The Liturgical Action of Christ's Body:

A Theo-Philosophical Extension of Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology

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Abstract

Bonhoeffer's theological contributions may provide significant relevance and theoretical illumination on contemporary issues in ecclesiology. Not only did Bonhoeffer offer creative theological insights, but he also incorporated philosophy into his theological positions in a way that maintains the supremacy of theology. Specifically, Bonhoeffer develops an ecclesial theology, starting in *Sanctorum Communio* and extending throughout his writings, that relies on social theory and philosophy (especially Hegel) while simultaneously making theology the theoretical authority over these other disciplines. In his ecclesiology, Bonhoeffer argues for an ontological unity between the Church and Christ, which he calls the *Christ-reality* and *Christ existing as Church-community*. In his earliest work, *Sanctorum Communio*, Bonhoeffer develops his Christological ecclesiology that he later refines in his other writings. Within his theology of the Church, Bonhoeffer significantly uses liturgy in order to illuminate how Christ exists as the Church. This thesis will theologically and philosophically analyze Bonhoeffer's theology of the Church's ontological unity with Christ in order to explicate the theological realities involved with the Church *acting as* and *being* Christ's body on earth.

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According to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Church, as a *community*, can constitute the collective person of Christ through converging social features; such an emphasis can be found especially in *Sanctorum Communio*. Specifically, Bonhoeffer incorporates liturgy as a significant feature of *Christ existing as Church-community*. Yet, Bonhoeffer's theology of corporate personhood can be significantly strengthened by recent developments in the philosophy of liturgy which nuance theo-philosophical developments in continuity with Bonhoeffer's thought. This thesis theologically and philosophically analyzes Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology by arguing that (1) his theology of *Christ existing as Church-community* is theologically strong and (2) the communal nature of Christ's ontology is further supported by the philosophy of liturgy.

Method and Purpose

Methodologically, this research argues confessionally from the Christian tradition and does not strictly separate philosophy from theology; the various means of God's revelation are sources of knowledge for Christian philosophers (this is a debate in itself, but such a confessional-philosophical position will be taken in this paper). Accordingly, this argument does not proceed from a supposed neutral position of rationality, as Christianity itself does not align with such a viewpoint. Furthermore, the following analysis relies on postmodern and some analytic philosophers (i.e., Wolterstorff) in order to elucidate the reality of the Church constituting Christ as a collective person.

This thesis is written in order to theologically and philosophically analyze the reality of Christ's body on earth (i.e., the Church), which acts in a unified manner through liturgy. By understanding the social body of Christ better, this paper also offers findings in social theory in

general, as other communities share similarities with the Church. These findings are meant to contribute to philosophical theology by utilizing both theology and philosophy. Ultimately, the following argument has been developed to reveal the excellencies of God's work in his Church.

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Literary Exposition of *Sanctorum Communio*

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In order to understand Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology and theology of liturgy, *Sanctorum Communio* will be analyzed with a specific interest in three themes of Bonhoeffer's theology: (1) *Christ existing as Church-community*, (2) collective persons in general (i.e., *objective spirit*), and (3) liturgy. In this analysis, a chronological approach that explicates primary passages and central arguments from the beginning to the end of the book will be implemented, rather than utilizing a purely indictive approach. *Sanctorum Communio* can only be understood as a whole— that is, by following Bonhoeffer's argument from his first premises to his final conclusions. By clarifying Bonhoeffer's theology of these three themes within *Sanctorum Communio*, a constructive philosophical development incorporating the philosophy of liturgy into Bonhoeffer's theology can then be developed.

Introduction

Written as Bonhoeffer's first dissertation, *Sanctorum Communio* offers a theological sociology of the Church. Bonhoeffer explains that his "purpose is to understand the structure of the given reality of a church of Christ, as revealed in Christ, from the perspective of social philosophy and sociology."[1] Yet, he quickly adds that "the nature of the church can only be understood from within, *cum* ira et studio [*with* passionate zeal], never by nonparticipants. Only those who take the claim of the church seriously . . . can possibly glimpse something of its true

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[1] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio: A Theological Study of the Sociology of the Church*, eds. Clifford J. Green and Joachim Von Soosten, trans. Reinhard Krauss and Nancy Lukens (Vol. 1. Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 33.

nature."[2] In this manner, Bonhoeffer begins his research from theology and then *critically*

incorporates findings from sociology and philosophy; he does this *critically* by utilizing the

dialectic of creation, sin, and reconciliation.[3] Thus, even from the beginning of the dissertation in

the first three chapters, which can be misread as Bonhoeffer basing theology on social theory,

Bonhoeffer develops his ecclesiology from the narrative of God's redemptive plan (i.e., a

Christian starting point based on Church tradition and Scripture).[4] To state Bonhoeffer's

argument in *Sanctorum Communio* briefly, he critiques idealism's atomistic account of society

by articulating the Christian concept of person (Chapter 2), describes the "primal state" of

humanity before the fall by utilizing social theory (Chapter 3), develops a social hamartiology

that articulates the corrupt social relations of humanity (Chapter 4), and articulates how the

Church is a return to the "primal state" state of humanity by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ

(Chapter 5).

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[2] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 33. Emphasis is Bonhoeffer's unless otherwise specified.

[3] Michael Mawson, "Theology and Social Theory—Reevaluating Bonhoeffer's Approach," *Theology Today* (71, no. 1 (April 2014): 69-80. https://doi.org/10.1177/0040573613518549), 76-78. Bonhoeffer approached social theory and philosophy in a theologically critical manner, as he recognized that these other disciplines often stand upon normative claims that are idolatrous. For this reason, Bonhoeffer preferred formal sociology (the scholarship of Georg Simmel, Ferdinand Tönnnies, Alfred Vierkandt, and Leopold von Wiese) rather than the historical approach to sociology (the scholarship of Weber, Durkheim, and Marx). On the one hand, the formal approaches worked to "attend to social formations in their empirical givenness, without placing them within a wider interpretive framework." On the other hand, the historical approaches attempt to develop a framework of meaning and interpretation. Thus, there is less to deconstruct within the formal approach to sociology, which is why Bonhoeffer utilizes this school of sociology. Ibid., 73.

[4] Bonhoeffer relies on the historical dialectic (i.e., humanity's unity, break form unity, and future return to unity) that is embedded in the biblical narrative. He writes, "The doctrine of the primal state [i.e., the doctrine that can more readily utilize the insights of philosophy and social theory] is hope projected backward. Its value is twofold. It forces the methodological clarification of the structure of theology as a whole; then it renders concrete and vivid the real course of things from unity through break to unity. Thus the concept of person and community, for example, are understood only within an intrinsically broken history, as conveyed in the concepts of primal state, sin, and reconciliation." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 62. In addition, the insights summarized from Chapter 1 thus far are the only relevant insights for this literary exposition; thus, Chapter 1 of Sanctorum Communio will not receive its own section of analysis.

Chapter 2: "The Christian Concept of Person and Concepts of Social Basic-Relation"[5]

Following his definitions of social philosophy and sociology, along with his affirmation

of theology as the authority of ecclesiology (Chapter 1), Bonhoeffer develops the Christian

concept of personhood and the concept of social basic-relations[6] in Chapter 2. After articulating

the Aristotelian, Stoic, Epicurean, and Cartesian concepts of person and briefly revealing their

inability to create human community,[7] Bonhoeffer begins to articulate the Christian concept of

person, which will contribute to his later claims about objective spirit and collective persons.[8]

First, he understands personhood to be divinely established by God.[9] Bonhoeffer Scholar

Michael Mawson explains, "Broadly, Bonhoeffer follows Barth here by insisting on the

'absolute qualitative distinction' and asymmetry between God and the human being;"

accordingly, human personhood rests upon God's authority.[10] Second, contrary to the

individualism of idealism,[11] Bonhoeffer argues that the Christian concept of person[12]

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[5] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 34.

[6] Bonhoeffer's engagement with social theory in these first three chapters is integral for his later development of ecclesiology. For example, Bonhoeffer clearly understands ontic (or social) basic relations in this manner: they will later be renewed in a more beautiful way in the Church. He writes, "The norm and limit to all empirical sociality is established in ontic basic-relations—an assertion that will be of great significance when we deal with the concept of the church." Ibid., 36.

[7] Ibid., 35-43.

[8] Ibid., 44.

[9] Ibid., 49.

[10] Michael Mawson, *Christ Existing as Community: Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2018), 62.

[11] Concluding his argument against idealism, Bonhoeffer writes, "Idealist individualism's notion of spirit as being-for-itself [Fürsichsein] is unchristian, as it involves attributing to the human spirit absolute value that can only be ascribed to divine spirit." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 49.

[12] Defining this term, Bonhoeffer explains, "*The term 'Christian concept of person' will now be used for the concept of person that is constitutive for the concept of Christian community and is presupposed by it.*" In this way, Bonhoeffer's theo-philosophy of personhood is integral to his theology of *Christ existing as Church-community*. Ibid., 44.

demonstrates the necessary interconnectedness of the *I* and the *You* of the individual and the

other.[13] The *I*, in order to be an ethical and social person, must encounter the barrier of a *You* that

draws the *I* out of itself in the moment of ethical responsibility and decision.[14] Bonhoeffer holds

that the *I* and the *You* are completely separate spheres of identity that are non-subsumable into

each other; while at the same time, he argues for their biconditional nature: the personhood of

the *I* and the *You* require each other in order to exist.[15] Bonhoeffer decisively describes these

features of human sociality that will play a significant role in this paper's first two exegetical

themes of interest (i.e., *Christ existing as Church-community* and collective persons in general).

Bonhoeffer explains:

> When the concrete ethical barrier of the other person is acknowledged or, alternatively,
> when the person is compelled to acknowledge it, we have made a fundamental step that
> allows us to grasp the *social ontic-ethical basic-relations of persons* . . . . The concept of
> barrier is not to be located in the relation between the individual and the universal . . . .
> But *the metaphysical concept of the individual is defined without mediation, whereas the
> ethical concept of the person is a definition based on ethical-social interaction.* From the
> ethical perspective, human beings do not exist 'unmediated' qua spirit in and of
> themselves, but only in responsibility vis-à-vis an 'other'.[16]

Thus, Bonhoeffer understands personhood as necessarily bound to human sociality, which

involves the social basic-relations of the barrier that the *You* becomes as a completely separate

sphere of identity. At the end of Chapter 2, Bonhoeffer positions the insights of Chapter 3 as the

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[13] Bonhoeffer explains, "[T]he individual exists only in relation to an 'other'; individual does not mean solitary. *On the contrary, for the individual to exist, 'others' must necessarily be there.* But what is the 'other'? If I call the individual the concrete I, then the other is the *concrete* You." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 51.

[14] Ibid., 52.

[15] Bonhoeffer Scholar Charles Marsh helpfully explains, "Bonhoeffer argus that the integrity of the other, the other's irreducibility to the I—'to my thoughts and possessions'—can only be realized in a social, ethical dynamic . . . . [F]or in responding to the call of the Thou, I am taken out of myself and repositioned *in relation with the other*. I no longer take control of the other, nor does the other control me, but we both discover our individual and social identities in the place of our difference." Charles Marsh, *Reclaiming Dietrich Bonhoeffer: The Promise of His Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 69.

[16] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 50.

implications from the Christian concept of person and the social basic-relations established in Chapter 2.[17]

Chapter 3: "The Primal State and the Problem of Community"[18]

In Chapter 3 of *Sanctorum Communio*, along with chapter 4, Bonhoeffer develops the central claims involved in the dialectic of (1) creation (i.e., primal state), (2) fall, and (3) reconciliation.[19] Specifically, Chapter 3 establishes the primal state of humanity, which is different from the Christian concept of personhood (Cf. Chapter 2) that is existentially in effect between the fall and the eschaton;[20] instead of being the present state of human personhood, the primal state was lost in the fall and will only be fully realized again in a more beautiful way with Christ's second coming.[21] In short, the primal state of humanity consists of prelapsarian human nature. Bonhoeffer provides an account of the primal state in order to (1) reveal the corrupting

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[17] As the last sentence of Chapter 2, Bonhoeffer writes, "What follows is thus to be seen as presupposed by the preceding argument." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 57.

[18] Ibid., 58.

[19] Mawson, *Christ Existing as Community*, 77.

[20] The primal state of humanity is associated with (1) human sociality before the fall and (2) the eschatological hope of God's coming kingdom. Bonhoeffer explains, "The Christian concept of person should be thought of historically, i.e., in the state after the fall, for history in the true sense only begins with sin and the fate of death that is linked with it. From this it follows that the concept of person in the primal state must be understood differently, corresponding to the idea of the new humanity which, in hope, overcomes the history of sin and death . . . . Community with God by definition establishes social community as well . . . . In the following we will show that even the formal concept of person can be conceived only in terms of community. Thus unbroken social community belongs to primal being [urständliches Sein], in parallel to the eschatological hope we have for it in the church. This is expressed clearly, if only indirectly in the Genesis narrative . . . . A rupture has come into the unbroken community." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 63.

[21] Ibid., 58-64.

effects of sin[22] and (2) theologically articulate the social basic-relations which are regenerated in

the Church.[23]

Briefly, the social basic-relations found in the primal state (which are imperfectly

regenerated in the Church-community) involve (1) the dialectic of openness and closedness of

the human person,[24] (2) human community as a community of individuals unitedly willing

together,[25] (3) and objective spirit as the nexus of human sociality.[26] Each of these aspects of

humanity's primal state[27] will briefly be articulated in order to understand Bonhoeffer's later

ecclesiology. Unlike some previous engagements with *Sanctorum Communio*, Michael

Mawson's analysis of this work shows how Bonhoeffer's engagement with social theory in

Chapters 1-3 is integral to Bonhoeffer's later claims about the Church.[28]

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[22] Bonhoeffer writes, "For us, though, the doctrine of the primal state is significant precisely because it enables us to grasp concretely the reality of sin, which infinitely alters the essence of things." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 62.

[23] Bonhoeffer balances a tension in this chapter because he relies on social philosophy while working from a theological position. He claims that the Church and human sociality can only be understood theologically and from the Church community; yet, the full reality of the Church is drawn out by *theological* engagement with social philosophy. Bonhoeffer explains, "[M]ethodologically, all statements [about the primal state] are possible only on the basis of our understanding of the church, i.e., from the revelation we have heard. Thus social-philosophical and sociological problems can be dealt with in the context of theology not because they can be proved generally necessary on the basis of creation, but because they are presupposed and included in revelation . . . . Of course . . . the reversed logic of the theological system applies to the description of what is known, in that the concept of the church only appears to emerge out of the amalgam of issues worked out in the doctrine of the primal state." Ibid., 65.

[24] Ibid., 65.

[25] Ibid., 80.

[26] Ibid., 97.

[27] Just as a point of clarification, Bonhoeffer does not intend these social basic relations in Chapter 3 to be conflated with the Christian concept of person. Rather, Chapter 3 establishes the general account of human sociality prior to any corruption. This also means that this account excludes important ethical features from chapter 2 and later chapters which emerge from the reality of human sinfulness. Ibid., 65-66.

[28] Mawson, *Christ Existing as Community*, 123-124.

