



# BULLETIN

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### ANNUAL MEETING

A reminder: The annual meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society will be held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, on Friday, 6 November 2009, in conjunction with the meeting of the American Academy of Religion. The annual banquet will be held at a local restaurant Friday evening. Our speaker this year will be Raymond F. Bulman of

Saint John's University. He is the author of the award-winning book, *A Blueprint for Humanity. Paul Tillich's Theology of Culture*.

The AAR Group, Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture, will meet on Saturday and Sunday at the AAR meeting. The Fall Bulletin will print the entire schedule for both meetings.

For information and registration, see:  
[http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting/Current\\_Meeting/default.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/default.asp)

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

Tillich, Paul. "El Derecho a la Esperanza." Translation of "The Right To Hope." [Originally published in *The University of Chicago Magazine* 58, 2 (1965): 16–21. In *Presencia Ecu mica* (Caracas, Venezuela) 65 (Enero-abril 2009): 9–15.

Tillich, Paul. *Berliner Vorlesungen III (1951-1958): Ontologie (1951), Die menschliche Situation im Lichte der Theologie und Existentialanalyse (1952), Die Zweideutigkeit der Lebensprozesse (1958)*. Herausgegeben und mit einer historischen Einleitung versehen von Erdmann Sturm (Erg nzungs- und Nachlassb nde zu den Gesammelten Werken von Paul Tillich, Band XV). Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 2009.

*Les Peurs, La Mort, L'Esp rance autour de Paul Tillich*, eds. Lucie Kaenel and Bernard Raymond. XVII<sup>e</sup> Colloque International de l'Association Paul Tillich d'Expression Fran aise, 3-5 May, 2007, Fribourg, Switzerland. M nster and London: LIT Verlag, 2009.

Fante, Ryan. "An Ontology of Health: A Characterization of Human Health and Existence." *Zygon* 44, 1 (2009): 65-84. [Editor's note: this paper was originally written while Mr. Fante was an undergraduate at Santa Clara University. He is currently in his third year of medical school at the University of Colorado. The *Bulletin* is seeking permission from Zygon to reprint his paper in the Summer or Fall issue.]

Wariboko, Nimi. "Emergence and "Science of Ethos": Toward a Tillichian Ethical Framework," *Theology and Science* 7, 2 (2009): 189-206.

*Abstract:* Gordon Kaufman has recently interpreted emergence ("serendipitous creativity") in religious terms as "ultimate mystery," "the divine," or ultimate point of reference. Using Tillich notion of ethics as "science of ethos" or "science of culture" this paper attempts to work out some of the ethical implications of this theological naming of emergence. The implications are brought to light in an ethical framework that not only traces and clarifies the lure of the mystery at work in the culturally creative functions of persons and social groups, but also shows how the creative functions of human life can express the unconditional eros of serendipitous creativity.

## PAUL TILlich LECTURE

On Monday, 4 May 2009, at 5:15 p.m. in the Memorial Church of Harvard University the Spring 2009 Paul Tillich Lecture, "The Open Universe and the Sacred," by Stuart A. Kaufmann, Visiting Professor of Science and Religion, Harvard Divinity School (Spring Term), and Director, Institute of Biocomplexity and Informatics, University of Calgary, Canada.

Professor Kauffman, MD (BA Hons., Oxford) holds joint appointments at the University of Calgary in biological sciences, physics and astronomy and is an adjunct professor in philosophy. A graduate of Dartmouth College (1960) with his medical degree from the University of California, he has taught biophysics, biochemistry, and theoretical biology at the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania. A MacArthur Fellow (1987-1992), Professor Kauffman is a founding scientist and an external professor at the highly interdisciplinary Santa Fe Institute, where he has done pioneering visionary work in complexity science. With important applications of his work in management theory, he has founded four companies, including Genesys Molecular, Inc. and the Bios Group LP, Santa Fe (acquired in 2003 by NuTech Solutions).

Professor Kauffman has published 250 articles and four books, including *The Origins of Order* (1993), *At Home in the Universe* (1995), and *Reinventing the Sacred: A New View of Science, Reason, and Religion* (2008), selected as one of the finalists for the prestigious 2009 Warwick Writer's Prize (UK, \$90,000). Professor Kauffman has recently addressed two international conferences on science and religion, the May 2008 Qoha, Qatar conference on "Science, Cultures and the Future of Humanity" and the March 2009 five-day Vatican Conference on Science and Evolution.

A dinner in Professor Kauffman's honor was held following the lecture at 7:15 p.m. in the Library of the Harvard Faculty Club.

[Editor's Note: William Crout, Founder and Curator of the Paul Tillich Lectures, is pleased to announce that the Lectures have moved from sponsorship of the Harvard Divinity School to Harvard's Memorial Church, warmly welcomed by the Reverend Professor Peter J. Gomes, Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister in The Memorial Church. The 2008-2009 Lecture by Professor Kauffman is the 34th in the series. The lecture is available for

MP3 download at: <http://www.memorialchurch.harvard.edu/ef/education.shtml#tillich.>

**Editor's Note:** A COMPLETE REPORT OF THE APTEF COLLOQUE IN PARIS, 15-17 MAY, WILL APPEAR IN THE SUMMER BULLETIN

**TILlich'S INDEBTEDNESS TO KANT:  
TWO RECENTLY TRANSLATED REVIEW ES-  
SAYS ON RUDOLF OTTO'S  
*IDEA OF THE HOLY***

CHRIS L. FIRESTONE

### Introduction

A common way of approaching the theology of Paul Tillich is to show its relationship to and reliance on the philosophy of Friedrich W. J. Schelling. It is common knowledge, for instance, that Tillich attributed his theological awakening to his first encounter with the writings of Schelling in a bookstore as a university student and that Schelling's work provided a model for how philosophy and theology could be synthesized and fruitfully employed to meet the conceptual challenges of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In reference to his early struggles with the doctrine of justification and the inadequacy of strong-handed applications of orthodoxy for overcoming them, Tillich writes, "It was the work of Schelling, particularly his late thought, which helped me relate these basic theological ideas to my philosophical development. Schelling's philosophical ideas opened the way, I thought, to a unification of philosophy and theology."<sup>1</sup> Tillich, of course, goes on to write two Ph.D. dissertations on Schelling's philosophical the-ology and apply many of Schelling's ideas in his subsequent writings.<sup>2</sup> No doubt Schelling's work served as the backdrop for many of Tillich's most influential insights.

In this essay, I want to present the case for another way of approaching Tillich's early intellectual development and its relationship to Tillich's mature systematic theology. My claim is that Schelling was not the only "late-Enlightenment" influence of what I will call "constitutive significance" to Tillich's thought. The philosophy of Immanuel Kant was, I contend, just as influential, perhaps more so. "In my student years," Tillich writes, "there was a slogan often repeated: Understanding Kant means tran-

scending Kant. We all try to do this."<sup>3</sup> In Tillich's earliest work on Schelling, the influence of Kant's philosophy on his student years is undeniable. Victor Nuovo, in summing up this influence in his "Introduction" to the English translation of the first dissertation, writes, "Tillich's [Ph.D.] dissertations may be viewed as attempts, through Schellingian concepts, to overcome the Kantian antithesis of historical faith and moral religion, and to provide a metaphysical basis for Kant's doctrine of radical evil and the self-estrangement of the autonomous moral will."<sup>4</sup>

Kant's influence on Tillich was surely profound and foundational, but was it such that it can be what I am calling "constitutive significance" to Tillich's thought in the way Schelling's is accepted to be? In other words, did Kant's philosophy help form some of Tillich's basic concepts and bring shape to the overall structure of Tillich's thought? My answer to both of these questions is "Yes." Yet, there is a sense in which this answer might rightly be viewed as something of a truism or non-falsifiable thesis. One of the distinguishing features of the German Idealists generally is that they all saw themselves as the true heirs of the best of Kant. They were all in one way or another responding to problems left in the wake of Kant and they relied on Kant's writings for intellectual resources for help in resolving them. In other words, it is not all that surprising nor is it all that risky to suggest that Tillich's work is likewise reliant on and responsive to Kant's philosophy. If that were my only argument, I would not be saying all that much. No "constitutive significance" would thereby be shown.

The argument I want to sketch out and defend in brief, however, is a little more sophisticated than this and I think does point to the constitutive significance of Kant's philosophy for Tillich's theology. My claims center on another scholar whose work Tillich often writes about with a tone and frequency very similar to that of Schelling, but who often times gets "the short end of the stick" when it comes to academic recognition and study. The person I have in mind, of course, is the philosopher of religion Rudolf Otto. In the "Autobiographical Reflections," Tillich writes, "When I first read Rudolf Otto's *Idea of the Holy*, I understood it immediately in the light of these early experiences, and took it into my thinking as a constitutive element. It determined my method in the philosophy of religion, wherein I started with the experiences of the holy and advanced to the idea of God and not the reverse way."<sup>5</sup>

This is not the only place where Tillich makes such references to the constitutive significance of Otto's work. We find similar statements in the *Systematic Theology* and in two review articles Tillich wrote for German newspapers in the 1920's.<sup>6</sup> The review essays, entitled "The Category of the Holy in Rudolf Otto" (1923) and "Rudolf Otto—Philosopher of Religion" (1925),<sup>7</sup> make up the lion's share of the evidence that I will forward in support of my thesis. Tillich's consistent testimony, from the 1920s through to the 1960s, is thus pro-Otto and not just in a generic sense, but in the sense of Otto's work being "a constitutive element" and what "determined [Tillich's] method."

In my book, *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason*, forthcoming from Ashgate in 2009, wherein these two translated articles appear in the Appendices, I argue that Otto's philosophy of religion can be understood as good example of the religious interpretation of Kant's philosophy. Stephen R. Palmquist, whose work I will examine in more detail below, presents the religious interpretation of Kant's philosophy in his books *Kant's System of Perspectives* (1993) and *Kant's Critical Religion* (2000).<sup>8</sup> To the extent that (1) the groundwork for Tillich's theology can be shown to emerge in response to Otto's philosophy of religion, and (2) Otto's philosophy of religion is best understood as an extension of Kant's critical philosophy under the religious interpretation in the sense of Palmquist, then a solid case can be made for a third claim—namely, (3) Tillich's theology is likewise best understood as a theological response to the philosophy of Kant. My argument succinctly is therefore threefold and these three parts mark out the remaining sections of this essay.

### Tillich in "the Light" of Otto

Looking back at Tillich's two newspaper articles on Otto provides not only valuable insights into Tillich's relationship to Otto, but also a striking look at the seeds of thought that would blossom into some of Tillich's best known theological insights of his American period. For thematic reasons, I will focus first on the 1925 essay, "Rudolf Otto—Philosopher of Religion," and then turn to the 1923 essay "The Category of the Holy in Rudolf Otto."

The 1925 essay is the longer of the two and somewhat more sweeping in its review of the person and work of Otto. It begins as follows:

It was an unforgettable event for me, when, in the fall of 1917, Rudolf Otto's book on "The

Holy"—a marvelous early draft, sent from a dear woman who had died early—came to me at the camp "Note Erde" on a high mountain in Champagne. I was taken aback for a moment by several oddities in the writing style and the completely unknown publisher. But then an amazement began, an internal thrill, a passionate approval, in a way one is no longer used to with theological books (RO1).<sup>9</sup>

Tillich goes on in this article to unpack Otto's career and thought, highlighting Otto's relationship to the Neo-Kantians in general and Leonhard Nelson of Göttingen in specific. After marching his way through these highlights, Tillich returns to the significance of Otto's thought for the era:

With this last remark, the intellectual significance of Otto's thoughts is now touched on. They have become for theology a complete breakthrough of the wholly other. They have saved the work on theology and philosophy of religion from the difficulties of the rational problem, from the corruption of logic and ethics. They have created a new foundation on which to build, and on which many of Otto's rivals also build, with or without his knowledge" (RO7).

We see in this passage, and in what follows it, not only Tillich's grand appreciation of Otto's work but also hints regarding its significance and those places in Otto's work requiring further thought and development.

Speaking somewhat poetically of himself, Tillich continues, "But who, like the author of these lines, has experienced the liberation that the book on *The Holy* has given him; he too can go there, where he believes he must proceed to, like for example in the determination of the relationship of the rational and irrational, of otherworldliness and this-worldliness of the Numinous, in order to not forget the first breakthrough" (RO7). This point was already taken up in earnest in the 1923 essay, which we will get to in a moment, but here serves merely as an honorarium to the career of the great philosopher of religion, his good friend, Rudolf Otto. The article closes with this remark: "Out of devotion to the capturing of the Numinous, [Otto] devoted work to practical and theoretical Protestant religious reform. But what is decisive and makes him one of the most important figures in contemporary theology, is his book on *The Holy*, for that an entire generation owes him thanks" (RO9).

By itself, the 1925 article does not present us with direct evidence of Tillich's reliance on the work

of Otto, only the clear indication that Tillich read and understood Otto's work in great detail, openly declaring its significance and his adoration for it without qualification. In the other review essay, however, the one devoted specifically to Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*, Tillich is far more forthcoming about his intellectual indebtedness to Otto's work. There, Tillich calls Otto's text "the breakthrough book in the field of philosophy of religion, but not only a breakthrough, it has also been the guide for philosophy of religion to this day. For those who, like the reviewer, are among the first working in the area, and those whose ideas have been influenced by this impression, it is a duty to give thanks and testify to the book's beauty and power" (CH1). His purpose in this article is not merely to sing Otto's praises, though he does plenty of that; the purpose of the article is, in Tillich's words, "not to say all this" but to identify "at which points of Otto's book must we take up this great work, and how should we build on Otto's achievement" (CH3).

According to Tillich, the subtitle of *The Idea of the Holy*—namely, *On the Non-Rational in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational*—is only partially realized in the book. The non-rational is famously and insightfully explored, but how the non-rational is related to the rational was not, in Tillich's estimation, fully determined (CH4). "For this," Tillich tells us, "you need a critical element in the Kantian sense" (CH5). Tillich calls this Kantian critical element "a method of critical-intuition" (CH5). According to Tillich,

Otto himself heads in this direction when he speaks of the religious disposition and makes the Holy into an a priori category. A religious a priori, however, cannot suddenly stand beside the rest of the a priors, not even if its content is the "wholly other." It must be shown in which natural relation this "wholly other" stands to the rest of the forms of consciousness. For if it stood nowhere, or even only in an additional relation, then the unity of consciousness would burst (CH5).

Here, we find something more than mere enthusiastic adulation for Otto's work; we find the beginnings of a serious philosophical engagement. Tillich's criticism of Otto can be summarized as follows: Because Otto turns to "the faculty of divination" as a type of fourth realm of reason, Otto in effect amends Kant's critical philosophy by adding to it a fourth a priori standpoint. This standpoint cannot suddenly appear, thinks Tillich, for it has no clear

critical grounds in reason, no intellectual precedent in the great work of Kant. So it must either stand nowhere or be an unnatural addition to Kant's critical program. The direction that Tillich maps out to build on Otto's achievement, then, cannot be to understand the faculty of divination as a fourth, independent addition to Kant's critical philosophy, but rather to understand it as something more transcendental and ontological, something related to reason holistically—more formal than technical.

Tillich's response to and reliance on Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*, however, runs deeper than merely relating the non-rational less technically and more holistically to the rational in a sense amenable to Kant's critical philosophy. Tillich seizes on the insight that Otto "brings to expression...the natural relationship of the Holy...[in] the concept of the unconditioned" (CH6). As a consequence of reading Otto, it seems, the concept of the unconditioned becomes, for Tillich, closely tied to the natural human experience of the Holy. Tillich finds this idea to be both a breakthrough and an insight in need of further clarification and development.

Tillich, in pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of Otto's position, does not merely accept Otto's formulation as it stands. He continues, "It is not proper that Otto declares this concept to be only quantitatively distinct from the conditioned; rather, it contains in itself the entire force of the qualitatively 'other,' the 'unfamiliar'" (CH6). The wholly other, in other words, is not merely some non-descript, mysterious entity that occasionally impinges itself on the religiously sensitive members of the human species. The "unconditioned one," as Tillich designates it in this article, or "Being-itself," as he would later call it, "is so important that I cannot avoid it under any circumstances" (CH6). The "wholly other" or the "unconditioned one" lies at the ground of all human experience and, in words of the later Tillich, is the "ultimate concern" of human beings. "Thus," Tillich writes, "the concept of the unconditioned is not, as Otto states, a pattern of rationalization, but an element of the Holy itself" (CH6).

Tillich's analysis of Otto achieves its full force in the integral relationship between the unconditioned one as the source of human experience and human rationality as its essential instrument or conduit. Here, we find the decisive moment in Tillich's engagement with Otto and why I think there is more than mere regulative significance to Tillich's employment of Otto's ideas. Tillich writes, "The unconditioned is not only a posteriori by schematiza-

tion, but also a priori by natural relationship, which is the foundational element of all value consciousness" (CH6). Because human beings are conscious and willful participants in being as actuality, the unconditioned has a "natural relationship" to the world in and through humanity. Religious experience, as a distinct aspect of human experience in general, is in this sense foundational to all experience—it is, in Tillich's words, both a posteriori and a priori, or, put another way, it is the product of the transcendental nature of reason understood in its phenomenological fullness.<sup>10</sup>

This is why, I think, Tillich understands the unconditioned as something more than the "mystery of Being" in the sense of Otto; it is also, as Tillich goes on to suggest, the "mystery of the Light" (CH6). Tillich explains, "Being comes to itself in the Light. The unconditioned substance and the unconditioned form essentially belong together" (CH6). This climactic moment in the essay bursts with meaning, alluding to the religious potentiality buried deeply within the very rationality that defines human beings (*logos*) and exemplified ultimately in Jesus as the Christ, the light of the world.

In sum, we find in Tillich's review of *The Idea of the Holy* more than just tidbits of his mature work; there is solid meat. We find, first, the "unconditioned," the "unconditioned one," and the "wholly other" as early illusions to the significance of Being-itself; second, we find that the unconditioned is "something so important that I cannot avoid it under any circumstances" and, equally, the reader cannot avoid the important conclusion that this phrase is linked directly to Tillich's later emphasis on humanity's "ultimate concern"; and, third, we find that the unconditioned is not merely the mystery of being in the numinous sense; rather the unconditioned one is located at the well-lit crossroads of the rational and non-rational within human beings. This third point foreshadows the superstructure of Tillich's mature thought, which puts humanity at what Tillich calls the "perspectival center," standing between God and world as the mystery of "Being" turns into the "Light."<sup>11</sup>

### **Palmquist's Religious Interpretation of Kant**

Stephen Palmquist's interpretation of Kant is significant to the Otto–Tillich relationship because of its close affinities with Otto's philosophy of religion and the remarkable way it resembles Tillich's theology. Before we get to these two points in my

argument in the closing section of this paper, we first need to understand in more detail the nature of Palmquist's interpretation of Kant. His interpretation is part of a "new wave" in Kant–studies, which argues that Kant's philosophy is more theologically affirmative than has been traditionally supposed. This wave has been gaining momentum over the last 30 years, and, recently, has crested in a spate of new books and journal articles.<sup>12</sup> This wave continues to be a major factor in the field of Kant–studies today in challenging the standard portrait of Kant as the "all-destroyer" of metaphysics in favor of a portrait of Kant bent on establishing "rational religious faith" at the transcendental boundaries of reason. In *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason*, I present three discernable streams of theologically affirmative Kant interpretation—the moral, poetic, and religious.<sup>13</sup> Palmquist's interpretation provides a good example of "the religious interpretation" of Kant.<sup>14</sup>

Palmquist's interpretation capitalizes on the often-neglected writings surrounding Kant's critical period. These writings include the much-maligned essay "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer" and Kant's posthumous writings known as the *Opus Postumum*. According to Palmquist, when these writings are taken seriously, they present a fuller, more complete account of Kant's philosophical program and show that theology can build fruitfully on Kant's philosophy. Palmquist's interpretation is traceable to the pioneering work in 1889 of Edward Caird.<sup>15</sup> For Caird, the most natural reading of Kant is likewise four-fold and holistic. "For the theoretical, the practical and the aesthetic and religious consciousness are not really independent things, or the products of independent faculties, which stand side by side with each other; they are different forms of one conscious life, forms which rise out of each other in a certain order determined by the very nature of the intelligence."<sup>16</sup> Caird understood Kant's thought to be a coherent and dynamic whole, in which apparent contradictions find their resolution in the development and filling out of ideas, rather than in their relative demise due to logical inconsistency.

