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The Rationale for the Incarnation and the Place of
Substitutionary Atonement in the Thought of William
Temple and Michael Ramsey: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

William Temple (1881-1944) and Michael Ramsey (1904-1988) are two of the leading Anglican intellectuals of the twentieth century. Their significance does not just lie in the quality of their intellect. Each served as Archbishop of Canterbury during their career; that essentially representative role heightens the sense of the significance of their work to an understanding of Anglican thought during the period. Yet surprisingly little has been written on Temple and Ramsey's theology, and there have been no attempts to give a detailed, systematic account of their thought.

Such a comprehensive study lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet the research does seek to contribute to an understanding of Temple and Ramsey's thought. The thesis has its origins in an incidental remark made by Professor David Brown, who commented that Anglican theologians of the twentieth century had tended to downplay the role of substitutionary atonement in their theological schema. This raised a fundamental question: what impact might such a downplaying have at the wider level of systematic theology? How might it mould their account of the Incarnation, and how might that, in turn, shape their wider thought?

This thesis does not set out to test Brown's claim for a downplaying of substitutionary atonement, but it does – incidentally – show that Temple and Ramsey are examples of the trend. Rather, the focus is on Temple and Ramsey's rationale for the Incarnation, and the place of substitutionary atonement within it. As such, it addresses a significant gap in understanding of their thought. Its central claim is that Temple and Ramsey understood the Incarnation not, primarily as a response to sin, but as a sacrificial means of deepening the union between God and humanity. At the core of their rationale for the Incarnation, it is argued, is the eternal divine purposive desire for fellowship, and not the exigent necessity of substitutionary atonement.

There are two ancillary areas of study. First, the question of the compatibility of their respective accounts of the Incarnation. Arguing for a high level of coherence within and between their accounts, the thesis suggests that such compatibility underlines the significance of their Christology for an understanding of wider Anglican thought during the period. Secondly, the thesis tentatively highlights ways in which each man's rationale for the Incarnation impacts on their wider thought, not least their ecclesiology.

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Declaration

The contents of this thesis have not previously been submitted for any other degree in any university, and is entirely the author's own work.

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Introduction

This thesis offers a comparative study of the theology of William Temple and Michael Ramsey. More specifically, it focusses on their respective accounts of the Incarnation, and the rationale for that divine act. Despite differences, it argues that there is a coherence and complementarity in their presentations of the Incarnation, characterised by a downplaying of themes of substitutionary atonement, and a particular emphasis on the concept of “fellowship.” The full significance of this strand in their theology lies both in the degree to which their accounts of the Incarnation impacted on their wider thought – not least their ecclesiology, and their conception of the hermeneutical task – and in the extent to which they represented a wider trend within Anglicanism. Only the former of these two elements can be traced in any detail in this thesis, and even then as a secondary theme to the central concern to analyse their rationale for the Incarnation; but the conclusions of this thesis will at least highlight the potential value of further research into the latter.

Why Study the Theology of William Temple and Michael Ramsey?

William Temple (1881-1944) and Michael Ramsey (1904-1988) were amongst the most significant Anglican intellectuals of the twentieth century: a fact which would be enough in itself to highlight the importance of research into their thought, even if there were no other grounds for making such a claim. Yet the justification for further research lies in more than just the quality of their minds. Ramsey himself described Temple as ‘one of the greatest of Anglicans in this or any other century.’¹ That “greatness” extends to several different aspects of Temple’s character: the quality of his mind and intellectual achievements;² his learning, energy and zeal;³ his leadership, and his national and international influence both within and beyond the Church.⁴ Not all the praise is unqualified,⁵ but the overall sense remains, with Wolf,

¹ Michael Ramsey, *The Anglican Spirit* (New York: Seabury Classics, 2004), 79.

² Lowry cites Niebuhr’s comment that ‘his intellectual attainments surely exceeded those of any man in either Church or State in our day...’ - Charles W. Lowry, ‘William Temple after Forty Years,’ *Theology* 88, no. 721 (1985), 28.

³ Lowry, ‘William Temple’, 28-29.

⁴ Witness Walker’s observation that ‘[t]he extraordinary thing about Temple is that so many people welcomed his appointment as archbishop... and felt that his early death was a major disaster for the Church and a personal loss for themselves. He had a place in the lives and affections of millions who owed little or no allegiance to the God he served or to the Church of which he was the leader’ - David Walker, ‘William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury,’ *Church Quarterly Review* 161, no. 341 (1960), 480.

that Temple has rightly ‘been described as the most “variously distinguished” of the Archbishops of Canterbury since Anselm. He was undoubtedly the first churchman since the Reformation to be a national leader and a world figure.’⁶ Ramsey’s reputation is only slightly less formidable: Wakefield describes him as ‘the one undoubted theologian to occupy the chair of St Augustine this century... Very little escaped him. He was a theologian in the depths of his being from first to last... Abreast of his times and always ready to consider new and radical notions, there is a continuity and consistency about his thinking.’⁷ Like Temple, that reputation was grounded in more than just the quality of his mind: ‘[h]e was undoubtedly one of the outstanding church leaders of his day, and his influence as a spiritual teacher was no less significant’; this was ‘a remarkable life and ministry.’⁸

The potential significance of research into Temple and Ramsey’s thought is reinforced not just by their inherent gifts, but by the importance of their role and influence within the wider Anglican Communion. Williams has pointed out that ‘Anglicanism has often in practice defined itself as much through exemplary figures as through declared doctrine’;⁹ the fact that such ‘exemplary figures’ as Temple and Ramsey also served as Archbishop of Canterbury suggests a representative role for their thought within their historical context – and one which moreover might carry additional implications for an understanding of the shape and definition of wider Anglican theological identity today. Significantly, the two men’s careers overlapped for a time in the 1930’s and 1940’s, and it is perhaps therefore not surprising that Ramsey was seen by some as an heir to Temple;¹⁰ certainly, and by his own admission, Temple was a major influence on Ramsey’s thought, though an influence which he felt diminished in later years.¹¹ This hints at a potential synergy and resonance between their respective theological schemas: given their inherent gifts, and their prominent role within Anglicanism, that synergy reinforces the potential

⁵ Vidler, for example, has offered a more critical assessment of Temple’s thought – see A.R. Vidler, ‘The Limitations of William Temple,’ *Theology* 79, no. 667 (1976), 37.

⁶ Owen C. Thomas, ‘William Temple,’ in *The Spirit of Anglicanism : Hooker, Maurice, Temple*, ed. William J. Wolf, John E. Booty, and Owen C. Thomas (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1979), 101.

⁷ Gordon Wakefield, ‘Michael Ramsey : A Theological Appraisal,’ *Theology* 91, no. 744 (1988), 455-456.

⁸ Douglas Dales, ‘One Body’ - the Ecclesiology of Michael Ramsey,’ *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 5, no. 1 (2005), 12.

⁹ From Rowan Williams’ foreword to Ramsey, *The Anglican Spirit*, ix.

¹⁰ Christian Howard, ‘Michael Ramsey,’ *The Modern Churchman* 31, no. 2 (1989), 1.

¹¹ Ramsey, *The Anglican Spirit*, 89-90.

value of research into what may well prove to be a coherent and significant strand within Anglican thought – and one that again carries implications for an understanding of Anglican identity. Certainly, critics have identified a number of areas in their thought which remain significant for mainstream Anglicanism today.¹² The potential significance of their thought as representative of wider trends is underlined by the fact that, combined, Temple and Ramsey span almost the whole of the twentieth century; likewise, that they were elevated to Canterbury implies that their thought was considered sufficiently mainstream as to be representative of a broad cross-section of Anglican thought. Of course, it is important to remember that mainstream does not mean all-embracing: for example, one might question how representative Temple and Ramsey were of the wider Anglican Communion as a whole. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to map that wider contextual significance by evaluating just how representative both men were of wider Anglican thought and identity – but their reputation, role and status within Anglicanism does at least make a case for research into their theological thought all the more compelling.

A Focus for Research: the Rationale for the Incarnation

A comparative study of Temple and Ramsey's theological schema would constitute a substantial study; it is therefore necessary to narrow the focus of research in order to construct a workable thesis. Any such narrowing will inevitably seem rather arbitrary, reflecting as it does the author's own curiosity and research interests. In this particular instance, the "spark" that helped define this thesis' scope lay in an incidental comment made by the author's then M.A. thesis supervisor, Professor David Brown. Brown was, at the time, Van Mildert Professor of Divinity at the University of Durham. In the course of a wide-ranging discussion during a supervision session, Brown suggested that Anglican accounts of the Incarnation in the twentieth century had a distinctive tendency to downplay the role of

¹² For examples of (critical) appreciation of Temple, see Paul Wilding, 'Re-Review: William Temple's Christianity and Social Order' *Modern Churchman* 34, no. 2 (1992), 40-49, especially 47-48; David Jenkins, 'Christianity, Social Order, and the Story of the World,' *Theology* 84, no. 701 (1981), 322; J.L. Campbell, 'Liberation Theology and the Thought of William Temple: A Discussion of Possibilities,' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 42, no. 4 (1989), 517-518, 520-523; Alan Suggate, 'William Temple and British Society Today,' in *Fundamentalism and Tolerance: An Agenda for Theology and Society*, ed. Andrew Linzey and Peter Wexler (London: Bellew, 1991), especially 152-157. For Ramsey, see James E. Griffiss, 'Michael Ramsey's *the Gospel and the Catholic Church* after Fifty Years,' *Anglican Theological Review* 69, no. 2 (1987), 172-173; Dales, 'One Body,' 12. Wakefield accounts Ramsey the foremost Anglican theologian to hold the archbishopate of Canterbury in the twentieth century - Wakefield, 'Michael Ramsey,' 455.

substitutionary atonement in their outline of Christ's salvific work: that downplaying arguably implied a distinctive understanding of the Incarnation itself. It will shortly be argued that Temple and Ramsey are, in fact, exemplars of this trend – but first, it is important to be clear as to the parameters of this research: testing of Brown's thesis is far beyond the scope of this thesis, and this thesis will not attempt to evaluate his claim. Rather, the “spark” for this thesis lies in what seemed an interesting question, flowing out of Brown's claim: if not substitutionary atonement, what lies at the heart of the rationale for the Incarnation in the kind of theological schema to which Brown alluded - and if such atonement is indeed downplayed, what role does it yet play in the whole?

On the face of it, this may seem a rather abstract theological question. Yet the potential implications of this downplaying of substitutionary atonement are far-ranging. What makes research into a clearer understanding of the rationale for the Incarnation in Anglican thought so compelling is the implications of that understanding for wider Anglican systematic theology, not least ecclesial identity. It is perhaps first important to note that it is perfectly plausible for there to have been such a limited emphasis on substitutionary atonement within Anglican Incarnation thought; indeed, such an approach to the atonement has a venerable history within systematic theology. It has long been recognised that there are several different possible understandings of the means by which the incarnate Christ effects salvation. Theologians do not agree on the precise number: for example, whilst Schmiechen has identified ten possible accounts in four categories,¹³ Wells has cited only five.¹⁴ Such differences highlight both the degree to which the sources are at times ambiguous, and the extent to which the divisions between the various theories are not clear cut, with a significant amount of overlap between them. Crucially, several of those theories noted by theologians tend to downplay the importance of substitutionary atonement.¹⁵ In the circumstances, it is perfectly possible to envisage just that “downplaying” envisaged by Brown.

¹³ Peter Schmiechen, *Saving Power : Theories of Atonement and Forms of the Church* (Cambridge: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 11.

¹⁴ Samuel Wells, *What Anglicans Believe : An Introduction* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2011), 31-33.

¹⁵ See, for example, Schmiechen, *Saving Power*, 291-297.

More important to note is the fact that the Atonement is not an autonomous doctrine: it is inextricably bound up with other elements of Christian belief – and above all is itself subsumed within the doctrine of the Incarnation. The theologian's understanding of *why* Christ became incarnate defines their account of *what* Christ does on the cross, and *how* he does it, even as, reflexively, the cross is itself a lens through which to gain a clearer understanding of the divine purpose in incarnation. Crucially, this dialectic between the doctrines of the Incarnation and Atonement has implications for wider theology and practice, not least in shaping understanding of the individual Christian's calling to engagement with the world. A stress on substitutionary atonement arguably carries with it a tendency to focus on an individualistic understanding of salvation – Christ paying for *my* sins, in *my* place; emphasis on Christ as exemplar, the temporal realisation of divine self-giving, arguably generates a stronger sense of the individual's obligation to wider humanity in loving, sacrificial service. Hence, for example, Chapman has noted that 'a kenotic Christology results in a quite different approach to establishment and political power from the traditional role of the national Church.'¹⁶ Williams echoes the theme: 'the problems of the Church, not least the problems of reunion between Christians, cannot be met, or even intelligently thought about, unless it is recognised that the Church exists because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and that any project in which the Church approaches more nearly to "becoming what it is"... involves sacrifice, dispossession.'¹⁷ The essence of Christ's action on the cross moulds the Church's identity, and, thereby, its sense of calling and purpose within society.

Schmiechen picks up on the point and has offered a complex analysis of this doctrinal inter-dependence. Noting that 'the gospel of Jesus is far greater and richer than what can be contained in only one theory of atonement,'¹⁸ Schmiechen persuasively teases out the nature of this direct link between Atonement, Incarnation and ecclesiology. For Schmiechen, the crucial element in this dialectic is the close linkage between the act of salvation and the means by which it is communicated (with, of course, the Church as the primary agent of that communication). Both are intrinsic elements in the concept of atonement: 'atonement theories contain implicit

¹⁶ Mark Chapman, *Bishops, Saints and Politics : Anglican Studies* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 180.

¹⁷ Rowan Williams, 'Theology and the Churches,' in *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, ed. Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995), 11.

¹⁸ Schmiechen, *Saving Power*, 365.

or explicit references to a mode of transmission. Without this an atonement theory would only be an interpretation of Jesus without any indication as to how saving power is accessible to believers across time and space.¹⁹ Consequently he concludes: ‘[d]oes this mean that one can change the form of the church by simply changing the theory of atonement or mode of transmission? In theory this should follow.’²⁰ It is beyond the scope of this thesis to test Schmiechen’s claim; but one might reasonably expect any investigation into Anglican accounts of the Incarnation to throw up incidental evidence for the dialectical link between that doctrine and ecclesiology. In short, mapping Anglican accounts of the Incarnation might reveal much about the nature of Anglican theological and ecclesial identity.

An understanding of Anglican accounts of the rationale for the Incarnation is given further significance by the fresh perspective it might offer on the debates surrounding the question of “authority” within the wider Communion. Ecclesiology is an area of interest within current Anglican scholarship, and in particular the quest for a defining identity robust enough to embrace the broadest possible range of views in the fullest possible communion. Hence, for example, Sykes has argued not only for the *possibility* of an Anglican doctrine of the Church,²¹ but for the urgent *necessity* of its clarification and articulation. Sykes’s is only one of a number of books and reports to have appeared in recent years with titles reflecting that same desire to give some shape to Anglican identity.²² It is a sense of the important implications for unity of the link between ecclesial identity and authority which led to the 2004 Windsor Report, and its struggle to tease out the ecclesiology behind the Anglican Communion.²³ If Brown is right, and Anglicanism has embraced a rationale for the Incarnation that downplays substitutionary atonement, then a study of that rationale and the place of substitutionary atonement within it might well contribute to an understanding of Anglican ecclesiology, and, thereby, of authority.

¹⁹ Schmiechen, *Saving Power*, 358.

²⁰ Schmiechen, *Saving Power*, 361.

²¹ Stephen Sykes, *Unashamed Anglicanism* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1995), 101.

²² See, for example, Mark Chapman, ed., *The Hope of Things to Come : Anglicanism and the Future* (London: Mowbray, 2010); Andrew Shanks, *Anglicanism Reimagined : An Honest Church?* (London: SPCK, 2010); Stephen Spencer, *Scm Studyguide to Anglicanism* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 2010); Wells, *What Anglicans Believe* ; Rowan Williams, *Anglican Identities* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2004) .

²³ The Lambeth Commission on Communion, *The Windsor Report 2004* (Unknown: Morehouse Publishing, 2004), especially, 24-41.

Equally, the degree to which that rationale is or is not replicated outside the Church of England might also help theologians increase their understanding of the reasons for the divisions within the Anglican Communion: as Schmiechen has noted, ‘[t]he high level of confusion, disagreement, and at times, outright warfare between factions within a denomination suggests that multiple Christologies do not easily coexist.’²⁴ Kaye has drawn attention to the ‘diversity that exists and continues to be created in the local circumstances of Anglicans around the world,’²⁵ and both Ward²⁶ and McGrath²⁷ have underlined the point. Might the current divisions within Anglicanism have their roots in growing theological diversification within the Anglican Communion? Yet Schmiechen rightly points out that the picture is a complex one: that very different Churches can nonetheless share very similar emphasis in their accounts of atonement implies that a complex of factors must be at work.²⁸ An understanding of Anglican accounts of the Incarnation is not by any means the “solution” to the divisions within the Anglican Communion, but it does have a potential contribution to make to the slow process of resolution. This thesis can contribute to this complex task of mapping the link between ecclesiology and the Incarnation, if only by beginning a process of studying in greater depth Anglican attempts to offer a rationale for the Incarnation, and the role of atonement within it.

Temple, Ramsey, and the Rationale for the Incarnation

So far this thesis has highlighted the theological significance of Temple and Ramsey; it has also identified a potential field of enquiry, rooted in a remark made by Professor David Brown. As already noted, it is not the aim of this thesis to test Brown’s claim – though one might *incidentally* remark that research into Temple and Ramsey’s rationale for the Incarnation might contribute to that wider task. Rather, the central concern of this thesis is to explore what might take the place of substitutionary atonement as the dominant note in an account of the Incarnation and, insofar as all doctrine is in some sense interrelated, how does that downplaying begin to play out in terms of the wider theological schema? It is not the purpose of this

²⁴ Schmiechen, *Saving Power*, 354.

²⁵ Bruce Kaye, *An Introduction to World Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 236.

²⁶ Keith Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 316.

²⁷ Alister McGrath, *The Renewal of Anglicanism* (London: SPCK, 1993), 21.

²⁸ Schmiechen, *Saving Power*, 353.

thesis to provide a comprehensive account of Temple or Ramsey's theology, except insofar as that theology is touched and moulded by their account of the Incarnation.

Temple and Ramsey are exemplars of Brown's downplaying tendency. This thesis will show that each man understood the Incarnation not, primarily, as a response to human sin, but as a sacrificial means of deepening the union between God and humanity – a union conceived in subtly different ways, but which remain wholly consistent with their underlying conception of the divine nature and purpose. Effecting fellowship, not paying a debt, is the central concern of the Incarnation. Alongside this central claim will be a tentative exploration of the question: how compatible are Temple and Ramsey's accounts of the Incarnation? Though neither man set out to articulate a rationale wholly in sympathy with the other, yet the thesis will argue that there is coherence and complementarity between their two positions which, despite some qualification, seems to lend weight to the significance of their thought within the history of twentieth century Anglicanism. A third and final dimension to the thesis will be a teasing out of some of the implications for this rationale for each man's wider thought – and, perhaps most strikingly from the perspective of modern Anglicanism, for their ecclesiology. There is a direct link between, first, their understanding of the divine nature and purpose; second, their rationale for the Incarnation; and third their ecclesiology: that systematic linkage implies a coherent theological schema, and one that clearly has a contribution to make to an understanding of Anglican ecclesial identity today.

Temple and Ramsey on the Incarnation and Atonement: Current Research

What research has already been done on Temple and Ramsey's accounts of the Incarnation and the place of substitutionary atonement within it? Surprisingly little – a point which further underlines the need for research. Ironically, one of the best sources on Temple's theology is written by Ramsey himself, in his survey of Anglican theology *From Gore to Temple*. Yet the chapter on Temple is wide-ranging, and allows comparatively little scope for a detailed analysis of his understanding of the rationale for the Incarnation - though there are at least some slender clues hinting at that downplaying which is an element in the central claim of this thesis. Hence he notes that, for Temple, the Incarnation is principally to be understood as 'the unveiling of Godhead; and of its tremendous corollaries none is

more significant than that God is Christ-like... Thus the suffering love of the Incarnate is the key to the working of the divine omnipotence; and the dereliction on Calvary does not conflict with Christ's deity so much as shew the meaning of divine love.²⁹

Elsewhere, the evidence is even more limited. The most detailed biography of Temple makes only passing reference to his understanding of the Incarnation, though here again substitutionary atonement seems to play a secondary role: for Temple, the Incarnation was the means 'through which God entered into fellowship with men and has thereby enabled them to enjoy that fellowship with God which is "the profoundest need and the highest blessing of men."' ³⁰ Spencer's shorter biography, being rather more limited in scope, likewise makes only passing reference.³¹ On the whole, commentators have tended to focus predominantly on surveying his social ethics,³² his ecumenical work,³³ his contribution to education in England,³⁴ and (the perceived inadequacies of) his account of the problem of evil.³⁵ Though there have been a number of broad surveys of his thought, there have been no sufficiently detailed attempts to explore the link between the Incarnation, atonement and his wider theology.

The same can be said of Ramsey, as Gill and Kendall observed.³⁶ In part, this reflects the fact that Ramsey addressed the Incarnation and Atonement only obliquely - as Griffiss has noted '[a]s far as I am aware, except for one chapter in one book, *God, Christ and the World*... and some occasional essays on New Testament questions,

²⁹ Michael Ramsey, *An Era in Anglican Theology : From Gore to Temple : The Development of Anglican Theology between Lux Mundi and the Second World War: 1889-1939* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), 148.

³⁰ Frederic Athelwold Iremonger, *William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury : His Life and Letters* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), 272.

³¹ Stephen Spencer, *William Temple : A Calling to Prophecy* (London: SPCK, 2001), 27-28, 47-50, 58-61.

³² For example, Alan Suggate, *William Temple and Christian Social Ethics Today* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1987) .

³³ For example, Dianne Kirby, 'William Temple, Pius XII, Ecumenism, Natural Law, and the Post-War Peace,' *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 36, no. 3-4 (1999) .

³⁴ For example, John Sadler, 'William Temple and Educational Economics,' *Theology* 88, no. 723 (1985) .

³⁵ For example, J.W. Rogerson, 'William Temple as Philosopher and Theologian,' *Theology* 84, no. 701 (1981) .

³⁶ 'there has been comparatively little attention given to Michael Ramsey's theology' - Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall, eds., *Michael Ramsey as Theologian* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1995), 1.

Bishop Ramsey never wrote explicitly on what he thought the doctrine of the Incarnation meant.³⁷ Perhaps in consequence, there are no systematic attempts to outline Ramsey's thought: John Court makes passing reference to Ramsey's short pamphlet *The Christian Concept of Sacrifice*, but does not discuss the link between that and Ramsey's concept of salvation.³⁸ Dales offers the most detailed exploration of Ramsey on the Atonement, but even this is relatively brief. Picking up on a survey of atonement in the bible, given as a lecture, he quotes Ramsey's reaction against any single, simplistic, account of the doctrine: '[o]ne-sided caricatures of the atonement misrepresent its meaning, or in reaction rob it of its power to save by reducing it to exemplary symbolism.'³⁹ Yet whilst Dales goes on to note the foundational influences on Ramsey's account of atonement, he stops short of exploring the place of substitution within his thought, or its linkage to the Incarnation.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, Ramsey's theology has come in for criticism in recent years, and it might be argued that its alleged flaws raise questions about the validity of further research into his writing – at least in terms of the wider significance of his thought as an example of a viable and significant strand in Anglican Incarnation theology. This criticism has focussed on his “biblical theology”: Court has argued that Ramsey overestimated what might be known of Christ's historical context, and the distinctiveness of biblical modes of thought operative within it.⁴¹ Moreover, he argues that the ‘diversity of material in the Bible library has an unreal uniformity imposed upon it’⁴² by biblical theologians such as Ramsey.⁴³ Again, Ramsey's working methods are, it has been claimed, guilty of a certain amount of ‘imprecision’ which ‘must cast some doubts on the validity of his conclusions.’⁴⁴

³⁷ ‘Michael Ramsey : Catholic theologian’ in Gill and Kendall, eds., *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, 35.

³⁸ ‘Michael Ramsey as biblical theologian’ in Gill and Kendall, eds., *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, 93.

³⁹ Douglas Dales, *Glory : The Spiritual Theology of Michael Ramsey* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003), 22.

⁴⁰ Dales, *Glory*, 27.

⁴¹ John M. Court, ‘Michael Ramsey and Biblical Theology,’ in *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, ed. Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995), 97.

⁴² Court, ‘Michael Ramsey and Biblical Theology,’ 97.

⁴³ For a more sympathetic account of Ramsey's thought, see Rowan Williams's ‘Theology in the Face of Christ’ in Douglas Dales et al., *Glory Descending : Michael Ramsey and His Writings* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), especially 179-180.

⁴⁴ Court, ‘Michael Ramsey and Biblical Theology,’ 98. Hence, for example, critics such as Avis have argued that Ramsey blurs the boundaries between *episcopo* (pastoral oversight) and *episcopacy* (a particular manifestation of *episcopo*), too hastily concluding that episcopacy is rooted in the gospels -

True, Ramsey was himself somewhat critical of the biblical theology of his youth in later years.⁴⁵ Yet such criticisms are focussed on method; whilst his methodology may have been subsequently refined, his core beliefs – except for some slight shift of emphases – remained, he argued, essentially the same.⁴⁶ Consequently, it is not clear that weaknesses in his method invalidate his theological thought. Only careful study of the inter-relation between ‘method’ and ‘theology’ can serve to evaluate its validity – and no such truly detailed survey has yet been completed. Even if it were proved that Ramsey’s theology was flawed, his status as Archbishop of Canterbury ensures that his thought nonetheless carries weight as a legitimate subject of study. In sum, then, there is a key gap in the secondary literature on Temple and Ramsey: given their significance, and the significance of those links already noted between Incarnation and wider theology, there are clear grounds for further research.

A Method of Approach

At the heart of this thesis is the two-fold question: why, for each man, did the Incarnation occur, and what role does substitutionary atonement play in that rationale? In the light of the review of the secondary literature on Temple and Ramsey, it is the contention of this thesis that these questions can only be answered by a close, detailed study of the primary sources – the books, sermons, letters and addresses of both men. Secondary critiques of each man’s thought will only be drawn in where necessary, in order to deepen understanding of the key themes in their thought. Each chapter will compare Temple and Ramsey’s theology step by step. Such a close, comparative reading will have two key advantages. Firstly, each man will serve as a foil for the other: close comparison will help identify subtle differences in their positions, and tease out the implications of these differences for their wider thought. Secondly, careful comparison will help the process of identifying how far their accounts reflect a comprehensive switch from substitutionary atonement to a coherent alternative. Only by developing such a thorough-going understanding of their thought will it be possible to articulate their account of the Incarnation and in doing so lay a foundation for future research.

Paul Avis, *Anglicanism and the Christian Church : Theological Resources in Historical Perspective*, 2nd ed. (London: T & T Clark, 2002), 351-352.

⁴⁵ Michael Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim* (London: SPCK, 1974), 3.

⁴⁶ Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 110, also 18. See also Wakefield, 'Michael Ramsey,' 456.

Where, then, to begin? As already noted, this thesis argues that Temple and Ramsey understood the Incarnation in terms of the divine quest for fellowship. As such, it is rooted in the eternal divine nature and purpose: even had there been no sin in the world to necessitate an atoning act, the Incarnation would still have occurred. Sin and atonement are thus subsumed within a wider Christology. In order to establish this claim, the thesis must begin with an evaluation of each man's account of the divine nature. *Is this a nature which seeks relational fellowship?* What is the dominant note in each man's account of the divine nature? Chapter Two flows from this initial discussion, looking at how that nature finds expression in a distinctive purpose. In each case, that purpose is seen to point forward to an incarnation; that purpose, existing from all eternity, implies that the Incarnation is, at the very least, consistent with a divine plan predating the Fall. Chapter Three explores the link between that purpose and the Incarnation in more depth, highlighting the extent to which incarnation is not simply *consistent* with the eternal purpose and nature (even a contingent response to human sin might make the same claim) but a necessary and logical extension of that purpose, and one which would have occurred independently of human sin.

By this stage it will be clear that the divine quest for fellowship has been established as the dominant note in each man's thought, at the expense of substitutionary atonement. Chapter Four will then explore in more depth what role is left to sin, the cross and atonement in each man's theological schema. In each case, it will show that these key concepts remain important strands in their thought, but are nonetheless indelibly moulded by understanding of the divine nature and purpose in seeking deeper fellowship with humanity. In order to help tease out this inter-relationship, a third voice is brought in to the discussion – that of P.T. Forsyth, a contemporary of Temple, but holding to a more traditional substitutionary account of the Incarnation. Forsyth will act as a foil for each man's thought. Chapter Five then looks at how fellowship is effected, highlighting the extent to which that method is consistent with the dominant emphasis on the divine purpose and nature: the cross effects salvation not so much through the cancelling of a debt, as by the revelation of a divine love which breaks open the human heart, enabling it to enter into fellowship with the divine. Chapter Six rounds off the argument by looking in more depth at that fellowship, arguing that it is not mere reconciliation effected by substitutionary

atonement, but a fellowship defined by the eternal divine purpose – and, as such, a product not of some exigent response to the accident of human sin, but the logical outworking of an eternal divine plan. An underlying sub-theme of the thesis will be focus on the coherence between Temple and Ramsey’s positions: how far is it possible to see in Temple and Ramsey presentation of the Incarnation a coherent alternative to a substitution-centred account, and one that might hint at the enduring significance of their work for an understanding of Anglican thought and identity? Finally, Chapter Seven draws the argument together, before going on to suggest some avenues of further research.

Chapter One: The Divine Nature

Introduction

Why did Christ become incarnate? It is the core contention of this thesis that Temple and Ramsey understood the Incarnation not, primarily, as a response to sin, but rather as a sacrificial means of deepening the union between God and humanity. Atonement is subsumed within the quest for fellowship, and in a way that downplays the significance of substitution theory. Yet the importance attached to divine-human union raises a fundamental question. If God is one and perfect, as orthodoxy asserts, then the Incarnation must be consistent with the divine nature; what kind of God, then, could and would become incarnate? *Is the nature of God such as to prioritise fellowship?* In the first instance, and for the core argument of this thesis to be credible, it is not enough simply to show that the Incarnation is *consistent* with the divine nature – as noted in the Introduction, an incarnate response to sin could equally make the same claim – but rather to show that the atoning consequences of the Incarnation are subsumed in a broader on-going action of God in a quest for deeper fellowship with humanity that is innate to his being. This means showing that, at the very least, both men's account of the divine nature allow for the possibility that an incarnation would be consistent with that nature, even had there been no sin to call it forth.

Such a claim rests both on an account of the divine nature that is, and always was (even before the Fall) seeking deeper union with creation, and on the notion of a God who finds the clearest means of self-expression in and through the life of his creatures. Clearly, then, the question of the divine nature is central. This chapter begins the process of exploring the first of those two elements by drawing out the basic themes in Temple and Ramsey's account of it. At first glance, those accounts seem very different: for Temple, God is above all purposive Will, whilst for Ramsey he is defined as self-giving love. Yet there is an underlying coherence between the two positions, and in both cases what emerges is – crucially – evidence to support a sense of God as inherently expressive and relational. If there is indeed a downplaying of substitutionary atonement, and if the divine nature is foundational to understanding of the Incarnation, then there is evidence here to suggest that

downplaying may well have been in favour of a coherent alternative position. The next chapter will go on to look in more depth at what it is that such a God seeks to attain in creation, and in particular at both men's concept of fellowship.

Temple: God as Purposive Will

For Temple, the essence of the divine nature is a personal, purposive Will. God 'works not here and there, but everywhere and always,'⁴⁷ such that the course of the world 'is itself the object of His creative Will and comprehending Mind.'⁴⁸ Only in God is the purest expression of Will to be found: 'an act of pure Will is one wholly determined from within. It must supply entirely the grounds for its own action and remain independent of what it calls into being.'⁴⁹ Arguing for analogy between the human and divine Mind, Temple argues that the 'most significant characteristic of Mind, after all... is purpose – not the apprehension of the world as it now is, but the constant effort to make it something else.'⁵⁰ Hence Temple sees in purposive Mind/Will the unifying principle of all creation: '[i]f Mind, of which the vital principle is the aspiration towards totality, is the explanation of the world-process, then process must be itself a unity.'⁵¹ That purposive Will is, inherently, expressive: '[s]elf-expression is inherent in the very nature of God.'⁵² The divine creation is a source of delight to God, though not strictly necessary: it reflects back to God his

⁴⁷ William Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' in *Foundations : A Statement of Christian Belief in Terms of Modern Thought : By Seven Oxford Men*, ed. B. H. Streeter (London: Macmillan, 1912), 243.

⁴⁸ William Temple, *Christus Veritas : An Essay* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1924), 94. Again, purpose is 'the ultimate principle of explanation' for the universe - William Temple, *Nature, Man and God : Being the Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Glasgow in the Academical Years 1932-1933 and 1933-1934* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1934), 131; also 37.

⁴⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 93.

⁵⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 207.

⁵¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 213. Again, 'Mind is the principle of unity in Reality... But Reality is first presented as a Process. We found that the Process is subject to Mind, and when Mind expresses itself through process, its activity is called Purpose' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 219. See also William Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought : Six Lectures* (London: Macmillan, 1910), 17; William Temple, *The Nature of Personality : A Course of Lectures* (London: Macmillan, 1911), xxiv; William Temple, *The Universality of Christ : A Course of Lectures* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1921), 39; William Temple, *Essays in Christian Politics and Kindred Subjects* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1927), 6.

