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THE ABANDONMENT OF ATONEMENT

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A pall of consensus seems to have settled over the elusive, but pivotal, Christian doctrine of atonement. There is widespread agreement that there never has been, and never will be, one orthodox doctrine of atonement. While the issue of the person of Christ provoked the intense debates and debacles which resulted in the two-natures christology of Chalcedon, the work of Christ never elicited such focused attention, and consequently never received a corresponding authoritative formulation. Some would suggest that this is so much the better because the work of Christ must necessarily shatter any concepts which would seek to contain it; though why this is not equally true of the person of Christ is passed over in discreet silence. The consensus rather goes on to enumerate a list of generally accepted theories of atonement, among which pride of place (although in view of the inevitable inadequacy of theoretical constructs in this area, it is a dubious distinction) is awarded to St. Anselm, whose *Cur Deus Homo* is reckoned as the first sustained statement of an atonement theory. Amid the concern of the feudal age with integrity and honour, Anselm concluded that sin was such an affront to God's honour that it could only be dealt with if in some way that affront could be recompensed. Since only man should, but only God could, accomplish this, that constituted the explanation for the God-man. Thus the first explicit theory of atonement suggested that God facilitated forgiveness with integrity through the sacrifice of the God-man.

From the vantage point of this explanation, it is possible to identify other prominent theories of atonement, pre- as well as post-Anselm. In what has probably been the single most influential book on the subject in this century, Gustaf Aulén's *Christus Victor*, the suggestion is made that there is a general understanding of atonement in the early centuries which is quite distinct from Anselm's theory. This Aulén calls the classical or dramatic view of atonement, according to which the accomplishment of Christ was seen as the classic victory of God over Satan in the great cosmic drama of the clash between the forces of good and evil. On this side of Anselm, a very different understanding of atonement has emerged from the consideration that the problem which prompts the need for atonement is not God's but ours. It is we who are estranged; it is we who are sinners. Consequently what is required is not a change in God, but in us. And this is what God offers in Christ. In revealing His love in the cross, God elicits our responding love so that reconciliation is effected. This moral influence approach, broached by Abelard shortly after Anselm's theory was formulated, has tended to dominate modern thinking on the subject.

These three main conceptions of atonement may be supplemented by recognition of the juristic perspective of the reformers, which, Aulén's impartial Lutheranism notwithstanding, draws on Anselm as well as on the early Fathers. Two other underlying motifs which have exercised varying degrees of influence on atonement articulations are the Greek concept of divinization, according to which the incarnation itself constitutes a kind of atonement, hints of which may be detected in someone like McLeod Campbell, and the cultic approach of sacrifice, which is presupposed in varying degrees by the more explicit theories.

This consensus about main types of atonement theories is seen to entail the corollary that this plurality of theories precludes any one theory gaining ascendancy to the exclusion of the others. At certain times it seemed inevitable to understand atonement in terms of one particular dominant motif. However, the advantage of hindsight shows that that understanding was at best partial. Anything approaching an adequate understanding of atonement must allow for the variety of expressions to which this diffuse reality has given rise. The various theories all have their contribution to make to a comprehensive appreciation of the meaning of atonement.

The obviousness of this conclusion, and the ease with which it is reached, is only exceeded by its uselessness as a contemporary perspective on atonement. The theoretical advocacy of a sophisticated openness which is appreciative of various approaches translates into the concrete practice of the total avoidance of the whole issue. Thus the persistent recommendation of such pluralism amounts to little more than lip-service paid by theologians to a doctrine whose abandonment is too unthinkable to be acknowledged explicitly. The shallowness and absurdity of this solution is particularly glaring at that point where it derives its initial credibility, in its proposal for combining objective and subjective approaches to atonement. The superficial plausibility of this proposal is dissipated as soon as it is recognized that far from representing different emphases on a continuum, the objective and subjective approaches reflect the diverse world views of different historic epochs. At the very least, anyone who advocates their harmonization is undertaking to combine the ancient and modern worlds.

In this paper we shall consider the concerns and difficulties of the modern subjective and traditional objective approaches respectively, and attempt an assessment of the prospects for an appreciation of atonement today in light of the gulf between these perspectives.

