Part I

The Spirit and the Church

Miroslav Volf and Maurice Lee

Introduction

The third articles of the Christian creedal tradition consistently pair "the Spirit" and "the church." We can trace such pairing back at least to the early third century. According to the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (c. 215), the third question asked of a candidate for baptism was "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and the holy church and the resurrection of the flesh?"[1] This connection in the creedal tradition echoes the close ties between the Spirit and the church found throughout the New Testament: as the account of the Spirit's coming at Pentecost paradigmatically attests, the church was born out of the womb of the Spirit. From their beginnings and throughout their history, Christian dogmatic and theological traditions have acknowledged the Spirit as the generative force and life-giving environment – the "breathing room" – of the church.

The pervasive association between "Spirit" and "church" notwithstanding, theologians have reflected relatively little on precisely how the two are related. Take as an example Calvin, a theologian who on the whole cannot be faulted for neglect of the Spirit.[2] Though he stresses in the *Institutes* that the elect "are made truly one since they live together in one faith, hope, and love, and in the same Spirit of God" (4.1.2), he does not venture to explore how the Spirit of the triune God shapes the nature and mission of the church.[3] In Calvin, as often in the history of Western theology, the distinctive relation of the Spirit to the church is elusive.[4] Even in the Eastern churches, whose theologians have tended to ascribe a greater role to the Spirit,[5] the Spirit's work in the birth and life of the church remains vague. In commenting on

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recent Orthodox reactions to Catholic dogmatic formulations, John Zizioulas, an astute contemporary Orthodox theologian, remarks that while the Orthodox criticisms may be valid, "what the Orthodox would in fact like to see [Western theology] do with Pneumatology in its ecclesiology"[6] – has not yet been worked out.

By contrast, there has been abundant reflection on how the church is related to Christ e.g., as body (to head), as bride (to bridegroom), as servant (of the Lord), as redeemed (of the Crucified One). These christological modes of understanding the church not only draw from the NT's rich reservoir of metaphors to describe the church's relation to Christ but, more significantly, build on the core of the underlying NT narrative of the life, death, resurrection, exaltation, and continuing lordship of Christ. The logic of that narrative is straightforward, and its ecclesiological implications were expressed in the early tradition most succinctly by Ignatius of Antioch: *ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia.*[7] But where does this leave the Spirit? Does the Spirit come only after the church has already and independently been "constructed with christological material alone,"[8] to play a secondary role as the life-infusing and invigorating "breath" of the ecclesial body?

Part of the reason that the tradition has not developed the pneumatological side of ecclesiology is a certain elusiveness of the Spirit. This is a well-known pneumatological theme, and we want to underscore only one of its aspects that relates directly to ecclesiology. Much of what Christian theology claims about the Spirit is filtered Christologically. We identify who the Spirit is and what the Spirit does by pointing to Christ. Except for being a source of life and power, the Spirit would then seem ecclesiologically redundant. We argue that the impression of redundancy is false. Though (above and beyond vivification of the church) the Spirit's ecclesiological function seems more formal than material, that function is nonetheless significant.

Why can the Spirit's work not be limited to vivification of the church? The identity and mission of Christ are not to be understood independently of the Spirit, and Christ portrayed solely as the giver rather than also as the receiver of the Spirit. Though our knowledge of the Spirit is filtered Christologically, the being and the activity of the Spirit are not unidirectionally determined by Christ. Indeed, recent research in the Gospels has persuaded many that the identity and mission of Christ were fundamentally shaped by

the Spirit. Even if one does not find an exclusive Spirit Christology persuasive, it seems clear that the NT writers clearly believed that Jesus was Christ because he was anointed by the Spirit. If we take this insight of biblical scholarship seriously, then we have a *triplicity* of relations: between the Spirit and the church, between Christ and the church, and between the Spirit and Christ in which Christ appears both as bearer and giver of the Spirit. No ecclesiology failing to aknowledge the particularities of all these relations can be adequate to the Biblical testimonies, to the tradition, or to experiences of the divine presence in the church.

How should the relations between Christ, the Spirit, and the church be theologically expressed? Some thirty years ago, Catholic theologian Heribert Mühlen proposed an ecclesiology whose foundation was neither Christ alone nor the Spirit alone, nor Christ simply as giver of the Spirit, but Christ as bearer and giver of the Spirit. Distancing himself from the influential Catholic tradition of viewing the church as an "ongoing incarnation" in which the Spirit seems superfluous, and rejecting any "spiritualistic" conceptions of the church which render Christ ecclesiologically inconsequential, Mühlen argued that the church should be seen as the continuation of Christ's anointing by the Spirit – the anointing by virtue of which Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah of God.[9] Though we will diverge from Mühlen significantly, we will explore in a more Protestant way the relation between the Spirit and the church by following his basic insight. We will first examine the relations between Christ, the Spirit, and the church, and then suggest how the Spirit is related to the nature and mission of the church. By doing so, we hope to sketch an ecclesiology giving full weight both to the Ignatian rule *ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia*, and to the Irenaean rule *ubi Spiritus Dei, illic ecclesia, et omnis gratia*.[10]

Christ, Spirit, Church

The relations between Christ, the Spirit, and the church suggested in the NT can be explored at two levels – that of the practice and self-consciousness of the "earthly" Jesus (reconstructible in terms of the "historical Jesus"), and of the biblical writers' theological reflection on the "earthly" Jesus (redescribable in terms of the "biblical Christ"). Although, for reasons we cannot expand on here,[11] we give preference in systematic constructive work to the theology of

the biblical writers, here we pay much of our attention to the level of the "historical Jesus," in order to underscore the congruence between Jesus' practice and self-consciousness on the one hand and the church's remembrance and reflection on the other, and to ground the emergence of the church in the mission of Jesus. We seek to address consecutively these questions: How did Jesus of Nazareth see himself in relation to the Spirit and to the community? How did the early church understand those relations?