⁵² William Temple, *Fellowship with God* (London: Macmillan, 1920), 220. Again, '[i]f the unifying principle of the Universe is not a system of intellectual principles but an active Will, this provides for elasticity in the unifying principle itself... We should therefore antecedently expect... that God not only controls all the world by the laws of its own being, inherent in its elements by His creative act, but that as He made it for the realisation of certain values, so in pursuit of those values He acts directly upon its course as occasion in His all-seeing judgement may require' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 99-100, also 101. See also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 284.

own nature, and 'Love rejoices in the union with all things wherein it finds itself.'⁵³ Temple goes further in suggesting that Creation is an inevitable outpouring of the divine nature: 'the Love which prompts Creation is the very nature of God... Because He is Love, He is and must be self-communicating; in principle... In this sense the Universe is necessary to God.'⁵⁴

Temple teases out the relationship between divine purposive Will and creation in his philosophical writings. Drawing on his Idealist roots, he posits a four-fold structure to Reality of Matter, Life, Mind and Spirit; each level 'depends for its actuality upon those which are below it... Life is unknown apart from living organisms, which are matter informed by Life. Mind is unknown except in reasoning, living organisms. Spirit is unknown except in conscientious, reasoning, living organisms.'⁵⁵ There is an incarnational element here: Temple argues that it would be a mistake to attempt to 'separate the Good from the good thing, and to demand either some account of it in such separation or else a method of apprehending it in separation...'⁵⁶ By implication, God too must express himself through these lower elements in Reality: '[i]t is in and through His work, His agony, His triumph in History that His eternal perfection is achieved and consists...'⁵⁷ The Incarnation is thus wholly consistent with the structure of Reality: '[t]he whole process of that revelation which has been going on through nature, history and through the prophets, comes to complete fulfilment in the Incarnation';⁵⁸ that God should create 'cannot be a mere accident of His being; it proves Him to be of such a nature as to create.'⁵⁹ Temple is, of course, careful to avoid heresy: '[t]he way in which God is necessary to the universe is utterly different from the way in which the universe is necessary to God; for in each case the ground of necessity is in God. God is necessary to the universe in the sense that apart from God the universe would not exist: the universe is not necessary to God in that sense at all; it is necessary to God only in the sense that, being what He

⁵³ William Temple, *Mens Creatrix : An Essay* (London: Macmillan, 1917), 362.

⁵⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 274. Again, 'Love must declare itself. From all eternity it is self-revealing' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 223, also 222, 225.

⁵⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 6; also William Temple, 'The Godhead of Jesus,' in *Fundamentals of the Faith : Four Lectures Delivered in Manchester Cathedral, Jan.-Feb. 1922* (London: G. J. Palmer & Sons, 1922), 18.

⁵⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 15-16.

⁵⁷ William Temple, "The Coming of the Kingdom," (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1917), 23, 24.

⁵⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 317.

⁵⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 443.

is, His nature leads to its creation.’⁶⁰ God, then, is purposive Will, and reveals that Purpose through the natural outflowing of his nature in engagement in and through the fabric of Reality.

One might question whether there is anything truly distinctive in this account of God as purposive Will: after all, a God who creates must do so for a reason, and the energy by which he does so clearly implies some kind of will. The distinctiveness of Temple’s position will become clearer in the next chapter, which explores that purpose in more depth. But it is important to note even at this stage that there is something noticeably cerebral and dynamic about Temple’s God: ‘He is eternal energy and activity...’⁶¹ God is personal, ‘and the essence of personality is intelligent choice or purpose.’⁶² Moreover, the divine has, from all eternity, a clear intent to realise a goal *within* and *through* his creation: as already noted, the course of the world ‘is itself the object of His creative Will and comprehending Mind.’⁶³ History reveals the steady, triumphant progress of that Will. Temple’s God has a whiff of masculinity about him: purposive, and because purposive, relational – yet a relationship whose meaning and purpose goes beyond the satisfaction of the intimacy which it brings: ‘the Bible sets before us a God who is, first and foremost, righteous Will, and whose demand of His servants is that they conform their wills to His purpose...’⁶⁴ Temple’s God is a God of love, but it is a love bent on the realisation of intelligent purpose: ‘when the greatness and the far-reaching power, might and authority of God exhibit themselves for man, it is by washing the disciples’ feet.’⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 274-275. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 22; F.S. Temple, ed., *William Temple : Some Lambeth Letters* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 101.

⁶¹ William Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity : Being University and School Sermons* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 3. Hoskins argues that Temple inclines to psychological paradigms when defining the divine - John Hoskins, *The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Works of John Richardson Illingworth and William Temple, and the Implications for Contemporary Trinitarian Theology*, vol. 81, *Toronto Studies in Theology* (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000), 237.

⁶² William Temple, *Christian Faith and Life : Being Eight Addresses Delivered in the University Church at Oxford : February 8th-15th, 1931* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1931), 14.

⁶³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 94. Again, purpose is ‘the ultimate principle of explanation’ for the universe - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 131; also 37.

⁶⁴ William Temple, *The Church and Its Teaching Today : Being the William Belden Noble Lectures Delivered in the Memorial Church, Harvard University, on December 17 and 18, 1935* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), 41.

⁶⁵ Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 17.

Is there an Evolution in Temple's Thought?

Does Temple's account of the divine nature fundamentally change during his career, and – if so – how might this affect his account of the role of substitutionary atonement in the Incarnation? Commentators such as Gessell,⁶⁶ Spencer⁶⁷ and Ramsey⁶⁸ have certainly argued for a significant change towards the very end of his career,⁶⁹ and one that potentially has implications for his account of the divine Purpose. The implications of such claims – and, consequently, the implications for his account of the Incarnation – should not be exaggerated, however. Gessell's is the most comprehensive account. To summarise: on the one hand, dividing the evolution of Temple's thought into three stages, Gessell has sought to emphasise the radicalness of the latter stage by contrasting it with the greater continuity between those which went before. The division, though helpful, nonetheless belies – as he himself partly acknowledges⁷⁰ – the deeper underlying unity of Temple's thought throughout his career. At each of these stages in that career, Gessell rightly asserts that Temple appeals to the coherent witness of a particular aspect of reality to the divine Will and purpose. Initially, says Gessell, that coherent witness is grounded in cosmology.⁷¹ He then identifies a second phase, which sees the focus shift to the rational coherence of reality.⁷² Implicit in this is a sense of that unity as somehow present but hidden: thus, for example, our will to know finds its satisfaction in the 'apprehension of a reality which is presupposed to exist apart from its

⁶⁶ John Maurice Gessell, 'Beyond Nature, Man and God,' *Anglican Theological Review* 42, no. 3 (1960), 236.

⁶⁷ See Spencer, *William Temple*, 88-91.

⁶⁸ Ramsey, *The Anglican Spirit*, 87-90. See also Oswald Bayer and Alan Suggate, eds., *Worship and Ethics: Lutherans and Anglicans in Dialogue* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 179-180.

⁶⁹ For an alternative view, see Lowry, 'William Temple', 33-34; also Campbell, 'Liberation Theology,' 519-520, especially 523; Theodore A. McConnell, 'The *Via Media* as Theological Method,' in *The Anglican Moral Choice*, ed. Paul Elmen (Wilton, CT.: Morehouse-Barlow, 1983), 148-149; James Bezzant, 'William Temple,' *Modern Churchman* 39, no. 1 (1949), 19; Jack F. Padgett, *The Christian Philosophy of William Temple* (The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), 5-6.

⁷⁰ 'It is important to remember that, while for analysis, we can discern three stages, Temple himself always moved backwards and forwards within them and remained ultimately ambiguous in relation to all three of them' - Gessell, 'Beyond Nature, Man and God,' 236.

⁷¹ Witness, for example, Temple's declaration that 'whenever the human mind has been active for a considerable period it is brought back to the belief that the world is a rational system governed by a rational principle' - Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 215.

⁷² Hence in *Mens Creatrix* Temple argues that the role of both theology and philosophy is to discern that 'single system whose combination of comprehensiveness and coherence would supply a guarantee of its truth' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 3.

apprehension.⁷³ Towards the very end of Temple's career, Gessell sees a significant shift to the conviction that coherence can only emerge 'from a *faith* experience which "makes sense" in a world which is chaos awaiting an act of God to give it order.'⁷⁴

Two sources in particular are often used to support the sense of the beginning of a radical reappraisal. First, a letter written by Temple to Dorothy Emmet in 1942, in which he declared: '[w]hat we must completely get away from is the notion that the world as it now exists is a rational whole... the world as we see it is strictly unintelligible.'⁷⁵ Second, an article by Temple in *Theology* entitled "Theology Today." Gessell is not alone in highlighting Temple's seemingly radical call for theology to eschew the quest for a comprehensive system: "[w]e shall not try to "make sense" of everything; we shall openly proclaim that most things as they are have no sense in them at all. We shall not say that a Christian philosophy embraces all experience in a coherent and comprehensive scheme; we shall declare that in the Gospel there is offered to men deliverance from a system of things – "the world" – which deserves the destruction that is coming upon it... We proclaim not general progress, but salvation to them that believe."⁷⁶ Gessell in particular sees this as the beginning of a quest for a 'metaphysics of experience' in Temple's thought.⁷⁷

Nonetheless this emphasis on the shift in Temple's thought obscures the fundamental continuity in his account of the divine nature. True, experience did come to play a greater role in Temple's theology: hence, for example, in his *Gifford Lectures* of 1932-1934 Temple stressed that experience 'has an authoritative quality... It commands our judgement rather than submits to it.'⁷⁸ Alongside this went a growing sense of the superficially illogical and irrational nature of present reality. Emmet (amongst others)⁷⁹ has quite reasonably criticised Temple's *earlier* work for assuming both 'too easily the unique explanatory value of Purpose' and that 'if an

⁷³ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 10. Again, Will finds its satisfaction in the 'apprehension of a reality which is presupposed to exist apart from its apprehension' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 363.

⁷⁴ Gessell, 'Beyond Nature, Man and God,' 236.

⁷⁵ Cited in Iremonger, *William Temple*, 537-538.

⁷⁶ Cited in Gessell, 'Beyond Nature, Man and God,' 244.

⁷⁷ Gessell, 'Beyond Nature, Man and God,' 236.

⁷⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 249.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Rogerson's claim that '[t]ime and again Temple placed before his readers the two alternatives: either the world has no explanation or meaning, or it has meaning as the expression of an absolute Mind or Will' - Rogerson, 'William Temple,' 327.

explanation in terms of Purpose would satisfy our minds then such an explanation there must be.⁸⁰ Such criticisms were partly justified – witness for example Temple’s rather simplistic assertion that the doctrines of the existence of God and of the Incarnation are shown to be probable when seen as the ‘springs of a conception of Reality which, when reached, commends itself as the most satisfying conception which is in fact available.’⁸¹ Temple’s increasing sense that the reasonableness of creation was not so immediately apparent, and his growing appeal to experience drew the sting out of such criticism, as Emmet recognised: ‘increasingly in his later works he puts forward the idea of a divine Purpose for Good as a venture of faith, supported though not demonstrated by reason and experience.’⁸² Yet there remained more continuity than many commentators allow. At least as early as 1921, Temple was recognising that it might not be possible to make final sense of the world until the end of time.⁸³ Equally, the appeal to experience was nothing new. For example, even in 1912 he could appeal to the common experience of that ‘ineradicable instinct of mankind to conceive of the Supreme Power as good.’⁸⁴

More importantly, whilst the emphasis on experience admittedly grew during his career, it did so in a way that actually reinforced a sense of divine purpose. Crucially, experience was always understood primarily in moral terms: ‘the normal channel for religious experience is conscience.’⁸⁵ This moral dimension carries with it an imperative which at once both lends weight to the concept of a divine purpose and carries a compulsion to share in its goal: to be aware of absolute value as revealed in religious experience is equally to be aware of the ‘absolute obligation which it imposes.’⁸⁶ True, Temple came to question the optimistic conviction of the

⁸⁰ Dorothy Emmet, 'The Philosopher,' in *William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury : His Life and Letters*, ed. Frederic Iremonger (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), 527.

⁸¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, xiii.

⁸² Emmet, 'The Philosopher,' 527.

⁸³ Temple used the analogy of a poem – the meaning of the whole is only finally revealed when you have finished reading the poem; '[f]rom this it follows that the true value of any occurrence may depend upon the future...; the real value of every fact is unknown until the course of history is complete' - Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 51.

⁸⁴ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 219. Equally, in his 1910 *The Faith and Modern Thought*, Temple’s account of the evidences for the existence of God begins with experience. Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 4. See also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 8.

⁸⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 36.

⁸⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 35. ‘Man appreciates absolute value mainly through the sense of absolute obligation which it imposes, and this is as real in relation to Truth as it is in relation to Beauty and Goodness. And it is through this chiefly that man first actually experiences God. For if

theologians of his youth⁸⁷ that seemingly inexorable human progress was evidence for the divine purpose.⁸⁸ In his final years there are signs of a stronger emphasis on humanity's sinfulness.⁸⁹ Yet he remained committed to the belief that all things were in the process of incorporation into that purpose: though in objectively evidential terms rather more absent from creation, Purpose remains a reality in the divine Mind, and as such the basis of the unity of all things.⁹⁰ Hence, writing in 1942, Temple reiterated that the foundation of any social order should be 'God and His Purpose.'⁹¹ As Temple wrote elsewhere in his letter to Emmet, the shift 'is not substantial though I think it is very important.'⁹² Drawing on an analogy from his own *Christus Veritas*, Temple goes on to say of creation: 'we must think of its unity not by the analogy of a picture, of which all the parts exist at once, but by the analogy of a drama where, if it is good enough, the full meaning of the first scene only becomes apparent with the final curtain; and we are in the middle of this. Consequently the world as we see it is strictly unintelligible. We can only have faith that it will become intelligible when the divine purpose, which is the explanation of it, is accomplished.'⁹³

there is an absolute obligation, and if there is a Will on whose act all existence depends, then that obligation must be the injunction of that Will' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 95; also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 249.

⁸⁷ Witness, for example, his assertion in 1910 that : '...all knowledge is directly or indirectly knowledge of Him and His method; for He is the Maker of all the world; His is the Purpose which we see manifest in all the facts of life' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 30.

⁸⁸ Writing in 1939, he condemns that 'most unChristian belief in automatic progress' - William Temple, 'Theology to-Day,' *Theology* 39, no. 233 (1939), 327.

⁸⁹ Witness, for example, his stinging account of the causes of the Second World War, rooted in conviction that 'Mankind has sinned; Europe has sinned; Great Britain has sinned; and we are undergoing the righteous judgement on our sins...' - William Temple, "Why Does God Allow War?," (London: SPCK, 1941), 3. Yet Temple's optimism does not desert him: Britain's entry into the War at least shows that 'this rottenness had not gone to the root of national life' - Temple, "Why Does God Allow War?," 4. See also William Temple, *"Religious Experience" : And Other Essays and Addresses* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1958), 203, 233-234, 252.

⁹⁰ 'God is not committed to any of his earthly instruments, and the fulfilment of his purpose is in eternity. Even though evil should on the whole increasingly predominate in earthly history, that history does not exhaust the opportunities of God, and his victory remains sure' - William Temple, "Prayer for Victory : What It Means," (C.L.A., 1940), 5; Temple, *Religious Experience*, 226, 245; William Temple, "A Manual of Prayers for War-Time," (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1939), 4; William Temple, "Freedom, Truth and Peace : The Commemoration Sermon Preached before the University in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin Sunday 21 June 1942," (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 5, 8; Temple, "Why Does God Allow War?," 8.

⁹¹ William Temple, *Christianity and Social Order* (London: Shephard-Walwyn : SPCK, 1976), 62.

⁹² Cited in Iremonger, *William Temple*, 537.

⁹³ Iremonger, *William Temple*, 537-538. Again, the *Logos* should 'not to be conceived as a static principal of rational unity, but as an active force of moral judgement which calls upon us to be its fellow workers and agents. So that we ourselves, by our moral endeavour, are positively bringing into existence that which alone renders rational and intelligible our experience of to-day...' - Iremonger, *William Temple*, 538.

Gessell argues that Temple, in his later years, set out ‘to find the basis upon which one can seek a coherence which will afford the entrance into the meaning of finite existence.’⁹⁴ Yet Temple had always sought that point of entry into the meaning of existence: his quest for a logically coherent basis for faith rested on the conviction that such a logical basis gave meaning to existence: thus he could declare that the notion of an ordered system in history is something that ‘the intellect demands for the satisfaction of its ideal of coherence.’⁹⁵ The world may increasingly have seemed less sacramental of the divine purpose, less rationally coherent but his growing emphasis on experience was used to bolster his conviction that unity and meaning were yet to be found in the divine purpose. That purpose was as active in the world as it ever had been; Temple’s article in *Theology* remains clear that future generations, free from the storm clouds of the 1930s and 1940s, may yet be able to offer a more systematic account of its action: ‘[w]e must dig the foundations deeper than we did... And we must be content with less imposing structures. One day theology will take up again its larger and serener task and offer to a new Christendom its Christian map of life, its Christo-centric metaphysic. But that day can hardly dawn while any who are now already concerned with theology are still alive...’⁹⁶

The Significance of any Shift

Developments in Temple’s thought thus tended to reinforce rather than undermine his sense of God as purposive Will. The distinctive character of ‘Will’ is teased out by an increasing stress on God as ‘personal.’ Present even from the earliest days of his thinking,⁹⁷ the significance of divine personality was most clearly developed in *Nature, Man and God*. He argues that, whilst conscious human minds (Mind) may have emerged within the evolutionary process, yet Mind cannot be explained as the ‘combination of circumstances which are in their own nature not consciousness.’⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Gessell, 'Beyond Nature, Man and God,' 237.

⁹⁵ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 363.

⁹⁶ Temple, 'Theology to-Day,' 333. Also William Temple, *Christianity in Thought and Practice* (London Student Christian Movement Press, 1936), 33-35; Temple, *Religious Experience*, 60, 229.

⁹⁷ Witness his assertion: '[t]he God of religion then is... Personal in a fuller sense than any other being' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 80; also xxix-xxx, 24.

⁹⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 198. Again, “all attempts to trace in evolution an explanation of the emergence of mind have totally failed. And if this is not explained, the Process is not explained, for this is an element in the process. On the other hand, we find that the Process is akin to Mind, that Mind arises in the course of it, and that Mind does exhibit what is essentially the thing required-

Rather, in the emergence of Mind is found the clue to the whole of reality: the human mind ‘*though it appears within the Process at a late stage, discovers throughout the Process the activity of Mind – universally in the form of Truth, commonly in the form of Beauty, sometimes in the form of Goodness. That Mind is pervasive of reality is a necessary inference from this method of apprehending the world. If that method is justified, as we have tried to show that it is, the conclusion is inevitable. Mind is the principle of unity in Reality...*’⁹⁹ In short, in Truth, Beauty and Goodness the human mind finds a harmony between itself and the creator, a harmony which alone can satisfy the restless soul: ‘[t]he enquiring mind, confronted with an example of what it perfectly understands as the essential characteristic of its own being, is completely satisfied. Whenever the subject of enquiry is traced to the action of intelligently purposive mind, the enquiry is closed; Mind has recognised itself and is satisfied.’¹⁰⁰

Temple’s later years may have been characterised by a stronger sense of the chaotic nature of reality, but the enduring presence of Truth, Beauty and Goodness in the world still seemed to point to a creative Mind. If the human mind is ‘personal’ then so too, crucially, is the divine Mind and in a way reinforcing the sense of God as purposive Will: ‘[i]f God is personal, He must express Himself.’¹⁰¹ Again, Personality ‘is a principle of which the characteristic is action in the present with a view to future fruition... Personality exhibits itself supremely in purposes of fellowship or love.’¹⁰² Miracles – specific acts of divine intervention within creation, such as the Incarnation – become rather more plausible if God is personal: ‘Personality, whether human or divine, is, in so far as it is immanent, a principle of variation. There is in the world an immanent Reason – a Logos. If this is impersonal, it may be only a principle of logical coherence. If it is personal, it must be a principle

a self-explanatory principle of origination. It is then more reasonable to test the hypothesis that Mind contains the explanation of the World-Process than to refuse to test it’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 132, also 199, 213.

⁹⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 219.

¹⁰⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 257. Again, ‘[n]o mystery could well be greater than that the brains of certain organisms should produce secretions which correspond with the structure of the universe in such a way that to act upon the impulsion supplied by them is found to result in further correspondence with a modified structure of the universe at a later date’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 279-280.

¹⁰¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 265.

¹⁰² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 263.

of perpetual adjustment according to “sufficient reason.”¹⁰³ Moreover, ‘Personality’ reinforces the concept of the divine Purpose as necessarily communicating through the medium of creation: ‘[t]herefore it needs, for its full self-expression, the existence of other persons. If we take as our ultimate principle Personality, not only as purposive mind, but as mind of which the actual purpose is love, then the occurrence of persons within the World-Process is truly explained by the principle to which that process is referred; and there is no other principle known to us whereby human fellowship, which is the culmination of the Process hitherto, is truly explained at all.’¹⁰⁴

In sum, then, Temple’s account of the divine nature remained remarkably consistent throughout his career. Insofar as this nature underpinned his understanding of the Incarnation, and the function of the cross within it, there is a suggestion here that the tendency to downplay substitutionary atonement was – for Temple – a given throughout his career.

Ramsey: God as Self-Giving Love

Comparison with Temple

On the face of it, Ramsey’s God could hardly seem more different to that posited by Temple. Most strikingly, Ramsey reacted against the speculative metaphysics of an earlier generation of philosophers and theologians, and in particular easy notions of progress: ‘the more the Church learns of God, the more it is aware of the incomprehensible mystery of His being’;¹⁰⁵ humanity is confronted ‘with a universe more than ever terrible in the blindness of its processes and the destructiveness of its

¹⁰³ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 295. Again, ‘[w]e reach, then, a conception of God as at once comprehending the entirety of things in the whole range of space and of time, and also as constantly at work within the process of His own creation, shaping it as a master-artist till... He finds the good for which He made it’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 101. See also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 284, 289-290.

¹⁰⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 263.

¹⁰⁵ Michael Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1990), 126. Again, ‘the Kingdom of God does not advance in smooth and steady movement’ - Michael Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses* (London: SPCK, 1956), 89. Also Michael Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays and Addresses* (London: SPCK, 1964), 33.

potentialities.¹⁰⁶ He is scathing of the liberal Christianity of an earlier generation which, he argues, 'has belittled the fact of sin and the meaning of redemption and, in its extreme forms, has identified the Kingdom of God with ethical progress and social morality.'¹⁰⁷

Temple avoids the more extreme pitfalls of this liberal Christianity, but is not wholly immune from it. Whilst he can declare: '[o]f any emancipation from selfishness itself, or any attainment of perfect fellowship in self-surrender to the absolute good, our historic progress hitherto gives no promise whatsoever,'¹⁰⁸ yet he clearly discerns an underlying, steady, progression of the divine purpose in spite of the vicissitudes of human history, albeit a progression that may not be fulfilled within time.¹⁰⁹ Hence, for example, he can still assert that 'all the realities of life are processes moving from point to point in an ordered growth.'¹¹⁰ This progression is, for Temple, evidenced in a reading of history which sometimes appears simplistic: witness, for example, his assessment of the religious history of recent centuries: '[w]earied with the controversies of the sixteenth century, distraught by the religious wars of the seventeenth..., men fell back in their religious life upon what is most central and fundamental. The spirit of man needed to recuperate; but having regained freshness it

¹⁰⁶ Michael Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), 147. Again, '[r]ather does some of the language of the New Testament suggest an ever-intensifying conflict between the evil and the good, issuing in a costly victory by the way of the Cross' - Michael Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 43. Also Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 43.

¹⁰⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 201. See also the Garbett Lectures of 1962: '[t]he story of civilization is not the story of ascent from one that's good to one better still & one better still & one better still...' - Michael Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," (Lambeth Palace Library), v.315 f.192.

¹⁰⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 88. Again, writing in 1914, he recognised that 'it would be rather difficult to maintain that merely through our leaving natural forces alone anything like what we call morality or moral progress will result' - William Temple, *The Kingdom of God : A Course of Four Lectures Delivered at Cambridge During the Lent Term, 1912* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 117-118.

¹⁰⁹ Thus he declares of the Kingdom of God: '[w]hether or not this ideal is capable of realisation upon this planet is a question of comparatively small interest' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 348. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 210. In fairness, Temple is perhaps driven to this position in part by his conviction of the metaphysical unity of all things under divine providence: as McConnell notes, 'Temple was interested in presenting a broad metaphysical interpretation of the whole course of human history. Such a pattern is then assumed to be applicable to individual events and problems in history' - Theodore A. McConnell, 'William Temple's Philosophy of History,' *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 37, no. 2 (1968), 92.

¹¹⁰ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 130. Also, Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 164, also 93, 136-137; Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 118, 122-123; William Temple, *Repton School Sermons : Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation : Being the Sermons Preached in Repton School Chapel between September 1910 and July 1912* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 100; Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 89.

sallied forth again...'¹¹¹ True, at the very end of his life, and in the midst of World War Two, Temple was acknowledging a more chaotic, fragmented creation; yet it is arguable that he regarded that chaos as one more example – albeit an extreme one – of the vicissitudes of human history, temporarily obscuring the divine purpose. It is important to remember that a key motivation in Temple's thought throughout his life was apologetics:¹¹² inevitably, in the tumultuous days of the 1930s and 1940s, this led Temple to focus more on the present hardship of human experience, at the expense of apparently easy platitudes about the divine Will. Context shaped presentation – but the core conviction of a progressive divine purpose seems to have remained, even as Temple proved more willing to acknowledge the (transient) 'messiness' of creation.

In spite of this, Ramsey and Temple are not so far apart here as might at first seem – and had Temple lived that gap might have reduced further, as witnessed by the increasing emphasis on chaos (albeit it in a more moderate form than Ramsey) in his later writings. There are other, more deeply established similarities between them in this question of progress. Ramsey did not reject natural theology: '[t]he glory of God has been disclosed in his created works.'¹¹³ Equally, like Temple, he had a sense of an underlying unity behind the chaos, albeit one grounded in biblical theology rather than speculative metaphysical philosophy: '[i]f the idea that the universe has a centre and a moral shape is no longer accepted as axiomatic in religious and ethical discussion, the answer is for Christians not to cling to facile assumptions but to learn

¹¹¹ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 46.

¹¹² As early as 1895, Temple had joined The Synthetic Society, which counted amongst its objectives a desire to consider agnostic tendencies within society and to formulate a 'working philosophy of religious belief' - William Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," (Lambeth Palace Library), v.67 f.14. Equally, Temple became a member of the *Life and Liberty* movement, which was set up within the Church of England during the First World War in order to seek reform of the Church from within; the movement included in its aims 'the maintenance and increase of the soul-saving power of the Church' - Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," v.46 f.33. In a letter of 7th February 1918 Temple complained that the Broad Church movement's emphasis on ethics had weakened the Church's appeal because it had led many to lose sight of the crucial 'supernatural element in religion' - Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," v.46 f.63.

¹¹³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 83. Again, '[t]he divine Word has been at work in the world ceaselessly, in creation, in the processes of nature and history, giving life to mankind and illuminating human minds with truth' - Michael Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World: A Study in Contemporary Theology* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1969), 95, also 111-112, 116. Also Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Address to the Church Union Congress, 27th April 1968. v.317 f.163 .

again that it is only in the light of the Cross that all things work together for good.’¹¹⁴ Again, there is a sense of progress in Ramsey’s account of history: in the Old Testament God ‘chooses a nation, and delivers it from bondage, that it may be the instrument of His purpose, a worshipping people who continually praise Him for the acts whereby He has delivered them, and whereby He has kept them in safety.’¹¹⁵ Yet where in Temple there is a stronger sense of a deeper underlying linearity to that progress, in Ramsey it is rather more chaotic: ‘[n]either our Lord nor the apostles encourage us to expect a steady advance of the good and a steady regression of evil...’¹¹⁶ Rather, ‘[w]e are thus led to expect not a gradual recession of the one [evil] & a gradual advancement of the other [good], but rather an intensified clash of good & evil.’¹¹⁷ Chaotic it may be, but there remains some sense of an underlying movement within history. To understand that movement, and in particular to obtain a clearer picture of the underlying divine purpose to which it points, it is first necessary to outline Ramsey’s own account of the divine nature.

God as Self-Giving Love

At the heart of Ramsey’s account of the divine nature is the notion of self-giving love. Hence Christ’s self-abandonment ‘is the expression in history of the self-giving of the eternal Godhead.’¹¹⁸ For Ramsey, love and self-giving are inseparable: self-giving is not a *reaction* of love to any initiative from the beloved, and nor – crucially – is it to be understood as a response to any failure or weakness in them (including human sin). Self-giving is not simply a practical manifestation of love, but the very essence of love and of God: ‘[t]o act divinely is not to grasp, but to pour self out; that

¹¹⁴ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 105. Again, ‘[i]s there in our divided and frustrated world anywhere a clue, a meaning, a pattern, a sovereignty, a way? And Christianity answers: Yes... In the death and resurrection of Jesus there is disclosed the sovereign power by which evil is overcome and the divine purpose is shaped: life through death, losing life so as to find it...’ - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 52.

¹¹⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 10. Again, ‘Israel has a mission to the nations of the world, who are at last to be drawn into unity with her in the worship of the one God’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 10.

¹¹⁶ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 43. Also, Michael Ramsey and Leon-Joseph Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1971), 26-27; Michael Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1970), 74-75; Michael Ramsey, *F.D. Maurice and the Conflicts of Modern Theology: The Maurice Lectures, 1948* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 111.

¹¹⁷ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.190.

¹¹⁸ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 24. Again, Michael Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past: The Hale Lectures 1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 47.

is the secret of the incarnation, and is no less the secret of fellowship.¹¹⁹ This emphasis on self-giving naturally leads Ramsey to focus in particular on divine humility: ‘authority is rooted in humility.’¹²⁰ Where for Temple the animating principle is Purpose – an animating principle that is inherently expressive and operates in and through creation – for Ramsey that animating principle is a no less expressive self-giving. Hence, the Son ‘for ever possesses the character of one who gives His life utterly in love. His eternal priesthood and sacrifice are the eternal element of self-giving love in the Godhead.’¹²¹

As with Temple,¹²² self-giving is inextricably bound up with Ramsey’s concept of the divine glory. Glory is the character and action of God in history;¹²³ ‘[t]he Father’s glory is seen in His love for the Son, and the Son’s glory in His love for the Father... This eternal glory is manifested in the death on the Cross whereby the Father glorifies the Son, and the Son the Father.’¹²⁴ The whole of Christ’s life reveals this glory.¹²⁵ True, ‘glory’ as a concept extends beyond self-giving and ‘includes ideas of power, character, radiance and physical accessibility which can be neither wholly disentangled nor set in historical sequence’;¹²⁶ yet those elements take their meaning from the concept of self-giving – ‘the essence of glory is self-giving love.’¹²⁷ Thus,

¹¹⁹ Michael Ramsey, *Holy Spirit: A Biblical Study* (London: SPCK, 1977), 76. Again, in the cross we see the heart of Christianity ‘with its corollary of the identity of divine sovereignty and sacrificial love’ - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 130.

¹²⁰ Ramsey and Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church*, 29. Again, at the foot-washing Jesus is showing the disciples ‘what divine majesty is like. It is like – Jesus washing the feet of the disciples... God, the Creator and the sovereign ruler of the universe, shews his glory in humbling himself towards the created world’ - Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 93.

¹²¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114. God’s sovereignty is ‘the sovereignty of self-giving love, of losing life so as to find it’ - Michael Ramsey, *The Cross and This World* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1980), 7. Also Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 12, 115.

¹²² ‘One aspect at least of the Divine Glory is the triumphant self-sacrifice of love. This is God’s very being... That fact determines the dominant issue of history, which is the prevailing and increasing supremacy of love in all its forms over self-centredness in all its forms... This is the divine glory whereof the heaven and the earth are full’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 494. See also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 111-112, 126.

¹²³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 12, 29; Michael Ramsey, "Beyond Religion?," (London: SPCK, 1964), 11-12.

¹²⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 92.

¹²⁵ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 33. For example, ‘the feet-washing so far from being a veiling or an abandoning of the glory is a manifestation to the disciples of the nature of the glory of the eternal God’ - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 69.

¹²⁶ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 82.

¹²⁷ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 13, also 24, 29. See also Michael Ramsey et al., *Come Holy Spirit* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1977), 36; Michael Ramsey, 'Principles of Christian Unity,' in *Lambeth Essays on Unity: Essays Written for the Lambeth Conference 1968*, ed. Michael Ramsey (London: SPCK, 1969), 1; Michael Ramsey, "Sacrifice and Spirit," (Oxford: SLG Press, 2005),

for example, the power of God to transform and give meaning to life's experiences is rooted in Christ's self-giving: 'the Transfiguration meant the taking of the whole conflict of the Lord's mission, just as it was, into the glory which gave meaning to it all.'¹²⁸ Self-giving thus becomes a kind of metaphysical key: 'living through dying' (the ultimate form of self-giving) is a 'principle running through the world which God has created.'¹²⁹ As for Temple, Ramsey's God is thus, by his very nature, self-expressive and relational: self-giving requires an object, and it seems that for Ramsey God's creating 'is the utterance or overflowing of a glory which eternally lacks nothing.'¹³⁰ That sense of 'overflowing' neatly captures Ramsey's sense of the natural, unquenchable, creative exuberance of the divine nature. Yet, as with Temple, Ramsey is careful to avoid any simplistic suggestion that God is somehow dependent on his creation: 'Without Him, it cannot be; without it, His being is perfect.'¹³¹ Just as God is not *compelled* to create by any sense of purpose external to his nature, so Ramsey's God is not compelled to create by the desire for an external object to which to give himself. In both cases, Purpose and self-giving Love are of the essence of God, and their expression simply a part of his being.

