

The Unity and Contrast between Gustaf Aulen's and L. Harold DeWolf's Christology II

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CHAPTER 9

THE ATONEMENT

From the beginning of Christianity and down through the ages the Cross has been the center of the Christian faith and at the climax of preaching wherever the Christian gospel has gone. Because the essence of Christianity is characterized by the fact that its entire content is referred to and defined by the act of God in Christ, the Cross summarized the totality of his life and work.

Comparing the doctrine of the Atonement of Gustaf Aulen with that of L. H. DeWolf, we can find the same emphasis on the fact that Christianity has rightly seen in the crucifixion of Christ not only a manifestation of human loyalty, courage, and loving sacrifice, but also a revelation of God's love, and that God's power was revealed over death, making the resurrection an essential part of Christ's redemptive work. Though both theologians agree in the above mentioned important points of the Atonement, they have different emphases. Aulen's first concern is always with the sovereign love, the way to fellowship with God which is God's way to man, while DeWolf extends Aulen's vertical emphasis to the horizontal which is man's repentance. As far as the doctrine of the Atonement is concerned, the classical view of the Atonement is exclusively stressed in Aulen and the moral theory is comparatively stressed in DeWolf. But both Aulen and DeWolf concentrate their theology on divine love. God is love and love suffers with the suffering beloved. Indeed, it bears all things endures all

things.¹ The suffering love is at the same time the victorious and Sovereign love.²

We shall see Aulen's viewpoint first. DeWolf's viewpoint next, and finally the unity and contrast between both of them.

1. The Doctrine of the Atonement of Gustaf Aulen

Bishop Aulen is the foremost writer of the Lundensian School. He owes much to the renewed study of Luther in the twentieth century. It is no doubt that the interpretation of Luther today is truer and more accurate than it has been in any previous century.

The method adopted by Aulen is usually historical. It is in the pursuit of what is essentially and more fully Christian than Luther's main object lay, according to Aulen, in emphasizing "classic" Christianity to the exclusion of foreign elements which have compromised its purity. At no time did Luther desire to found a new religion or a new church he only wished to reveal what had been obscured.³

The most important contribution is the concept of revelation which is basic in modern and present Swedish theology, whether viewed historically or systematically. Divine revelation is dynamic over against all static historicism and intellectualism. Divine revelation is self-impartation, from above, never from below. Revelation is the divine activity. Christ is the victor against the forces of evil which hinder the realization of his will. The cross stands as the decisive victory by virtue of which the ongoing struggle in the loves of men may be assured a triumphant outcome. Thus the drama of the cross is re-enacted in each human soul—but with a difference, for the victory there was the decisive one.⁴ Thus divine revelation is once and for all in the fact of Jesus Christ but at the same time is continually active everytime. This kind of Christocentric and dynamic theology is the characteristic of Aulen's theology.

For Aulen the essence of Christianity is characterized by the

fact that its entire content is referred to and defined by the act of God in Christ. According to the viewpoint of Christian faith there is no way from man to God, no way in which man could gradually strive upward to the divine. The way to fellowship with God is God's way to man. Through the fact of Jesus Christ the act of reconciliation and victory of the self-sacrificing, divine love is revealed. The divine love re-establishes the broken fellowship between God and man through that act of forgiveness that creates faith.

The act of God in Christ has two aspects. The revelation of God is from one point of view, once and for all accomplished in Christ, and finished through the cross. The Christian fellowship between God and man is once and for all defined by the revelation of God in Christ. The reconciliation between God and man is here once and for all established. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19). The victory over the powers hostile to God has been won once and for all.

From another point of view, the work of divine love is a constantly continuous work, the work of *Kyrios-Christus* and of the Spirit, the Life-giver. The victory over the forces hostile to God is won anew in a struggle. This victory is just the finished act which is, in the present, continually realized anew.

(a) Three Types of the Atonement

Aulen differentiates the 'classic' idea of the Atonement, which is his own idea, from the scholastic and the idealistic theories, which are misleading. The scholastic type has been called objective, and the idealistic type subjective.⁵

1) The Classic Idea of the Atonement:

Aulen defines the classic idea of the Atonement by saying that "the divine act is unabridged and the order of justice breached."⁶ This type of view may be described provisionally as the 'dramatic.' The central theme is the idea of the Atonement as a Divine conflict and victory; Christ—*Christ Victor*—fights against and triumphs over the evil powers of the world, the

'tyrants' under which mankind is in the bondage and suffering, and in Him God reconciles the world to Himself. Thus, says Aulen,

First... certainly it describes a work of salvation, a drama of salvation; but this salvation is at the same time an Atonement in the full sense of the word, for it is a work wherein God reconciles the world to Himself, and is at the same time reconciled. The background of the idea is dualistic; God is pictured as in Christ carrying through a victorious conflict against powers of evil which are hostile to His will.⁷

Therefore, seen from this side, the triumph over the opposing powers is regarded as a reconciling of God Himself; He is reconciled by the very act in which He reconciled the world to Himself.

Secondly, this classic idea of the Atonement is sharply distinct from both the other types. The most marked difference between the classic idea and the so-called 'objective' type lies in the following fact.

It presents the work of Atonement or reconciliation as from first to last a work of God Himself, a continuous Divine work; while according to the other view (the objective type), the act of Atonement had indeed its origin in God's will, but is, in its carrying-out, an offering made to God by Christ as man and on man's behalf, and may therefore be called a discontinuous Divine work.⁸

The classic idea is sharply distinct from the subjective type also. Here, even more than in the objective type, the emphasis is placed on human activity, and consequently this viewpoint represents, even as far as Christ is concerned, a line from below upward, from man to God. Thus, says Aulen,

The idealistic theory of the Atonement is sharply critical of the legalistic aspect of the scholastic theory. But this does not mean a breach in the order of justice along the line of the classical theory, but in reality only that legalism is replaced by a moralistic and ethical point of view, since the emphasis is shifted from the divine act to that which is accomplished by man.⁹

Thus through the historical survey of the Atonement, Aulen finds

the classic idea is the dominant idea of the Atonement in the New Testament, throughout the early church period and the ruling idea of the Atonement for the first thousand years of Christian history, though it is expressed in a variety of forms, not all of which are equally fruitful. Against the Latine doctrine which belongs to the West and becomes the dominant form of the doctrine of the Atonement in the West in the Middle ages, Luther returns to the classic type. But after the Reformation, the classic idea dropped almost out of sight in the sphere of theology. And Aulen says,

It has been the common assumption that the other two types of doctrine were the only possible forms which the Christian doctrine of the Atonement can take. Nevertheless, the classic idea has never wholly died out; it was too deeply rooted in the classical formulae of Christianity to be completely lost. It reappears from time to time in the hymnody of a Wesley in England or a *Grundtvig* in Denmark.¹⁰

According to Aulen, it is the outstanding characteristic of the theological situation today that "in many ways and on many sides the humanistic outlook which has been dominant for nearly two hundred years is being fundamentally challenged."¹¹ Through the dialectical theology of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner a door appears to stand open for the classic idea to come again to the fore. Thus according to Aulen, the classic viewpoint of the Atonement which was dominant in the New Testament and through the early church, reappeared by the effort of Luther and again reappears in present day Neo-orthodoxy.

What is the fundamental theme of the Atonement in the New Testament? Aulen answers it is the struggle and victory of the divine will through Christ. The divine will carries out its purpose through a bitter struggle with hostile forces. Christ carries on the struggle of the divine will against the evil powers, those demonic powers which have enslaved man. The cross is the victory over these powers. Thus Paul regards sin, death, and demonic powers as the enemies whom Christ has defeated.¹²

On the one side, it (the Law) is "holy and righteous and good"; on the other, "the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law" (I Cor. 15:56), and "as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse" (Gal. 3:10).¹³

As a destructive power the law, too, has been overcome by Christ.¹⁴ Christ is "the end of the law" (Rom. 10:4). The triumph of Christ over the hostile powers is essential to Paul's thought.