I

Any attempt to combine elements of objective and subjective views of atonement runs into an immediate obstacle in that, from the point of view of the objective approach, subjective views are not views of atonement at all.[1] The final contention of subjective views is that atonement is not necessary because God is love, and forgives freely. However, rather than putting it so bluntly, advocates of the subjective approach continue to refer to this free forgiveness as atonement. We could find no clearer example of this stance than the following statement by one of the most influential exponents of the subjective view, Hastings Rashdall: "The atonement is the very central doctrine of Christianity in so far as it proclaims, and brings home to the heart of man, the supreme Christian truth that God is love, and that love is the most precious thing in human life".[2] Not all advocates of the subjective approach are so casual. Its leading American exponent, Horace Bushnell, was more aware of the cost of forgiveness to God,[3] and the alleged originator of this view, Abelard, may well be misrepresented in being identified with the view as it came to be articulated by later enthusiasts.[4] However,

there can be no doubt about the triumph of this approach in modern theology.

The father of modern theology, Schleiermacher, entitled the 100th section of his major doctrinal work: "The Redeemer assumes believers into the power of His God-consciousness, and this is His redemptive activity".[5] Earlier he had diagnosed the problem which makes redemption necessary as "God-forgetfulness"[6] which he warns must not be taken to mean "a state in which it is quite impossible for the God-consciousness to be kindled".[7] The possibility of its being rekindled is ever present. What it requires to actualize it is the ignition of someone who has that consciousness, and this is what is effected in Jesus. Thus for Schleiermacher, atonement refers to a reorientation in human consciousness whereby the awareness of God is recovered, at-one-ment is effected, apparently with little or no difficulty for God.

> The grace and love of God are reduced to sentimentality if the tension between judgment and grace, righteousness and love is not properly maintained. In Schleiermacher's theology this tension is presented only in weakened form . . . The omnipotence and authority of God's sanctifying and transforming love are so strongly sounded that sin seen from God's side dissolves into nothing.[8]

This direction is further refined by Albrecht Ritschl by his expansion of the God-consciousness motif on both ends, in reference to Jesus and to ourselves. In Jesus, the God-consciousness takes the specific form of a consciousness of vocation.[9] "Jesus' *vocation to found the kingdom of God* is for Ritschl *the* key to every phase and detail of his life and ministry."[10] This object of Jesus' vocation, the kingdom of God, constitutes the significance of Jesus for us in the form of its ethical challenge, and provides the direction for reconciliation in that it opens the way through the ethical to the religious because it is also God's "eternal self-end".[11] The prospect of growing reconciliation in the advancing kingdom which has come to light in Jesus thus supplants the historic concern with justification in a further unfolding of the abandonment of atonement.

Perhaps the most concise certification of the new view is to be found in the statement of Harnack which came to be regarded as a central slogan of liberal theology: "The gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has to do with the father only and not with the son".[12] The "essence of Christianity", to follow Harnack's original German title, centres in the revelation that God is father and not the stern judge who demands the sacrifice of the son. The sacrifice of Jesus is essentially a human event. For "it was by the cross of Jesus Christ that mankind gained such an experience of the power of purity and love true to death that they can never forget, and that it signifies a new epoch in their history".[13]

The reaction against this direction represented by neo-orthodoxy, and by Barth in particular, can be seen as a recovery of an appreciation of the need for and reality of atonement. In Christ God pronounces his judgmental "No!" as well as his accepting "Yes!". Yet even here the direction away from the centrality of atonement is implicit in the continuing predominance of the consciousness motif in the form of the centrality of revelation.[14] Thus even with Barth it can be charged that atonement is finally a matter of the revelation of the grace of God in Christ, rather than something actually effected in the concrete reality of Christ.[15] At any rate, in so far as a restoration of concern with atonement was involved in neo-orthodoxy, it was short lived. For virtually all major movements in theology since the middle of this century have found it possible to accord the issue scant attention at best.