Openness and Closedness

First, Bonhoeffer contends that individuals in the primal state are completely open and completely closed in their social relations to others.[29] The concept of spirit has a significant role in this dialectic, and Bonhoeffer defines spirit in the following way: "[S]pirit in a person is *the bond of self-consciousness and self-determination* [i.e., the will] *that documents its structural unity*; this spirit can be *formally defined as the principle of receptivity and activity*."[30] Bonhoeffer then gives an example of how human spirit is intimately and openly tied to sociality. In each intellectual act, people "know that they *understand*, *express themselves*, *and are understood*"; as a result, the human intellect is necessarily bound to social interaction.[31] Similarly, the phenomenon of language shows how "[*o*]*nly in reciprocal interaction with other minds is self-conscious thinking and willing possible and meaningful*."[32] The nature of human will also demonstrates the socially open nature of individuals in the primal state. Human will fully emerges with the resistance or encounter of another's will.[33] Upon inspecting human volitional nature, willing something only makes sense in reference to other individuals who also will things to be. Thus, for Bonhoeffer, (1) the human intellect, (2) the social nature of language, and (3) the reciprocal properties of the human will all point to the openness of individuals.

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[29] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 69-80.

[30] Ibid., 67.

[31] Ibid., 68.

[32] Ibid., 68-69. Bonhoeffer concludes this vein on thought, "Thus, with language, a *system of social spirit* has been built into human beings; in other words, '*objective spirit*' *has become effective in history*." Ibid., 70.

[33] Bonhoeffer explains, "Thus, the will, too, as actively arising from self-consciousness, is possible only in sociality . . . . Will comes into being where there is 'resistance'. However, resistance in the fullest sense of the word can only be that of another spirit's will . . . . Will as an isolated phenomenon is absurd." Ibid., 72.

Just as important, however, people also are structurally closed. Bonhoeffer recognizes the danger of human spirit being *only* open, as that would make a monistic, apersonal spirit.[34] Opposed to this position, Bonhoeffer explains how objective spirit's[35] social existence (i.e., the nexus of all individuals' social openness) requires active human agents that are distinct and non-subsumable. Bonhoeffer writes:

> Thus, they [i.e., human beings] clearly are not only reservoirs or receptive organs for a certain quantity of objective spirit, but much more they are spontaneous 'bearers', active members, of the great social nexus . . . . The more the individual spirit develops, the more it plunges into the stream of objective spirit, the more it becomes a bearer of objective spirit, and this immersion is precisely what strengthens the individual spirit. Thus the 'openness' of the person demands 'closedness' as a correlative, or one could not speak of openness at all.[36]

In this way, Bonhoeffer develops a theory of personhood that flows from a biconditional relationship between individual spirit (Cf. human closeness) and objective spirit (Cf. human openness). If C represents individual spirit and O represents objective spirit, this relationship can be symbolized as such: $C \equiv O$, i.e., $(C \supset O) \bullet (O \supset C)$. In this way, people are structurally closed and open as social creatures.[37]

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[34] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 73.

[35] Bonhoeffer relies on Hegel for this term. It refers to the historical-social development of a collective force that influences the members of a community. Bonhoeffer scholar Jeff Nowers explains that "*Geist*, for Hegel, is the historical unfolding of the dialectical process." Hegel's *Geist* historically unfolds in three stages: subjective *Geist* (i.e., individual consciousness), objective *Geist* (i.e., collective consciousness linked to things like institutions and communities), and absolute *Geist* (i.e., "movement into the domains of aesthetics, art, religion and, ultimately, philosophy"). Bonhoeffer utilizes the concept of objective spirit in *Sanctorum Communio*; Nowers explains, "Just as individual *Geist* relates to the self-consciousness and will of the person, so objective *Geist* is the self-consciousness and will of the community as *Kollektivperson*." Jeff Nowers, "Hegel, Bonhoeffer, and Objective *Geist*: An Architectonic Exegesis of Sanctorum Communio," in *Ontology and Ethics: Bonhoeffer and Contemporary Scholarship*, eds. Adam Clark and Michael Mawson (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 48, 49, and 54 for the last three sentences, respectively.

[36] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 73-74.

[37] Bonhoeffer utilizes Leibniz's philosophy of monads to explicate the closedness of individuals. Bonhoeffer writes, "Clearly, Leibniz's *image of the monad* may serve to clarify these social basic-relations. This is an image of individual beings who are completely self-contained—'monads have no windows'—and yet conceiving, mirroring, and individually shaping all of reality, and, in so doing, discovering their being." Ibid., 79. Leibniz himself did not propose a hard individualist ontology with his monads as some construe him doing. Indeed,

Humans as Volitional

Second, after explaining the social openness and closedness of individuals, Bonhoeffer argues that humanity in the primal state has different modes of willing. The importance of human volitional nature in society does not lie in the conscious decision making of individual agents; rather, a social entity (e.g., a society or a community) "subsists in such acts."[38] Bonhoeffer explains how "[w]ills can will 'together', 'beside', and 'against' one another."[39] Willing together is the only form relevant to ecclesiology and the primal state.[40] Within the social occurrence of people willing together, a community is formed when people will "[*b*]*eing-with-one-another* [*Miteinander*] . . . *as an end in itself*."[41] Fundamentally, communities will toward *being-with-one-another* because they place value in the community itself,[42] which exists

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Leibniz's monadic philosophy, which demonstrates the utter connectedness of individual monads, is helpful at this point in Bonhoeffer's argument. Leibniz writes, "Monads all go confusedly to infinity, to the whole; but they are limited and differentiated by the degrees of their distinct perceptions. In this respect, composite substances are analogous to simple substances. For everything is a plenum, which makes all matter interconnected." Here, Leibniz highlights the *differentiatedness* of monads and their connectedness. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *The Monadology*, in *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays*, eds. Daniel Garber and Roger Ariew (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1991), 77.

[38] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 81. In footnote 16, Bonhoeffer even critiques Rousseau's contract theory for overlooking the imaginative, subconscious forces of social relations. Rousseau fails to articulate human volitional nature in his social contract theory because "(1) the conscious will of the individual is wrongly located already at the origin of organic social forms . . . and . . . (2) this will is construed as purely contractual, so that all empirical associations would have to be conceived as arising from such a contract. But this is sociologically untenable. Sociologically, a contract is obviously unthinkable without the underlying communal ethos that treats a contract as binding." Ibid., 81

[39] Ibid., 88.

[40] Bonhoeffer writes, "Only the first [i.e., willing together] leads to empirical social formation. The second [i.e., willing beside] is sociologically irrelevant . . . . The third [i.e., willing against], when developed in completely pure form, does create real social vitality, but remains unable to create a social form [Sozialgebilde]. Thus only the first form is significant here." Ibid., 88.

[41] Ibid., 88.

[42] Ibid., 89.

as a concrete life-community.[43] Unlike the social type of *society*, which is only a loose

connection of persons and a social sphere of efficiency for an end outside the society,[44] the social

type of *community* consists of closely connected people[45] and is "*built upon the separateness and

difference of persons, constituted by reciprocal acts of will, finding unity in what is willed.*"[46]

Bonhoeffer will later theologically associate *community* with *Christ existing as Church-

community*.

Objective Spirit

Third, the primal state of humanity is integrally tied to objective spirit, which Bonhoeffer

defines as "*the connection between historical and communal meaning, between the temporal and

spatial intentions of a community. Objective spirit is will exerting itself effectively on the

members of the community.*"[47] In essence, objective spirit is its own entity that arises from the

dialectical interaction of *I* and *You*[48] that consists of shared understandings, experiences, and

desires. Unlike Hegel, Bonhoeffer argues that objective spirit relies on the closedness and

openness of individuals and can never absorb individual spirit.[49] Furthermore, this concept of

objective spirit is closely tied to collective persons. Regarding objective spirit, Bonhoeffer

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[43] The social type of *community* is a life-community because a person's act of willing it is "*embedded in a concrete, living, non-formal act* such as conscious participation in the work of the community . . . . Common feeling, common willing, and co-responsibility are forces of the inmost cohesion." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 90.

[44] Ibid., 90-91.

[45] Ibid., 91.

[46] Ibid., 86.

[47] Ibid., 99.

[48] Bonhoeffer writes, "It [i.e., objective spirit] leads an individual life 'beyond' the individual persons, and yet it is real only through them. The more alive the individual persons, the more powerful the objective spirit. It interacts reciprocally with each individual and with them all." Ibid., 99-100.

[49] Ibid., 102-103.

writes, "Thus, we are not dealing here with the concept of some spirit entity, called spirit of the people, that arises of its own natural strength from metaphysical depths. Rather, in the dialectical movement through which alone persons originate, individual collective persons come into being as well."[50] Here, Bonhoeffer relies on the Christian and Greek concepts of social bodies.[51] From the objective spirit of a community, personal characteristics arise that are created by the community and influence the community reciprocally.[52] This discussion of the primal state will directly influence Bonhoeffer's theology of *Christ existing as Church-community* and *collective persons* in his ecclesiology.

Chapter 4: "Sin and Broken Community"[53]

Progressing through the dialectic of primal state, fallen state, and regenerated state, Bonhoeffer develops a social hamartiology in chapter 4. In the fall, the primal state of humanity became completely marred by sin's corrupting powers.[54] Bonhoeffer develops two significant arguments that subsequently lead to his ecclesiology: postlapsarian humanity (1) naturally exists as selfish, isolated individuals in the collective person of Adam, but (2) they can be regenerated in the collective person of Christ, which will only fully supersede Adam in the future Kingdom of God.

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[50] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 103.

[51] Ibid., 104.

[52] Michael Mawson helpfully explains, "Bonhoeffer reinforces the integrity of a community as a kind of person in its own right by claiming that individual and collective persons are able to interact *as persons* . . . . Collective persons, therefore, can similarly be conceived of as open and closed in their relationships . . . . On the one hand, a collective person in the primal state is generated by and consists of individual persons, and for this reason remains genetically dependent upon them. On the other hand, it is also necessary simultaneously to conceive of collective persons as entirely independent of such individual persons." Mawson, *Christ Existing as Community*, 85.

[53] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 107.

[54] Bonhoeffer concisely explains, "All natural forms of community remain, but they are corrupt in their inmost core." Ibid., 108.

The Community of Adam

First, Bonhoeffer reveals why he cannot accept social philosophy at face-value: the reality of sin in Adam is simply ignored by these accounts.[55] The corrupting nature of sin is disastrous. Bonhoeffer bluntly states, "But the recognition by human beings of their utter solitude in responsibility before God, and their utter uniqueness of their culpability, is met with another perception . . . . This second perception is based upon the insight into the qualitative nature of sin, that is, knowledge that the misery of sin is infinitely great."[56] Yet, even while the damage of sin is immense, "all natural forms of community remain."[57] This means that the *I-You* social structure remains, but it now highlights the "individual" and "supra-individual"[58] act of sinning, which is thereby simultaneously a solitary and communal act.[59] This social connectedness of sin is best understood in the collective person of Adam, who is the head (so to speak) and the social sphere of sinful humanity.[60] In this way, Bonhoeffer understands sin as a corporate and an individual condition.

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[55] When discussing the primal state, Bonhoeffer clearly rejects an accommodationist engagement with social philosophy. In Chapter 3, Bonhoeffer explained, "While the theological problem [of the primal state] presents little difficulty, *the methodological issues become more complicated by relating social philosophy and sociology* to the doctrine of the primal state. Here, too, it cannot be a matter of developing speculative theories about the possibility of social being in the primal state not affected by evil will. Instead, methodologically, all statements are possible only on the basis of our understanding of the church, i.e., from the revelation we have heard." In Chapter 4, Bonhoeffer explains in detail what he mentioned briefly here in his theological approach to philosophy. Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 64-65.

[56] Ibid., 108.

[57] Ibid., 108.

[58] Ibid., 108.

[59] Ibid., 109-114. Explaining how all of humanity shares in sinfulness, Bonhoeffer writes, "Aware of this state of affaires [i.e., human sinfulness], we connect consciousness of our deepest personal culpability with that of the universality of our deed. Every deed is at once an individual act and one that reawakens the total sin of humanity. This, then, establishes the universality of sin as necessarily posited along with, and in, individual sin." Ibid., 116.

[60] Ibid., 107, 120-121.

The Community of Christ

Second, within Chapter 4, Bonhoeffer argues that Christ is the collective person of the Church, which God regenerates as the new humanity out of the old, Adamic humanity.[61] Importantly, however, Adam still exists within the new humanity of Christ; in this way, Bonhoeffer is able to recognize sin that still remains in the Church.[62] Nonetheless, in Christ, the Church is a return to the primal state of humanity with new and unique social basic-relations that are responses to sin. Bonhoeffer ends his discussion of the *peccatorum communio* with a theological glimpse of his forthcoming ecclesiology: "The structure of humanity-in-Adam is unique because it is both composed of many isolated individuals and yet is one . . . . It is 'Adam', a collective person, who can only be superseded by the collective person 'Christ existing as church-community.'"[63] Bonhoeffer then unfolds this claim in Chapter 5, which is his most constructive and practical chapter.

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[61] Bonhoeffer writes, "The world of sin is the world of 'Adam', the old humanity. But the world of Adam is the world Christ reconciled and made into a new humanity, Christ's church." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 107.

[62] Ibid., 107. One of the advantages of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology lies in this very point—he recognizes that the Church is still influenced by sin. Michael Mawson highlights the importance of Bonhoeffer's insights in comparison with the ecclesiology of Robert Jenson and Reinhard Hütter, who both "strongly emphasize the visibility and holiness of the church." Michael Mawson, "The Spirit and the Community: Pneumatology and Ecclesiology in Jenson, Hütter and Bonhoeffer," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* (15, no. 4 (2013): 453-468, https://doi.org/10.1111/ijst.12038), 454. By overemphasizing the holiness of the Church, "Jenson and Hütter fail to formulate the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the existing church in a way that clearly allows for recognizing the church as at once holy and sinful. Specifically, they pursue the former in ways that seem to subtly militate against the latter." Ibid., 462. As a powerful alternative with similarities to Jenson and Hütter, Bonhoeffer uses the concept of objective spirit to account for sin in the Church. Mawson explains, "His [i.e., Bonhoeffer's] insistence that the Holy Spirit constitutes the church in its public witness (Jenson) and is received through its practices (Hütter) *by way of the church's objective spirit* means that the Holy Spirit and its work are not so directly and unambiguously bound to very specific forms or practices." Ibid., 467.

[63] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 121.

Chapter 5: "Sanctorum Communio"[64]

At the start of his final and most substantial chapter, Bonhoeffer relates the previous

arguments to his study of the Church, and he indicates the direction of his ecclesiology by giving

an overview of three arguments. First, Bonhoeffer again explains why the Sanctorum Communio

can only be understood by Christians and studied from the vantage point of the Church.[65] Using

outside criteria to study the Church only leads to the historical concept of "*religious*

community."[66] Bonhoeffer concisely explains, "*The reality of the church is a reality of*

revelation, a reality that essentially must be either believed or denied"; only by "bowing in faith

to its claim" and "stepping inside it" can a person study the Church.[67] Second, Bonhoeffer

articulates how the Church is a unique social type: it is neither a full return to the primal state of

community (i.e., an overcoming of sin)[68] nor a subcommunity of the collective person of Adam

(i.e., an essentially corrupt community).[69] Rather, the Church is a regenerated community of

humans who still experience the effects of sin but are given new social basic-relations that allow

it to be the body of Christ on earth.[70] Furthermore, the Church-community is a unique social type

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[64] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 122.