The decisive victory has been won already; Christ has assumed His power and reigns till at last all His enemies are subjected to Him. His victory avails for all mankind: He is the Head of the new spiritual humanity. As through Adam sin entered into the world, and death through sin, so through the Second Adam comes deliverance from sin's power and newness of life. We are dead with Christ, we are risen with Christ: He died for all, and rose again; "He was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). His work is for our sake, and it has vicarious efficacy.¹⁵

This same theme of a redemptive act which has occurred in and through the victory of Christ over the destructive powers appears in the other New Testament writings. For instance in the Johannine writings the dualistic feature appears exceptionally strong and serves as a background to the acts of conflict and victory of Christ. The purpose of the revelation and work of Christ is to vanquish an obscure power hostile to God and dethrone the devil.

Thus the thought of Christ's struggle with, and victory over, the destructive powers occurs in constantly new variations in the whole Bible.

This theme dominates the viewpoint of the ancient church. For instance, the teaching of Irenaeus forms a thoroughly typical example of that view of the Atonement. Firstly, the work of Atonement is regarded as carried through by God Himself. It is the Word of God incarnate who overcomes the tyrants which hold man in bondage; God Himself enters into the world of sin and death, that He may reconcile the world to Himself. Therefore Incarnation and Atonement stand in no sort of antithesis;

rather, they belong inseparably together. It is God's Love, the Divine *Agape*, that creates a new relation between the human race and Himself. Secondly, this view of the Atonement has a dualistic background—namely, the reality of forces of evil, which are hostile to the divine will. Thus the work of Atonement is depicted in dramatic terms, as a conflict with the powers of evil and a triumph over them. This involves a necessary double-sidedness, in that God is at once the Reconciler and the Reconciled.¹⁶

This classic idea of the Atonement is the dominant view of the Western as of the Eastern Fathers. But during the Middle Ages this theme was more or less pushed aside. It is Luther who expressed the classic idea of the Atonement with greater force than any before him. "From the side-line of the Latin theory he bends right back to the main line, making a direct connection with the teaching of the New Testament and the Fathers."¹⁷ Thus, says Aulen,

It is significant that Luther not only regards the ancient triad, sin, death, and the devil, as destructive powers, but includes also the law (as Paul did) and wrath, the divine wrath. Through this insight of Luther, Christian faith is able to view the work of Christ under the most profound perspective.¹⁸

Firstly, there is a continuity of Divine operation. Almighty God Himself steps in and carries through His work to victory. Secondly, the Atonement is once again closely connected with the Incarnation. All depends on the assertion that it is God Himself who in Christ overcomes the tyrants. Thus the Deity of Christ is not a bare metaphysical dogma; for in the work of redemption the actual agent is no other and no less than God's own Blessing, Righteousness, and Life. Thirdly, "the whole view is dualistic and dramatic. The description is of a stupendous conflict, a *mirabile duellum*, in which Christ prevails."¹⁹ Another important thought of Luther is the wrath of God which is God's direct and immediate reaction to sin and, at the same time, is a destructive power and a tyrant, even the worst of all tyrants. Thus, Aulen says,

The overcoming of wrath means....that the inmost nature of God, the divine love, "the blessing" makes a way for itself through wrath, "the curse." This occurs when Christ submits to wrath and bears the burden it imposes, or, in other words, through the self-giving sacrifice of love. Divine wrath is thus "reconciled", it is, so to speak, fused with love. But this act of Atonement through which wrath is reconciled is at the same time a divine act, the act of divine love itself.²⁰

Thus God is reconciled in that he reconciles the world unto Himself through the self-giving sacrifice of love. The classic theory comes out with greater clearness; at every point Luther's theology is strong in its refusal of a rational scholasticism and Latin theory.

2) The Scholastic Theory of the Atonement:

The fundamental character of the scholastic theory of the Atonement is: "an unimpaired order of justice and an impaired act of God."²¹ Anselm and later scholasticism are the examples of this theory. God is simply the object of reconciliation and nothing more.

Thus, Aulen says,

The whole object of his (Anselm's) argument is to show how the Man appears who is able to give the satisfaction which God absolutely demands. The satisfaction must be made by man; and this is precisely what is done in Christ's atoning work.²²

Thus it is essential to the theory of Anselm that the Incarnation and the Atonement are not organically connected together, as they were in the classic view. God is the author of the plan and He has sent His Son and ordered it so that the required satisfaction shall be made. Nevertheless, it is not in the full sense God's work of redemption. The doctrine of Anselm requires a broken line between Incarnation and Redemption; or, "the line that leads downwards may be shown as made crossed by a line leading from below upwards, to represent the satisfaction made to God by

Christ as man.”²³ Thus the double-sidedness characteristic of the classic idea has disappeared.

Thus, Aulen says,

At the decisive point in the act of reconciliation, the rendering of satisfaction, the emphasis is placed on the service which Christ *qua homo* renders. But the act of God is thereby impaired. The Atonement is no longer, as in the classical theory, that act in which God at the same time reconciles and is reconciled, but on the contrary, partly a divine work and partly a compensation which God as man offers to God on behalf of man. In this way also the order of justice is preserved unimpaired. The whole theory indicates that the work of reconciliation is securely placed within the system of legal justice.²⁴

In this theory it is in the payment of the required satisfaction that the continuity of Divine operation is lost; for the satisfaction is offered by Christ as man, as the sinless Man on behalf of the sinners. At the same time the Atonement is still in some sense the work of God, since He is regarded as planning the Atonement; therefore, also, the doctrine does not require that there is any change in God's attitude to men. Thus the scholastic theory makes God “stand more at a distance; for the satisfaction is paid by man, in the person of Christ, to God.”²⁵ Thus the essential Christian idea of a way of God to men, which dominates the classic type, is weakened in this theory.

3) The Idealistic Theory of the Atonement:

In this type of theory, the idea of the Atonement as an act of God is more completely set aside. Here Jesus is dealt with as the religious “archetype” of humanity, “the ideal man,” or the Incarnation of the religious and moral ideal. And Aulen says,

Here, even more than in the scholastic type, the emphasis is placed on human activity, and consequently this viewpoint represents, even as far as Christ is concerned, a line from below upward, from man to God. The idealistic theory of the Atonement is sharply critical of the legalistic aspect of

the scholastic theory. But this does not mean a breach in the order of justice along the line of the classical theory, but in reality only that legalism is replaced by a moralistic and ethical point of view, since the emphasis is shifted from the divine act to that which is accomplished by man.²⁶

We find Abelard in this line though he does not follow this line consistently. Abelard attacked the imagery of the classic idea of the Atonement and its dualistic outlook, as well as Anselm's theory.

On the one hand, he refused to allow the idea of the Atonement to be connected in any way with the devil (as the classic theory); on the other, he sought to prove the impossibility of the idea of satisfaction, for if Adam's lesser fault required such a satisfaction, how much greater ought to be the satisfaction demanded by sins against Christ!²⁷

His emphasis is on the fact that Christ is the great Teacher and Example, who arouses responsive love in men; this love is the basis on which reconciliation and forgiveness rest.

The idealistic theory of the Atonement had survived the assaults of the Enlightenment, and had succeeded in gathering its forces to make a more vigorous resistance in the nineteenth century, especially in Schleiermacher's and Ritschl's theology. This type of view is characterized by opposition to the Latin scholastic theory. It criticizes especially the notion that God needs in any sense to be reconciled or that His attitude to mankind should be changed; any such assertion is inconsistent with His Love. "Hence the Love of God is maintained, with a denial of any sort of tension or opposition between God's mercy and His justice."²⁸ At the same time this view assumes an influence upon God from man's side greater than the scholastic theory. Thus says Aulen,

The extent to which 'Atonement' is effected depends upon that which is done in and by men, on their penitence, their conversion; therefore God's attitude to men is really made to depend on men's attitude to God. The case is not different when Christ and His work comes under consideration. The

effort of Christ's work is that God, seeing the character of Christ, and His place as the Representative Man, gains a new and more hopeful view of humanity.²⁹

Thus in the idealistic theory, the Atonement is no longer regarded as in any true sense carried out by God. Rather, the Reconciliation is the result of some process that takes place in man, such as conversion and amendment. "Christ's work is no longer thought of as the work of God for man's salvation: He is rather the perfect Example, the Ideal Man, the Head of the race." Thus the Atonement is a matter of an approach of man to God, from below upwards, and not of an approach of God to man. "Reconciliation is throughout a work of God. To Christian faith the matter appears thus, that God is reconciled in and through his reconciliation of the world unto himself."³⁰

Through his survey of the history of the Atonement, he makes clear the fact that the classical theory of the Atonement stands in intimate relation to the central content of this confession: the Incarnation of divine love in Christ. "This connection is evidenced by the fact that the Atonement is throughout the work of divine love, and that it cannot be accomplished by any other power."³¹ Both the scholastic and the idealistic theory broke this connection.