Palmquist argues in a similar fashion that Kant's philosophy ought to be considered less technically and more holistically—as a system of three standpoints grounded by one overarching "Transcendental Perspective." According to Palmquist, one of reason's three finite standpoints is always operative in human experience, but considered as a whole, the overarching transcendental nature of reason deline-

ates its true boundaries and employments. As Palmquist writes, “This over-arching ‘Transcendental (or ‘Copernican’) Perspective’, which is based on the assumption that the subject imposes certain a priori conditions on the object, defines the systematic context into which all three Critical systems fit.”<sup>17</sup>

Both Caird and Palmquist contend that Kant’s later writings, particularly the writings on religion and the *Opus Postumum*, bring into sharp relief a fourth dimension of reason. In other words, a fourth realm of human experience—the religious or mystical—arises out of Kant’s ‘Transcendental Perspective,’ but is not to be considered separate from it. The Transcendental Perspective functions as the pre-reflective interface of reason and being at the outermost frontiers of human experience. This ontologically robust understanding of the fourth realm, on both their readings, becomes vital to the coherence and completion of Kant’s philosophy. We have access to God, and thus can speak and think meaningfully about God, as Kant himself often does, because reason must finally engage the mystery of being in the world and it must do this in accord with its overarching Transcendental Perspective.<sup>18</sup>

### From Kant to Otto to Tillich

What we see from the foregoing analysis is that Palmquist’s interpretation of Kant is strikingly consistent with Otto’s thought. Palmquist highlights this consistency in a 1989 article entitled “Kant’s Critique of Mysticism.” He writes, “Rudolf Otto expounds in more detail the implications of [Kant’s] view of religious feeling in [*The Idea of the Holy*].... [I]n fact they are almost entirely consistent.... Once the perspectival character of Kant’s thinking is taken into account, it becomes clear that *he would have no trouble accepting such an explanation* of his deepest experiences. ‘Reason’ is, for Kant, the ultimately unknowable mystery out of which arise all our human capacities for knowledge and goodness.”<sup>19</sup> Like Palmquist’s interpretation of Kant, Otto’s philosophy of religion identifies three employments of reason—the scientific, the moral, and the aesthetic. More than this, Otto likewise contends that the most distinctive feature of any transcendental analysis of the possibility of religious experience is a kind of fourth employment of reason that is more ontologically robust than the others, dealing with the overplus of meaning that eludes technical reason.

It should be noted that Otto is not strictly speaking a Kant exegete, but an innovator who extends

Kant’s critical philosophy to the religious dimension of human experience. This religious perspective or, as Otto refers to it, the “religious outlook” is the key link among the works of Palmquist, Otto, and Tillich. Although Tillich uses the term “ontological reason” to describe the point of contact between reason and reality, the way it functions in his system is very similar to Otto’s “faculty of divination” or Palmquist’s “Transcendental Perspective.” For Tillich, “Neither structures, Gestalt processes, values, nor meanings can be grasped without ontological reason. Technical reason can reduce them to something less than their true reality.”<sup>20</sup> Technical reason (or reason in its three finite standpoints) can give a limited description of religion, but ontological reason enables us to grasp its true essence. All three of these thinkers—Palmquist, Otto, and Tillich—understand the religious dimension, outlook, or perspective not only as the natural fourth step for philosophy, but also as a particularly vital aspect of reason’s overarching economy.<sup>21</sup>

Ontological reason (or the Transcendental Perspective) serves as the primary link between philosophy and theology in both Palmquist’s interpretation and Tillich’s theology. Without a proper understanding of ontological reason, technical reason is corrupted and religion is reduced.<sup>22</sup> Internal to Tillich’s understanding of ontology is a definite position on the relationship between philosophy and theology. Like Palmquist’s interpretation of Kant, it has an hourglass-shaped structure. This hourglass integrates three principal aspects of reality—God, man, and world. Kant repeats over and over again a similar three-fold structure in the *Opus Postumum* as if he were proleptically groping his way toward Tillich: philosophy fundamentally works from the perspective of reason (*logos*) and the man-world relationship and theology fundamentally works from the perspective of faith in revelation (*Logos*, the Word of God) and the God-man relationship, with the method of correlation integrating them into a system.<sup>23</sup>

In conclusion, I have shown, through two of Tillich’s lesser-known writings—the newspaper review articles on the person and work of Rudolf Otto—that Otto greatly influenced Tillich at a formative stage in his intellectual development and that several key elements of Tillich’s mature thought are found in Tillich’s analysis of Otto. I also have shown, in reference to the interpretations of Caird and Palmquist, that Otto’s philosophy of religion can be fruitfully understood as a direct extension of Kant’s critical

philosophy. Furthermore, I have shown how the superstructure of Tillich's theology bears a striking resemblance to Kant's philosophy in the sense of Caird, Otto, and Palmquist. Tillich, in essence, formulates in theological terms a new and improved extension of Kant's philosophical program as it pertains to religion. The cumulative force of my argument supports the conclusions that Kant's philosophy through Otto has "constitutive significance" for Tillich's thought and, insofar as this analysis is accurate, Tillich's systematic theology is as much grounded on the philosophy of Kant as it is on the philosophy of Schelling.

<sup>1</sup> Paul Tillich, *On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), 51.

<sup>2</sup> The first of Tillich's two doctoral dissertations on Schelling was presented for the degree of philosophy at the University of Breslau and the second was presented for the degree of theology at Halle. These were translated into English as Paul Tillich, *Mysticism and Guilt Consciousness in Schelling's Philosophical Development*, tr. Victor Nuovo (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, and London: Associated University Presses, 1974); and Paul Tillich, *The Construction of the History of Religion in Schelling's Positive Philosophy: Its Presuppositions and Principles*, tr. Victor Nuovo (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, and London: Associated University Presses, 1974). These works will henceforth be referred to as *Schelling's Philosophical Development* and *Schelling's Positive Philosophy*, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Tillich, *Perspectives on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Protestant Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1967), 70.

<sup>4</sup> Tillich, *Schelling's Philosophical Development*, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Tillich, "Autobiographical Reflections," *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, eds. Charles W. Kegley & Robert W. Bretall (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), 6.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 215-6.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Tillich's "Die Kategorie des ‚Heiligen‘ bei Rudolf Otto," originally appeared in *Theologische Blätter* (vol. 2, 1923, Spalten 11-12). It can also be found in GW XII, *Begegnungen: Paul Tillich über sich und andere* (Ed. Renate Albrecht (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1971), 184-186). The translation is based solely on the original document in *Theologische Blätter*. The second article, originally titled "Denker der Zeit: Der Religionsphilosoph Rudolf Otto," was first published in *Vossische Zeitung*, 1925, Nr. 308. It can now be found in GW XII,

*Begegnungen: Paul Tillich über sich und andere*, ed. Renate Albrecht (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1971), 179-183. The current translation is based solely on the original version in *Vossische Zeitung*. Nathan Jacobs and I translate these review articles in the Appendices of Chris L. Firestone, *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publications, Ltd., forthcoming 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Stephen R. Palmquist, *Kant's System of Perspectives: An Architectonic Interpretation of the Critical Philosophy* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1993) and *Kant's Critical Religion: Volume Two of Kant's System of Perspectives* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishers Ltd., 2000).

<sup>9</sup> All citations for "The Category of the Holy in Rudolf Otto" (1923) and "Rudolf Otto—Philosopher of Religion" (1925) are embedded at the end of the text as paragraph numbers—"CH" for the 1923 article and "RO" for the 1925 article. At the time of writing this essay, page proofs (with page numbers) for *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason* have not yet been received.

<sup>10</sup> Otto's contention that the faculty of divination is sensitive to a "sheer over-surplus" of meaning in human experience is not therefore evidence of rational separation, but instead, in Tillich's way of thinking, evidence for this foundational status. Religious experience speaks of both the outermost limits human experience and the mystery of human consciousness that makes any experience possible in the first place. All these concepts, interestingly enough, are re-confirmed on pages 215 and 216 of the *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, 189.

<sup>12</sup> For a detailed account of this new wave, see *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion* and the 2007 Special Symposium Edition of *Philosophia Christi*.

<sup>13</sup> Tillich, of course, is familiar with all three of these streams of Kant interpretation. In *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason*, I show how Tillich interacts with the first two streams directly from Kant and Kant's interpreters, and the third stream indirectly through Otto.

<sup>14</sup> Palmquist accepts the designation 'the religious interpretation' in the 'Editors' Introduction' to *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion*.

<sup>15</sup> Caird's two-volume work, entitled *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant* (1889), was the first substantial work on Kant in English covering the full extent of Kant's philosophy (including within its parameters Kant's philosophy of religion). Caird's interpretation of Kant's philosophy is divided into four "books." The first three correspond to the three *Critiques* and the fourth addresses Kant's *Religion*. Edward Caird, *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, vols. I and II



*osophy of Immanuel Kant*, vols. I and II (Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, 1889).

<sup>16</sup> Caird, *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, 644.

<sup>17</sup> Palmquist, *Kant's System of Perspectives*, 58.

<sup>18</sup> For Palmquist (*Kant's Critical Religion*, 313), "[Kant] not only *believed* in the reality of a transcendent God represented by our theoretical idea, manifested in our practical reason (speaking to our conscience), and communing with us in prayer, but also actively *experienced* this reality in his daily life." On the distinction between the overarching (thus, capitalized) Transcendental Perspective that governs all three *Critiques* and the specific (thus, uncapitalized) transcendental perspective operative within each *Critique*, see Palmquist's *Kant's System of Perspectives* (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 1993), II.4.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen R. Palmquist, "Kant's Critique of Mysticism: (2) The Critical Mysticism," *Philosophy and Theology*, vol. 4, 11, 83. Emphases mine.

**TILlich AND KING ON LOVE AND JUSTICE  
AND THE SIGNIFICANCE FOR MODELS OF  
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

JONATHAN ROTHCHILD

In his 1964 Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Martin Luther King, Jr. affirms the future of humanity despite the unceasing threats of violence and despair. In defending human dignity and the prospects for peace and justice, King advocates for the development of "a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."<sup>1</sup> In and through his sustained call for love and its import for justice despite the estrangement of the human condition, King appropriates the theological content and method of Paul Tillich. This paper seeks to engage King and Tillich in a critical conversation regarding the relationship between love and justice, particularly as this relationship pertains to transformation and restorative justice. The purpose of the paper is to argue that the construals of love and justice in King and Tillich disabuse reductive understandings of justice and reconceptualize justice as restorative, not retributive, in its presuppositions and implementations.

A *brief* analysis of the system and the rationales for four theories of punishment will shed light on the

<sup>20</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol.1, 81.

<sup>21</sup> Otto remarks in a footnote, "constructing a 'humanity' prior to and apart from the most central and potent of human capacities is like nothing so much as the attempt to frame a standard idea of the human body after having previously cut off the head." Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), 37, f2.

<sup>22</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol.1, 81. For Tillich, philosophy may sometimes function as though technical reason and ontological reason are not divided, but they are so divisible and theology itself must reject the confusion of this division. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol.1, 82.

<sup>23</sup> As Kant puts it in fragment form in the *Opus Postumum*, "Three principles: God, the world, and the concept of the subject which unites them and brings synthetic unity into these concepts (*a priori*) insofar as reason makes this transcendental unity itself" (21:23).

significance of restorative justice and the contributions of Tillich and King. The United States dominates truly as the penitentiary "superpower" with its approximately 2.3 million imprisoned, a number that eclipses China by half a million prisoners and that is tantamount to nearly a quarter of all the prisoners in the world.<sup>2</sup> The annual budget for constructing and maintaining prisons has increased in the last two decades to over forty billion dollars.<sup>3</sup> The massive rise of incarceration, what Marc Mauer has called the race to incarcerate,<sup>4</sup> has implicated significant portions of minorities—particularly in disadvantaged urban centers. Whereas about 0.7% of white men are imprisoned, an estimated 4.8% of African-American men and 1.9% of Latino men were in prison or jail.<sup>5</sup> More than 11% of black males age 25 to 34 are incarcerated.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the overall number of women imprisoned is growing exponentially: between mid-year 2005 and 2006, the female prison population increased by 4.8% to reach 111, 403.<sup>7</sup>

Description of these figures invites critical interrogation of the underlying reasons behind the drive to punish. Among multifarious questions, King's aforementioned question is paramount: Can one punish without revenge and vengeance? In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt sheds insight into the question by construing vengeance as that which "acts in the form of reacting against an original trespassing, whereby far from putting an end to the con-

sequences of the first misdeed, everybody remains bound to the process, permitting the chain reaction contained in every action to take its unhindered course...[vengeance] encloses both doer and sufferer in the relentless automatism of the action process, which by itself need never come to an end."<sup>8</sup> I argue that each of the four dominant rationales for punishment—deterrence, retribution, incapacitation, and rehabilitation—fail to transform the endless impasse of “relentless automatism;” models of restorative justice, by contrast, break through the vicious cycle.

Deterrence is informed by teleological pursuits, that is, attention to the consequences and to an emphasis on goods. Supporters hold that deterrence works because the good of not being incarcerated outweighs any good that could be achieved in and through criminal activity. In *An Introduction to The Principles of Morals and Legislation*,<sup>9</sup> Jeremy Bentham construes deterrence as a mechanism for adjudicating utility or the balance of goods/pleasures over harms/pains, which, in turn, helps to establish social order in terms of good consequences, notably the greatest good for the greatest number. However, in addition to studies that problematize claims about the success of deterrence, utilitarianism’s privileging the good potentially ratifies transgressing individual dignity. Moreover, as G.W.F. Hegel observes about deterrence, “To justify punishment in this way is like raising one’s stick at a dog; it means treating a human being like a dog instead of respecting his honor and freedom.”<sup>10</sup>

If deterrence theories are “forward-looking,” retributive theories are “backward looking” in that they focus on punishing past crime. Affirming that punishment is deserved and is therefore just, as long as it is proportionate to the offense committed, retribution focuses on deontological restraints, or considerations of the rules, boundaries, and harms. In *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice*, Immanuel Kant writes: “The penal law is a categorical imperative, and woe betide anyone who winds his way through the labyrinth of the theory of happiness in search of some possible advantage to be gained by releasing the criminal from his punishment or from any part of it.”<sup>11</sup> However, retribution alone cannot account for individual differences within sentencing; obviates the challenges of achieving uniform punishment; and, similar to deterrence, neglects the post-conviction goals of restoring relationships (not just repaying a debt). Kant’s pursuit of a formal justice lapses into a protracted legalism that fails to appreciate the vicissitudes of the human condition.

Another rationale for punishment is incapacitation, which removes persons guilty of violent crimes from society and thereby ensures the safety of the wider public. Sentencing policies such as the 1984 Federal Sentencing Act and the 1987 implementation of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines have effectuated a paradigm shift to mandatory sentencing and determinate sentencing. The rationale of public safety for incapacitation becomes attenuated when it is recognized that it warehouses prisoners, many of whom are non-violent, repeat drug addicts whose lifetime prison sentences can be equivalent to death sentences. Mark Lewis Taylor extends the critique further and argues that such measures amount to a theatrics of terror, or modes of control carried out by “Gulag America”<sup>12</sup> or a *Pax Americana* whereby peace is coerced and the “citizenry comes under the control of state-sanctioned prisons.”<sup>13</sup> He abrogates incarceration for its deleterious effects: “[T]he terror is greater than the error. The bitter gall and resentment circulate and maim within, especially for those whose nonviolent crimes are being met with forced spirit death.”<sup>14</sup>

The rise of incapacitation precipitated the decline, if not the disappearance of rehabilitation as a viable strategy for criminal justice. While there are historically theological roots of rehabilitation (e.g., the Quakers’ influence on the earliest penitentiaries in the United States), nevertheless some thinkers hold that the system that funded rehabilitation, notably the practice of indeterminate sentencing, became too subjective and resulted in miscarriages of justice. Others argue that rehabilitation could be coercive and a mechanism of social control. Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison* construes rehabilitation as part of the machinery that disciplines and creates docile bodies. Foucault argues that the repetitive character of disciplinary punishment brings about a corrective effect that “involved only incidentally expiation and repentance”<sup>15</sup> and that inevitably “hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it *normalizes*.”<sup>16</sup>

Restorative justice<sup>17</sup> provides a more holistic model of criminal justice because it promotes the dignity and relationality of all persons; it perceives conflict as destructive of relationships; it commits to a process in which victims and other stakeholders can contribute to the criminal justice deliberations; it contemplates punitive alternatives to incarceration; and it upholds dialogue as the means for healing and restoration. Redressing deterrence theories’ lack of respect for human freedom, retributive theories’

failure to appreciate the victim and the wider community, incapacitation theories' emphasis on separation, and rehabilitation theories' exclusive focus on individual, not communal, transformation, restorative justice theories conceptualize justice and punishment in communal and relational terms. In developing their ideas about the relationship between love and justice, Tillich and King support the procedures and values of restorative justice.

Both Tillich and King envisage the relationship between love and justice as the grounds for engaging and transforming conflict and inequality. Conceptualizing love as reunion of the separated and justice as laws and principles of a universal character, Tillich argues that justice and love require one another, where "it is love which creates participation in the concrete situation."<sup>18</sup> Participation in the concrete situation resonates with restorative justice's claim about dialogue in and through conferencing between offenders, victims, family members, and members of the community. Tillich insists that such participation "preserves the individual"<sup>19</sup> because it works through the center, "which is not calculable,"<sup>20</sup> or not reducible to precise, punitive formulas of justice. Such reductions deny justice because "one cannot transform a living being into a complete mechanism"<sup>21</sup> and "[j]ustice is always violated if men are dealt with as if they were things."<sup>22</sup> Tillich censures "the bourgeois principle" (*The Socialist Decision*) and "technical reason" (*Systematic Theology*) as reductive and instrumentalizing forces which, according to Langdon Gilkey, constitute "the main, if not the unqualified, antagonist[s] of most of Tillich's thought."<sup>23</sup> Resisting these forces requires the courage to be that denies hegemony to social control and controlling knowledge so that "knowledge is more than a fulfillment; it also transforms and heals."<sup>24</sup>

In reflecting on God's "creative justice" and denominating it as the form of "reuniting love,"<sup>25</sup> Tillich provides further grounds for restorative justice by challenging retributive notions that justice must accord with strict proportionality. Rather, God "can creatively change the proportion, and does it in order to fulfill those who according to proportional justice would be excluded from fulfillment."<sup>26</sup> Creative justice, rooted in claims about divine love and mercy, entails speaking to and listening to the other, despite hostility and separation, and underlies morality as the constitution of person as person in the encounter with another person. Creative justice confronts estrangement and therefore creates the intersubjective conditions for the possibility of transforming indi-

viduals and restoring relations. Tillich identifies the three functions of creative justice as listening, giving, and forgiving.<sup>27</sup> In contrast to the privileging of social utility (e.g., plea-bargaining) or rigid strictures (e.g., three strikes' laws), restorative justice theories invite listening (or authentic dialogue), giving (or awareness of and consent to mutual demands placed on the self by another), and forgiveness (or, analogous to the covenant<sup>28</sup>, actions that do not replace justice but rather restore just relations). Forgiving love extends the requirements of justice for the purposes of restoration. The ultimate criterion of creative justice is universal fulfillment symbolized as the kingdom of God.<sup>29</sup>

What about justice and power? Power dimensions, in Tillich's judgment, can partially justify Hegel's retributive claim that the criminal has a right to punishment;<sup>30</sup> hence, Tillich insists that the fulfillment of justice is a precondition for reuniting love.<sup>31</sup> It could be plausibly argued that Tillich would join contemporary thinkers such as Donald Shriver who embrace restorative justice without completely eliminating retributive justice.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, retributivists such as Kant are overly abstract<sup>33</sup> and fail to provide a robust account of justice; Tillich affirms that love as grace—the acceptance of the unacceptable—undergirds justice. Tillich argues that Anselm's theory of atonement, often identified as a retributivist theory of punishment<sup>34</sup>, contradicts the ontological insight that "ultimately love must satisfy justice in order to be real love, and that justice must be elevated into unity with love."<sup>35</sup> Tillich's integrating love and justice—and its manifestation in restorative justice—does not violate Bonhoeffer's cheap grace because "there is grace in every reunion of being with being, insofar as it is reunion and not the misuse of the one by the other, insofar as justice is not violated."<sup>36</sup>

King's appropriation of—and prophetic engagement with—basic themes in Tillich's thought is illustrated in King's consistent discussion finite freedom,<sup>37</sup> sin as separation,<sup>38</sup> powerless morality,<sup>39</sup> and ontological courage.<sup>40</sup> King similarly speaks of the power of love to engender transformation. In his Christmas Eve Sermon on Peace (December 24, 1967), King writes—amidst the demonic elements of segregation, discrimination, and violence—that love must undergird justice. Appropriating the austere demands of agapaic love mandated by *imitatio Christi*, King insists that actions of violence will be met with actions of love. Reversing in profound ways the logic of justice as reciprocity, King argues

that love—as suffering and the logic of superabundance that characterizes the gift—effectuates change of self and other and achieves justice. In addressing the violent, hooded perpetrators of the night, King anticipates a double transformation: “We will not only win freedom for ourselves; we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory.”<sup>41</sup> Agapaic love, or “understanding, creative, redemptive good will for all men,”<sup>42</sup> expresses a “willingness to go to any length to restore community.”<sup>43</sup> Nonviolent resistance, the refusal to be duplicitous in a system of revenge and violence, functions as a “means to awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent. The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness.”<sup>44</sup> Restorative justice confronts the “tragic bitterness” of violence and the concomitant retaliation carried out by intensely punitive measures and offers counter-models such as reintegrative shaming<sup>45</sup> for the purposes of reconciliation.