Temple's Account of Love in the Divine Nature

Superficially, Temple's concept of 'purposive Will' and Ramsey's 'self-giving love' imply two very different accounts of God. Yet whilst the fundamental characteristic of Temple's God may be purposive Will, it would nonetheless be a mistake to imply an absolute dichotomy with Ramsey's stress on self-giving Love. True, Temple tends to conceive of the divine love in subtly different terms, with greater emphasis on 'mutuality' rather than 'self-sacrifice.' Yet the distinction should not be overdrawn: he remains clear that self-sacrifice is of love's essential nature.¹³² More importantly,

11-12; Michael Ramsey, "Christianity and the Supernatural... The Ethel M. Wood Lecture Delivered before the University of London on 5 March 1963," (London: The Athlone Press, 1963), 10.

¹²⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 146. Again, Jesus gave his life 'to share in the deep darkness of a world sinful, black, estranged. But the apostles of Jesus came to believe that when Jesus died in this manner, giving himself and not saving himself, he was not contradicting the reign of God. Rather was he, the divine Son, showing what the reign of God is like and how the reign of God comes, indeed what God himself is like...' - Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 26.

¹²⁹ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures. v.315 f.187.

¹³⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 83.

¹³¹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 83.

¹³² See, for example, Alan Suggate, 'The Concept of Sacrifice in Anglican Social Ethics,' in *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology*, ed. Stephen Sykes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 242, 244.

there is greater coherence between the concepts of ‘purposive Will’ and ‘self-giving love’ than the distinction implies, with potential implications for an understanding of the nature and rationale of that Anglican tendency to downplay substitutionary atonement already noted by Brown. Certainly, themes of Love and self-sacrifice are present in Temple’s account of the divine nature. Indeed Temple can declare that ‘[t]he outstanding feature in the character of the Heavenly Father is an unlimited and indiscriminating love...’¹³³ For Temple, as for Ramsey, the definition of love embraces the sacrificial and self-giving: love is the ‘giving of self to rejoice in the self-gift which answers.’¹³⁴ That self-giving is, with Ramsey, equated with the divine glory.¹³⁵ Indeed, Temple foreshadows Ramsey in declaring that Christ’s spirit of service ‘is the spirit of all life.’¹³⁶

Nonetheless, for Temple Love and Purpose are almost inextricably linked. Hence Temple can declare on the one hand that God’s Purpose is loving: in a letter to C.H.S. Matthews Temple speaks of ‘the overruling will of the One whose nature is Love. The operation of that will is of course directed by Love, and it therefore will not, or in your language cannot, do things contrary to Love...’¹³⁷ Equally, and on the other hand, he can speak of God’s Love as inherently purposive: hence he speaks of ‘the fellowship of love which is the divine plan to establish...’¹³⁸ Yet this is not to reduce the distinction between Love and Purpose to mere semantics. Purpose is the

¹³³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 177. Again, ‘God the Father, because of His Love, which cannot be content with isolation, utters His Nature in the Creative Word, wherein all created things are implicit; by the full revelation to the created things of the nature of that Word by which they were created He calls forth from them the divine potency which is theirs by virtue of their origin; this potency, which is the Holy Spirit, ever fashions the created things into fuller correspondence with the Love of the Creator, so... bringing satisfaction to the Love in the Father’s heart’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 143. See also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 64-65.

¹³⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 446. ‘One aspect at least of the Divine Glory is the triumphant self-sacrifice of love. This is God’s very being...’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 494. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 190; Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 79, 93, 98; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 122, 52, 167; William Temple, *Church and Nation : The Bishop Paddock Lectures for 1914-1915 : Delivered at the General Theological Seminary, New York* (London: Macmillan, 1915), 14.

¹³⁵ ‘The divine self-sacrifice, which is the true glory of God, once for all manifested on Calvary, renews itself whenever men, whom God made in His own image, accept for themselves the saying “Lo, I am come to do Thy will, O God”’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 203.

¹³⁶ Temple, ‘The Divinity of Christ,’ 256. Again, ‘it is misleading to speak of self-realisation *through* self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice *is* self-realisation’ - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 77.

¹³⁷ Cited in Iremonger, *William Temple*, 186. Again, ‘He created beings in His own image, spiritual as He is spiritual, to be the living embodiment of His purpose. He would love them; He would be loved by them; in their love for Him, and in Him for one another, should be seen the beauty of the love which is His own Nature’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 149.

¹³⁸ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 63.

dominant note in Temple's account of the divine nature. In the same revealing letter to Matthews Temple, linking Purpose/Will to the concept of Power, sets out the distinctiveness of his position with relation to miraculous divine intervention in history:

[o]n the whole I tend to think of God as Power; then comes the Revelation, that this Power is the Power of Love; consequently it is natural to me to say about a great many things that God *could* do them but He will not. I think you tend to begin with Love rather than Power, and therefore it is natural to you to say that because He is Love He cannot do them. So far the difference is merely verbal. But I think it gives a different inclination to a great deal of one's thinking on the subject, and there are people whose minds work like mine, to whom your language perpetually suggests that God would like to do things but owing to some limitation or incapacity is unable¹³⁹

Revelation is, for Temple, first of power, a force active to a particular end - 'normal experience is of process';¹⁴⁰ once seen to be active, that purpose is discerned as love. Nonetheless, it is a sense of a grand, over-arching purpose that gives love its shape, definition and fullest expression - hence

[i]t is in and through being such as we find Him in the course of history at its greatest moments to be, that He is eternally love and joy and peace. Even to the eternal life of God His created universe is sacramental of Himself. If He had no creatures to redeem, or if He had not redeemed them, He would not be what He is. Neither does His historical achievement *make* Him eternally Redeemer, nor does His eternal redemptive love simply express itself in history while remaining unaffected. But each is what it is in and through the other, like spirit and matter in a sacramental rite...¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Iremonger, *William Temple*, 185-186.

¹⁴⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 118, 119.

¹⁴¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 494. Again, 'the death and resurrection of Christ did not cause God to be after their occurrence what He was not before, but neither are those events without meaning and value for His eternal being. On the contrary, His eternal being, in being what it is, requires self-expression in those events, and while those events make no difference in the quality of love which is expressed in them, yet the activity of the expression is a part of the fullness of the eternal love. Thus we may truly say that the glory of God is not only revealed in, but actually in part consists in, the death and resurrection of Christ' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 481; also 495. What is true of God is true of history: Christ's life 'is a part of History, though it reveals the principle of the whole, and it is through its occurrence in the midst of History that History is fashioned into an exposition of the principle there revealed' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, viii.

God is loving purpose and purposive love, but from the perspective of the creature it is Purpose which is the dominant note: 'Love is itself a disposition and energy of the will, and if this is what God is, then His very substance is will.'¹⁴²

Ramsey's Account of Purpose in the Divine Loving Nature

As already noted, Ramsey's account of the divine nature carries both a sense of unity – it is 'in the light of the Cross that all things work together for good'¹⁴³ – and a sense that God is at work in history to overcome the power of evil.¹⁴⁴ Combined, both imply a sense of purpose that highlights the degree to which Temple and Ramsey are closer in thought than might at first seem. Ultimately, it is Ramsey's concept of self-giving as a metaphysical key unlocking the meaning of human experience which most clearly points towards a sense of a wider divine purpose in creation. Not surprisingly, then, Ramsey often uses the concept of purpose to speak of God. For example, he points to the Servant Songs in Isaiah, arguing that '[w]ithin the Old Testament there exists this proclamation of God's sovereign purpose wrought out in the life and death of a sufferer.'¹⁴⁵ If anything, the language of purpose becomes more commonplace in Ramsey's later works, especially during and after his time at Canterbury. Hence, for example, he shares Bonhoeffer's sense: 'that we ought, while continuing to believe in man's creatureliness, to emphasize also his vocation to grow through sonship into being a fellow-worker with God and thus to share as a son in the Father's creative process.'¹⁴⁶ Yet the emphasis on purpose is not the dominant note: witness his assertion of 'the unshaken purpose of God to use

¹⁴² Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 221. Again, 'if we really believe that Love is the best thing of which Spirit, as we know it, is capable, then we have here a Purpose with which we can sympathise, and therefore a clue to the explanation of the world' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 93. Also, William Temple, *The Hope of a New World* (New York: Macmillan, 1942), 123.

¹⁴³ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 105.

¹⁴⁴ Thus, '[i]n fulfilment not only of particular passages in the O.T., but of the whole Passion which the O.T. contains, Christ's death was the act of divine power which broke the forces of evil and set up God's Kingdom amongst men.' See also Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 58; Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 18, 89, 91.

¹⁴⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 16; also 12, 14. Again, Truth is defined as 'a quality of the living God in action... Thus the truth is God's saving plan as He rules in history with righteous purpose' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 121. Also Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 89; Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 15.

¹⁴⁶ Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 58. Again, God 'is a God at once beyond and within, the creator and sustainer of his creation, manifesting himself in particular events and persons to forward his righteous purpose' - Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 15, also 13. Also Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 13, 18; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 22; Michael Ramsey, *The Christian Priest Today* (London: SPCK Classics, 1985), 4.

Israel for the shewing of himself to the world despite the obstacles they put in his way':¹⁴⁷ God's purpose is to *show*; and what is shown is self-giving love.

This sense of purpose will be explored in more depth in the next chapter, but it should not be allowed to distract from the equally important (if narrower) sense in Ramsey that such self-giving is an end in itself. God desires to enter into human experience. In Christ, 'the Word was identified with men right down to the point of death.'¹⁴⁸ Ramsey seems throughout his career to have a greater sense of the pain and cost of human suffering than does Temple, and with it a stronger identification of God with that suffering: thus, for example, he emphasises the experience of the Old Testament people of Israel: '[i]n the midst of the promise and of the hope Israel was beset by the agony of its Passion.'¹⁴⁹ That sense of suffering and identification increases in Ramsey's later works: speaking of the cross he declares that 'God is revealed in the event: the answer is given, the answer that in the suffering of the world God suffers, sharing, bearing, intimate with those who suffer if they will accept the intimacy which he offers.'¹⁵⁰ This increased emphasis on the divine sharing in suffering does not come at the expense of his earlier stress on self-giving as a metaphysical key,¹⁵¹ as reflected in the growing sense of purpose already noted. However, it does hint at an increased apologetic concern – perhaps driven by his representative role as Archbishop of Canterbury – to speak to the suffering and injustice of the world.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 69.

¹⁴⁸ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 6-7.

¹⁴⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 11.

¹⁵⁰ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 27. Again, 'his is always the sovereignty of a self-giving, pain-bearing love' - Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 27.

¹⁵¹ Hence Ramsey goes on to say '[i]n the Apocalypse the Lamb (sacrificial self-giving) is on the throne (sovereignty). There is no throne except the throne where the Lamb is, the throne of Calvary. *There* we begin to see meaning, purpose, sovereignty within the world, *there* we begin to see the path which we can follow through the jungle of our frightening experiences. Where we see acts of sacrifice and love in human lives, these are never "lost" or wasted. They are the way to the heart of God himself, and they are used within his purpose of the overcoming of evil' - Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 27. Again, in Christ the sufferings of the world are given meaning by being transfigured: 'when Jesus went up the mount to be transfigured he did not leave behind the conflicts of his mission, the pains of humanity and the agonies he had yet to face. No, he carried these with him to the mountain, so that when he was transfigures [sic] all these were transfigured with him' - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," "Transfiguration" – article for the journal "Christian", dated 3rd July 1973. v.320 f.78-79.

¹⁵² Thus, for example, Ramsey's 1970 *Freedom, Faith and the Future* sets out to address 'two of the passionate concerns which are felt today by many of the younger generation': firstly, the concern for freedom seen in 'the hatred of seeing other people subjected to persecution on the grounds of belief

This is not to say that Temple ignores the reality of human suffering, or God's sharing in that suffering, even if some critics have argued that this is the case.¹⁵³ Witness, for example, Temple's assertion that '[a]ll that we can suffer of physical or mental anguish is within the divine experience; He has known it all Himself.'¹⁵⁴ Still, the theme of suffering is rather more pronounced in Ramsey. Nonetheless, both men are careful to avoid the potential charge of Patripassionism, and on similar grounds: thus Temple claims - '[t]here is suffering in God, but it is always an element in the joy of the triumphant sacrifice.'¹⁵⁵ In a similar vein, Ramsey declares that 'God's impassability means that God is not thwarted or frustrated or ever to be an object of pity, for when he suffers with his suffering creation it is the suffering of a love which through suffering can conquer and reign. Love and omnipotence are one.'¹⁵⁶ Self-giving and sharing in human experience are thus intimately linked in Ramsey's God; the Divine seeks the closest possible connection with humanity, and it is that yearning which lies at the heart of Ramsey's account of the rationale for the Incarnation. Whilst one might argue that the fulfilment of that yearning is, in itself, a purpose, yet it is a purpose distinctly different from that found in Temple. For Temple, God engages progressively with his creation throughout history, seeking the fulfilment of an ultimate goal, the consummation of all life; for Ramsey, that engagement is an end in itself.

Conclusion

Temple and Ramsey's accounts of the divine nature have much in common. Both present a God who is at once purposive and loving. Both present a God whose nature is inherently expressive and relational, intimately engaged with creation. Crucially, God communicates himself *within* human history – that is, chiefly through human

or opinion or race or colour'; secondly, the concern about human suffering, witnessed in 'an eagerness to help those who are hungry or homeless or underprivileged' - Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 3. Note, too, his criticism of Biblical Theology's concentration on biblical categories to the exclusion of their 'interpretation to the contemporary world' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 18, also 109.

¹⁵³ Robert Craig, 'William Temple and the Prospects of a Reasonable Christology,' *Anglican Theological Review* 41, no. 1 (1959), 61.

¹⁵⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 270. Again 'That Body has many functions to fulfil, and one of them is suffering... [we] should belong to it in order to take our share in the great work, the fulfilment of God's purpose in the world and beyond it' - Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 37.

¹⁵⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 269 n.1.

¹⁵⁶ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 41. Also Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 27; Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 79.

lives as lived, and supremely in the life of Christ. In both cases, that engagement is free from external compulsion: it is not the human condition or humanity's behaviour that forces divine action – though, as will be shown, it certainly moulds its expression. Yet key differences remain. Temple's God is primarily Purposive; Ramsey emphasises self-giving Love. Can the two be reconciled, perhaps as differing emphases within one broader, coherent picture of the divine nature? At this level, arguably yes: the two elements are not mutually exclusive, as the above discussion shows. A love that seeks to enter into the experience of humanity as an end in itself need not exclude the concomitant fulfilment of a broader divine purpose. Equally, a God intent on the attainment of a final goal for all creation need not remain aloof from human suffering. As such this suggests that the downplaying of substitutionary atonement found in Temple and Ramsey might imply a coherent alternative account of the divine nature. Ultimately, what matters most (from the point of view of this thesis) is the sense that both those qualities of love and purpose, however combined, point towards a God actively seeking a qualitative engagement with his creation that implies a form of fellowship. A fuller defence of that view demands a deeper exploration of that loving purpose, and this will be the theme of the next chapter. Nonetheless, the crucial conclusion of this chapter must be that the divine seeking after engagement would, if indeed inherent to his nature, seem to exist independently of human sin, thereby relegating the place of substitutionary atonement within their account of the Incarnation - unless one were to allow for the possibility of the Fall having such transcendental consequences as to effect a change in the very divine nature itself.

Chapter Two: The Divine Purpose

Introduction

This thesis contends that, for Temple and Ramsey, the rationale for the Incarnation is rooted in their distinctive understandings of the divine nature and purpose - and in a way leading them to downplay the role of substitutionary atonement, with significant consequences for their wider theology. The previous chapter highlighted the characteristic emphasis each man gives in their presentation of the divine nature – a nature that for both is understood as self-expressive and relational. This chapter will focus on the way that nature gives rise to a distinctive purpose which, as Chapter Three will show, provides the foundation for the Incarnation. Central to this purpose is the notion of fellowship. True, subtle distinctions in their accounts of the divine nature appear to generate significantly different descriptions of that purpose: Temple’s God of ‘purposive Will’ seeks the realisation of Value in creation; Ramsey’s self-giving God seeks the loving, worshipful echo of that love in human response and intimacy. Yet in both cases, fellowship remains the dominant note. For Temple, humanity has a crucial role to play in the realisation of Value; only by an intimate fellowship with God is the divine spirit enabled to in-dwell the individual, such that they become an agent in that process. For Ramsey, the divine nature inherently yearns for intimacy with his creation. As with their accounts of the divine nature, the two men are not so far apart as might at first seem. Though the dominant note is on the realisation of value, Temple’s God also seeks fellowship for its own sake. Equally, Ramsey’s God seeks intimacy as an end in itself *and* as part of a process of realising the new creation. Fellowship is thus intimately linked in both men’s thought to the *on-going process* of creation. Consequently, though each offers a different account of the Fall, yet both share a sense of the divine response as part of a broader creative act: sin and atonement are thus subsumed in a wider process whose realisation had only just begun at the Fall. Consequently, here again there is evidence that this downplaying of substitutionary atonement is consistent with a coherent alternative rationale for the Incarnation.

Temple's Definition of the Divine Purpose: The Realisation of Value

For both men, the Incarnation is rooted in the divine purpose. For Temple, that purpose is for the realisation of the Value¹⁵⁷ of his creation: 'He made the world for its value; this comes to actualisation in man.'¹⁵⁸ Value is thus the key to the meaning of all creation: 'the correlative of Will is Good or Value; therefore the fundamental element in things is their Value. This is not a property which they have incidentally; it is the constitutive principle, the true self, of every existent.'¹⁵⁹ Inherent in that meaning is the satisfaction that the realisation of Value brings in the divine: 'Will acts always for the sake of value, or good, to be created or enjoyed as a result of the action. It is precisely as so acting that it is self-explanatory;¹⁶⁰ consequently, 'Value' is 'an wholly irreducible aspect or function of Reality...'¹⁶¹ Nonetheless, Value is 'recognised by a sense of kinship or "at-homeness" which we may call satisfaction. Where a man claims to find this, his claim cannot be disputed. To every man his own sense of value is final... But though value is recognised by a sense of satisfaction it does not consist in this satisfaction.'¹⁶²

Temple's sense of 'kinship' and 'at-homeness' carry relational connotations: '[i]n that highest sphere of creative art which we call human conduct, the good or value sought is that of Personality (or character) in Fellowship, with all the varieties that this implies. Actions have their value as symbolising and as producing this.'¹⁶³ For Temple, Value is identified with the divine nature: '[t]o be conscious of absolute value and the absolute obligation which it imposes is plainly a direct awareness of

¹⁵⁷ Temple usually capitalises core concepts such as 'Will,' 'Value' and 'Purpose' in his works. Although he is not always consistent in this, the thesis will follow his example as this helps give a closer sense of how Temple conceived of the terms.

¹⁵⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 101. Again, 'Purpose is directed primarily to Value' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 220; also 141-143, 218.

¹⁵⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 14, also 253.

¹⁶⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 10; also 7. See also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 219, 281, 330.

¹⁶¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 178. 'If our whole position is sound, no definition is possible; you cannot state the *Genus* and *Differentia* of your highest principle' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 32.

¹⁶² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 24-25. See also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 165.

¹⁶³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 18. Again, the central principle of God's guidance of history 'is spiritual growth or, if you like to put it so, an expansion and enrichment of personality' - Temple, *Church and Nation*, 145; because personality 'is a social product' fellowship is needed for the fulness of personality: 'the greatest personality... is yet more entirely dependent upon the society in which he is living than people with a less wide range of gifts' - Temple, *Church and Nation*, 145-146. See also William Temple, *Christ in His Church : A Charge : Delivered by the Right Rev. William, Lord Bishop of Manchester at His Primary Visitation, 1924* (London: Macmillan, 1925), 10-11, 17, 141; William Temple, 'Worship and Life,' in *How Christians Worship : Broadcast Talks*, ed. J. Eric Fenn (London: Student Christian Movement, 1942), 19, 22-23; Temple, *Religious Experience*, 211-212, 217, 265.

something ultimate in the universe... It is a consciousness of the very object of the Creative Will; it is thus itself a knowledge of God.¹⁶⁴ As such, there are ‘three forms of the one Absolute Value, which is Love’:¹⁶⁵ Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Here again, each is defined in relational terms. Hence to desire Truth ‘is to desire the perfect correlation of the mind to reality’ grounded in God;¹⁶⁶ Beauty ‘is the perfect (*i.e.* truly adequate) expression of the value of any truth or fact... It appeals, as Truth does not, to feeling... To make Beauty the end of any activity is to seek a perfect correlation with the various values of what is apprehended by consciousness’;¹⁶⁷ Goodness ‘is the perfect correlation of all the elements of personality into one whole, and of that whole with its environment.’¹⁶⁸ Value, then, is to be realised, engaged with and enjoyed: that is the meaning of God’s purpose. In so far as the human mind echoes the divine Mind, it is an engagement – a *relationship* - in which humanity can share, in and through its relationship with God: ‘[t]he essential condition of Value is the discovery by mind of itself in its other’¹⁶⁹ such that ‘a man’s relation to Truth and Beauty is thus a social relation.’¹⁷⁰

Temple: God’s Purpose and Human Value

Crucially, for Temple the emphasis in this focus on Value is towards the consummation of creation, rather than its restoration. In other words, God’s purpose is not about *returning* creation to a pre-Fall state of Value; rather, the Fall is become one stage in God’s on-going realisation and fulfilment of the value of his creation – a realisation which lies not in the past, but in the divine Mind, and a steady progression towards a final goal. Humanity is integral to this process, and in such a way that the

¹⁶⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 35.

¹⁶⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 27. See also Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 124.

¹⁶⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 27.

¹⁶⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 27. Again, ‘apart from the expression there is no Beauty – indeed the thought only becomes fully actual in the expression’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 28.

¹⁶⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 28. Again, ‘Science seeks a totality of perpetually wider extension; Art seeks a totality of perfected inner unity; Goodness is the achievement of inner unity in the individual and extended unity in the society – totality in both. Value, in short, is a system of experience in which a subject free from inner causes of change finds satisfaction in an object which (therefore) it does not seek to change. Its type is God’s eternal contemplation of His perfect work. It is not a relation of subject and object or of object and object; it is a unitary system of experience in which such relations have their place. Because it is a subject-object system, perfectly co-related, the object must reveal the characteristics of Mind, and the subject must be absorbed in the object’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 33.

¹⁶⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 193-194, also 148-150, 164.

¹⁷⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 190.

Fall becomes, in a distinct sense, a fall “upwards”: sin and atonement, though still important, nonetheless are downplayed and become one element in a greater process of realising Value.

This will become clearer with an account of Temple’s understanding of the emergence of humanity within the divine plan. That understanding draws heavily on evolutionary thought:

As we move from the simpler to the more complex structures, individuality counts ever more potently in the reactions and relationships observed. Where the rudimentary sentience, implied by the plant’s turning to the sun, makes itself apparent; where the organism in search of nourishment detaches itself from its position and exercises powers of self-motion; where the animal develops interests and affections beyond what are relevant to the biological concern for survival; where the mind frames ideas drawn from, but also separable from, its particular experiences; where the moral person selects his ends independently of biological or even (in the narrow sense) personal, interests, aspiring, it may be, towards an ideal of which neither his own experience nor all recorded history supplies the origin – at every stage the individual is playing a greater part in determining his own reactions to the environment which is the field of his activity¹⁷¹

Humanity strives towards an ideal. That ideal is not simply a product of evolution: yes, it may find echoes in history and experience, but, as Temple noted above, neither ‘experience nor all recorded history supplies the origin.’ The ideal which humanity recognises is the echo of something higher: the creative Mind. God’s creativity ‘expressed itself in beings able in some measure thus to enter into His mind and understand His work, so that in them he found a fuller counterpart than elsewhere of His own being.’¹⁷² In that engagement, humanity finds fulfilment: ‘Mind discovers itself in the Real, and in the discovery becomes its full self.’¹⁷³ Conscious mind comes not from ‘below’, but is a gift from God – humanity is endowed within the

¹⁷¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 230.

¹⁷² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 444. Again, ‘[n]ature is controlled by principles akin to the mind of man’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 122. Also Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 63; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 51; Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 27.

¹⁷³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 33. Again, ‘[o]nly in other minds can a mind thus find its counterpart completely; here therefore is the true norm of absolute good’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 168.

creative process with the means of perceiving the divine Will. Humans have the capacity to recognise the divine Will at work, and the Value which is its goal.

Yet the consciousness which makes possible that recognition brings with it ‘desire’: ‘[d]esire, which is in its basis need-apprehended-in-consciousness, fastens, as we have seen, on the element of generality in those objects towards which it is directed, and thus out of the most “biological” element in the field of psychology there arises that apprehension of universals which makes possible the free and rational movement of thought.’¹⁷⁴ Desire has the potential to be a positive: desires ‘are the material of which Purpose is made up, and with Intellect and Imagination they are the whole of that material.’¹⁷⁵ However, in reality such desire is disorderly, impairing humanity’s ability to perceive the divine purpose:

[a]s consciousness develops, this trouble develops; for the power of imagination, whereby attention can be given to the general idea of what is not present to the senses, vastly increases the stimulation of desire, so that it may operate without reference to the proportion required by the life-process of the organism. Thus the same element in nature supplies the starting-point of the reasoning process which seeks order, and of the riot of appetite which destroys order.¹⁷⁶

To check this, the will emerges as the means of controlling these conflicting desires: ‘[w]ill, then, as the agent in truly moral action is the whole organised nature of the person concerned; it is his personality as a whole; and so far is it from being an initial endowment of our nature, that the main function of education is to fashion it – a process which is only complete when the entire personality is fully integrated in a harmony of all its constituent elements.’¹⁷⁷ Without will, the individual would be a slave to his or her desires: this ‘is the true freedom of a man, when his whole nature controls all its own constituent parts... True freedom is not only or chiefly a freedom from external control, but from internal compulsion...’¹⁷⁸ Discipline may be needed

¹⁷⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 232, 359-360. Also Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 20-21.

¹⁷⁵ Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 24.

¹⁷⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 232-233. Again, ‘[o]ur initiative, roughly speaking, comes from our desires’ - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 23. Also Temple, *Church and Nation*, 17.

¹⁷⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 234.

¹⁷⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 169-170; again, ‘in perfect Personality, all the impulses, under the guidance of Reason, constitute a Soul or Self which all obey’ - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 32; also 30-31, 33, 43-44.

to train the will, yet such discipline alone is not enough.¹⁷⁹ ‘Will’ and ‘purpose’ are inextricably linked in Temple’s thought: ‘Will, conceived as the seat of Purpose, is not a separate faculty, except in the sense that man has the capacity to form a Purpose; rather it is the coordination of his whole psychic nature for action... If any one interest is from the first predominant, unity is reached without great difficulty...’¹⁸⁰ Will is active in purpose – indeed, without a purpose one would struggle to speak of it at all. Hence for Temple the individual requires a purpose if they are to find that unity and meaning which is God’s will for them: ‘[w]e shall find fellowship only when we find some object great enough to claim and retain the absolute devotion of every soul.’¹⁸¹ Not surprisingly, for Temple that purpose is rooted in God: ‘we can understand nothing properly until we see it in relation to God and His purpose...’¹⁸²

Individual human beings may thus be ‘centres of appreciation of value...’¹⁸³ – if the will is able to control unruly desire. Yet the individual’s role in the divine purpose extends beyond mere appreciation. Rather, they are also called to assist in the realisation of the divine purpose; the marshalling of the will is needed both for the completion or consummation of the individual, and for the fulfilment of the divine Purpose in creation. Mind emerged ‘under pressure of the world, in order to assist its organism in its adaptation of itself to the world, and, still more, of the world to itself...’¹⁸⁴ In its engagement with the world the mind ‘becomes aware that it is discovering its own principles in the object of its study.’¹⁸⁵ Appreciation brings with it a sense of obligation: ‘[t]o be conscious of absolute value and the absolute obligation which it imposes is plainly a direct awareness of something ultimate in the universe.’¹⁸⁶ In the recognition ‘by the finite mind of that which is akin to it in its

¹⁷⁹ For more on the relationship between love and justice in Temple’s thought, see Alan Suggate, ‘William Temple and the Challenge of Reinhold Niebuhr,’ *Theology* 84, no. 702 (1981), 415; also Alan Suggate, ‘William Temple on Pacifism,’ *Modern Churchman* 29, no. 1 (1986), 12.

¹⁸⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 61, also 7.

¹⁸¹ Temple, *Essays in Christian Politics*, 6. Also, Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 14, 108-114, especially 114.

¹⁸² Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 12.

¹⁸³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 215. Again, ‘[i]t is in Man that the sense of Value seems first to become distinct...’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 23.

¹⁸⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 149. Also, Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 41; William Temple, *Life of Bishop Percival* (London: Macmillan, 1921), 374.

¹⁸⁵ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 149-150.

¹⁸⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 35.

world, is also a recognition that this which is akin to it is yet remote, to be served rather than possessed.’¹⁸⁷ Obligation to God brings with it an obligation to one’s fellows human beings: ‘the fact that a man is the Universe coming to self-consciousness in a particular focus makes it essentially unnatural that he should pursue his own course in isolation from other men in whom also, as in other *foci*, the same universe is in process of coming to self-consciousness... because he grows from the same stock as his neighbours, and is therefore social in the roots of his being, the purpose to which all his energies are given must be a social purpose.’¹⁸⁸

Crucially, then, it is part of the eternal divine plan that humanity should share in the task of realising Value; yet Temple is careful to note that God ‘willed finite centres of consciousness, capable of apprehending value, but not capable (being finite) of grasping the one true Value which is God’s whole work as God sees it.’¹⁸⁹ That sense of finitude is important: it maintains a sense of humanity’s dependence on God, its need for a relationship with him. To create an infinite centre of consciousness would be to create a being effectively independent of God. Purpose is central, but it is purpose grounded in relationship. True, the finitude of the human perspective tends towards self-centredness, but not a self-centredness necessarily, of itself, wrong: ‘how can any life in fact be anything else? A man must be the centre of his own social relationships. From that centre he appreciates all values, so far as he appreciates them at all...’¹⁹⁰ Moreover, that unique perspective is crucial: the individual ‘exists in order to realise the values apprehensible from *his* centre and no other. What is required is... that he should discharge his particular function in response to... the Spirit of the whole.’¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 152-153. Again, it is ‘essential to our notion of a person that he should be the subject of Duties – and indeed it is only as he is a possible subject of Duties that he is altogether a subject of Rights’ - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 11-12.

¹⁸⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 70. Again, ‘[o]nly in service of what lies beyond ourselves, only in service of the Kingdom of God...is peace or joy to be found’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 217. See also Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 52; Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 36.

¹⁸⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 270. ‘Man’s obligation is not chiefly to admire goodness but to be good. And this consists... in the achievement of internal and external unity. If a man’s whole being is organised to the fulfilment of one purpose, and that purpose is the fulfilment of his contribution to the universal good, he has reached perfect goodness’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 30-31.

¹⁹⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 220.

¹⁹¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 220. Again, ‘[e]ach man is a unique and irreplaceable member of the system with his own bit of the value of things to realise’ - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 72-73. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 117; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 96 and 98-99.

Underpinning this sense of the role of humanity is another inherent characteristic of Value: Value is only truly Value when it ‘is fully actual... so far as it is appreciated by some conscious being.’¹⁹² Temple’s refines his thought during his career, but his basic premise remains the same: the object of appreciation becomes something different when its Value is recognised or realised. Hence the appreciation of Value is a creative process: it is precisely because of this potential for the realisation of value that ‘man is capable of fellowship with God, for he can share the motive of creation.’¹⁹³ Writing in 1917 he could declare, ‘value begins when it is appreciated... the object when appreciated becomes something which it was not until then.’¹⁹⁴ Temple’s position remains broadly similar in 1924: ‘though the appreciating mind finds rather than creates the value, yet the value is dormant or potential until appreciation awakens it.’¹⁹⁵ By the time of his *Gifford Lectures*, there is a subtle shift in Temple’s thought. There is now a stronger sense of Value as residing *within* the interaction of subject and object, and in a way which thus gives a greater importance to the on-going role of the perceiving subject. True, he continues to claim that ‘the valuable character is primarily in the object,’ but he goes on to declare that ‘Value as actual belongs neither to the Subjective nor to the Objective side of the Subject-Object relation, but precisely to that relation itself. The picture may be beautiful, but the Value or Good of that only occurs when a mind appreciates it, though the appreciating mind finds the beauty in the picture, and does not put it there...’¹⁹⁶ In this sense, the Fall is, in essence, a fall *upwards*: *[t]he human mind is a focus of appreciation. It has knowledge of good and evil. The winning of that knowledge is called the Fall of Man*’;¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 15. Also Temple, *Christianity in Thought* 23-25.

¹⁹³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 73.

¹⁹⁴ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 84.

¹⁹⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 18. ‘Man’s appreciation of the world is the first instalment, so to speak, within the Time process, of the realisation of that for which the world was made, though in the eternal Mind which comprehends all Time this is actual eternally’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 19. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 14; 32-33; Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 211.