From the point of view of the conception of God, the classical theory has a twofold tension. "In the first place, God is sovereign, but he is also the God who engaged in a struggle under historical conditions. In the second place, God struggles against hostile powers, but among them are also powers which represent and dispense divine judgement."³² The principal point of view is that divine love wins the victory through self-giving and sacrifice. In the scholastic theory this tension is rationalized and in the idealistic theory there is no tension, and the concept of God has been humanized.

(b) Aulen's Insistence

As we have seen already, Aulen insists upon the classical

theory. The Atonement includes both objective and subjective elements. Thus in regard to the classic theory it is clear that this is to an eminent degree "objective," since the finished work of Christ appears to faith as something objectively given, while it is just as clear that it contains a subjective element, since the divine act of reconciliation continually realizes itself anew in human life.³³

Then what are the main characteristics of Aulen's idea of the Atonement? We shall see them in the following four points: the work of divine love, *Christus Victor*, *propter Christum* and the continuous work of Christ.

1) The Work of Divine Love:

Faith receives the work finished on the cross as a divine deed, an act of divine love. The Christian faith is the fellowship with God which is based entirely on divine love and is established entirely through its activity. This is of the most vital significance for the Christian faith.

The finished work of Christ is that divine act whereby God established reconciliation between himself and the world. It is of the nature of salvation. Thus, says Aulen,

The essential character of salvation is a reconciliation, the re-establishment of a broken fellowship between God and the world. Since the fellowship has been broken by the hostile power of evil, the reconciliation implies the destruction and subjugation of that power which separates God and the world. Faith perceives the divine act in Christ primarily as an act of reconciliation and redemption.³⁴

The essential element in the fellowship created by the work of Christ is that God here seeks sinful man and enters into communion with him. Thus, says Aulen,

The inmost character of the Christian conception of God is determined by Christ and his work. This implies that here faith finds the God who seeks and enters into communion with sinful man; or, in other words, a love which destroys

that system in which legalism and rationalism would incorporate the relationship between God and man. This explosive power of love is a fundamental Christian theme.³⁵

The distinctive mark of this love is that it creates a fellowship between God and man which is different from that which is based on reason and law. Divine love descends to and enters into communion with sinful man and is not a rationally motivated idea obtained by reflection on the nature of the world and human life.

This divine love is spontaneous and self-giving. God's love is always prevenient. Its cause is not something outside of God, but in God himself and in his nature. And the spontaneous, divine love appears to faith as self-giving. There is for man no way to God except the way of the cross. "In the Christian conception of Christ the spontaneous self-giving of divine love appears most clearly, both in the fact that this love has descended into the human world and accepted its conditions, and also that it has thus given the supreme sacrifice."³⁶ Thus Paul says, "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Divine love is therefore definable as "absolutely sovereign, spontaneous, and ungrounded free from all calculations."³⁷

2) *Christus Victor*:

What is *Christus Victor*? Aulen answers:

This finished work appears to faith first of all as a victory over those demonic powers which enslaved humanity, and is, therefore, the victorious intervention of the divine will. Since, however, these destructive powers are in part an expression of the divine judgment, the victory implies not only an altered situation for humanity, but also an act whereby God is reconciled in and through his reconciliation.³⁸

Here the fundamental idea of struggle and victory is revealed. The divine will carries out its purpose through a bitter struggle with hostile forces. Christ carries on the struggle of the divine will against the evil powers, those demonic powers which have

enslaved man. The cross is the victory over these powers. The cross is the chief Christian symbol because it is a symbol of victory. Thus suffering love is at the same time victorious and sovereign love. The background is the divine will and the forces opposed to it. Thus, says Aulen,

Christ stands as the warrior and victor of the divine will in the struggle against the evil powers in every form....Christ wins the victory in apparent defeat and triumphs in his death. Divine love is victorious in self-giving and sacrifice.³⁹

The victory of Christ through himself-giving is the means whereby God reconciles the world unto himself and is at the same time reconciled.

With Paul and Luther, Aulen deals with the law and wrath as destructive powers. The law cannot save man from the power of sin. Thus the victory over the law means that divine love in Christ breaks through the legal order of justice and establishes a new order in the relationship between God and man.

According to Aulen, wrath is God's direct and immediate reaction to sin and, at the same time, a destructive power and a tyrant, even the worst of all tyrants. Thus the overcoming of wrath means that the inmost nature of God, the divine love, makes a way for itself through wrath, the curse. This occurs when Christ submits to wrath and bears the burden it imposes, through the self-giving sacrifice of love itself. Thus, says Aulen.

This act of Atonement through which wrath is reconciled is at the same time a divine act, and act of divine love itself.⁴⁰

God is reconciled in that he reconciles the world unto himself through the self-giving sacrifice of love.

3) Propter Christum:

Through the evidence of the Bible it is clear that the work of Christ was "for us," "for our sake."⁴¹ This self-giving of love "for our sake" is firmly connected with divine love. The struggle and victory of Christ over the demonic forces have

occurred for our sake, for our salvation and redemption. Thus our situation is what it is *propter Christum*. Divine love in Christ has done what no human power could accomplish. When God meets man with reconciling and forgiving love, it is only through Christ and *propter Christum*.

Man's unworthiness, man's sin is over his only quality before God. On this basis God's free, spontaneous, unmotivated *agape* creates a divine fellowship. The Atonement is God's work in man, God's activity in man. *Propter Christum* man is completely forgiven, but this forgiveness is also fellowship in spite of man's sin, and as such increase man's sense of guilt. Thus nothing is more essential to Christian faith than the conviction that this suffering love is at the same time a victorious and, in relation to evil, a sovereign love. Nothing is more vital to Christian faith than that the act of reconciliation in Christ is a victory. By the fact of Christ alone, God restored the broken relationship between Himself and man.⁴²

Thus in the classical view, God reveals himself in constant conflict with the forces that oppose him. In this conflict he shows himself to be the omnipotent Sovereign. There is a tension within God's own nature, between his righteousness, justice, wrath, and his love. It is characteristic of the classic type to set wrath and love against one another. God's victory is a victory of love over wrath, as well as a victory of God over the devil. The scholastic view substitutes retributive justice for the wrath of God. It too speaks of a tension in God's nature, but the tension is resolved differently. Instead of love overcoming retributive justice, it is made to serve retributive justice. The demand of justice prescribes what love must do before it is free to operate. After justice has been satisfied, love may function without any infringement of the legal demands. In the idealistic view, there is no tension within God to be overcome. God is pure love, defined in such a way that God's radical opposition to evil is eliminated.

The Atonement, according to Aulen, that is, to the classical view, is a "movement of God to man," and God is "personally engaged in the work of man's deliverance."⁴³

4) The Continuous Work of Christ:

The work of Christ was finished on the cross but, at the same time, it continually occurs.