Neglect is difficult to document. Perhaps the best that can be done is to point to the absence of concern with atonement at those places where it might be most expected to emerge, and to elicit some confirmatory endorsements of this impression. One such place where it might be expected to have some prominence is in the recent controversy over christology.[16] However, apart from passing references as in testimonials to the importance of atonement from Frances Young and to his aversion to the traditional accounts from Michael Goulder in the original volume, the only direct treatment of the subject is a scant 25 pages in the third volume of the controversy.[17] The fundamental focus is provided by modern academic interest in questions of history, myth and metaphysics, and in contrast to the classical christological controversy where the ancient counterparts of these issues were under debate, the atmosphere this time does not suggest an underlying assumption of soteriological significance.

The direction which seems to be the single most dominant one in contemporary theology manages to avoid atonement by focusing on the promotion of liberation. It emulates liberal theology in turning from the cross toward the whole life of Jesus and especially his message of the kingdom, but where liberals found in this a confirmation of the inherent value of the individual, liberation theology sees it as the evidence of God's siding with the poor and oppressed. Consequently any questioning of this theology invariably invites the accusation of siding with the privileged and oppressors. Yet this accusation must be risked, as it is by Schubert Ogden when he asks how liberation can be motivated and sustained apart from redemption.[18]

At the other end of the spectrum, the personal approach of the theology of story has equally little difficulty by-passing atonement.[19] Even the theologians who most directly inherit the mantle of the neo-orthodox revival of interest in classical themes, such as Moltmann and Pannenberg, present "remarkably little of salvific value, of the reconciling love of God acting in atonement in Jesus",[20] and this in spite of the fact that Moltmann has produced a book on *The Crucified God*.

In so far as the atonement issue is even approached in contemporary theology, it tends to be assumed that it involves the recognition of the free and automatic acceptance of God. Perhaps the only atypical element in the following articulation of this stance is the fact that it is stated so explicitly.

> The revelation of God in Jesus is the developmental unmasking not of a terrible God, but of a God who would 'wipe away every human tear', of a God who is radically personal and communal in knowledge, love and free creation. God would have us 'fear not'.[21]

From the traditional point of view, this represents the elimination, rather than an articulation, of atonement.

Yet it must be recognized that this approach to atonement is not without its merits. For one thing, it reflects the literal meaning of the term. The word "atonement" is unique in being the only major theological term of English origin. Its original meaning is precisely what its component elements suggest: at-one-ment. It refers to the achieving of at-one-ment between estranged parties. Thus its primary reference is to reconciliation, and any suggestion that such reconciliation is achieved by making amends for the offences which caused the estrangement in the first place, is a secondary development.[22] The strength of the liberal approach is that it reflects this priority. "The significance of the 19th century in the history of atonement doctrine is the new prominence given to such relations as that between father and son or between mother and child, to such concepts as personal sympathy and personal identification with others."[23]

Even more significant than this reflection of the root meaning of the term is the fact that the modern understanding of atonement is motivated by distinctly theological concerns. Aulén suggests that the subjective view represents a reaction against what he calls the Latin theory, originated by St. Anselm.[24] It takes issue with this theory's apparent assumption that atonement consists in appeasing God so that the divine attitude toward us is changed from wrath to grace. Against such a perspective, it insists that, far from being a trophy marking our successful propitiation of God, atonement is rather a gift of God's grace. Thus one of the earliest proponents of this argument, Faustus Socinus, insisted toward the end of the 16th century that forgiveness is not achieved by satisfaction being provided to God, but rather issues from God himself of his own volition. "For God can, especially since he is Lord of all, abandon as much of his rights as he pleases."[25] Socinus suggests that if God cannot forgive without satisfaction, he has less power than humans.[26] Forgiveness must be of God, and not a response to which God is cajoled by the sacrifice of Christ.

In fairness to the traditional accounts of atonement, it must be noted that no serious exponent of them ever meant to suggest that this was how atonement was effected. In this regard, Aulén's reading of Anselm is highly misleading. The latter's explanation of atonement in terms of the satisfaction of God's honour which allows God to forgive with integrity presupposes that God is the source as well as the object of this satisfaction. This is the whole point of his treatise, *Cur Deus Homo*, as suggested most succinctly in the heading of Chapter Six of Book Two: "That the satisfaction whereby man can be saved can be effected only by one who is God and man".[27] Only the God-man can provide satisfaction because as God he can effect it and as man he represents the side from which it is due. In the dialectic of the incarnation, God satisfies his own honour from within estranged humanity. We shall see that this model of atonement is not without its own problems, but anthropocentrism is not one of them. Contrary to Aulén, Anselm does not see man propitiating God, but rather this office is, and can only be, executed by the God-man.