¹⁹⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 208. Again, ‘[t]he object is not merely such as to occasion a valuable experience in the Mind; the Mind in experiencing it appreciates it as valuable. Only in and through the subjective appreciation does this value become actual, but when it thus becomes actual it is objective’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 165; also 208, 211, 250. Also Temple, *Christianity in Thought* 23-25. Some have argued that this emphasis on the subject-object relationship makes Temple’s account of Value vulnerable to the charge of subjectivism (Lowry, ‘William Temple’, 35) yet this is perhaps to ignore the degree to which Temple’s faith in dialecticism allows the object to operate as an active corrective to subjective interpretation.

¹⁹⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 365. See also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 295; Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 58-59.

at a certain stage in development consciousness becomes self-consciousness. The organism is now not only conscious of its environment as offering occasions for satisfying appetite, or for flight from danger. It is now conscious also of itself as distinct from its environment, and of possible states of itself as distinct from its actual state... Its time-span is increased. The “present” is now for it a longer stretch of clock-time, and it has memory of a past and anticipation of a future. Events now have value for it, and it has become a centre of value-judgements¹⁹⁸

Upwards, then, precisely because it becomes the means whereby the realisation of the Value of creation is advanced.

The Fall nonetheless remains a ‘fall’ in the traditional sense, precisely because the finite perspective of this burgeoning self-consciousness brought with it the capacity for sin – a capacity realised in humanity. ‘I am the centre of the world I see... Our standard of value is the way things affect ourselves. So each of us takes his place at the centre of his own world. But I am not the centre of the world, or the standard of reference as between good and bad; I am not, and God is. In other words, from the beginning I put myself in God’s place. This is my original sin...’¹⁹⁹ Temple goes on to say that the Fall was

“too probable not to happen”, though not strictly necessary; for it is possible without contradiction to conceive a mind which from the outset chose the general good as its own. Inasmuch as finitude does not necessarily involve self-centredness, it cannot be said that the very principle of the actual creation involved sin; on the other hand, inasmuch as it was “too probable not to happen”, we must admit, or rather affirm, that God accepted the occurrence of evil as a consequence of the principle of creation which He adopted and that therefore its occurrence falls within, and not outside, the divine plan²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 359-360.

¹⁹⁹ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 60. Again, ‘the obstacle is found in precisely that which most marks man’s advance beyond the animals - his sense of Value as a principle. For of necessity each man appreciates his own values not only more readily but more fully than the values of others. He is a being particular and finite called to live by a principle universal and infinite; and his particularity distorts his vision. It is only God who is able to see the scheme of life in such a way as to hold the scales of justice even. If man is to rise to the level of true justice, it must be because God indwells and inspires him’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 215-216, also 220. Also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 290, 504-505, 514.

²⁰⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 501, also 510. Also Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 62.

In short, the negative consequences of the Fall become, quite simply, a price worth paying for the good which is the wider realisation of Value.

This is not to say that Temple sees original sin as a blessing in itself: original sin leaves the individual's spirit 'depraved, his reason... perverted. His self-centredness... distorts all his perspectives.'²⁰¹ The extent to which personality is, of necessity, formed within a society, means that none can escape original sin's infection. The human will is not fully formed at birth,²⁰² and would remain so without outside influence; that outside influence, when once sin has entered the world, becomes inherently damaging for the individual. The "infection" of human sin in the world is so powerful that it inevitably distorts the formation of that will as the child develops: 'Man was made for unity but has chosen division; and as each man is by his nature in large part a focussing point for his environment, it is not possible that, when once this false start has been followed by any, there should be others who are totally unaffected by it, unless indeed some power coming into human history from outside should make this possible.'²⁰³ Humanity is thus mired in sin: 'though the will can largely control my body, it cannot at any given moment control itself. It is what it is. If it is set on selfish ambitions or carnal pleasure, the fact that it is so set precludes it from changing its direction...'²⁰⁴ Sin dissipates the will, and thereby creates an obstacle in God's purpose for humanity as a means of realising Value.

Three key conclusions emerge from this discussion of the divine Purpose and human nature. Firstly, the human mind echoes the divine mind and finds in the relationally mediated recognition of that echo a sense of meaning: 'Mind discovers itself in the Real, and in the discovery becomes its full self... But Mind will only perfectly discover itself in other minds; therefore Fellowship is the true norm of Value, and

²⁰¹ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 65.

²⁰² A child is, at first, 'a mass of chaotic interests and impulses... if by Will we mean the capacity to form a Purpose the child has no will at all...' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 168; also Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 28-29.

²⁰³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 75. Again, '[w]hat the old Theologians put down to Adam we attribute in part to our evolutionary descent from non-human ancestors, and in part to "social heredity" – the evil influence of the actual society into which we are born, its tradition of self-seeking and moral indifference...' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 38.

²⁰⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 234. Again, 'There may never have been a Fall; but we are fallen at least in the sense that if we stay where we are, we are in a very bad way, and also that of ourselves we can do nothing but stay where we are' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 38.

Love its perfect realisation.²⁰⁵ Secondly, mind discovers not only meaning, but purpose, and a purpose in which it is called to share: the realisation of Value can only come about when the mind finds in the object a sense of harmony between that object, itself, and the creative Mind: the ‘correspondence of mind with reality is the essential condition of Value or Good.’²⁰⁶ That sharing is the means by which the will is marshalled and Value is realised. Thirdly, its ability to share in that purpose is mired by its own sinfulness. Humanity does not hold within itself the resources to overcome that sin: ‘I am in a state, from birth, in which I shall bring disaster on myself and everyone affected by my conduct unless I can escape from it... complete deliverance can be effected only by the winning of my whole heart’s devotion.’²⁰⁷

As will be shown later in the thesis, that deliverance can only come about through fellowship with God as the means of enabling the indwelling of the divine spirit: for example, Temple can assert that ‘[i]f deliverance of the self from its self-centredness is to be complete it cannot come through response to any partial manifestations of the Spirit of the Whole... That Spirit must personally appear before the self in a form truly apprehensible by that self.’²⁰⁸ However, it is enough at this stage to show that in each of the key conclusions drawn from this discussion of the divine concern for Value, there is an underlying sense of the importance of fellowship with God as the means whereby the on-going creation of a world of Value is realised. The emergence of sin is undoubtedly a major setback, but it is set within a wider process and, as noted above, appears a price that has to be paid for the wider realisation of Good. It is this central focus on Value which, as will be shown, leads Temple to remould his understanding of the Atonement, and in such a way as to downplay the substitutionary element within it.

²⁰⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 33. Again, ‘only by intercourse with other minds does any mind fully attain to its own unity’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 126.

²⁰⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 149. Again, ‘the mind finds in the object what is akin to itself; it finds itself in its other. It is not only the purely logical structure of mind that it now finds, but also its purposive and emotional qualities’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 155. But, though mind finds its own nature in the object of study, it finds it ‘on such a scale as to feel the object to be wholly Other even than when it seemed strange and alien’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 156. That Other is Mind, ‘in the likeness of which our own minds are fashioned and yet before which they can only confess their impotence’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 156.

²⁰⁷ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 60.

²⁰⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 377. Also 397-398.

Temple: Indwelling as the Means to Purposive Fellowship

The realisation of Value thus demands a relationship between God and humanity that enables him to be the animating principle of the human will. How does Temple set about underpinning that claim, and what are the implications for his account of the rationale for the Incarnation and the place of sin and atonement within it?

Temple argues that humanity's fulfilment, and with it the realisation of Value, can only come through a relationship characterised by divine indwelling: '[t]he Spirit that was in Christ must become through Him the Spirit in us.'²⁰⁹ For Temple it is a fundamental, eternal principle of creation that '[w]e only know what matter is when Spirit dwells in it; we only know what Man is when God dwells in Him.'²¹⁰ The argument is most clearly expressed in his *Christus Veritas*:

The structure of Reality, as it presents itself to us, seems to be as follows: It consists of many grades, of which each presupposes those lower than itself, and of which each finds its own completion or perfect development only in so far as it is possessed or indwelt by that which is above it. This seems to involve an infinite regress, and suggests an infinite progress... To make my present meaning clear it will be enough to take these broad divisions: Matter, Life, Mind, Spirit.²¹¹

Spirit is again understood in purposive terms: when 'Mind, by means of its free ideas, becomes active not only in choosing means to ends, but in choosing between ends, it is rightly called Spirit. This activity manifestly belongs to that Mind in which the cosmic process is grounded, so that this Mind is fitly called the Supreme Spirit.'²¹² Temple is quite explicit here: *each* level of creation ultimately requires that which is above it in order to fulfil its potential, and, supremely, the ultimate 'level': the animating spirit of God. Completion comes for humanity only 'in so far as it is possessed or indwelt by that which is above it.'²¹³

²⁰⁹ Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 108-109.

²¹⁰ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 259. Again, 'Man can only be all that he is destined to be when God indwells him' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 162, also 190, 224. Also Temple, *Christianity in Thought* 48.

²¹¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 4.

²¹² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 277.

²¹³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 6. Hence, '[t]he heart of religion is communion with the eternal' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 57, also vi, 168. Also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 42.

This is a critical point: *irrespective of human sin*, humanity would need to be indwelt by the divine in order to reach its full potential; the progressive realisation of that process of indwelling had only begun at the time of the Fall. That indwelling *is* fellowship: the human mind ‘only shows what it can be and do when it is guided by Mind as Spirit. I should find the differentia of Spirit in the sense of Absolute Value and therefore of obligation; this, at its height, is Love or personal union. Because Spirit is, or has, the sense of absolute value it also is, or has, the capacity for fellowship with God.’²¹⁴ Spirit’s power to indwell the individual rests in the ‘attraction of, and responsiveness to, apparent good’²¹⁵ – not least as revealed in Christ. Moreover, the logic of Temple’s argument leads him to assert that fellowship with God brings with it fellowship with all humanity, and in a way which reinforces the sense of humanity sharing in the divine purpose: bring people together ‘to work out a practical problem as colleagues, or to face pain and death as comrades – at once there is fellowship between them... But only one object is lofty and great enough to unite in fellowship all men of all types: it is the supreme Reality which we call God.’²¹⁶ As Mind is found echoed in other minds, so the individual is called into a deeper fellowship with humanity, both as a means through them of deepening his or her fellowship with God,²¹⁷ and, presumably, as the means in turn of enabling those ‘minds’ to find a greater intimacy with God and a sharing in his purpose for others. Thus ‘the meaning of History is found in the development of an ever wider fellowship of ever richer personalities.’²¹⁸

In sum, then, Purpose is fulfilled through a process of divine in-dwelling that is mediated through a form of fellowship most effectively actualised in the ability of human minds to receive that which is communicated and in a manner as closely akin to their nature as possible: the Higher can express himself through the lower ‘more adequately as this lower approximates to likeness with Himself, so that of all things

²¹⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 5. Again, ‘man’s creative mind can find satisfaction only if there be a Divine creative Mind with which it may have communion’ - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 258.

²¹⁵ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 478.

²¹⁶ Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 75-76. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 25.

²¹⁷ Hence ‘only by intercourse with other minds does any mind fully attain to its own unity’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 126.

²¹⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 448. Again, ‘the whole purpose of human history is to fashion souls, and a great fellowship of souls, knit together in mutual love through common participation in the Eternal love. That is the goal of human history according to the Christian scheme ...’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 197. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 53, 158; Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 89.

known to us human nature will express Him most perfectly.²¹⁹ Crucially for evaluation of the claim that substitutionary atonement is downplayed, the introduction of human sin, though a setback, is understood as itself subsumed in the wider divine Purpose which is the dominant element in Temple's thought.

Purposive Fellowship, the Value of the Individual and the Problem of Evil

The emphasis on purpose raises a key question, however. Does the notion of God as purposive effectively devalue the individual, too often making them an essentially passive means to an end - and in a way which ultimately undermines the integrity of Temple's argument? Hoskins certainly thinks so.²²⁰ Admittedly, there are (surely unintentional, though no less significant for that) hints – chiefly in his earlier works²²¹ – that humans are not necessarily to be seen as holding worth in themselves, except as part of the quest for a greater good. Hence for example he can declare that objects come into existence 'because some good can be brought into existence by means of them';²²² again, 'all things exist either for their own value or else for the sake of something else that has value...'²²³ This also plays out in his more practical concerns: witness his assertion that malnutrition is of concern primarily because it 'produces enfeebled bodies, embittered minds and irritable spirits: thus it tells against good citizenship and good fellowship.'²²⁴

The point is most keenly felt with regard to Temple's response to the problem of evil – a response for which he has received more criticism than for any other element in his thought. Temple's emphasis on the unity of all things in God means that evil must have a purpose in the divine plan – if evil could not be explained, then 'there is in the

²¹⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 124. Again, '[h]is creativity expressed itself in beings able in some measure thus to enter into His mind and understand His work, so that in them He found a fuller counterpart than elsewhere of His own being' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 444.

²²⁰ Hoskins, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, 289-292, 301; cf. 289.

²²¹ Temple lays much greater stress on the value of the individual in his later works – see, for example, William Temple, "Christianity and Communism : An Address Delivered by the Archbishop of York (the Most Reverend and Right Honourable William Temple) at the York Diocesan Conference : St William's College : 22nd June 1933," (London: SPCK, 1933), 13; Temple, *Religious Experience*, 204; William Temple, *The Church Looks Forward* (London: Macmillan, 1944), 123.

²²² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 220.

²²³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 23.

²²⁴ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 33. See also 34.

world an irrational and inexplicable element.²²⁵ The essence of his argument is that ‘a world redeemed is better than a world that has never known evil’²²⁶ such that evil becomes ‘an essential part of much that is best in life – heroism and self-sacrifice.’²²⁷ Each time we make a mistake in life God makes ‘of it the material through which he more abundantly shows His love, and therefore calls out from us a better response.’²²⁸ Mindful that it is not always apparent what good might emerge from a particular evil incident, Temple draws analogy with a play: ‘the value of the past is alterable. This is proved by every drama that was ever written... The real value and meaning of the first act of a play is not known until the play is ended.’²²⁹ Put crudely, we may not know what good can be redeemed from our suffering in this life, perhaps ‘not to all eternity.’²³⁰ Nonetheless, there is enough evidence for the principle to stand: ‘[a]ll we can claim is that we have found a principle on which, where we can trace its operation, suffering becomes a necessary element in the full goodness of the world; that in some cases this principle can actually be traced; that in others its action must be assumed if we are to maintain the rationality of the world.’²³¹

Critics have argued that Temple’s account is both naïve and optimistic, and betrays a lack of any deep sense of the enormity of human suffering. Rogerson speaks for many when he declares: ‘there is a heavy – and to me unacceptable – price to be paid for this wonderfully harmonious and optimistic view of reality. That price is a view of evil which comes as close as possible to saying that evil is a necessary part of the world in which we live’,²³² and, in doing so, glosses over the reality of human pain.

²²⁵ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 291. Again, ‘Why? means, For what purpose? The problem of evil is always a problem in terms of purpose’ - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 117; William Temple, *Christ’s Revelation of God : Three Lectures* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1925), 10.

²²⁶ Temple, ‘The Divinity of Christ,’ 220.

²²⁷ Temple, ‘The Divinity of Christ,’ 217. Again, ‘[t]he love of a shallow or shifty soul is a thing less precious than the love which is rooted on the rock of eternal trust, secure against all chances and changes of this mortal life. The deepening and strengthening of the soul is therefore necessarily to be included among the purposes of Love... experience shows beyond any sort of question that the action of natural uniformity in producing what we call accidents is one of the most efficient instruments of soul-making...’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 226-227. Also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 118-120; Temple, “Why Does God Allow War?,” 6.

²²⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 360-361.

²²⁹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 357; also 172, 269.

²³⁰ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 173.

²³¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 280.

²³² Rogerson, ‘William Temple,’ 330. For further discussion of Temple’s ‘optimistic’ faith, see Lowry, ‘William Temple’, 29, 31; also Walker, ‘William Temple,’ 489; Bezzant, ‘William Temple,’ 17.

Does Temple's emphasis on Purpose come at a cost, and if so, is that cost unacceptable?

To be fair to his critics, Temple is sometimes guilty of a generalising tendency that does not always pay due regard to the weight and detail of evidence against him. It was ever thus. His final report at Rugby commented of his performance in History that 'he must cultivate accuracy';²³³ his father found him a difficult boy to teach, 'because he expressed himself so clearly as to give his teacher the impression of knowing more than he did.'²³⁴ Yet it would be unfair to say that Temple was naïve. He himself knew what it meant to suffer, having been afflicted with painful gout from the age of two.²³⁵ Again, his genuine sense of the cost of evil is reflected in the emphasis within his thought on the need practically to resist it: '[t]he interest of religion is mainly practical, to overcome the evil that exists. The interest of philosophy is mainly theoretic, to show that evil *when overcome* is justified. It is to be noticed that even from the standpoint of philosophy the religious interest is the more important.'²³⁶ If anything, that practical concern grew as his career progressed: '[w]e have to recognise to the full the reality, and the radical badness and wrongness, of evil...'²³⁷ So too did his sense of the inherent value of the individual: witness his later assertion that 'each man, because he is a child of God, has a dignity higher than any earthly title and a value independent of any State.'²³⁸ To focus exclusively on Temple's theoretical account of the problem of evil in isolation from his practical concern is to generate a lop-sided view of his thought.

²³³ Cited in Iremonger, *William Temple*, 33.

²³⁴ Iremonger, *William Temple*, 57.

²³⁵ Spencer, *William Temple*, 5; Bezzant, 'William Temple,' 15; note also that Temple suffered from a congenital cataract - Bezzant, 'William Temple,' 18.

²³⁶ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 254. See also Iremonger, citing Temple: '[a]s a matter of practical politics - what is our so-called Christianity doing? Men are still encouraged to get drunk than otherwise; the poor are not housed, nor the naked clothed nor the hungry fed... the Church forgets that Christianity is not an attitude of mind, but a type of life' - Letter to John Stocks dated 22nd September, year unknown, but between 1901-1905. Cited in Iremonger, *William Temple*, 99. Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 119; William Temple and Lord Rochester, "Nazi Massacres of the Jews & Others : Some Practical Proposals for Immediate Rescue Made by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Rochester in Speeches on March 23rd 1943 in the House of Lords," (London: Victor Gollancz, 1943), 2-3; Temple, "Why Does God Allow War?," 7; William Temple, *Issues of Faith : A Course of Lectures* (London: Macmillan, 1917), 38.

²³⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 356-357.

²³⁸ Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 25.

More importantly, the criticism of that theoretical account is likewise largely unfair. True, Temple has the humility to recognise that his thesis might not prove persuasive, precisely because it seems hopelessly optimistic, ill-keeping with the reality of suffering. It is also true that, particularly in his earlier works, his attempts to show evil as in some sense rational can seem cold: 'love requires beings whom it may love, and requires their varying forms of evil for the perfecting of love.'²³⁹ Yet the ultimate grounds for his account of evil lies in the figure of Christ crucified; there, for Temple lies the ultimate union of theory and practice:

We are to assume that all the futile struggles of the eliminated species, all the useless sordid misery, all the baseness and hardness of heart, find their justification in the eternal realm (for manifestly they do not find it here); and we are to assume that the character of the Cosmic Power, which can only be known through its work in history, is infinite love, though the world it has made is as selfish as it is loving...; and why? Because otherwise there is in the world an irrational and inexplicable element. Were it not better to accept that element at its face value, at the risk of scepticism, than to indulge in speculation such as this...? Yes, it may be so; unless there is one fact ascertainable. But if there has ever been a manifestation of love on the scale required, and if the Supreme Power of the Universe has been plainly co-operant in its redemptive work, carrying the Spirit that displayed it through the ultimate self-sacrifice that He might see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, then the theory we have constructed is forced upon us by the facts as well as by the demands of reason...²⁴⁰

Christ shares in human suffering; but he does so in order to overcome it, using it as a means for the realisation of a greater good. That which Christ achieves through suffering helps to make sense of that suffering. Temple's account of evil flows out of his Christology: if Christ is indeed at the heart of the Christian religion, and if in him is found the embodiment of God, then in the crucifixion it is possible to find the 'supreme instance'²⁴¹ of the meaning of suffering as something which, though always wild and irrational in itself, yet can be overcome by good and used as the means for the realisation of a greater Value. Thus his definition of Value as resting in the interaction of subject and object is also applied to evil: '*the future does not merely disclose in the past something which was always there, but causes the past, while*

²³⁹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 290.

²⁴⁰ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 291-292.

²⁴¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 358. See also Temple, "Why Does God Allow War?," 7.

*retaining its own nature, actually to be, in its organic union with its consequence, something which in isolation it neither is nor was.*²⁴²

Temple: Fellowship as an End in Itself

Integral to any defence against Hoskins' criticism that humans are, too often, simply a tool to the fulfilment of the divine purpose is the sense in Temple that fellowship is also an end in itself for God. As noted in the previous chapter, God's Purpose is loving; that love seeks an entry into fellowship for the satisfaction it brings to the Almighty: 'He made the world for its value; this comes to actualisation in man, and for what man can give Him – loyalty and obedience and even love – He cares more than for the splendour of starry heavens or the delicacy of insects' wings.'²⁴³ At one level, humanity exists simply to reflect back to God the divine nature, even as God seeks to reveal to humanity its true nature as a simple act of love: '[h]is creativity expressed itself in beings able in some measure thus to enter into His mind and understand His work, so that in them He found a fuller counterpart than elsewhere of His own being;²⁴⁴ even as the human mind 'discovers itself in the Real, and in the discovery becomes its full self.'²⁴⁵ Echoing Ramsey, the cross shows that 'heroism and self-sacrifice'²⁴⁶ are integral to the divine nature. The loving nature of God is manifested in the fact that, for Temple, self-giving as an end in itself is an integral element in fellowship: the divine love inasmuch as it is love, 'enters by sympathy into all pain and sorrow',²⁴⁷ and humans were made 'in order that they might be a fellowship of love answering the love with which he made them.'²⁴⁸

Inherent to that love for creation is an innate sense of the value of humans *as individuals*: if the human mind echoes the divine Mind, then the love between

²⁴² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 210.

²⁴³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 101. Again, 'the aim of God's love is first to make us perfect in love' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 229.

²⁴⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 444.

²⁴⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 33.

²⁴⁶ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 217. Also Temple, "The Coming of the Kingdom," 22.

²⁴⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 290. Also, Temple, *The Church Looks Forward*, 103-104; William Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel (Second Series : Chapters Xiii-Xxi)* (London: Macmillan, 1940), 385. Indeed, Temple argues that pain can become 'a new point of fellowship' between God and humanity - William Temple, *Palm Sunday to Easter* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1948), 33.

²⁴⁸ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 37. Again, 'to find oneself in another, so that both are apprehended as one, is love' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 190. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 185.

humans echoes the divine love, especially if God is personal: the ‘lover resents the notion of classifying his beloved as one of a type... it is precisely what belongs to no class, what is unique, that affection makes its own. This is a relation of person to person...’²⁴⁹ God’s Purpose may be for the realisation of Value, and that Purpose may require fellowship with humanity; nonetheless fellowship is also an end in itself. Though critics of Temple have, on the whole, treated his thought unfairly, it is true to say that fellowship in *this* sense is not as clearly stressed in his work as it might be. That this is so is not, finally, fatal to his argument – the element *is* there, and with it a concern for human suffering. Rather, it reflects the degree to which his thought has at its root - ironically – a practical concern: Value must be realised, and suffering overcome. A theoretical basis offers a powerful apologetic ‘engine’ to drive those concerns, but practical engagement with the world is the overriding goal: ‘a man who has no serious purpose as the backbone of his life cannot be a Christian.’²⁵⁰

Ramsey’s Definition of the Divine Purpose: Fellowship as Worship

For Temple, the purposive Will of God seeks the realisation of Value through the indwelling of humanity in intimate fellowship. Chapter One showed that the essence of Ramsey’s God is not so much purposive Will as self-giving love, and love actively seeking to enter into human experience not as a means to an end, but as an end in itself. As such this pointed forwards to the Incarnation as a means of entering into human experience and suffering, rather more than as substitutionary payment for sin.

Nevertheless, the chapter also noted a further, more overtly purposive element in Ramsey’s account of the divine nature. It is the contention of *this* chapter that this purpose is no less concerned with fellowship than was the case for Temple: at the heart of the Christian faith is the belief ‘that there is one God, supreme and righteous, who created the world and therein the human race – distinct from the creator in its utter creaturely dependence upon him, yet akin to him as made “in his own image” for fellowship with him.’²⁵¹ That fellowship is one wherein the element of mutual

²⁴⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 143.

²⁵⁰ Letter to John Stocks, dated 4th August but year unknown (pre-1909). Cited in Iremonger, *William Temple*, 97.

²⁵¹ Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 49. Again, ‘God wants to have each of us with him in a fellowship of love which will last for ever’ - Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 41, also 27, 28; Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 12; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 18; Ramsey et al., *Come*

self-giving love already noted in Temple's work is now the dominant note: as in the Eucharist, Christians find that 'Jesus gives himself to them and they, through Jesus, give themselves to God and one another.'²⁵² Above all, for Ramsey, humanity exists not for the realisation of Value, but for worship, and worship implies a relationship with God: 'man exists in order to have the most intimate relationship with God that is possible, a relationship of fellowship.'²⁵³ The notion of worship is, of course, present in Temple: '[r]eligion seeks knowledge for the sake of worship',²⁵⁴ nonetheless there is for Temple a strong sense that worship is a means to the end of opening oneself to that fellowship which brings the individual into the divine Purpose.²⁵⁵ In Ramsey, by contrast, there is a much stronger sense that worship is an end in itself: 'Man is created by God in God's image for a life of glorifying God.'²⁵⁶ The essence of that worship is – as with Temple²⁵⁷ – reflecting back to God his nature, and in particular his glory: '[w]hen men glorify Yahveh they do not add to His glory. They acknowledge it, submit to it, set their affections upon it, seek its greater manifestation, pray and give praise for it.'²⁵⁸

Holy Spirit, 26; Michael Ramsey, "Christ Crucified for the World," (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., 1964), 5; Michael Ramsey, "The Meaning of Prayer," (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., 1965), 12.

²⁵² Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 30. Again, Ramsey notes that '[t]he word "fellowship" is in itself a very ambiguous one. Christian fellowship does not mean getting all the people on to one spot at one hour of the day. It means bringing them into participation in our Lord (*koinonoi Christou, participes Christi*), in his broken body. It is by participation in *him* that we have our deepest togetherness with one another' - Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 19. Also Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 65.

²⁵³ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 41. Again, 'adoration of God is the first privilege and the final goal of us his creatures and children. The claim that worship comes first rests upon the elementary fact that God created us in his own image after his own likeness, and longs that we shall have with him the closest fellowship possible in love and in converse' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 74. Also Michael Ramsey, "For God's Sake : Pray! The Evening Sermon Preached on 6th November 1966," (Cambridge: Great Saint Mary's, 1966), 1-2.

²⁵⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 30-31; also Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 26-27.

²⁵⁵ Worship means doing 'just what is needed to enable you to take your part in bringing in the new world for which we hope' - Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 30. Also Temple, 'Worship and Life,' 19.

²⁵⁶ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 27. Again, 'God has declared His glory to the end that all creation may give glory to Him' - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 91.

²⁵⁷ Hence creation is 'sacramental of Himself to his creatures; but in effectively fulfilling that function it becomes sacramental of Him to Himself – the means whereby He is eternally that which eternally He is' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 495.

²⁵⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 92. Again, 'Man exists to glorify his Creator' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 56. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 22; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 19, 37, 72-73.

As already noted, glory is understood by Ramsey as being seen ‘specially in his *self-giving*’;²⁵⁹ consequently, humanity too must share in that self-giving which is love: ‘[i]t is a life of losing self in order to find it. In Christ there is seen within this world the God who is “for man” in the totality of divine self-giving, and the man who is “for God” in the totality of human response.’²⁶⁰ Suffering can lead to glory, and to God: in the power of the Spirit ‘the Christians find the glory within them already, and not least does this happen in their experience of suffering.’²⁶¹ Worship is self-giving, self-giving is love, and love is relationship and fellowship. This worshipful fellowship brings unity: worship ‘links the Christian communities’²⁶² in so far as it is worship *in* and *through* Christ, eternally in fellowship with the Father: it is ‘the unity of His own Body, springing from the unity of God.’²⁶³ There is a subtle difference of emphasis here. For Temple, fellowship means the divine spirit in-dwelling and animating humanity; for Ramsey, it means the spirit uniting humanity to Christ in his body. The former view tends to emphasise purpose and action, the latter that sense of partaking of a relationship – though the two elements are not mutually exclusive.

Worshipful fellowship also brings with it true freedom: Jesus’ freedom (in which the believer shares) is ‘seen in the attitude of thankfulness, gratitude, praise, which lifts the self out of the self: the attitude of the worshipper.’²⁶⁴ Here, as with Temple, freedom means a fundamental re-orientation away from ‘self’ and onto God. As Williams notes, for Ramsey truth is to be understood as ‘*appropriate relation to reality*’;²⁶⁵ indeed, theology is strictly unintelligible ‘if it once ceases to be reflection on *relations* that have been established by something other than an individual intellect.’²⁶⁶ Though there are echoes of Temple in Ramsey’s assertion that worship is a ‘continual absorption into the Father’s purposes and designs’²⁶⁷ this emphasis on purpose should not be allowed to detract from the overwhelming sense that worship

²⁵⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 92. Again, the Spirit gives to humanity a life ‘of which the crucifixion is a quality, a life of living through dying’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 30, also 25. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 56; Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 34; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 46, 53.

²⁶⁰ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 27-28. Also Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 54.

²⁶¹ Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 58.

²⁶² Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 46.

²⁶³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 47. Also Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 19.

²⁶⁴ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 12.

²⁶⁵ Williams, ‘Theology and the Churches,’ 17.

²⁶⁶ Williams, ‘Theology and the Churches,’ 18.

²⁶⁷ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 12.

is, above all, an end in itself²⁶⁸ and one which finds its perfection in heaven: humanity was created ‘in order to come to the perfection of fellowship with his Creator, a fellowship which the Biblical verb “to glorify” describes.’²⁶⁹

Social Implications

Ramsey’s reference to God’s ‘purposes and designs’ highlights a social implication of his account of worship. On the one hand, Temple’s account of fellowship, by seeing fellowship as a sharing in the divine Purpose, naturally carries with it a strong social dimension. Intimate fellowship with one’s fellow human beings would not be possible without the closest possible fellowship with God, but Temple’s emphasis on Value and Purpose lends prominence to themes of social action: hence, for the Church ‘[w]orship is indeed the very breath of its life, but service of the world is the business of its life. It is the Body of Christ, that is to say, the instrument of His will...’²⁷⁰ Incidentally, one might note in passing that there are hints here of that link between Incarnation and ecclesiology (in so far as that both are grounded in the divine purposive nature) already highlighted by Schmiechen in the Introduction.

For Ramsey, the emphasis is subtly different, though here too evidence of Schmiechen’s link is evident. On the one hand, as for Temple, fellowship with God implies fellowship with all humanity: “‘fellowship’ and the death [of Christ] seem inseparable. “Fellowship” has been created since, starting with the death of Jesus, men have died to themselves as separate and sufficient “selfhoods” and have been found alive in one another and in the Spirit of the Lord Jesus.’²⁷¹ Indeed, only through God is true fellowship between humans possible: ‘reconciling man with man calls for so much humility on the part of those concerned that I don’t see it happening

²⁶⁸ ‘We best do God’s will now if there is in us the longing for God for God’s own sake which sees our present tasks in the light of our heavenly goal’ - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 162. A sense of the priority Ramsey gives to relationship as an end in itself is reflected in a discussion of the importance of retreat: the aims of the retreat is ‘the realization of *God in himself* – his majesty, eternity, love, nearness, tenderness, bounty, righteousness. It means also, for each retreatant, the realization of something of *God’s will for me*’ - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 148. That “will” may entail the recognition that one should ‘love him more, remember him more, and pray better’ (Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 148) no less than a specific social action.

²⁶⁹ Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 21.

²⁷⁰ Temple, *Church and Nation*, 30; also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 78-79, 172-173, 233; Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 15.

²⁷¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 30. Again, ‘[m]any kinds of fellowship in diverse places and manners are created by the Spirit of Jesus, but they all depend upon the one life’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 44; also 66, 67, 74, 90, 94, 105.

apart from they've been reconciled to God.²⁷² It is worship that creates that unity, in so far as worship means sharing in the life of Christ: worship 'was and is the *Liturgy*, the divine action whereby the people of God share in the self oblation of the Christ.'²⁷³ There is a cyclical, dialectical movement here: knowledge of God brings fellowship with the community; fellowship with the community brings knowledge of God. Hence 'it is within the common life, the worship and the general mind of the Christian community that the Christian is attuned to the understanding of the biblical message';²⁷⁴ again, humanity can attain freedom 'in the knowledge of God, in the doing of his purposes, in self-forgetful love towards one another in mutual service and towards him in contemplation, with him as their centre, their goal, and their *glory*.'²⁷⁵ Such fellowship is essential to the Christian, because fellowship means fellowship with Christ and through him intimacy with God: hence, for example, prayer is 'the sharing by men in the one action of Christ, through their dying to their own egotisms as they are joined in one Body with His death and resurrection.'²⁷⁶ Here too, then, there is a purposive element in Ramsey's thought: the individual, rooted in Christ, is a vehicle for others, enabling that deeper union which is God's goal.

Ramsey's account of fellowship with God and humanity means that, for him, the element of social *action* figures rather less prominently. This is particularly true in his earlier works.²⁷⁷ True, there is a clear commitment to all creation: 'the meaning of

²⁷² Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Transcript of radio interview for BBC Schools, 19th May 1972. v.319 f.128.

²⁷³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 108.

²⁷⁴ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 109.

²⁷⁵ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 13. Again, '[o]penness to heaven is realized in the Communion of Saints in deliberate acts of prayer and worship. But it is realized no less in every act of selflessness or humility or compassion, for such acts are already anticipations of heaven in the here and now. Thus our openness to heaven is null and void unless it carries with it an openness to the world around us' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 115-116.