[65] For Bonhoeffer, the Church "is possible and meaningful only form the perspective of the sanctorum communio. Only from this vantage point are we justified to integrate philosophical considerations into the theological framework." Ibid., 122-123.

[66] Ibid., 127.

[67] Ibid., 127.

[68] Bonhoeffer writes, "The reality of sin and the communio peccatorum remain even in God's church-community; Adam has really been replaced by Christ only eschatologically." Ibid., 124.

[69] Bonhoeffer writes, "When they [i.e., social basic-relations] are modified, or re-created, in the concept of the Church, the concrete form of the community must change as well; indeed this provides the possibility and necessity of developing a unique empirical form of community." Ibid., 125.

[70] Mawson explains this twofold dynamic, "Bonhoeffer directly identifies the person and work of Christ with the existing Christian community . . . . He deepens and substates this claim by drawing in both Luther's language of Christ's 'real presence' and Paul's descriptions of the Church as the 'body of Christ' . . . . Nonetheless, if Bonhoeffer holds that Christ's action has established this community, and that Christ is and remains fully present

because it is "simultaneously a historical community and one established by God."[71]

Accordingly, the Church-community is both (1) fully human and subject to historical forces and

(2) fully created by God as a reality of revelation. Third, this introductory section in Chapter 5

reveals Bonhoeffer's synthesis of his previous chapters and his ecclesial focus. Bonhoeffer

writes:

> Until now we have been pursuing two, or rather three, different lines of thought that must
> now be integrated conceptually—or better, we must reflect upon their union that already
> exists in the reality of the church. [1] On the one hand, there was the line of thought about
> the ontic basic-relatedness of human beings to one another as persons [i.e., the primal
> state of the *I-You* relation]. [2] On the other hand, there was the discovery of the pre-
> volitional sociality of the human spirit [i.e., the reality of objective spirit and collective
> persons], and [3] the subsequent investigation of the forms of empirically existing
> communal relations, which always require intentional social acts in order to manifest
> themselves as personal social relations [i.e., the investigation of human will and social
> types].[72]

These previous topics of inquiry will be analyzed in their regenerate form within the Church.

Bonhoeffer later connects these three social dynamics with the outline of Chapter 5: he discusses

(1) the new social basic-relations created by Christ, (2) the role of the Holy Spirit as the

actualizer of the Christ-reality,[73] and (3) the objective spirit of the Church-community as used by

the Holy Spirit.[74] As a unique contribution to ecclesiology,[75] Bonhoeffer recognizes the common

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within it, he maintains that this does not mean that Christ thereby becomes a possession of the church . . . . For
Bonhoeffer, it is *Christ* who constitutes the church, not the reverse." Mawson, *Christ Existing as Community*, 127.
Sin is still a significant factor for the Church, as the new social basic-relation of vicarious representative action
creates a new sociality that "bears a resemblance to the social basic-relations of the primal state, but is distinctive in
that it is now responding to and overcoming the condition of sin." Ibid., 135.

[71] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 126.

[72] Ibid., 124-125.

[73] For the remainder of the paper, I will simply use *Christ-reality* as a synonym of *Christ-existing as
Church community*. Ibid., 144-145.

[74] Ibid., 143-145.

[75] Unlike many ecclesial theologians, Bonhoeffer seeks to avoid historicizing the Church as simply an
empirical community, and he does not consider the Church to be separate from the world as an escape from human

approach of building ecclesiology from the doctrine of God; however, regarding this, Bonhoeffer writes, "[I]t would be good for once if a presentation of doctrinal theology were to start not with the doctrine of God but with the doctrine of the church."[76] Thus, Bonhoeffer transitions into his positive presentation of ecclesiology.

The New Testament's Teaching on the Church

As one who takes seriously the authority of God's revelation, Bonhoeffer first reviews themes of the Church as found in the New Testament. Summarized here only in shotgun fashion, Bonhoeffer (1) recognizes that ἐκκλησία originates from the Jewish concept of קָהָל, (2) articulates how the Church exists as Christ's body only through Christ's salvific action,[77] (3) summarizes Paul's identification of Christ with the Church, (4) explains how Christ is the collective person of the Church (Cf. Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:10), (5) claims that the Church is a source of revelation through Jesus Christ, (6) rebuts the idea that the early Church was the archetypal and ideal Church-community, (7) asserts that "working-for-each-other" and worship create the visible social form of the Church, and (8) clarifies how Paul reworks the Greek concept of social organism in order to articulate the uniquely Christian form of sociality.[78] With these guiding

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history. Bonhoeffer explains, "Neither of them [i.e., theological historicists and escapists], however, understands the reality of the church, which is simultaneously a historical community and one established by God." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 126.

[76] Ibid., 134.

[77] Bonhoeffer writes, "It [i.e., the Church] has been created in a real sense only by the death of Christ (Eph. 2:15 and 5:25). The relation of Christ to the church is twofold. Christ is the foundation, the cornerstone, the pioneer, the master builder. But Christ is also at all times a real presence for the church, for it is Christ's body, and the people are members of this body (1 Cor. 12:2ff.; Rom. 12:4ff.; Eph. 1:23, 4:15f.; Col. 1:18), or members of Christ himself (1 Cor. 6:15; Rom. 6:13 and 19)." Ibid., 138-139.

[78] For Bonhoeffer's most detailed engagement with the New Testament doctrine of the Church, footnote 29 inserted by the editors contains the full passage of Bonhoeffer's summary of New Testament ecclesial themes. Ibid., 134-141.

teachings of Scripture, Bonhoeffer then proceeds with his "Positive Presentation" of ecclesiology.[79]

The Church's Social Basic-Relation: Vicarious Representative Action

In the first main section, Bonhoeffer articulates how *vicarious representative action* is the new social basic-relation for the Church-community. Bonhoeffer writes, "In the old humanity the whole of humanity falls anew, so to speak, with every person who sins; in Christ, however, humanity has been brought once and for all—this is essential to *real* vicarious representative action—into community with God."[80] Taking place of the social basic relations of the primal state (i.e., the dialectic of openness and closedness and the *I-you* relation; Cf. Chapter 3) and the social basic relations of the fallen state (i.e., complete isolation and egoism; Cf. Chapter 4), *vicarious representative action* is the "life-principle" of the Church that re-creates humanity in Christ.[81] This foundational dynamic in the Church is a kind of being-for-each-other that overcomes the being-for-oneself in Adam. Through Christ's *vicarious representative action* on the cross, he established the new form of human community in the Church;[82] thereby, Christ (1) abolished Adamic social isolation, (2) created God's revelatory Church-community,[83] (3) established the historically completed and eschatological yet-to-come realities in the Church-

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[79] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 141.

[80] Ibid., 146.

[81] Ibid., 147.

[82] Ibid., 148-149.

[83] It must be noted, however, that Bonhoeffer understands the Church as only fully created by the Holy Spirit. He writes, "To be sure, the church could be created only in an empirical form by the Holy Spirit. In the resurrection it is 'created' only insofar as it has now run the course of dialectical history." Ibid., 152. In addition, he understands the Church-community to be a realm of revelation: "God established the reality of the church, of humanity pardoned in Jesus Christ—not religion, but revelation, *not religious community, but church*. This is what the reality of Jesus Christ means." At the same time, however, Bonhoeffer acknowledges the importance of the historical sense in which the Church is a religious community. Ibid., 153.

community,[84] and (4) overcame the power of sin for humanity.[85] Bonhoeffer helpfully

summarizes how Christ's *vicarious representative action* impacts humanity:

> Thus, the church is established in and through Christ in the three basic sociological relationships known to us: [1] his death isolates the individuals—all of them bear their own culpability and have their own conscience; [2] in the light of the resurrection the community of the cross is justified and sanctified in Christ as *one.* The new humanity is seen synoptically in *one* point, in Christ. [3] And since the love of God, in Christ's vicarious representative action, restores the community between God and human beings, so the *community of human beings with each other has also become a reality in love once again*.[86]

God's creation and implications of *vicarious representative action* will directly relate to the first

two themes of this literary review: *Christ existing as Church-community* and collective persons

in general.

The Holy Spirit, Christ, and the Sanctorum Communio

In the second subsection of Chapter 5, Bonhoeffer develops his threefold understanding

of the interaction of the Holy Spirit, Christ, and the Church. Bonhoeffer opens by explaining the

closely bound operation of the Holy Spirit and Christ: "Tying the Spirit to the word means that

the Spirit aims at a plurality of hearers and establishes a visible sign by which the actualization is

to take place . . . . Christ himself is in the word; the Christ in whom the church-community is

already completed seeks to win the heart by his Spirit in order to incorporate it into the

actualized community of Christ."[87] The actualization of the *Church-community*, as the *Christ-*

reality on earth, is accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the liturgy of preaching (among

other liturgies). In addition, Bonhoeffer connects the Holy Spirit to the *Church-community*,

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[84] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 153-154.

[85] Ibid., 155-156.

[86] Ibid., 157.

[87] Ibid., 158.

which is the only site of the Spirit's recreation of proper human sociality.[88] And because Christ

exists as the Church community, these three realities are interconnected: The *Christ-reality* of the

Church is actualized by the Holy Spirit, who draws people together in love. From this

understanding, Bonhoeffer continues with an exposition of three ways the Holy Spirit acts upon

the Church-community.[89]

Plurality of Spirit. First, the "Plurality of Spirit" is the operation of the Holy Spirit

"directed as a personal will toward personal wills, addressing each person *as a single individual,*

leading that person into 'solitude.'"[90] This individuality is necessary in the Church, as God cares

for each individual and calls each person to recognize their sinfulness. Individuals are important

to the Church's sociality because the primal state itself rests upon the closeness (and

correlatively the openness) of individual persons.[91] Furthermore, Bonhoeffer argues that

individual interaction with the Spirit is important because of predestination, which "is

understood not as a human question about election, but as a way from God to us."[92] As a

transition into the next section about community, Bonhoeffer adds that predestination is a

corporate concept—God elects individuals and the whole Church "in a *single act*."[93] Thus, the

individualistic concept of the Spirit's work in the Church "needs supplementing."[94]

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[88] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 158-159.

[89] Ibid., 161.

[90] Ibid., 161.

[91] Bonhoeffer writes, "This solitude, however, is not something done by faith, but is willed by God. It is the solitude of the individual that is a structure of the created order, and it continues to exist everywhere." Ibid., 162.

[92] Ibid., 164.

[93] Ibid., 165.

[94] Ibid., 165.

Community of Spirit. Second, the Holy Spirit builds the Church-community through the "Community of Spirit," which is the Holy Spirit's implantation of Christ[95] in Christians' hearts; in effect, this is the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, the creation of faith, hope, and love.[96] Most significantly related to the sociality of the Church, Christian love "shows that new social relations have been created, and that the breach of sin has been closed."[97] Bonhoeffer explains this significant shift in human sociality:

> The person living in the community of the I-You-relationship is given the assurance of being loved, and through faith in Christ receives the power to love also, in that this person, who in Christ is already in the church, is led into the church. For that person the other member of the Church-community is essentially no longer claim but gift, revelation of God's love and heart. Thus the You is to the I no longer law but gospel, and hence an object of love. The fact that my claim is met by the other I who loves me—which means, of course, by Christ—fulfills me, humbles me, frees me from bondage to myself, and enables me—again, of course, only through the power of faith in Christ—to love the other, to completely give and reveal myself to the other.[98]

By this regeneration of human love, God recreates his community with humanity in a way that reflects the primal state of humanity. After explaining how God restores the Church as a community of love, Bonhoeffer develops an extended analysis of Christian love,[99] which

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[95] This theology has roots in Augustine, at least the view that Christ dwells within Christians in a significant way. Seeming to offer a description of how Christians understand things apart from the usual method of signs and things signified, Augustine writes, "Regarding each of the things we understand [i.e., things known not by the usual method of knowing], however, we don't consult a speaker who makes sounds outside us, but the Truth that presides within over the mind itself, though perhaps words prompt us to consult Him. What is more, He Who is consulted, He Who is said to *dwell in the inner man*, does teach: Christ—that is, *the unchangeable power and everlasting wisdom of god*, which every rational soul does consult, but is disclosed to anyone, to the extent that he can apprehend it, according to his good or evil will." Augustine, *The Teacher*, trans. Peter King (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publ. Co., 1995), 139.

[96] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 165.

[97] Ibid., 166.

[98] Ibid., 166.

[99] Bonhoeffer spends time supporting five different claims: "*Christian love is not a human possibility*;" "*It is possible only through faith* in Christ and through the work of the Holy Spirit;" "*Love, as a volitional act, is purposeful*;" "*It loves the real neighbor*;" and "*Christian love knows no limits.*" Ibid., 167, 168, 168, 169, and 170-192, respectively. He spends significant time developing the last feature of Christian love, which refers to the limitless nature of loving others within God's divine will.

contains some important arguments related to this literary survey. Significantly, Bonhoeffer

explains that love is an integral part of the Church's social basic-relations. Concretely

manifesting itself through "*being structurally 'with-each-other' . . . and . . . 'being-for-each-*

other' and [through] *the principle of vicarious representative action*."[100] Love works through

these social basic-relations: *being-with-each-other* means that Christians will no longer live in

the isolated community of Adam but will feel the social presence of other lovers of God within

the Church;[101] *being-for-each-other* includes repentance, forgiveness, intercession, and active

service;[102] and *vicarious representative action* allows the Church to bear people's sins because

the Church is "*Christ existing as church-community*."[103] Thus, the Christian virtue of love

operates (minimally) in a threefold fashion that highlights the Church's basic nature. As a social

basic-relation that orients individuals toward other people, Love has an integral role in *Christ*

existing as Church-community, collective persons in general, and liturgy (this analysis' three

themes of inquiry).

Unity of Spirit. Third, having articulated the communal and individualistic aspects of the

Spirit's work in the Church, Bonhoeffer argues that the Holy Spirit creates unity in the Church

through *Christ existing as Church-community*.[104] The Church is a unity that contains diversity.

Bonhoeffer explains:

> But—to put it paradoxically—the more powerfully the dissimilarity manifests itself in the
> struggle [of social difference], the stronger the objective unity. The decisive passages in

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[100] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 178.

[101] Ibid., 182.

[102] Ibid., 184-190.

[103] Ibid., 190.

[104] Bonhoeffer understands the unity of the Church to be created (i.e., actualized) by the Holy Spirit who uses the objective spirit of the Church to actualize *Christ existing as Church-community*, who is the unity of the Church. Ibid., 198-199.

the New Testament do not say: *one* theology and *one* rite, *one* opinion on all matters public and private, and *one* kind of conduct. Instead they say: *one* body and *one* Spirit, *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and father of us all (Eph 4:4ff.; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 12:5); various gifts—*one* Spirit, carious offices—*one* Lord, various powers—*one* God (1 Cor. 12:4ff.) The point is not 'unanimity in spirit' ['Einigkeit im Geist'], but the 'unity of the Spirit' ['Einheit des Geistes'].[105]

Here, Bonhoeffer clarifies that Christian unity does not imply sameness. Rather, the Church is a unity that contains a plurality.[106] Unlike human unity in the primal state, the unity of the Church is a divine reality—not something created by human sociality; the unity of the Church divinely comes from God and "moves from above downwards."[107] Understood on the social level from *below*, the Church finds unity in its common faith.[108] Understood on the divine level from *above*, the Church has its unity in Christ.[109] Furthermore, the realities of sin and grace—experienced commonly by all Christians—establishes the equality found among the Church's diversity.[110] In this manner, Bonhoeffer demonstrates three integral operations of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Church: unity of Spirit, community of Spirit, and plurality of Spirit.