Similar to Tillich, King insists that mechanisms and social structures cannot eradicate human dignity and freedom: “But man is not a thing. He must be dealt with, not as an ‘animated tool,’ but as a person sacred in himself.”<sup>46</sup> The sacred dignity of all persons perforce requires that the whole concept of justice be re-conceptualized as the restoration of individual and communal wholeness. As restorative justice proponent Christopher Marshall notes, “If corrective justice is understood in essentially retributive terms, then acts of mercy and forgiveness will be seen as, at best, a foregoing of the legitimate claims of justice or, at worst, a distinct injustice. But if justice is understood in more relational and restorative terms—making things right and repairing relationships—then justice is actually consummated in forgiveness and reconciliation.”<sup>47</sup> Rethinking justice as forgiveness and reconciliation, according to King, acknowledges the interconnectedness of all persons, uplifts individual dignity of both the offender and the victim, and “exalts the personality of the *segregator* as well as the *segregated*.”<sup>48</sup>

In addition to gainsaying the diminishment and subjugation of persons by systems, King and Tillich repudiate the broader social indifference to such treatment. This indifference presents the most daunting obstacle to restorative justice in particular and social justice in general. King’s famously indicts the white moderate, who is “more devoted to ‘order’

than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice”<sup>49</sup> and whose “[l]ukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection”<sup>50</sup> because it exacerbates social responses to violence and abjures the need for community. Miroslav Volf similarly observes that indifference can be more deadly than hate, in part, because “the cold indifference can be sustained over time.”<sup>51</sup> Reflecting on the Truth and Reconciliation efforts in South Africa, John de Gruchy notes that the majority of white South Africans—who benefited politically, economically, and socially from the system of apartheid—failed to support the restorative justice efforts of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission because they experienced indignity, innocence, and shame.<sup>52</sup> This inability to grasp self-reflexively the dialectics between victims, offenders, and the community fails to restore justice. Tillich analyzes indifference in solipsistic terms, including pathological anxiety (whereby an individual clings to “the castle of self-defense”<sup>53</sup> or hides in the “security of a prison”<sup>54</sup>) and the failure to adopt a prophetic attitude. In contrast to the cultivation of indifference, the refusal to accept guilt, the flawed understandings of justice, and the insulated perspective vis-à-vis the needs of the other, love facilitates restorative justice because “[i]t breaks the prison of any absolute moral law, even when vested with the authority of a sacred tradition”<sup>55</sup>

For both Tillich and King, love functions as the mechanism that underpins, challenges, and ultimately transcends the struggle for justice. Love provides the ontological basis for harnessing power dynamics in constructive ways that promote just community. They therefore advocate for restorative justice on normative and not simply procedural grounds.<sup>56</sup> One principal difference between King and Tillich pertains to their views on violence and coercion. Though they both advocate for resistance to injustice and dehumanizing forces, King’s nonviolent resistance differs from Tillich’s conception of the ineluctable character of coercion. However, these differences are not incompatible, but rather signal different means for restorative justice.

Tillich’s constructive triangulation of power, love, and justice in and through an ontological framework is well known, but his subtle analysis of the ineluctable tensions between them provides another significant contribution to restorative justice debates. Echoing the insight of Augustine that we must judge given human wretchedness,<sup>57</sup> Tillich rec-

ognizes the inevitable necessity of coercion: "We have to apply force; otherwise we would sacrifice that power in which love is embodied, we would sacrifice that justice which is in the principle of form of all social life."<sup>58</sup> This coercion is tragic because it transforms the person, the prisoner, into a thing incapable of exercising his or her freedom to act out of the totality of his or her being and thus incapable of forming a full community with other persons.<sup>59</sup> Yet, similar to restorative justice theorists who argue that "punishment should serve an instrumental value in criminal procedures, not an a priori one,"<sup>60</sup> Tillich does not accept this coercion, this violence and vengeance, as the definitive word in light of his claim about Christian ethics that "denies anybody the right to use these tools [of power] in such a way as to contravene the divine creation and the future potentialities of human history. Force serves power; but if it destroys power in serving it, it contradicts its own meaning."<sup>61</sup> Hence, Tillich breaks with the dualism of Augustine's two cities and Luther's two kingdoms by arguing that coercive force is necessary, and yet the law of love is valid: "These are not two worlds, but one—the one in whose divine ground, power and love are united; in which power and love, in their coexistence, conflict in a thousand ways, yet whose hope is the reunion of power and love."<sup>62</sup>

On anthropological grounds, King would concur with Tillich that the reality of sin precludes utopian progress or a fully Rauschenbuschian optimism about human nature.<sup>63</sup> Their concern for the deeply embedded character of sin and guilt helps to disabuse facile assumptions about restoration, thereby disquieting critics regarding restorative justice's overly sanguine assumptions.<sup>64</sup> Yet, King also refutes the ultimate necessity of violent coercion for challenging unjust social structures. Similar to Gustavo Gutierrez's solidarity and Karen Lebacqz's love of enemy as forgiveness and survival, King upholds self-reflexive awareness and non-violent, social action as the mechanism of subverting unjust power. Tillich's coercion and King's non-violent resistance can be aligned in and through a commitment to the prophetic witness that, in opposition to purely arithmetic or corrective theories of justice, constitutes, as Paul Ramsey puts it, a redemptive justice, which, similar to current models of restorative justice, affirms that "although an alien or forgotten [person], [one] comes to belong or still belongs to the community."<sup>65</sup>

In conclusion, the prospects for restorative justice appear only in embryonic form in the United States. The lessons from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Japan, and post-conflict situations are powerful ones.<sup>66</sup> Similar to the construal of love and justice in King and Tillich, Miroslav Volf insists that prior to any moral judgment, a "will to embrace" "transcends the moral mapping of the social world into 'good' and 'evil'"<sup>67</sup> that never excludes the other,<sup>68</sup> promotes a peace "guided by the recognition that the economy of undeserved grace has primacy over the economy of moral desert,"<sup>69</sup> and creates a reconciled community "in which each recognizes and is recognized by all and in which all mutually give themselves to each other in love."<sup>70</sup> This will to embrace is tantamount to the portrait of agapaic love in King and Tillich. King and Tillich contend that justice is a necessary but not sufficient mode for criminal justice; it is only through the integration of love and justice that can forestall vengeance and heal and restore community.

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<sup>1</sup> King, "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech," in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, edited by James Melvin Washington (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986), 225.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick McCormick, "Just Punishment and America's Prison Experiment." *Theological Studies* 61:3 (2000): 509.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 510.

<sup>4</sup> Marc Mauer, *The Race to Incarcerate and Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*. New York: New Press, 1999.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006." *Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin*. Data compiled by William Sabol, Todd Minton, and Paige Harrison. Revised March 12, 2008. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition: A Study of the Central Dilemmas Facing Modern Man* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1959), 216, as cited in Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1996), 120-121.

<sup>9</sup> Bentham, for example, writes: "The first object, it has been seen, is to prevent, in as far as it is worth while, all sorts of offences; therefore, The value of the punishment must not be less in any case than what is sufficient to outweigh that of the profit of the offence." Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*

tion (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications), 2007 [1823], 179.

<sup>10</sup> Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 125-126.

<sup>11</sup> Kant, *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice*, 155, reprinted as "The Right to Punish," in *Punishment and Rehabilitation*, edited by Jeffrie Murphy, second edition (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1985), 21. Later in the same text, Kant appears to challenge the putatively categorical character of his own approach to justice and punishment: "All murderers, whether they have themselves done the deed, ordered it to be done, or acted as accomplices, must suffer the death penalty. This is what justice, as the idea of judicial power, wills in accordance with universal laws of a priori origin. But the number of accomplices in such a deed might be so great that the state, in order to rid itself of such criminals, would soon reach the stage of having no more subjects, and yet it would not wish to dissolve itself and revert to the state of nature... And above all, the state will not wish to blunt the people's feelings by a spectacle of mass slaughter. The sovereign must therefore have the power to act as judge himself in such an emergency, and to pass a sentence which imposes a penalty other than death on the criminals so that the community of people may be preserved." *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>12</sup> Taylor, *The Executed God: The Way of the Cross in Lockdown America* (Minneapolis: Fortress Paper, 2001), 21.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>15</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 180.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* 183 (original emphasis).

<sup>17</sup> The literature is extensive; for a variety of perspectives, see *Critical Issues in Restorative Justice*, edited by Howard Zehr and Barb Toews. Monsey, New York: Criminal Justice Press, 2004; Heather Strang, *Repair or Revenge: Victims and Restorative Justice*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002; Howard Zehr, *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1990; Ruth Ann Srickland, *Restorative Justice*. Studies in Crime and Punishment, Volume 5. New York: Peter Lang, 2004; and *Restorative Justice and Criminal Justice: Competing or Reconcilable Paradigms?* Edited by Andrew von Hirsch, Julian Roberts, Anthony Bottoms, Kent Roach and Mara Schiff. Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice: Ontological Analysis and Ethical Implications* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), 15. See also 82.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-47.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>23</sup> Langdon Gilkey, *Gilkey on Tillich* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 5.

<sup>24</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, volume 1: Reason and Revelation, Being and God (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 95.

<sup>25</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 66.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 84-86.

<sup>28</sup> John de Gruchy grounds his theory of restorative justice in covenant: "Thus restorative justice has to do with renewing God's covenant and therefore the establishing of just power relations without which reconciliation remains elusive." De Gruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 204.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Shriver, "Truth Commissions and Judicial Trials: Complementary or Antagonistic Servants of Public Service?" *The Journal of Law and Religion* XVI:1 (2001): 1-34, especially 17-19.

<sup>33</sup> In discussing Kantian rational criticism, Tillich contends that such criticism "is abstract and condemned to be merely a subject for academic debate; at the most it can only obstruct concrete criticism." Tillich, "Protestantism as a Critical and Creative Principle." *Political Expectation* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 19.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Timothy Gorringer, *God's Just Vengeance: Crime, Violence and the Rhetoric of Salvation*. Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion 9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>36</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, foreword by William Schweiker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1963), 62 (original emphasis).

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence," in *A Testament of Hope*, 37, and "The Ethical Demand for Integration," *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," in *Ibid.*, 293-294.

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, "Where Do We Go From Here?," in *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, *The Strength to Love*, in *Ibid.*, 512.

<sup>41</sup> King, "A Christmas Sermon on Peace," in *A Testament of Hope*, 257.

<sup>42</sup> See, among numerous examples, King, "The Power of Nonviolence," (June 4, 1957 address), in *A Testament of Hope*, 13; "An Experiment in Love," in *Ibid.*, 19; "Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience," (November 16, 1961 address), in *Ibid.*, 46; "Facing the Challenge of a New Age," (December, 1956 address), in *Ibid.*, 140; "A Christmas Sermon on Peace," (December 24, 1967), in *Ibid.*, 256)

<sup>43</sup> King, "An Experiment in Love," in *A Testament of Hope*, 20.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, *Hope*, 18. See also, "The Current Crisis in Race Relations," in *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>45</sup> For proposals on reintegrative shaming as an effective form of restorative justice, see John Braithwaite, *Crime, Shame, and Reintegration*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

<sup>46</sup> King, "The Ethical Demands of Integration," in *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>47</sup> Marshall, *Beyond Retribution: A New Testament Vision for Justice, Crime, and Punishment* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 26.

<sup>48</sup> King, "The Ethical Demands of Integration," in *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>49</sup> King, "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," in *Ibid.*, 295.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 295.

<sup>51</sup> Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 77.

<sup>52</sup> De Gruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice*, 190.

<sup>53</sup> Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, second Edition with an Introduction by Peter Gomes (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000 [1952]), 73.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>55</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 43.

<sup>56</sup> This normative ground challenges the claims of thinkers such as Andrew Skotnicki, who holds some restorative justice proponents believe "justice is restored on procedural and empirical grounds, not normative ones." Skotnicki, "How is Justice Restored?" *Studies in Christian Ethics* 19:2 (2006): 191.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, Augustine, *City of God*: "In view of this darkness that attends the life of human society, will our wise man take his seat on the judge's bench, or will he not have the heart to do so? Obviously, he will sit; for the claims of human society constrain him and draw him to this duty; and it is unthinkable to him that he should shirk it." Augustine, *City of God*. A New Translation by

Henry Bettenson (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), Book XIX, Chapter 6, 860.

<sup>58</sup> Tillich, "Shadow and Substance: A Theory of Power," in *Political Expectation*, introduction by James L. Adams (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 120-121.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>60</sup> Andrew Skotnicki, "How is Justice Restored?," 190.

<sup>61</sup> Tillich, "Shadow and Substance," 123.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>63</sup> King, "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence," in *A Testament of Hope*, 37.

<sup>64</sup> See, for example, Annalise Acorn, *Compulsory Compassion: A Critique of Restorative Justice*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004. Acorn identifies three strands of restorative justice optimism, including optimism about justice and equality, transformation and restoration, and healing to victim (46-77). Skotnicki articulates a similar critique: "In short, I believe that restorative accounts of justice cannot bridge the gap [between coercion and correction] due to a hesitance to embrace an account of the moral life sufficiently coherent to provide meaning to the compulsory nature of penal systems, no matter how innocent they portray themselves to be." Skotnicki, "How is Justice Restored?," 200.

<sup>65</sup> Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*. Library of Theological Ethics. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993 [1950], 14

<sup>66</sup> Among numerous examples, see *Post-Conflict Justice*, edited by M. Cherif Bassiouni. New York: Transnational Inc., 2002; *Telling The Truths: Truth Telling and Peace Building in Post-Conflict Societies*, edited by Tristan Anne Borer. South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006; Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie, *Crafting Peace*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007; and Rama Mani, *Beyond Retribution: Seeking Justice in the Shadows of War*. New York: Polity Press, 2002.

<sup>67</sup> Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 29.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>69</sup> Volf, "Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Justice: A Christian Contribution to a More Peaceful Social Environment," in *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation*, edited by Raymond Helmick, SJ, and Rodney Petersen, Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2000, 42-43.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.



**“SYMBOL IS THE LANGUAGE OF RELIGION.” THE CONDITIONS OF TIL-  
LICH’S THEORY OF SYMBOL IN HIS  
EARLY WRITINGS<sup>1</sup>**

CHRISTIAN DANZ

We owe to Paul Tillich the most important contributions to a theory of symbol in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Tillich’s philosophy of religion and culture his concept of symbol plays a major part. He understands symbol as the “language of religion.” “Religious symbols need no justification if their meaning is understood. For their meaning is that they are the language of religion and the only way in which religion can express itself directly.”<sup>2</sup> Religious communication is symbolic communication.

This discussion of Tillich’s understanding of symbol is orientated by his mature form of a theory of symbol—what we would read in his paper *Das religiöse Symbol* in 1928, in various other writings on the concept of symbol from the 1950s and 60s, and in his *Systematic Theology*. But we may realize that there are significant differences between Tillich’s late writings on the concept of symbol and his early considerations of symbol. The main difference lies in an ontological foundation in his in American written works. Tillich expressly speaks about the theory of *analogia entis* as a condition of his theory of symbol. This point of view of symbols has not only given rise to criticism but it does not seem to agree with the intentions of Tillich’s theory itself.

Tillich’s thesis that symbol is the language of religion does not intend any kind of theoretical knowledge. Religious symbol neither has a relation to an object nor does it refer to a supernatural sphere. It is only a form of human self-interpretation. According to this conception, we have to reflect the development of Tillich’s understanding of symbol. Although several of Tillich’s early writings that show this development clearly enough have been published in the last years, there are up to now only a few analyses.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, at first we should analyze Tillich’s theory of symbol against the background of developing his understanding of symbol. Let us start with a first section about development of his concept of symbol from the beginning until his paper *Das religiöse Symbol* in 1928. A second section refers to the resumption and further development of the concept of symbol in Tillich’s American period.

### 1. The development of Tillich’s understanding of symbol

Since the 1920s, Tillich has used the concept of symbol very frequently; in his writings before 1920, however, we find the concept of symbol only sporadically and in a form that is criticized.<sup>4</sup> We have the first mention of symbol in the work *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel* from 1919.<sup>5</sup> But in the revision of this passage in his second version of *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel*, Tillich does not use the concept of symbol, but “Anschauung” and “Begriff.”<sup>6</sup> In the same way in his programmatic lecture *Über die Idee einer Theologie der Kultur* from the same year, he does not fall back on the concept of symbol for describing religion and its relation to culture. Only in his Berlin lectures in 1920,<sup>7</sup> later in his paper *Religiöser Stil und religiöser Stoff in der bildenden Kunst* from 1921, and last of all in his paper *Das religiöse Symbol* in 1928, the concept of symbol becomes a basic and central concept.<sup>8</sup>

The concept of symbol has already come up in the 1920s, although the matter, that what it means, has been present in Tillich’s thinking already. In his writings before World War I, in his both dissertations on the philosophy of Schelling, in the 128 theses on Christian certainty, in his *Systematische Theologie* from 1913, and his paper of habilitation about the concept of the supernatural, Tillich mentions the absolute paradox.

Tillich uses this concept of the paradox in his early works for representation of the self-understanding of consciousness in its inward structure and connects it with religion. Therefore, history of religion is history of becoming self-awareness of consciousness in its way to its self-transparency. In the true, real religion, cultural forms become mediums of representation of the absolute, and the conditioned becomes here the paradoxical perception of the unconditioned.

Tillich presents two principal aspects. At first he understands the relative cultural forms as paradoxical forms of the perception of the absolute. This implies four characteristics: figurative quality, perceptibility, innate power, and acceptability, which we can already find in Tillich’s early writings although not as characteristics of symbol but of the paradox.<sup>9</sup> The second aspect is a central point in Tillich’s early concept of the paradox and relates history of religions to the absolute truth. Perhaps it is the version of Hegel’s philosophy of history, which here is respon-



sible for Tillich's early reservation in view of the concept of symbol.

So we may consider the result of modifications of his theology during World War I and revision as a change where the concept of symbol takes the place of the paradox in the beginning of the 1920s. For the first time, Tillich has used the concept of symbol in his work *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel* from 1919.

Let us now consider this text because it is quite informative about our question for the development of Tillich's concept of symbol. We note three important aspects. At first, obviously, Tillich formulates here the point of a modern form of theology. The basic theme of his paper, on the one hand, is concerned with the concept of God in modern culture and, on the other hand, with the problem of objectivation (*Objektivationsproblem*) of religious statements.<sup>10</sup> Second, we may say since 1918 Tillich has used his concept of meaning, which subsequently became a methodical basis of his whole theology and philosophy of religion. Third, Tillich falls back on the early phenomenology of Edmund Husserl for an explication of consciousness of meaning. He includes Husserl's concept of intentionality as a basis for an understanding of his own concept of symbol.<sup>11</sup> This is characterized by the relation of conditioned and unconditioned; in doing so the unconditioned of meaning is the intentional completion of the religious consciousness. Only by concrete forms that represent the unconditioned could an indirect perception happen. However, we may say that in religious statements it is not the point of a kind of theoretical consciousness. Consciousness does not relate to a transcendent object whereby it becomes religious consciousness. But both the conditioned and the unconditioned are components of the consciousness of meaning. And here is, indeed, the point where Tillich includes these three named aspects into the final form of his theory of symbol and summarizes in his paper *Das religiöse Symbol* from 1928. In developing the theory of meaning in his theory of religion, Tillich creates the possibility of relating religion and culture. Both differ from each other but do not come into conflict any longer. Tillich's concept of symbol that he has elaborated after World War I and in the beginning of the 1920s represents the methodological medium. In religious experience, culture becomes a medium of religion, or in other words, for Tillich, religion is the place in culture where culture becomes self-understood in its own dimension. Here indeed, the conflict between religion and culture is

not only overcome, but also cultural forms become expressions of religion.