²⁷⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 94.

²⁷⁷ See, for example, Adrian Hastings, 'Proclaiming the Gospel in the Twentieth Century: Michael Ramsey and Oliver Tomkins,' *One in Christ* 32, no. 1 (1996), 10. It should be noted that Leech has found in Ramsey's first major work, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, the building blocks of some kind of social theory: '[t]here is... in Ramsey's early thinking a stress on the gospel itself as social, as embodied in a visible and material social reality' - Kenneth Leech, 'Glory in Trouble: The Social Theology of Michael Ramsey,' in *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, ed. Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995), 104. Again, he identifies a stress on 'the Church as a new social organism, a transforming unit within society' - Leech, 'Glory in Trouble: The Social Theology of Michael Ramsey,' 105. Allchin has likewise identified a social concern rooted in the influence of the Orthodox Fathers with their conviction 'that God is already present and at work in

man's worship is bound up with his place in the creation. He is set over the rest of God's created works as God's vicegerent, and in his praises of God he is creation's spokesman. Creation becomes articulate in and through man.'²⁷⁸ Yet that commitment is articulated not in terms of stewardship, but in terms of humanity as a kind of "chief worshipper", leading creation's praises. God 'purposes to unite mankind through a particular people, and to unite them, not in a programme of philanthropic and social progress, but in the worship of Himself.'²⁷⁹ Yet this does not imply that, for Ramsey, fellowship with God excludes service of one's fellow human beings. The picture is clouded by a tendency in his earlier works (acknowledged by Ramsey himself)²⁸⁰ to overcompensate against an emphasis, found amongst many earlier liberal theologians, on the moral and ethical element in Christianity to the exclusion of the spiritual. Certainly, as that generation's influence passed away, and perhaps too under the pressure of his public role as Archbishop of Canterbury, Ramsey refined his thought in this regard: '[a]s Christians we must be the sworn foes of persecution, of arbitrary imprisonment, of racial discrimination, of crippling poverty and hunger. We shall throw ourselves into these causes of freedom in the name of Christ...'²⁸¹ Still, for all the shift in his thinking, worship remained at the heart of his account: '[i]n the noise of our times there is little enough of the quiet waiting upon God which is the heart of our religion. In the activism of our Church life there is a forgetfulness that the reality of God is not necessarily made known by the multiplying of the things we do.'²⁸²

his creation' - A.M. Allchin, 'Michael Ramsey and the Orthodox Tradition,' in *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, ed. Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1995), 57. Nonetheless, as Leech notes, that social theory was never fully developed: Ramsey's 'stress on the glory [of God] often failed to connect in any concrete way with the troubles of the world, so glory itself got into trouble when abstracted from the mess and concreteness of life on earth... .. his moral indignation had no backup in social theory, no analysis of society... His own cultural background and his theological commitment to glory helped to isolate him from concrete engagement and from the political nuts and bolts of real life' - Leech, 'Glory in Trouble : The Social Theology of Michael Ramsey,' 120, 121.

²⁷⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 91. Again, 'Man and nature are together parts of one whole pattern of creation, together serving the glory of God' - Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 46.

²⁷⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 10.

²⁸⁰ Ramsey and Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church*, 31.

²⁸¹ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 15. Again, 'spirituality is no escape from the world. It is lived out in all the complexities of our social life, in family, city, country, industry, culture, joy, and sorrow...' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 22; also 26, 27, 37, 62, 167. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 57, 75-76, 85-86, 97, 116-117, 119, 122, 136; Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 41, 44-48; Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 57, 62; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 32.

²⁸² Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 74. Also Ramsey and Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church*, 30. But note too Ramsey's sense that worship and service are, in fact, one and the same in a perfect

Comparing Temple and Ramsey on Fellowship

In truth, Temple and Ramsey's views on the nature and purpose of fellowship are reconcilable, and the differences between them, at least at the theological level, generally more a matter of emphasis than doctrine. Thus for example, Ramsey directly echoes Temple's own language in his distinction between freedom as being *'for'* rather than exclusively *'from'* something;²⁸³ equally, whilst Ramsey's emphasis on worship might not dominate Temple's writings, the latter was nevertheless clear that 'the regeneration of social life' cannot 'precede the conversion and consecration of individual life.'²⁸⁴ One significant difference remains, however: Temple's stress on the individual as the *essential* instrument in the realisation of Value is a theme absent from Ramsey's thought. In part, this flows out of the distinction between, on the one hand, Ramsey's emphasis on worship and, on the other, Temple's linkage of Purpose with the individual's social duty. Yet it also reflects Ramsey's reaction against a certain blurring of the distinction between God and humanity characteristic of many turn of the century liberal theologians and philosophers.²⁸⁵ Emphasising the role of the individual in realising the fulfilment of creation risked blurring the boundaries between God and humanity: thus he is careful to stress that 'God and Man, even God and perfect Man, are not synonyms...'²⁸⁶

Ramsey on Evil

There is a further purposive dimension to worship as reflection of the divine self-giving love: through a sharing in fellowship with God, the individual is able to 'make sense' of human suffering and, through the divine grace, to redeem it. Ramsey thus avoids the pitfalls of Temple's account of the problem of evil, simply because his rejection of notions of Value and purpose as the grounds of the unity of all creation

world: '[i]n principle his relation to his fellow men is the stuff and substance of his worship of God; but in his present imperfection he is compelled to see in a certain duality, albeit a duality like the two sides of a coin' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 57, also 60, 67.

²⁸³ 'Freedom so far as it is a treasure must be freedom *for* something as well as freedom *from* something. It must be the actual ability to form and carry out a purpose' - Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 68; for Ramsey, freedom means '... "[t]o be able to choose a goal for myself and to unify my faculties in the consistent pursuit of that goal". If so, then my freedom involves for me some moral purpose, and discipline in its quest' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 17.

²⁸⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 213.

²⁸⁵ Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, 68-73.

²⁸⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 130. Again, 'the line of distinction between creature and Creator can never be blurred' - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Sermon(?) dated 1964. v.316 f.162.

means that he is not compelled, with Temple, to show that all evil must be purposive. This enables him to embrace the strengths of Temple's account whilst side-stepping the broader, generalised claims that underpin them. Thus, for example, he comes close to Temple in accepting evil as sometimes the occasion for a greater good: 'in the midst of apparently insoluble suffering some of the most heroic of human qualities have been seen ... And when this is experienced we find that in the abyss of the problem of evil it is the problem of good which invades the scene...' ²⁸⁷ Yet ultimately, for Ramsey – as for Temple – the answer to human suffering is found in the cross, God's *sharing* in human experience: 'God is revealed in the event: the answer is given, the answer that in the suffering of the world God suffers, sharing, bearing, intimate with those who suffer if they will accept the intimacy which he offers to them.' ²⁸⁸

Of course, this is not an answer that, in the final analysis, tries (with Temple) to explain suffering. Ramsey nonetheless claims a biblical precedent for the approach: the method of the biblical writers is 'not to try to explain the problem or to explain it away, but somehow to carry it into the presence of God and to see what happens to it in that context.' ²⁸⁹ He does, however, share Temple's ultimate sense that suffering can be redeemed: 'while Christ strove to remove suffering from others as if nothing could be made of it, when it came to him he accepted it as if everything could be made of it.' ²⁹⁰ The cross is thus more than just a sympathetic bridge between God and humanity. In it, 'pain has been used by Christ, and has been given a new significance; and taught by Him, the Christians can use it for love, for sympathy and for intercession. It enables them to enter more deeply into His passion, it helps to wean them from any content with the present order and its false values, it makes them "members one of another" in a unity springing from the Cross, and pointing to a glory which is to be revealed.' ²⁹¹ Self-giving is seen to be the heart of God's nature;

²⁸⁷ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 23. Or again, '[a]s long as we are a race collectively sinful and selfish, there would be little chance of our growing out of our sinfulness and selfishness if the world of nature were uniformly comfortable and free from accident' - Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 23. Also Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 31.

²⁸⁸ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 27; also Ramsey, "The Meaning of Prayer," 8.

²⁸⁹ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 24.

²⁹⁰ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 28-29.

²⁹¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 40. Again, faced with suffering, 'it can make all the difference to look towards the cross of Jesus Christ. From there the power of transfiguring comes. And it helps to know that in the suffering of Jesus God himself is there... If we are near to Jesus we

to give of one-self, and to suffer for another is thus part of the fabric of creation and – as in the cross – potentially a means of reconciling humanity into a deeper fellowship with God.²⁹² Here again, the individual act of self-giving is not – as it is for Temple – essential to the realisation of Value; that strong sense of *purpose* found in Temple is lacking. Nonetheless, the individual can become an agent by which others are drawn into worshipful fellowship with God.

Ramsey's Definition of the Divine Purpose: New Creation

For Ramsey, the divine act of drawing humanity into worshipful fellowship was synonymous with the establishment of a new creation: 'God, who created the world for His glory, will glorify His creatures and lead them to glorify Him. The end is a new creation, forged from out of the broken pieces of a fallen creation, filled with glory and giving glory to its maker.'²⁹³ Intimacy is key: 'the goal of a transformed creation is that God's children will in literalness *see* Him as He is.'²⁹⁴ The crucial question arises: is the 'new creation' qualitatively different (richer?) than the pre-Fall creation? If not, then God's action in history is essentially about *restoration*: undoing the Fall through an act of atonement. Fellowship would still be the central goal, and the core argument of this thesis would still stand; but questions of sin and atonement would take on a greater, more absolute prominence. If, through the Atonement, humanity is released *back* into a state of fellowship with God inherent to its nature, then the Atonement must be more dominant in any such theology when viewed from the human perspective (though it would be necessary to explore whether this was *substitutionary* atonement, or some alternative understanding). If, on the other hand, the Atonement is seen as one part of a wider process towards a new creation, characterised by an ever richer, deeper fellowship with God, then the focus shifts, albeit subtly, towards God's on-going creative action in history, and in particular the consummation of that action at the end of time. The Atonement

are helped to realise that the world-to-come is near, we can know that the perspective of heaven about which Jesus spoke to the dying thief is near' - Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 38, also 7; also Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 31.

²⁹² Hence, for example, prayer means 'putting 'ourselves at his disposal to become channels of his loving purposes towards the world, towards this or that person or affair' - Ramsey, "The Meaning of Prayer," 8, 10. Also Ramsey, "Christ Crucified for the World," 6.

²⁹³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 89. See also Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 34, 37, 71, 110.

²⁹⁴ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 139. Again, the goal is 'the seeing of God as He is... this perfect seeing awaits the transformation of mankind into the image of Christ' - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 89-90.

remains a critical moment, but its meaning is seen to lie in more than just the eradication of sin or even the *restoration* of fellowship: as such it gives greater sway to the question of fellowship with God. It remains a diamond set in the crown of God's creative action in history, but the crown is revealed as rather more ornate and the overall effect is subtly different.

On the one hand, there is some ambiguity in Ramsey's account of the difference between the old, pre-Fall creation and the new. Hence, for example, he declares that the 'mystery of evil afflicts not man alone, but all creation too...all betoken the frustration of the divine design by the fall. But by the Cross and Resurrection of Christ the inauguration of a new creation has begun, and this new creation will involve both mankind brought to sonship and to glory... and nature renewed in union with man in the worship and praise of God...' ²⁹⁵ Again, the new creation is 'forged out of the broken pieces of a fallen creation,' ²⁹⁶ a world 'wherein the old is not lost but fulfilled.' ²⁹⁷ Language of 'renewal' and 'fulfilment,' of a creation wrought out of the broken pieces of the old: all imply restoration, but hint too at something qualitatively more than has gone before. It is significant that Ramsey rarely uses the word 'restoration' to describe the new creation; even the concept of an explicitly *new* creation implies something more than existed before the Fall. Creation is an *on-going* process. ²⁹⁸ Thus when he declares that the 'Christian hope is therefore far more than the salvaging of human souls into a spiritual salvation: it is the re-creation of the world, through the power of the Resurrection of Christ,' ²⁹⁹ there is a cumulative sense that 're-creation' implies something greater than had gone before. The new is prefigured in the old – 'the glorifying of man in the new creation is the realization of

²⁹⁵ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 90.

²⁹⁶ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 89. Again, '[s]pirituality refers to a man's relation to God and it is the recovery in man of his basic and elementary relation to God the Creator' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 21, also 22, 31. But note that Ramsey goes on to say: 'Man was created in God's own image, after God's own likeness in order to come to the perfection of fellowship with his Creator' – suggesting that the pre-Fall state was the beginning of a process enabling the individual 'to come' to perfection of fellowship - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 21. See also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 51 for another rather ambiguous passage – though here the ambiguity might be explained, in part, by the intended audience; the passage in question comes from a Radio 4 broadcast during Holy Week, and could not be expected to deal in detail with the qualitative difference between pre-Fall and post-Resurrection humanity.

²⁹⁷ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 90.

²⁹⁸ Unity 'exists already, not in what Christians say or think, but in what God is doing in the one race day by day' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 175.

²⁹⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 90.

his true meaning in the old'³⁰⁰ - but that prefiguring is as a shadowy echo of what is to come.³⁰¹ '[t]here is no need to suppose that primitive mankind was perfect. The "fall", as Christians call the disaster, need not have been a crash from a primitive perfection; think of it as a deviation of progress right away from the path of man's right response to the promptings of God.'³⁰²

If there is ambiguity and confusion, it is primarily because of Ramsey's close linkage of themes of creation and redemption: '[t]he problem of man's glorifying is one with the problem of man's justification; and the only answer is the grace of God who in the events of the Gospel brings both God's glory and God's justification within reach of man. In a number of passages the connection between glory and justification is suggested....'³⁰³ Confusion arises if redemption is seen as a restorative act; for Ramsey, it is not restorative but creative. Redemption is thus subsumed within that new creation which is characterised by worship-filled fellowship in self-giving love. A tendency to focus on redemption as solely restorative has, for Ramsey, long been a fault of the Church: for example, the Medieval Church failed to set the truth about propitiation and sacrifice 'sufficiently in the context of the loving work of God's own initiative – "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and "God commendeth his own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Thus the Mass came to be regarded popularly as man's method of propitiating God without due thought of God's own declaration to men of His own sacrifice in which the initiative is His.'³⁰⁴ The 'legalising' tendency of Western Christendom led to the point where the Passion 'was known as the object for the devotion of Christians and as the impulse to penitence and humility; it was known

³⁰⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 46.

³⁰¹ A further example comes from his vision of a reunited Church, understood not as 'a movement backwards to something ancient and venerable, nor a submission on the part of some to what especially belongs to others. It is the recognition by all of the truth about themselves as members of the one people of God, whose origin is the historical life of Jesus and whose completeness will be known only in the building up of the one Body' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 222.

³⁰² Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 26-27. Again, '[n]o longer is it thought that mankind's first parents collapsed from a state of innocence, bringing pain and death as a punishment. Rather does man emerge in the evolutionary process childlike and yet with the dawning of conscience and moral responsibility. But while man's moral and spiritual progress has been a reality, so has a twist towards selfishness, pride and the rejection of the call of conscience... The term "fall" can thus denote not the act of a moment but a movement...' - Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 21.

³⁰³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 46-47.

³⁰⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 169.

too little as the means of God's sovereignty over the world'³⁰⁵ in creative, relational purpose. Ultimately, the Parousia is central: '[t]he thought of the apostles does not begin with the present stage and pass on to the eschatology as a kind of further stage. It begins with the eschatology, intent upon the coming Parousia; and then it perceives that the eschatology is being anticipated in the here and now, and that the glory of the Parousia seems to throw its light backwards upon the present life of the Church.'³⁰⁶

Eschatology and the Divine Purpose in Temple and Ramsey's Thought

One might expect that an emphasis on the new creation would lead both men to pay particular attention to a detailed articulation of the "End Times." Certainly, Temple can declare that 'it is of capital importance to notice that man's deliberate conduct is far more determined by expectation of the future than by any kind of impulsion from the past.'³⁰⁷ Nevertheless, in practice both men give it far less attention than might be expected. Thus Temple, speaking of the Kingdom, declares: '[w]hether or not this ideal is capable of realisation upon this planet is a question of comparatively small interest.'³⁰⁸ That this is so may partly reflect – for Temple at least – a wider theological trend of the period: as Macquarrie notes, theologians of Temple's earlier years tended to pay relatively little attention to eschatology.³⁰⁹ Yet it also reflects a concern to avoid an "other-worldliness" that might distract from humanity's concern with the present. Hence Temple declares:

[i]f my desire is first for future life for myself, or even first for reunion with those whom I have loved and lost, then the doctrine of immortality may do me positive harm by fixing me in that self-concern or concern for my own joy in my friends. But if my desire is first for God's glory, and for myself that I may be used to promote it, then the doctrine of immortality will give me new heart in the assurance that what here must be a very imperfect service may be made perfect hereafter³¹⁰

³⁰⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 169.

³⁰⁶ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 51.

³⁰⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 206.

³⁰⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 348. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 210; William Temple, *Citizen and Churchman* (London: Eyre & Spottiswode, 1941), 103.

³⁰⁹ John Macquarrie, 'Whither Theology?', in *The Great Christian Centuries to Come: Essays in Honour of A.M. Ramsey*, ed. Christopher Martin (London: Mowbrays, 1974), 152.

³¹⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 458. Also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 129, 139; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 51.

In short, the chief benefit of reflection on humanity's future hope – properly understood – is that it acts as a vision and spur to faithful participation in the divine purpose now: '[w]e are to live here as citizens of the Kingdom of God. And we can only do that truly and effectively if our affections are set on things above, that is to say, on love and beauty and truth.'³¹¹ True, Kollar has argued that immediate pastoral concern in the light of the horrors of war led Temple to lay greater stress on eschatology and, in particular, the Communion of Saints, than is herein implied.³¹² Yet Kollar tends to give particular weight to Temple's sermons and letters, partly at the expense of his wider theological works. This seems to lead her to ignore this relationship between the Communion of Saints and Temple's wider conception of the divine purpose: the need to provide comfort may indeed be a *concomitant* benefit of his thought, but it must be set in the wider, pervading context of Temple's concern to expound a theological schema rooted in the divine purposive nature.³¹³

On the whole, Temple tends to see the Eschaton not as some final cataclysmic event at the end of time (though there are elements of this in his thought)³¹⁴ but as the gradual "breaking-in" of the Kingdom,³¹⁵ and in a manner entirely in keeping with his sense of a divine purposive engagement with creation: God is constantly at work, leading the world forward to final consummation in fellowship with him.³¹⁶ Indeed, in his earliest writings – perhaps infected with the optimistic glow of much of the theology of his age – the emphasis is almost exclusively on the coming of the Kingdom of God in *this* world: '[a]s we look out into the future, we seem to see a vast army drawn from every nation under heaven... all pledged to one thing and to one thing only, the establishment of Christ's Kingdom on the earth... And as they

³¹¹ Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 217. Again, '[t]o the restless fever of this world and its tumult no man can bring healing unless he habitually lives in the presence of the eternal God with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning, and has in his own soul some measure of the peace which passeth understanding' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 212; also 72, 78. Also Temple, *Citizen and Churchman*, 103; Temple, *Issues of Faith*, 41.

³¹² Rene Kollar, 'William Temple's View on Life after Death : An Anglican Eschatology for the Twentieth Century,' *Journal of Religion and Psychical Research* 18, no. 4 (1995), 209-210, 214.

³¹³ Of course, this is not to ignore the potential comfort that a convincing, integrated schema might bring. However, as will be noted elsewhere, Temple's primary motivation seems to have been apologetic - to make the faith "reasonable."

³¹⁴ Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 38.

³¹⁵ 'It is the thought of the slow, gradual, and secret growth of the Kingdom which must be taken as historical' - Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 10.

³¹⁶ William Temple, "The Christian Hope of Eternal Life," (London: SPCK, 1941), 5, 7, 8; also Temple, *Religious Experience*, 120.

labour, there takes shape a world, much like our own, and yet how different!³¹⁷ Nonetheless, as McConnell rightly notes,³¹⁸ there remains a sense that the Kingdom is something that cannot, finally, be realised in this world. That conviction seemed to grow in his later works, perhaps reflecting the impact of the First (and Second) World War, coupled with the Great Depression, on his thought: ‘History is not leading us to any form of perfected civilisation which, once established, will abide.’³¹⁹ This sense of a final consummation beyond history nonetheless flows out of his conception of the divine purposive quest for the realisation of Value: if each individual is a unique loci for the realisation of Value, then every individual is needed for the fulfilment of that purpose – including those who have died. Consequently, the fulness of ‘fellowship in its quintessence is not possible under the conditions of earthly existence.’³²⁰

What is true for Temple is also true for Ramsey. Eschatology was, by his own admission, a theme largely neglected in his earlier works.³²¹ As with Temple, this reflected an anxiety that concepts of heaven and hell might be a distraction from other aspects of theology – though in Ramsey’s case this was centred on a particular desire to draw attention to the historical rootedness of the Church. Nevertheless, there is a clear link between Ramsey’s conception of the divine nature and his eschatology: hence, for example, heaven is understood as worshipful fellowship with God and with humanity;³²² hell ‘is the self-chosen loneliness of the man or woman who prefers this to the love of God.’³²³ Yet the “End Times” did come to figure more prominently in his later thought.³²⁴ The shift may reflect the impact of his new public role as bishop and later archbishop; certainly, in these later works he seemed to share Temple’s concern to highlight the implications of heaven for *this* world. Witness, for example, his assertion that the Christian is to engage with the world in a manner characterised

³¹⁷ Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 59-60; also Temple, "The Coming of the Kingdom," 18-19.

³¹⁸ McConnell, 'William Temple's Philosophy of History,' 92.

³¹⁹ Temple, *Citizen and Churchman*, 8.

³²⁰ Temple, *The Church and Its Teaching*, 22; also Temple, *Readings (Second Series)*, xxxi.

³²¹ Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 84.

³²² Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 80-81.

³²³ Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 84-85.

³²⁴ Ramsey gave greater stress to the need for a balance between the “this-worldly” and the “other-worldly” - Michael Ramsey, *Sacred and Secular : A Study in the Otherworldly and This-Worldly Aspects of Christianity : The Holland Lectures for 1964* (London: Longmans, 1965), 17, 70.

neither by an acceptance of things as they are nor by a flight from them, but by that uniquely Christian attitude which the story of the Transfiguration represents. It is an attitude which is rooted in detachment – for pain is hateful, knowledge is corrupted and the world lies in the evil one, but which so practises detachment as to return and perceive the divine sovereignty in the very things from which the detachment has had to be. Thus the Christian life is a rhythm of going and coming...³²⁵

This “socially alive” sense of ‘going and coming’ was nourished by the long-standing influence of Orthodox liturgy on his thought. As Chadwick notes, in right worship heaven itself is present within the medium of this world: the eschatological element in worship thus has an intrinsic “this-worldly” focus well suited to Ramsey’s growing social concern.³²⁶ It is important to note that Ramsey’s concept of future hope has implications for ecclesiology and ecumenism: hence he notes the importance of the eschatological vision of the Church in its plenitude, arguing that this vision can remind us of the Church’s present shortcomings, and as such open us to the insight of experimental movements within Christianity that have something to teach us about what the Church might be.³²⁷ Whether then as a deliberate agent in the divine plan, or simply as an outpouring of the fellowship created with God, humanity must not lose sight of the “this-worldly.”

Conclusion

Temple and Ramsey both see the divine nature and purpose as focussed, above all else, on effecting fellowship. Crucially, that fellowship is understood by both as something qualitatively richer than humanity’s pre-Fall state. There is thus already a sense in which the Atonement seems to be subsumed within that wider purpose. It is too early in the argument to draw any firm conclusions as to the implications of this for their account of the Incarnation, and the wider consequences for their theological thought. Nonetheless, these core areas of agreement between Ramsey and Temple do

³²⁵ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 146. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 32, 39; Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 41; Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 187-188; Ramsey and Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church*, 34; Ramsey et al., *Come Holy Spirit*, 16, 32; Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 115-116; Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 213; Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 35.

³²⁶ Owen Chadwick, 'Michael Ramsey and the Beatific Vision,' *Sobornost (incorporating Eastern Churches Review)* 10, no. 2 (1988), 44, 46, 48.

³²⁷ Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 110-111.

at least offer hints that the tendency to downplay substitutionary atonement reflected a coherent alternative account of the Incarnation in their theological schema.

Arguably, Temple's notion of Value partly clouds the coherence and synergy between the two men's thought: Value is, in fact, realised in just that fellowship which Ramsey articulates as the divine goal. Clearly, for Ramsey, fellowship brings value: hence his claim that 'in Jesus... we see man becoming his true self, in that giving away of self which happens when man is possessed by God.'³²⁸ Ramsey would also claim that the Church has a duty to witness to that divine purpose for fellowship: God's sovereignty is 'a sovereignty to which the Church can add nothing but which the Church can share and interpret by accepting the Cross as its own way of power in human life.'³²⁹ The Eucharist embodies this calling: '[t]he Gospel of God is here set forth, since the bread and wine proclaim that God is creator, and the blessing and breaking declare that He has redeemed the world and that all things find their meaning and their unity only in the death and resurrection of the Christ who made them... And the meaning of all life is here set forth, since men exist to worship God for God's own sake.'³³⁰

Yet Temple's own account of the Eucharist teases out one enduring difference between the two men: in the Eucharist Christians receive 'His Life, to unite them to each other in Him, and to impel them to the fulfilment of His purpose... No form could be devised which would more eloquently proclaim God's priority and man's dependence.'³³¹ God's goal is the realisation of a metaphysical unity in which humanity is not simply a spokesperson for creation (as in Ramsey) but a necessary *agent* in the realisation of its value. Both men see at the heart of fellowship the need to reflect back to God the essence of who he is, but Temple's emphasis on Value, allied to purpose, means that his is a vision where the individual, animated by God, has an essential role in drawing creation into fellowship and realising its Value.

³²⁸ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 100.

³²⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 169.

³³⁰ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 119. Again, '[t]he Eucharist is the centre and norm of all worship' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 27. See also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 9.

³³¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 162. Again, in advice to Repton students: 'come regularly to receive the Body that was broken for the Kingdom of God and the Blood that was shed for the Kingdom of God, determined that your lives shall also become in the power of Christ lives of sacrifice for the Kingdom of God' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 215.

However, the difference seems relatively minor when set against the areas of agreement between the two men – at least in the context of the scope of this thesis. Yet the implications could be altogether greater for an understanding of the Church, its nature and purpose, and consequently for Anglican ecclesial identity. Clearly this may be an area in which more work needs to be done. What matters for the purpose of *this* argument is the role of the divine nature and purpose in shaping each man's understanding of the rationale for the Incarnation, and the implications of that on their approach to the Atonement. It is to the former of these two points that the thesis now turns.

Chapter Three: The Divine Purpose and the Incarnation

Introduction

It is the contention of this thesis that Temple and Ramsey are examples of a tendency within twentieth century Anglican theology to downplay the role of substitutionary atonement in accounts of the Incarnation. The thesis is exploring the question of what takes the place of substitutionary atonement in their thought: what drives the divine act of Incarnation, and how might the consequent account of Incarnation impact aspects of their wider theology? Just as important is the incidental question: to what extent can Temple and Ramsey's accounts of the Incarnation be reconciled? So far, it has laid the foundation for the exploration of these questions by teasing out their respective understandings of the divine nature and purpose, noting the dominant quest for fellowship within them; that nature and purpose, it will be shown, lies at the heart of their rationale for the Incarnation. It is to a deeper understanding of that rationale that the thesis now turns.

It is essential to show that the Incarnation is not simply *consistent* with the divine nature: an account which emphasised sin and atonement could make the same claim. Rather, it is necessary to show that the Incarnation flowed naturally from that purpose, and was the continuation of its core principle, established long before the advent of sin. That is the contention of this chapter. Both men argue that, because of qualities inherent in human nature even before the Fall, the Incarnation was the only means by which the fullest possible fellowship could be realised. Despite essentially minor differences in their respective accounts, both men are clear that the fellowship eternally desired of God is effected through the most direct encounter possible between the divine and humanity. Such encounter necessitated God's manifestation in a human life. The main part of this chapter will thus be concerned with exploring the link between the divine purpose and the Incarnation. It is nonetheless important to show that this linkage is borne out in practice; consequently, the chapter will go on to explore whether each man's detailed presentation of Christ is consistent with this sense of the Incarnation as first and foremost an intrinsic expression of the divine purpose for fellowship. Put crudely: is Christ presented as the means to fellowship, or is there a greater emphasis on sin and atonement? The chapter concludes with a

short section exploring each man's rationale for the *timing* of the Incarnation – why did it occur when it did? Does each man's response to this question bear out the priority of fellowship, or is there a sense of the Incarnation as triggered by the need to respond to human sin?

The Incarnation and the Divine Purpose

For both Temple and Ramsey, the Incarnation is an act rooted, not in the Fall, but in the on-going purpose of God from all eternity. For Temple, the Incarnation is the logical consummation of his four-fold structure of reality:

What we find in Christian experience is witness, not to a Man uniquely inspired, but to God living a human life. Now this is exactly the culmination of that stratification which is the structure of Reality; far therefore from being incredible, it is to be expected, it is antecedently probable. Even had there been no evil in the world to be overcome, no sin to be abolished and forgiven, still the Incarnation would be the natural inauguration of the final stage of evolution. In this sense the Incarnation is perfectly intelligible; that is to say, we can see that its occurrence is all of a piece with the scheme of Reality³³²

‘Even had there been no evil...’: the Incarnation is inextricably rooted in that divine purpose which, as the previous chapter showed, pre-dated and subsumed the Fall.³³³ Lest the unique and decisive nature of the Incarnation might appear an extraordinary reaction to human sin, Temple is careful to show that such decisive intervention, far from being reactive, is in fact part of the pro-active character of a personal God: ‘[i]f the unifying principle of the Universe is not a system of intellectual principles but an active Will, this provides for elasticity in the unifying principle itself... We should therefore antecedently expect... that God not only controls all the world by the laws of its own being, inherent in its elements by His creative act, but that as He made it for the realisation of certain values, so in pursuit of those values He acts directly

³³² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 139. For an earlier, more rudimentary version of this schema, see Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 17-18.

³³³ Temple seems to qualify this statement at the end of his life, noting instead that ‘[t]here can be no settlement of that controversy’ as to whether the Incarnation would have occurred without human sin (Temple, *Religious Experience*, 264). Yet he does not explicitly reject his earlier view. His point seems to be that such theoretical questions must be made secondary to the practical need to acknowledge the power of evil in the midst of war-time: ‘let there be no doubt about the actual fact. Man had embarked on a selfish course. It was, in fact, for his redemption that Christ did come, and it remains the fact that only in the power that is discoverable in the Cross of Christ can man turn history into the thing that God designed it to be’ - Temple, *Religious Experience*, 264.

upon its course as occasion in His all-seeing judgement may require.³³⁴ Significantly, Temple claims that these ‘exceptional acts are the true revelation of him’,³³⁵ whilst God may ‘for centuries act in ways that very imperfectly disclose His Character; yet when time is appropriate [he] may Himself submit to conditions which reveal that Character as it had always been...’³³⁶ In effect the Incarnation is thus the clearest manifestation of the divine nature; given that that nature is inherently purposive, this again implies that the Incarnation is consistent with that eternal purpose from before the Fall. Consequently, ‘[w]e have been led by the argument to a view of the universe which requires for its confirmation a divine act in the midst of history.’³³⁷

Equally, Ramsey’s emphasis on self-giving likewise logically implies an Incarnation: ‘[w]hen we say that Christ is Divine it means that in Christ there is the complete giving by God and God’s own self to us and if God really loves the human race, will he give a gift less than the gift of himself?’³³⁸ Hence in Christ’s life is revealed the eternal divine glory and on-going purpose: ‘the age-long purpose of God towards the human race is summed up in the manifestation of the glory.’³³⁹ As already noted, both men conceive the divine nature as inherently relational and self-expressive; consequently both see in the Incarnation *of necessity* the fullest possible manifestation of the divine, the consummation of that self-revealing element – as Ramsey said, ‘will he give a gift less than the gift of himself?’ Thus both emphasise

³³⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 99-100. Again, ‘[i]f I regard the ultimate principle as Personal, then I am at least at liberty to interpret as acts of specific self-revelation on the part of that Principle any which can make good their claim to be so regarded; and I am then also at liberty – rather am bound in reason – to take these as indications of the character of the Ultimate Principle’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 264; also 295.

³³⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 101. Again, ‘if the immanent principle is personal, we must not only see the whole universe as the expression and utterance of His activity, but must expect to find in its course special characteristic and revealing acts, which are no more truly His than the rest, but do more fully express Him’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 296-297. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 234; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 194; Temple, *Church and Nation*, 39.

³³⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 296.

³³⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 105. See also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 60.

³³⁸ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Transcription of a television interview broadcast on 31st March 1963. v.316 f.19. Again, ‘S. Paul makes it clear that the first and great act of humiliation is the act whereby the Son of God is made man’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 24. See also Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 47-48, 50, 76.