Still, the question that troubles modern sensibility is why there is need for satisfaction. In the tradition of Socinus, we wonder about the power and supremacy of God if there is some constraint to which God is subject. If God is God, then requirements of honour must surely be negotiable for God. If God is bound by these requirements, then such requirements are superior, and God is not really God. The point is nowhere expressed more clearly than by a theologian whose fame and influence have least to do with his pronouncements on atonement, St. Thomas Aquinas, in his explanation of how God could have forgiven without satisfaction and not thereby impugned the cause of justice.

> . . . if God had wanted to free man from sin without any satisfaction at all, he would not have been acting against justice. Justice cannot be safeguarded by the judge whose duty it is to punish crimes committed against others, e.g. against a fellow man, or the government, or the head of the government, should he dismiss a crime without punishment. But God has no one above him, for he is himself the supreme and common good of the entire universe. If then he forgives sin, which is a crime in that it is committed against him, he violates no one's rights. The man who waives satisfaction and forgives an offence done to himself acts mercifully, not unjustly.[28]

Because God is Lord of all, there is an inherent guarantee of the maintenance of justice in divine forgiveness. But this seems to assume that justice is a concomitant of authority and power. It is because of God's sheer supremacy that forgiveness should be possible without questions of compensation or satisfaction. But is justice guaranteed by authority and power? Is it not rather assured by impartiality and consistency? But in that case, forgiveness as a concession of supreme authority appears arbitrary and problematic. If God can forgive because of sheer supremacy, how does this differ from a capricious despot who might display indulgence one moment and vengeance the next? It seems that forgiveness itself, if it is to be genuine and worthwhile, must entail the affirmation of the truth or right offended.

The affirmation of truth and right was one of the main concerns behind the traditional models of atonement. It has been suggested that the strength of that version which is prime candidate for the epitome of satisfaction models, the penal theory of atonement, lies in its concern for the sanctity of the moral law.[29] As is often the case in this area, sources of strength very easily revolve into points of weakness. Concern for the moral law can very easily result in its elevation over the personal reality of divine forgiveness. The concern for atonement, which validates the moral dimension, can displace the quest of at-one-ment, which is the goal of the whole process. Along with this, there is also the implication that somehow the moral law is superior to God. Its requirements have to be satisfied before God can forgive. Yet, recognizing these dangers in satisfaction perspectives, there is something in this outlook which will not be denied.

> The consciousness of guilt cannot be overcome by the simple assertion that man is forgiven. Man can believe in forgiveness only if justice is maintained and guilt is confirmed. God must remain Lord and Judge in spite of the reuniting power of his love.[30]

There can be no real at-one-ment without atonement. This is not due to the inviolability of some abstract reality such as the moral law, but rather has to do with the very nature of God.

The moral influence approach, as it is generally understood, sees atonement as the at-one-ment which can be realized through the recognition of God's graciousness which freely forgives us and accepts us as we are. As far as it

goes, it is difficult to fault such an interpretation as an accurate portrayal of the fundamental thrust of the gospel. But to stop there, as much contemporary Christian rhetoric does, is to settle for a half-truth which can only serve to undermine that very gospel. For as characterized by sheer forgiving acceptance, God cannot fail to appear as an arbitrary power representing indiscriminate indulgence for whatever transpires. Such a sentimentalization and trivialization of the gospel of divine love can be avoided only by acknowledging another side in the divine character, that side which traditionally has been designated as holiness.