Let us consider some briefly aspects of Tillich's paper *Das religiöse Symbol*. Tillich develops his understanding of symbol in dealing with other competing theories of symbol like those from Marx, Freud, and Cassirer. His general outline includes cultural as well as religious symbols for his description of characteristics of symbols. The difference between religious and cultural symbols only lies in the self-relatedness of religious symbols. "Die religiösen Symbole sind vor den übrigen dadurch ausgezeichnet, daß sie Veranschaulichungen dessen sind, was die Sphäre der Anschauung unbedingt übersteigt, des im religiösen Akt *Letztgemeinten*, des Unbedingt-Transzendenten." ["Religious symbols are characterized differently from all others because they are illustrations of that which transcends the sphere of opinion, of the final religious act, namely, unconditional transcendence."]<sup>12</sup>

We also understand better now that religious symbols aim at the enlightenment of cultural activity of human consciousness and differ from all theoretical consciousness. Moreover, in religion, cultural forms become symbols for activity of cultural consciousness. That is what Tillich himself intends to say in his formula: "religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion."<sup>13</sup>

The conclusion is significant. We may say that Tillich's early theory of symbol aims to the self-enlightenment of cultural consciousness. Religious consciousness is intentional consciousness of meaning. It connects the spheres of the unconditioned and the conditioned.

## 2. Tillich's late theory of symbol

In 1940, Tillich published his paper *Das religiöse Symbol* in English in the *Journal of Liberal Religion*.<sup>14</sup> But his paper was criticized in the same issue by Wilbur M. Urban and, in the next issue, by Edwin E. Aubrey, the editor of the *Journal*. There are two objections to Tillich's theory of symbol. On the one hand, one is to suggest that Tillich's theory of symbol leads to a "pan-symbolism" (MW IV, 270), which comes dangerous closely to a "pan-fictionism" (MW IV, 271). On the other hand, Urban says: "The God idea cannot itself be a symbol, as Professor Tillich implies" (MW IV, 271).

Tillich answers this criticism in his paper *Symbol and Knowledge*, saying, "I do not think I would write this today, certainly not in English, which for-

tunately makes some ambiguities of the German philosophical terminology impossible" (MW IV, 273). Another more important feature for Tillich's further development of his theory of symbol in the USA we find in his "Response." Tillich concedes to his critics that he accepts the "classical doctrine of 'analogia entis'" (MW IV, 273) for avoiding a pan-symbolism. The *analogia entis* is running through like a red thread in Tillich's explanations of the theory of symbol in the 1950s and 1960s. This now is certainly what is meant when Tillich says that ontology is the basis of a theory of symbol. The question about meaning is replaced by the problem of being. But the main difference between Tillich's theory of symbol from the 1920s and then from his later period we realize in his ontological foundation. In the paragraph "*God as being and the knowledge of God*" we may consider his statement as summery of what we read in his *Systematic Theology*: "The *analogia entis* gives us our only justification of speaking at all about God. It is based on the fact that God must be understood as being-itself."<sup>15</sup> Tillich uses the ontological semantics in his late papers on the religious symbol instead of the concept of the "Letztgemeintem." It becomes still more evident when he shows how a religious symbol participates on what it represents.<sup>16</sup> With it a religious symbol refers to being-itself. "Such names are not names of being but a quality of being. If religious symbols express this quality in divine names, classical theology has always asserted that the referent of these names transcends their non-symbolic meaning infinitely" (MW IV, 418). The characteristics of symbols are the same as in the 1920s but they get a new determination.<sup>17</sup> Obviously, naïve realism seems to be connected with Tillich's late ontology. As a result of this, symbols are no more representations of meaning but they refer to reality that is beyond them. But such a view is extremely problematical, epistemically as well as semiotically, because symbols do not refer to a reality but only to other signs.

However, since the late 1920s, Tillich has begun to include an explicit inclusion of ontology in his theology and philosophy of religion. The concept of being is present in Tillich's writings from the beginning as a part of his philosophy of spirit. But only in 1927, in his *System der religiösen Erkenntnis*, does Tillich correct his earlier theory of the principles of meaning and speaks about principles of being and meaning.<sup>18</sup> With this, we could take Tillich's ontology—which really becomes a sign of his theology in America—as a result of his theory of meaning that

he has elaborated after World War I.<sup>19</sup> In the following, Tillich's late ontology does not represent metaphysics in a pre-Kantian meaning but it is rather a description of the human self-world-correlation.

I come to a conclusion. By thinking back to Tillich's early theory, we remember that the concept of symbol is a function for the self-enlightenment of the finite human self. Religious symbols are symbols for the activity of human consciousness. In his late theory of symbol, it could be seen that here are the basic intentions of his theory of symbol in an ontological form. By seeing Tillich's ontology from the view of his early works, we can understand ontology as a transcendental theory about the conditions of human experience. If this interpretation is right then there is no break in Tillich's understanding of symbols. However, the *analogia entis* in that case has only an illustrative and no constitutive character.

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<sup>1</sup> I express my thanks to my wife, Uta-Marina Danz, for translating this paper.

<sup>2</sup> P. Tillich, *The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols*, in: *Religionsphilosophische Schriften* (= *Main Works Bd. IV*), Berlin/New York 1987, pp. 415-420, here p. 415.

<sup>3</sup> To the genesis of Tillich's understanding of symbol, see C. Danz, *Symbolische Form und die Erfassung des Geistes im Gottesverhältnis. Anmerkungen zur Genese des Symbolbegriffs von Paul Tillich*, in: *Das Symbol als Sprache der Religion* (= *Internationales Jahrbuch für die Tillich-Forschung Bd. 2*), ed. by C. Danz/W. Schüßler/E. Sturm, Wien 2007, pp. 59-75; L. Heinemann, *Symboltheoretische Anfänge. Paul Tillichs frühe Privatdozentenjahre in Berlin (1919/1920)*, in: C. Danz/W. Schüßler (Ed.), *Religion – Kultur – Gesellschaft. Der frühe Tillich im Spiegel neuer Texte (1919/1920)*, Wien 2008, pp. 233-257.

<sup>4</sup> See L. Heinemann, *Symboltheoretische Anfänge*, pp. 237-240.

<sup>5</sup> See P. Tillich, *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel*, in: *Religion, Kultur, Gesellschaft. Unveröffentlichte Texte aus der deutschen Zeit (1908-1933). Erster Teil* (= *EW X*), Berlin/New York 1999, 172f.: „Sobald sich das Bewußtsein aber auf die Stufe des radikalen Zweifels erhoben hat, können jene Vergegenständlichungen in ihrer unreflektierten Anschaulichkeit nur als Symbole gelten für die Lebendigkeit und Konkretheit des absoluten Paradox. Auf dieser Stufe kann das Bewußtsein jene Symbole nur gebrauchen unter ständiger Erinnerung an ihren symbolischen Charakter und den Sinn, den sie zwar anschaulich und lebendig, aber doch inadäquat ausdrücken.“

<sup>6</sup> See P. Tillich, *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel*, EW X, 221.

<sup>7</sup> See P. Tillich, *Berliner Vorlesungen I (1919-1920)* (= EW XII), Berlin/New York 2001, 409ff.

<sup>8</sup> See P. Tillich, *Religiöser Stil und religiöser Stoff in der bildenden Kunst*, in: *Kulturphilosophische Schriften* (= Main Works Bd. II), Berlin/New York 1990, p. 87-99, here p. 96ff.

<sup>9</sup> To the characteristics of symbol see P. Tillich, *Das religiöse Symbol*, in: *Die Frage nach dem Unbedingten. Schriften zur Religionsphilosophie* (= GW V), Stuttgart <sup>2</sup>1978, pp. 196f.

<sup>10</sup> Compare to the letter from Tillich to Emanuel Hirsch from December 1917, EW VI, 102f. See also U. Barth, *Religion und Sinn*, in: C. Danz/W. Schüßler (Ed.), *Religion – Kultur – Gesellschaft. Der frühe Tillich im Spiegel neuer Texte (1919/1920)*, Wien 2008, pp. 197-213.

<sup>11</sup> See P. Tillich, *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel*, EW X, 176: „Klärend“ for the relation of the conditioned and the unconditioned is the „von der phänomenologischen Schule gebrauchte Begriff des ‚Meinens‘. Ein Begriff ‚meint‘ etwas, zielt auf etwas hin, und dieses Gemeinte ist etwas ganz anderes als die Vorstellung, durch die hindurch gemeint wird. So wird das Unbedingte gemeint in bedingten Vorstellungen.“

<sup>12</sup> P. Tillich, *Das religiöse Symbol*, GW V, 197 (my emphasis). In the English translation of this paper Tillich himself writes: “Religious symbols are distinguished from others by the fact that they are a representation of that which is unconditionally beyond the conceptual sphere, they point to the ultimate reality implied in the religious act, the unconditioned transcendent.” P. Tillich, *The Religious Symbol / Symbol and the Knowledge (1940-1941)*, in: *Religionsphilosophische Schriften* (= Main Works Bd. IV), Berlin/New York 1987, pp. 253-277, here p. 254.

<sup>13</sup> P. Tillich, *The Theology of Culture*, New York 1959, p. 42.

<sup>14</sup> P. Tillich, “The Religious Symbol,” and “Symbol and the Knowledge,” in *Main Works/ Hauptwerke*, vol. 4, *Writings in the Philosophy of Religion*, edited by John Clayton (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987): 253–277.

<sup>15</sup> P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 240.

<sup>16</sup> See P. Tillich, *The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols*, MW IV, p. 238: „The second characteristic of all representative symbols is to *participate* in the reality of that which they represent. The concept of representation itself implies this relation“ (my emphasis).

See also *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, 239: “Therefore, the religious symbol, the symbol which points to the divine, can be a true symbol only if it participates in the power of the divine to which it points.” In this ontological sense also R. C. Neville, *The Truth of Broken Symbols*, New York 1996, understands the religious Symbol.

<sup>17</sup> See P. Tillich, “The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols,” MW IV, pp. 415f.

<sup>18</sup> P. Tillich, *Das System der religiösen Erkenntnis* (1. Version), in: *Religion, Kultur, Gesellschaft. Unveröffentlichte Texte aus der deutschen Zeit (1908-1933). Zweiter Teil* (= EGW XI), Berlin/New York 1999, pp. 79-116, here p. 91 Anm. c.

<sup>19</sup> To Tillich’s Ontology see G. Neugebauer, *Tillichs frühe Christologie. Eine Untersuchung zu Offenbarung und Geschichte bei Tillich vor dem Hintergrund seiner Schellingrezeption*, Berlin/New York 2007, pp. 349-353; C. Danz, *Religion als Freiheitsbewußtsein. Eine Studie zur Theologie als Theorie der Konstitutionsbedingungen individueller Subjektivität bei Paul Tillich*, Berlin/New York 2000, pp. 13-175.

### **Coming in the Summer Bulletin:**

- **Dues Notice for 2009**
- **A report on the Colloque in Paris of the APTEF**
- **More articles from the November 2008 meeting in Chicago**

**LOOKING AT THE TRUTH OF ART IN TILlich  
AND MARION: SYMBOLIC DEPTH AND THE  
SATURATED PHENOMENON**

DAVID K. MILLER

Paul Tillich's theology of culture and Jean-Luc Marion's phenomenology of givenness analyze art as having a deep quality of meaning that opens up truth for the viewer of art. Marion's phenomenology necessitates an understanding of truth, though not explicated by him as such, as the relation between the givenness of a phenomenon and what is shown in the self. Truth is thus partial, ever changing, and plural. Tillich sees the *Gehalt* or depth dimension of art as an expression of ultimate concern and as a mediation between the depths of a person's spirit and the Absolute, while Marion sees the painting, with its excess quality able to fill and overflow the subject's intention and to mirror that intention back to the subject, as a form of idol, arresting the constituting gaze of the subject. For both thinkers, the work of art functions as a bridge—for Tillich, between the Absolute and the human spirit, and, for Marion, between givenness and the self. Tillich sees the work of art as a particular kind of symbol that gives expression to ultimate concern as it participates in the reality both of the depths of the viewer and of the Absolute. Marion's phenomenology can benefit from such a consideration of the symbol. In this paper I will compare this view of truth drawn from Marion with Tillich's understanding of truth contained in his understanding of art as the union of the Absolute and human depth and his explication of symbol as expressing the union of the particular and totality.

Russell Manning, focusing on Tillich's early work, puts Tillich's theology of culture in theological and philosophical context. While Tillich claimed in a 1954 private letter to have "broke[n] rank" with the "Schleiermacher-Troeltsch line" by "support[ing] the great offensive by the Kierkegaard-Barth line,"<sup>1</sup> Manning argues that Tillich actually maintained affinities with the liberal theologies of mediation while functioning merely as a "'subterranean' fellow laborer with Barth."<sup>2</sup> Recounting Tillich's coining of the phrase "theology of culture" in 1919, Manning argues that Tillich sides with the liberals and breaks with the dialectical or neo-orthodox theologians by maintaining an unbreakable connection between religion and culture; indeed Tillich sees Christianity as embedded in culture, while a dialecti-

cal approach posits the religious as a separate sphere alongside that of culture.<sup>3</sup> Manning argues that Tillich combines liberal theology with the deep structure of Schelling's philosophy to create an "Idealist/Romantic theology of mediation." Manning crystallizes "the breakthrough of the unconditioned into the conditioned [as] the fundamental determining structure of [Tillich's] theology of culture."<sup>4</sup>

Tillich's writings themselves confirm Manning's thesis. In the aforementioned 1919 address, entitled "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," Tillich insists that religion is "an attitude of the spirit in which practical, theoretical, and emotional elements are united to form a complex whole."<sup>5</sup> This whole consists of human conditional "directedness toward the Unconditional."<sup>6</sup> For Tillich, there is no religious attitude separate from a cultural attitude; rather there is a dynamic axis on which human autonomy and divine theonomy are both in tension and in cooperation with one another. Each pole of this axis is an ideal, which never exists in actuality. The actual situation is always the interplay of culture and religion, human and divine. When religion functions to overthrow or to suppress human autonomy, it is not theonomy at work but rather a heteronomy in which the interplay is denied. Religion as a separate sphere from that of culture creates a false duality. Tillich describes the religious principle as finding its expression in the cultural function; indeed true religion acts to overcome not the autonomy of culture but the split between humanity and God.<sup>7</sup>

In his later writings, Tillich does not abandon his correlation between religion and culture. In his 1959 *Theology of Culture*, Tillich takes an ontological approach. Rather than asserting a traditional Anselmian ontological proof of God's existence, Tillich instead argues that God (neither *a* being, nor even the highest being) is Being-itself or the Ground of Being for all that does have existence. The "essential structure of mind"<sup>8</sup> constitutes reality as the duality of subject and object but also makes one aware of God as that which goes before the duality, its "prius."<sup>9</sup>

Tillich contrasts this to the cosmological approach, which he claims leaves God and humanity strangers. Thomas Aquinas, the primary Christian proponent of this approach, denies that it is possible to know God immediately. Knowledge of God is mediated by our observations of the material world and by our arguments from causality that piece together a clearer and clearer picture of God. As this observation can never lead one all the way to God,

the authority of revealed religion is brought alongside to bridge the gap. Not only do God and humanity remain strangers in this view, according to Tillich, but also religion and philosophy.<sup>10</sup> Tillich thus continues his earlier privilege of understandings that bridge the split between philosophy and theology, culture and religion, subject and object, and humanity and God.

Marion, on the other hand, maintains a distance between these pairs. While he produces no explicit theology of culture, his phenomenology and theology privilege distance in such a way as to provide a counterpart to Tillich's correlation. In *God Without Being*, Marion begins to "think God without any conditions, not even that of Being, hence to think God without pretending to inscribe him or to describe him as a being."<sup>11</sup> Determining any god capable of being inscribed onto the screen of Being to be an idol, he seeks to "free God from Being."<sup>12</sup> Marion depicts a God who cannot be contained by Being and who cannot be apprehended by human consciousness. Marion outlines the philosopher's use of concepts to organize phenomena. For Marion, any god that can be conceptualized can be contained within those concepts and is therefore an idol. The philosopher's god is therefore not the same God as that revealed in Christianity. Philosophy and theology operate at a distance in that philosophy speculates about God from human reason and theology deals with a revealed God.

Later, in *Reduction and Givenness*, Marion, building on the work of Husserl and Heidegger, reduces a phenomenon to its givenness. Finding in both seminal phenomenologists the germ of such a reduction,<sup>13</sup> Marion comprehensively explicates what it means for a phenomenon to be given to consciousness. Husserl's phenomenology is founded in part on the correlation between intention and intuition, by which any mental awareness is an awareness of something, which we will call a phenomenon. Through intention, consciousness aims at the phenomenon and by recognition of its essential characteristics identifies it as a specific object. In what Marion calls "common-law" phenomena, intention and intuition are correlated, with intention as subjective aiming exhibiting mastery over intuition as objective phenomenon. The subject names the object, deciding what it is and what characteristics it has. In this way, the subject constitutes reality. Reducing the phenomenon to givenness and moving past the Husserlian object and Heidegger's Being, Marion locates givenness beyond both horizons, making the

origin of givenness completely inaccessible. Doubling this distance between givenness and any constituting subject, he further asserts that givenness, as it gives a phenomenon, folds back upon itself, withdrawing back beyond the horizon of Being.<sup>14</sup> Givenness is thus only evident in the trace it leaves behind. Marion never equates God and givenness. It does appear, however, that the two, if not homologous, are at the very least analogous within their respective disciplines.

Another form of Marion's distance is that of his saturated phenomenon, explicated in his *Being Given*. He proposes a phenomenal form for each of Kant's four types of categories—quantity, quality, relation, and modality. In the saturated phenomenon, givenness gives in such a way as to exceed the subject's ability to perceive and to judge. The subject's attempt to aim at a saturated phenomenon is thwarted by the excess of intuition. The subject is therefore unable to constitute the phenomenon into an object. Subject and object are not merely distant from one another; they are both deflated. In the inability to objectify the saturated phenomenon, the subject's intentionality is foiled. This will be further explicated when I deal with art as a saturated phenomenon.

A phenomenon that exceeds all four Kantian categories is, for Marion, revelation, "by saturation of saturation."<sup>15</sup> While Marion as a phenomenologist deals only with the possibility and not the actuality of revelation, he lifts up the biblical Christ as an exemplar of the possibility of revelation.<sup>16</sup> Revelation, as the saturation of saturation, is revelatory in only a one-way fashion. The revelation of Christ is not, as it is for Tillich, embedded in culture; it rather confounds culture as the saturated phenomenon confounds subjective intentionality. In Tillich's terms, Marion sets up a Thomistic cosmology, in which reason—and phenomenological intention—can never know God. Only God's gift of revelation makes that possible, creating two governing principles that are not overcome but heightened in the act of revelation. Both Marion's phenomenology and his theology are, continuing to use Tillich's terminology, heteronomous, exacerbating rather than overcoming the subject/object split and the human/divine split. It is the overcoming of this split that is a central characteristic of Tillich's understanding of religion and of truth.

Returning to his *Theology of Culture*, we find that religion is "the dimension of depth in all its functions,"<sup>17</sup> depth as "ultimate concern."<sup>18</sup> Western

society has produced persons who have become alienated from the Ground of Being and from our own essential selves.<sup>19</sup> This alienation produces *Angst*,<sup>20</sup> or anxiety, which is the basic manifestation of sin in the modern age. Only a religion of grace can overcome the anxiety by erasing the alienation. As God sits above and comes before the subject/object duality of existence, the regenerated person (having been forgiven and justified) becomes the prius of the duality between what one is and what one ought to be.<sup>21</sup> Tillich sees this as the Protestant principle,<sup>22</sup> the substance of true religion, which he would like to see united with the forms extant in Catholicism.<sup>23</sup>

This inverse relationship between form and substance is precisely the relationship Tillich sees between religion and culture. As substance or import increases in a cultural object, the form becomes less adequate to convey its import; as form is emphasized, the substance it is conveying is overshadowed. Though never the substance of religion itself, which is an attitude toward the Absolute, these forms make the expression of this attitude possible. Religion is the substance or import of a society or its ultimate concern; culture is religion's form and expression. A theology of culture will examine forms of culture with the purpose of bringing the substance to the fore. In other words, a theology of culture will show how cultural objects are representations of that society's understanding of, its attitude toward, and estrangement from the Ultimate. Every cultural artifact manifests to some degree the ultimate concern of its producer.<sup>24</sup>

Tillich's 1919 work includes a "cultural-theological consideration of art,"<sup>25</sup> in which the relation between form and substance is examined, particularly as found in Expressionism. Tillich considers the substance of an Expressionistic work to be shattering its form while paradoxically seeking its own form. He finds the substance, import, or depth of the work to be intrinsically religious regardless of the work's religious content or lack thereof. Regardless of its content, a work of art is religious for Tillich when its depth component speaks to the alienation of humanity from itself and from God. Although Tillich does not produce an explicit theology of art, Manning reconstructs one through consideration of Tillich's 1920s works. In 1921, Tillich first articulates his "typology of styles" of art, which codifies the relation of form and substance—or depth, ultimate concern, import, and the stance of the conditioned toward the unconditioned—all English attempts to translate the German word *Gehalt* in its

various contexts. Tillich writes that "three fundamental types of style are revealed: the *Form*-dominated style (impressionism-realism), the *Gehalt*-dominated style (romanticism-expressionism), the balanced style (idealism-classicism)."<sup>26</sup> Consolidating Tillich's various comments on these styles, Manning puts together a coherent picture of Tillich's understanding of the styles as "an oscillation between subject and object... The different attitudes express different answers to the question of how to overcome the distance between thought and being, between the ideal and the real in the aesthetic realm."<sup>27</sup> Adding this dimension, Manning fleshes out each artistic style as it lies along two axes—*form/Gehalt* and subjective/objective.<sup>28</sup> Styles that are form-dominated exhibit more autonomy; those that are more *Gehalt*-dominated exhibit more religious substance, regardless of the content of the artwork.