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[105] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 192-193.

[106] Once again, this point regarding a plurality within a unity was established in the primal state, and Bonhoeffer discussed this previously in reference to the *I-You* relation, collective persons, and objective spirit. Bonhoeffer's unity of spirit "means the objective principle sovereignly establishes unity, unites the plurality of persons into a single collective person [Gesamtperson] without obliterative either their singularity or the community of persons. *Rather, unity of spirit, community of spirit, and plurality of spirit* [i.e., the three topics in Bonhoeffer's discussion of the Holy Spirit and the Church] *are intrinsically linked to each other through their subject matter.* This has already been demonstrated in our discussion of the social-philosophical foundations." Ibid., 193.

[107] Ibid., 199.

[108] Ibid., 200.

[109] Ibid., 199, 206-207.

[110] Ibid., 204-207.

***"The Empirical Form of the Church"*[111]**

As a culminating section on *Sanctorum Communio*, Bonhoeffer's discussion of the empirical Church presents many of his central ecclesial contributions. His position unfolds and integrates the previous arguments regarding objective spirit, collective personhood, and human volitionality. In accord with Christian doctrine, he adds the insights of liturgy into his presentation of the Church. Throughout Bonhoeffer's entire ecclesiology, "Christ is the foundation upon which, and according to which, the building (οἰκοδομή) of the church is raised (1 Corinthians 3; Eph. 2:20)."[112]

The Holy Spirit's Use of the Church's Objective Spirit. The interaction of the Holy Spirit and objective spirit in Bonhoeffer's theology reveals how his theology offers explanatorily powerful insights for contemporary ecclesiology. Empirically, the *Church-community* consist of the Holy Spirit actualizing *Christ existing as Church-community* through the liturgies of the Church and through the objective spirit of the Church. Bonhoeffer writes, "The empirical church is the organized 'institution' of salvation. Its center is the cult, consisting of preaching and sacrament or, sociologically speaking, the 'assembly' of its members. This empirical church is a legal body, and restricts its benefits to those who participate in the liturgical ordinances it has laid down."[113] Liturgy (e.g., the ordinances of communion and baptism) provides the tangible standard by which people are admitted into the Church. These communal, liturgical activities play a role in generating the objective spirit of the Church, which "gets its character from the

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[111] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 208.

[112] Ibid., 246.

[113] Bonhoeffer uses *cult* in the classical sense, to refer to the group of people who follow and practice the rites and teachings of a religion. Ibid., 208.

historical context."[114] Yet, the Church is not essentially a religious community (i.e., a creation of

historical forces); rather, "in the relativity of its forms and in its imperfect and modest

appearance, it is the body of Christ, Christ's presence on earth, for it has his word."[115] As a

divine reality created by God, however, the *Church-community* is also a historical community.[116]

With its imperfect objective spirit, the historical (i.e., human) nature of the Church postures itself

in submission to God—who, through the Holy Spirit, actualizes collective holiness in the Church

which then constitutes *Christ existing as Church-community*.[117] To make his argument really

shine, Bonhoeffer directly states his point:

> The objective spirit is bearer and instrument of the spirit of the church of Christ; it has
> certain visible forms that the Holy Spirit produced and implanted into it. The Holy Spirit
> thus stands behind the objective spirit as the guarantor of the efficacy of these forms;
> these forms are preaching and the celebration of the sacraments. But the objective spirit
> does not bear these forms as one would carry a sack on one's back; rather it is itself
> sanctified through the load, *it carries it in its heart*.[118]

In this manner, Bonhoeffer relates the Holy Spirit to the Church's objective spirit; the former

acts through, *uses*, and *sanctifies* the latter.

While developing the relation of the Holy Spirit and the Church's objective spirit,

Bonhoeffer makes it vividly clear that these two entities cannot be equated. He supports this

claim with three reasons. First, because sin still exists in the Sanctorum Communio, its objective

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[114] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 214-215. Earlier, Bonhoeffer argued that "the *objective spirit* is the new spirit-principle generated by social formation." Ibid., 209.

[115] Ibid., 209.

[116] Bonhoeffer explains, "Once this has been grasped [i.e., God's divine creation of the Church], however, it is in principle possible once again to define the church as a religious community, namely as a religious community that has really been established by God." Ibid., 209.

[117] Ibid., 215

[118] Ibid., 216.

spirit cannot be the Holy Spirit. If it were, then the Holy Spirit would be influenced by sin.[119]

Second, the objective spirit of the Church is sustained by the *I-You* relations of love and

vicarious representative action and is thereby a contingent entity with imperfections. As a result,

it cannot be the Holy Spirit.[120] Third, the objective spirit of the Church can be sustained and

influenced by non-Christian participants; yet, the Holy Spirit only has communion with

regenerate Christians. This fact demonstrates the distinctness of the two entities. For these

reasons, "the objective spirit and the Holy Spirit cannot be equated."[121]

The Essential (i.e., Voluntary) and Empirical (i.e., Historical) Church. The concept

of *Christ existing as Church-community* faces some challenges by the non-ideal status of the

Church. Bonhoeffer first distinguishes between the "Realm of God"[122] and the Church. God's

realm "includes all those who are predestined," and it has existed from eternity (God's realm

thereby also includes God's previous community centered in Israel).[123] The Church,

alternatively, "includes only those who are elected in Christ as church-community," which

means that the Church begins in history.[124] As a historical entity, Bonhoeffer further understands

the Church to be a "*Church-of-the-people*" (i.e., an imperfect community with nominal

Christians)[125] and as a "voluntary Church" (i.e., the pure church willed by all its members).[126]

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[119] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 212-214.

[120] Ibid., 214-215.

[121] Ibid., 216.

[122] Ibid., 218.

[123] Ibid., 218.

[124] Ibid., 218.

[125] Ibid., 219.

[126] Ibid., 220.

These two natures of the Church unite upon God's word, which is proclaimed to all the potential

and nominal members of the Sanctorum Communio while clearly demarcating the need to

volitionally follow Christ.[127] Thus, the Church is intended by God to have a center of volitional

Christians and the ambiguous inclusion of nominal Christians.

Specifically aiding the concept of *Christ existing as Church-community*, Bonhoeffer also

explains how the Sanctorum Communio is based on the whole *Church-community* on earth, not

the individual, local bodies of Christ. The universal church does not authoritatively exist as an

authority to local congregations.[128] Instead, each local body of Christ participates in the body of

Christ as a whole.[129] In other words, each local congregation is an actualization (by the Holy

Spirit) of Christ's body *from* the full body of Christ.[130] In this manner, Bonhoeffer elucidates the

first theme of this literary review: *Christ existing as Church-community*.

Liturgy: The Church's Sociological Forms and Functions. Thus far, Bonhoeffer has

not distinctly written about Church liturgy.[131] At this point in his argument, liturgy evidently

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[127] Bonhoeffer writes, "[T]he sanctorum communio, which by its nature present itself as a church-of-the-people, also calls for the voluntary church and continually establishes itself as such; that is, the sanctorum communio bears the others, so to speak, who have the latent potential to become 'real' members of the church by virtue of the word that is both the author of the church and of the message it preaches . . . . The logical and sociological unity of the voluntary church and the church-of-the-people, the essential and the empirical, 'invisible' and 'visible' church is thus established by the word." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 220-221.

[128] Bonhoeffer writes, "We do not hold that the empirical church as a whole (e.g., council or general synod) is more than the individual congregations; this would be a complete contradiction of Protestant thinking." Ibid., 224.

[129] Ibid., 224-225.

[130] Bonhoeffer helpfully explains this complex relation: "If the concept of the body of Christ could only be applied to the individual congregation, we would immediately run into difficulties concerning its function as the *smallest sociological unit within the concept of the church* . . . . Now, marriage can in fact be a full expression of the sanctorum communio. However, just as each collective person stands, without knowing and intending it, within another, more comprehensive collective person, so the smallest sociological unit of the sanctorum communio necessarily extends beyond itself and has its place within the 'whole' body of Christ; it is in fact merely an individual actualization of that body." Ibid., 226.

[131] While this section only *explains* Bonhoeffer's view of liturgy, the author nonetheless has an interpretive framework that will influence this explanation of Bonhoeffer's theology. Accordingly, it might be helpful to provide a definition of liturgy that will be developed later in this thesis. The author of this thesis defines Christian liturgy in

becomes central in understanding the Sanctorum Communio. Accordingly, Bonhoeffer discusses

(1) assembling for worship, (2) preaching, (3) baptism, and (4) communion. These liturgies have

an integral role in establishing *Christ existing as Church-community*. Broadly in Bonhoeffer's

ecclesiology, liturgies of the Church function as sites where the Holy Spirit uses the objective

spirit of the Church and where the Holy Spirit creates God's word through Scripture and

preaching.

     Assembly of the Saints. Assembling for worship is the general liturgy of being-with-

each-other and itself includes other liturgies. Bonhoeffer writes:

> A Christian church-community, whether a publicly visible congregation or a house-church, is held together by its *assembling around the word*. The word constitutes the unity between essential and empirical church, between Holy Spirit and objective spirit. The concrete function of the empirical church, therefore, is *worship that consists of preaching and celebrating the sacraments*.[132]

Contra individualism, Christianity holds that the practice of assembling for worship is essential

for the Christian life, as people receive faith through concretely being in the Church—through

preaching and other sacraments.[133] In addition, when Christians assemble for worship, they offer

(1) the visibility of Christ's community [134] and (2) the tangible experience of God's grace.[135]

These significant features of Christian assembly directly influence the objective spirit of the

Church—creating God's rule and embodied grace in the world.[136]

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this way: Christian liturgy is *scripted action prescribed for Christians by Scripture and Church tradition for the purposes of worshiping God, being formed into Christlikeness, and having Christ existing as Church-community actualized by the Holy Spirit.*

    [132] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 226.

    [133] Ibid., 228.

    [134] Ibid., 229.

    [135] Ibid., 229-230.

    [136] Bonhoeffer writes, "To summarize: *the assembly embodies God's will to use the social connections between human beings to extend God's rule. The objective spirit of the church-community actualizes this will of God*

Preaching. At the center of the Christian assembly lies the liturgy of preaching.[137] Bonhoeffer writes, "The word, to be specific, is present in the church-community as the word of scripture and of preaching—essentially in the latter."[138] In a Barthian fashion, Bonhoeffer understands God's authoritative word to be existent only in the *Church-community* where it is heard, not as something in the substance of Scripture.[139] Because God's word is the uniter of the essential and the empirical natures of the Church, the liturgy of preaching (and the public reading of Scripture) is essential for God's purpose for the Church. Bonhoeffer explains, "[T]he word has been entrusted to the sanctorum communio; it is both its creator and the instrument of its activity. Where it [i.e., the Church] is present there the word is not without fruit."[140] In this manner, preaching functions as a central liturgy of the Church.

Baptism. Bonhoeffer, relating the concept of sacrament to his previous discussions, writes, "Sacraments are acts of the church-community and, like preaching, they unite within themselves the objective spirit of the church-community and the Holy Spirit who is operating through it."[141] Regarding baptism and communion, Bonhoeffer's Lutheran theology reveals itself. For Bonhoeffer, Christian baptism is infant baptism. Bonhoeffer argues, "But since children do not themselves receive faith, even as fides directa, and the sacrament nevertheless demands faith, we must conclude that the subject that receives the sacrament in faith can only be

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by establishing regular worship. Assembling for worship belongs to the essence of the church-community." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 230.

[137] Ibid., 226-230.

[138] Ibid., 232.

[139] Ibid., 232-233. Bonhoeffer later directly cites Barth's *Die christliche Dogmatik*. Ibid., 250.

[140] Ibid., 233.

[141] Ibid., 240.

the objective spirit of the church-community."[142] When an infant (or a volitional believer, as in other denominations) is baptized, the whole Church surrounds the liturgical event, which has a gracious faith-producing impact on the whole congregation. This gift of faith to the body of Christ is how the objective spirit of the Church receives a faith-producing impact from baptism.[143] In Bonhoeffer's view, the objective spirit of the Church (i.e., the communal entity that is created though social features, as discussed in regard to the primal state) receives faith because it carries the baptized infant in faith.[144]

    Communion. Transitioning to discuss the liturgy of communion, Bonhoeffer compares it to baptism: "Whereas *infant baptism* comprises *all those who potentially* belong to the church, *the sacrament of the Lord's Supper* gathers all those who are serious about submitting their will to God's rule in the Realm of Christ [i.e., the Church]."[145] Those who participate in the eucharist are Christians who truly desire and who truly will for the *Church-community* to be a reality of Christ. In the liturgy of communion, God gives Christians the assurance of the Gospel "[w]ith the same clarity and vividness that it encounters a person."[146] This jarring bodily dimension of the eucharist is a gift to each individual. In addition, the eucharist is a gift to the whole *Church-community*, as it offers (1) spiritual community with Christ as well as (2) the gift of strengthening the Church's love for each other.[147] While being a recipient of non-salvific grace

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[142] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 241.

[143] Ibid., 241.

[144] Ibid., 241-242.

[145] Ibid., 242.

[146] Ibid., 243.

[147] Bonhoeffer writes, "*The Lord's Supper is (2) also, and to an even greater extent, a gift to the church-community.* Christ's presence in spirit is not merely symbolic, but a given reality . . . . [1] *Christ gives community with himself,* i.e., his vicarious suffering unto death is my benefit; and *Christ gives the church-community*, i.e., he

through the liturgy, the Church also is acting before God when enjoying communion; thereby, it

also contains a significant human reality, along with its divine efficaciousness.[148] Thus,

Bonhoeffer considers the liturgy of communion to be an act of the *Church-community* in worship

of God that bestows gifts on individuals and the whole congregation.

Last Thoughts on the Empirical Church. Bonhoeffer dives into some issues which are

irrelevant for the present literary survey. Bonhoeffer argues for a relative authority vested in the

institution of the Church;[149] he ties together previous developments in *Sanctorum Communio* to

show how the Church is a unique sociological type (i.e., a combination and transcending of the

social types *society, community,* and *association*);[150] and he explains why faith is the necessary

prerequisite for any experience of the Sanctorum Communio.[151] In producing these arguments,

Bonhoeffer essentially draws conclusions from the previously established premises of his

dissertation. These discussions are certainly important—they simply do not relate to the

following argument and the themes *Christ existing as Church-community*, collective persons in

general, and *liturgy*.

"Church and Eschatology"[152]

As is fitting, Bonhoeffer concludes *Sanctorum Communio* by discussing the *telos* of the

Church in the future eschaton. Bonhoeffer claims that "Christian eschatology is essentially

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renews it, thus giving it to itself . . . . By the act of self-giving, Christ gives us the obligation and the strength to love one another." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 243.

[148] Ibid., 244.

[149] Ibid., 250-251.