> Love is not love of God if it is not holy. At the same time, holiness is not really holy if it is not love. Holiness is the presupposition of love, while love is the fulfilment of holiness.[31]

Because of this, the original meaning of at-one-ment expanded to include reference to the atonement which made at-one-ment possible. Consequently a full appreciation of atonement must encompass this sense of making amends which gives substance to the accepting love. The sentimentalization of accepting love on its own is dissipated through the recognition that it is holy love that thus accepts. This has at least two crucial implications. On the one hand, it dispenses with the suggestion of compromise which is implicit in the isolation of love as the sole ingredient in forgiveness.[32] At the same time, it provides an assurance that the acceptance of divine love is genuine and will be sustained.[33]

Thus in spite of a fundamental concern to identify God as the source of forgiveness, the moral influence approach so portrays this as straightforward acceptance that it tends to eliminate the fundamental tension between acceptance and rejection, grace and wrath, love and holiness to which the traditional atonement models pointed.

> The 'love of God' in liberal theology since Schleiermacher is nothing but the 'soprano' of these happy people. They did not have the ears to hear the bass which is the pain of God sounding out of the depths.[34]

The easy acceptance of God coincides with an essentially easy understanding of life, which, in the words of D. M. MacKinnon "ignores altogether the dimension of the irrevocable; in the end, it comes perilously near taking refuge in a false optimism, which supposes all for the best, in the best of all possible worlds".[35] MacKinnon concludes that, whatever their inadequacies, the traditional treatments of atonement insisted that the work of Christ concerned the deepest contradictions of human life. These contradictions are the human experiences which constitute glimpses of the conflict theology points to in terms of the dialectic of the holiness and love of God. It is out of that conflict that atonement emerges. When the dialectic is short-circuited, as it is in much contemporary religious and theological affirmation of the love of God, in complete disregard of God's holiness, atonement is replaced by an at-one-ment which is as inconsequential as the arbitrary God who sponsors it.

II

If the moral influence approach proves forbidding because it loses the depth of the gospel with which traditional atonement models were concerned, those models themselves fall far short of providing an acceptable alternative. "Their transactional character, whether expressed in terms of propitiation, substitution or payment of a debt, make them an easy butt for criticism."[36] In fact, the criticism is so easy that it readily degenerates into caricature, as in the following dismissal of traditional models of atonement by Michael Goulder.

> Alas for those whose task is the defence of the traditional doctrines of atonement! Better Skid Row than the endless round of empty speculations that run from the implausible to the irreligious: the theories that point to demons more powerful than God (unless he can cheat them), and those that posit a faceless justice more powerful than God; those that make Christ a whipping boy, and those that make him an international banker in merit, with resources enough to pay off the world's balance of payments deficit. Many such expositors end their labours with the complacent reflection, 'all these pictures are inadequate: we need them all to do justice to the greatness of the facts': but rubbish added to rubbish makes rubbish.[37]

The complacency implicit in the blanket endorsement of all accounts of atonement because none is adequate to the reality itself is precisely the issue behind this paper, as suggested in the introduction. In fact, in the light of Goulder's proposal to avoid the difficulties in the concept of incarnation by regarding Jesus as "The Man of *Universal* Destiny" (italics added), it may be that he knows what he is talking about when he speaks of rubbish. However, without accepting his blanket dismissal of traditional accounts of atonement as being any more adequate than their blanket endorsement, we can agree that even on the most sympathetic reading, these accounts do have an unfortunate tendency to trivialize the reality they attempt to represent. Paul van Buren's assessment of Anselm's position, that it portrays the cross "as a great transaction carried out over our heads",[38] might be applied to any of the objective views of atonement.

It is not just the foreignness of talk of transactions between God and Satan, or between the Father and the Son, which makes these accounts problematic, but the very suggestion of an "objective" transaction which is somehow supposed to have an inherent significance for us. We could translate the ancient mythology of deals with Satan into the contemporary idiom of psychological conflict within God. Aulén asserts of the classical view of atonement: "God is at once the author and the object of reconciliation; He is reconciled in the act of reconciling the world to himself".[39] And we have seen that, contrary to Aulén's own interpretation, Anselm maintains this dialectic, and, indeed, facilitates a theopsychological type of interpretation even more directly by eliminating the external reference to Satan, and concentrating the transaction internally in the Godhead between the Father and the Son. From a perspective as indebted to Luther as Aulén's, Kazoh Kitamori effects the transition to contemporary psychological terms by describing atonement in terms of a struggle within the divine psyche which he characterizes as the pain of God resulting from the conflict in which the divine love conquers the divine wrath so that sinners might be acceptable in spite of their sin.[40] This psychological account is less jarring to modern ears than talk of treacherous deals with Satan, but the familiarity of the idiom does not dispense with the sense of an alien transaction to which we are not party.