Beyond the works examined by Manning, Tillich's later work continues to tie religion and art together in a similar manner. Speaking about one's "ultimate concern," Tillich, in a 1952 lecture, ties "the hidden places of our soul" to art in its "expressive power." He writes anecdotally of a time that he had experienced in a non-religious painting—in the narrow sense of religion—by Jan Steen, in the "scenes of peasant vitality something of the divine ground of being."<sup>29</sup> In similar fashion, he later recounts an experience during World War I when, while viewing Botticelli's *Madonna with Singing Angels*, he "had an experience of revelation," triggered not by the work's content but by its expressiveness.<sup>30</sup>

In the 1952 lecture, he continues with a discussion of religious symbols, with which he also deals in his 1959 *Theology of Culture*. Distinguished from signs, which point to something beyond themselves without participating in its reality and power, symbols do both. Language that is merely representational points to objects and concepts which are signified by words that could be replaced by other words as long as all parties agree on the meanings. Some language, however, has become symbolic by being so associated with that to which the language points that it is irreplaceable, participating in the power and reality of that which it represents. Symbols open up levels of reality that cannot be otherwise accessed, levels of reality that are matched by level of depth in the human spirit. Religious language symbolically mediates the Absolute to the depths of the human spirit. Religious symbols reveal aspects of reality

that cannot be otherwise represented and are therefore true without being literally true.<sup>31</sup>

In the 1963 third volume of his *Systematic Theology*, Tillich resumes the question of truth, which he defines as “the fragmentary reunion of the knowing subject with the known object in the act of knowledge.” He eschews the notion that humanity’s fragmentary grasp of truth is actually untrue in relation to the truth of the whole,<sup>32</sup> and he seeks to articulate an understanding of truth that includes both the particular and the whole.

Returning to the symbol, he distinguishes between the ordinary and the “Spirit-created” symbol.<sup>33</sup> Whereas the former returns to the subject/object split, the latter, “overcomes this possibility and with it the ambiguities” of the aforementioned limitations. These ambiguities are the result of “the infinite distance” between “the inexhaustible” subject and the inexhaustible object. What Tillich is now calling “the Spiritual Presence” transforms symbols, infusing them with participatory power. A spiritually symbolic cognition creates a union in which the subject participates in the reality of the object. Moving beyond the ordinary activity of a subject, that of observation and conclusion about an object, the subject participates in the reality of the object (continuing to observe) and gains insight (which surpasses but includes conclusions). It is this cognitive union that Tillich calls “revelation.”<sup>34</sup> Regarding aesthetics, Tillich reiterates his earlier views on symbolic depth, stating that expressionism is best able to portray the union of the subject and object, the human and divine by “show[ing] the Spiritual Presence in symbols of broken finitude.”<sup>35</sup>

Marion also connects art as a form of saturation to truth. He describes the inability of the subject to master the phenomenon of the painting as one in which the painting must be seen over and over again.<sup>36</sup> It is possible to objectify aspects of a painting in order to master certain elements of it, but never the painting as a whole. One can endlessly analyze and engage in what Marion calls an “infinite hermeneutic”<sup>37</sup> without exhausting the qualitative aspects of the painting. He asserts that the paradox of excess intuition’s thwarting of intentionality “belongs, indisputably, to the domain of the truth, with this minor qualification: that its givenness contravenes, in its intuition, what previous experience should reasonably permit us to foresee.”<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, he states that the saturated phenomenon is the benchmark for truth because it testifies to givenness.<sup>39</sup> He does not, however, make clear why he

privileges the relation between givenness and truth. He writes that, in the case of the saturated phenomenon, adequation between intention and intuition is exceeded, “not because the latter is lacking but because it exceeds what the concept [or intention] can receive, expose, and comprehend.”<sup>40</sup> In the case of the saturated phenomenon, including art, excess intuition makes it impossible for intention to constitute an object, and Marion consistently uses the Husserlian understanding of truth as the adequation between intention and intuition. As this is impossible in the case of the saturated phenomenon, what is the truth of which Marion speaks?

In the case of art, I argue that the truth is that of the self. His first articulations of the saturation of quality included only the idol. The idol, created in the subject’s image, arrests the subject’s intentional gaze. Finding exactly and completely what it has intended, the subject is bedazzled by the idol, which functions as a mirror. What the idol reveals to excess is the subject’s own self.<sup>41</sup> Using Kantian categories, Marion articulates this form of saturation as one “in which intuition gives reality (first category of quality) to the phenomenon without any negation (second category) and, of course, without collapsing into limitation (third category).”<sup>42</sup> It seems evident that, that which is most real to the subject is the subject itself. Art reflects the intention of the subject back to the subject, and it does so completely, and even more so. Marion says, “The gaze no longer keeps anything in reserve from free vision; the visible invades all its intended angles; it accomplishes *adequatio* [truth]—it fills. But the filling goes by itself beyond itself; it goes to the brink, too far.”<sup>43</sup> The intensity of the reality is more than the subject can bear, proving the finitude of the subject.

Whereas Tillich sees an ambiguity of reality in art, Marion sees art as giving reality in excess. The reality of the self is given; the split between subject and art as object is bridged; truth is attained; and then even more is given, so much as to be unbearable. Marion repeatedly writes of how the artwork “shows” or does not show the given. In fact, he writes in *In Excess* that, “the painting reduces what gives itself to what shows itself.”<sup>44</sup>

If givenness, the process of intuition, is located beyond the objective horizon and beyond the horizon of Being, “shownness,” the process of intention, must be located in the self. In the face of saturation, the self turns out not to be a subject grasping for an object; the subject is indeed thus deflated. In the face of art, that deflated subject reveals a larger self that

turns out to be the unique locus where givenness is shown. Art reflects the reality of the self so intensely that the subject is confounded, but the reality of the self is revealed to be connected to both shownness and givenness. Despite Marion's efforts to keep the two separated, they yet participate in one another. They are not the same, and the self cannot contain givenness any more than the inexhaustible subject can master the inexhaustible object. Phenomenological givenness and, speaking theologically, God are certainly transcendent and inaccessible, but art reveals in excess that the reality of the human self participates in ultimate reality. The depth that Tillich describes as the stance of the conditioned toward the unconditioned can become, for Tillich, a symbolic depth in which the conditioned participates in the unconditioned. Marion, on the other hand, wants to keep God and humanity intrinsically apart, even in the face of revelation. His reduction of a phenomenon to givenness is problematic, in that it consistently neglects shownness, which must operate as the counterpart to givenness. Any phenomenon must be shown in order to be given, as any givenness that is not shown is never phenomenalized. Art shows givenness in such a way as to reveal shownness to be located in the reality of the human self, and it is precisely in the process of shownness that givenness is revealed. Both givenness and shownness are thus shown to participate in one another. Combining the terminology of Tillich and Marion, art shows unconditioned givenness (God) in such a way as to reveal conditioned shownness to be located in the ultimate reality of the human self. The human self and God are not the same, and the human self cannot contain God, but the two participate in one another. Yet, giving the distance Marion exemplifies its due, and contra Tillich, I do not see this participation to be exclusively that of union. Truth, then, is rather the relation between shownness and givenness, subject and object, the human self and God. The relation between the two is one on an axis between perfect union and total estrangement. The two poles are extremes that are never actualized, and truth consists of the infinite interplay of union and estrangement, correlation and distance.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Tillich, *EN VI* 312. Quoted in John Clayton, "Tillich, Troeltsch and the Dialectical Theology" in *Modern Theology*, (1988), 323-344, p. 324. Quoted in Russell Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture: Paul Tillich's Theology of Culture and Art* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2005), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Manning, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Manning, 8-9.

<sup>4</sup> Manning, 57.

<sup>5</sup> "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," 160.

<sup>6</sup> "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," 162.

<sup>7</sup> "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," 161-162.

<sup>8</sup> "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," 15.

<sup>9</sup> Tillich, *Theology of Culture*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 22.

<sup>10</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 26.

<sup>11</sup> Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being: Hors-Texte*, tr. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1991), 45.

<sup>12</sup> *God Without Being*, 83.

<sup>13</sup> Marion, *Reduction and Givenness: Investigations of Husserl, Heidegger, and Phenomenology*. Tr. Thomas A Carlson. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1998), 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. Tr. Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 228-29; Marion, *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*, tr. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berran (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 64-66.

<sup>15</sup> *Being Given*, 235.

<sup>16</sup> *Being Given*, 236.

<sup>17</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 5-6.

<sup>18</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 8.

<sup>19</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 42.

<sup>20</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 102.

<sup>21</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 141-142.

<sup>22</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 68.

<sup>23</sup> *Theology of Culture*, 169.

<sup>24</sup> "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," 159-168 and *Theology of Culture*, 40-42.

<sup>25</sup> "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," 169.

<sup>26</sup> "Religiöser Stil und religiöser Stoff in der bildenden Kunst" in *Das neue Deutschland* 9 (1921), 151-158, repr. in *Gesammelte Werke IX, Die religiöse Substanz der Kultur. Schriften zur Zeitkritik*, (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1968, 312-323), 319. E.T, Manning, 143.

<sup>27</sup> Manning, 144.

<sup>28</sup> Form-dominated, Subjective attitude (impressionism); Form-dominated, Objective attitude (realism); Balanced, Subjective attitude (idealism); Balanced, Objective attitude (classicism); Gehalt-dominated, Subjective attitude (romanticism); Gehalt-dominated, Objective attitude (expressionism), Manning, 144-152.

<sup>29</sup> Tillich, "Religion and Art," in Tillich, *On Art and Architecture*, ed. John and Jane Dillenberger (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 33.



<sup>30</sup> Tillich, "I'll always Remember...One Moment of Beauty," in *Parade* (New York), 15 September 1955, 1-2 and in Tillich, *On the Boundary* (London: Collins, 1967), 26 and Tillich "Zur Theologie der Bildenden Kunst un der Architektur" in *Kunst und Kirche* 24 (1961), 99-103; p. 99. Repr. in *Gesammelte Werke IX* 345-355; 345 and in *Main Works / Hauptwerke II, Writings in the Philosophy of Culture / Kulturphilosophische Schriften*, ed. by/hrsg. Von Michael Palmer (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 333-343; 333. Cited in Manning, 129.

<sup>31</sup> "Religion and Art," 36-39, and *Theology of Culture*, 47-48, 52-67.

<sup>32</sup> *Systematic Theology III*, 71.

<sup>33</sup> *Systematic Theology III*, 254.

<sup>34</sup> *Systematic Theology III*, 255-256.

<sup>35</sup> *Systematic Theology III*, 258.

<sup>36</sup> *In Excess* 70.

<sup>37</sup> *Being Given* 211, 267; *In Excess* 126-27.

<sup>38</sup> *Being Given*. 226.

<sup>39</sup> *Being Given*. 227.

<sup>40</sup> *Being Given*. 159.

<sup>41</sup> *God Without Being*, 9-15.

<sup>42</sup> *Being Given*, 203.

<sup>43</sup> *Being Given*, 204.

<sup>44</sup> *In Excess*, 68.

**SYMBOL, SACRAMENT, AND SPIRIT(S):  
PAUL TILlich IN RECENT  
PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGY**

CHRISTOPHER A. STEPHENSON

This paper will address the significance of Paul Tillich's theology in the works of two contemporary Pentecostal theologians, Frank D. Macchia and Amos Yong. I will focus on both their explicit adoptions of some of Tillich's categories and their determinations to overcome perceived limitations in his thought. Those familiar with some of the common theological emphases of the pentecostal tradition will not be surprised by my claim that Macchia's and Yong's engagements with Tillich are centered on pneumatology. This brief investigation suggests some potential theological gains for evangelicals and pentecostals who are willing to take Tillich seriously. Since my own expertise is closer to the area of pentecostal theology than to Paul Tillich's theology, I will be more concerned with how what might be referred to as "the received Tillich" functions for these two pentecostal theologians than with judgments about the accuracy of their assessments of Tillich. I will begin Macchia and conclude with Yong.

Frank D. Macchia, Professor of Theology at Vanguard University (Costa Mesa, California), received the D. Theol. from the University of Basel under the direction of Jan Lochman. Macchia's primary interaction with Tillich comes in relation to the idea of the sacramental in general, the two Protestant sacraments in particular, and especially the practice

of Glossolalia or "speaking in tongues," one of the most distinctive and enduring characteristics of the pentecostal tradition. This interaction includes Macchia's incorporation of Tillich's notions of the relationship between "structure and ecstasy"—as found in *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3—and of *kairos* as well as of the "realistic" interpretation of sacramental elements—as found in *The Protestant Era*—all with a pneumatological focus.<sup>1</sup>

In his discussion of the Spiritual Presence in the *Systematic Theology*, Tillich contends that ecstasy does not negate structure, either of the human spirit or of the Spiritual Community. He states that Paul's doctrine of the Spirit, especially as found in I Corinthians, is a classical expression of unity between ecstasy and structure. There, Paul emphasizes the ecstatic dimensions of experiencing the Spiritual Presence, but insists that they be subject to *agape* and *gnosis*. He encourages various *charismata*, especially glossolalia, to the extent that they do not lead to chaos. According to Tillich, the Christian church sometimes fails to replicate such unity between ecstasy and structure, whether in the form of the Roman Catholic tendency to supplant *charismata* with office or in the form of the Protestant tendency to replace ecstasy with doctrine or moral structure, what Tillich calls the "profanization of the Spirit" and the "profanization of contemporary Protestantism," respectively. For Tillich, the Pauline approach resists both of these tendencies, inasmuch as it provides structure within which ecstasy can operate rather than equating ecstasy with chaos and attempting to smother it.<sup>2</sup>

In an essay entitled "Nature and Sacrament" contained in *The Protestant Era*, Tillich adopts a

“realistic”—as opposed to a “symbolic-metaphoric” or “ritualistic”—interpretation of the nature of sacramental elements. According to the realistic interpretation, there is a *necessary* rather than *arbitrary* relationship between the sacraments and their respective elements. Water in baptism and the bread and the wine in the Lord’s Supper have natural powers that suit them to be elements in those sacraments. This realistic interpretation of the elements, says Tillich, assumes an interpretation of nature that he calls “a new realism.” To this realism, Tillich adds an insistence that sacraments be understood within the context of the concrete history of salvation. Tillich writes,

Any sacramental reality within the framework of Christianity and of Protestantism must be related to the new being in Christ. No Protestant criticism would be conceivable in which this foundation was denied. But if the presence of the holy is the presupposition of any religious reality and any church, including the Protestant churches, then it follows that the interpretation of nature in sacramental terms is also a presupposition of Protestantism, for there is no being that does not have its basis in nature.<sup>3</sup>

It is only within the context of salvation history that nature can become sacramental elements, thereby bearing transcendent power.

These theological themes in Tillich surface primarily in Frank Macchia’s work on pentecostal glossolalia—usually with explicit references to Tillich—in a number of articles published in the early- to mid-1990s.<sup>4</sup> Following the lead of certain biblical scholarship, Macchia connects Pentecost of Acts 2, which he calls a “*kairos* event,” with the giving of the law at Sinai. Like Sinai, Pentecost is a theophany, a moment of divine self-disclosure. Likewise, the recurring practice of glossolalia among pentecostals, *kairos* events in themselves, has similar theophanic significance. Glossolalia, as frail and broken human speech, becomes a medium through which the intensity of the divine presence, namely the Holy Spirit, is experienced. Glossolalia, then, is a symbol in which the divine presence participates and through which it is conveyed.

All of this, Macchia argues, is more of an account of how pentecostals actually *experience* glossolalia than a description of how they tend to *theologize* about it. Theological formulations, he reminds us, have traditionally centered on the category of what is commonly referred to as “initial evidence.” Initial evidence is shorthand for the pentecostal

claim that reception of, or, as it is more commonly called, “baptism in” the Holy Spirit is accompanied by an empirical verification that this “baptism” has in fact taken place, namely, glossolalia. Historically, pentecostals have theologized about the question, “How do I know that I have received the Holy Spirit?” by offering the answer “Because I have spoken in tongues.” Without dismissing the possible benefit of some—no doubt, reformulated—variation of “initial evidence,” Macchia argues that in spite of the endless *theologizing* by pentecostals about glossolalia along these lines, this is not how glossolalia actually *functions* for them. To use Macchia’s terms, glossolalia has a far greater *sacramental* quality, in as much as it conveys the divine presence, than *evidential* quality, in the sense of serving as empirical “proof,” at least in terms of pentecostal *experience* even if not in terms of typical pentecostal *theology*. Macchia suggests that this theophanic/sacramental account has, perhaps, been the fundamental basis of “initial evidence” all along, although pentecostals have not seemed to be aware of this basis. In summary, Macchia writes,

It would seem that [initial evidence] arose in relation to a combination of factors, such as an accent of turn-of-the-century revivalism on ‘signs and wonders’ and on experiences of God in the book of Acts as patterns and precedents for religious experience. The supreme sign or wonder that seemed to represent the *sine qua non* of the Acts ‘pattern’ for an in-depth encounter with God appeared in Pentecostal interpretation to be tongues. Beneath the dogma of tongues-as-evidence was the assumption that tongues symbolized an encounter with God that may be termed ‘theophanic,’ or as spontaneous, dramatic and marked by signs and wonders.... Of importance to Pentecostals has not been tongues *per se*, but what tongues symbolizes for them, namely, a theophanic encounter with God that is spontaneous, free and wondrous.<sup>5</sup>

Macchia hopes that the illumination of the sacramental basis of glossolalia will prompt pentecostals to explore further the idea of the sacramental in general.

While Macchia undermines certain aspects of the traditional formulation of “initial evidence,” he believes that the doctrine, nonetheless, speaks to the integral logical connection between glossolalia and baptism in the Holy Spirit, a connection he affirms and wishes to maintain. Glossolalia is not simply one sign among other spiritual gifts that also func-

tion as signs, as some charismatic Roman Catholics and Protestants have maintained; rather, glossolalia has the place of primacy because it demonstrates like no other spiritual gift or form of ecstatic speech the inability of *any* human speech to communicate exhaustively the depths of the human encounter with the divine epitomized by baptism in the Holy Spirit. According to Macchia, glossolalia is an unclassifiable, free speech in response to an unclassifiable, free God. It is the language of the *imago Dei*. The closer one draws to the divine presence, the more urgent and more difficult expression becomes. As Macchia writes, "This is the crisis out of which tongues breaks forth. Any attempt rationally to communicate the experience [of the divine] ends it, for to reflect upon and rationally communicate an experience is to distance oneself from it already. Tongues is a way of expressing the experience without ending it. The experience and the expression become one." This is not to say, of course, that the divine presence is reduced to the medium itself, but that glossolalia truly is a symbol in the sense that it conveys that in which it participates.<sup>6</sup>

By way of summary, Macchia frames his entire discussion of glossolalia with Tillich's concern that ecstasy and structure remain united. Glossolalia is indeed a free and ecstatic expression in which one is grasped by the divine presence. However, because of its sacramental quality, it is also a structured expression. Glossolalia upholds the concern for the freedom of the Spirit that would resist the objectification of the divine presence in visible forms. At the same time, it also affirms the legitimacy of the divine self-disclosure through natural elements, specifically oral and aural symbols of speech. Because glossolalia is both free and sacramental, it is both ecstatic and structured. Furthermore, by insisting on the *necessary* relationship between glossolalia and baptism in the Holy Spirit, Macchia shifts from the traditional pentecostal account of glossolalia as a *sign* that points away from itself to another more significant reality to glossolalia as a *symbol* that also conveys the divine presence as a theophanic *kairos* event.