The Spirit of Christ

Integral to Jesus of Nazareth's Messianic identity and mission was his consciousness of the power of God's Spirit at work in him.[12] Some "historical Jesus" scholarship has tended to see Jesus in less apocalyptic categories and more, for example, in terms of "peasant Jewish Cynicism,"[13] and has therefore hesitated to ascribe to him an awareness of his own endowment with the eschatological Spirit,[14] the gift promised in such texts as Isaiah 11, 42, and 61 in connection with the advent of God's definitive rule (or "reign" or "kingdom") – the unprecedented arrival of God to consummate God's authority and to reclaim God's people in the world. But the apocalyptic dimension of Jesus' life and proclamation is too well attested to doubt that Jesus saw his vocation of announcing and inaugurating the kingdom of God as guided and driven by the eschatological Spirit of the prophets.[15]

If we assume the crucial role of the Spirit in Jesus' mission, two key questions arise. First, what concrete content did the Spirit give to Jesus' proclamation and inauguration of God's reign? Second, how is "the church" related to this proclamation and inauguration? We will take the second question first and begin by asking more particularly: Was the founding of the church explicitly a part of Jesus' mission, as the tradition claimed for centuries? Contemporary scholarship seems agreed that "ecclesiological" passages in the Gospels, such as Matt. 16:18, do not go back to Jesus himself. Jesus did not "found" the church. Does it therefore follow, as some scholars have argued, that the emergence of the church has nothing or very little to do with the original mission of Jesus, or even that Jesus' eschatological self-understanding is incompatible with the idea of the church?[16] Gerhard Lohfink has suggested that behind the disjunction between the mission of Jesus and emergence of the

church lies a dichotomy between the reign of God and the people of God. The dichotomy is false, however, because the reign of God is in fact unthinkable without the people of God among whom it becomes a concrete reality.[17] In Jesus' ministry, the indissoluble bond between the reign of God and the people of God is most clearly manifest in the calling of the Twelve, who symbolized and enacted "the incipient gathering of Israel to be the eschatological people of twelve tribes."[18] Rather than being an alternative to the people of God, the reign of God entails the coming and final presence of God *with* God's people, the reconstitution of the people as unforsakably *God's*.[19]

Essential, then, to Jesus' announcement of the reign of God was the calling and gathering of the people of God. Though not yet "the church," the gathering of God's people around Jesus is nonetheless ecclesiologically significant. Consider the following four features that distinguish formally the communities gathered around Jesus from the larger Jewish community of the time, and that we synthesize from N. T. Wright's *Jesus and the Victory of God*. (1) The center of the gathering, the attractor to whom God's people were to be drawn and renewed in the very drawing, was Jesus himself, whose self-perception was as "the focal point of the people of YHWH, . . . [who] embodied what he had announced."[20] Over against traditional construals of symbols that constituted community, Jesus regarded himself as "the true interpreter of Torah; the true builder of the Temple; the true spokesperson for Wisdom."[21] (2) Although the gathering was aimed at the whole of Israel, it took concrete shape as formation of "a network of cells loyal to [Jesus] and his kingdom-vision"[22] who "believed themselves to be in some sense the true Israel."[23] (3) Although Jesus insisted that his own mission and that of his disciples during his lifetime was "restricted to ethnic Israel," he believed the reign of God that was arriving through his work would bring hope to the gentiles because "Israel would be the light of the world, so that nations, seeing it, would come in and glorify the god of Israel."[24] (4) Jesus' disciples whom he sent out during his lifetime as "agents of the kingdom"[25] were empowered, even as Jesus was, by the Spirit. In so far as Jesus authorized them to heal the sick, cast out demons, and announce the nearness of God's reign, he made them share in the Spirit with which he had been anointed for his mission.[26] Both Jesus' sending and the Spirit's presence were essential to their mission.

All of these features, appropriately transformed, can be seen in the theology and practice of the church of the mid- and late first century. The ways Jesus

gathered God's people for God's reign in the power of the Spirit helped give impetus to the later emergence of the church. But the church would not have emerged were it not for the specific character of the gathered communities, which stemmed from the concrete content of Jesus' proclamation and inauguration of God's reign.

Jesus announced and demonstrated the reign of God among the people of God in various modes: forgiveness offered to "sinners,"[27] fellowship welcoming the outcast,[28] and care for the physically needy.[29] Central to Jesus' kingdom work was the making of whole persons, relationships, and bodies. And as a comparison with his immediate predecessor John the Baptist, the preacher of judgment, shows, the most striking feature of Jesus' whole-making activity was its expression of *unconditional grace*, of God's free, noncoercive, unbrokered outreach to restore God's people to fullness of life.

The power of such grace, the power of restoration to wholeness, community, and life, must be the kind of power that gives, not restricts, freedom: power that opens up a *space* in which the unconditioned outreach of God can be extended, witnessed and experienced, and accepted – or rejected. The Spirit with whom Jesus was anointed and who thus empowered Jesus' mission constituted that freedom: in the relations established between Jesus and those whom he encountered,[30] as well as in his own joy in the works and words given to him by his Father,[31] room was made for the interplay of divine initiative and human response. The grace that both creates and fills this "space" of freedom is marked by at least two features.

First, unconditional grace is not cheap. Rightly understood, forgiveness, rather than ignoring evil, includes the naming of the wrong being forgiven. It affirms the assumptions and requirements of justice in the very movement of transcending them.[32] Similarly, fellowship that goes beyond mere proximity to include peace and well-being between people does not turn a blind eye to inequalities and injustices but depends on a dynamic of community where barriers of economic status,[33] gender identity,[34] and religious purity[35] are taken down and where hierarchies that replicate relations of power in the world are subverted.[36] Finally, care for the body presupposes a robust notion of bodily well-being, and means recognizing and setting oneself over against forms of physical entrapment – suffering, sickness, possession, death – that endanger and restrict creaturely life.[37] The unconditional grace mediated by

Jesus was not a vague tolerance associated with a principled commitment to "take in" rather than to "keep out,"[38] but rather went hand in hand with a vision of the good life, involving substantive values and determinate practices.

Second, the offer of grace is not directed toward isolated individuals, remaining free of social and political import. Since Jesus saw in his own proclamation and inauguration of God's reign the fulfillment of prophetic promises that God's Spirit-endowed servant would bring forth justice to the nations, preach good news to the oppressed, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and the year of the Lord's favor, and provide for those who mourn,[39] his mission was inescapably and deeply political. He was not engaged in politics in the usual sense, though. For one thing, by announcing the true and ultimate kingdom as now present in his person through the offer of grace, he subverted the defensive strategies of the established authority that enforced stability through subjugation. As well, by insisting on the noncoercive ethic of the renewed heart, he subverted nationalistic agendas that advocated victory through violence. Jesus not only knew that what he was saying and doing was profoundly incompatible with ruling and revolutionary programs alike; he saw the path of suffering and death marked out for him by such incompatibilities as bound up with his messianic task.