The legacy of this theopsychic approach to atonement surfaces in the concern, particularly prominent in neo-orthodox theology, to isolate the significance of Christ, especially of his death, from the rest of life. "Theologians have commonly imagined that they are under obligation to make a complete isolation of the sacrifice of Christ from the heroic self-offering of other noble souls; and this has vitiated most of the classical attempts to produce a doctrine of atonement."[41] The concern that it is really God with whom we have to do in Christ easily slips over into the insistence that we have to do with God only in Christ. Thus Brunner emphasized the once-for-allness (*Einmaligkeit*) of the event of Christ, contending not simply for its uniqueness but its absolute uniqueness.[42] Such insistence on the completeness of the work of Christ serves to confirm the sense of an alien transaction which places such an encumberance on any attempt at an appreciation of atonement that it is not likely to be surmounted.

Beyond the abstraction of essentially objective theories of atonement which gives the impression of reporting a celestial transaction which has little or nothing to do with us, an impression re-enforced by the isolation of the work of Christ from the rest of our experience of life, the fundamental difficulty with objective theories is located in the same place as that of the subjective moral influence approach, in the understanding of God. Where the moral influence view sentimentalizes the love of God through a failure to appreciate and affirm divine holiness, the objective satisfaction theories fail to do justice to the love of God because of a one-sided obsession with divine holiness. Even if we were not put off by the transactional atmosphere of the traditional accounts of atonement, we would find ourselves brought up short by the understanding of God implied in them. Not only does God come off as something of a wheeler-dealer, but as a wheeler-dealer of questionable credentials. Beyond the deceitful treatment of Satan in the classical theory, which might suggest that it was really Satan who prevailed through the endorsement of his methods, the satisfaction theory, especially in its stronger penal-substitutionary form, raises basic questions about the sheer morality of the whole operation. The central assumption of the traditional accounts was that atonement was the method by which God was able to forgive with integrity. But the penal-substitution explanation suggests that this was made possible by allowing, if not causing, the innocent to suffer for the guilty. How is integrity maintained by such a reversal of just deserts? There would seem to be some point to Bushnell's conclusion: "The justice satisfied is satisfied with injustice!".[43] At the very least, it is ironic that the approach to atonement which puts the premium on moral integrity should be accused of portraying the atonement in immoral terms.

An immediate answer to this charge of immorality against the penal theory is to point out that God does not require Jesus to become the substitute for the guilty, but rather that it is God the Son who takes this judgement upon himself in the mystery of the incarnation. Thus Moltmann contends that it is the cross that evokes the doctrine of the Trinity as its only adequate interpretation, according to which the Father sacrifices the Son through the Spirit.[44] However, far from exonerating God, such a perspective could in fact be seen to confirm the suspicions of those who challenge the God who requires satisfaction. Thus Dorothee Soelle contends that Moltmann's position is an example of that understanding of God which actually glorifies suffering and really amounts to a theological sadism which ends up "worshipping the executioner".[45] Christians manage to live with this astounding concept of God because it is tempered with the conviction that God is loving as well as just, thus adding the note of masochism.[46]

> But the cross is neither a symbol expressing the relation between God the Father and the Son, nor a symbol of masochism which needs suffering in order to convince itself of love. It is above all a symbol of reality. Love does not 'require' the cross, but *de facto* it ends up on the cross.[47]

Or, as Soelle puts it more crisply elsewhere: "Christ came to the cross because he went too far in loving people, not because a heavenly father elected him as the special victim to be punished".[48]

Thus Soelle raises questions about the understanding of God implicit in traditional satisfaction theories of atonement which are just as debilitating as the innocuous picture of God which results from the modern moral influence tendency to lose sight of holiness through the sentimentalization of divine love. The connotation of sadism and the legitimation of suffering are issues which must be faced by any account of atonement which would expect to be taken seriously today. On the other hand, Soelle's own position does not provide much help toward a positive understanding of atonement for today. Her concentration on the problem of suffering prescribes a different orientation.