The continuous work of Christ receives its content from the finished work, and implies a realization of the latter. In his continuous work Christ appears as the Lord of the Christian life, as *Kyrios*. The existence of this life is *propter Christum* as well as in *Christo*.⁴⁴

Faith in Christ stands inseparably connected with Christ as the one who is active in the present. Without this contemporaneity, faith in Christ would be reduced to an intellectual assent to certain events in ancient history, or to certain "religious ideas" formulated and delivered in the past. The contemporaneity of faith in Christ characterizes the entire life and culture of the Christian church. Faith affirms the presence of Christ and in a variety of expressive figures has declared: *in ipsa fide Christus adest* (in faith itself Christ is present). We need only remind ourselves how strongly this is emphasized in primitive Christianity. Christ is the Head, we are the members; Christ is the vine, we are the branches; our life is a life in Christ—it is no longer I that live but Christ liveth in me, we must abide in Christ as he abides in us. This presence of Christ is the foundation on which the whole cultus of the church is based. Thus, says Aulen,

The victory of divine love through self-giving is continually realized in the present. It is realized in a continuous struggle. Luther describes very drastically how Christ always "beats and chokes" in us those enemies which were the object of the one decisive struggle, and how he thus appears as *Kyrios*, as my Lord.⁴⁵

The work of the Atonement once finished is continually realized anew in the heart of the believers. The victory is an "eternal"

victory, and therefore also a victory in the present. Therefore, the existence of the Christian life is both *propter Christum* and *in Christo*.⁴⁶

Everything depends on the finished work of divine love in Christ; from this point of view the watchword *propter Christum* is unconditionally valid. But everything depends also on the work which is continually being done in the hearts of man.

Thus that which we call the struggle of faith is nothing else than the struggle of the living God to realize his dominion. This struggle continues through the ages, and in the midst of it stands Christ as the great Victor whose struggle and victory are on our behalf, and of whose fullness we all receive—grace for grace (John 1:16). Salvation is entirely the creative act of divine love; we are redeemed *sola gratia*, through God's *agape* alone.

The activity of divine love is the sole foundation of faith, therefore faith is completely a work of God and a divine gift. This does not exclude, but rather includes, the fact that faith involves the whole volitional activity of man. From this point of view faith is a turning and a commitment to God. The slogan "by faith alone" is a genuinely Christian watchword since it rejects the thought that this activity implies "human merit" or service and that it therefore is rooted in something other than God's subduing love, (*sola gratia*).⁴⁷

Thus divine revelation is understood by paradoxical statements. The divine revelation expresses itself in a struggle against that which opposes the divine will; but it is at the same time a revelation of that God who transcends all strife. Revelation is fulfilled in Christ, but at the same time is continually in progress. Thus divine revelation is interpreted in a dynamic and dramatic way by Aulen.

2. The Doctrine of the Atonement of L. Harold DeWolf

Though DeWolf and Aulen both stress the centrality of the Cross in the Christian faith, DeWolf criticizes Neo-orthodoxy which has been weak in building a constructive program of hopeful

action and which stresses man's sinfulness more than his capacity for goodness and for communion with God.⁴⁸ His main interest passes from the transcendent character of the Atonement to the horizontal, immanent character of the Atonement. Consequently, the moralistic idea of the Atonement is emphasized though his insistence on it is not so strong as Aulen's on the classical view.

Concerning the understanding of the Atonement in the New Testament, both theologians are contrasted sharply, because DeWolf shows us various aspects of the Atonement in it while Aulen concentrates upon one viewpoint: the dualistic, dynamic viewpoint in it.

In spite of the identity of the emphasis on the divine act of Atonement through Jesus Christ, Aulen's main interest depends on the giving side while DeWolf's depends on the receiving side.

(a) DeWolf's interpretation of the doctrine of the Atonement

DeWolf explains the Atonement in the New Testament and various aspects of its doctrine and emphasizes the moral theory rather than others though he does not neglect them entirely.

1) His interpretation of the Atonement in the New Testament :

According to DeWolf, the New Testament writers do not give us a systematic doctrine of the Atonement. From the beginning, even without a developed theory about the cross, the early Christians accepted the crucified and risen Jesus as the Son of God, supreme revelation of the Father and of the true way of life for men.

Having accepted Jesus, they experienced a release from the guilt of sin and the fear of death, with a new eruption of love and joy, which changed all of life. The whole New Testament and the existence of the church which produced it are testimonies to this cleansing and creative experience.⁴⁹

In the Synoptic Gospels, there is scarcely any teaching concerning what was to be or was accomplished by his passion and death. "It is described as fulfillment of prophecy....and it is

repeatedly linked closely with the resurrection.”⁵⁰ What had Jesus’ death accomplished? DeWolf answers,

The solution at which Paul arrived was that Christ had been substituted for sinful men. All sinners, that is all human beings excepting Jesus, had been doomed, under the Law, to suffering and death. But the sinless Christ, sent from God to save His people, suffered and died in their place and so reconciled men with God. Hence, as God raised him from the dead He granted to all who would have faith in him the gift of victorious everlasting life as “heirs of God and fellow heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.”⁵¹

While Aulen concentrates on the dualistic and dramatic side of Paul’s point of view, DeWolf mentions Paul’s insistence on substitution of Jesus Christ for sinful men. “He (Paul) affirms his conviction ‘that one has died for all; therefore all have died,’ but the conclusion hardly follows from the one premise given and he supplies no explanation.”⁵²

In the Letter to the Hebrews the theme of Christ’s death as as the expiation of men’s sins is taken up again but placed in the setting of the ancient sacrificial system. The author of this letter sums up with the statement,

Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. But Christ has now come to complete and end the whole system of priestly sacrifice by sacrificing himself once for all.⁵³

This is a kind of sacrificial theory like the “Lamb of God” theory in the fourth Gospel. In the Johannine writings Jesus is referred to as the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,”⁵⁴ but the idea is not a developed theory of the cross and no further explanation of the way in which the cross saves men from sin is attempted.

Thus we can say that “it is evident that the New Testament writers do not give us a systematic doctrine of Atonement. In their various ways they do testify to the experience of the first

Christians. That testimony to experience has much more importance for the discovery of the truth concerning the cross than have the partial explanations and analogies which the ancient writers provide."⁵⁵ Thus DeWolf's conclusion is that without a developed theory about the cross, Christian accepted the crucified and risen Jesus as the Son of God, supreme revelation of the Father and of the true way of life for men.

2). His interpretation of three types of the Atonement:

DeWolf classifies innumerable theories concerning the efficacy of the cross under three types as Aulen does. They are called dualistic doctrines, doctrines of substitutionary Atonement and moral theories.

a. Dualistic Doctrines:

This type of theory represented the cross as a means by which God overcame the power of Satan. Thus, says DeWolf,

It was obvious to defenders of the ransom theory that the resurrection of Jesus had the effect of canceling and more than canceling the ransom price. Hence, God was regarded as having deceived the great deceiver....When this teaching appeared to bring the character of God into question, it was later claimed that the deception was actually accomplished by Satan himself.⁵⁶

According to DeWolf, such views, representing a personal devil as source of all evil and fallen man as having passed from the control of God into his nefarious mastery, to be released only by divine bargaining or deception, "are so dualistic and represent such an uncritical and incomplete form of theism as to be clearly dated and worthy only of historical consideration."⁵⁷ Thus DeWolf does not support the classical viewpoint as Aulen does. He takes it as a crude dualistic theory, though even he realizes that this viewpoint does rightly recognize that it is human involvement in sin which is the one real barrier in the way of our reconciliation to God.

b. Doctrines of Substitutionary Atonement:

This type of theory was formulated by Anselm and defended by Hugo Grotius as the governmental theory. According to both typical theories, it is God who is regarded as decreeing the punishment and accepting the substitute. "Such a view may morally exalt the Christ who died, but it cannot escape the attributing of an unethical personal indifference to the God who decrees the death."⁵⁸

According to Anselm's doctrine, the work of the cross has to do solely with the relationship between men and God and Satan has no part in the transaction. Thus DeWolf explains it:

The honor of God is infinite, so the satisfaction must likewise be infinite. Infinite satisfaction is impossible for finite men, so as far as their own powers are concerned they face an endless and inescapable estrangement from God. But God in His infinite love assumed human nature and this God-Man by his death rendered for man the infinite satisfaction required.⁵⁹

A modification of the penal theory is the governmental theory formulated by Hugo Grotius. He argues that God is primarily concerned with the well-being of all his subjects. He loves all beings and so desires to forgive them their sins and reconcile all to Himself. Thus God gave His Son to die as a substitutionary recipient of the punishment deserved by sinful men because they will see that sin is a barrier to a harmonious relationship with Him. In this way He gave such an example of the penalty of sin as to impress upon men its awful meaning and consequences. DeWolf says:

The governmental theory avoids the ethically indefensible notions implied in appeals to divine honor or an abstract principle of justice really derived from the sub-Christian *lex talionis*. But it shares with the other forms of substitutionary doctrine the idea that it would be just to place upon one innocent person punishment regarded as deserved by others.⁶⁰

Though this theory escapes the untenable implication of the Anselmian and penal theories that guilt can be assumed by one

person for another as a financial debt can be, it is doubtful that the governmental theory succeeds in showing how the death of Christ actually demonstrates the inviolability of the divine moral law.