The way in which Jesus presented his claims and his message, both to individual persons and to larger social networks, involved a complex interplay between hiddenness and openness. His teaching and acts of power were certainly public in being accessible to and aimed at diverse groups. Yet Jesus did not try to implant a particular term or image representing his own identity – "Messiah," "healer," or other such title – in the public consciousness, where, torn loose from its moorings in the specificity of his mission, it would have been misrepresented and misunderstood.[40] The hiddenness *served* the openness, because it was meant to ensure that the message could be heard and accepted in its full integrity, as the eschatological presentation of God's grace. Moreover, Jesus surely saw the role granted him in the regathering of God's people as visibly central. Yet he pointed away from himself toward the Father, precisely in claiming to be the "way" to the Father.[41] This theme is reflected in the words of the Johannine Jesus: "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me."[42] In pointing away from himself to the Father he was making the most radical claims about himself.

The Church of the Spirit

Our brief exploration suggests the following picture: Because the reign of God is unthinkable without the people of God, the gathering of the communities was inseparable from Jesus' earthly mission that he carried out in the power of the Spirit. Moreover, participation in that mission was part of the identity of the communities formed in his name: called and gathered around Jesus and loyal to him and his vision, these messianic communities were also sent by him and endowed with the same Spirit that rested on him, so as to carry on the same mission – to proclaim God's reign as the power of unconditional grace to make persons, relationships, and bodies whole.

The basic structure of the relations between Jesus, the Spirit, and the community evident in the ministry of the historical Jesus is theologically reaffirmed and further developed by the Gospel writers, except that Jesus' identity is expanded to include the narrative of his resurrection and exaltation, and the community's identity is expanded to include the gentiles. It is impossible here to examine both of these expansions and the theological shifts they entailed; it suffices to note the structure of the relationships between Christ, the Spirit, and the church in the theologies of two evangelists. In Luke-Acts, the One whose baptism marked the start of his mission under the anointing of the Spirit[43] poured out on his disciples, after his resurrection and exaltation, the prophetic Spirit through whom, according to the prophecy of Joel, all God's people would be gathered and empowered to proclaim God's reign in word and deed.[44] Similarly in John, the One upon whom the Spirit descended and remained[45] and to whom the Spirit was given "without measure"[46] was the One who after his death, resurrection, and exaltation breathed the Spirit upon the disciples as he sent them into the world as he himself had been sent by the Father.[47] Clearly, Luke and John believed that the emergence of the church was bound up with Christ's sending of the Spirit, who anointed the disciples to continue the mission of Jesus.[48] This complex of theological affirmations builds on the remembered practice and self-consciousness of Jesus, and is well summarized by Raniero Cantalamessa's claim that "the last breath of Jesus [on the cross] is the first breath of the church."[49]

The relations between Christ, the Spirit, and the church sketched above are summed up appropriately in Mühlen's contention that the church is the continuation of Christ's anointing by the Spirit. Below we will explore the

implications of this claim for the nature and the mission of the church. But first we must indicate what kind of relationship between Christ's identity and mission, and the identity and mission of the church, is entailed by an ecclesiology so conceived. The relationship comprises both *identicality* and *non-identicality*.

The identicality between Jesus Christ and the church is manifest in the goal toward which they are directed (the reign of God) and the power by which their mission is carried out (the Spirit of God). The church is called, under circumstances different from those surrounding Jesus, to participate in Christ's mission by announcing and demonstrating God's coming in grace. Even more fundamentally, the sameness of goal and power rest on the fact that Christ himself is present in the church through the Spirit. Just as the mission of the communities gathered around the earthly Jesus entailed the interplay of being gathered around and sent by Jesus on the one hand, and being empowered by the Spirit on the other, so the church lives and pursues its mission in virtue of Christ's coming to the church through the Spirit he has sent. Far from simply being engaged in a mission similar or parallel to Christ's, the church in the power of Christ's Spirit is engaged in Christ's *own* mission, on his behalf[50] and accompanied by him.[51]

Above and beyond its living under different circumstances, however, the relationship between Christ and the church is not identical in at least three respects. (1) Since the reign of God that Christ proclaimed is bound up with his own person, he is the very content of this reign, as in his person he embodies, demonstrates, and establishes God's gracious lordship; the church can be the content of this reign only to the extent that it is first a creation of the gracious coming of this reign into the world. (2) Since Christ is the content of God's reign, his identity coincides with his mission: *to be* Jesus Christ, with all that that entails, *is* what he is to do. Since the church was created as the sphere of God's reign by grace, its identity often diverges from what it is supposed to proclaim and practice before the world; the church is always ambiguous because it is made up of people prone to deny Christ even given their most ardent attempts at clinging to him.[52] (3) Whereas Jesus' mission is properly his own, the church does not have a mission of its own; its only mission is the very mission of Jesus.

Here we see the emerging contours of the Spirit's ecclesiological significance. The idea that the Spirit which rested on Jesus was sent by the exalted Christ after his resurrection to mediate his presence and thereby

constitute the church functions to secure the proper interplay between Christ's and the church's identity and mission. Were it not for the Spirit, the relation between Christ and the church would be either one of sheer non-identicality (the church as a society founded historically by Jesus and/or obedient to a transcendent Lord) or of sheer identicality (the church as the continuation of Christ's incarnation). Since the Spirit of Christ mediates the presence of the absent one, the church can, like a bride, stand over against Christ yet be most intimately united with him.

This interplay of identicality and non-identicality arises from the fact that it is the *same* Spirit at work both in Jesus' ministry and in the church, and from the *difference* of the Spirit's presence in both. The presence of the Spirit in Jesus' ministry was immediate: the Spirit had descended upon him and made him into the Messiah of God. The presence of the Spirit in the church is mediated through Jesus: the disciples received the Spirit because they were Jesus' disciples, and it was he who sent the Spirit upon the church after his resurrection. In biblical terminology, Jesus was given the Spirit "without measure";[53] in the church the Spirit operates "according to the measure of faith."[54] In the terminology of later tradition, Jesus was endowed with the Spirit "by nature"; the church is endowed with the Spirit "by grace." Here we will concentrate only on explicating the nature and the mission of the church so conceived.