Amos Yong, Professor of Systematic Theology at the Regent University School of Divinity (Virginia Beach, Virginia) received a Ph.D. from Boston University under the direction of Robert C. Neville. Yong's primary interaction with Tillich is in relation to Yong's attempt to develop a theology of religions from a pentecostal/charismatic perspective that is thoroughly informed by contemporary theological contributions outside the pentecostal tradition. In

two books entitled *Discerning the Spirit(s)* and *Beyond the Impasse*, published in 2000 and 2003, respectively, Yong engages Tillich in search of resources for a theology of religions.<sup>7</sup>

Yong draws attention, first, to the prominence of pneumatology in Tillich's *Systematic Theology*, vol. III and, second, to Tillich's brief call for the discipline of systematic theology to be more thoroughly informed by a theology of religions in his "The Significance of the History of Religions for the Systematic Theologian," Tillich's last public lecture published in *The Future of Religions*.<sup>8</sup> Yong attempts to synthesize these concerns in order to produce a pneumatologically informed theology of religions, the end result of which he says will be:

a thoroughly restructured Christian theology that will have passed over into the other faiths and returned home transformed in such a way as to be able to speak the gospel effectively and meaningfully in a world context generally and in the context of the diversity of religions in particular.<sup>9</sup>

While Yong feels that Tillich does not fully succeed in his endeavor to establish a pneumatological basis for a theology of religions, Yong finds a number of Tillich's concepts suggestive for such a project. First, Yong adopts Tillich's definition of religion itself as the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern that qualifies all other concerns. Yong favors this definition because he believes that it adequately allows for the inclusion of important penultimate concerns and because it is highly conducive for analysis from the perspective of Christian theology.<sup>10</sup> In connection with this, Yong also adopts Tillich's notion of idolatry as elevating a preliminary concern to ultimacy, as taking the conditioned to be unconditional.<sup>11</sup> As a test case for his theology of religions, Yong constructs a dialogue between pentecostalism and Umbanda, an Afro-Brazilian religious tradition. After discussing three areas in which pentecostals might learn from Umbandists, Yong turns the table and offers three points on which Umbandists might benefit from dialogue with pentecostals. A brief mention of one of these points will suffice to illustrate Yong's use of ultimate concern and idolatry. According to Yong, Umbanda's element of magic, that is, its practitioners' occasional use of spiritual power for personal gain at the expense of others, stems from an element of idolatry in Umbanda, which manifests in a distorted view of healing that is insufficiently holistic due to its failure to

incorporate both individual and societal dimensions. Yong writes,

In short, Umbandist theology supports only a limited vision of healing focused on the individual. The lines of influence of Umbandist deities are clearly demarcated, leading to a compartmentalized world. Healing can only come about piecemeal, and that without long-term guarantee. Ultimately, because of the ephemeral nature of health and the fickleness of the gods, emphasis calcifies on that which brings immediate relief and satisfaction above all else. Idolatry develops in that the finite is elevated above its reach. The gods have become no more than a means to get one's way.

Yong contrasts this with the more appealing pentecostal notion that there is only one God with whom all have to deal, a God who—in the words of Acts 10:34—“does not show favoritism” by allowing only certain persons to become spirit-mediums.<sup>12</sup>

Second, with regard to the missions of the Son and the Spirit in the economy of salvation, Yong praises Tillich for avoiding the subordination of one mission to the other. At the same time, Yong is concerned that this avoidance comes in part because of “an implicit fusion of the two economies in the history of revelation and salvation,” by which he means that Tillich tends to conflate the Spiritual Presence with the New Being in Jesus as the Christ.<sup>13</sup> In developing his own account of the Son's and Spirit's respective missions, Yong finds resources within Tillich himself, however, to clarify this ambiguity. Yong employs Tillich's category of “dimension” to describe life processes without the hierarchical implications of categories such as “levels” or “layers.”<sup>14</sup> The gain of the category for Yong is a way to *distinguish* adequately the Son's and Spirit's missions without *subordinating* or *separating* them. While distinct, the missions “overlap dimensionally.”<sup>15</sup>

Third, in the process of developing what he calls a “foundational pneumatology,” Yong offers a view of divine presence that is compatible with Tillich's thought. Arguing that the Holy Spirit's presence should be assessed on both the ontological level and the concrete level within a religion's construction of symbols, Yong concludes that on this latter, concrete level every religious symbol bears the Spirit's presence to the extent that each one “succeeds in representing itself authentically to and situating itself harmoniously in its environment.”<sup>16</sup> On this point, Yong explicitly approves Tillich's conclusion that

every religion is based on revelation inasmuch as each is a creation and distortion of revelation and none is either revealed or to be equated with revelation itself. The reception of religion is ambiguous, and any claim otherwise epitomizes the demonic.<sup>17</sup>

By way of summary, Yong sees Tillich as one of the most significant and influential contemporary theologians to attempt a theology of religions and makes Tillich's attempt part of the basis for his own endeavor. Yong's engagement with Tillich is truly critical, for he adopts several of Tillich's ideas—including his notions of ultimate concern, idolatry, dimension, and the relationship between revelation and religion, and, to a certain extent his account of the Divine Presence—and at the same time criticizes Tillich and attempts to supplement his shortcomings.

In conclusion, Macchia's and Yong's works illustrate the potential benefit for pentecostals who engage Tillich. They demonstrate Tillich's ability both to broaden their existing theological categories—such as glossolalia and its relationship to baptism in the Holy Spirit—and to invite them to give greater consideration to traditionally neglected categories—such as the idea of the sacramental in general and a theology of religions. With pentecostal constructive theology still in its first generation, this may be the beginning of a longstanding and fruitful relationship between pentecostal scholars and the theology of Paul Tillich.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-63); idem, *The Protestant Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

<sup>2</sup>Tillich, ST, 3:114-17.

<sup>3</sup>Tillich, *Protestant Era*, 109.

<sup>4</sup>Frank D. Macchia, “Groans Too Deep for Words: Towards a Theology of Glossolalia,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 1, no. 2 (1998): 149-73; idem, “Tongues As a Sign: Towards a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience,” *PNEUMA: Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 15, no. 1 (1993): 61-76; idem, “Sighs Too Deep for Words: Toward a Theology of Glossolalia,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1, no. 1 (1992): 47-73.

<sup>5</sup>Macchia, “Sighs too Deep,” 47, 49.

<sup>6</sup>Macchia, “Sighs too Deep,” 61-62.

<sup>7</sup>Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Sheffield, U.K.: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000); idem, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2003).

<sup>8</sup>Paul Tillich, *The Future of Religions* (New York: Harper and Row). Yong, *Discerning*, 71; idem, *Beyond*, 92, 191.

<sup>9</sup>Yong, *Beyond*, 190-91.

<sup>10</sup>Yong, *Beyond*, 16-17.

<sup>11</sup>Tillich, ST, 1:3-15.

<sup>12</sup>Yong, *Discerning*, 302-04.

<sup>13</sup>Yong, *Discerning*, 85.

<sup>14</sup>Tillich, ST, 3:11-30.

<sup>15</sup>Yong, *Discerning*, 62.

<sup>16</sup>Yong, *Discerning*, 133.

<sup>17</sup>Tillich, ST, 3:104.

## WHAT WOULD TILlich DO?: A TILlichIAN CONTRIBUTION IN EVANGELICAL ETHICS

DAVID BARBEE

Given Paul Tillich's rather notorious personal life and evangelicalism's puritanical tendencies, it may come as a bit of a surprise to some to suggest that evangelicals might benefit from an engagement with Tillich's ethical thought.<sup>1</sup> Although it appears to be a rather odd pairing, they can actually be understood as complementary or at least not as conflicted as they seem. As represented by John Jefferson Davis's *Evangelical Ethics*, evangelical ethics consists primarily of scriptural exegesis with the intent to derive rules to direct one's life. Ethical values are determined by the whim of the exegete rather than by any consistent external regulating principle. This is precisely where Tillich's ontological analyses discussed most notably in *Love, Power, and Justice* and the related work *Morality and Beyond* can make a contribution to evangelical ethics. I would like to theorize about what Tillich might say if he were alive to read Davis' *Evangelical Ethics* and suggest that Tillich's ontology might be the sort of principle evangelical ethics needs to supplement seeming deficiencies.

There are several reasons behind the particular decision to put Davis in dialogue with Tillich. Based on his position at one of the largest evangelical seminaries in the nation and the popularity of his book, Davis's *Evangelical Ethics* is a salutary selection to represent an evangelical perspective on ethics. Davis has taught at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary since 1978. Many evangelical pastors and leaders have sat under Davis' tutelage during this time. The first edition of Davis' book came out in 1985 and it is now in its third edition.<sup>2</sup> These facts suggest that Davis exerts a fair amount of influence over ethical thinking in the evangelical world. Of course, the title of Davis' book is the most obvious reason to select him for this topic. It purports to be

the very definition of evangelical ethics. It is not assumed that Davis's model is the only one in evangelical ethics or that Davis is the best representative of an evangelical ethicist, but only that he seems to be of some importance within evangelical theology and can, therefore, serve as a representative of evangelical ethical thought.<sup>3</sup>

Davis' text generally follows the course of the human lifecycle beginning with issues related to the conception of human life before ending with matters related to the end of life. In the middle he considers abortion, homosexuality, and divorce, amongst other issues. Conspicuous by its absence is any discussion of social justice matters, although he does discuss civil disobedience.<sup>4</sup> He begins with a methodological prolegomena in which he elaborates upon his methodology. Davis' text is deontological and casuist in nature.<sup>5</sup> He begins from the supposition that the Bible is the final court of appeal for ethics. Davis contends that "foundational truths concerning the nature of God, humankind, good and evil, and the meaning and destiny of human life" can be derived from the Bible to form a basic worldview. From this perspective, one can evaluate concerns not explicitly addressed in the scriptures and interpret the data provided by human sciences.<sup>6</sup> He intends to incorporate empirical data and the principles of scripture as deduced by reason to arrive at sound ethical decisions. Situational ethics are dismissed in favor of what Davis refers to as "contextual absolutism." He finds fault with situational ethics because it is inherently antinomian and there is not a "definite criterion for what constitutes a 'loving' course of action in any given situation."<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, contextual absolutism is the view that while the Bible contains many moral absolutes, there is always a way for a person to avoid sinning by properly prioritizing these absolutes. This entails that lower moral obligations are suspended when one must meet a higher obligation. He cites instances in Scripture when the law of God conflicts with that of human authority, such as when Daniel and his friends refused to wor-

ship an idol at the command of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 3. Human laws have a lower moral obligation and so must give way to God's commands.<sup>8</sup> Davis concludes his introduction with a discussion of a Christian's role in a pluralistic society with regard to the question of legislating morality. He advocates the belief that, "Where Scripture indicates that unbelievers can have moral awareness on a given issue through *general revelation*, then it may be appropriate for Christians to press for legislation in that area."<sup>9</sup> He also wants to consider practical issues in legislating morality, such as the enforceability of a law as well as the gravity of the issue at hand.

The succeeding chapters address issues by placing them within the context of contemporary debate leading into a discussion of scriptural passages Davis deems relevant before arriving at conclusions that are sometimes predictable while idiosyncratic at other times. Davis's chapter on contraception illuminates his methodology. He views the question of contraception as speaking directly to the meaning of human sexuality, love, and the purpose of marriage. On a broader global level, Davis muses whether world population growth makes the use of contraceptives a moral imperative and, if so, can a person be forcefully sterilized. After setting forth the extent of the issues involved in a discussion of contraception, he then sets out a history of contraception beginning with the Egyptians and quickly moving forward to the modern period. Next he details a wide array of modern methods of contraception, describing how they prevent conception along with lists of their pros and cons. Following this analysis, Davis surveys historic Roman Catholic and Protestant attitudes toward procreation.

All of the foregoing material serves as a platform for to Davis to finally arrive at scriptural passages he considers pertinent to the discussion. Davis explains why he selects these passages when he writes, "The Scriptures have very little explicit teaching concerning contraception, but much concerning sexuality, marriage, and procreation, and it is from the latter passages that the decisive moral considerations must be drawn."<sup>10</sup> Numerous passages from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament are surveyed to provide an interpretation of their meaning. For instance, Davis understands the command in Leviticus 18.19 to abstain from sex with a menstruating woman as "anticontraceptive" because this would mean that, "intercourse would take place during the time in the menstrual cycle when conception would be more likely."<sup>11</sup> In the

New Testament, Davis points to 1 Corinthians 7:5, which states, "Do not refuse one another [conjugal rights] except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer." He construes this to mean that "Christian couples have the right to choose to 'override' the usual responsibility to procreate (Gen. 1:28) for a season in order to pursue a spiritual good."<sup>12</sup> After maneuvering through all of the selected texts, Davis ultimately concludes, "it would appear that there is no explicit endorsement of artificial contraception in either Testament," but there is also "no explicit condemnation of contraception in Scripture."<sup>13</sup> As such, certain forms of contraception can be justified in certain contexts, but under normal circumstances contraception cannot be used to permanently avoid childbirth within the confines of a marriage in accordance with the command of Genesis 1:28 to be fruitful and multiply.<sup>14</sup> This passage is taken to be a normative command for married couples. From this point, Davis moves on to consider related issues in the rest of the chapter, such as premarital sex, sex education, and world population.

The rest of Davis' book follows a similar pattern. The net result is a set of rules that every evangelical ought to follow, but it is not always clear why Davis chooses certain passages. Nor is there an explanation as to why he chooses to interpret them the way he does.

I suspect Tillich would have much to say if he were to read Davis' *Evangelical Ethics*. Tillich would likely begin his comments with a criticism of Davis' methodology as it is based on a Biblicism that Tillich found unacceptable. Tillich addresses this in volume one of his *Systematic Theology* when he considers the sources of systematic theology. He writes, "If the 'Word of God' or the 'act of revelation' is called the source of systematic theology, it must be emphasized that the 'Word of God' is not limited to the words of a book and that the act of revelation is not the 'inspiring' of a 'book of revelations,' even if the book is the document of the final 'Word of God,' the fulfillment and criterion of all revelations."<sup>15</sup> Tillich later expounds his doctrine of the Word of God by contrasting the inner and outer word. The latter is only a medium of revelation at best, a symbol, bounded by historical context and the strictures of human language. As such, it cannot really be the "Word of God" without the inner word consisting of a non-vocal communication of the divine within the depths of the human soul. This has direct ramifications for Davis' approach as Tillich

comments, “A collection of assumed divine revelations concerning ‘faith and morals’ without a revelatory event which they interpret is a law book with divine authorization, but it is not the Word of God, and it has no revelatory power.”<sup>16</sup> Rather Tillich wants to move to a deeper level beyond the written words to ascertain the meaning of the text. “Being precedes speaking,” Tillich comments, “and the revelatory reality precedes and determines the revelatory word.”<sup>17</sup> At the onset of a discussion of ethics, Tillich would push Davis to move beyond Biblicism to ontology.

Some might prefer to view this disagreement about the Bible as an a priori obstacle that would prevent any meaningful dialogue between Tillich and evangelicals such as Davis. While it is clearly a difficulty, it can be negotiated. For instance, some evangelical theologians of a more Pentecostal persuasion have already mined Tillich’s thought to further construct their own theology.<sup>18</sup> More to the point, though, Tillich’s objections to Biblicism need not derail a dialogue with non-Pentecostals like Davis. Insofar as Davis maintains that ethical principles can be derived from the Bible by the use of reason and aligned with the nature of God as described in the scriptures, then Tillich can be useful to Davis. In this regard, both are trying to accomplish a similar task on a very rudimentary level—both are employing reason to try to get at the nature of God to answer ethical questions. If Tillich’s rational ontological analyses can serve as a truncated doctrine of God, as seems possible, then it has direct relevance to Davis’ project by providing a philosophical or theological hermeneutic with which the Bible can be read in order to arrive at specific ethical positions. Further, even if Davis refuses such help, Tillich can still be of service, provided Davis practices a historic-critical hermeneutic. Such an interpretational method necessitates the consideration of authorial intent. For an evangelical like Davis this means that divine authorship must be evaluated. This speaks directly to God’s nature and so Tillich’s ontological analyses can again be utilized. Tillich’s criticism of conservative Biblicism can be an impediment to exchange with evangelicals, but it is not insurmountable.

While Tillich and Davis disagree over the nature of revelation, Tillich’s approach to ethics sought to transcend situational ethics, as does Davis. However, Tillich seeks to eclipse the sort of legal system Davis imposes. In his introduction to *Morality and Beyond*, Tillich informs the reader that he hopes to place his

ethical theory between graceless moralism and normless relativism.<sup>19</sup> Tillich offers up a proper definition of ethics as “the science of man’s moral existence, asking for the roots of the moral imperative, the criteria of its validity, the sources of its contents, the forces of its realization.”<sup>20</sup> For Tillich, this necessarily compels an ontological analysis inasmuch as the moral imperative is believed to be unconditional. As such, it connects to an external principle that translates into the establishment of values in either a group or an individual.<sup>21</sup> This is precisely how Tillich can describe ethics as a part of theology and further claim that it will ultimately lead to God inasmuch as God is being.<sup>22</sup> The problem of ethical relativism as Tillich sees it is that, while it illuminates the ethical differentiation that occurs through the influence of education and culture, it tends to ignore the universal ethical commonalities shared across time and societal boundaries as well as the essential nature of humankind.<sup>23</sup> As George Tavad sums up Tillich’s position, morality cannot be reduced to subjectivity because if this happened, then the unconditional quality in myself and the other would be fictitious.<sup>24</sup> Tillich and Davis share a similar disdain for ethical relativism that rejects any sort of absolute standard for ethical behavior.

Having dismissed ethical relativism as a viable option, Tillich delineates two different theological alternatives to relativism. Davis’ *Evangelical Ethics* prescribes a system Tillich labeled heteronomous. In this approach, “moral commandments,” Tillich writes, “are an expression of a divine will which is sovereign and without criteria.” There is no attempt to correlate ethical principles with human nature. This method is inherently destructive for the ethical agent inasmuch as he or she is sublimated to the will of another.<sup>25</sup> A moral act is by definition for Tillich an act of obedience to one’s essential nature. Conversely, an immoral act is not a violation of a command, but is an act “that contradicts self-realization of the person as a person.”<sup>26</sup> The law itself is an expression of our estrangement from our true nature. As such, law will be met with conflict and cannot be used as a motivation to ethical action.<sup>27</sup> In describing the problems associated with the rejection of *eros* in relation to love of God, Tillich notes that, “The consequence of this rejection is that love towards God becomes an impossible concept to be replaced by obedience to God. But obedience is not love. It can be the opposite of love.”<sup>28</sup> In short, the God who would make such demands is a tyrant and is to be feared for Tillich. The system of law imposed upon

such a God is intrinsically corrosive toward human nature. "No divine command ethic," John J. Carey remarks, "can do justice to the personal complexities and ambiguities in which all of human decision making stands."<sup>29</sup> Obedience to an external law, even if derived from canonical Scripture, simply cannot produce an ethical person for Tillich.

This view stands in contrast to what Tillich refers to as theonomous. The theonomous outlook avoids the destructiveness of the heteronomous perspective and for this reason it becomes ontological. The law given by God to humankind would be in harmony with human nature, if it were not distorted to such a degree that a person is alienated from him or herself. In fact, Tillich claims, "Every valid ethical commandment is an expression of man's essential relation to himself, to others and to the universe."<sup>30</sup> This is exactly why Tillich can justify his claim that, "The moral act establishes man as a person, and as a bearer of the spirit."<sup>31</sup> The fact that theonomous ethics is congruous with true human nature is the reason it is necessary and its rejection is self-destructive. This process of self-actualization, of transformation from a potential being to a being in accordance with one's true nature, is the essence of the moral imperative. With this move, Tillich establishes the foundation for his ontological discussion of ethics. By doing so, he is able to ground his guiding principle of love in a transcendent reality, thereby escaping the problem of situational ethics and at the same time steering clear of an ethical legal system as posited by Davis. J. Heywood Thomas notes that, "A theonomy unites autonomy and heteronomy by transcending them." In this manner, Tillich is able to weld together the sacramental and the historical in his ethics.<sup>32</sup> The theonomous alternative is superior to the heteronomous for Tillich because it is able to relate the problem of human existence and alienation to ethical decision-making by moving the discussion to an ontological level without subsequently crippling human potentiality through the imposition of external laws that creates an unwieldy burden of ethical action.