> In the face of suffering you are either with the victim or the executioner – there is no other option. Therefore that explanation of suffering that looks away from the victim and identifies itself with a righteousness that is supposed to stand behind the suffering has already taken a step in the direction of theological sadism, which wants to understand God as the torturer.[49]

Blessed are those who can distinguish so clearly between victims and executioners. Doubly blessed are those who can be sure that they are on the side of the victims. Those of us who find life more ambiguous many continue to draw consolation from the traditional conviction, however inadequately expressed, that God is to be found in the midst of that ambiguity as certified by the cross. This does not provide any excuse for not siding with the victims in so far as they can be identified, but it does submit our failures in identification and in recognition, as well as our complicity in the role of executioner, to the healing power of divine holiness and love.

III

The off-setting deficiencies of the subjective and objective approaches to atonement make the tendency to propose an amalgamation readily understandable. Since the subjective focus on experience compensates for the abstraction of the objective theories, and the divine sponsorship of atonement in the objective theories supplies the substantive gap in the subjective approach, it seems obvious that the solution to the atonement issue lies in some combination of the two approaches. The traditional concern with the holiness of God and its satisfaction constitutes a corrective to the sentimentalization of love in the modern approach, while the emphasis on the love of God in this approach recovers the essential thrust of the gospel

12. Adolf Harnack, *What is Christianity?*, tr. Thomas Bailey Saunders (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1901), p. 147.

13. Ibid., p. 162.

14. John McConnachie, *The Significance of Karl Barth* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931), p.157; see *CD* IV.1, pp. 252f., and II.1, pp. 152f.

15. Donald G. Bloesch, "Soteriology in Contemporary Christian Thought," *Interpretation*, 35 (1981), 143.

16. *The Myth of God Incarnate*, ed. John Hick (London: SCM Press, 1977); *The Truth of God Incarnate*, ed., Michael Green (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977); *Incarnation and Myth: The Debate Continued* (London: SCM Press, 1979).

17. *Incarnation and Myth*, 4.A. "Incarnation and Atonement," pp. 77-103.

18. Schubert Ogden, *Faith and Freedom* (Belfast: Christian Journals, 1979).

19. Lonnie Kliever, *The Shattered Spectrum: A Survey of Contemporary Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), pp. 173f.

20. George M. Newlands, *Theology of the Love of God* (London: Collins, 1980), p. 33.

21. John Francis Kavanaugh, *Following Christ in a Consumer Society* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1982), p. 94.

22. Robert S. Paul, *The Atonement and the Sacraments*, p. 28; J. K. Mozley, *The Doctrine of the Atonement* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1962), p. 11, n. 1; F. W. Dillistone, "Atonement," in *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology*, ed. Alan Richardson and John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1983), p. 50; K. F. Dougherty, "Atonement," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1 (Washington: The Catholic University of America, 1967), p. 1024.

23. F. W. Dillistone, *The Christian Understanding of Atonement* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1968), p. 242.

24. Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor* (London: SPCK, 1970), pp. 141f.

25. Faustus Socinus, *De Jesu Christo Servatore*, I.1, in Robert S. Franks, *The Work of Christ*, p. 365.

26. J. K. Mozley, *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 148.

27. St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1909), II.VI, p. 66.

28. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologia* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1965), 3a, Qu. 46, Art. 2.

29. J. K. Mozley, *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 210.

30. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I in Combined Volume (Digswell Place: James Nisbet & Co., 1968), pp. 319f.

31. Jung Young Lee, *God Suffers for Us* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), p. 9.

32. Peter Hinchliff, *Holiness and Politics* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1983), p. 65.

33. Donald G. Miller, "Expository Article on Jn. 3:1-21," *Interpretation*, 35 (1981) 177.

34. Kazoh Kitamori, *Theology of the Pain of God* (London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 24.

35. D. M. MacKinnon, "Subjective and Objective Conceptions of Atonement," in *Prospects for Theology: Essays in Honour of H. H. Farmer*, ed. F. G. Healey (London: Nisbet, 1966), p. 172.

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