The Nature of the Church[55]

Earlier we argued that God's reign as proclaimed and inaugurated by Christ in the power of the Spirit is unthinkable without God's people, and we suggested that God's people are directed toward God's reign. From this it follows that the nature and the mission of the church, though clearly distinct, are intimately related. When we speak about the the church's nature, we are looking at the church as a fruit of Christ's proclamation and inauguration of God's reign; when we speak of the church's mission, we are examining the participation of the church in that very mission of Christ of which it is a fruit. We will now examine the nature of the church, in particular how the Spirit who rested on the earthly Jesus and who was given by the risen Christ is related to the gathering and the internal life of the community, and how as a result of the Spirit's activity the church emerges as the image of the Trinity.

Gathered in Diversity

Any community must somehow be *gathered*. The gathering of a Christian church occurs as the Spirit moves people in varied and specific forms of social, cultural, and physical embodiment to acclaim – in a bountiful diversity of ways – the crucified and risen Jesus Christ as the "Yes" by whom God fulfills God's promises to God's people,[56] the source in whom true life is to be found,[57] the reality to whom all life is to be oriented.[58] Since the church sees itself as a potentially universal community, this confession must be made in the hearing and presence of others – *publicly*.[59] Though always a broken and gradually unfolding sign of the Spirit's work, the public confession of Jesus Christ is nonetheless a fundamental constitutive element of the church. A people gathered in the Spirit to worship the one God through common allegiance to and confession of Christ is a "communion of the Spirit," and thereby a concrete church.[60]

Two essential elements of this public profession are faith in Christ as Savior and commitment to Christ as Lord. The church is the communion of the faithful, whatever else it may be beyond this. Without faith in Christ as Savior, without the giving over of basic trust to God's mercy in Christ, there is no church. Similarly, if faith is not to degenerate into a false quasi-religious solace, it must be accompanied by the intention to follow Christ's way. Without commitment to Christ as Lord, without obedience to Christ's way of holiness, there is no church. Certainly, the church does not stand or fall with the faith and commitment of every individual member. It can exist even if an individual member does not trust or obey, but without at least someone trusting and obeying Christ, there can be no church.

Such an emphasis on faith and commitment might seem to make the church into a human "work." After all, it is individual people who believe and who commit themselves. Yet the NT sees these most basic human acts lyingat the foundation of the church as generated by the Spirit.[61] Thus, though no church can arise and live without the faith and commitment to Christ of its members, the real subject of the genesis of the church is not the people themselves, but the Spirit of Christ, acting through communal proclamation of the Word and celebration of the sacraments.

That the community gathered in faith and commitment is a church – that the community's trust and obedience are in and to *Christ* – implies it must be

a *catholic* community. Since the Spirit who creates the community in continuation of Christ's anointing is the Spirit of the reign of God, and since the eschatological reign of God will mean the creation of a single people of God from every tribe and nation,[62] every local community must see itself both as part of that one people of God and as its microcosm. Hence, no church in a given culture may isolate itself from other churches in other cultures; every church must be open to all other churches. Even more, every local church is a catholic community because all other churches are part of that church; all of them shape its identity.

For a community to be truly catholic, it must be composed of catholic persons. In coming to persons, the Spirit of God breaks through the self-enclosed worlds they inhabit; the Spirit renews, re-creates them and sets them up as a site of God's eschatological reign. To be such a site is to be a catholic person, a person enriched by others, a person whose identity arises not simply from and of itself, but because multiple others are reflected in it in a particular way. By opening each person and community to all other persons and communities, and all of them to God's universal eschatological reign, the Spirit fashions the church into a site of reconciled and mutually enriching diversity.[63]

Gifted for Ministry

Over against notions claiming that faith either comes through the narrow portals of ordained ministry or is directly given by the Spirit to the souls of individuals, NT texts suggest that the Spirit of God creates faith through the multidimensional proclamation of the gospel, in which, in principle, all members of the community participate. This is evident especially in Pauline ecclesiology. In working to establish peace within the enthusiastic and chaotic Corinthian congregation, Paul does not seek to bolster hierarchical structures but instead reaffirms a model of ecclesial life whose structure is *polycentric* and participatory. Summing up his own instructions he writes: "When you come together, *each one* has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up the congregation."[64] Commensurate with their calling and endowment by God's Spirit, all members of a church are stewards of God's manifold grace through their deeds and words,[65] and all have something to contribute in worship and in the entire life of the church. The church arises and lives insofar as grace is mediated through mutual service with pluriform spiritual gifts.

The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of ministerial diversity, creating the one body in which all members have differing roles.[66] True, not everyone participates in the same way and with the same intensity. Ordained ministers play a particularly prominent and indispensable role. Yet the church's whole life is not ordered around them. Different persons and networks of persons become soteriologically "significant others" for other members and groups. Beyond this, the community as a whole and not just its officeholders creates "plausibility structures" in which the mediation of faith and faithful life become possible. Thus the Spirit does constitutes the church not exclusively through its officeholders but as members serve others with their gifts.

If all the ministries in the church are equally significant for its life, and if all members are equally gifted by the Spirit, there would seem to be no need for ordained ministry. Yet this is not so. Of course, since all ministries derive from the gifts of the Spirit, the necessity of ordained ministry cannot be derived from the givenness of the gifts themselves. Instead, it must be grounded in the particular features of those ministries performed by officeholders and of the gifts bestowed upon them for those ministries. The specific necessity attaching to the gifts of office is their reference to the entirety of the local church: officeholders are responsible not for a part of the congregation or a narrow aspect of its life but for the vital concerns of the congregation as a congregation. An officeholder acts in the name of the congregation before God, individual members, and the world, and also in the name of Christ by the power of the Spirit before the congregation as a whole.