[150] Ibid., 252-272.

[151] Ibid., 272-282.

[152] Ibid., 282.

eschatology of the church-community."[153] The future for humanity lies in the *Church-community*

and God completing redemption through it. In accord with the rest of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology,

God's judgement will be for individuals and collective persons.[154] Biblical passages support this

concept; Bonhoeffer explains, "We learned that the community as a collective person exists from

God to God . . . and that it must be conceived as being established through the will of God, and

as such standing at the last judgement. This idea can also be found in the New Testament

(Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, Matt. 11:21ff.; the address to the churches in Revelation 2

and 3, esp. 3:16 and 3:10)."[155] While God judges collective persons in this manner, each

individual is also judged. This can create a strange situation, however, as God's judgment of an

individual and a collective person in which that individual resides can be different.[156] Based on

the testimony of Scripture and the nature of the Church, Bonhoeffer simply acknowledges that

this reality is a paradox of the final judgment.[157] When the Church is completed and fully

glorified, "the realm of Christ has become the Realm of God. The ministerium Christi, of the

Holy Spirit, and of the word have ceased. Christ himself hands over his church-community to the

Father (1 Cor. 15:24)."[158] In the end, God's Realm will extend throughout the whole world, and

the Church will rest in community with God.[159] The *I-You* relation consists of the closest social

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[153] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 283.

[154] Bonhoeffer writes, "Judgment applies to persons. But this obviously means that it applies not only to individual persons, but also to collective persons. This, in turn, entails the notion that the individual is judged not only in isolation, but also as a member of collective persons." Ibid., 284.

[155] Ibid., 284.

[156] Ibid., 284.

[157] Ibid., 284, 286.

[158] Ibid., 289.

[159] While he emphasizes the unity shared with God, Bonhoeffer makes it clear that people will not mystically become a part of God. Bonhoeffer explains, "[C]ommunity of spirit necessarily implies whole persons in

bond; the social basic-relations of love are exercised fully; and "*the collective person of the church now really is 'Christ existing as church-community.'*"[160]

Summarizing the Literary Exposition: Explicating Logical Strength

A thematic summary of (1) *Christ existing as Church-community*, (2) collective persons in general, and (3) liturgy, according to Bonhoeffer's theology in *Sanctorum Communio*, will demonstrate the theoretical strength and logical power of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology. Subsequently, this strength will also be supported with Scripture. In addition, this explanation of the logical consistency in Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology allows it to be supported by the philosophy of liturgy.

Christ Existing as Church-community

The theological basis of *Christ existing as Church-community* lies in the dialectic of primal state, fallen state, and regenerate state. Because humans are essentially created as social beings (Cf. primal state) and the community of Adam isolates all of humanity in sin (Cf. fallen state), God's redemptive work cannot merely relate to individuals; rather, justification and sanctification involve the enfolding of people into the *Church-community* (Cf. regenerate state). Bonhoeffer supports this concept in a twofold fashion. First, he makes clear that the primal state, in accord with social theory, operated based on the *I-You* relation of openness and closeness, which biconditionally requires the existence of a communal objective spirit. The Christian concept of person shows the necessity of human sociality. Beyond just the doctrine of the primal state, secondly, Bonhoeffer strengthens his argument by establishing it upon the authority of

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their spiritual bodiliness, a bodiliness that must be understood as the direct expression of the new reality of spirit. This precludes from the outset any mystical ideas such as final assimilation into God's all-encompassing person, a fusion of our supposedly divine nature with that of God." Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 287.

[160] Ibid., 288.

Scripture. Paul's emphasis on Christ's body being the church aids Bonhoeffer's own

presentation of *Christ existing as Church-community*.

In addition to these helpful premises (i.e., social theory of the primal state and Paul's

teaching on the Body of Christ), Bonhoeffer avoids an overly optimistic account of the Church

by distinguishing between the (1) Church's objective spirit, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) *Christ*

existing as Church-community. In a sense, the temporal order of events corresponds to the

proceeding list: (1) the objective spirit is generated by the regenerate (though imperfect) sociality

of the Church; (2) the Holy Spirit then uses the Church's objective spirit as the bearer of God's

social regeneration, which (3) creates and sustains *Christ existing as Church-community*. This

ecclesial process is certainly possible and seems plausible, given the strength of social theory's

support and Scripture's teaching on the body of Christ.

Collective Persons in General

Collective personhood is perhaps the most vulnerable concept in Bonhoeffer's

ecclesiology. It is a jarringly creative appropriation of social theory; yet, collective personhood

seems to find even greater instantiation in the New Testament's understanding of the Church,

that is, in the concept that the Church is the Body of Christ. Granted, the collective person of

Christ existing as Church-community is both divinely and humanly created.[161] Can humans alone

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[161] This concept does not divide Christ into two persons. Rather, it highlights the ontological extension of Christ's existence *from* heaven *into* the community of saints. In this ontological extension, Christ remains numerically one but ontologically present in different ways. Theologian Graham Ward helpfully shows how Christ's body can take many different forms ontologically; he discusses Christ's incarnation, circumcision, transfiguration, eucharistic supper, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension as examples of Christ's bodily displacement, or, in other words, Christ's ability to ontologically exist in a variety of ways. Graham Ward, "Bodies: The Displaced Body of Jesus Christ," in *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, eds. John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 1998), 164-177. Ward ends his essay by hinting toward a Bonhoefferian concept of the Church. Ward writes, "I have argued throughout that the body of Jesus Christ is continually being displaced so that the figuration of the body is always transposing and expanding its identity. That logic of displacement is now taken up in the limbs and tissue of his body as the Church . . . . The logic of ascension is the logic of birthing, not dying. The withdraw of the body of Jesus must be understood in terms of the Logos

generate collective persons? Yes, they can. Two reasons support this conclusion. First,

Bonhoeffer's discussion of the Adamic community, which is humanly created and sustained,

demonstrates one such non-divine collective person. Second, Catholic theologian William

Cavanaugh similarly advocates for corporate personhood.[162] He explains that Scripture[163] and the

patristic fathers held to this concept of corporate (or collective) personhood.[164] Cavanaugh

explains Paul's use and adaptation of the Greek body politic analogy:

> Paul's strong identification of the *ekklesia* as the very body of Christ is no doubt indebted
> to Greek concepts of corporate personhood in the body politic, but at the same time it is a
> radical departure from Greek ideas of citizenship and class . . . . As the image of the body
> makes clear, there remains differentiation among the members; some are eyes, some are
> hands, some are feet, and so on . . . . [D]ifferentiation produces a kind of attraction
> among the members, for, as Paul tells the Corinthians, the eye realizes that, because it is
> not the hand, it needs the hand, and the head realizes that it needs the feet . . . . Paul takes
> the body analogy even further by implying that a kind of nervous system connects all the
> members.[165]

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creating a space within himself, a womb, within which (en Christoi) the Church will expand and creation be
recreated." Ward, "Bodies: The Displaced Body of Jesus Christ," 176.

[162] Picking up on the ancient origins of this idea, Cavanaugh writes, "The idea of a corporate person can be
found in the ancient Greek analogy of a body politic. Here the *polis* was construed on the analogy of an individual
human body. Plato begins the *Republic* by treating society on analogy with the human body, which can either be
feverish or healthy. Aristotle develops the idea further . . . . The individual receives life by participation in the larger
whole; the whole is not constructed of preexisting parts. The individual, then, attains fulfillment by participation in
the *polis*." William T. Cavanaugh, *Field Hospital: The Church's Engagement with a Wounded World* (Grand
Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 15.

[163] Cavanaugh writes, "The image of God in Genesis 1:27 seems to apply to the whole human race . . .
which is why many versions of the Bible translate *adam* with a corporate noun like 'humankind.' Indeed, the
concept of corporate personhood is a dominant theme throughout the Bible. Israel is regarded as God's son (e.g.,
Exod. 4:22-23; Hos. 11:1). The Suffering Servant in Isaiah (52:13-53:12) is Israel as corporate person and /or the
Messiah who takes the collective sins of all onto his own body." In the New Testament, these concepts of collective
personhood are sometimes seen typologically, as in Romans 5:12-15. Ibid., 16.

[164] Ibid., 16-17.

[165] Ibid., 18.

Here, Cavanaugh elucidates Paul's theology of Christ's body. Yet, he extends this idea even

further to include corporations in the modern market.[166] As a contemporary advocate for

collective personhood, Cavanaugh supports Bonhoeffer's concept of collective persons. In this

manner, the existence of collective persons finds support from social theory (demonstrated in

Sanctorum Communio), Scripture, and recent developments in social theology.

The *logic* of collective personhood, however, still must be concisely explained in order to

demonstrate its theoretical strength. For Bonhoeffer, a collective person can only exist in the

social type of *community*, which is more tightly bound through its social relations than is a

society or an *association*. Through the dialectical relationship of *I*, *You*, and objective spirit,

there emerges collective features, such as collective understanding, goals, virtues, and habits.

This collectiveness generating from a community's objective spirit can also take on personal

characteristics, i.e., communities can be moral or immoral, scholarly or practical, healthy or

unhealthy, kind or unkind, etc. These personal characteristics, then, point to the existence of a

collective person. Another significant feature shared by objective spirit and collective persons is

their ability *to effect* community life. Bonhoeffer claims that both types of entities[167] can

volitionally influence the community from which they exist. This collective will, however, is a

creation of the community members' wills. Nonetheless, each individual experiences the will of

a collective person as the third entity, as a *You*. This *You* is the unity of the community members'

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[166] Corporations in the market, then, can be considered collective persons that are humanly created. Cavanaugh, *Field Hospital*, 20-29.

[167] It seems like a helpful distinction between objective spirit and collective persons is this: personal characteristics can be predicated to the latter while not to the former. Thus, one of the key differences between the two is that collective persons have personal characteristics while objective spirit refers to social and historical forces. Beyond the difference regarding personal traits, objective spirit and collective persons seem to share in common the majority of their other features.

wills and becomes something unique by their coming together. In this manner, collective persons have their own will and can have personal attributes predicated to them.

Liturgy

Bonhoeffer's discussion of liturgy has both a classically Christian and a pneumatologically unique sense. First, his incorporation of liturgy into his ecclesiology takes a Lutheran form. He follows Luther in most ways when developing the meaning of liturgy for the Sanctorum Communio (e.g., infant baptism involving the faith of the whole Church; communion involving the real presence of Christ; preaching operating as one of the foundations for each local church). He places a great emphasis on the role of liturgy—both its formative and theological features. Liturgies form Christians into the people of God and they also bear significant theological weight in their meaning and function for the Church.

Second, Bonhoeffer understands Christian liturgy to be the site of the Holy Spirit's use and sanctification of the Church's objective spirit. Essentially, this insight simply highlights the socially efficacious aspect of liturgy. The Holy Spirit actualizes *Christ existing as Church-community* precisely through the Church's liturgies as the Church postures itself in submission to God. Prima facie, this theological contribution to liturgical studies does not seem to contradict any of the central facets of Christianity. It merely brings to light the social dynamics of liturgy which are present in the New Testament. Thus, Christian liturgies are the sites of the Holy Spirit's social sanctification of the Church's objective spirit and the actualization of *Christ existing as Church-community*.

Scripture: Finding Theological Strength in Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology

An inductive argument is cogent when it (1) has strong logical form in its premises that *probably* implies the conclusion (if all the premises are true) *and* (2) has all true premises. This

section will venture toward a *theological* case for cogency in Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology. Having discussed the logical plausibility of (1) *Christ existing as Church-community*, (2) collective persons in general, and (3) liturgy, this section ventures toward an affirmation of the truth in the first and third concepts. Collective persons in general are not directly addressed in Scripture (except in specific relation to the Church being the body of Christ); therefore, this concept will need to remain logically strong and not theologically cogent.[168] Two central passages on these topics, Ephesians 4:1-7 and 1 Corinthians 10:16-20, will be exegeted in order to *theologically* support the logical strength and existential truth of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology.

Ephesians 4:1-7

In Book I of *Teaching Christianity*, Saint Augustine describes Christians' relation to each other and to Christ while on their earthly journey; he writes, "The Church, after all is his [i.e., Christ's] body, as the teaching of the apostle confirms, and it is also called his wife. So while his body consists of many parts, having different functions, he binds it tightly together with the knot of unity and love, as its proper kind of health."[169] Here, Augustine echoes Ephesians 4:1-7[170] where Paul urges the Christians in Ephesus to seek unity in love while celebrating diversity (cf. Eph. 4:7). This incarnational theology of Christ's body on earth *as* the Church should be a central doctrine in any ecclesiology.

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[168] This omission, however, is not a shortcoming of this argument. Rather, because the concept of collective persons is a philosophical concept, it does not enjoy as much theological support as do the concepts of *Christ existing as Church-community* and liturgy. The theme of collective persons in general is merely a helpful *link* to social theory from a theological viewpoint; it is not essential to the argument for the liturgical action of Christ's body.

[169] Augustine, *Teaching Christianity*, ed. John Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1996), 116.

[170] Edmund Hill, the translator of *Teaching Christianity* even lists Ephesians 4:3 as a cross reference for this passage in *Teaching Christianity*.

Translation

To understand this passage in context and in its fullness, it will be handled in the original

Koine Greek of the New Testament. Paul writes:

> (1) I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, exhort you to walk worthily of the calling to
> which you were called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bear with one
> another in love, (3) make every effort to preserve the unity of the spirit in the uniting
> bond of peace; (4) [there is] one body and one spirit, just as you were called in [the] one
> hope of your calling; (5) [there is] one Lord, one faith, one baptism; (6) one God and
> Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (7) But to each one of us grace
> was given according to the measure of Christ's giving.[171]

Verses 3-6 especially highlight the unity of the *Church-community*; Paul uses the Greek words

εἷς, μία, and ἓν (i.e., "one") to emphasize the unity of the Church.

Verse 3: "Make every effort to preserve the unity . . ."[172]

Still describing the proper kind of walk for Christian living, Paul gives a second

imperatival participle, σπουδάζοντες (nom. pl. masc. pres. act. ptc. of σπουδάζω, "'be

zealous/eager,' 'take pains,' 'make every effort,' 'be conscientious'"[173]), that stresses the

importance of intentionally preserving unity. This participle is coupled with the infinitive, τηρεῖν

(pres. act. inf. of τηρέω), which means "'to cause a state, condition or activity to continue.'"[174]

Here, Paul implores Christians to maintain unity in the spirit (ἑνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος). As the

fourth modifying phrase of περιπατῆσαι from verse 1, this exhortation to "make every effort to

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[171] This is an original translation from the Greek. Barbara Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament* (5th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014), Ephesians 4:1-7. For a helpful block diagram of this passage, see Appendix I.

[172] This is translated from the Greek: σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἑνότητα. Ibid., Ephesians 4:3.

[173] Benjamin L. Merkle, *Ephesians* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 114.

[174] Ibid., 114.

preserve the unity of the spirit" becomes the most specific way in this long sentence to walk properly as Christians.[175] Furthermore, this keeping of unity happens in the bond of peace (ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης). Here, ἐν functions as a dative of sphere.[176] Thus, verses 2-3 function to specify the kind of life to which the readers are called (Cf. 4:1): one of (1) humility, (2) gentleness, (3) patience, (4) love, and (5) unity.