Thus in this type of the Atonement, as Knudson says, "an innocent person may suffer because of the sins of others but he cannot justly be punished for their sins."⁶¹

c. Moral Theories:

According to DeWolf, the dualistic and substitutionary doctrines can hardly commend themselves to a modern mind engaged in a critical search for truth and not overawed by tradition. They depend too much on demonological, metaphysical, social and juridical ideas, but they put too little stress on the personal and ethical categories which are most relevant to a problem of reconciliation. But the moral view includes a number of the truths and religious values which have been most cherished in the older theories.

This theory was first proposed and elaborated in the thought of Abelard, as we have already seen in Aulen's analysis. DeWolf says:

Abelard saw in the suffering and death of Christ the culminating revelation of God's love which illuminated the entire life of the Master. This love, so wonderfully embodied in Jesus' sacrifice, called forth from sinful men an answering love which brought them to repentance, the receiving of the Father's forgiveness and a glad obedience to his will.⁶²

Against the Socinians and many other liberals from the sixteenth century onward for whom the cross was not good news of God, but only showed man at his best, the basic theme of Abelard's theory, according to DeWolf, is central in the thought of many modern theologians concerning the cross because their views explain the unique cleansing and creative power which the cross of Christ has exerted.⁶³

Through the survey of the doctrines of the Atonement, DeWolf

comparatively stresses the moral theory which includes the religious truths which have been most cherished in the older theories. But he does not give a *subjective* interpretation of this interpretation of this theory, but stresses the work of the divine love.

(b) DeWolf's Insistence

In contrast to Aulen, DeWolf does not support one theory exclusively, but he does agree with the moral theory. Thus his insistence is concentrated on the fact of the cross as reconciling men to God. It is important to realize that DeWolf does not mention simply the way to God from man upward but that way upward which was based on the way of God to man downward. He insists on several points: divine love to men, divine power over death, repentance (which is the most characteristic point in DeWolf's Christology) and objective reconciliation.

1) Divine Love to men

The crucifixion of Christ is not only a manifestation of human loyalty, courage and loving sacrifices, but also a revelation of God's love. DeWolf says:

The acceptance of the cross by Jesus was the climactic expression of his whole life which reflected so marvelously the character and purpose of God Himself...It is His own purpose which has guided His faithful Son and brought him into suffering...He will not contradict the love revealed through Christ by striking down the sinners in wrathful power. He will wait behind the shadows, suffering in such agony as might be guessed at by a human parent who has been compelled to stand by while his child is tortured to death, but such as only the God who is perfect in understanding love and who loves the torturers too can fully know.⁶⁴

Thus through the work of Jesus Christ sinners may know its meaning through to its fulfillment and learn the love of God.

DeWolf says, "to deny that God suffered with Jesus, both in his agony of death and in his anguish of soul for the men who

slew him, is to deny that Father and Son actually knew such unity as Jesus reported.”⁶⁵ Thus he supports the view that God’s love was revealed at Calvary, that He suffered with His love is manifest in any other life and that He suffers with every sufferer and for every sinner. But these revelations come to a focus at Calvary.

2) Divine Power over Death:

Concerning the resurrection which is an essential part of Christ’s redemptive work, all the Gospel writers in spite of their divergence in details, agree that Jesus Christ, who had died and whose lifeless body had been placed in a tomb, again confronted the disciples in regnant power and authority. Thus, says DeWolf,

This experience was not an inference or speculation but an immediate perception which swept all their doubts and fears away and gave to them such conviction, joy, and courage as nothing could ever dim. Their deeds, as well as their words, bore eloquent witness to all this so long as they lived on earth.⁶⁶

According to DeWolf, the Gospel writers wrote of the encounter with the living Jesus, victorious even over death, and the fact of the resurrection was to the disciples real beyond all doubt. Thus “the conviction in the lives of those first witnesses has been communicated through their preaching, the writings of the New Testament and the very life of the church itself, with its ever-renewed testimony of the Holy Spirit, to the community of believers down to the present day.”⁶⁷ On this point DeWolf seems to agree with Aulen. Divine power to conquer every obstacle and even death is emphasized. But DeWolf extends it to the fact that this Easter faith makes us victors over both sin and death.

3) Repentance:

DeWolf says if sin is to be renounced, repented of, and forgiven, two conditions which must be fulfilled are these: One is, “the sinner must condemn his sin and he must have hope. He

will not renounce his sin if he sees no wrong in it." And another is, "he will not repent unless he has hope of forgiveness and catches the vision of a victorious life."⁶⁸

These two conditions are met at the cross. But sinners find also the love of God, the sublimity of loyal obedience to Him, and the victory which He gives even in defeat and death. "So they are moved to place their hope in the Father, repent with faith and aspire to serve Him in obedient love."⁶⁹

Emphasis on repentance is one of the characteristics of DeWolf's Christology. Thus, says he,

God is righteous and true fellowship between Him and the sinner is impossible until the sinner repents. Yet this is not the first beginning. A man cannot repent until he is moved to be sorry for his transgressions and until he has hope of forgiveness. This sorrow and this hope God has prepared through all His beneficence to the sinner, through every human kindness to him and through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Through all these instruments the Holy Spirit now moves the heart to repentance. When the burdened heart responds with its plea for forgiveness, the way is opened for the new relationship.⁷⁰

Here DeWolf stresses that this repentance is a whole-response of faith. The ideal of what human personality ought to become, in Jesus Christ, gives to the converted person a concrete and superb goal of individual life. In contrast to the emphasis on divine revelation in Aulen, DeWolf's emphasis is on human repentance responding to divine revelation.

The sinner who becomes acquainted with the guilt-sharing God of Calvary knows that he is not alone. He knows that the supreme God of righteousness, the Judge of all men, cares for him. He knows that God seeks not to condemn him for his sin but to take from him the burden of his sin. John 3:17, "for God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him," is the heart of the Gospel, the good news of God. Thus says DeWolf,

At Calvary God has used the very sins of men to reveal to sinners everywhere the despicable evil of sin and at the same time His own glorious love. This is the victory over the power of sin which has often been so crudely portrayed by the teaching that God bargained with or deceptively ensnared the devil. From the first century until now sinful men have experienced this breaking of the power of sin over their lives.⁷¹

At this point DeWolf seems to support the substitutionary Atonement. Because as Jesus enters by deepest, understanding love into the sharing of the sinner's burden of guilt, this suffering of God and of His Son does ease the burden of the sinner and offer to him a way of release. "His guilt relieved and his bonds broken, the new man may quite rightly say, but without any notion of a satisfied divine 'honor' or legal or governmental requirement, that at Calvary he has seen a substitution made for the suffering and loss which he himself would have had otherwise to bear."⁷²

4) An Objective Reconciliation :

Though DeWolf stresses repentance very much, he differentiates what he means from a mere subjective doctrine. The reconciled sinner not only feels different as the word 'subjective' suggests. His attitude toward his own sin should be new. The leading purpose of his life should be new. "For the initiative of God's love has penetrated the barrier of his rebellious heart, incited him to repentance in faith and through forgiveness brought him into open fellowship with God."⁷³ Thus reconciliation is a glorious, objective reality.