United in Love

The gathering of a catholic community with a multiplicity of charismatic ministries aims at creating a people with distinctive communal practices.[67] In Acts 2 the Spirit establishes a community whose members are free from the compulsion of self-aggrandizement to give of their possessions to each other – free to love each other in concrete, specific ways. The Spirit who brings freedom[68] generates the fruit of love,[69] the greatest of the gifts.[70]

Love grows up in the space of freedom. Freedom for love transcends both an exclusive self-focus that nurtures radical independence and autonomy at the expense of the determinations of mutual presence, and from the dissolution of the self threatened by abusive relationships or bureaucratic

mentalities.[71] Indeed, love is enabled by freedom and enables it: personally oriented and communally practiced, it unites differently situated people without indiscriminately erasing differences and opens those who love and are loved to develop in individually specified yet mutually enriching and freeing ways. Love, in its many concrete manifestations – speaking the truth,[72] bearing others' burdens,[73] refusing to seek evil for evil,[74] showing hospitality to strangers,[75] even laying down one's life[76] – and freedom are thus intimately connected. Love gives rise to freedom; freedom is the precondition of love.

Both freedom and love, of course, can be sorely abused and counterfeits easily constructed. If the freedom that opens a space for true love is possible and available at all, it arises from the Spirit's gracious power and presence. If the love which gives genuine freedom is possible and available, it is because God's love is prior and paradigmatic,[77] indeed because God's love is the source, having been poured into believers' hearts by the Spirit.[78] The Spirit grants believers participation in the love given and received by the Son,[79] that is, in the perfect self-giving love that characterizes the triune divine life.

Imaging the Trinity

The sacrament of baptism has rightly been described as the gateway into the church. Through baptism "in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," the Spirit of God leads believers simultaneously into both the Trinitarian and ecclesial communions. Emerging from the baptismal waters, the members of the church enter the ecclesial space where the eschatological communion of the triune God and God's glorified people is lived out in a proleptic way.[80] From this vantage point, the gathering of catholic communities, the equality of their members, and the mutuality of their love all emerge as ways in which a church images in a broken but nonetheless real fashion the triune divine life.

We cannot argue here for an understanding of the Trinity that makes the identification of these correspondences between the Trinitarian and ecclesial communities possible. Neither can we argue for a construal of how the Trinitarian and ecclesial communities correspond and of the limits to such correspondences. We must simply assume all this,[81] and proceed to sketch three ways in which the Spirit of communion makes the church into an image of the Trinity.

First, *catholicity*. One notable characteristic of the divine persons is their personal interiority. Echoing John's Gospel,[82] John of Damascus writes in *De Fide* that the divine persons "have their being in each other without any coalescence or commingling."[83] Every divine person is indwelled by other divine persons, and all interpenetrate each other without ceasing to be distinct; distinctions of the persons are rather a presupposition of their interpenetration. Analogously, a member of the church is a catholic person because other members of the church are part and parcel of his or her identity (although, unlike the divine persons, not of his or her personhood); a local church is a catholic community because it is related to other local churches – and together with them to the glorified people of God – such that they shape its very identity and it shapes theirs.

Second, *equality*. The divine persons are distinct yet equal. Since each shares all the attributes of divinity, there can be no place for non-reciprocal subordination in their mutual relations (except for the economic subordination of the *incarnate* Word to the One who sent him and in whose power he was sent). Distinctions of persons concern their identities and their roles; they are not a function of unalterable "places" on a hierarchical line of super- and subordination. Analogously, all members of the church are fundamentally equal in that they have all been baptized by the Spirit and received gifts of the Spirit. Their distinctions stem from their specific personal identities and their concrete and changing gifts for ministry. Though life in the community requires willful subordination and mutual service, no principled and unalterable hierarchical relations obtain between members. Similarly, all local churches are equal, and the universal church, whether viewed as the whole *communio sanctorum* or as the global church, is not superordinate to local churches.

Third, *love*. The equality and personal interiority of the divine persons are rooted in the perfect divine love – an interchange between self and other in which the giving of the self coalesces with the receiving of the other and in which, paradoxically, each gives first and at the same time gives because she has received. In its encounter with a deeply flawed world crying for transformation, the delight of the perfect divine love is transmuted into the *agony* of the same love that in freedom spilled over the boundaries of the divine community to create the world, a world now gone astray – the agony of opposition to non-love, the agony of suffering at the hand of non-love, and the

agony of sympathy with non-love's victims. The love exhibited in the community of the Spirit should be modeled on the love of the divine persons for one another and for the world, the love that enjoys the other and the love suffers for the other's sake. The love of the ecclesial community is the fruit of the labor of that very love it seeks to replicate.

The Mission of the Church

In the power of the Spirit that rested upon Jesus as he announced and inaugurated the reign of God and that the resurrected and exalted Christ poured out on his followers so that they can continue his mission, churches live as catholic communities of equal persons who give allegiance to Jesus Christ and seek to embody divine love. As such communities, churches image in a broken way the Trinitarian life of God. This way of defining the nature of the church suggests a close relationship between the church's identity and its mission. If the triune God whom the church should image is redemptively engaged with a world gone awry, then the church should do the same.

Mission and Identity

If the church is the image of the Trinity, then the church's very being is a form of mission. As an image of the Trinity, the church is a sign of the coming reign of the triune God.[84] A sign can be extrinsic to the reality to which it points (like road signs) or intrinsic to it (like love letters). The church is this latter kind of sign: it points to the reign of God by being its present realization under the conditions of history. Put differently, the church signifies by *sampling* – admittedly in an ambiguous, inadequate way. It follows that the identity of the church is its first mission, a mission not simply toward itself but toward the world. The frequently invoked tension between identity and mission is spurious, because that identity *is* mission; mission cannot acquire gain by identity's suffering loss.