³³⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 49; also 40, 57, 61-65, 73, 150. See also Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 87, 95, 98; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 43; Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 47-48, 71.

that 'God is Christlike';³⁴⁰ that 'in Him is no un-Christlikeness at all',³⁴¹ and, particularly (though not exclusively)³⁴² for Ramsey, that in his relationship with the Father Christ embodies the essential nature of the Trinity: 'the Son finds in the Father the centre of His own existence; it implies a relationship of death to Himself *qua* Himself. The Son has nothing, wills nothing, is nothing of Himself alone. The self has its centre in Another. And this attitude and action of the Son in history reveals the character of the eternal God, the mutual love of Father and Son.'³⁴³

Given that this divine nature predated the Fall and finds its fullest expression in Christ, it is reasonable to conclude that human sin alone does not account for the Incarnation - the event would have occurred even had there been no Fall. True, the human condition moulds that self-expression, but it is not the root of God's action: for Ramsey 'the Son of God for ever possesses the character of one who gives His life utterly in love ... this eternal self-giving or priesthood is uttered in time and history in the life and death of the Incarnate Son, and when wrought out in a world of sin and pain the life of sacrifice involves death and destruction.'³⁴⁴ Temple would agree: '[o]ur contention is that an element in every actual cause, and indeed the determinant element, is the active purpose of God fulfilling itself with that perfect constancy which calls for an infinite graduation of adjustments in the process. Where any adjustment is so considerable as to attract notice it is called a miracle; but it is not a specimen of a special class, it is an illustration of the general character of the World-Process.'³⁴⁵ A self-expressive deity finds the perfection of that nature in the Incarnation.

³⁴⁰ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 98; also Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 43-44. Again, for Temple, '[e]ternally God is what He revealed Himself in Jesus Christ to be' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 279; also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 130.

³⁴¹ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 37.

³⁴² See for example, Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 283.

³⁴³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 25. Again, the doctrine of the Trinity arises from the disciples' experience of Christ, Father and Spirit at work in them; it 'is the affirmation that self-giving is characteristic of Being, that mutuality of self-giving love belongs to God's perfection...' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 99.

³⁴⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114.

³⁴⁵ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 267. Again, : '[i]t is as men live loyally in the fullest light they have that they become more capable of receiving more light. It is not that God changed, but that men's understanding of Him changed' - Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 17. See also Temple, *Church and Nation*, 143.

Natural Theology, Divine Purpose and the Incarnation

Temple

The point is reinforced by both men's account of natural theology. For Temple, the intrinsic unity between the Incarnation and the divine Purpose is prefigured within the inherent nature of creation, and in such a way as to point to the Incarnation as the necessary culmination of the inexorable divine self-disclosure within time. Thus, for Temple, 'the world is a single system governed by a single principle'³⁴⁶ and God is 'the indwelling principle of the world.'³⁴⁷ Christ's spirit of service 'is the spirit of all life. Biology, Ethics, Politics, all teach the same lesson; a species has significance through its assistance in the evolutionary process...'³⁴⁸ Again, '[t]he whole process of that revelation which has been going on through nature, through history and through the prophets, comes to complete fulfilment in the Incarnation.'³⁴⁹ This leads Temple to posit a 'Christo-centric metaphysics'³⁵⁰ which both sums up and gives meaning to creation: 'for that Life is a part of History, though it reveals the principle of the whole, and it is through its occurrence in the midst of History that History is fashioned into an exposition of the principle there revealed.'³⁵¹ True, as already noted, Temple is more wary of metaphysical super-structures in his later years, but it is clear that he continues to believe that such a Christo-centric metaphysic is still possible, and that Christ remains the root meaning of all creation.³⁵²

Crucial in this metaphysic is the sense that the Incarnation is not simply another example of the divine purpose actively revealed in creation, but the culmination of that purpose and as such an act that not only reflects the meaning both of creation and history but transcends and fulfils it. Christ is the keystone that not only lends the

³⁴⁶ Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 103.

³⁴⁷ Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 103. Again, 'as He is actually in relation to the world, I do not know why we should suppose we come closer to His true Nature when we leave that relation out of account. God as He is in Himself is God in relation to the world; God out of that relation to the world is precisely God as He is not, either in Himself or otherwise' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 97.

³⁴⁸ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 256. See also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 157.

³⁴⁹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 317.

³⁵⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, ix.

³⁵¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, viii. Again, the world's course is guided by God, 'and His appearance in the midst of it is just the most potent means by which He carries it forward to the completion of His eternal purpose' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 239, also 26, 140; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 156-157.

³⁵² Temple, 'Theology to-Day,' 333.

divine purpose as revealed in history its robustness, but also its final definitive shape; for God's self-expression to be perfect, creation must find its fulfilment in the Incarnation. Hence, for example, Temple can argue that, whilst Old Testament writers found that God was 'Spirit, constant, holy, almighty, and eternal, a Being of Majesty unapproachable... Such a belief Christ found in the world and took for granted. But the precise content of those terms He profoundly modified.'³⁵³ One might argue that the divine self-disclosure within creation and history might have been sufficient even without an incarnation, were it not for the fact of human sin; that sin, it might be claimed, so obscured the divine purpose that the Incarnation becomes a necessary corrective self-disclosure. Such a view seems to cut across the thrust of Temple's language: the divine purpose pre-existed the Fall; it is found echoed within creation and in a way that both prefigures and implies the intrinsic necessity of incarnation; that incarnation is integral to the self-expressive nature and purpose of God: all these elements point to the Incarnation understood not primarily as a means to substitutionary atonement but as an element in the divine plan for fellowship with creation.

Ramsey

Temple's language of prefiguring and fulfilment is echoed in Ramsey. Though perhaps drawing more conscious attention to the evils of the world in his writings, he nonetheless shares a sense with Temple of the world as eternally sacramental of God: '[t]he Wisdom of God is working through all created life, and far and wide is the sustainer and inspirer of the thought and endeavour of men.'³⁵⁴ There is a greater stress on the transcendence of God (here again constituting a reaction against that tendency to blur the boundary between human and divine found in a number of theologians of an earlier generation): '[t]he God of the Bible is manifested in His

³⁵³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 175. Again, '[t]he spirit of absolute service may be seen in every field to be the actual spirit of the whole of life. But we should never have found that it was so, if it had not broken out once in its full splendour in the Person of the Lord' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 145. See also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 17.

³⁵⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 125. Again, '[i]t is through the natural that we encounter the supernatural, although the supernatural eludes the ability of the natural to exhaust its meaning... transcendence is always near to the world and through it' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 26-27. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 73; Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 40; Michael Ramsey, *The Authority of the Bible* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1962), 21; Ramsey et al., *Come Holy Spirit*, 50. For more on the distinction between Ramsey's natural theology and that found in the wider Incarnation thought of which Temple was a part, see David Brown, 'God in the Landscape : Michael Ramsey's Vision,' *Anglican Theological Review* 83, no. 4 (2001), 783-787.

created works, and yet He transcends them all.³⁵⁵ Nonetheless Ramsey remains committed to the view that ‘all honest endeavour in science, in philosophy, in art, in history, manifests the Spirit of God. But the key to these mysteries of nature and of man is the Word-made-flesh.’³⁵⁶ Consequently, although Ramsey is critical of the speculative metaphysics of Temple’s generation, he nonetheless shares a sense that Christ is an hermeneutical key expressing the meaning of all creation as rooted in the self-giving love of God:

Is there within and beyond the universe any coherence or meaning or pattern or sovereignty? The New Testament doctrine is that in the death and resurrection of Jesus, in the fact of living through dying, of finding life through losing it, of the saving of self through the giving of self, there is this sovereignty. And to believe it with more than a bare intellectual consent is to believe it existentially, and to believe it existentially is to follow the way of finding life through losing it. Those who make their own the living-through-dying of Jesus find purpose, sovereignty, deity, in and beyond the world³⁵⁷

Not only does Christ express that meaning and purpose – as in Temple, his Incarnation is understood as consummating and fulfilling it. Hence Ramsey’s declaration that ‘[a]ll the ways of the tabernacling of God in Israel had been transitory or incomplete: *all* are fulfilled and superseded by the Word-made-flesh and dwelling among us.’³⁵⁸ Consequently,

[t]he manifestation of the glory of the Son of God is the climax of the activity of the Word who was in the beginning with God, created all that exists, and gave life to the whole creation and light to the human race. The event cannot be torn from its cosmic context. The glory which the disciples saw in Galilee, Jerusalem and Calvary is the glory of Him who

³⁵⁵ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 82.

³⁵⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 135.

³⁵⁷ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 99-100. Again, in citing de Chardin with approval, Ramsey concurs with his sense that, ‘there is a “Christliness” at a number of points in the process, which postulates a “divine-ness” belonging to the whole and to its beginning and its goal’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 112, also 42. See also Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 29, 46-47; Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 23; Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 3, 23, 96-97; Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 16, 19; Ramsey et al., *Come Holy Spirit*, 50; Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 76, 83; Ramsey, *The Christian Priest Today*, 16, 32-33.

³⁵⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 60. Again, ‘the Christian conception of our Lord’s Messiahship arose not from an amalgam of current notions but from a history which re-created them’ - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 104. Also Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 43; Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 47-48.

created the heavens and the earth and made Himself known in His created works, in providence, in history, and in the redemption of Israel...³⁵⁹

Here again Ramsey is clear: the Word's activity began *before* the Fall, was consistent with the divine nature and purpose, and reaches its climax within history in the Incarnation. Sin and atonement are subsumed in the Word's activity.

Temple: Philosophical Underpinning

Underpinning Temple's emphasis on the Incarnation as integral to the eternal divine purpose lies an appeal to a philosophical dialecticism which he finds woven into the fabric of creation and, as such, an intrinsic element in that process by which the unity of all things is revealed. In short, the nature of reality is such as to necessitate an incarnation as means to effecting the divine purpose. Temple is clear that those 'higher' elements in his four-fold account of the structure of reality cannot be explained solely in terms of the 'lower': 'the lower cannot explain the higher'³⁶⁰ (hence his earlier claim that the emergence of consciousness cannot be explained solely from within the evolutionary process). Consequently, there is an element in reality which always remains obscure and elusive: indeed, even the Incarnation is an action of spirit whose full purpose is only partially grasped.³⁶¹ The marshalling of the human will thus demands a wrestling with that which is higher as revealed in creation through a process of engagement and fellowship: when mind finds 'what is akin to it in its object' this recognition brings 'the escape of the self from its self-centredness because it involves a submission of all that is special or particular in the self to the impress of the object';³⁶² consequently 'the movement away from hampering self-centredness is a movement of response. It is an adaptation of the organism – an organism in which mind is the dominant principle – to its environment. The environment has the initiative. But the environment is the medium of divine activity.'³⁶³

³⁵⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 58.

³⁶⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 4. Again, '[w]e cannot interpret the higher and more complex in terms of the lower and simpler; rather we must interpret the lower in terms of the higher' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, xxix. See also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 83-85.

³⁶¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 139. The element of elusive obscurity is reflected in Temple's sense that 'the true apprehension of reality is attained not at the beginning but at the end of the mental process' of engagement with the divine - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 148.

³⁶² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 385.

³⁶³ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 387.

Moreover, for Temple, it was inherent to the nature of reality that the spirit's realisation within creation required differentiation,³⁶⁴ only through engagement with difference could the unity of reality be discerned: hence he could declare of human judgement that 'contradiction is at once its enemy and its stimulus... by the perpetual discovery of new contradiction it is forced on to a more and more systematic apprehension.'³⁶⁵ Again, 'living thought is circular'³⁶⁶ such that 'it is necessary to turn from generalisations to particulars and back again as often as possible.'³⁶⁷ Contradiction between Religion and Philosophy 'is inevitable'; nevertheless, 'as both are here assumed to have a rightful place in life, this tension must even be regarded as good.'³⁶⁸ Two key implications arise from this: firstly, if humanity struggles to discern the divine, that struggle should not be seen as exclusively a product of the Fall. Human sin may indeed impair humanity's ability to "see" God, but so too does the inherent nature of reality: the 'lower' cannot wholly explain the 'higher.' Secondly, the stress on dialecticism, coupled with Temple's sense that the 'higher' Mind can be most effectively revealed in conscious human minds suggests that the most effective revelation must be one with which human beings can enter into the deepest possible relational (dialectical) engagement – in other words, through experiential encounter of God in human lives as lived. Consequently, there is the 'possibility that a revelation of God should come through human nature, just because that human nature is in the image of God.'³⁶⁹

Relational experience of God is thus key to the marshalling of will: '[t]he intention of the term Good may be known *a priori*, but its extension only by experience; we can only tell what things are good by experience of those things.'³⁷⁰ Even then, the

³⁶⁴ In this Temple revealed the heavy influence of his Oxford tutor, Edward Caird. See, for example, Edward Caird, *The Evolution of Religion : The Gifford Lectures Delivered before the University of St. Andrew's in Sessions 1890-91 and 1891-92*, vol. I (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1899), 175.

³⁶⁵ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 66. See also Temple, *Religious Experience*, 136.

³⁶⁶ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 17; also Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 42-43; William Temple, "Theology, the Science of Religion : A Sermon Preached at St. Mary's Church before the University of Oxford on January 18, 1914," (Oxford: Blackwell, 1914), 5, 15.

³⁶⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 16. Again, 'agnosticism now, as heresy in the early Church, is the chief spur pricking men on to the discovery of theological truth' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, xii; also Temple, *Christianity in Thought* 39-41.

³⁶⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 54.

³⁶⁹ Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 24.

³⁷⁰ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 179, also 343. Equally, it is 'characteristic of the growth of Christian theology that religious experience should precede dogmatic formula' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 108,

experience requires interpretation: '[t]here are some people who always understand less than is said... That is why we all like bad art at first.'³⁷¹ That which is experienced is first and foremost the underlying unity of creation in the divine purpose,³⁷² and the sense of moral obligation which this brings.³⁷³ It has already been shown that, for Temple, Mind's ability to meet itself most fully in other minds serves as one basis for the Incarnation. Yet Temple is able to go further. On the basis of a philosophical account of the relationship between Art, Science and reality, Temple goes on to argue that Mind can best and most fully be revealed not in 'lives' in any generic sense, but in *a* single, unique life. Art, for Temple, takes precedence over Science: 'if the intellect is led by its own processes to the affirmation, or at least to the supposition, that the explanation of the Universe is to be found in the activity of a creative Will, it must go on to accept those human activities [Art, Ethics] which include some creative energy as surer guides to the constitution of Reality than its own special activity of science, which leaves its object as it finds it.'³⁷⁴

Dialecticism, Experience, and the Importance of Art

Temple's understanding of the dialectical process as a perpetual movement between the general and the particular lends further weight to this emphasis on Art. Science is always bound 'to ignore as far as possible the "this" in its efforts more perfectly to understand the "such."'³⁷⁵ Art, by contrast, calls upon imagination to reveal the unity of Creation by binding the universal into the particular: '[t]he infinite delicacy of the logical structure in the real world is only grasped by imagination when it apprehends the real in its concreteness with all the minute articulation which can never be artificially constructed by the intellect.'³⁷⁶ Only the object itself can convey the full

also 112. Also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 60-80, especially 60-66; also 128-129, 336, 380; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 4, 7-8, 39, 43.

³⁷¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 104.

³⁷² Experience 'is not an affair of isolated moments, it is a whole experience of life and the world, permeated through and through with religion' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 37.

³⁷³ 'We found that in all religious experience we are... vividly conscious of our own responsibility before God' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 150. Also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 62; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 105.

³⁷⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 12-13.

³⁷⁵ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 37.

³⁷⁶ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 39-40. Again, '[i]f lasting satisfaction is to be given, and perfect Beauty attained, all life must be packed into one work of art' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 125. Though Temple notes religious experience is, essentially, 'a whole experience of life and the world' yet in certain moments (such as the life of Christ) 'the whole significance of this is gathered up; but those moments derive the greater part of their importance from the fact that they neither are, nor are

truth: '[w]e all know the difference between a picture and a description of a picture. The description is all in general terms... the words do not call up before us the actual picture. No description can take the place of the picture itself...' ³⁷⁷ Consequently, intrinsic to appreciation is intimacy of engagement ³⁷⁸ in a manner which brings peace '[i]n the moment of deep appreciation, all movement of thought is checked; in place of the movement of thought there is the activity of receptive rest.' ³⁷⁹

The potential of a unique work of art to communicate the Universal is an inherent characteristic of reality. Once again, Temple would thus argue that the nature of reality calls for an incarnation for its consummation. Art shows that a naturally self-expressive God would, in order to attain the fulness of that self-expression, require revelation in an incarnate life. Moreover, Art is itself a vehicle for the realisation of Value:

if there is in the world of perception no object which embodies the "truth" in which Science culminates, it must call in the imagination, not as servant but as colleague or even as master, to create through Art what is not found in normal experience. The true beauty is something greater than what most men see in mountain or sky... the artist throws upon that scene a new light which transfigures and transforms what it illuminates. It adds new values of its own ³⁸⁰

Consequently, 'the value revealed in any object by the artist must be accepted not as imaginary, but as the real value, which we should have detected there ourselves had we the artist's faculty.' ³⁸¹ Art, as experienced, reveals God; and being so revealing, has the effect of creating value through the subject-object dialectic of appreciation. The argument is reinforced by Temple's emphasis on God as personal. Hence, for example, his declaration:

for two reasons the event in which the fullness of revelation is given must be the life of a Person: the first is that the revelation is to persons who can

thought to be, isolated or unique in kind; they are important because they bring to clear and vivid consciousness what is permanently present as a background to all experience' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 37. See also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 59, 88.

³⁷⁷ Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 32-33.

³⁷⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 30.

³⁷⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 157.

³⁸⁰ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 42; also 111.

³⁸¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 112.

fully understand only what is personal; the second is that the revelation is of a personal Being, who accordingly cannot be adequately revealed in anything other than personality. Moreover, if the Person who is Himself the revelation is to be truly adequate to that function, He must be one in essence with the Being whom He reveals³⁸²

The personal God can only be communicated to persons through the life of a person analogous to a perfect work of art: '[w]e need the fact of Christ, then, psychologically, because we are so constituted that if truth is to have full weight for us it must first be embodied.'³⁸³

The Place of Reason

Yet although experience is always primary in Temple's thought,³⁸⁴ he is careful to stress that such experience must also be reasonable – that is, make sense in terms of Temple's conviction of the 'rationality of the universe.'³⁸⁵ Logic reveals the underlying unity inherent to experience: citing Bosanquet with approval he notes that "by Logic we understand... the supreme Law or nature of experience, the impulse towards unity and coherence (the positive spirit of non-contradiction) by which every fragment yearns towards the whole to which it belongs."³⁸⁶ Logic likewise points to the Incarnation as the expression and fulfilment of the divine purpose: the core belief of Christianity 'can only be justified by the fact that it makes sense',³⁸⁷ 'Intellect and Imagination... reach their culmination in the apprehension and contemplation of the supreme principle of the universe adequately embodied or incarnate.'³⁸⁸ Yet reason in isolation would not be enough – 'the whole machinery by which the intellect

³⁸² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 319; again, 'personality can only reveal itself in persons' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 266; also 254, 305. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 49; also 116, 233.

³⁸³ Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 59. Christ the perfect work of art fulfils and transcends Art, as he does Science and Morality: all of these, from all eternity have pointed towards an Incarnation, and all require that Incarnation for their completion - here again there is a sense of the Incarnation as needed to fulfil something eternal, irrespective of human sin: 'while Science and Art and Morality struggle towards their goal and only realise their need for it, God gives Himself as the satisfaction of that need...' - Temple, *Church and Nation*, 135-136; '[w]e have, as it were, converging lines which never meet; and we have also the point at which we see they would meet if produced' - Temple, *Church and Nation*, 137.

³⁸⁴ 'The experience comes first; the formulation comes later' - Temple, 'The Godhead of Jesus,' 14.

³⁸⁵ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 1-2. Again, '[t]he Universe turns out to be a rational whole' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 11.

³⁸⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 108.

³⁸⁷ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 217; also 223. Again, 'in no department may the claims of the intellect be ignored or flouted, nor the admissibility of its method be denied' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 68; also 154.

³⁸⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 161.

works is incapable of leading to a full grasp of Reality’;³⁸⁹ nevertheless, its role is crucial as a means to test experience and ‘aid our estimate of our approximations to valid thought or true knowledge, in an experience which exists side by side with, and at first undistinguishable from, prejudices, casual opinions, and products of mere self-assertiveness.’³⁹⁰ Whilst Gessell³⁹¹ is undoubtedly right that Temple lays greater emphasis on experience in his later works, yet the appeal to reason remains an important element in his thought: for Temple there ‘neither is, nor can be, any element in human experience which may claim exemption from examination at the bar of reason.’³⁹²

The philosophical basis of reality thus reinforces the sense that the Incarnation was the consummation of the divine purpose as revealed in creation: Christ is the perfect work of art, even as the Incarnation transcends Art and Science. The power of God ‘could only reach its own plenitude by manifesting itself in a form that men could understand. God was guiding human history before the Incarnation... But the power of God over men’s hearts and wills could not in the nature of the case be complete until it had revealed itself intelligibly. For God had made men so that their full response could only be given to what they understood.’³⁹³ The Incarnation is consistent with the fabric of creation, quite independently of the consequences of human sin.

Ramsey: Dialecticism, Experience and the Incarnation

Dialecticism: Comparison with Temple

Ramsey may have largely rejected the philosophical metaphysics of Temple, but dialecticism remained a key feature of his thought. There is an instinctively

³⁸⁹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 73. Again, ‘[i]ntercourse with God or with men is not the conclusion of an argument, but a mode of experience. Knowledge of the living God comes not from Greece or from philosophy but from Palestine and from religious experience’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 175. Also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 59; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 320.

³⁹⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 105. Again, ‘it seems to me that the demand of Reason and the religious experience support one another; either without the other would be precarious’ - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 21-22; also 7, 44-45, 145-146.

³⁹¹ Gessell, ‘Beyond Nature, Man and God,’ 236.

³⁹² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 17.

³⁹³ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 341. Again, ‘[w]e shall never feel the necessity of adoration until we have seen God manifest in a life comparable in its mode with our own, because it is just the comparison that brings us to our knees. It is when God is most human that he is most unmistakably divine’ - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 51; also 47-49, 55, 143. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 115.

synthesising tendency in his approach, driven by an open, critical engagement with new ideas itself underpinned by the conviction that ‘[i]n the things that are made the everlasting power and divinity of God are discernible by man.’³⁹⁴ That synthesising tendency was seen most clearly during his tenure as Archbishop of Canterbury, at a time of theological radicalism. Thus, for example, whilst rejecting ‘Death of God’ theories, he yet argues that ‘these theories call for more study than they deserve. I cannot forget the plea of William Temple that some truth or other lurks beneath every erroneous position.’³⁹⁵ There is an ever-present ‘danger of theology becoming meaningless through not learning from the world which it sets out to teach.’³⁹⁶ There are strong echoes too of Temple’s argument that in the human mind the divine finds the most effective vehicle for its self-expression: ‘those who cherish God’s transcendence will know that it is within the secular city that it has to be vindicated and that the transcendent and the numinous are to be seen not in a separated realm of religious practice but in human lives marked by an awe-inspiring self-forgetfulness, compassion, humility and courage.’³⁹⁷ Consequently, ‘[t]he Church will therefore reverence every honest activity of the minds of men; it will perceive that therein the Spirit of God is moving.’³⁹⁸ As a result, Ramsey is careful to stress the unique individual humanity of Christ: Bultmann is criticised for failing to recognise the degree to which the New Testament emphasised ‘the man Jesus...’;³⁹⁹ the gospels reveal ‘a real, visible, human figure who challenges men not just as a kind of

³⁹⁴ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 83. Equally, revelation is understood in terms of dialectical fellowship: ‘[m]ay not the process of revelation in the scriptures be likened to a dialogue of disclosure and response? ... [whereas] In Christ the Yea of revelation is unblurred and the Amen of response is flawless’ - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 20.

³⁹⁵ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 33. Again, ‘If secular Christianity is in danger of losing Christian identity it is none the less within the secular city and not apart from it that the meaning of transcendence must be rediscovered’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 105. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 25, 167; Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, ix, 7, 47, 55-56; Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 34; Michael Ramsey, *Image Old and New* (London: SPCK, 1963), 3, 11.

³⁹⁶ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 106. Again, ‘[a]ll of us who try to follow Christ must learn from one another with the humility which can listen as well as the candour which can speak’ - Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 38.

³⁹⁷ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 29-30. Again, the Incarnation gains credibility when ‘we reflect, first, that there is the antecedent affinity between God and man as made in the divine image, with the potentiality of the greatest fellowship between creator and creature that is imaginable; and second, that the essence of deity is self-giving love, with a potentiality of self-giving beyond the measure of human analogies’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 95; also 28, 100.

³⁹⁸ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 125.

³⁹⁹ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 55.

incognito within whom deity is veiled but as one who can be known in and for himself and loved and imitated.’⁴⁰⁰

Yet Temple and Ramsey are not quite so close as might at first appear. Ramsey lacks the sense that dialecticism is an *essential* element in the process whereby God is discerned in creation; nor is it quite clear that he shares Temple’s sense that it is an inherent fact of reality that the divine must needs communicate through a human life. That this is so perhaps has more to say about his wariness of speculative metaphysics than it does about his views on the divine method of self-revelation. It is important to remember that Ramsey begins with theology; he lays before his reader the figure of Christ, the unique metaphysical key to reality: if Christ is indeed so utterly transparent to the divine that Ramsey can go so far as to say that ‘God is Christlike,’⁴⁰¹ then it follows by inference that a human life is thereby revealed as the perfect vehicle for divine self-revelation. Moreover, if the divine nature is inherently self-expressive, and if the divine love can know no limit to its self-giving, then it seems logical that the divine would choose that means most conducive to self-expression to reveal himself – in practice, a human life – and as a matter of course, irrespective of human sin. Here again, it is the particular which reveals the universal: ‘*this* Jesus, who was known as a person and is even now to some degree knowable, died and rose again and confronts us with a salvation which issues in a union with his own manhood.’⁴⁰² Ramsey’s sense of Christ as metaphysical key is underlined by his on-going sense that the Church, in order to be perfect, must follow the example of God in Christ:

The Incarnation was not only the condescension of Creator to creature, of infinite to finite, but also the condescension of the wisdom of the divine Word to the modes of human utterance. Jesus, the Word, spoke the Aramaic of his time and expressed the meaning of the divine kingdom partly through the imagery of Hebrew prophecy and apocalyptic and partly through parables drawn from the everyday life of his hearers. The church in its proclamation of Jesus as the Wisdom and the Word is called to follow the way of the Incarnation⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 76. Again, the Resurrection ‘was not the Resurrection of “X”, it was the Resurrection of Jesus whose life and teaching had already made their impact’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 91. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 48.

⁴⁰¹ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 41.

⁴⁰² Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 21.

⁴⁰³ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 106-107.

Hence it seems that even without the metaphysical superstructure found in Temple one can still claim that Ramsey's account of the inherent nature of creation is such as to lead to an incarnation irrespective of human sin.

Dialecticism, Experience and History

Ramsey's emphasis on dialecticism underpins his appeal to experience: too often 'Revelation is seen as the contents of a book rather than as the dynamic process of persons, events, and witness which brought the book into existence.'⁴⁰⁴ Where Temple's thought in this respect is rooted in philosophy, Ramsey's is rooted in history. God acts in history: Christianity is 'an historical religion;'⁴⁰⁵ only through fellowship grounded in concrete encounter can God truly be known: '[t]he disciples cannot understand the Kingdom until they know the Messiah.'⁴⁰⁶ Equally, objective historical events serve to check subjective excess in experience, in just the same way that logic and philosophical metaphysics serve a similar task for Temple. Thus, for example, it is the *historical* nature of the Incarnation, and in particular of the crucifixion which serves as a valuable safeguard against an over-spiritualising tendency: '[w]e have seen the "spiritual group" in Corinth who need reminding of *historical* Christianity and of the one Body.'⁴⁰⁷ To be fair, history also serves to check subjective excess in Temple's schema: thus, for example, the revelation given to the Prophets 'escapes the perils of pure subjectivism, which always accompany special moments of religious experience, for the reference of the illumination is not

⁴⁰⁴ Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 8. Again, '[i]t has always been the belief of Christians that God revealed himself in a unique way in the story of Jesus, and this belief has given to Christianity its character as an historical religion. But Christians also believe that this experience is corroborated in experience through a divine power in saintly lives in the subsequent centuries' - Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 9.

⁴⁰⁵ Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 9. Again, fellowship 'is essentially fellowship with the historical events' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 48.

⁴⁰⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 28, also 124. Again, '[w]ithin the daily decisions and relationships of the world around us we encounter God, and we learn the meaning of our theology in human terms' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 116. Also Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 14.

⁴⁰⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 56. Also Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 57. Looking back on his career, Ramsey recognises the influence on his own thought of the rather simplistic understanding of history characteristic of early twentieth century theology (Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 24-26); whilst he acknowledges the realisation within theology that historical fact was not so easily distinguished from interpretation (Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 26-27), he nonetheless still sought to affirm the continuing importance of 'living history' and the gospel's rootedness in historical event - Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 32.

to a feeling but to a historical fact.’⁴⁰⁸ Likewise, history has an authority which points forward to the Incarnation as the culmination of divine progress: ‘[t]his continuity of development along constant and converging lines is evidence of a continuing illumination; and if in some event the converging lines of development meet and all find their fulfilment, that is corroborative evidence of authentic revelation alike in the preparatory and in the culminating stages.’⁴⁰⁹

Yet Temple’s appeal to history falls *within* a broader, articulated philosophical framework;⁴¹⁰ Ramsey’s does not. Consequently, Ramsey’s appeal to history raises a key question: if God acts in history, he does so in the aftermath of the Fall; could God’s self-revelation in a human life be a product of human sin, a response forced out of the divine that would not otherwise have occurred? If so, does atonement and human sin play an altogether larger role in his rationale for the Incarnation than heretofore claimed? Clearly, Temple’s philosophical contention that the divine is always, from all eternity, most effectively revealed in the particular of a human life might well have bolstered Ramsey’s case here, and the two positions are not mutually exclusive. However, as with his appeal to dialecticism, Ramsey would respond primarily by emphasising the unique revelation of God in Christ as the true metaphysical key to reality: the self-expressive God can *only* be satisfied by perfect self-revelation; given that this is achieved in Christ, so then experiential encounter with Christ in a human life must from all eternity be essential to the fullest divine self-disclosure. Yet doubts remain. Given that Ramsey grounds his appeal to divine experiential encounter in the historical interaction of God and humanity – ‘*post-Fall*’ – might it not be argued that, had there been no sin, and had, in consequence, *other* historical circumstances thereby prevailed, God might yet have found some other way perfectly to reveal himself rather than through engagement with a human life as lived?

The thesis might seem vulnerable on this point, were it not for the fact that Ramsey sees in humanity’s encounter with Christ above all else an *experience of the divine*

⁴⁰⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 341. Again, the ‘main field of Revelation must be the history of men’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 305, also 312, 354.

⁴⁰⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 324.

⁴¹⁰ Witness, for example, his assertion that ‘the higher you go in the development of religion, the more vital does the historical element of the religion become’ - Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 3.

purpose and nature, and not – as might be the case if sin were more central – a dominant sense of human sin coupled with the divine demand for atonement; if the Fall had been the primary event prompting the Incarnation, it would be logical to assume that sin and atonement would play a much more dominant role in his account of experience than they in fact do. Much the same is true of Temple: here again, it is the divine nature and purpose which subsumes all else in the experience of God. This can clearly be seen in the subtle differences between each man’s account of experience. For Temple, there is a stronger sense that experience is intrinsically intellectually satisfying: the power of God ‘could only reach its plenitude by manifesting itself in a form that men could understand...’;⁴¹¹ in its experiential apprehension of the unity of creation in God the mind ‘experiences a joy which springs from unimpeded exercise of its energies.’⁴¹² There is likewise a stronger sense in Temple’s account of the subject remaining distinct from the object, even in its experience of that object. In Ramsey, by contrast, there is a greater emphasis on the subject *sharing in* the experience of the object in a much closer union.

The distinction becomes clearer when comparing Temple and Ramsey’s accounts of human engagement with the crucifixion. Temple: ‘to realise what my selfishness means to the Father who loves me with a love such as Christ reveals, fills me with horror of the selfishness and calls out an answering love... His love, shown pre-eminently in His Death, has transforming power over all who open their heart to it.’⁴¹³ Ramsey: the disciples ‘cannot know Him unless they face the necessity of His death... [and] the Lord teaches that they will never understand it except by sharing in it.’⁴¹⁴ The distinction is very slight, but nonetheless reveals the degree to which, crucially, for each man experience always carries the indelible imprint of the divine nature, underpinning all that is revealed. For Temple’s purposive God, the crucifixion ‘calls out an answering love’ in pursuit of the divine purpose; for Ramsey’s self-giving God, experience is only authentic when it involves sharing in the divine self-sacrifice. In other words, for both men experience evidences more

⁴¹¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 341.

⁴¹² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 118.

⁴¹³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 263.

⁴¹⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 28. The ‘death is spiritually unintelligible except the disciples share in it’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 34.

than just the cost of human sin and atonement: it reveals the divine nature which lies behind those actions *and subsumes them*.

Temple: What Does the Incarnation Achieve?

So far it has been shown that the Incarnation as experienced is rooted in, and prompted by, the divine nature as expressed in the inherent character of reality. Is that link borne out in practice, in each man's presentation of the incarnate Christ - his life, death and resurrection? Is the emphasis in that account focussed on the divine nature and purpose, or is it on the overcoming of human sin through atonement? Of course, the two are not mutually exclusive: atonement is a means of furthering the divine purpose; the divine purpose necessitates atonement. Moreover, it would be a surprise if each man's account of the Incarnation were *not* consistent with their sense of the divine nature. Yet if the contention of this thesis is correct – that the realisation of fellowship with God is the dominant note in the Incarnation – then it is inevitably necessary to show that this divine purpose predominates over atonement as the main focus of their account.