From this point, Tillich begins his ontological analyses with love. Tillich maintains that the ontological nature of love is expressed in the statement, "Life is being in actuality and love is the moving power of life."<sup>33</sup> Put another way, "Love, through compulsory power," Tillich contends, "must destroy what is against love. But love cannot destroy him who acts against love...It tries to save and fulfill him by destroying in him what is against love."<sup>34</sup> Love is

the power that eradicates non-being and by doing so, provides the opportunity for reunion and actualization. He flatly rejects the notion that love is to be construed as an emotion. In a 1962 lecture delivered at Florida State University, Tillich elaborates on the distinction between the popular understanding of love and the manner in which he uses the term. He comments,

*Love is the urge for the reunion of the separated.*

I previously described justice as an element in Love. It is the element that accepts the other one as a person. Recall, however, that I said this element is not sufficient alone, for there remains a barrier and a coldness in all abstract justice. 'Abstract' here means isolated from the reunion with another person. On the other hand, 'Love without Justice' is mere sentimentality.<sup>35</sup>

Tillich expounds on the nature of love by highlighting its apparently contradictory nature. This contradiction arises out of the observation that on one hand, love is always love and, as such, is unconditional as an ontological category, while on the other "it is more flexible than any other spiritual reality."<sup>36</sup> In this manner, love can serve as the basis of an ethical system that defies relativism, but is also adaptable enough to accommodate every situation.

Latent within Tillich's definition of love is power, particularly the power to be. Playing on Nietzsche, Tillich articulates the will to power not as "the will to attain power over men, but it is the self-affirmation of life in its self-transcending dynamics, overcoming internal and external resistance." Put another way, being is the power of being in the struggle against non-being.<sup>37</sup> In this fashion, power becomes manifest only within the process of actualization, "in the encounter with other bearers of power and in the ever-changing balance which is the result of these encounters."<sup>38</sup> Power is not to be confused with either force or compulsion according to Tillich. While power actualizes itself through these means, the power to be can be undermined when the compulsion that is brought to bear is out of balance with the actual power relation.<sup>39</sup> This qualification draws Tillich back to the ontological unity of love and power. A parallel is found in the restorative properties of each category. In the same way that love seeks to eliminate all that is not love, so too does the power to be try to overcome all that is non-being. "The more conquered separation there is the more power there is," Tillich observes, "The process in which the separated is reunited is love. The more reuniting love there is, the more conquered non-



being there is, the more power of being there is. Love is the foundation, not the negation, of power."<sup>40</sup> Love and power, then, are ontologically united for Tillich because they perform the same basic task.

Just as power was included in Tillich's analysis of love, so does his discussion of justice include both love and power. Love is the primary principle of justice according to Tillich. Justice, in turn, is the form in which the power of being actualizes itself and, as such, it gives form to the encounter of beings with other beings.<sup>41</sup> Tillich outlines four principles of justice intended to mediate the expression of love. The first principle is that of adequacy. This stems from the realization that rules that were once applicable may no longer be beneficial. It requires a historical interpretation of love to determine the particular expression of love as justice in a specific circumstance. The second principle is equality. This demands that people treat one another with equality as beings capable of reason. To do otherwise is to prevent the actualization of another human being and, thus, is to regard them unjustly and without love. The third principle is freedom. Tillich does not mean the traditional problem of the freedom of the will, but rather the content of this principle is the demand to treat every person as a person. Alternatively, it could be articulated as the principle of personhood to avoid confusion. This principle includes the basic right to justice on the grounds of ontological equality. It insists that the subject not be objectified or reified and considers these actions to be a violation of humanity in a fashion similar to slavery. The fourth principle is that of fraternity of community. Tillich includes this as a principle of justice because he considers justice to be the form of the reunion of the separated. Justice, then, must include the separation "without which there is not love and the reunion in which love is actualized."<sup>42</sup> Ronald Stone writes that Tillich's notion of justice contributes to his opposition to "all the structures that reinforce *essential* inequality."<sup>43</sup> Inasmuch as these principles contribute to Tillich's brand of socialism, as well as his broader approach to social ethics, they can make a direct contribution to evangelical ethical thought since Davis' book is largely silent regarding this matter.<sup>44</sup> Justice, as the manifestation of love in society, provides the grounds for self-actualization; as one acts justly, one thereby becomes a more fully realized person. But it also grants the freedom for expression of the other, allowing for the reunion of

persons in community through love. In this manner, love, justice, and power form an ontological unity.

At the same time as Tillich distinguishes between theonomy and heteronomy, he also sets the stage for his ontological analyses of love, power, and justice within the confines of society. This communal context is an absolute requirement for the development of a person through the expression of these three qualities. "The moral imperative," Tillich observes, "is the command to become what one potentially is, a *person* within a community of persons."<sup>45</sup> The failure to operate in this arena according to the proper principles is ultimately self-destructive, as Tillich narrates in a lengthy passage in *Love, Power, and Justice*:

Man becomes man in personal encounters. Only by meeting a 'thou' does man realize that he is an 'ego'. No natural object within the whole universe can do this to him. Man can transcend himself in all directions in knowledge and control. He can use everything for his purposes...But there is a limit for man which is definite and which he always encounters, the other man. The other one, the 'thou', is like a wall which cannot be removed or penetrated or used. He who tries to do so, destroys himself. The 'thou' demands by his very existence to be acknowledged as a 'thou' for an 'ego' and as an 'ego' for himself.<sup>46</sup>

Tillich's statement points toward the realization of selfhood involved in the exchange with the other, but it is not merely this apprehension that makes a person. In fact, the participation in community provides an opportunity for expression of personhood that one actually partakes in reality, as Tillich writes in *The Courage to Be*.<sup>47</sup> Society is a critical environment for the development of personhood as it presents a forum for the exercise of one's nature that leads to self-actualization.

Tillich's ontological analyses of love, power, and justice ultimately find a terminus in God and Christ. These three ideas find unity in God as being-itself. For Tillich, this places into contrast the separation and conflict that exists between them in existence. They will be united, Tillich claims, "[t]hrough the manifestation of the ground in which they are united."<sup>48</sup> The answer to the problem of theodicy is located precisely in the cross because love and power are united in this moment in the effort to overcome alienation and non-being. The cross of Christ is to be interpreted symbolically for Tillich, as "the symbol of the divine love, participating in the

destruction into which it throws him who acts against love.”<sup>49</sup> More broadly than the problem of human suffering, Tillich frames the person of Christ as the solution for human existence. “Forgiveness and acceptance, the conditions of the fulfillment of the law, must come from something above the law, or more precisely, from something in which the split between our essential being and our existence is overcome and healing power has appeared,” Tillich notes. “It is the center of the Christian message that this conquest took place in the Christ, in whom a new reality beyond the cleavage appeared.”<sup>50</sup> Jesus is called the Christ, Healer, and Savior, Tillich writes in *The New Being*, “because He alone does not give another law for thought or action, because He does not cut off anything or suppress anything that belongs to life, but because He is the reality of reconciliation, because in Him a new reality has come upon us in which we and our whole existence are accepted and reunited.”<sup>51</sup> In his essay on the New Being and Christology in Tillich, Langdon Gilkey observes that the appearance of the New Being opens the gateway to knowledge of the Spirit and ultimately to Being itself through the process of victory over non-being.<sup>52</sup> It is only in the light of Tillich’s ontological analyses that Christ’s nature as well as his work can be understood.

To conclude, ethics and ethical theory is a field in which Tillich could contribute significantly to evangelical approaches to these topics. If evangelicals like Davis have been taught to think about ethics by asking what Jesus would do, Tillich moves a step beyond this question to query what Jesus is ontologically. Naturally, this is a necessary first step in understanding what Jesus would do since action extends from being. As typified by Davis’ *Evangelical Ethics*, the evangelical ethical method consists of recourse to divine command theory as derived by biblical exegesis and as such is subject to the same criticisms. Such methodology does not provide justification for the interpretational choices necessitated in the attempt to apply an ancient text to modern problems. Davis also largely ignores the question of social justice issues. Tillich’s criticism of Davis would likely begin with their divergent doctrines of the Word of God. Davis clings to the Bible as the primary authority for ethics while Tillich prefers a much broader understanding of the Word of God. In some ways, this epitomizes the differences between the two, insofar as Davis practices a strict historico-grammatical exegetical method while Tillich is more philosophical in his approach. Tillich’s ontological

analyses could supplement evangelical ethics and help to place it on a firmer philosophical foundation. Tillich was opposed to situational ethics as evangelicals are generally, but by locating the basis for ethics in ontology that connects being with reality, he is able to deduce ethical principles that free him from the legal interpretations imposed by Davis while also escaping relativism. As Tillich’s ontology also informs his notion of social interactions between beings, this could also help provide guidance in an area where Davis is reticent. An evangelical encounter with Tillichian ethics could be fruitful and beneficial.

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<sup>1</sup> For different analyses of Tillich’s life aside from his autobiographical narration, see Wilhelm and Marion Pauck, *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought*, vol. 1 (London: Collins, 1977); Hannah Tillich, *From Time to Time* (New York: Stein and Day, 1973); Rollo May, *Paulus: Reminiscences of a Friendship* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973). For reflections on these interpretations in light of Tillich’s ethical system, see John J. Carey “Morality and Beyond: Tillich’s Ethics and Life and Death,” in *Tillich Studies: 1975*, ed. John J. Carey (Tallahassee, Fla: North American Paul Tillich Society, 1975), 104-15.

<sup>2</sup> The first edition was printed by P&R Publishing in 1985 as were the 1993 edition and the most recent version in 2004. Little has changed through the various reprintings of *Evangelical Ethics*. Davis has updated statistical information that has changed between editions and attempted to address issues that have arisen under his general rubrics from the first edition. The biggest change is that in the third edition, Davis included chapters on environmental ethics and genetics.

<sup>3</sup> For other approaches to evangelical ethics that may be more or less amenable to Tillich and provide alternative approaches to that of Davis see, for example, Oliver O’Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986); Donald Bloesch, *Freedom for Obedience: Evangelical Ethics in Contemporary Times* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987); and Wyndy Corbin Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics: The Promises and Pitfalls of Classic Models of Morality* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> It is unclear why Davis does not take social justice matters under consideration. Since his introduction concludes with a brief excursus detailing when it is appropriate to legislate morality, it is possible that Davis feels that such matters should not or cannot be legislated and, as such, are not discussed in his book. The corollary is that such issues are to be decided on a personal level apart

from governmental intervention. In *Your Wealth in God's World*, Davis makes it clear that poor relief and similar matters are not to be handled by the government, but by the church and individual Christians. In this book, Davis maintains that the Bible can support free market capitalism. The only other alternative is socialism and this, for Davis, is radically anti-Christian. This may illuminate why Davis did not consider social justice in his book, but it still represents a failing in *Evangelical Ethics* in that ethical decisions on an individual level must still be made. Tillich's analysis of justice would be helpful on that account. See John Jefferson Davis, *Your Wealth in God's World: Does the Bible Support the Free Market?* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 1984).

<sup>5</sup> John Jefferson Davis, *Evangelical Ethics: Issues Facing the Church Today* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2004), 14-6. Davis is explicitly not interested in a general discussion of moral virtues and dispositions or the history of ethics. He provides a short bibliography for each of these areas in a set of footnotes at the end of his book.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 16. It is unclear from *Evangelical Ethics* precisely what doctrine Davis adheres to in regard to the nature of the Bible. In *Foundations of Evangelical Theology*, Davis offers a list of three qualities—verbal, plenary, and confluent—that define the evangelical view of biblical inspiration. Davis takes these to mean basically that evangelicals regard scripture as given word for word, that this form of inspiration extends to all of scripture, and that the divine and human authors cooperate in the authorship process. Pursuant to its verbal and plenary nature, the Bible is also taken to be inerrant. Davis denies the validity of a “limited inerrancy” that would account for errors in geography, cosmology, and natural science. For him, this view causes more problems than it solves. He points toward the doctrinal statement of his institution and notes that inerrancy and infallibility are conflated. This appears to be a false dichotomy for Davis. See John Jefferson Davis, *Foundation of Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 171-219.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 52. In an admittedly random survey of Leviticus commentaries from several different series (*The Anchor Bible*, *Apollos Old Testament Commentary*, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, *Word Biblical Commentary*, *The Old Testament Library*, and *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary*), none of the authors of these works mentioned contraception or any

other aspect of procreation in their comments. Most were concerned with harmonizing the text with Leviticus 15.24, particularly in regard to source theory and all explained the passage in terms of ritual purity or communal contamination. This only serves to underscore the individualistic nature of Davis' method and his need for an organizing principle.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>14</sup> In one of his more idiosyncratic views, Davis appears to espouse a literal reading of this passage, suggesting that a Christian couple must not only procreate to fulfill this command, but actually have three or more children to “multiply.” Davis points toward the devastating effects a lower fertility rate would have for American society and economics while denying the claim that a higher population will lead to poverty, pollution, crime, and starvation. On the contrary, Davis advocates a “philosophy of positive population growth,” in part, because Christians who have larger families will make valuable contributions to society and help to expand the kingdom of God. See Davis, *Evangelical Ethics*, 63-7.

<sup>15</sup> Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), 35.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> See Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* *Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series* 20 ed. John Christopher Thomas, Rickie D. Moore, and Steven J. Land (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2003), Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002) and Frank D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> Paul Tillich, *Morality and Beyond* in *Main Works*, vol. 5, ed. Erdmann Sturm (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 654.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice: Ontological Analyses and Ethical Applications in Main Works*, vol. 5, ed. Erdmann Sturm (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 616. In *Morality and Beyond*, Tillich returns to this definition to clarify a distinction between “ethical” and “moral.” He maintains that the word moral has become distorted through historical accidents so that moralism has become equated with “graceless legalistic ethics.” Tillich prefers to retain “ethical” for theoretical discussion and to

use "moral" to refer to an act "in its fundamental significance." See Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 658 and Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), 39-40.

<sup>21</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 660.

<sup>22</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, 31-2 and Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 632. Tillich is not the first Christian thinker to place ethics within the domain of theology. In *Dialogue Between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian*, Peter Abelard uses the persona of "The Christian" to equate "ethics" with "divinity." This position is cast in contrast with that of "The Philosopher" who addresses ethics from the perspective of means to achieve virtue. "The Christian" ultimately describes ethics as the discipline which reveals "where the ultimate good is and by what road we are to arrive there." It is unclear whether Tillich draws upon Abelard for his view, if he deduced it from another source, or if he sees himself as independent on this point. See Peter Abelard, *Dialogue Between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian in Ethical Writings*, trans. Paul Vincent Space (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), 93

<sup>23</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 663-6.

<sup>24</sup> George Tvard, *Paul Tillich and the Christian Message* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), 142.

<sup>25</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 617.

<sup>26</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 657.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 677.

<sup>28</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 598.

<sup>29</sup> Carey "Morality and Beyond: Tillich's Ethics and Life and Death," 110.

<sup>30</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 618. Such statements ought not be taken to mean that Tillich completely disallows the validity of any and all legal structures. Tillich contends that "law and institutions are required. They are required by love itself. For every individual, even the most creative, needs given structures that embody the experience and wisdom of the past, that liberate him from the necessity of having to make innumerable decisions on his own, and that show him a meaningful way to act in most situations." Tillich merely wants to use the wisdom of the past embodied in laws and institutions as guidelines that can be transcended when necessary in the face of new situations. He continues on, "Love demands laws and institutions, but love is always able to break through them in a new *kairos*, and to create new laws and new systems of ethics." Tvard, then, seems to miss the point when he criticizes Tillich for an artificial distinction between the law and love. Tvard views the law as a manifestation of love rooted in the divine. He

maintains that Tillich affirms the supremacy of love with Catholics, but denies the divine origin of an objective moral law. This is an unfair reading of Tillich. For Tillich, it is precisely because love is from a divine source that it can be objective while also transcending laws if necessary, just as Tvard believes. See Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 699-700 and Tvard, *Paul Tillich and the Christian Message*, 157

<sup>31</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 655.

<sup>32</sup> J. Heywood Thomas, *Tillich*, Outstanding Christian Thinkers, ed. Brian Davies (London: Continuum, 2000), 42.

<sup>33</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 595.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 606.

<sup>35</sup> Paul Tillich, "Ethical Principles of Moral Action," in *Being and Doing: Paul Tillich as Ethicist*, ed. John J. Carey (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 213. It should be noted that when Davis rejects love as a solid basis for ethical speculation in favor of a legal approach, he does not bother to define what kind of love he is discarding, but rather quickly dismisses such a standard as inherently relative. For some reason, rationality appears to be more valid a criteria than love, although rationality could be equally subjective. This is precisely the sort of imprecision that a thorough reading of Tillich could help to amend. See Davis, *Evangelical Ethics*, 16-20.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

<sup>37</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 600-1.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 602.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 605.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 606. Tillich's ideas about the transformative and unifying quality of love appears to be a point at which his claim to stand within the Augustinian-Franciscan tradition seems valid. Compare his views with Bonaventure, *The Journey of the Mind to God*, trans. Philotheus Boehner (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993), 37-9. For a more extensive evaluation of Tillich's claim, see John Dourley, *Paul Tillich and Bonaventure: an Evaluation of Tillich's Claim to Stand in the Augustinian-Franciscan Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 1975).

<sup>41</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 609.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 609-12.

<sup>43</sup> Ronald Stone, *Paul Tillich's Radical Social Thought* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), 120.

<sup>44</sup> Tillich views socialism as the sociological corollary to existentialism in that both combat the process of dehumanization in the modern world. Religious Socialism, insofar as it is religious, necessitates a doctrine of human nature for Tillich. Further, the question of human freedom within society must also be addressed. Naturally, Tillich's ontological analyses, as discussed here, has clear

ramifications for thinking about social justice. Tillich addresses the matter of Christianity and socialism on numerous occasions, but see in particular *Sozialismus, Religiöser Sozialismus, Protestantisches Prinzip und proletarische Situation, Man and Society in Religious Socialism*, and *Beyond Religious Socialism* in *Main Works*, vol. 5, ed. Erdmann Sturm (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998).

<sup>45</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 656.

<sup>46</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 618-9.

<sup>47</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 91.

<sup>48</sup> Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice*, 632.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 635.

<sup>50</sup> Tillich, *Morality and Beyond*, 682.

<sup>51</sup> Paul Tillich, *The New Being* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), 41-2.

<sup>52</sup> Langdon Gilkey, "The New Being and Christology," in *The Thought of Paul Tillich*, ed. James Luther Adams, Wilhelm Pauck, and Roger Lincoln Shinn (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 308.

### PAUL TILlich AND THE GOSPEL OF PROSPERITY

NATHANIEL C. HOLMES, JR.

One of today's most visible and influential movements in popular Christianity is the so-called prosperity Gospel. Prosperity Gospel can be defined as the teaching that financial opulence, good health, and success in every area of a person's life are the signs of God's favor and blessings. One of the fundamental claims of prosperity gospel is that it approaches the Christian message from a holistic perspective, i.e., it is as interested in a person's finances, family life, and health as it is in his/her spiritual well-being. Detractors of the prosperity gospel argue that it is simply about the accumulation of wealth and material possessions.

After outlining some of the sociological and theological reasons prosperity gospel has become the current fashion in popular Christian ministry and indicating the chief biblical texts employed to substantiate it, I will show how Tillich's thought exposes both positive and negative aspects of the prosperity gospel. On the one hand, Tillich's method of correlation and his focus on the existential human condition as the key to theological reflection can provide a framework for prosperity gospel's claim that it seeks to overturn the reality of poverty, illness, and broken families plaguing society. The answer the Christian message provides is that God desires Christians to prosper in these areas. Promises of prosperity have a great attraction to those in poverty, especially those who see no hope for a change in their status. The belief that God wants us to be financially secure and successful in our pursuits is more appealing than the belief of "suffer now and

reward later." Furthermore, Tillich's understanding of the erotic, with its connotation of extravagance, passion, and embracing the fullness of life, also provides a basis for the concept, though not the content, of prosperity gospel. On the other hand, Tillich warns against the temptation of greed and idolatry (especially through the marks of sin, i.e., unbelief, hubris, and concupiscence). Idolatry is a turning away from the true and living God, and giving your devotion to a false god or a god of our own making. Tillich defines faith as the "state of being ultimately concerned."<sup>1</sup> The proper object of our deepest concern is the Ultimate, God. Tillich also says, "Only the concern with what is truly ultimate can stand against idolatrous concerns."<sup>2</sup> The type of idolatry we are confronting today is "money-theism."<sup>3</sup> Money-theism is the idolization of capital. It means abandoning the worship of the living God to worship the gods of the marketplace. Marketplace idolatry not only means turning away from the living God, but also the severing of human relationships and the denigration of the inherent worth of human beings. Human beings lose their value. "In this system people are measured in terms of their net worth, accumulated possessions, and incomes rather than their human worth, the quality of their character, and their spiritual depth."<sup>4</sup>

### Key Theological Aspects of Prosperity Gospel

The roots of prosperity gospel extend into the nineteenth century holiness emphasis on *faith healing* in the teachings of Charles Finney who argued that when we pray with specificity, in faith, then "faith always obtains the object."<sup>5</sup> Some mainline ministers and churches—Episcopalians, Baptists, and Presbyterians—also preached that healing is

available to believers in Christ. Kenneth Hagin popularized prosperity gospel concomitant to the charismatic renewal in the 1960s through televangelism. He influenced some of the most prominent and successful proponents of prosperity theology, e.g., Fredrick Price.