Verse 4: "One body and one spirit . . . in one hope . . ."[177]

Starting with verse 4 and continuing through verse 6, the passage seems to have a style indicative of an early creed or hymn, and it seems that Paul adapted with a "free hand" this early creed.[178] The first phrase of this new section, ἓν σῶμα καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα, echoes 2:13-22 where oneness in Christ's body was established.[179] ἓν σῶμα ("one body") refers to the Church, and ἓν πνεῦμα ("one Spirit") the Holy Spirit, both of which are radically singular entities that also are tied to diversity.[180] καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι (trans: "just as you were called in [the] one hope") correlates the oneness of the Church and the Spirit to the oneness of the Christian's hope (i.e., comparatively), and ἐκλήθητε (2nd plur. aor. pass. indic. of καλέω) continues the theme of calling (Cf. 4:1).[181] Seeing this as a spherical prepositional phrase, Merkle further comments on

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[175] Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 254.

[176] Merkle, *Ephesians*, 115.

[177] This is translated from the Greek: *ἓν σῶμα καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα . . . ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι*. Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, Ephesians 4:4.

[178] Paul, however, certainly used the material to fit his argument, if indeed there was an early creed. Thielman, *Ephesians*, 255-256.

[179] Ibid., 256.

[180] For the Holy Spirit, the diversity is the triune Godhead—three persons in one God. Merkle, *Ephesians*, 115.

[181] Ibid., 115.

ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι; he argues that hope in this verse "is not the subjective feeling of a confident expectation but its content."[182] Paul then adds that this hope is τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν ("of your calling"), which seems to be a subjective genitive (i.e., hope is a product of the call).[183] Thus, Paul posits three theological unities: (1) the Body of Christ as the Church, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) the hope of the Christian calling.

Verse 5: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."[184]

In pithy repetition, Paul omits conjunctions in verse 5 and places emphasis on the oneness, giving ἓν in all three genders.[185] The first unity, εἷς κύριος, refers to the Christ and contains a political thrust, that Christ is exclusively lord—Caesar is not.[186] The next two phrases are tied together, as the one faith likely refers to the "baptismal confession of Jesus as Lord" stated by new Christians before baptism (this was more a tradition in the early Church than it is today).[187] Lincoln notes that the baptism is ἓν because it is entry into the ἓν σῶμα.[188] Furthermore, the faith is one because it refers to the united content of Christian belief.[189] In these three ways, Paul intensifies the theme of oneness—the theological basis for the Ephesians' calling to walk rightly.

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[182] Merkle, *Ephesians*, 116.

[183] Harold Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 375.

[184] This is translated from the Greek: εἷς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἓν βάπτισμα. Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, Ephesians 4:5.

[185] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 257.

[186] This also echoes the Shema of Deut. 6:4, thus drawing on Jewish roots. Ibid., 258.

[187] Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, eds. Bruce M. Metzger, et. al (Vol. 42. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 240.

[188] Ibid., 240.

[189] Merkle, *Ephesians*, 116.

Verse 6: "One God and Father of all . . ."[190]

Verse 6 forms the climax and the completion of a trinitarian emphasis (i.e., one Spirit, one Lord, one Father) held in verses 4-6: God the Father sovereignly unifies all Christians.[191] Describing the one God and Father, πάντων, though debated, is neuter and a genitive of subordination, emphasizing God's "cosmic" authority.[192] The first prepositional phrase in the dependent clause, ἐπὶ πάντων, again emphasizes God's universal sovereignty.[193] However, God is also immanent, ever present, as the latter two prepositional phrases emphasize: διὰ πάντων καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ("through all and in all").[194] Thus, in this way, Paul concludes his initial theology of Christian unity in 4:1-6, climaxing it in the Father who is omnipotent and omnipresent.

A Theology of Christ's Body

Since the beginning of the Church, Paul's theology of unity in the Body of Christ has been a foundational doctrine; furthermore, this concept is still very much influential in the modern world.[195] For example, Jaegeon Ha at the University of Pretoria in South Africa has conducted an analysis of the Korean Presbyterian Church's lack of unity and how Paul's theology in Ephesians 4:1-16 can encourage catholicity (i.e., ecumenicalism) and avoid

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[190] This is translated from the Greek: εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων.

[191] Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 377.

[192] Merkle, *Ephesians*, 117.

[193] Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, 377.

[194] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 240.

[195] Recently, George Lotter and Timothy Van Aarde have argued Ephesians 4:1-16 is essential to the constant rediscovery and maintaining of the priesthood of all believers. George Lotter and Timothy Van Aarde, "A Rediscovery of the Priesthood of Believers in Ephesians 4:1-16 and its Relevance for the Missio Dei and a Biblical Missional Ecumenism," *In Die Skriflig* 51, no. 2 (2017): https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v51i2.2251, 7-9.

division.[196] Ha argues that, while the Korean Presbyterian Church suffers from severe disunity, the "solution can be found in the mature ecclesiology and mature sense of unity in Ephesians 4:1-16."[197] Furthermore, Bonhoeffer himself provides one of the most profound theological articulations of ecclesial unity. In *Discipleship*, his chapter, "The Body of Christ," outlines how the Church on earth is actually the real presence of Christ—something that seems absent from some ecclesiologies.[198] In *Sanctorum Communio*, Bonhoeffer gives an even richer theology of Christ's body as the Church: "It is not as if Christ could be abstracted from the church; rather, it is none other than Christ who 'is' the church . . . . Christ did not merely make the church possible, but rather realized it for eternity. If this is so, then the significance of Christ must be made the focal point in the temporal actualization of the church."[199] Here in Bonhoeffer's theology, the doctrine of unity in Christ's body is very much alive. Indeed, Ephesians 4:1-7 supports the theological cogency of Bonhoeffer's argument regarding *Christ existing as Church-community*.

1 Corinthians 10:16-20

This section will engage specifically with 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 within the context of 1 Corinthians 10:14-22; through this exegesis, further support for Bonhoeffer's theologies of human existence in Christ's body and the Holy Spirit's work through liturgy will be revealed. In

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[196] Jaegeon Ha, "Unity and Catholicity in the Korean Presbyterian Church: An Ecumenical Reformed Assessment," *Verbum Et Ecclesia*, 37 no. 1 (2016): https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v37i1.1554, 6-8. Ha writes, "Paul lists the sevenfold oneness of spiritual realities as theoretical, doctrinal basis and motivation for the unity of the church, focusing on the three persons of the Trinity in Ephesians 4:4–6: one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God the Father. The characteristics, origin, basis and motivation for the unity of the church are founded in and flow from the Triune God." Ibid., 1.

[197] Ibid., 2.

[198] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, eds. Martin Kuske, Ilse Todt, Geffey Kelly, and John Godsey, trans. Barbara Green and Reinhard Krauss (Vol. 4. Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 218.

[199] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 157.

this passage, Paul (1) describes the eucharist as a participation (Cf. κοινωνία) in the body of

Christ, (2) explains the unity of the church as seen in the eucharist (Cf. εἷς ἄρτος, ἓν σῶμα), and

(3) reveals the demonic foundation of idol worship (Cf. ἀλλ' ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ

θεῷ θύουσιν). From analyzing the Greek and Paul's argument, significant theological

implications can be formulated regarding the eucharist and the Church being Christ's body on

earth.

Translation

Trying to help create unity in the Church at Corinth, Paul exhorts the burgeoning Church

to find unity based on the eucharist. Paul writes:

> (14) Therefore indeed, my beloved, flee from idolatry. (15) I speak [to you] as wise
> people; you judge what I say. (16) The cup of blessing that we bless, is [it] not fellowship
> in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is [it] not fellowship in the body of
> Christ? (17) Because [there is] one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all
> partake from the one bread. (18) Observe the fleshliness of Israel; are not those who eat
> the sacrifices participating [in] the alter? (19) What, then, do I declare? That [an offering
> to] an idol is something or that an idol is anything? (20) But rather, what they sacrifice,
> [they sacrifice] to demons, and they do not sacrifice to God; but I do not want you to
> become partners [with] demons. (21) You are not able to drink [the] cup of the Lord and
> [the] cup of demons; you are not able to participate [at] the table of the Lord and [at] the
> table of demons. (22) Or are we to make the Lord jealous? We are not stronger than he is,
> are we?[200]

In this passage, Paul wrote specifically on the issue of eating idol sacrifices associated with local

temples.[201] Thematically, this section has covenantal overtones of *exclusivity* and *community* that

link it to 10:1-13, which discusses how the Israelites' example constitutes a warning for

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[200] This is an original translation of the Greek text. Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, 1 Corinthians 10:16-20. For a helpful block diagram of this passage, see Appendix II.

[201] Gordon D. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (The New International Commentary on The New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmans, 1987), 22.

Christians.[202] For the current study of Bonhoeffer, verses 16 and 17 are most relevant and revealing.

Verse 16: Participation in the Body and Blood

As the Eastern Orthodox Bible Scholar, Dr. Paul Tarazi notes, Paul's use of κοινωνία in this passage strongly emphasizes a communal fellowship, a sharing together in the body of Christ that is the Church.[203] This κοινωνία, however, also includes a participation in Christ, in his body and blood;[204] Paul leaves the exact details of this divine participation in Christ's body (i.e., σώματος) and blood (i.e., αἵματος) as a divine mystery. While it is perhaps not fully explicable, the eucharist was instituted as one of the central practices of the Church, as alluded to in this passage.

Paul begins the verse with the first of two parallel rhetorical questions: τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.[205] Paul's question translates as, "The cup of blessing that we bless, is (it) not fellowship in the blood of Christ?" Paul's meaning behind τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας notably takes on the background of the Jewish Passover within a covenantal framework.[206] Even more, as Thiselton argues, "[I]t is upon covenant rather than upon the Passover meal as such that emphasis derived from the sharing of the cup of blessing falls primarily."[207] The dependent clause, ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν (pres., act., indic., 1st,

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[202] Anthony Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 750-751.

[203] Paul Nadim Tarazi, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary* (St. Paul, MN: OCABS Press, 2011), 182-183.

[204] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 32. The Anchor Yale Bible. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 389-390.

[205] Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, 1 Corinthians 10:16.

[206] Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 756-760.

[207] Ibid., 760.

plural; "that we bless"), emphasizes the communal nature of the verb—blessing the cup is

something the whole church does together. This blessing should be understood as an address to

God.[208] Lastly, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ points to the unifying nature of the

eucharist, which draws the individual Christian (1) closer to Christ and (2) closer to other

Christians.[209] Thus, with this first rhetorical question, Paul highlights the rich dimensions of the

Lord's supper.

Secondly, Paul asks: τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ

ἐστιν.[210] This translates as, "The bread that we break, is [it] not fellowship in the body of

Christ?" Many of the features of the first question apply to this second one. Both affirm the

communal dynamics of the eucharist, and both base this communion in the person of Christ, his

body and blood. This passage, then, provides one of the Pauline discussions, albeit somewhat

indirectly, of the eucharist and its two elements. Bread and wine certainly symbolize the rich

narrative of Christ's sacrifice, but they also are the means of a supernatural accomplishment:

divine participation in Christ. In this verse again, the action verb, κλῶμεν ("we break"), is first

person plural, denoting the social aspect of communion. Paul's rhetorical questions set the stage

for his condemning argument against joining feasts associated with idol worship.[211]

Verse 17: Unity in the Body

Verse 17 is a kind of theological implication of the second question in verse 16—because

Christians share in one bread (Cf. ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν), there is a supernatural unity

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[208] Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 761.

[209] David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 476-477.

[210] Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, 1 Corinthians 10:16.

[211] Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 391.

within the Church (Cf. ἓν σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν). As Christians commune similarly with Christ in the sacrament, they share a unity within Christ. Bible scholar Pheme Perkins argues that the emphasis on εἷς ἄρτος and ἓν σῶμα "serves the larger agenda of the letter, establishing concord in the divided church."[212] In addition, New Testament scholar Sin-pan Ho explains how the dynamic of social identity formation played an integral role in 1 Corinthians.[213] Verse 17 in particular engages with such identity formation: though Christians are πολλοί ("many"), they also share (Cf. μετέχομεν) ἓν σῶμα ("one body"), thereby joining together in the common narrative of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection. Because of the power of social formation, Paul exhorted the Corinthians to abstain from idolatrous feasts,[214] which act as anti-eucharistic liturgies. Because there is one loaf, one sacrificial lamb of God, there is also one body of believers who together enjoy the benefits of Christ's sacrifice.[215]

The Eucharist and Christ's Body

In 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, Paul establishes the spiritual significance of the eucharist—it creates κοινωνία within the body of Christ, while feasts of idol-worship make κοινωνία with demons. It seems unlikely that, as some protestants argue, the eucharist is merely a symbol—more is involved in this practice than cognitive remembrance. The eucharist is one of the means through which Christians are joined together into the social identity of Christ's body, which is the Church.[216] It seems that an actual grace, the gracious gift of closeness to Christ, is given by

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[212] Pheme Perkins, *First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 126.

[213] Sin-pan Daniel Ho, *Paul and the Creation of a Counter-cultural Community: A Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Cor. 5.1-11.1 in Light of the Social Lives of the Corinthians* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2015), 16-21.

[214] Ho, *Paul and the Creation of a Counter-cultural Community*, 23.

[215] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 469-470.

[216] Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, 216.

God through the sacramental ordinance of the eucharist. This grace given at the Lord's table is

significantly a communal partaking with others (Cf. εὐλογοῦμεν . . . κλῶμεν   . . . μετέχομεν),

but it also is a means of a participatory union with Christ (Cf. the two rhetorical questions of

verse 16). Accordingly, communion is one of the primary means by which God establishes the

Church as a Christ-reality. This passage, like Ephesians 4:1-7, garners theological support for

Bonhoeffer's arguments regarding *Christ existing as Church-community* and liturgy.

Integration with Bonhoeffer: Theological Cogency

While many other passages could be engaged in order to evaluate Bonhoeffer's

proposal,[217] Ephesians 4:1-7 and 1 Corinthians 10:16-20 are two highly relevant passages that

support Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology. In Ephesians 4:1-7, Paul argues for theological unities—one

being the Church as the Body of Christ. Here, Paul's argument supports Bonhoeffer's position

because Paul teaches that the Church is ontologically united within Christ. This passage also

demonstrates the divine establishment of the Church by God the Father (Cf. verse 6; God the

Father is above, in, and through all as the omnipotent creator). Paul exhorts the Ephesians to be

united as the Church because it is divinely one (ἓν) in Christ (i.e., the σῶμα). Bonhoeffer, in

Sanctorum Communio, follows Paul's teachings because he understands the Church to be a

social reality united in Christ. In addition, Bonhoeffer, like Paul, ties the regenerate power within

the Church to the divine power of God—because there is one spirit, one lord, and one hope, the

Church also is one body in Christ with one baptism as admission into the social body.