DeWolf points out the central theme of the Atonement. The Atonement is divine work itself. It is shown as divine love to men and divine power over death. But like the New Testament writers, DeWolf supports many ideas of the Atonement. They all testify to the experience of the Christian faith. Without any developed theory about the cross, we accept the crucified and

risen Jesus as the Son of God, supreme revelation of the Father and true way of life for men.

When DeWolf begins to emphasize repentance, which is the most characteristic point in his Christology, his focus in Christology depends on the humanity of Jesus Christ. Consequently his Christology emphasizes the moral theory first and the substitutional theory next. As in Dynamic Monarchianism or Arianism the emphasis depends on the ethical side of faith.

Nevertheless DeWolf, in contrast to the old liberalism, emphasizes the fact that divine saving activity is that act in and through which God establishes a communion and fellowship between himself and a humanity of the world which is sinful and lost. Thus we can say that DeWolf's Christology emphasizes the Christian experiences in which God lives and is near. And he takes precautions against the objective and dry conception of faith.

3. The Unity and Contrast between Aulen's and DeWolf's Doctrine of Atonement

Though both Aulen and DeWolf make a historical and Biblical survey concerning the Atonement, their method and emphasis are very different. We shall note four main points in the unity and contrast of their idea of the Atonement.

First, they agree in the view that the Atonement is, throughout the expression of God's love. In the Cross, Christianity rightly sees a revelation of God's love and in the Resurrection a revelation of God's power death—an essential part of Christ's redemptive work. Thus divine revelation is self-impartation, from above, never from below. Revelation is the divine activity. The crucifixion of Christ is a revelation of God's love.

It is characteristic of Neo-orthodoxy to make it clear that Jesus Christ is "one who comes from above, from a transcendent world, and whose divine-humanity is not merely a slight heightening of average humanity, but the amazing miracle and absolute paradox of heaven come down to earth, and the Creator becoming

a creature.”⁷⁴ When Aulen from the Neo-orthodox school emphasizes the fact that the finished work of Christ is that divine act whereby God established reconciliation between himself and the world, and this divine love is spontaneous and self-giving, DeWolf from the new liberal school stresses the fact that the crucifixion of Christ is divine love to men and divine power over death, that divine love was revealed at Calvary and that divine power conquers obstacles and even death. DeWolf does not over-emphasize the immanence which brings God and man so near that all men are divine and a Saviour is not needed, as old liberalism did.

Thus it is fair to say that both Aulen and DeWolf completely agree upon the fact that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (II Cor. 5:19).

Secondly, concerning the meaning of the Cross, Aulen takes the classical point of view of the Atonement exclusively while DeWolf does not support any particular theory of the Atonement but rather emphasizes the moral and substitutional theories comparatively.

As we have seen already, Aulen strongly stresses the fact that Christ is the victor against the forces of evil which hinder the realization of his will. The victory of Christ through himself-giving is the means whereby God reconciles the world unto himself and is at the same time reconciled. This is the most fundamental character of the Atonement. Thus Aulen’s contribution to it is important.

Though DeWolf does not overlook its importance, his intention is to oppose an over-emphasis on the divinity of Christ by which God and man are so far apart that a divine-human Mediator between them becomes quite inconceivable. At the Cross the reality of Christ as God and man was revealed. Consequently the moral and substitutional theories appear in his Christology. Aulen’s first concern is always the sovereign love, the way to fellowship

with God which is God's way to man, while DeWolf extends Aulen's vertical emphasis to the horizontal phase.

Though Aulen's contribution to the Atonement is remarkable, there is doubt whether the classical idea of the Atonement was fully discussed in his survey or not. Isn't over-simplification for him to mention only the dramatic and dualistic view of the Atonement and the theme of *Christus Victor* when he surveys the New Testament and the early Christian theology? One author says, "They do not fit into any simple pattern. Aulen's *Christus Victor* theme is only one of perhaps four chief themes that relate salvation and Atonement to each other in this period."⁷⁵ These four are, according to that author, Christ as Bearer of Incorruption, Victor, Sacrificial Victim and Revealer. Thus it is fair to say that Aulen too exclusively emphasizes the dramatic and polaristic elements in the Atonement and the *Christus Victor* theme, which is a most important side of the Christian faith; but still there are other elements in Christology. DeWolf points out many aspects of the Atonement but his emphasis is not so clear as in his doctrine of the Incarnation.

The third point is about the relationship between the Atonement and the Christian faith. Though both Aulen and DeWolf present the Christian faith as a living reality, we can find a difference of *nuance* between these two. The latter, DeWolf, emphasizes the Christian experiences in which God lives and is near; while the former, Aulen, emphasizes the divine revelation in the Christian experience. He takes precautions against the subjective and psychological conception of faith, or the experiential theology, while DeWolf takes precautions against the objective and dry conception of faith.

According to Aulen, the Christian faith is *propter Christum* as well as *in Christo*. The work of the Atonement once finished is continually realized anew in the hearts of the believers. The victory is an "ethical" victory, and therefore also a victory in

the present. This is the realization of *sola gratia*, which is through God's love alone. Here the Christian faith as living reality is expressed from above. The sovereign love of God is the center of the Christian faith.

According to DeWolf, repentance is a whole-response of Christian faith. The ideal of what human personality ought to become, in Jesus Christ, gives to the converted person a concrete and superb goal of individual life. Thus in contrast to the emphasis on divine revelation by Aulen, DeWolf's emphasis is on human repentance responding to divine revelation. Here the Christian faith as living reality is expressed from below. Of course, here uniqueness of the divine revelation is not denied at all but it is found in a unique quality, reproducing itself in Christian experience from age to age, rather than in unique, unrepeatable historic events.⁷⁶ According to DeWolf, "he who bows in God's presence, experiencing the condemnation of sin by His purity, the perfect beauty of His Holiness, the inrush of His power and the cleansing comfort of His love knows that this is no dream nor delusion. *God lives and He is near.*"⁷⁷

Thus both Aulen and DeWolf agree that the Christian faith depends on divine revelation, but Aulen's main emphasis is on the giving side of revelation while DeWolf's emphasis is on the receiving side of revelation.

The last point is about their Christology in general. In the history of Christology, there are two big trends.⁷⁸ The first is seen in Docetism, Modalism, Monothelitism and Monophysitism. They may be called theophanic Christologies. These Christologies, generally speaking, tend to identify Christ with God in such a way that the historical is removed and the concrete human features disappear from the person of Christ. The second is a humanized Christology, Dynamic Monarchianism or Arianism. Jesus Christ is the religious archetype or the ideal man. Here humanity at its best becomes and reflects the divine. This point of view gives to the figure of Christ an abstract quality. We

cannot follow any of these Christologies, though we understand the motive of the first type of Christology is the emphasis on divine salvation, and of the second, the emphasis on the ethical side of the Christian faith.

The difference between Aulen and DeWolf is not so distant as between the first and the second type. As Donald M. Baillie has suggested, today there is no more docetism and no more mere "Jesus of history." But there is the same general trend in the difference between these two present theologians' Christologies. Aulen emphasizes the divinity of Christ and the divine work of Atonement while DeWolf emphasizes the humanity of Jesus Christ and the ethical side of the Christian faith, although their difference is not so polemic as between the early dialectical theology and the old liberal theology.

Following chapters will be omitted. They consist of chapter 10. the Holy Spirit, 11. the Trinity, 12. the Last Judgment and 13. the Nature of the Christian Church.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of this survey of the unity and contrast between Gustaf Aulen's and L. Harold DeWolf's Christology, several remarks should be added as conclusion.