The fundamental themes of prosperity gospel are healing, prosperity, and positive confession.<sup>6</sup> Miraculous healing is available to anyone with the faith to claim it. Prosperity is associated with the idea that the kingdom of God is here on earth and believers must take back the good things of life from Satan and live prosperously.<sup>7</sup> Financial prosperity is a sign of God's favor on those with the requisite portion of faith. Positive confession conveys the idea that whatever we say without doubting will happen, and whatever we pray for, in faith, we will receive.

There are three theological essentials in prosperity theology: prior awareness of the promises of God before claiming them, obedience to God's commandments engenders prosperity, and an obedient believer has the power to claim authority over resources that have already been guaranteed by God. Other core doctrines that undergird prosperity theology focus on God and Jesus. God is the creator of the world—most importantly the creator of all wealth. Fredrick Price rephrases Genesis 1:1 as “In the beginning God created gold, silver, and diamonds, and said ‘it is very good.’”<sup>8</sup> The implication is that wealth is not an evil to be shunned, but rather a God-given inheritance to be embraced. In opposition to claims that Jesus was poor, Jesus is seen as the King of Heaven who receives gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh when he arrives on earth, financially sustains his disciples, and gives to the poor.<sup>9</sup> This gives believers further ground for pursuit of prosperity.<sup>10</sup>

Numerous principles of the prosperity gospel are in keeping with the foundational but often forgotten principles of the Christian tradition. There are many examples in Scripture proclaiming that the Christian life is the best possible life, filled with joy, abundance, and contentment.<sup>11</sup> We would be hard pressed to deny that there is a fundamental commitment to life and preservation of health imbedded within the Christian Scriptures and tradition. The Levitical health legislation attests to a deep concern for all that enhances life and wellbeing. Micah, chapter 4, and Revelation, chapter 22, give pictures of peace and prosperity. Jesus fuses health and salvation in his ministry by demonstrating the forgiveness of sin through physical and mental (demonic) healing.

These examples serve to illustrate and legitimate aspects of prosperity theology.

### Tillich, the Situation, and Prosperity Gospel

The “situation” is central to Tillichian theology. Tillich's method of correlation suggests that theology oscillates between two poles: the eternal truth and the temporal situation. In the method of correlation, the human situation is analyzed philosophically to determine the existential<sup>12</sup> questions that arise from it. Then, the Christian message is presented in a way that provides answers to those questions. This method is a theology of culture because it draws the existential questions from the philosophy, art, science, and social mores and institutions of the culture at large. What I believe we can see in Tillich is an honest attempt to make the Christian message relevant to modern society and to allow the human situation to reinterpret our understanding and presentation of the Christian tradition.

In *The Religious Situation*, Tillich speaks of the antagonism between religion and capitalism. He observes that the history of Protestantism has been closely connected to the spirit of capitalism.<sup>13</sup> In many ways, this was a religious response to a cultural phenomenon—the likes of which the world had not seen. Prosperity gospel is also a response to the spirit of capitalism as a way to overcome the antagonism between theology and capitalism. How do Christians live in capitalist society? American culture promotes the idea that “anyone with a dream, willing to work hard enough, can achieve success and fortune.” There are numerous examples of persons with far-fetched ideas becoming millionaires, even billionaires. It is difficult to ignore such possibilities, and one could hardly deny it is better to be financially secure in today's world.

The prosperity gospel is a type of theology of culture. It is a response to consistent conditions of poverty, and more importantly, the theological position that poverty is a sign of holiness or God's path of salvation. Tillich also rejects a “religious escapism that proclaims a transcendent security of eternal values in order to divert the masses from their present economic insecurity.”<sup>14</sup> It was once held, especially by Pentecostals, that poverty and holiness were synonymous.<sup>15</sup> Poverty, however, is not a condition that is easily accepted. With the growth of an affluent middle and upper-middle class, the link between poverty and holiness quickly diminished. Churches that promote prosperity gospel teach that

poverty is a curse of the devil and we have the power, through faith in the promises of God, to overcome poverty and live prosperously—prosperity being indicative of the Kingdom of God.

With economic systems around the world in utter disarray, the “shock of non-being” is felt by billions of people living in poverty on a daily basis, and lack access to quality, or even minimal, healthcare. How are they to make sense of their faith? Glib attempts to reduce prosperity gospel to mere spiritual provincialism are too myopic. Conditions of privation precipitate a theological response. Prosperity theology brings the reality and issues of poverty back into a place of centrality in theological conversations. Some theologians deny Christian theology has any bearing on politics or society.<sup>16</sup> Issues of poverty and socio-economic concerns are seen as superseding the foci of Christianity. For many evangelicals, the church’s mission is reconciling people to God and preparing them for heaven, not redeeming the economic and political world order. This stance “caused evangelicals to discard ideas of social transformation because it became stereotyped as a liberal doctrine.”<sup>17</sup> Prosperity gospel engages the issue of quality of life. Is it God’s will for poverty and disease to run rampant in the world? Is the church not obligated to respond to such conditions?

This is not to say that only those who suffer in poverty and oppression are enticed by prosperity gospel. The middle-class has become a dominant population in this movement.<sup>18</sup> Prosperity gospel was readily embraced by upwardly mobile, middle-class Christians who enjoyed a burgeoning consumer culture and an explosion of wealth spurred by Wall Street that produced unprecedented financial prosperity. Some Christian ministers enjoyed this economic boom as well. Does one renounce affluence or middle-class lifestyle in order to be in line with the ministry of Christ? Prosperity theology’s answer is it is not a sin to be wealthy or desire to be wealthy.<sup>19</sup> This is a position I wish to affirm; but I also agree with Tillich that economic security is not solely for the individual who receives it—a point often overlooked by the espousers of prosperity theology. Rather it is for “the advantage of everyone... [not] restricted and wasted by the profit interests of a controlling class and the struggle for power between different groups within a class.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Tillich, Health, and Prosperity Gospel**

Tillich often railed against supranaturalism in the Christian tradition. He reinterpreted (or in his view he sought to recover the original meaning) several religious terms that are prominent in the prosperity gospel movement, namely, miracles, faith, and healing. While miraculous healing is not novel in the Christian tradition, prosperity theology expands the implications of such healing. Prosperity gospel claims that God does not intend for any believer to suffer sickness.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, anyone who has faith can receive healing, as it is the right of every Christian to be blessed with good health, long life, and financial security. Proof of this is found in the fact that Jesus never refused to heal anybody throughout his ministry. Since the scriptures proclaim, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever,”<sup>22</sup> petitioning for healing today should not yield different results. It is not simply God’s will to heal, but it is God’s will that all be healed. This healing can only come by the activating of one’s faith.<sup>23</sup>

Tillich definitely advocated for healing of humanity in every aspect, i.e., the total person.<sup>24</sup> Tillich reminds us that the original meaning of salvation (from *salvus*) is “healing.”<sup>25</sup> The word *healing* means wholeness, health, sound, and wellbeing. Modern medicine and psychology play a role in the healing of humanity, and Tillich sought to clarify the role of faith in regards to healing. He says three things in regards to faith-healing (or magic healing): (1) it is not healing through faith but magic concentration; (2) it is justified in many human encounters, though it has destructive as well as creative possibilities; and (3) if it excludes other ways of healing in principle, it is predominately destructive.<sup>26</sup> There are positive and negative elements of faith healing. Faith healing includes, among other things, intensive prayer and intercession, which Tillich says, “belongs to the normal intercourse between God and humanity.” It has, however, the potential to prompt its participants to deny medicine and others means of legitimate healing.

Both prosperity gospel and Tillich remind us that the healing power of God through faith is real. We must be cautious, though, not to fall into a trap of supranaturalism whereby we disregard medicine, psychology, and other forms of healing. Disease as well as health is a part of life. It is a part of the human condition in its ambiguous and fragmented form. Tillich proposed a complex understanding of health and faith consisting of spiritual, historical, chemical, mechanical, psychological, and biological dimensions.<sup>27</sup> In the end faith healing does not ex-

press a state of being grasped by Spiritual Presence.<sup>28</sup> Tillich makes a distinction between a Spirit-determined prayer and a magical prayer. A Spirit-determined prayer brings one's concern for one's own well-being and the well-being of others to the fore, and is content whether the object of the prayer is granted or not. A magical prayer only sees God as a means of realizing the object of prayer. The goal of the magical prayer is not reunion with God.

### **Eros and Prosperity Gospel**

Tillich's understanding of the erotic can help us understand the framework of the prosperity gospel.<sup>29</sup> Tillich recovers "eros" within the Christian Tradition and uses it to demonstrate the connection between eros, justice, and spirituality in the life, witness, and mission of Christians.<sup>30</sup> In his sermon, "The Meaning of Joy," Tillich expresses sentiments akin to the prosperity gospel. He says, "As Christians... we are suspicious of the gifts of nature which contribute to joy."<sup>31</sup> By nature, Tillich means art, music, philosophy, in short, culture, and the natural world itself. These things represent gifts for life's pleasure and fulfillment. Tillich saw that many Christians sought to detest this kind of joy under the guise of false piety. A key characteristic of prosperity gospel is joy or "abundant living." Tillich expresses this in terms of blessedness.<sup>32</sup> Blessedness is not something strictly for some life after death. Instead, "Jesus will give His joy to His disciples now."<sup>33</sup> Like prosperity theology, Tillich's focus was on the present condition of humanity. We receive joy in this life, not some life after death. Wendy Farley articulates this characteristic of eros saying, "Desire, ever restless, ever yearning, ever hopeful, does not seek heaven to still its lust for pleasure eternally and completely. It does not stoically await paradise. It desires to live and to love the earth."<sup>34</sup>

At the same time, the prosperity gospel can lose sight of the prophetic tradition in Christian faith. Abundant living is not the overall goal of Christian life and faith. Tillich railed against the evils inherent in capitalistic society for the whole of his career. He invokes the *Protestant Principle* as a means of direct action against injustice. In this way, Tillich balances his understanding of eros. While eros speaks of extravagance and enjoyment of life, it also speaks of the connection of spirituality and justice. Tillich says that love is the foundation of all social and political power structures, the ultimate moral principle, and the source of all moral norms. The connection be-

tween love and justice (as morality) is not accidental. "Love in its erotic and libidinal qualities guides human beings toward the situation of encounter in which they experience the moral 'ought-to-be.'"<sup>35</sup> In other words, eros drives us towards working to bring about justice in our society. The principle of the transmoral motivation in Tillich's thought suggests that personal and communal justice is the path toward reunion with the divine.<sup>36</sup> Relation with God happens in part when we work towards justice in the world. Furthermore, the Tillichian conception of eros suggests we become fully human in our pursuit of justice because it is only when we have just dealings that there can be true human-to-human relationships.

### **Prosperity Distorted: Prosperity Theology and the "Marks of Sin"**

For all of its qualities of encouraging faith, financial stability, good health, and strong families, the gospel of prosperity has produced ills characteristic of Tillich's marks of sin. Jesus' is clear when he says one cannot serve God and mammon. Tillich is clear that faith is the state of being grasped by ultimate concern. Thus, the object of faith and theology must be God. The focus of prosperity gospel can easily turn from enhancing religious faith, enriching impoverished communities, and promoting healthy living to merely a grasp at wealth with theological justification. In other words, *mammon* has become ultimate concern. If we are consumed with the pursuit of wealth and health, then we have abandoned faith in God and relationships with others. In this form, prosperity gospel demonstrates the state of human estrangement from the ground of being.

Each of the marks of sin outlined by Tillich corresponds to some of the worst qualities of the gospel of prosperity. Unbelief is turning away from God with the totality of one's being. God is removed as the center of one's being. One's ultimate concern is no longer centered on the divine. Instead, ultimate concern is that of money, power, and status in society. Once the divine is removed from the center, the self replaces it with what Tillich calls hubris. "Hubris is the self-elevation of [a human being] into the sphere of the divine."<sup>37</sup> *Self* is too often the focus of prosperity theology. Few churches that ascribe to prosperity gospel concentrate on discipleship, justice, or evangelism. Emphasis is on *your* prosperity, *your* health, and *your* transformation. Sermons pander to these notions of personal prosperity in hopes



of influencing people to give generously (by faith) to these ministries. Even the extent of one's prosperity is predicated upon the centrality of the self. Jason Byassee shows how unnecessary God becomes in the teachings of Joel Osteen, for instance.<sup>38</sup> Emphasis is more on our positive attitudes, prayers of faith, and merits, then the power or grace of God.

One is tempted to become centered in oneself because this is "the position of drawing the whole of [one's] world into [one's self]."<sup>39</sup> The predilection of desiring unlimited abundance is concupiscence—the unlimited desire to draw the whole of reality into one's self. Tillich shows us that concupiscence is concomitant with hubris. With the self at the center "the skies are the limit" to what one can possess or gain by giving (tithes and offerings). Each person receives financial blessings, physical healing, or some other request in proportion to their "faith-giving." Concupiscence is present when the prosperity gospel is merely about the accumulation of wealth and material possessions. Giving becomes a way of amassing personal material wealth as opposed to community development or helping those who are impecunious. So we see the true sin is not possessing wealth, but when wealth and our desire to acquire unlimited power and prosperity replace God as our ultimate concern. This is the real meaning of Jesus statement about choosing between God and mammon.

### Tillich, Faith, and Prosperity Gospel

Finally, we see that Tillich can assist prosperity theology significantly with a deeper understanding of faith. Prosperity theology has a superficial perception of faith because faith is reduced to belief and positive thinking and confession. If we "truly believe" then Christ will give us all that we ask for. This includes healing, financial prosperity, and the power of positive confession. Yet *Christ demands that we live out our faith in every area of our lives*. This suggests that faith is a way of being. Thus, faith is not simply asking for prosperity and believing God will give it to you.

Tillich not only tells us what faith is as ultimate concern, but what faith is not. Central to this is the distinction between faith and belief. Faith is not the affirmation of something in spite of exiguous evidence or substantiation—this is belief. Proponents of prosperity gospel often exhort followers to maintain faith, especially in prayer, free of doubt—despite all evidence to the contrary of what one is asking for or

believes is possible. For example, how many were motivated into purchasing houses they could not afford because of a false sense of faith and hope?<sup>40</sup> "One of the worst errors of theology and popular religion is to make statements which intentionally contradict the structure of reality."<sup>41</sup> Such a meretricious attitude is indicative of belief, not faith.

Tillich also reveals that faith is not necessarily connected with blessings and prosperity. Life is ambiguous. The ambiguous life is filled with joy and pain, uncertainty and unpredictability, serenity and chaos, with only momentary glimpses of life free of ambiguity. Faith allows us to possess "the courage to be," the resolve to affirm life in the face of death, poverty, or disease.<sup>42</sup> The fact of the matter is faith and obedience to God *may* or *may not* lead to prosperous living. Prosperity theology gives the illusion that following its basic principles will always lead to financial abundance, good health, and success. This illusion must be jettisoned if prosperity theology hopes to espouse a valid interpretation of life and Christian faith.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1957), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith*, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice: Navigating the Path to Peace* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Groody, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> James Goff, Jr. "The Faith That Claims" in *Christianity Today*, 19 February 1990, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Bruce Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 1987), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> David L. Smith, *A Handbook of Contemporary Theology: Teaching Trends, Discerning Directions in Today's Theological Landscape* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1992), p. 197.

<sup>8</sup> Fredrick Price, *Prosperity: Good News for God's People* (Los Angeles: Faith One Publishing, 2008), p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Price, pp. 24-29.

<sup>10</sup> The socio-economic status of Jesus has become central to Christian theological discourse by way of lib-

eration theology. Peoples who have suffered oppression in various forms identify with the Jesus who also suffered oppression, poverty, and political disenfranchisement. By using the socio-economic status of Jesus, theologians seek to place Jesus within his historical context. But what does that context actually look like? Can we get a more accurate picture of Jesus' socio-economic condition? The depiction of Jesus as a Palestinian peasant is widely accepted among scholars. However, the definition of a peasant in Jesus' day is not so established. The term "peasant" allows multiple meanings. Furthermore, our modern image of a peasant is somewhat different from that of first century Palestine. In contrast to the modern American farmer, who is simply an agricultural entrepreneur and businessperson seeking a profit, the peasant does not run an enterprise in the modern economic sense, but rather a household. The issue is whether this depiction of peasant fit Jesus. If "peasant" refers to persons who tile soil and raise livestock, and Jesus is not portrayed as doing such, then in what sense was Jesus a peasant? At the very least, Jesus lived in, was economically connected with, and in some sense supported by an agrarian society.

For more on this discussion see John P. Meier. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> John 10:10; Deuteronomy 8:18

<sup>12</sup> Existential refers to that which is of ultimate importance to a person's being, or existence, and the way humanity as a whole expresses its deepest or ultimate concern.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Religious Situation* (New York: Meridian Books Inc, 1958), p. 191.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Spiritual Situation in Our Technical Society*, ed. by J. Mark Thomas (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1988), p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> Shayne Lee, "Prosperity Theology: T.D Jakes & the Gospel of the Almighty Dollar," *Crosscurrents*, Summer 2007, p. 227.

<sup>16</sup> See Edward Norman, *Christianity and World Order: The B.B.C. Reith Lectures* (Oxford University Press, 1979).

<sup>17</sup> Peter Wagner, *Dominion: How Kingdom Action Can Change the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books Publishers, 2008), p. 49.

<sup>18</sup> Shayne Lee, "Prosperity Theology: T.D Jakes & the Gospel of the Almighty Dollar," pp. 228-229.

<sup>19</sup> Isaac Phiri and Joe Maxwell, "Gospel Riches: Africa's Rapid Embrace of Prosperity Pentecostalism Provokes Concern- and Hope," *Christianity Today*, July 2007, p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> Tillich, *The Spiritual Situation in Our Technical Society*, p. 20.

<sup>21</sup> David L. Smith, *A Handbook of Contemporary Theology: Teaching Trends, Discerning Directions in Today's Theological Landscape* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1992), p. 195.

<sup>22</sup> Hebrews 13:8

<sup>23</sup> Smith, p. 196.

<sup>24</sup> Systematic Theology vol. 3, p. 277.

<sup>25</sup> Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology vol. II: Existence and the Christ* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pg. 166.

<sup>26</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology vol. 3*, p. 279.

<sup>27</sup> See Paul Tillich, *The Meaning of Health: The Relation of Religion and Health* Edited by Paul Lee (North Atlantic Books, 1981) and Paul Tillich, "The Meaning of Health," in *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine 5* (Autumn 1961).

<sup>28</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology vol. 3*, p. 280.

<sup>29</sup> Tillich defines love as the "urge, desire, or drive toward the reunion of that which is separated." See Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, & Justice: Ontological Analysis and Ethical Applications* (Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 25. To explicate the nature of "love" Tillich uses several Greek terms: libido (the movement of the needy towards that which fulfils the need), philia (the movement of the equal towards reunion with the equal), eros (the movement of that which is lower in power and meaning toward that which is higher), and agape (affirms the other unconditionally and is universal).<sup>29</sup> Tillich believed that although agape transcends the other forms of love, libido, philia, and eros are not inherently evil. Furthermore, agape needs eros and eros needs agape. Properly understood, eros is the "source of every movement in the world." It is the source of human-to-human relationships, as well as, human-divine relations. See Alexander Irvin, *Eros Toward the World: Paul Tillich and the Theology of the Erotic* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), pp. 8-9.

<sup>30</sup> Alexander Irvin, *Eros Toward the World: Paul Tillich and the Theology of the Erotic* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> Paul Tillich, "The Meaning of Joy" in *The New Being* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p.143.

<sup>32</sup> Tillich, "The Meaning of Joy", pp. 150-151.

<sup>33</sup> Tillich, "The Meaning of Joy", p. 150.

<sup>34</sup> Wendy Farley, *The Wounding and Healing of Desire: Weaving Heaven and Earth* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), p. 15.

<sup>35</sup> Irvin, p. 64.

<sup>36</sup> Irvin, p. 67.

<sup>37</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology vol. 2*, p. 50.

<sup>38</sup> Jason Byassee, "The Health and Wealth Gospel: Be Happy." *Christian Century*, 12 July 2005, p. 21.

<sup>39</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology vol. 2*, p. 52.

<sup>40</sup> One has to wonder about the role prosperity gospel played in the current housing crisis. How many times did ministers encourage congregants to purchase homes they could not afford based on the principles of prosperity theology?

<sup>41</sup> Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith*, p. 34.

<sup>42</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 172.

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