In 1 Corinthians 10:16-20, Paul explains how the Eucharist, as a liturgical act, graciously

creates communion with Christ and with other Christians. While the former passage primarily

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[217] An extended inductive survey of passages cannot be offered here. Yet, the concepts of the Church being *in Christ* or existing as *Christ's body* are prevalent in the New Testament (Cf. 1 Cor. 10:16-17, 12:12-31; Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 2:19-22, 4:4, 4:11-13, 5:29-30; Col. 1:18, 1:24, 2:19, 3:15). In the Old Testament, Israel is considered to be a collective person (Cf. Nehemiah 8:1; Ezra 3:1).

supports *Christ existing as Church-community*, 1 Corinthians 10:16-20 additionally reveals the

liturgical nature of Christ's body. With his rhetorical questions in verse 16, Paul reminds his

readers that the eucharist is an act of divine participation uniting them with Christ. Because

Christians share in one bread (εἷς ἄρτος), we are correspondingly united as Christ's one body

(ἓν σῶμα) on earth. The significance of this passage is twofold. First, regarding the theme of

liturgy, it points to God's divine work through the Eucharist—a theme that Bonhoeffer develops

in *Sanctorum Communio*. Communion is not *primarily* a cognitive reminder of the Gospel;

rather, Communion is a divine liturgy through which God instills Gospel realities in the Church.

Second, regarding the theme of *Christ existing as Church-community*, there seems to be some

kind of causal link between partaking in one bread and being united in Christ's one social

body.[218] Participation in the Lord's Supper by the Church, like Bonhoeffer argues, is one way

that God actualizes *Christ existing as Church-community*.

The Philosophy of Liturgy: Strengthening Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology

Liturgy, as seen in *Sanctorum Communio*, has a significant role in Bonhoeffer's

ecclesiology. This liturgical emphasis only gets stronger in his later writings. At the end of

Ethics, for example, Bonhoeffer writes:

> [T]he danger of the Reformation is that it focuses exclusively on the mandate of
> proclaiming the word at the expense of attending to the church as a distinct domain and
> thus overlooks almost completely that the Church is an end in itself, which consists
> precisely in its being-for-the-world. Our Protestant services today suffer from a liturgical
> poverty and uncertainty. Church order and church law are weak . . . . Very widespread
> among Protestants is an inability even to understand the significance of disciplined
> practices, such as spiritual exercises, asceticism, meditation, and contemplation . . . .
> Exclusive interest in the divine mandate of proclamation, and thus interest in the
> Church's commission for the world, has resulted in overlooking the intrinsic connection

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[218] The conjunctions ὅτι ("because") and γὰρ ("for") in verse 17 seem to make premises out of the claims (1) that there is one bread and (2) that Christians partake in one bread. The conclusion, then, is that the Church consists of many persons united in one body. In Paul's argument, the liturgical reality of the Eucharist directly impacts the social reality (i.e., the uniting of many persons) of the Church. Bonhoeffer makes similar claims regarding liturgy.

between this commission and the church's own domain. This deficiency led to a necessary decline in the power, the fullness, and the richness of the proclamation itself, since it lacked fertile soil.[219]

Here, Bonhoeffer identifies the Protestant trend of overlooking the institutional role and social domain of the Church—this neglect manifests itself by deemphasizing liturgy.[220] The following section will bolster Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology by taking seriously his own view of liturgy and placing it in the more recent philosophical discussions of liturgy. Having ventured toward the theological cogency of Bonhoeffer's concepts of *Christ existing as Church-community* and liturgy, the insights from philosophers of liturgy can now be integrated in order to philosophically support Bonhoeffer's position.

Wolterstorff and Smith: Aids for Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology

As two of the more prominent philosophers analyzing Christian Liturgy, Nicholas Wolterstorff and James K.A. Smith will provide insights that support Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology and bring to light, in ways varying from Bonhoeffer, the intertwined realities of liturgy and *Christ existing as Church-community*. Smith's *Cultural Liturgies* trilogy and Wolterstorff's analytic insights in *Acting Liturgically* will illuminate Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology for modern

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[219] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, eds. Ilse Tödt, Clifford J. Green, Ernst Feil, and Heinz Tödt, trans. Reinhard Krauss, Charles C. West, and Douglas W. Stott (Vol. 6. Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 406-408.

[220] It seems that Bonhoeffer was a forerunner of more recent theologians and philosophers. James K.A. Smith has identified the Protestant overemphasis on didactic Christian formation, writing, "Many Christian schools, colleges, and universities—particularly in the Protestant tradition—have taken on board a picture of the human person that owes more to modernity and the Enlightenment than it does to the holistic, biblical vision of human persons . . . . The result has been an understanding of education largely in terms of *in*formation; more specifically, the end of Christian education has been seen to be the dissemination and communication of Christian ideas rather than the formation of a peculiar people." James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 31. Correspondingly, Christian analytic philosophers have also neglected the liturgical, embodied dimension of Christianity. As a prominent Christian analytic philosopher himself, Nicholas Wolterstorff bluntly writes, "Apart from reflections on the ontology of the Eucharist, we have no rich heritage of philosophical reflections on liturgy." Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically: Philosophical Reflections on Religious Practice* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2018), 2.

readers. Thus, by juxtaposing Bonhoeffer with these philosophers of liturgy, the liturgical action

of Christ's body will become more apparent.

Defining Liturgy

Before exploring this unique intersection, a concise definition of liturgy must be

produced. The following definition will align with both Wolterstorff and Smith's definitions by

fitting broadly into Smith's concept of cultural liturgies and specifically aligning with

Wolterstorff's analysis of Christian liturgy as scripted action. In his development of the

philosophy of liturgy, Smith seeks to display the liturgical nature of humanity, the inherently

worshipful foundation of love according to which every human lives. Smith explains, "I simply

use the term *liturgy* as a synonym for *worship*. In the word *liturgy*, readers should not hear the

valorization of any particular form or style; at the same time, I hope those readers who associate

negative connotations with the word *liturgy* will suspend judgment and simply hear the word as

a shorthand for naming worship practices of all kinds."[221] With the concept of cultural liturgies,

Smith corrects the overly modernist worldview-apologetics by articulating a liturgical

anthropology: all humans are fundamentally lovers (not thinkers)[222] whose loves are shaped by

communal liturgies.[223] Smith develops the *formative* dimension of liturgy[224] by articulating how

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[221] James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 25, footnote #8.

[222] Ibid., 41-43, 46-60.

[223] Ibid., 46-63.

[224] Wolterstorff helpfully distinguishes between the performative, formative, expressive, and environmental (i.e., relating to the *space* of liturgical actions) aspects of liturgy. Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*, 6. On the one hand, Smith is clearly interested in the formative aspect of liturgy; on the other hand, Wolterstorff develops the performative reality of liturgy. Wolterstorff writes, "The focus of my discussion will not be on the expressive and formative functions of liturgical activity but on *what is done* in liturgical enactments. Call this the *performative* dimension of liturgy. Insofar as liturgical activity is expressive and formative, it's what is done that is expressive and formative. What is done is basic." Ibid., 5. With these two different but compatible perspectives on the performative and formative dimensions of liturgy, a fuller spectrum of meaning can be revealed in this integration of liturgical studies with Bonhoeffer.

thick practices condition human love and knowledge.[225] This picture of liturgy opens up the

possibility for penetrating cultural analysis. For example, according to this view, consumerist

malls are types of liturgical temples that cultivate a love for the *good life* of pop culture.[226] In

this manner, Smith broadens the concept of liturgies in order to highlight the religious and love-

cultivating dimensions of institutions that form people, as liturgical animals, into certain kinds of

lovers.

Wolterstorff, on the other hand, analytically understands liturgy to be a subcategory of

"scripted activity,"[227] which requires the acquisition of tradition-inculcated "know-how"

knowledge[228] for full participation. According to Wolterstorff, Christian liturgies "are for the

purpose of learning and acknowledging the excellence of who God is and what God has

done."[229] Liturgies are complex activities that involve human action, God's action, and human

formation. Wolterstorff concisely explains:

> An enactment of a liturgy consists of the participants together performing scripted verbal, gestural, and auditory actions, the prescribed purpose of their doing so being both to engage God directly in acts of learning and acknowledging the excellence of who God is and what God has done, and to be engaged by God. And the liturgy itself is that type of sequence of act-types that is enacted when the participants do what the script prescribes.[230]

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[225] Smith distinguishes between *thick* and *thin* practices. He writes, "Some habits are very *thin*, or mundane, like brushing our teeth, or eating the same cereal for breakfast every day . . . . Such things are not usually pursued for their own sake; rather, they are instrumental to some other end . . . . Other habits are what we could call *thick*, or meaning-full. These are habits that play a significant role in shaping our identity, who we are . . . . So thick habits often both signal and shape our core values or our most significant desires." Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 82.

[226] Ibid., 90-101.

[227] Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*, 18.

[228] Ibid., 23.

[229] Ibid., 29.

[230] Ibid., 29-30.

This definition highlights the various forces at play in liturgy: human action, the standard of a

script, God's action, etc. Notably, the reality of *what actually happens* in liturgy is significant

because it is from this performative dimension of liturgy that the formative dimension emerges.

Wolterstorff's inquiry is simply narrower than Smith's interests; albeit more specified,

Wolterstorff's definition of liturgy maintains the basic worshipful nature of liturgy that Smith

outlined. In this way, both perspectives on liturgy are congruent.

Following the lead of Smith and Wolterstorff, Christian[231] liturgy is *scripted action*[232]

prescribed for Christians by Scripture and Church tradition for the purposes of worshiping God,

being formed into Christlikeness, and having Christ existing as Church-community actualized by

the Holy Spirit. This definition combines the best parts of Smith and Wolterstorff's research into

one definition. Furthermore, while this definition can be used by different Christian traditions,

the definition of liturgy in this paper will rest upon a broadly reformed and protestant

tradition.[233] Lastly, this definition incorporates Bonhoeffer's theology of liturgy into Smith and

Wolterstorff's positions by adding that the Holy Spirit actualizes *Christ existing as Church-*

community through liturgy.

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[231] In accord with Smith's more general definition of liturgy, philosophers and theologians can alter the adjective before liturgy (e.g., Christian liturgy, Confucian liturgy, secular liturgy, Mormon liturgy, etc.) in order to refer to different kinds of liturgies.

[232] Wolterstorff explains, "[I]n general, when the prescriptions that are in force for some activity identify with relative specificity a certain act as required, I will say, when the prescriptions are followed, that the act is *scripted*, and I will call the prescription for that act, the *script* for it. *Relative specificity* is, obviously, a vague concept; there are borderline cases." Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*, 14.

[233] This paper aligns with the Heidelberg Catechism, which outlines how baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two sacraments established in the New Testament. As sacraments, they are means of non-salvific grace given through the work of the Holy Spirit. *Heidelberg Catechism*, *Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confession*s (Grand Rapids, MI: CRC Publications, 1988), 41. In addition to these two sacraments, the protestant position in this paper recognizes other liturgies of the Church (e.g., financial giving, preaching, weddings, fellowship) that do not count as sacraments in the same way that Communion and Baptism do. These other liturgies are still *ways to worship* and means of non-salvific grace, but they simply are not as central to the Church as are Communion and Baptism.

Liturgy in Support of Bonhoeffer

Four features of liturgy articulated by Smith and Wolterstorff provide support for

Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology with contemporary concepts. The realities of (1) an emergent *we*, (2) a

common telos, (3) the cultivation of Christian virtue, and (4) the *habitus* provide four kinds of

alternative, though supporting, depictions of realities that Bonhoeffer outlines in *Sanctorum*

Communio. Thus, having supported the logical consistency and theological cogency of

Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology, these contemporary philosophical concepts will display the resonance

between Bonhoeffer's views and contemporary philosophical developments.[234]

The Emergent "We" of Unity

First, in his analysis of *what actually happens in liturgy*, Wolterstorff recognizes the

emergence of a *we*, a third entity, when liturgical enactments occur. In discussing Searle and

Bratman's philosophies of human action and joint intention, Wolterstorff writes:

> Whereas on Searle's view the intentions constitutive of collective actions are non-ordinary we-intentions, the view I share with Bratman is that they are ordinary individual intentions with a distinct content. In 'shared agency,' as Bratman calls it, each participant has an intention of the form, *I intend that we do X together*—that is, *I intend that you and I do X together* (where 'you' refers to all the members of the group) . . . . Bratman speaks of intentions related in this way as *interlocking*, in the sense that each party 'intends that the shared activity go in part by way of the relevant intentions of each of the other participants.' Call intentions whose content is of the form, *that you and I do X together, joint-action intentions*. And when two or more people each have the intention that they perform a certain act together, let us say that they *share* the joint-action intention.[235]

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[234] A more complete argument would include a response to scholars whose understanding of liturgy is in opposition to Smith and Wolterstorff. Some scholars may disagree with the formative and performative importance of liturgy, and their arguments should be addressed for completion of this thesis' argument. For the purposes of this paper, however, a response to such scholars will be left for a later time. Based on Smith and Wolerstorff's credentials and powerful arguments, this thesis will assume that their dissenters do not produce defeaters to their positions. However, this point of weakness is an opportunity for more research.

[235] Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*, 59.

Having explained the meaning of *joint-action intentions* and the ability to *share* them in the preceding way, Wolterstorff suggests that joint actions are not merely collections of individual intentions; rather, *joint-action intentions* point to the fact that *we* do something together. At this point in his analysis of the collective nature of liturgy, Wolterstorff merely suggests the possibility of collective *we* entities. He writes, "It's my view—for which I have no argument that an ontological reductionist would find persuasive—that the ontological furniture of the universe does include groups and that groups do things; in particular, groups do things by way of their members acting together."[236] He continues this vein of thought and develops it specifically in relation to liturgy.

Following his explanation of *joint-action intentions* and their *shareability*, Wolterstorff explains how most liturgy fits this category of joint action. [237] The meshing of *joint-action intentions* "is achieved by a blend of following the script and mutual responsiveness."[238] The script, of course, is the written prescription for liturgical action (e.g., the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, a Baptist bulletin, etc.), and by *mutual responsiveness*, Wolterstorff refers to the situational adjustments that people make during liturgy in response to others (e.g., singing at a slower pace than expected, taking only the bread of Communion due to a virulent virus, etc.). When Christians partake in Communion, for example, all the participants intend together to celebrate the Lord's death, resurrection, and second coming. Thus, Christian liturgy consists of *joint action-intentions* that are *shared* between participants.

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[236] Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*, 61.

[237] Even though people may have different roles in liturgy (e.g., the pastor may bless the elements of the Lord's Supper or he may physically baptize a new believer while the congregation has alternative roles of celebration, reception of grace, joint affirmation, etc.), the whole congregation works together actively in liturgy (i.e., it is not only the pastor who acts and intends in liturgical actions). Ibid., 62.

[238] Ibid., 64.

Concluding this argument, Wolterstorff explains that the *we* of liturgical joint action

certainly consists of all those who follow the script, but it also, more conjecturally, consists of

the Church as the body of Christ. Wolterstorff explains, "Perhaps the 'we' can sometimes be

understood as referring to that corporate body which is the congregation, or to the corporate

body which is the church."[239] As an articulate philosopher, Wolterstorff does not construe this

assertion as a conclusion from his pervious philosophical discussion, because the *we* of liturgy

being Christ's corporate body is a *theological* reality, not a *philosophical* reality. His argument

supports the existence of a corporate entity operating in liturgy, but it logically does not go as far

as understanding that corporate entity to be the Christ-reality. Nonetheless, theological

arguments, such as Bonhoeffer's in *Sanctorum Communio*, can supplement Wolterstorff's

philosophical claims in order to conclude that the *we* of liturgy is Christ's corporate body.