Firstly, both Aulen, a Swedish Lutheran theologian who is neo-orthodox, and DeWolf, a Boston Methodist theologian who is neo-liberal, completely agree that the essence of Christianity in its entire content is defined by the act of God in Christ. Faith depends on the divine revelation which is a divine self-impartment. DeWolf does not simply mix the divine with the human. Like Aulen, he strongly emphasizes that faith is theocentric as well as Christocentric because "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19). Is this not traceable to the great influence upon both men of the so-called neo-orthodox movement? Therefore, Aulen and DeWolf built their own theologies in order to

understand the living Christian faith as a living reality, completely theocentric as well as Christocentric.

Secondly, there is a great contrast between them in their methodology. This contrast depends on the use of reason. Though both men use reason to some extent, Aulen's emphasis is on the paradoxicality of faith, in opposition to the intellectual and philosophical approach to faith, while DeWolf's emphasis is on the use of reason, in opposition to the revolt against reason. Aulen has a polemic reaction to the idealistic philosophy of the nineteenth century and the Scholasticism of the post-reformation period. Sometimes this reaction is too strong to accept the right use of reason to understand the Christian faith. But his emphasis is on the paradoxicality of faith and on the work of God who is revealed and at the same time hidden. Thus his theology is always kerygmatic. DeWolf, also, denies mere rationalism and religious relativism. His intention is to overcome the faults of neo-orthodoxy which refuses to build positively a bridge between theology and philosophy. Thus reason is necessary to receive revelation and to interpret and apply revealed truth. This is why he so strongly insists on reason in his theology. Its purpose is "to interpret the divine message into the new situation." Consequently his theology is apologetic. But even he does not deny the paradoxicality of faith. Human reason will never find certainty of faith. It is only bestowed by the work of God. This paradoxicality of faith is for DeWolf the conclusion of his theology while it is for Aulen the starting point of his theology. This variation runs through their entire theologies. It affects their attitude to experience. DeWolf emphasizes the Christian experiences in which God lives and is near while Aulen emphasizes the divine revelation in the Christian experiences. Aulen takes precautions against the subjective and psychological conception of faith, or the experiential theology, while DeWolf takes precautions against the objective and dry conception of faith in neo-orthodoxy. So the former's emphasis is laid on revelation which has an unshakable ultimate

foundation in the event of Jesus Christ, while the latter's emphasis is laid on the temporal situation in which the eternal truth must be received. Therefore the variation appears in their use of reason, negative and positive; their use of experience, negative and positive; their emphasis on revelation, giving side and receiving side; their orientation in theology, Christological and Christian experiential. Of course, both avoid a polemic one-sided emphasis, keeping their variation within the *nuances* indicated above, and which affect Christology.

Thirdly, in Christology, both Aulen and DeWolf completely agree upon the fact that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and though both agree upon the fact that there is no more docetism and no more mere "Jesus of history," both related themselves to the great difference which has been revealed in the history of Christology again and again. In the history of Christology, there are two big trends: one is seen in Docetism, Modalism, Monothelitism and Monophysitism, and the other is seen in Dynamic Monarchianism and Arianism. The former is called theophanic Christology, which tends to identify Christ with God in such a way that the historical is removed and the concrete human features disappear from the person of Christ. The latter is called humanized Christology which tends to make Jesus Christ the religious archetype or the ideal man. Here humanity at its best becomes and reflects the divine. This point of view gives to the figure of Christ an abstract quality. The motive of the first type of Christology is the emphasis on divine revelation, and of the second, the emphasis on the ethical side of the Christian faith. The difference between Aulen and DeWolf is not so distant as between the first and second type. Today there is no more docetism and no more mere Jesus of history. But there are typical differences of emphasis relating to these two historic trends, between these two contemporary theologians' Christologies. Aulen emphasizes the divinity of Christ and the

divine work of the Atonement while DeWolf emphasizes the humanity of Jesus Christ and the ethical side of the Christian faith, although their difference is not so polemic as between the early dialectical theology and the old liberal theology.

There is no logical way of resolving these differences because Christology is not a closed system. The reason why "the boundary" comes into both Christologies is because God cannot be comprehended in any human words in any of the categories of our finite thought. As the Christological controversies in the fourth and fifth centuries indicated, there is a boundary of Christology. As soon as the problem of Christology is approached by way of politics, or by metaphysical and purely speculative reasoning, the true meaning of Christ is destroyed. Both Aulen and DeWolf agree to recognize the boundary of Christology. Christology is not a closed system but an open system where the divine love is working and where we fall at His feet in repentance to God for our sin. Therefore, can't we say that as long as the two trends in Christology which we have studied are kept in mutual tension as Aulen and DeWolf do keep them, theology in general, especially Christology, is dynamic and living? If this tension comes to an end, theology, especially Christology, is dead.

Two main heretical trends in Christology, viz., the docetic and humanized or idealized trends, have been shown even in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, of the Trinity and of the Church. And they have been rejected as heresies.

In the doctrine of Incarnation, we find both of the theologians try to discern the true figure of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. But Aulen apprehends Christ from a Pauline-Lutheran background while DeWolf does it from the New Testament in general. In consequence the divine and loving will in Christ is emphasized in Aulen while the vivid picture of Jesus Christ as true man and as true God is emphasized in DeWolf. Aulen's chief idea is that God was incarnate in the man Jesus Christ. Thus Christ is "of the same substance with the Father," the "substance" of the

Father is "incarnate in Christ." DeWolf insists on the centrality of the historical personality of Jesus Christ for our faith and our salvation, though he stresses that no merely historical approach to the life and teaching of Jesus can recognize him as Savior. Therefore we say DeWolf's Christology opposes an over-emphasis on the humanity of Jesus, by which God and man are so near that all men are divine and a Savior is not needed, and he also opposes an over-emphasis on the divinity of Christ by which God and man are so far apart that a divine-human Mediator between them becomes quite inconceivable.

In the doctrine of the Atonement Aulen takes the classical point of view exclusively while DeWolf does not support any particular theory of the Atonement but rather emphasizes the moral and substitutionary theories comparatively. Aulen strongly stresses the fact that Christ is the victor against the forces of evil which hinder the realization of God's will. The victory of Christ through self-giving is the means whereby God reconciles the world unto himself and is at the same time reconciled. This is the fundamental character of the Atonement. Though DeWolf does not overlook its importance his stress is to oppose an over-emphasis on the divinity of Christ by which God and man are so far apart that a divine-human Mediator between them becomes quite inconceivable. At the Cross the reality of Christ as God and man was revealed. Consequently the moral and substitutional theories appear in his Christology. Aulen's first concern is always for the sovereign love, the way to fellowship with God which is God's way to man, while DeWolf extends Aulen's vertical emphasis to the horizontal phase.

Both Aulen and DeWolf stress the unbreakable relationship between the Incarnation and the Atonement. There is a very different nuance as between these two, however. The former's Christology is concentrated on *Christus-Crucifixus—Christus Victor*, while the latter's Christology emphasizes the whole life of Jesus

Christ from his birth to his resurrection. In consequence, DeWolf's idea of relationship between the Incarnation and the Atonement is plain since they stand in historical sequence. But even in DeWolf the Incarnation cannot stand without the Atonement.

On the subjects of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, and the Nature of the Christian Church, diversity between Aulen and DeWolf becomes very minor though the same variation remains. At least diversity on these topics is not so clear as on the doctrine of the Incarnation and the Atonement.

Aulen and DeWolf fundamentally agree that work of the Spirit is the continuous work of Christ. But Aulen's approach is always Christologically made while DeWolf's approach is always in terms of Christian experience. Consequently while DeWolf sees it "from below upward," Aulen explains the work of the Spirit "from above downward." But both theologians completely agree that the Spirit is the dynamics of the Christian faith. The Spirit is the Giver of the Christian life and the appearance of divine love in the present; in other words, the Spirit guides Christians into new understanding and into new realization of the divine purpose. Besides, both of them criticize the hopeless attempt to weave words of testimony into a theological doctrine and emphasize the inward testimony of the Spirit.