Fulfilling the Divine Purpose

Temple's account of the Incarnation reveals just this consistency between Christ's life and the divine purpose: '[t]he whole process of that revelation which has been going on through nature, through history and through the prophets, comes to complete fulfilment in the Incarnation.'⁴¹⁵ Temple stresses, above all, that the Incarnation is the means whereby, through fellowship, the human will can be marshalled to the divine purpose for the realisation of Value. As already noted, 'true individual freedom... is found when the character is fashioned into so true a unity that in all its acts it expresses itself completely';⁴¹⁶ insofar as creation is an expression of the divine, there is therein an inherent spiritual unity 'in which the parts fully realise their membership.'⁴¹⁷ The power to marshal the human will lies in humanity's perception of this underlying unity, of being 'at-home' and of finding meaning and purpose (and obligation) in that which is akin to itself in the whole,

⁴¹⁵ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 317.

⁴¹⁶ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 218.

⁴¹⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 218.

such that fellowship is created with God.⁴¹⁸ Whilst creation reveals something of that divine purposive unity, it does so in a way which is not, in itself, enough to win the human will; the knowledge of divine unity in creation ‘will perhaps not help us to do what we want to do, but it may help us to want to do the right thing.’⁴¹⁹

Christ the perfect work of art, the expression of the divine personality, above all reveals the underlying unity of creation grounded in that loving purpose wherein humanity finds itself: ‘[t]he revelation of the eternal in Christ’s life forbids us to find the meaning of man’s life only, or even chiefly, within the process of successive events which make up man’s terrestrial history. It is to be found in a new creation’⁴²⁰ – a creation grounded in obligation to share in the realisation of Value. The ‘spiritual authority of revelation depends wholly upon the spiritual quality of what is revealed’;⁴²¹ consequently ‘[t]he spiritual authority of God is that which he exercises by displaying not His power, but His character. Holiness, not omnipotence, is the spring of His spiritual authority.’⁴²² In Christ, the love of God is uniquely and perfectly revealed, and the control ‘that is exercised over a human being by one who loves him and, revealing that love intelligibly and unmistakably, calls out from him an answering love, is far more complete than that exercised by an authority which gives orders’;⁴²³ consequently, ‘when God is revealed as Love, this can no longer be a solitary experience; it becomes an incorporation into the fellowship of all those

⁴¹⁸ Hence ‘in postulating the coherence of the system of Truth or Reality we are formulating a Purpose – the Purpose that our own experience shall become coherent with the coherence ascribed to ultimate Reality’ - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 78. As the will is marshalled to that underlying purpose so comes ‘true self-control’ and that ‘perfect harmony of the soul where all capacities are used and all instincts satisfied in the pursuit of a life’s purpose’ - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 217. Also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 500-501.

⁴¹⁹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 33 .

⁴²⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 211.

⁴²¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 347.

⁴²² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 348, also 349.

⁴²³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 156. Again, ‘the work that is to be done is a spiritual work and must, therefore, be accomplished through the free assent of the people in whom that work is wrought. So long as the power of God is unnoticed, so long even as it is inadequately understood, our response cannot be complete... What we need is the manifestation of the divine power and the divine purpose such as will win from our hearts free allegiance and answering love. We need something upon which our imaginations can lay holds, something which will mould our affections, something which will change our will; and that can never be done except by something that we can appreciate; and we cannot appreciate what is not before us. God cannot be omnipotent except by the revelation of His Love. By His power He could control our actions, but not our wills. If He is to be Lord of all that exists, He must be Lord of our wills... God can only control our wills through a complete and intelligible manifestation of His Love’ - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 149-150; also 110. Also Temple, *Church and Nation*, 14.

whom God loves and who in answer are beginning to love Him.’⁴²⁴ In this, the most fundamental element in Temple’s presentation of Christ, there is a deep harmony with his distinctive presentation of the divine nature and purpose.

Only through encounter with Christ, then, can the will be marshalled: the divine quest for fellowship can be traced throughout history, but heretofore always proved partial and incomplete, risking the danger of

one or other of two limiting conditions. Either the influence implanted within a man’s own character is so strong as to make him as a separate being a mere automaton, or else it is one influence among others, to which the character in process of formation must deliberately submit. In the former case, freedom is destroyed... In the latter case, the free choice of the individual remains, and the reasons which make freedom give birth to pride will prevent the absolute surrender which is needed for the realisation of a complete divine indwelling [consequently] the chances of success on any wide scale are, *a priori*, so small that no reasonable hope of “salvation” can be based on it. The existence of this divine potency in every man is, however, what makes possible the success of the other method...⁴²⁵

It might be noted that Temple sees sin (defined here as pride) as impairing humanity’s ability to perceive the unity of creation and to enter into fellowship with God. Consequently, one might argue that sin so impaired fellowship as to draw from God the more radical step of incarnation – a step that would not otherwise have been needed or taken. Yet the ‘existence of this divine potency’ implies a characteristic inherent to human nature; if God’s quest is indeed for the fullest possible fellowship with humanity, grounded in a revelation of the unity of creation, with mind finding itself most fully in that which is most akin to itself, then it seems logical to conclude that only through a physical incarnation could the fullest possible perception of unity be realised: that divine potency makes possible the ‘other method’, that is ‘that God should Himself enter the course of human history by taking into Himself the experience of mankind as focussed in some one of its centres.’⁴²⁶ Unity, and the sense of obligation to the divine purpose which it brings, is thus only fully discerned

⁴²⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 169.

⁴²⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 216-217.

⁴²⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 217.

through fellowship with Christ, and it is this element which predominates in Temple's account of the Incarnation.

Fellowship as an End in Itself

Temple's presentation of the incarnate Christ likewise incorporates that sense of fellowship as an end in itself already noted in his account of the divine nature: here again there is a consistency which reinforces the sense of fellowship as the dominant note. Temple speaks of God's loving sharing in human experience in a manner reminiscent of Ramsey: 'the Son of God has made our condition matter of His own experience. To the sympathy and insight of omniscient love no limit can be set, and we dare not say that after the Incarnation He understood us better than before. But it is mere matter of historic fact that before the Incarnation men could not say, and after the Incarnation we thankfully can say, concerning the Eternal Son Himself: "in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."⁴²⁷ Just as there is a carefully framed sense of the divine as dependent on his creation for his self-disclosure, so there is a sense for Temple that in Christ there is a real enrichment of the divine:

[i]t is sometimes said that the Incarnation and the experiences of Jesus Christ on earth cannot have made any difference to God. But this is only a half-truth. Eternally God is what He revealed Himself in Jesus Christ to be; therefore to say that He then became this would be false. But temporally God passed from creation to creation... and continually He passes from experience to experience. This does not make Him different, but it does not leave Him unaffected... If He is thus affected by temporal occurrences, this must be true especially of the Incarnation. God eternally is what we see in Christ; but temporally the Incarnation, the taking of Manhood into God, was a real enrichment of the Divine Life. God loved before; but love (at least as we know it) becomes fully real only in its activity, which is sacrifice. Temporally considered, we must say that the Love, which eternally God is in full perfection, attained its temporal climax when Christ died on the Cross... The act of sacrifice enters into the very fibre of love and makes the love deeper and stronger... At that time God put forth His power; but also God therein fulfilled Himself⁴²⁸

Temple's presentation is thus consistent with a divine nature which, in its essence, seeks the perfect self-revelation of divine love - and as a means to winning the

⁴²⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 144-145.

⁴²⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 279-280.

reflection of that love from creation. Consequently, fellowship ‘in the measure of its attainment passes over into worship, of which the meaning is total self-giving and self-submission to the Object of worship.’⁴²⁹ This stress on worship brings a coherence and unity between the thought of Temple and Ramsey, though Temple goes on to stress that communion of creature with Creator ‘*is worship and obedience*’⁴³⁰ – and that obedience is, of course, obedience to a purposive realisation of value.

Temple’s Overall Presentation of the Incarnate Christ

The degree to which it is the divine purpose which shapes Temple’s account of the Incarnation is likewise reflected in the relative weighting given by him to the life of Christ over and against his death and resurrection. It has been shown that the metaphysical unity of creation, grounded in God, is a recurring theme in Temple’s thought; that unity is, above all, a unity of purpose. Temple’s account of the divine nature emphasised the importance of marshalling the will in such wise as to unite the personality behind the divine purpose: ‘the task of man is to achieve inner and outer unity – the inner unity of complete personality and the outer unity of a perfected fellowship as wide as humanity.’⁴³¹ Indeed, that unity of personality is revealed in action: ‘it is the responsible exercise of deliberate choice which most fully expresses personality and best deserves the great name of freedom... it is in and through his freedom that a man makes fully real his personality.’⁴³² Above all, it is revealed in the inherent unity of the life as lived: the man will only be altogether himself if he can succeed in so organising his nature and his activities that all his various capacities and impulses have scope in the maintenance and promotion of a life through which they find their expression.’⁴³³

It is precisely this account of the unity of the individual which is found in Temple’s description of Christ, and which leads him to emphasise *the whole* of Christ’s life as lived, with the cross and Resurrection as a summative expression of that whole, yet

⁴²⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 518.

⁴³⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 354.

⁴³¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 158.

⁴³² Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 67. Again, ‘it is in life rather than in speech that personality finds its full expression’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 233.

⁴³³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 59.

in essence wholly consonant with it. In this sense, the focus on cross and Resurrection is primarily concerned with their unity with the life of Christ as revelatory of the divine purpose. Sin and atonement are not ignored – as the next chapter will show – but *are* downplayed and subsumed into that wider divine purpose. Hence Temple can declare that it is ‘only through His Birth and Life and Death and Resurrection that the Spirit could be sent.’⁴³⁴ Again, he teases out the unity between the death and the life: ‘the perfect sacrifice of Christ is not limited to His Death; it consists not in any momentary offering but in the perfection of His obedience, which was always complete. The Death is not other than the Life; it was its inevitable result and its appropriate climax. It is Christ’s union of humanity with God in perfect obedience which is the essential sacrifice, of which the Cross is the uttermost expression and essential symbol.’⁴³⁵ The cross and Resurrection – and, by implication, sin and atonement, are thus set within the wider context of Christ’s life as revelation of the divine nature and purpose.

Consequently, there is a sense for Temple that the *actions* of an incarnate life better express the divine nature and unity than can words or teaching: ‘it is in life rather than in speech that personality finds its fullest expression.’⁴³⁶ This is consonant with his emphasis on dialectical, experiential encounter as the most effective means for discerning the divine: intimacy of fellowship, rather than attention to specific teaching, is key; consequently, the Bible is not to be seen as revelation in itself, but as a record of revelation.⁴³⁷ The importance of fellowship is further reinforced by his emphasis on the subjective nature of the disciples’ own experiential encounter with Christ. The sense of that subjectivism as flawed is providential: ‘the purely spiritual authority of the revelation is secured by this removal of what would otherwise have

⁴³⁴ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 320. Again, ‘[i]f Christ designed to evoke a response spiritual in every part, He must write no book, but leave the general impact of His Person and Work to reach mankind in general through the account of Him which His disciple would give’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 351.

⁴³⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 238.

⁴³⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 233. Again, words are ‘too articulate for the deepest feelings, which are best expressed by a gesture which suggests their totality without any analysis of their content...’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 232. Also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 311.

⁴³⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 307-308. Again, ‘the revelation itself came in a living experience; that in it which is of permanent authority is not capable of being stated in formulae; it is the living apprehension of the divine will in living intercourse of the human spirit with the divine’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 343.

been the almost coercive quality of its divine origin;⁴³⁸ moreover, ‘almost every divine message has direct application to a particular occasion, and it is impossible to declare with certainty how far it applies to any other occasion.’⁴³⁹ Consequently, ‘Christians must exercise their own insight and their own intelligence, not only in judging whether or not to submit themselves to Him as Lord, but also in estimating the claim on their allegiance of any particular recorded direction... The mode of the revelation as it reaches us renders inevitable a large exercise of private judgement, which is the essentially spiritual principle.’⁴⁴⁰ The right exercise of such judgement can only be effective when rooted in fellowship with the divine: hence, for example, ‘[w]hen the lover finds beauty where others find none, both are right; they are looking at different objects: the indifferent see the physical form; the lover... sees... a soul that can only be revealed to love.’⁴⁴¹ Temple’s understanding of the divine nature can thus be seen moulding his account of the Incarnation, and through it, his whole theological schema, including his ecclesiology and ethics.⁴⁴² This, of course, is hardly surprising, though it does lend support to Schmiechen’s linkage of Incarnation, Atonement and ecclesiology. More importantly, it highlights the fact that Temple’s presentation of the Incarnation is wholly consistent with his account of the divine nature as presented in this thesis; that consistency does not negate the importance of sin and atonement, but it does reinforce the sense that both are downplayed in his thought and should be set within the wider context of God’s ultimate concern for fellowship.

⁴³⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 351.

⁴³⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 342.

⁴⁴⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 351.

⁴⁴¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 96. Worship, grounded in faith, is thus crucial to the theological task. Hence he would argue that the “objective” academic approach to theology ‘properly corresponds to the analytical study of the score between two occasions of hearing great music [but] we shall not expect the divine self-disclosure to be made at that stage or in that form. Rather we shall expect to find it in the tumultuous surge and the serene calm of the world’s music itself. Theologians will play the part of musical critics, analysing and summarising; but they too will return from theology to worship’ - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 317.

⁴⁴² Hence there is an incarnational element to Temple’s account of ethics: ‘it is in fact always impossible to lay down universal moral rules with regard to acts’ (Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 200). Context, and an adherence to the underlying spirit of Christ’s life is the key.

Ramsey: What does the Incarnation Achieve?

Fulfilment of the Divine Purpose

Ramsey's account of the Incarnation is equally consistent with his presentation of the divine nature and purpose. Thus he emphasises the Incarnation as the expression of the divine self-giving nature: 'the climax of God's mercies in history (creation, preservation, Sabbaths, Passover, people of God) is the death of the Christ, in which God's whole work in the world and in Israel is summed up...'⁴⁴³ Christ's life is thus the revelation of divine glory: 'the glory of God in all eternity is that ceaseless self-giving love of which Calvary is the measure.'⁴⁴⁴ At the heart of that self-giving is the desire to enter into human experience as an end in itself:

From the first, the will to die was part of the Messiah's identification with men. By His baptism in Jordan He places Himself where the sinners had been bidden by John the Baptist to go, declaring thereby that He will cleanse sinners not as one who stands apart from them, but as one who shares utterly in the consequences of their sin. In His temptations in the wilderness He is again seen "in all things made like unto His brethren." And all His intercourse with men is a sharing of their lives which points to His death and its completion... In the manner of His coming there is disclosed already the meaning of "fellowship" between God and men⁴⁴⁵

The cross is thus defined, first and foremost, as an act of love: 'Good Friday meant God's self-giving love... God was doing more than sending a messenger to tell the world how greatly he cared, he was caring so greatly that he came and gave his own self.'⁴⁴⁶

Above all, Christ 'came to earth to show us God and the possibilities of human fellowship with God as being an eternal thing.'⁴⁴⁷ The degree to which that revelation helps to give meaning to existence underscores the extent to which it is

⁴⁴³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 103. Again, 'in the Cross... God discloses the essence of what it is to be God' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 43.

⁴⁴⁴ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 41, also 99.

⁴⁴⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 23. Again, '[t]he Love and Glory being what they were, in a world of suffering, suffering was inevitable but equally being what they were victory was inevitable' - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.149-157. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 125; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 42, 43, 46, 59.

⁴⁴⁶ Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 18.

⁴⁴⁷ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Transcription of television interview dated 31st March 1963. v.315 f.18.

rooted in expression of the divine nature as revealed in creation: '[b]y sharing in the broken body and the blood outpoured, the disciples will find interpreted both the crucifixion and the whole divine creation.'⁴⁴⁸ Like Temple, Ramsey acknowledges that sin creates a barrier between humanity and the divine, and one which admittedly reinforced the need for an incarnation: 'the glory of Yahveh in His purpose in history is clouded by Israel's sinfulness.'⁴⁴⁹ Consequently, post-Fall, Israel's scriptures and institutions both flagged up humanity's impotence to glorify God and 'pointed forward to an act of glory and a response of glorifying beyond the power of sinful man.'⁴⁵⁰ As with Temple, it might be argued from this that sin created such a barrier between God and humanity that *only* an incarnation could overcome it – an incarnation that, not otherwise being needed, would not have occurred. On such a view, sin and atonement would become a far more dominant note in Ramsey's account of God and the Incarnation. Yet this would be to ignore the emphasis in Ramsey of an intrinsic divine love seeking the fullest possible entry into human experience. Yes, human sin may have moulded the incarnate life, such that death and suffering became a dominant characteristic, but – to use Ramsey's own words – though sin 'clouded' the divine purpose it did not wholly obscure it, or its dominant concern for just that fulness of self-expression which points forward to an incarnation.

This sense that Christ's "dealing" with sin was subsumed within a wider purpose of fellowship is underpinned by the central emphasis given by Ramsey to the Incarnation as the means of effecting that worship understood as the reflection of the divine glory. For Ramsey, humanity alone is incapable of fully reflecting that glory, in spite of being made in God's image. Here again, one might ask – could it be sin that impairs humanity's ability to fulfil this task, stymying God's inherently self-revealing nature? Perhaps, in part. Yet it must be remembered that Ramsey is clear that the fulness of the divine glory is to be found only within the Trinity, whose very

⁴⁴⁸ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 103. Again, 'as He went to die, He embodied in His own flesh the whole meaning of the church of God; for its Baptism, its Eucharist, its order, the truth which it teaches to men, the unity which it offers to them, all these mean simply – "ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God"' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 224. See also Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 119.

⁴⁴⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 92.

⁴⁵⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 93.

essence is ‘the activity of love’;⁴⁵¹ if the divine nature seeks its own reflection in creation then it must find it only in as much as that creation is brought into the Trinity *through its union with Christ and in the power of Christ’s own self-giving love*. Ramsey is clear that only the incarnate Christ was capable of being the one perfect human being, making possible that action of reflecting back to God the divine nature which is the essence of worship. Hence, ‘[t]he perfect act of worship is seen only in the Son of Man. By Him alone there is made the perfect acknowledgement upon earth of the glory of God and the perfect response to it.’⁴⁵² Only as we gaze on the face of Christ are we ‘being transformed into His likeness and brought, more and more, to share in the glory’ that is self-giving love.⁴⁵³ It is the Spirit that makes possible humanity’s sharing in Christ: only ‘the fellowship which shares in His death and resurrection shall be led by the Holy Spirit to interpret all life and all history,’⁴⁵⁴ the ‘perfect seeing’ of God ‘awaits the transforming of mankind into the image of Christ.’⁴⁵⁵ Thus the Holy Spirit ensures ‘the splendour of Christ is more and more reflected in the lives of men’⁴⁵⁶ such that ‘the participation in the unity of the Father and the Son which He gives to the disciples is nothing less than their participation in the glory which the Father gives to Him.’⁴⁵⁷

The New Creation

The sense of the divine nature purposing a new creation is likewise mirrored in the work of Ramsey’s incarnate Christ, and in a way reinforcing the linkage of creation and redemption. That linkage is reflected in Christ: ‘the receiving of the image of

⁴⁵¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 212. Again, ‘[t]he doctrine of the Trinity is the affirmation that self-giving is characteristic of Being, that mutuality of self-giving love belongs to God’s perfection...’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 99.

⁴⁵² Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 93, also 77. Again, ‘worship was and is the *Liturgy*, the divine action whereby the people of God share in the self-oblation of the Christ’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 108. Also Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 87.

⁴⁵³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 52. Again, ‘Man’s true glory is the reflection in him of the divine glory, the self-giving love seen in Jesus’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 100. The key characteristic of the first Christians was ‘a spirit of doxology’ which filled them ‘amid all that they do and suffer’ - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 96, also 84, 87, 131.

⁴⁵⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 124. Again, when God ‘suffers with his suffering creation it is the suffering of a love which through suffering can conquer and reign. Love and omnipotence are one’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 41.

⁴⁵⁵ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 90.

⁴⁵⁶ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 74.

⁴⁵⁷ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 80. Again, prayer ‘is the sharing by men in the one action of Christ, through their dying to their own egotisms as they are joined in one Body with His death and resurrection’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 94; also 105.

Christ from glory unto glory cannot be separated from the bestowal of the righteousness of God.⁴⁵⁸ As with Ramsey's broader account of the divine purpose, the precise nature of the link is not immediately clear. For example, he can argue that part of the evidence in favour of the Incarnation is the 'antecedent fulfilment between the Creator and creature in view of man's creation in God's image.'⁴⁵⁹ The notion of an 'antecedent fulfilment' prefiguring that fulfilment found in Christ implies a sense of restoration, and as such seems to throw attention back onto the cross as means of atonement.

Yet such comments have to be set against Ramsey's sense of Christ as the pivotal moment in an *on-going* process of creation: if God is loving, and essentially self-giving, then that nature must needs express itself in the progressive widening of the circle of fellowship as each new generation succeeds that which has gone before. Even had there been no Fall there would still have been successive *unique* generations to whom God would give himself in an endless cycle of giving, and receiving, of glory. It is the uniqueness of each human life which effects something more than just a growth in the quantity of love within creation: each unique individual brings some new and original element to the qualitative enrichment of the whole. The creation is thus in a sense for ever "new," even as it remains in harmony with the antecedent fellowship which existed before the Fall: '[i]n spite of the utter newness of the access to the Father through Jesus in one Spirit which the new covenant has brought, the worship of the new ecclesia has a real continuity with the worship of the old... It is the same God of glory who is worshipped... His glory in the creation is not forgotten but enhanced in the worship of Him as redeemer.'⁴⁶⁰ More importantly, these problematic comments must also be read in the light noted above of Ramsey's particular emphasis on that transfiguration of humanity realised in and through Christ's drawing humanity into the fellowship of the Trinity - and in a manner which seems to imply a qualitatively superior state to that which existed before the Fall. Thus '[t]he vision of Christ is the transfiguring of man.'⁴⁶¹ In sum,

⁴⁵⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 54.

⁴⁵⁹ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," *The Garbett Lectures*, 1962. v.315 f.148.

⁴⁶⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 97. Again, '[t]he time is fulfilled... it is the presence of Jesus doing what he does and saying what he says which marks the new order' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 86.

⁴⁶¹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 127. Again, citing Westcott with approval: "'[t]he sight of God... is the transfiguration of man'" - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 62.

then, though Ramsey's account of the Incarnation reflects some of the same ambiguity already noted surrounding his account of the relationship between creation and redemption, yet there remains a sense that in Christ redemption is subsumed in that new creation which comes through the fellowship effected with God.

Comparison with Temple

Ramsey's understanding of the divine nature differs from Temple's, and it is this which leads to a significant shift of emphasis between the two, albeit one which belies a deeper unity. Specifically: Ramsey gives a much more central role to the cross in his thought. That this is so is not, primarily, because of a greater theological concern for sin and atonement; rather, it reflects the greater emphasis found in Ramsey on the divine as, predominantly, self-giving love rather than purposive will. Hence he declares that 'Christ is for ever with the Father in that character of self-giving and self-offering of which Calvary was the decisive historical utterance.'⁴⁶² The cross reveals the deepest truth about God in a way that the life could not: herein is found the true depth of that self-giving love which gives meaning to the universe and which calls humanity into fellowship: '[b]efore and behind the historical events there is the unity of the one God. This unity overcomes men and apprehends them through the Cross';⁴⁶³ again, "'Fellowship" has been created since, starting with the death of Jesus, men have died to themselves as separate and sufficient "selfhoods" and have been found alive in one another and in the Spirit of the Lord Jesus.'⁴⁶⁴

Here too, the difference between Temple and Ramsey should not be overstated. Ramsey is aware of the danger of an exclusive focus on the cross: when abstracted from Christ's life and teaching, it may 'give us a dogmatic gospel of the Lord's death and resurrection disconnected – like a sort of evangelical Mystery-Religion – from

⁴⁶² Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 94. Again, 'Christians... discover in the Cross a key to the meaning of all creation. The Cross unlocks its secrets and its sorrows, and interprets them in terms of the power of God' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 125; also (for example) vi, 8-9, 17, 23, 103, 114, 124, 223-224; Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 65; Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 8, 43, 89.

⁴⁶³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 49; again, '[b]y sharing in the broken body and the blood outpoured, the disciples will find interpreted both the crucifixion and the whole divine creation whose secrets the crucifixion unlocks' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 103, also 124, 223-224; also Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 8, 43; Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.146.

⁴⁶⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 30. Again, '[t]he unity which comes to men through the Cross is the eternal unity of God Himself, a unity of love which transcends human utterance and human understanding' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 49.

the ethical context of the life and words of the Son of Man.⁴⁶⁵ It is clear from this that the cross is central not because it is understood primarily in terms of justice and the judgement of God against sin (though this is one element in Ramsey's account), but because it is the one, perfect, expression of the divine nature seeking fellowship with humanity. As such it is consistent with the essence of sacrificial offering throughout Jewish history: '[t]he essence of the old sacrifices was the offering of an animal's blood which represented its life. The death was necessary to release the blood, but the essence of sacrifice was the offering of the life...'⁴⁶⁶ The cross takes precedence because it symbolically sums up the whole action of God in Christ: 'the Incarnation is in itself an act of sacrifice than which none is greater; Christmas is as costly in self-giving as is Good Friday. Only the Crucifixion is the deepest visible point of the divine self-giving which entered history at Bethlehem and which begins in heaven itself.'⁴⁶⁷ Temple partly shares Ramsey's sense of the cross as the definitive expression of the divine nature: hence his declaration that '[i]t is always by imagery that principles become powerful over conduct. We are not left to conceive the all-embracing love of God as a general idea; we can call to mind the Agony and the Cross.'⁴⁶⁸ Yet the fact remains that Temple's emphasis on purpose, and on the unity of Christ's life tends to pull him away from isolating any one incident in that life as definitive; Ramsey's stress on the divine self-giving naturally leads him to give centrality to the cross as its ultimate expression.

As with Temple, this emphasis on the incarnate life as *the* experiential means of encountering the divine means that Ramsey likewise sees the Bible not as revelation, but as a *record* of revelation, and one which 'is to be apprehended with the aid of the whole structure and tradition of the Church.'⁴⁶⁹ In consequence, Ramsey sees the life and worship of the Church as the agent of that on-going experiential encounter. The Church is, quite literally, the Body of Christ: '[w]e do not know the whole fact of

⁴⁶⁵ Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 25.

⁴⁶⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 113.

⁴⁶⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 24. Also Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.149-157.

⁴⁶⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 184.

⁴⁶⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 205, also 66. Again, it is 'within the common life, the worship and the general mind of the Christian community that the Christian is attuned to the understanding of the biblical message' - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 109.

Christ Incarnate unless we know His Church and its life as a part of His own life.’⁴⁷⁰ As with Temple, there is a sense that right belief cannot simply be reduced to specific words or phrases: praising the Eastern Fathers Ramsey writes that ‘Truth, tradition reside in the Body as a whole; they are not something clerically imposed upon the Body. Hence truth is very close to life and worship. Both in Russian and Slavonic the phrase ἡ ὀρθοδοξία is translated so as to mean not right “opinion” but right “glory” or “worship.”’⁴⁷¹ Equally, ethics must be rooted in contextually grounded praxis – an attempt to give living embodiment to Christ’s life in the context of particular need – rather than in the imposition of a universal principle which makes no allowance for context: Christ’s message of righteousness was ‘the righteousness of an inner relationship to God Himself expressed in ethical actions... it was the righteousness of a relationship to God.’⁴⁷²

It has already been noted that the different characterisations of the divine nature in Ramsey and Temple tend to mould their understanding of divine revelation through fellowship, and in particular the role given in their thought to social action. One element which grows out of this is a tendency on Ramsey’s part to give greater prominence not only to the life of the Church but, in particular, to its liturgy as the place where Christ is met, where glory is revealed, and where true fellowship is effected in Christ.⁴⁷³ Here again there are echoes of Schmiechen’s linkage of Christology and ecclesiology.⁴⁷⁴ Thus all liturgies ‘are expressions in language and

⁴⁷⁰ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 35; also 41, 65, 123.

⁴⁷¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 148. Again, citing Brunner: “[w]hen dogma has ceased to be a witness pointing to something behind and above itself, then it is fossilized into a concrete ‘word’ or fetish... The Word is no longer a challenge; it has become an object for consideration, a theory” - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 131.

⁴⁷² Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.157. Again, Christ’s righteousness is the model for humanity, but it ‘is not a code of law... but a relationship of persons to God. They are to live their lives towards God, sensitive to his nearness and goodness and, through this sensitivity, they will find themselves reflecting his character and possessed by his goodness. It is the ethics of a Godward relationship...’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 84.

⁴⁷³ As Weil notes, ‘[t]he importance of the liturgy for Ramsey is always rooted in its power to manifest the nature of the Church as the people of God fulfil their vocation in the world’ - Louis Weil, ‘The Place of the Liturgy in Michael Ramsey’s Theology,’ in *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, ed. Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995), 142.

⁴⁷⁴ Witness, for example, Kendall’s claim that ‘[h]is understanding of the relationship of the ordained ministry to the Church and the Church’s gospel to the world and its problems was rooted in a deep Incarnational theology’ - Lorna Kendall, ‘Michael Ramsey and Pastoral Theology,’ in *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, ed. Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995), 127.

action of the one λειτουργία of Christ'⁴⁷⁵ and, as such, are the basis of 'a Christian sociology.'⁴⁷⁶ As with Temple, the importance of fellowship with God is nevertheless reinforced by his sense of the Church as 'broken' and flawed: the Church 'does not bear witness to the perfection of those who share in it, but to the Gospel of God by which alone, in one universal family, mankind can be made perfect. It is not something Roman or Greek or Anglican; rather does it declare to men their utter dependence on Christ by setting forth the universal church in which all that is Anglican or Roman or Greek or partial or local in any way must share by an agonizing death to its pride.'⁴⁷⁷ Consequently, as with Temple, there is something inherently incarnational about Ramsey's whole approach to the Christian life: the Christian is called to embody Christ in the concrete situations of life, using the Bible and the Church not as the source of abstract rules, but as the vehicle for a transformative relational encounter with the divine which enables them to discern and contextually articulate the spirit of God as revealed in Christ in the particularity of their individual circumstances.

The Timing of the Incarnation

Temple

If the Incarnation is indeed a natural expression of the divine nature, and not simply an exigent response to human sin, then a problem would seem to arise: why did God delay it? If the Incarnation is so central to the divine purpose and nature, would not God have so acted in Christ at the beginning of creation, rather than waiting until he did, contenting himself in the meantime with partial and ultimately ineffective acts of self-disclosure? The question is pertinent to both Ramsey and Temple, though the latter's response would seem the more persuasive - if only because it is more clearly presented. Temple laid great stress on evolution, and in particular the gradual development of the human mind wherein the divine Mind was able to reveal itself and summon humanity to share in its purpose. Temple's response, therefore, would be very simple: the Incarnation could only occur when the human faculty to appreciate God had reached that level of maturity that enabled the furthering of the

⁴⁷⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 109.

⁴⁷⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 177.

⁴⁷⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 66.

divine will: '[w]e may look back upon the previous history of the world before Christ and see how the same Spirit, which was in Him, was guiding the ages up to Him, as it has guided the Church ever since.'⁴⁷⁸ Temple talks of 'the three great factors in the preparation for Christ' – specifically, the evolution of Israel's awareness of the divine nature, the development of Greek thought and the stability brought by the Roman Empire.⁴⁷⁹ The Incarnation constituted a decisive new step in that evolutionary process: 'if in Jesus Christ God lived a human life for the purpose of inaugurating His Kingdom, that is an event which marks a new stage as truly as the first appearance of life or the first appearance of Man.'⁴⁸⁰ In this sense, the Incarnation occurred at the earliest possible moment and in a manner entirely consistent with the divine purpose. If there was a lengthy gap between Fall and the Atonement it was because the Fall "upwards" occurred before there arose within humanity an ability to receive the divine self-disclosure in Christ in the manner that would most effectively further the on-going divine purpose.

Ramsey

Ramsey's account of the Incarnation lacks this evolutionary, philosophical super-structure. Why, then, for Ramsey, did God delay the Incarnation? Ramsey's answer is not altogether clear, and his thinking must again be inferred. If Christ's primary task is to reveal the divine self-giving love, then that love must be pre-figured within creation and history, if both are indeed understood as revealing the divine nature.⁴⁸¹ If that love is not prefigured, then the Incarnation would seem a random act and one perhaps, therefore, better understood as a wholly contingent response to the context of its occurrence. Its plausibility is dependent on its being seen to be consistent with the fabric of reality as expressive of that same self-giving nature. The delay between Fall and Incarnation is thus to be understood as allowing time for God to reveal

⁴⁷⁸ Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 157. Again, Temple talks of 'the long record of man's intercourse with God and growth in the knowledge of God, which we call the Bible...' - Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 47. Also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 17.

⁴⁷⁹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 300.

⁴⁸⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 127. Again, '[w]hat we find in Christian experience is witness, not to a Man uniquely inspired, but to God living a human life. Now this is exactly the culmination of that stratification which is the structure of Reality; far therefore from being incredible, it is to be expected...' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 139.