If mission is compromised by a concern for identity, the problem is that identity has been wrongly conceived. The claim that the church's identity is its first mission is valid only if mission is seen from the start as part of that identity.[85] The church emerged as a result of the mission of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit to announce and inaugurate the reign of God. Since God's reign is unthinkable without God's people, the church is not simply a means

toward that reign; rather, the church is in some sense an end in itself. But only insofar as it is oriented toward and contributes to the emergence of something greater than itself – the reign of God. As a broken, ambiguous but real sampling of God's reign, the church is called to serve that reign by continuing the mission of Jesus in the power of the Spirit. As preached and presented by Jesus, God's reign is the inbreaking of God's favor and love, which eagerly seeks out those trapped in sin as one would seek a wandering sheep, a lost coin, or a wayward child, to return them to where they belong. In the power of the Spirit, the church must participate in this inbreaking of God's favor – or cease to be the church. As David Bosch puts it in *Transforming Mission*, "the Christian faith is . . . intrinsically missionary."[86]

All the essential elements of the church's mission are aspects of the inbreaking of God's favor manifest in the mission of Jesus under the anointing of the Spirit that the church is called to continue, albeit in a non-identical way. We will now sketch three key elements of the church's mission.

Rebirth of Persons

The church is called to proclaim that God "through the Holy Spirit" seeks to pour "God's love" into the hearts of those who are "weak," "sinners," and "enemies."[87] At the cross we see that the reach of God's love cannot be limited or confounded by ungodliness; as God lets the sun shine on good and evil, so God bestows grace on all. God's commitment to each human being is irrevocable and God's covenant with them indestructible. No deed is imaginable that could put a person outside the scope of God's love. Hence the universal offer of forgiveness. Forgiveness, of course, entails blame. Far from treating human sin as if it were not there, in the act of forgiveness God names deception as deception, injustice as injustice, violence as violence. The good news is not that human sin does not matter but that, the reality of the most heinous sin notwithstanding, the offer of embrace still holds. Hence the cross.

By naming sins in the context of God's immutable grace, the Spirit of truth frees us from self-deception rooted in conscious or unconscious efforts at self-justification. Facing God's arms outstretched toward us on the cross, we dare to look into the abyss of our own evil and recognize ourselves as who we are – "weak," "sinners," and "enemies," the "ungodly." Freedom from self-deception comes, however, not simply because we know that we will be

embraced, indeed that we have been embraced, but because of the certainty that God's embrace will liberate us from the enslavement to evil that has so profoundly shaped us. "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"[88] The grace that forgives is the grace that makes new.[89]

"New creation" is, of course, an eschatological reality. This suggests that the good news of God's grace concerns not only our past and our present but also our future. Forgiven and transformed, we have been given "a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"[90] a hope "that does not disappoint."[91] In the words of Serene Jones, "the purity of grace that God has poured upon our imperfect, impure souls," through Christ who was put to death for our transgressions and raised for our justification,[92] gives us certainty that our end has been "folded into God's promise."[93]

Summing up these three aspects – forgiveness, transformation, hope – we can say that the church is called to proclaim the eschatological event of justification by grace through which God forgives, transforms, and promises to glorify sinful human beings, and thus take them up into God's own Trinitarian embrace.

Reconciliation of People

At the center of God's offer of grace, which remakes the sinner into a new creation, lies the cross of Christ as an act of God's self-giving. In baptism persons are identified with the death of Christ and are portrayed as those who live "by faith in the Son of God, who loved [them] and gave himself up for [them]."[94] In the Lord's supper Christians remember the One who gave his body "for them" so that not only their communion with him would be restored but that they would be shaped in his image.[95] Since the church's very being is grounded in God's self-giving and constituted by its being made present to those who believe by the Spirit, the church's life must be modeled on God's self-giving by which God has reconciled human beings to himself.[96] And since the church's mission is nothing but the face of its identity turned toward the world, the church must engage in the ministry of reconciliation, one that in early times was pursued in the power of the same Spirit of communion[97] seen at work in the communities themselves to reconcile members to one another.[98]

For the most part, the church has regarded its ministry of reconciliation to refer to the call for individual persons' reconciliation to God.[99] Reconciliation in this vision has a theological and personal meaning but not a social meaning. For the larger world of social relations, in recent decades the twin categories of liberation and justice have gained prominence. For many theological, socio-philosophical, and political reasons, we think this is dangerously one-sided.[100] The social mission of the church ought to be pursued out of the heart of its own identity. Hence we must retrieve and explicate the social meaning of divine self-giving in order to reconcile sinful humanity. Though Paul describes the ministry of reconciliation as entreating people to "be reconciled to God,"[101] that ministry for him has an inalienable social dimension because reconciliation between human beings is intrinsic to their reconciliation with God. At its center, not just at its periphery, reconciliation has a horizontal dimension as well. It contains a turn away from enmity toward people, not just toward God, and it contains a movement toward the other who was the target of enmity. Hence the Pauline vision of reconciliation between Jews and gentiles, between men and women, between slaves and free.[102] And hence the grand deutero-Pauline claim that "in [Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross."[103] The ultimate goal both for the church and the whole of reality is a vision of the reconciliation of all things in the embrace of the triune God.

If we put reconciliation and grace at the center of the church's social mission, we must not conceive reconciliation in opposition to liberation and grace in contrast to justice. Instead, within the dialectical relation between reconciliation and liberation we need to give priority to reconciliation. We must underscore both the priority of reconciliation over liberation and the dialectical relationship between the two. Apart from the priority of reconciliation, the pursuit of liberation will never lead to peace and love between former enemies, partly because truth and justice are unavailable outside the prior commitment to reconciliation. But without a commitment to justice within the overarching framework of love, the pursuit of reconciliation will be perverted into perpetuating domination and oppression. Just as the proclamation of God's embrace is centered on grace that affirms

justice as part of its inner makeup, so also the understanding and practice of social reconciliation must include the struggle for liberation within the overarching framework of embrace.

Care of Bodies

As we have seen, central to Jesus' mission was the care of bodies. His programmatic sermon in Nazareth makes this plain: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."[104] Attempts at spiritualizing Jesus' care for bodies abound. Martin Luther, for example, consistently translated accounts of Christ's healings of human bodies into reports on how Jesus liberates the conscience through forgiveness of sins.[105] But this will clearly not do as an adequate reading of the Gospels: Jesus forgave *and* he healed. The early church, at least ideally, continued with the same kind of care: it healed the sick and it supported the poor so that "there was not a needy person among them."[106] The apostle Paul, too, did not only proclaim reconciliation; he also helped the poor[107] and healed the sick.[108]

Behind the care of bodies lies the conviction that the rebirth of persons who live in this material world and who with this world make up God's good creation cannot be complete without the redemption of their bodies. The new birth of persons through the Spirit is the ambiguous, but nonetheless real beginning of the rebirth of the whole cosmos.[109] Similarly, the reconciliation of people who live embodied lives will be complete only when the reconciliation of all things takes place; there can be no eschatological bliss for God's people without eschatological *shalom* for God's world. Hence the care of bodies, broadly conceived, belongs properly to the church's mission.