This discussion sheds a great deal of light on Bonhoeffer's concepts of *Christ existing as*

Church-community and corporate persons in general. It demonstrates how theories of joint

agency point to the same reality that Bonhoeffer recognized: collective entities. Both objective

spirit and collective persons in general are concepts in *Sanctorum Communio* that are supported

by Wolterstorff's discussion of *joint action-intentions*.

A Common Telos

Both Wolterstorff and Smith affirm the teleological nature of liturgies, but Smith

especially demonstrates what Bonhoeffer describes as the ability for people to "will together."[240]

Smith's project, particularly in *Awaiting the King*, involves the Church's public engagement with

alternative communities (e.g., the state) that have different cultural liturgies (in Smith's broad

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[239] Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*, 68.

[240] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 88.

sense of liturgy) and different *teloi*. In light of this pluralism of formative liturgies linked to

various communities, the Church must walk carefully to maintain its *telos*. Smith explains:

> Too many Christian public theologies, rightly fending off an apolitical and anticultural
> pietism, end up with overly sanguine accounts of how and why Christians can embrace
> public and political engagement. This stems, I think, from a failure to see our public
> institutions as *liturgical* bodies, a failure to see the *rites* that suffuse the state . . . . The
> state is not just a neutral, benign space I can stride into with my ideas and beliefs. The
> state isn't just the guardian of rights; it is also a nexus of rites that are bent on shaping
> what is most fundamental: my *loves*.[241]

Here, Smith argues, based on his liturgical anthropology from *Desiring the Kingdom*,[242] that a

community's liturgies have a kind of gravity that tends to make one's loves (i.e., will)[243] align

with the loves of all the other members of that community. Humans are inherently teleological,

and in liturgical communities, people's wills tend to unite through formative liturgies. Smith

writes, "[A] desire for and orientation to a particular vision of the good life . . . becomes

operative in us . . . by becoming an integral part of the fabric of our *dispositions*—our

precognitive tendencies to act in certain ways and toward certain ends. Philosophers like

Aristotle, Aquinas, and MacIntyre describe such dispositions as 'habits.'"[244] These habits, or

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[241] James K. A. Smith, *Awaiting the King: Reforming Public Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 35.

[242] As a neo-Augustinian development of humans as lovers, Smith argues for a liturgical anthropology, over and against anthropologies emphasizing thinking and believing. In Smith's account, liturgy and social practices (Cf. MacIntyre's virtue ethics) refer to the same formative dynamic. The liturgical anthropology argues that (1) humans are fundamentally lovers (i.e., intentional), (2) loving always has a telos (i.e., a vision of the good life), (3) habits form a person's love(s), and (4) such formative habits are communal practices, liturgies that shape people's loves through their bodily participation. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 46-63.

[243] Augustinian scholar John Rist explains how *voluntas* (i.e., will) is often synonymous with *eros* and *amor* in Augustine's works, as love is the fundamental orienteer of a person's will; furthermore, he echoes Augustine's claim that knowledge depends on what a person wills (e.g., ignorance is often an intentional choice). Thus, love and will are integrally linked, and in the Augustinian tradition, love is the most pure kind of will. John Rist, "Faith and Reason," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, eds. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (Cambridge Companions to Philosophy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. doi:10.1017/CCOL0521650186.003), 36-37.

[244] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 55.

liturgies, are the training ground for loves; thus, they act as the "fulcrum" for a person's love: "they are the hinge that 'turns' our heart, our love."[245] In this manner, Smith demonstrates how liturgies (broadly, in both the Church and in culture at large) function as uniters of human desire and volitionally.

Like Smith, Wolterstorff recognizes the love-centered nature of liturgy. Specifically, he explicates how Christian liturgy manifests Christ-like love, the kind of love that Christians specifically are called to embody, reciprocally with each other and sacrificially for the world.[246] When a congregation performs a liturgy together, they rely on the Holy Spirit to create Christ-like love, which is necessary for the enactment of most liturgies. Wolterstorff writes, "An implicit if not explicit component of all scripts for Christian liturgical enactments . . . is that the participants are to be related to each other in bonds of Christ-like friendship love."[247] Thus, Christian liturgies not only orient Christians unitedly toward a common telos, they also manifest aspects of that telos, namely, *being* a community of Christ-like love.

These discussions about liturgy's teleological nature (i.e., how liturgy unites people in their *love* and *will* toward a common end) reflect Bonhoeffer's own discussion of "the voluntary church,"[248] which is the center of true Christians in the Church who *will* the existence of *Christ existing as Church-community*, and Bonhoeffer's discussion of humanity's volitional nature in the primal state.[249] These philosophical contributions notably portray *how* human wills unite in

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[245] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 56.

[246] Wolterstorff, *Acting Liturgically*, 253-254.

[247] Ibid., 258.

[248] Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio*, 219-221.

[249] Ibid., 86-92.

Bonhoeffer's sociology of the Church. In this manner, Wolterstorff and Smith's recent developments in liturgical studies provide support for Bonhoeffer's volitional ecclesiology.

Cultivation of Christian Virtue (i.e., Christian Social Basic-Relations)

In a plethora of ways, Bonhoeffer's social basic relations of (1) vicarious representative action and (2) love are cultivated according to Smith's formative function of liturgy. Smith argues that Christian liturgies (1) allow Christians to perceive (i.e., imagine) the world properly and (2) form Christians into Christ-like people. By making these arguments, Smith, albeit in different words, supports Bonhoeffer's description of regenerate social basic relations in the Church.

First, liturgies function as regenerative sites for Christian perception. Not only do liturgies cultivate Christian character, they also are a means by which God regenerates Christians' intuitive understanding of the world. Smith explains:

> Christian worship and spiritual formation have long known and affirmed *in practice* that gestures are not just something we do but that they also do something *to* us—that kneeling for confession is a kind of cosmological act that inscribes in us a comportment to God and neighbor . . . . As the Story of God's redeeming love sinks down into our imaginative background through practices that are kin/aesthetic, we *perceive* the world differently and thus constitute our environment *as* God's good-but-broken creation.[250]

Using insights from Merleau-Ponty, Smith argues that liturgies provide the proper heuristic background against which Christians can contrast, and thereby understand, their daily experiences.[251] This perceptual rehabilitation via Church liturgies grants the necessary precondition for Christians' embodying Bonhoeffer's regenerate social basic relations. A regular dose of liturgical enactments primes Christians to live vicariously and lovingly.

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[250] James K.A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 167.

[251] Ibid., 49-53.

Second, Smith additionally argues that liturgies cultivate Christlikeness (i.e., Christian virtues) in a world full of counter-liturgies.[252] Smith explains, "Secular liturgies capture our hearts by capturing our imaginations and drawing us into ritual practices that 'teach' us to love something very different from the kingdom of God. By the same token, Christian worship needs to be intentionally liturgical, formative and pedagogical in order to *counter* such mis-formations and misdirections."[253] According to the liturgical anthropology, liturgies (in the general sense) form humans into certain kinds of people—love, hate, generosity, selfishness, vicariousness, and isolation are all human traits that result from formative, *thick* practices. Accordingly, the social basic-relations of love and vicarious representative action originate from Christian liturgies, and Bonhoeffer seemed to allude to this claim in his discussion of liturgies. For Bonhoeffer, liturgies are the sites of the Holy Spirit actualizing *Christ existing as Church-community*, which rests upon and creates the social basic-relations of vicarious representative action and love.

In this way, Bonhoeffer's argument for the cultivation of love and vicarious representative action in the Church fits neatly into Smith's liturgical anthropology. The new humanity in Christ becomes concrete through tangible enactments of Christ's love and vicariousness. Just as Christ became incarnate for the sake of his creation, the regenerative power from Christ's vicarious representative action on the cross emerges from embodied practices of Christlikeness that create proper social relations in the Church.

Habitus and Objective Spirit

Not only can Wolterstorff and Smith's philosophical analyses of liturgy (1) demonstrate the habitual cultivation of virtue, (2) explain the uniting of human wills in the Church, and (3)

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[252] Smith provides a penetrating analysis of cultural liturgies that deform Christians. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 93-129.

[253] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 88.

reveal the emergent *we* of liturgy, Smith's contribution also provides a helpful analogy for

Bonhoeffer's objective spirit (Cf. pages 14-15). In his adaptation of Pierre Bourdieu's

philosophy, Smith develops the concept of *habitus*—the "complex of inclinations and

dispositions that make us lean into the world with a habituated momentum in certain

directions."[254] Juxtaposed with the concept of objective spirit, *habitus* sheds light on

Bonhoeffer's understanding of the historical force within communities.

According to Bourdieu and Smith, a *habitus* shapes individuals and whole communities;

it is intimately connected to a person's life, but it also is supra-individual because it consists of

commonly shared habits within a community.[255] These habits are subconsciously acquired

through the bodily participation in the environment of a community.[256] Similar to Bonhoeffer's

concept of objective spirit, a community's *habitus* is the "nexus" of shared meanings and

common assumptions in social practices—the acquisition of a *habitus* makes a person a native of

her community, someone who is able to properly interact with other people and her

environment.[257] In this sense, a *habitus* is biconditionally related to being human: without it, a

person will not be able to function properly as a human being, but without human beings, there

would be no *habitus*. Thus, just like the Hegelian idea of objective spirit, *habitus* is necessarily

woven into the fabric of what it means to be human.

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[254] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 79.

[255] Ibid., 80-82.

[256] Ibid., 82-84.

[257] Ibid., 92-98. Smith concisely explains, "*Habitus*, we've seen, is Bourdieu's shorthand concept for that nexus of dispositions that makes it possible for us to perceive the world, to experience our environment, to constitute a context, and *act* therein. It is the visceral plausibility structure by which we make sense of our world and move within it." Ibid., 92.

Summary: Liturgy in Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology

From this intersection of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology and liturgical philosophy, Bonhoeffer's theology in *Sanctorum Communio* garners philosophical support and theoretical illumination. First, the concept of *habitus* provides a rendition of Hegel's objective spirit through the lens of philosophical anthropology; thereby, *habitus* helps clarify what Bonhoeffer means by objective spirit. Second, Smith's liturgical anthropology demonstrates *how* Bonhoeffer's social basic relations of vicarious representative action and love are created within the Church-community. Smith provides a powerful explanation of the humanly cultivated side of these two Christological realities. Third, Wolterstorff and Smith articulate *how* Christians' loves (and thereby their wills) are united toward a common *telos*. In Smith's account, on the one hand, liturgies subconsciously teach people, through aesthetic narratives and images of the *good life*, what they should love. Wolterstorff, on the other hand, argues that Christian liturgies are actual manifestations of the community's telos—what is communally desired actually happens in the liturgy (i.e., Christ-like love, which is the social *mode* of action in liturgy, manifest due to the Holy Spirit's work). Fourth, Wolterstorff explains how an emergent *we* operates in Christian liturgical action, due to the *shared joint action-intentions* rooted in the enactments. This collective entity points to the explanatory power in Bonhoeffer's extended discussions of *Christ existing as Church-community*, collective persons in general, and objective spirit. In these four ways, Wolterstorff and Smith's insights in the philosophy of liturgy support Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology in *Sanctorum Communio*.

Conclusion

In this thesis, a thematic exegesis of (1) *Christ existing as Church-community*, (2) collective persons in general, and (3) liturgy, according to *Sanctorum Communio,* allowed for a

theological argument for the cogency of Bonhoeffer's concepts (specifically his first and third foundational ideas) and enjoyed the supporting analysis from the philosophy of liturgy. While further articulation and support of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology should be developed, the way Bonhoeffer's internal logic cogently functions and the support from liturgical philosophy demonstrates a certain level of theological power in *Sanctorum Communio*. It seems that Bonhoeffer's contributions to the Church still have relevance; indeed, his bold arguments and rich theological foundation could animate ecclesial studies. By having an open ear to Bonhoeffer's theology of *Christ existing as Church*-community, theologians and pastors might benefit in their studies and daily pursuits of Christlikeness.
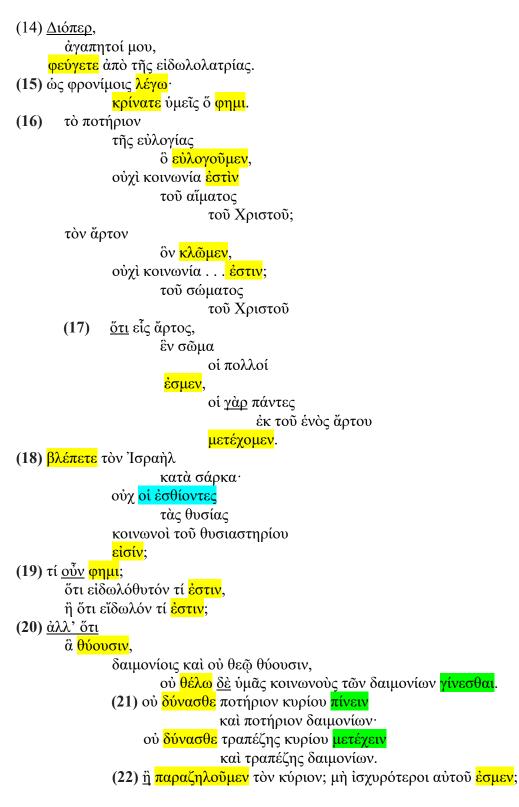
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Appendix I: Block Diagram of Ephesians 4:1-7

(1) **Παρακαλῶ** οὖν ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ
        ὁ δέσμιος
                ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως
περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως
        ἧς ἐκλήθητε,
                (2) μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ πραΰτητος,
                μετὰ μακροθυμίας,
ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων
        ἐν ἀγάπῃ,
(3) σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἑνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος
        ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης·
(4) ἓν σῶμα καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα,
        καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε
                ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι
                        τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν·
(5) εἷς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἓν βάπτισμα·
(6) εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων,
        ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων
        καὶ διὰ πάντων
        καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν.

Appendix II: Block Diagram of 1 Corinthians 10:16-20

(14) Διόπερ,
    ἀγαπητοί μου,
    φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας.
(15) ὡς φρονίμοις λέγω·
    κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὅ φημι.
(16)   τὸ ποτήριον
        τῆς εὐλογίας
            ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν,
        οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν
            τοῦ αἵματος
                τοῦ Χριστοῦ;
      τὸν ἄρτον
            ὃν κλῶμεν,
        οὐχὶ κοινωνία . . . ἐστιν;
            τοῦ σώματος
                τοῦ Χριστοῦ
      (17)   ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος,
            ἓν σῶμα
                οἱ πολλοί
            ἐσμεν,
                οἱ γὰρ πάντες
                    ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου
            μετέχομεν.
(18) βλέπετε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ
            κατὰ σάρκα·
      οὐχ οἱ ἐσθίοντες
            τὰς θυσίας
      κοινωνοὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου
      εἰσίν;
(19) τί οὖν φημι;
    ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τί ἐστιν,
    ἢ ὅτι εἴδωλόν τί ἐστιν;
(20) ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι
    ἃ θύουσιν,
        δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῷ θύουσιν,
            οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι.
        (21) οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν
                καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων·
          οὐ δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν
                καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων.
        (22) ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον; μὴ ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτοῦ ἐσμεν;