In the same way, both present the same fundamental unity and also the same variation on the doctrine of the Trinity. There is a slight difference between Aulen and DeWolf in dealing with the doctrine of the Trinity for Christology and Pneumatology are derived immediately from the testimony of the doctrine to the unity of Christian experience, and the doctrine of the Trinity means that our affirmations about God as Father, Son and Spirit are inseparable and interdependent. Thus no Christology can be adequate which does not recognize that Christ is at the center of the faith because he is the Son of the Father

and because the Spirit who works in the Church is his Spirit. Thus no Christology can be adequate which is not explicitly trinitarian. Besides, both have the same type of doctrine of the Trinity, that is, a contemporary modalistic conception of the Trinity. Both of them insist that the essential purpose of the doctrine of the Trinity is to maintain both the definitive and dynamic content and the unity of Christian faith in God. Their interest is rather in "one God in three modes of revelation," than in "three persons in one Godhead."

Lastly, it is noteworthy that Aulen and DeWolf hold very similar positions concerning the nature of the Christian Church. In spite of differences in their Christologies both agree that the church is the body of Christ and exists through the work of the Holy Spirit, that the church is eccumenical, and that church should neither be interpreted merely as a spiritual fellowship nor merely as a social organization. Where Christ is, there is the church. And where the church is, there is Christ. Therefore as the Incarnation is completed in the Atonement, Christology is completed in Ecclesiology.

Both theologians stress the uniqueness of Christianity. Both are trying to find a new, deeper insight of the Christian faith, and foremost, a new and fresh, and realistic approach to the Biblical message. The endeavors of theology must be to see Christianity as it actually is, and to point out the uniqueness of the Christian faith. In spite of different emphases on the transcendence and the immanence of God, from above downward and from below upward in the theological method, or negative and positive use of reason and experience, both agree that we must liberate the Christian message from all that obscures its fresh colors and so let it appear in all its original power. In any country the Christian faith is dynamic in so far as faith is centered in the fact that God was in Christ; then the Christian message is interpreted by fresh colors and revealed in all its original power.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)

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Chapter 9 The Atonement

- ¹L. Harold DeWolf, *A Theology of the Living Church*, p. 266.
- ²Gustaf Aulen, *The Faith of the Christian Church* p. 226.
- ³H. M. Waddams, "Recent Developments in Swedish Theology and Church Life," in *The Church Quarterly Review*, 124:247, April-June, 1937, p. 46.
- ⁴E. M. Carlson, *The Reinterpretation of Luther* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1948), pp. 31f.
- ⁵G. Aulen, *op. cit.*, p. 240.
- ⁶*Ibid.*, p. 238.
- ⁷G. Aulen, *Christus Victor*, pp. 20f.
- ⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 21f.
- ⁹G. Aulen, *The Faith of the Christian Church*, pp. 238f.
- ¹⁰G. Aulen, *Christus Victor*, p. 162.
- ¹¹*loc. cit.*
- ¹²Rom. 4:25; 6:3ff. 8:38f.; I Cor. 15:3f.; 15:24ff.; 15:54; II Cor. 5:18ff.; Gal. 1:4; Phil. 2:6ff.; Col. 2:15, etc.
- ¹³G. Aulen, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
- ¹⁴Rom. 7:4; I Cor. 15:57; Gal. 3:13; Col. 2:14, etc.
- ¹⁵G. Aulen, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
- ¹⁶Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-51.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 138.
- ¹⁸Gustaf Aulen, *The Faith of Christian Church*, p. 227.
- ¹⁹Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor*, p. 124.
- ²⁰Gustaf Aulen, *The Faith of the Christian Church*, p. 231.
- ²¹*Ibid.*, p. 238.
- ²²Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor*, p. 103.
- ²³*Ibid.*, p. 104.
- ²⁴Gustaf Aulen, *The Faith of the Christian Church*, p. 238.
- ²⁵Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor*, p. 171.
- ²⁶Gustaf Aulen, *The Faith of the Christian Church*, pp. 238f.
- ²⁷Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor*, p. 112.
- ²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 158.
- ²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 159.
- ³⁰Gustaf Aulen, *The Faith of Christian Church*, p. 229.
- ³¹*Ibid.*, p. 239.

³²*loc. cit.*

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 240f.: Aulen says, "The traditional distinction between objective and subjective Atonement is calculated to confuse rather than clarify the issue, and these two can in no case be proposed as the alternatives." *Ibid.*, p. 223.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 225.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 130.

³⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 134f.

³⁷N. F. S. Ferre, *Swedish Contributions to Modern Theology*, p. 128. This emphasis of divine love is one of the characteristics of the Swedish theology. For instance, Nygren's definition of Christian love may be set in relation to the Christian polarity background and the Atonement doctrine. In each of these the emphasis is upon the sovereign activity of God. He is arrayed against the hostile powers and decisively defeats them through Christ's atoning deed. This motif of conflict and victory is of fundamental importance for the Swedish interpretation of Luther. The motif of *agape* is equally fundamental. God gives himself in spontaneous and unmotivated love. A certain tension exists between there two—the power that wins, and the *agape* that surrenders and it is treated in a fashion that is characteristic of the whole Swedish view. Love and power may seem to be two qualitatively different motifs. In Aulen we can see it very clearly. Divine power is the power of His Love. The basic fact about God, both as to his love and as to his power, is that God justifies sinners. Cf. E. M. Carlson, *op. cit.*, pp. 88f.

³⁸G. Aulen, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 228.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 231.

⁴¹Rom. 5:8; Gal. 2:20; 3:13; II Cor. 5:14; 5:21; I John 4:10.

Here is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (I John 4:10).

⁴²Thus Aulen's theology is completely theocentric as well as Christocentric. All Christian faith is faith in God and at the same time faith in Christ. Cf. G. Aulen, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-65.

W. M. Horton calls the theology of Lund *theologia resurrectionis*, in contrast to the Barthian *theologia crucis*, because the latter is standing in tragic uncertainty under the shadow of the cross, beholding its salvation only as a promised "impossibility," while the former is standing thankfully in the light that streams from the risen and victorious Christ, rejoicing in present salvation while it looks for greater victories yet to come. Cf. W. M. Horton, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁴³E. M. Carlson, *op. cit.*, pp. 61f.

⁴⁴G. Aulen, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 244.

⁴⁶This continuous work of Christ, which was based on the finished work of Christ at the cross. is one of the characteristics of Aulen's theology. The dialectical theologians used to emphasize the "*Einmaligkeit*" of revelation and not emphasize continuous revelation so much.

⁴⁷G. Aulen, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

⁴⁸L. Harold DeWolf, *Trends and Frontiers of Religious Thought*, p. 96.

⁴⁹L. Harold DeWolf, *A Theology of the Living Church*, p. 259.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 258.

⁵²*loc. cit.*

⁵³Heb. 9:21-22; 8:25-26,

⁵⁴John 3:14-17. Cf. v. 36; also 17:1-2; I John 4:7-12.

⁵⁵L. H. DeWolf, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 260.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁶¹Albert C. Knudson, *The Doctrine of Redemption*, p. 368,
quoted in L. H. DeWolf, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

⁶²*Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁶³Examples of this are to be found in the work of Schleiermacher, Ritschl,
H. Rashdall, A. C. Knudson and Water M. Horton. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 264.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 265

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁶⁶*loc. cit.*

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 267.

⁶⁸*loc. cit.*

⁶⁹*loc. cit.*

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 293.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁷²*loc. cit.*

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 269.

⁷⁴Walter M. Horton, *Liberalism Old and New*, p. 17,

⁷⁵William J. Wolf, *No Cross, No Crown* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1957). p. 94.

⁷⁶Walter M. Horton, *Christian Theology* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), pp. 67f.

⁷⁷L. H. DeWolf, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁷⁸We may add a third type of Christology. It is the so-called Dyothelitism as Tillich calls it. It is the double-headed Christology. In this Christology there is no possibility of uniting the two elements in one person. Jesus Christ becomes neither the true God nor the true Man. This relationship between God and Man in Christ is a paradox. This is an offence to philosophical analysis and is understood only through the eye of the Christian faith and obedience.