If we understand the church's mission this way and in so doing address larger social and ecological issues, where does the Spirit come in? Often the Spirit's work has been limited to the church, to gathering people into communities, gifting them, uniting them, inspiring them to proclaim the gospel, which aims in turn at further gathering. Is such a centripetal view of the Spirit's work adequate? Are its implicit ecclesiological assumptions correct – namely, that the church is only a church when gathered but not when

"scattered," and that its work is therefore primarily liturgical and not "secular"? Properly understood, the church is not a "gathering" but a community that gathers, and ecclesial work is therefore done both when the community is gathered and when it is scattered in the world. Since to live as a Christian means to "walk in the Spirit,"[110] all Christian work is done in the power of the Spirit – whether it concerns the rebirth of persons, the reconciliation of people, or the care of bodies.[111]

As the community of faith reaches into the world to touch all dimensions of its life, it will find that the Spirit of Christ at work in the community is the Spirit of life at work in the whole creation. Anointed by the Spirit, the church is sent to go where the Spirit is always already to be found preparing the way for the coming of God's reign.

Hiddenness and Openness

At work in all these aspects of the church's mission is a complex interplay between "hiddenness" and "openness" analogous to that which characterized Jesus' ministry. The church does not seek to draw attention to itself. Instead, the church in its worship and service points to Christ as the way to God the Father, and by doing so points to the reign of God. This takes Jesus' own practice of hiddenness a step further still. Jesus refused to identify and to exalt himself in ways that would have reinforced popular expectations and assumptions, even as he acted and spoke from his belief in his own centrality to the mission for which he had been anointed and which was meant to go forward to all of God's people. The church, sent by Christ and anointed by his Spirit, similarly does "not wrangle or cry aloud" in self-interest, does not demand that "anyone hear [its] voice in the streets."[112] And the church must harbor no illusions about its own "centrality," for its anointing is with Christ's Spirit for Christ's mission, and the center around which its existence and work are organized is displaced from itself in Christ, for the sake of making known the grace of God's reign.

This radical de-centeredness is not an excuse for the church to avoid agency but entails the courage to remain "misfitted" as the church pursues its proper mission: the courage to be openly out of step with the surrounding culture's plausibility structures and social arrangements – dominant paradigms that might

otherwise dictate to the church what is publicly expected of and appropriate to it, independently of its proper mandate. To the extent that the church understands that its identity and mission are not its own but Christ's, it will resist having its boundaries and its place marked out for it by assumptions and pressures other than those arising from its union with Christ in the Spirit.

Thus the church's hiddenness is not equivalent to withdrawal or a sectarian privatization of religious life, a blissful, unsullied, somehow apolitical isolation in which the church can float above and beyond the concrete tapestry of human needs, wounds, enmities, and hopes. Rather, the church's hiddenness is a form of openness. De-centered from itself in Christ, it is publicly un-bent by forces that would shape it into merely another socio-cultural institution, and is thereby unleashed – pointing away from itself – to announce and demonstrate God's grace that changes the world. This interplay of hiddenness and openness coming out of the church's anointing by Christ's Spirit protects its identity and mission from facile distortions and oppressive demands, and thus frees the church to subvert, challenge, and transform both the public's visions of its own salutary future and its ways of creating such a future. To be public as the church is to offer an alternative vision, in which the image and reign of God are displayed to all and brought to bear on all aspects of life – to pursue the very mission at the core of the church's identity.[113]

Notes

[1] *Apostolic Tradition* 2.21.17.

[2] Cf. Werner Krusche, *Das Wirken des heiligen Geistes nach Calvin* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupecht, 1957).

[3] By that Spirit's work, believers "have entered into fellowship with Christ" and receive "gifts variously distributed" (4.1.3). Calvin devotes particular attention to the gift of pastoral ministry, but why it should be the Spirit who does these things, how the nature of the church is characterized by "en-Spirit-edness," is left unsaid.

[4] Cf. John Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 171.

[5] Cf., e.g., Nikos Nissiotis's critical comments on *Dei verbum*, quoted in Dmitri Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, tr. Robert Barringer (Crestwood: St. Vladmir's Seminary Press, 1980), 48ff. and Staniloae's own scoring of Protestant pneumatological individualism, 14 .

[6] John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood: Vladmir's Seminary Press, 1985), 123.

[7] *Ad Smyrnaeos* 8.2
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] Heribert Mühlen, *Una Mystica Persona: Die Kirche als das Mysterium der heilsgeschichtlichen Identität des heiligen Geistes in Christus und den Christen: Eine Person in vielen Personen* 3rd ed. (Munich: Schöningh, 1968), 216–286.
[10] *Adversus Haereses* 3.24.1.
[11] Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest for the Historical Jesus and the Truth of Traditional Gospels* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996) and *Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1998).
[12] N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 162; cf. James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus and The Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 67.
[13] As in John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991).
[14] In his summaries of what can be said with reasonable certainty about the historical Jesus, Crossan (417–26) does not mention the Spirit at all, the summaries reflecting an almost total absence of this theme from the main body of the work as well.
[15] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 162; cf. Matthew 12:28 (although the substitution here of "Spirit" for Luke 11:20's "finger" is probably secondary relative to Q).
[16] Hans Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament*, tr. John Bowden (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 33.
[17] Gerhard Lohfink, "Jesus und die Kirche" in *Handbuch fur Fundamentaltheologie 3: Trakat Kirche*, ed. W. Kern, H.J. Pottmeyer, and M. Seckler (Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 49–96; *Wie hat Jesus Gemeinde gewollt? Zu gesellschaftlichen Dimension des christlichen Glaubens* (Freiburg: Herder, 1982), 38–41.
[18] Lohfink, "Jesus und Kirche," 76.
[19] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 615ff.
[20] *Ibid.*, 538
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] *Ibid.*, 317
[23] *Ibid.*, 276
[24] *Ibid.*, 309–10
[25] *Ibid.*, 303
[26] Matt. 10:1–23 (esp. 20); cf. Mark 6:6–13, Luke 10:1–20. Also cf. W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, Vol.2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 186. Max Turner, *Power From on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 333-41.
[27] E.g., Matt. 9:2 pars.
[28] E.g., Luke 15:2
[29] E.g., Mark 1:34
[30] Luke 1:17, John 6:63

[31] Luke 10:21, John 3:34
[32] Miroslav Volf, "The Social Meaning of Reconciliation." *Interpretation* 54:2, 158-72.
[33] E.g., Luke 19:1–10
[34] E.g., Luke 8:1–3
[35] E.g., Mark 5:25–34; Luke 17:11–19
[36] Mark 10:42–44
[37] Cf. Michael Welker, *God and the Spirit*, tr. John F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 195–203.
[38] Alan Wolfe, "Democracy versus Sociology: Boundaries and Their Political Consequences," in *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, ed. M. Lamont and M. Fournier (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 309-25.
[39] Isaiah 42:1, 61:1–3
[40] Cf. Matt. 12:15ff., and cf. Welker, *God and the Spirit*, 203ff.
[41] Cf. John 14:6, Matt. 11:27
[42] John 7:16; cf. 14:24
[43] Acts 10:38.
[44] Acts 2:33
[45] John 1:32–33
[46] John 3:34
[47] John 20:19–23
[48] The language describing the Spirit's activity in relation to Jesus is varied, perhaps reflecting, as John Levison suggests, the freedom with which the evangelists drew from disparate sources and traditions. "Anointing" and "baptism," for example, are images with different histories and forces. Yet Luke makes it clear that the baptism of Jesus by John and the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit could be held by early Christians in the closest connection (Luke 3:21–22, 4:18; Acts 10:37–38).
[49] Raniero Cantalamessa, *Life in the Lordship of Christ* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1990), 140. We owe this reference to Kilian McDonnell.
[50] 2 Cor. 5:20
[51] Matt. 28:20
[52] Cf. Matt. 26:33–35, 69–75
[53] John 3:34
[54] Rom. 12:3
[55] In this and the following main sections we build and expand on arguments presented in Volf, "The Church as a Prophetic Community and Sign of Hope," *European Journal of Theology* 2.1 (1993): 9-30; Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996); Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); and Volf, "'The Trinity is Our Social Program': The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement," *Modern Theology* 14.3 (1998): 403-23
[56] 2 Cor. 1:20–21
[57] John 20:31

[58] 1 Cor. 12:3; cf. Rom. 10:9–10
[59] Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 149
[60] 2 Cor. 13:13; cf. Phil. 2:1
[61] 1 Cor. 12:1–3
[62] Rev. 7:9
[63] Acts 2
[64] 1 Cor. 14:26; cf. 1 Pet. 2:5–10, 4:10
[65] Cf. 1 Peter 4:10–11
[66] Rom. 12:4–5
[67] Acts 2:41–47
[68] 2 Cor. 3:17
[69] Gal. 5:22
[70] 1 Cor. 13
[71] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation,* tr. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 251
[72] Ephesians 4:15
[73] Gal. 6:2
[74] Rom. 12:9–21
[75] Heb. 13:1–2; cf. Rom. 12:13
[76] 1 John 3:16
[77] 1 John 4:19
[78] Rom. 5:5
[79] Rom. 8:15–17; cf. John 17:24–25
[80] Cf. 1 John 1:3–4; Rev. 21–22
[81] Volf, *After Our Likeness,* 191-220; Volf, "'The Trinity is Our Social Program'"; Volf, "Trinity, Unity, Primacy: On the Trinitarian Nature of Ecclesial Unity and Its Implications for the Question of Primacy," *Petrine Mystery and the Unity of the Church*, ed. James F. Puglisi (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 171-84
[82] E.g., 10:38
[83] *De Fide Orthodoxa* 1.7.
[84] Volf, "The Church as Prophetic Community."
[85] David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991).
[86] *Ibid.*, 8
[87] Rom. 5:1–11
[88] 1 Cor. 5:17
[89] Cf. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 123ff., 144ff.
[90] 1 Pet. 1:3
[91] Rom. 5:5
[92] Rom. 4:25
[93] Personal communication.
[94] Gal. 2:20
[95] 1 Cor. 11:21,24

[96] Cf. Johnson, *Living Jesus*.
[97] Paul does not state explicitly that his ministry of reconciliation was carried out in the power of the Spirit. But it is clear that that ministry was central to his apostleship, which he did conceive as a gift of the Spirit (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:28; 2 Corinthians 5:18–20).
[98] Phil. 2:1; 2 Cor.13:13; cf. Eph. 4:3
[99] Gregory Baum and Harold Wells ed., *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the Churches* (Geneva/Maryknoll: WCC/Orbis, 1997), 5.
[100] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*; Volf , "'The Trinity is Our Social Program'"; Volf, "The Social Meaning of Reconciliation."
[101] 2 Cor. 5:20.
[102] Cf. Gal. 3:28. For an argument for interpreting this verse in terms of reconciliation, rather than the erasure of differences, see Judith M.Gundry-Volf, "Christ and Gender: A Study of Difference and Equality in Gal. 3:28," in *Jesus Christus als die Mitte der Schrift: Studien zur Hermenutik des Evangeliums*, ed., C. Landmesser, H.- J. Eckstein, and H. Lichtenberger (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), 439-77.
[103] Col. 1:20.
[104] Luke 4:18–19.
[105] Volf, "Materiality of Salvation: An Investigation in the Soteriologies of Liberation and Pentacostal Theologies," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 26.3 (1989): 449–54; Gustav Wingren, "Beruf II," in *Theologische Realenzyklopadie*, vol. 5, ed. G. Krause and G. Müller (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), 663.
[106] Acts 4:34
[107] 2 Cor. 8–9; cf. 1 Cor. 16:1–4, Gal. 2:10
[108] Gal. 3:5
[109] Cf. Matt. 19:28; 2 Cor. 5:17
[110] Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16ff.
[111] Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
[112] Matt. 12:19.
[113] We thank Todd Billings, Jin Cho, Jill Carlson Colwell, and participants in the Marquette symposium for valuable comments on previous versions of this paper.