⁴⁸¹ Creation is 'the utterance or overflowing of a glory which eternally lacks nothing. The Biblical doctrine... denies two recurring errors: the error of neglecting the *testimonia gloriae* in nature, in man and in history, and the error of treating God and the created world as co-partners mutually necessary' - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 83.

himself in creation in a manner pointing forward to that Incarnation and in a manner which gives compelling meaning to the whole - and, thereby, wins humanity to fellowship in worship. There is then, with Temple, a sense of history as the vehicle through which God leads his people to discern the fulness of that which he reveals of himself in Christ: God can be seen within history teaching Israel, 'through painful struggles, to worship Him not self-interestedly as a means of securing their own prosperity, but for His own sake.'⁴⁸² History helps shape human understanding such as to receive the divine revelation in Christ: hence

[t]he priestly theology [of the post-Exilic period] lacked a note of confidence. The longings of Israel were not satisfied. The fulfilment of the exilic prophecies had not been completed; and these prophecies became more and more projected into the future. But the hope remains; and one day Israel will have the vision of the *kabod* of her God, whether by His dwelling with man upon the stage of history or by the coming of a new heaven and a new earth bathed in the light of the divine radiance⁴⁸³

It is this sense of the harmony between Christ and the divine nature as revealed in history that wins humanity to fellowship: thus in prayer the individual must recollect the whole action of God in history wherein, understood through the revelatory prism of Christ's life, 'the Christian knows the Father to whom He prays, and He humbly asks for his daily bread, for the forgiveness of his sins, and for deliverance from the evil one, and as he prays he is drawn away from self into the loving purpose of God.'⁴⁸⁴ The timing of the Incarnation is thus likewise, both for Temple and for Ramsey, consistent with their dominant emphasis on the divine purpose for fellowship.

Conclusion

For Temple and Ramsey, the Incarnation is inextricably linked to the divine purpose. Christ's manifestation was defined both in its timing and presentation by that

⁴⁸² Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 10. Again, the faith of Israel 'did not drop in a neat pattern from heaven but was wrought out in the ups and downs of a turbulent history' - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 21; also 12, 46, 58. Also Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 95.

⁴⁸³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 18.

⁴⁸⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 90. Again, 'faith has as its groundwork the glory of God in creation, in nature and in the history of Israel; it has as its centre the glory of God in the birth, life, death and exaltation of Jesus, and as its goal the participation of mankind and of all creation in the eschatological glory of the messiah' - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 28.

purpose and nature. For both, the nature of reality, grounded in the divine, is such as to necessitate an incarnation as the only truly effective means of disclosing that purpose, even if both disagree on the role and value of philosophical metaphysics as a method for expressing reality. There is thus a growing sense that, in the case of Temple and Ramsey, sin and atonement are seemingly subsumed in the wider drama of God's quest for fellowship.

Equally, there is further evidence that this downplaying of substitutionary atonement was in favour of a coherent alternative. True, this rooting of the Incarnation in the divine purpose, reflected in the manner of each man's presentation of Christ, generates subtle differences between their respective accounts of his life, death and resurrection. Temple's Christ reveals the divine purpose for the realisation of Value, a purpose that provides the unity needed to marshal the human will through the indwelling fellowship of the Spirit; Ramsey's reveals the divine heart, the self-giving love seeking to call out that responding love which is the meaning of creation. Indeed, such differences colour every aspect of their presentation of Christ: hence, for example, Ramsey focuses much more closely on the cross, the fullest revelation of divine self-giving; Temple, emphasising the importance of the unity of divine purpose as prefigured in creation and decisively revealed in Christ, tends to focus on the incarnate life as a whole.

Yet such differences arise at precisely the point one might expect if it was the divine nature and purpose which was the dominant element in their account of the Incarnation. They also belie a deeper synergy between the two men's thought, and one reflected in a sense that the fundamental difference between them is one of emphasis, not degree. The conclusion to Chapter One suggested that the two different presentations of the divine nature might be reconciled, and this tentative conclusion seems to be reinforced in the study of their respective presentations of Christ's incarnate life. The Christ who gives himself to win humanity into fellowship grounded in worship creates thereby a relationship *with* God and *within* humanity – a new creation – that carries echoes of Temple's concept of Value and which might thereby concomitantly be said to realise a divine purpose. Equally, a Christ who gives himself in order to win humanity to purposive fellowship might yet also be revealing the divine as self-giving love. It is, of course, too early in the argument to

make this claim conclusively; in particular – for example – it will be necessary to look more closely at the nature of the fellowship effected by Christ in the respective accounts of the two men. There nonetheless seems to be a growing case for suggesting a coherent alternative to substitutionary atonement.

An important question remains, however: if the Incarnation is primarily about effecting fellowship rather than a response to sin, what, then, *is* the role of substitutionary atonement in their thought? *Is* it downplayed? It is to this question that the thesis must now turn.

Chapter Four: Sin and the Divine Purpose

Introduction

It has thus far been shown that for Temple and Ramsey the Incarnation is not, primarily, a contingent response to sin but rather a sacrificial means of deepening the union between God and humanity. Heretofore the thesis has argued this point on the basis of an account of the divine nature and purpose as revealed in creation, and it has sought to show that the Incarnation is consistent with both. Yet this is not to say that Temple and Ramsey ignored concepts of sin, judgement, atonement, salvation and resurrection. How then are these wider elements moulded by this emphasis on fellowship? What impact does the downplaying of substitutionary atonement have on this wider theological landscape? Ironically, exploration of the presentation of these elements in Temple and Ramsey's thought seems, at first blush, paradoxically to imply that the Incarnation was, after all, primarily a contingent response to sin. It is nevertheless the contention of this chapter that each man's account of sin reveals the dominant role which the divine loving purpose plays in shaping their thought: indeed, sin, atonement, salvation and resurrection are all defined *primarily* in terms of their relation to this quest for fellowship, and in a manner which ultimately reinforces the sense that fellowship, not Christ's "paying the price for sin" was the dominant motive behind the Incarnation. Substitutionary atonement is indeed downplayed, and in a way that has consequences for each man's wider theological schema.

It has been argued heretofore that there are significant similarities between Temple and Ramsey's account of the divine nature and purpose, and the inter-relationship of that purpose with their understanding of the Incarnation and atonement. Those similarities can lead one to lose sight of just how distinctive that understanding is, when compared to those more substitutionary-focussed theories picked up by Brown. In order to throw Temple and Ramsey's thought into relief, and to tease out the distinctiveness and significance of this inter-relationship between divine purpose and Incarnation, the chapter will introduce an additional "voice" into the discussion, and one broadly representative of that alternative, substitutionary view highlighted by Brown. That voice belongs to the (then) well-known Congregationalist theologian

P.T. Forsyth, a contemporary of Temple and a man Ramsey considered to be of ‘outstanding importance’⁴⁸⁵ to theology – though Forsyth is one of a number of theologians who might have filled this (limited) role. Despite sharing a similar theological method (not least an emphasis on biblical criticism) Forsyth’s conception of the divine nature, Incarnation and atonement differed sharply from Temple and Ramsey. Above all, it was his emphasis on the divine holiness (understood in deeply ethical terms) which led him to give far more attention to substitutionary atonement, and in a way which effectively moulds his understanding of the rationale for the Incarnation. The main focus of this chapter will remain on Temple and Ramsey, and Forsyth will only be brought into the argument where helpful. Nevertheless, his sharply different account of the divine nature and purpose, of Incarnation, and of the Atonement, will serve as a helpful foil to Temple and Ramsey.

The chapter begins by sketching Forsyth’s understanding of the divine nature and purpose, touching on points of contact, similarity, and difference with Temple and Ramsey. It then goes on to contrast each man’s account of sin, revealing the degree to which its definition is driven by their distinctive presentation of the divine purpose. This being so, inevitably it raises the question “what does the cross do?” In answering this question, the chapter explores the nature of the cross as divine power, as judgement, and as salvation; it looks at the light thrown back onto the cross by the Resurrection and it concludes that – for Temple and Ramsey – each of these elements is, ultimately, subsumed within the divine purpose. Once again, the credibility of the core claim that substitutionary atonement is downplayed in each man’s thought is strengthened by the sense that the cross is presented first and foremost not as payment for the debt of sin, but rather, as the means for the realisation of the divine purpose for fellowship.

Forsyth on the Divine Nature and Purpose as Background to the Incarnation

What was Forsyth’s conception of the divine nature and purpose, and how did this fit into his account of Incarnation and atonement? For Temple, the dominant characteristic in the divine is purposive Will; for Ramsey, it is self-giving love. For

⁴⁸⁵ Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, 38.

Forsyth, by contrast, there is much greater stress on *holiness*.⁴⁸⁶ That holiness is defined by its moral, ethical character: ‘[t]he true Israelites always found in Israel’s God... a moral Jehovah, whose power was governed by the absolute holiness of His own nature... A God of mercy, truly, but also a God of right... He was a God of grace, but of grace that could never sacrifice His moral nature.’⁴⁸⁷ There is more than a hint of reaction against that liberalising tendency in theology which, Forsyth believed, had played down the moral essence of holiness in favour of revelatory love: ‘[I]et us only flee the amateur notion that in the Cross there is no ultimate ethical issue involved, that it is a simple religious appeal to the heart.’⁴⁸⁸ Whilst Forsyth does not ignore the element of love in the divine nature, there is a strong sense of its being secondary to divine morality: ‘[r]eal forgiveness is not natural... We should realize how far from a matter of course forgiveness was for a holy, and justly angry, God, for all His love... Is not God’s forgiveness the great moral paradox...?’⁴⁸⁹

A moral nature implies a moral purpose. Indeed, any sense of the world’s “meaning” is only to be found in the holiness of God. Here there are echoes of Temple and Ramsey’s link between the divine purpose and the meaning, or unity, of all creation. In practice, Forsyth comes closer to Ramsey than Temple in this, thanks to his rejection of speculative metaphysics: ‘[o]ur first concern is not a [metaphysical] sketch, narrow or broad, but a purpose.’⁴⁹⁰ Nevertheless, his presentation of that meaning is very different from either man, thanks to his different conception of the

⁴⁸⁶ True, Temple acknowledges that ‘[t]he primary note is Holiness’ - and a holiness defined in ethical terms (Temple, *Christianity in Thought* 71-72; Temple, *Christ’s Revelation of God*, 15). Yet Temple tempers this recognition with an emphasis on a righteousness ‘not only judicial but paternal’ (Temple, *Christ’s Revelation of God*, 15, 35-36, especially 38-39), active in history in pursuit of an essentially loving purpose ‘to save the sinner’ - Temple, *Christianity in Thought* 71-72.

⁴⁸⁷ P.T. Forsyth, *Positive Preaching and Modern Mind* (Memphis, USA: General Books, 2012), 70. Again, ‘[t]o ethicize religion... does not mean to reduce it to pedestrian morality but to recognize in its heart the action of the greatest influence in the higher movement of civilization – I mean *the primacy of the moral*... it means the primacy and finality of the holy... We could not have *faith* even in infinite love were it not *holy* love...’ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 67.

⁴⁸⁸ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 66. Again, ‘It is not the ideal man we seek, who verifies and glorifies our noblest Humanity... but it is the redeeming God who sets Humanity in heavenly places in Jesus Christ’ - P.T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ : The Congregational Union Lecture for 1909* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1909), 96-97.

⁴⁸⁹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 66. Again, ‘[a]uthority’s seat and source is not God’s love, but God’s holiness. Have I not said that the love in God must itself rest on the holiness of God, that we can trust love with real faith only if it show itself absolutely holy. That is to say, the Church’s Word, the preacher’s Word, must issue from a Gospel not of love alone but of holy love’ - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 74.

⁴⁹⁰ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 68.

divine. For Forsyth, the divine purpose is focussed on a moral goal: only theology ‘reveals and assures the moral purpose of the world... It builds on the supremacy and finality of intelligent action toward a moral purpose.’⁴⁹¹ As with Temple and Ramsey’s own theological method, evidence in support of the moral nature of that purpose is found in human experience. For Forsyth, religious experience is essentially moral, and reveals the divine purpose: ‘[i]s not the great universality that of the conscience; and the final universality – is it not God’s conscience, that is, God’s holiness...[?]’⁴⁹² Hence it is only in experience of the moral holiness of God that the unity of all things is found: ‘[w]e do not touch the deep illogical things of God till we find paradox the only expression. Life under God is one grand paradox of dependence and liberty. These two logical incompatibles are only solved in the living active unity of the moral person, especially towards God...’⁴⁹³

What is the essence of that moral purpose? Above all, and in sharp contrast to Ramsey and Temple, it is the satisfaction of divine holiness, outraged by human sin: ‘[t]he essential thing in a New Testament Christianity is that it came to settle in a final way the issue between a holy God and the guilt of man.’⁴⁹⁴ Forsyth has a strong sense of the profound consequences of sin for all creation: ‘we are sinful men in a sinful race... The disease is mortal. And, moreover, what is in question is a diseased world. It is a society that is sick to death, and not a stray soul. We have to deal with a radical evil in human nature...’⁴⁹⁵ Consequently, ‘[t]he solution of the world... is what destroys its guilt. And nothing can destroy guilt but the very holiness that makes guilt guilt. And that destruction is the work of Christ upon His Cross.’⁴⁹⁶ As such, the Incarnation becomes in its essential nature – and far more than in Temple and Ramsey – a response to sin: Christ is ‘not... the mere aesthetic incarnation of

⁴⁹¹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 69. Again, ‘[o]ur first need is to know the destiny of the world and not its scheme. It is not ability that has the secret of life but energy [and] moral power’ - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 68.

⁴⁹² Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 70. Again, the deity of Christ can be proved ‘only to the evangelical experience. It is our pardon that is the foundation of our theology – our eternal pardon for an “eternal sin”’ - Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 94. See also, Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 68.

⁴⁹³ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 17.

⁴⁹⁴ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 5. Again, God’s love ‘is the love for sinners of a God above all things *holy*, whose holiness makes sin damnable as sin and love active as grace. It can only act in a way that shall do justice to holiness’ - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 79.

⁴⁹⁵ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 76.

⁴⁹⁶ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 75.

God's holy love, but... that love itself in its crucial moral act of eternal judgement and grace.'⁴⁹⁷ That response must come through an historic human life: if it reveals itself at all in history 'it must surely do so in an act corresponding to its own total ethical nature in the spiritual world... A world of spiritual action with moral coherency can only be revealed in history by a supreme spiritual act, the supreme act of a person who both gathers up and controls human existence.'⁴⁹⁸ Christ is the incarnation of God's grace,⁴⁹⁹ and given that this grace is defined by moral holiness, it seems clear that the Incarnation is, for Forsyth, a response to human sin designed to satisfy the outrage caused in God by human failure: sin 'drives Him not merely to action, but to a passion of action, to action for His life, to action in suffering unto death... It has a guilt in proportion to the holy love it scorns.'⁵⁰⁰

The goal of the Incarnation is not only to satisfy divine holiness, however. It is also the restoration of humanity. Hence Forsyth argues that the nature of human personality rests on 'its central organ as conscience, on its central energy as will, on its central malady as sin, on its central destiny as redemption.'⁵⁰¹ Forsyth does not use the word "fellowship" to describe redeemed humanity's relationship to God, perhaps because he sees this as too intimate a term, and one which does not honour the absolute separation between human frailty and divine holiness. Rather he speaks of humanity's 'communion' with the divine: saving faith does not view Christ 'as the pledge of our human future, but as the foundation of our new communion with a holy God.'⁵⁰² Does this imply that for Forsyth, unlike Ramsey and Temple, the new creation is merely a restoration of the old? Certainly, Forsyth consciously rejects any sense of a progressive, evolutionary realisation of the divine purpose in history such as found in Temple: '[t]he world energy of such a spiritual world as we postulate in God can only act on us in the way of redemption and not more evolution from the world of our first stage.'⁵⁰³ There are hints that redemption means restoration: '[o]nly

⁴⁹⁷ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁴⁹⁸ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 75.

⁴⁹⁹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁵⁰⁰ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 82.

⁵⁰¹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 69.

⁵⁰² Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 324.

⁵⁰³ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 76. Again, Christian faith 'is not a warm sense of sonship as the crowning form of natural religion or of a devout temperament... It is the experience of having in Christ, His crisis, and His victory, that salvation, that pardon, that new life which God alone can give' - Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 8, also 11.

God Himself with us, and no creature of His, could meet the soul's last need, and restore a creation undone.⁵⁰⁴ Yet, by contrast, there are also hints that this communion nonetheless effects a new creation qualitatively richer than that which has gone before: 'we enter His communion, and share His life, and are marvellously made to partake of His Eternal Love to His Eternal Son.'⁵⁰⁵ This certainly seems a higher state than that enjoyed pre-Fall. How then are these different emphasises to be reconciled?

The answer lies in Forsyth's sense that it is the need for the satisfaction of the divine holiness which predominates:

Christ is not the revelation of man, but of God's will for man; not of the God always in us, but of the God once and for all for us. Christ did not come in the first instance to satisfy the needs and instincts of our diviner self, but to honour the claim of a holy God upon us, crush our guilt into repentant faith, and create us anew in the act... He came to fulfil God's will in the first place, and to fulfil human destiny only in the second place and by consequence... The one makes the centre of Christianity to be the ideal or spirit of Christ, the other the Cross of Christ. One makes the Cross the apotheosis of sacrifice with a main effect on man, the other makes it the Atonement with its first effect on God⁵⁰⁶

If Forsyth is ambiguous on the qualitative distinction between the old (pre-Fall) creation and the new, it is because his conception of the divine nature and purpose is such as to give precedence to the satisfaction of divine holiness; humanity's response to redemption is characterised above all by the joy that the satisfaction of that holiness brings to a sinful nature, and *only then* reinforced by the hope of a fuller consummation. Yes, the new creation may be richer than the old for Forsyth: this suggests that an emphasis on the transcendent goodness of the new creation is not exclusive to a theology which downplays substitutionary atonement. Yet – as with Temple and Ramsey – it is the conception of the divine nature and purpose which sounds the dominant note. Consequently, for Forsyth the qualitative relationship

⁵⁰⁴ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 85. Again, '[t]he final revelation could only be God revealing Himself, in the sense of God bestowing Himself, and Himself coming to men to restore communion' - Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 92-93.

⁵⁰⁵ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 58. Again, 'in Christ God not only comes near to us but by an eternal act makes us His own... God *has*, by the resurrection of Christ, regenerated us into a living hope... in Christ God creates us anew' - Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 57.

⁵⁰⁶ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 29.

between old and new creations is of relatively little importance. It is worth adding that Forsyth is closer to Ramsey than Temple in his understanding of the role of humanity in that divine purpose, and consequently he will not risk blurring the boundaries between human and divine by suggesting any essential role for the individual in the divine plan. Rather, the chief goal of humanity is to glorify God as an end in itself. As with both Temple and Ramsey, 'to glorify' means, for Forsyth, to reflect the divine nature – but here again, the moral emphasis on holiness, rather than new creation is telling: 'Man's chief end is not to make the most of himself, but to glorify a holy God by the holiness which alone can satisfy holiness.'⁵⁰⁷

In sum, then, Forsyth's account of the Incarnation and the Atonement is rooted in the divine nature, conceived in terms of a moral holiness that demands satisfaction for sin. The Incarnation is a reactive means to the end of satisfying the outraged divine holiness, even as it brings the concomitant benefit of a new creation. Unlike Temple or Ramsey, there is no sense that the new creation is the *primary* goal of the divine, or that the Fall is somehow the necessary means to the realisation of something altogether richer, and which always fell within the eternal divine purpose.

In the light of this discussion of Forsyth's thought, it is now possible to return to Temple and Ramsey, and focus on their account of the nature of sin and atonement, and the way in which this account is moulded (and somewhat marginalised) by their understanding of the divine purposive nature in incarnation. Forsyth, and his own understanding of the link between the divine purposive nature and atonement, will act as a foil to this discussion, where appropriate.

Defining Sin: Temple

Forsyth's definition of sin is grounded in his conception of the divine as holy: sin is rebellion against God, an insult to his holiness: 'God is fundamentally affected by sin. He is stung to the core... It is, in its nature, an assault on His life.'⁵⁰⁸ There is a particular emphasis on sin as wrong deeds, no less than a wrong relationship with God - and wrong deeds that constitute a debt to be paid. Hence sin is not something

⁵⁰⁷ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 71. Again, '[s]in is an offence against...holiness' - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 82.

⁵⁰⁸ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 82.

that ‘can be put straight by repentance and amendment without such artifices as atonement.’⁵⁰⁹ Temple’s definition of sin is likewise indelibly stamped by his understanding of the divine nature and purpose. However, given that the heart of that purpose is fellowship, sin for Temple means anything which obstructs that intimacy. Hence for the religious person ‘to do wrong is to defy his King; for the Christian it is to wound his Friend.’⁵¹⁰ This leads him to go so far as to assert that ‘[t]he background of darkness against which the Light of the World stands out in its splendour is not sin as we ordinarily conceive it; it is dead religion.’⁵¹¹ Temple does not ignore the moral: witness his assertion that, in the cross, ‘[t]he appeal to the heart and conscience must come first...’⁵¹² ‘Heart’ and ‘conscience’: the order is telling. For Temple, the language of sin is focussed far more on this idea of a wounded relationship with a loving God, and one wherein the offence of specific acts against divine holiness plays a significantly lesser role: ‘[a]ll real thought about the Atonement, about the meaning of the Cross of Christ, must of course start from the love of God...’⁵¹³

The goal of fellowship is, ultimately, the fulfilment of the divine purpose – humanity’s sharing in God’s will for creation. This leads Temple to define sin in particular terms as selfishness, an individualistic refusal to fulfil one’s role in that purpose and as such ‘an assertion of a part against the whole.’⁵¹⁴ With Forsyth, there are hints of sin as rebellion, but rebellion against *love* and purpose. Hence sin is often articulated not so much as a “wrong act”,⁵¹⁵ but rather as a *failure* to act: preaching in 1919 from Matthew’s Gospel, Temple stresses that ‘condemnation is pronounced, not upon those who have done some positive wrong, but upon those who have failed

⁵⁰⁹ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 17.

⁵¹⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 37. Also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 64; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 19-20, 297; Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 181.

⁵¹¹ Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 94.

⁵¹² Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 120. Again, appreciation of the righteous majesty of God is a necessary precursor to understanding the divine love - William Temple, "The Majesty of God : A Sermon Preached at the Opening of the Lambeth Conference, 1930," (London: SPCK, 1930), 10

⁵¹³ Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 76.

⁵¹⁴ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 220. Again, '[s]in is the self-assertion, either of a part of a man’s nature against the whole, or of a single member of the human family against the welfare of that family and the will of its Father’ - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 124. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 149; Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 14, 110; Temple, *Church and Nation*, 7, 25, 28; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 89, 299; Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 73-74; William Temple, *Basic Convictions* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1937), 89.

⁵¹⁵ Sin is not simply wrong acts but rather ‘much more a principle of action’ – cited in Temple, ed., *William Temple : Some Lambeth Letters*, 26.

to do something that was right.⁵¹⁶ Focus on sharing the divine purpose naturally lends his account of sin a particular emphasis on social action: ‘[i]ndifference, hostility and fellowship are the only primary relations that are possible between one man and another... The essence of sin is self-will... Of the forms of self-will, complete indifference to other people is the worst...’⁵¹⁷ Forsyth, by contrast, effectively strikes a more individualistic note, giving greater focus to the need for reconciliation between the individual sinner and the holy God, and this may well account for his relative lack of emphasis on shared purpose and social concern: ‘[o]ur talk of sin is palpably ceasing to be the talk of broken and contrite men... Our speech of sin has not behind it the note of “my sin, my sin!” We do not know an “eternal sin” and an awful Redemption, and therefore we do not know an Eternal Redeemer in the Christ.’⁵¹⁸

The Origin of Sin

Temple’s sense of sin as an assertion of the self against the fellowship of the whole is reinforced by his account of the origins of sin. In essence, Temple sees it as an accidental by-product of the divine purpose for the realisation of Value through fellowship. The human mind emerged within the divinely-guided evolutionary process as an essential means to the realisation of Value. The human mind is ‘*a focus of appreciation,*’ but it is also finite:

It is indeed confined within extremely narrow limitations. It cannot attain to any grasp of the true proportions and perspective of the world in which it is set... *each man cares more about what seems to be good for him than about goods which he does not expect personally to enjoy. Even so far as*

⁵¹⁶ Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 29. Again, ‘[t]he condemnation of the world is chiefly visited on those who do wrong things; the condemnation of Christ is specially uttered against those who fail to do right things’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 30. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 88.

⁵¹⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 285. Again, whilst ‘Christians should vote in a Christian spirit at least to the extent of preferring the public advantage to their own...’ (Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 42) yet in practice the individual’s spirit ‘is depraved, his reason... perverted. His self-centredness infects his idealism because it distorts all his perspectives’ - Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 65. Also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 98; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 9; Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 36; Temple, *Church and Nation*, 175; Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 15-16.

⁵¹⁸ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 54. Again, the Church ‘wrestles with many problems between man and man, class and class, nation and nation; but it does not face the moral problem between the guilty soul and God... In a word, as I have said, we are more concerned with man’s religion than with God’s salvation’ - Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 24, also 8, 93, 333, 343.

*he knows of these, they take a second place for him; and about many of them he knows nothing. So he becomes not only the subject of his own value judgements, which he can never cease to be, but also the centre and criterion of his own system of values, which he is quite unfit to be*⁵¹⁹

The individual must needs be a discrete centre for the appreciation of Value, but to be discrete is also to be finite, and so subject to a perspective on the world which naturally inclines one to self-centredness. Equally, '[t]he mind cannot think without either percept or image... Now imagination, just because it exists to offer particular instances of general qualities, offers to desire the stimulus which the appropriate physical objects offer to appetite. Hence comes a great, and in principle unlimited, expansion of the life of desire... Desire as so expanded may take the form of aspiration or of lust.'⁵²⁰ If sin is indeed the price to be paid for the realisation of Value within creation, then there is inherent within this a sense that Value – and the underlying purpose it expresses – must outweigh the concomitant cost of that sin. This, coupled with the fact that Temple's definition of sin is shaped by his account of purpose, reinforces the sense that that fellowship wherein Value is rooted is the dominant note in Temple's account of the Incarnation, and far more so than any concern for substitutionary atonement.

Nevertheless there is a dangerous implication here that God *willed* human sin (and consequent suffering). The danger arises precisely because Temple gives central place in his thought to the divine purpose: hence, as he himself points out, 'so far as Evil is a product of exaggerated or misdirected desire, the condition of its occurrence is identical with the condition that makes possible all the higher ranges of human life... All depends on how it is used... all depends on the direction of attention.'⁵²¹ Given that, as Temple himself acknowledges, there is 'an unquestionable bias or tendency to evil in human nature',⁵²² is God guilty of introducing sin into the world in pursuit of Value? Temple recognises the danger. Consequently, he is careful to stress that sin was not an *inevitable* product of the advent of finite, appreciating

⁵¹⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 365. Again, human beings, being 'centres of appreciation of value' are consequently 'disposed to assert themselves unduly and out of proportion to their place in the scheme of things or the true structure of society. This tendency is Original Sin... It appears as an exaggeration of the importance of what is one's own...' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 215.

⁵²⁰ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 361.

⁵²¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 361-362.

⁵²² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 363-364.

consciousness: '[t]he good-for-self is alone effectively apparent good, and good in a fuller sense, though recognised to be real, is relatively powerless as motive. It is not utterly necessary that this should be so; and consequently it is not true to say that God made man selfish, or predestined him to sin.'⁵²³ At least in theory, humanity could have sought that intimacy of fellowship with God which would prevent the coming of sin - though, as Matthews points out⁵²⁴ (and Temple acknowledges)⁵²⁵ the odds were uncomfortably stacked against it. However, once sin had entered the world, the susceptibility of individuals to the sinful influence of others made its propagation inevitable: '[w]e are, in part, reciprocally determining beings. We make each other what we are. Therefore the existence of the one self-centred soul would spread an evil infection through all who come within its range of influence.'⁵²⁶

Yet this raises another problem: if human sin was *not* inevitable, might not the Incarnation therefore be a pragmatic response to sin after all, an expedient corrective guiding humanity back onto the course set by God? At times, Temple's language implies just such a response: witness, for example, his declaration that 'man, through his very sense of value, has chosen a way which is not God's to pursue his own good... Here is an emergency sufficient if any could be for a special and specially revealing act.'⁵²⁷ Yet such isolated comments have to be set in the wider context of his thought already explored in previous chapters. For example, elsewhere in the same work Temple declares that the individual is 'a being particular and finite called to live by a principle universal and infinite; and his particularity distorts his vision. It is only God who is able to see the scheme of life in such a way as to hold the scales of justice even. If man is to rise to the level of true justice, it must be because God

⁵²³ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 366, also 369.

⁵²⁴ W.R. Matthews et al., *William Temple : An Estimate and an Appreciation* (London: James Clarke, 1946), 18-19.

⁵²⁵ Hence, 'it was in principle possible that the development of man's life should be perfectly harmonious from its simplest origins to its sublime attainment. But it has not been so, and (as we saw) the dice were heavily loaded against such a contingency...' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 86.

⁵²⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 366-367. Again, '[w]hat the old Theologians put down to Adam we attribute in part to our evolutionary descent from non-human ancestors, and in part to "social heredity" - the evil influence of the actual society into which we are born...' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 38.

⁵²⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 101; again, '[w]e have found that God is such as to act in a special way if occasion demand; we have found an occasion which demands such an act...' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 105.

indwells and inspires him.⁵²⁸ Temple is not speaking of *sinful* humanity here; particularity may distort the individual's judgement, but there is no sense that that distortion is inherently sinful.⁵²⁹ Rather, Temple is speaking of the *inherent* character of humanity as it existed even before the advent of sin: being 'particular and finite,' indwelling (and so, incarnation) would always be necessary if humanity was to fulfil its purpose.⁵³⁰

Temple: Sin and the Divine Purpose

Forsyth's stress on divine holiness and his understanding of sin purely in terms of rebellion against that holiness leads him to the emphatic assertion that sin 'has no part whatever in His purpose... It can only be destroyed.'⁵³¹ For Temple, by contrast, such is the primary emphasis on fellowship as the eternal means to the realisation of Value, underpinned by a sense of the unity of all creation in pursuit of that purpose, that even sin is seen as subsumed in the divine plan. God's conquest of sin becomes the means for a fuller fellowship with humanity than would otherwise have been possible: 'in conquering the sin, it justifies it; for the love thereby developed and won back is richer and deeper.'⁵³² As such, it makes possible the realisation of a Value which would have been impossible in a perfect world: 'love that has won against hatred has in it for evermore a nobility which positively consists in that conquest of hatred, and which is therefore otherwise not obtained'; consequently, 'eternally it is good that there should be evil in the course of Time.'⁵³³ Forsyth, of course, might

⁵²⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 215-216.

⁵²⁹ Elsewhere he notes: '[t]here is a great dispute perpetually reappearing in philosophy and theology as to the moral value of our natural impulses. The strict form of the doctrine of Original Sin makes them out to be evil: many moderns are fond of saying they are good, and only become evil by abuse. Surely the plain fact is that they are neither good nor evil, but are the material out of which either virtue or vice is to be made' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 29, also 37.

⁵³⁰ For Temple, the valuable element in the doctrine of Original Sin is that it recognises that human impulses 'can only be made into the elements of such an ideal human life by much effort' - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 29-30.

⁵³¹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 82.

⁵³² Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 221. Again, '[i]n a world where no injury was ever done, the spirit of Love would show itself in maintaining the perfect harmony; in such a world Love would be more truly supreme than it is in our world as yet; but also in such a world Love would be far less deep and full than it has in our world the opportunity to become' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 265. Also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 125, also 139.

⁵³³ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 361. Again, '[v]ictory is only good when Goodness wins the Victory... such Goodness when it is attained by a struggle, and still more, when it maintains and reproduces itself through struggle, wins thereby an added excellence' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 269, also 287.

agree that the new fellowship is richer than the old – but only as a by-product of the primary concern to propitiate the divine holiness.

Here again there is a danger of Temple seemingly implying that sin is an essential precondition of the realisation of Value – and consequently that God *willed* his creation's suffering. Yet just as Temple argues that it was almost – but *not quite* – inevitable that sin would enter the world, so he seems to stop just short of suggesting that evil was a necessary precondition of Value. Witness his assertion:

A world into which evil has come can never again be a world innocent of all evil; but it may become a world in which evil has been overcome of good - a nobler world than one always innocent. So the occurrence of evil in the course of history is no obstacle to the eternal perfection; on the contrary, the Love of God makes evil a contributory cause of that perfection; and this is the Atonement⁵³⁴

Temple's language seems to imply that the sin was not intended by God, and so was ultimately avoidable: to suggest that God *makes* evil a contributory cause for the good implies a quality not inherent to the nature of evil as it arose within creation. This is consistent with Temple's analogy of a play, wherein the meaning of the whole is only fully realised at the end, such that 'though past facts cannot be altered, their value can, so that the presence of evil in the world at any moment or through any period of time is not in principle any argument against the perfect goodness of the Whole.'⁵³⁵ This enables Temple to argue that though evil was not willed by God, and as such is inherently purpose-less, yet it can and is subsumed within the divine purpose. Temple seems to have become rather more aware during his later career of the danger of implying that God willed sin, and hence there arose within his work a stronger sense of its destructive, irrational power. Yet that sense of sin being redeemed into the divine purpose remains: writing to a mother whose son was killed in the Second World War, Temple argued, '[i]f we are Christians, we cannot possibly suppose that we have a right to expect God to save either us or those we love from death. If He, as St. Paul puts it, "spared not His own Son," it is quite clear that the way of suffering may be the way by which we are to fulfil His purpose.'⁵³⁶

⁵³⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 272.

⁵³⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 34.

⁵³⁶ Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," Letter dated 24th April 1944. v.47 f.328.

Sin can be *incorporated into* that divine purpose which is realised in the Incarnation. Hence the Incarnation embodies both the contingently concomitant means by which sin is subsumed, and that deeper purpose that transcends sin and reveals itself from all eternity.

The Divine Purpose: Self-Giving Love

Temple's account of God's purposive nature included a subordinate sense of divine self-giving love realised within history as an end in itself; this too is reflected in his account of sin, and in a manner consistent with the dominant emphasis on the divine purpose for fellowship:

The revelation of God's dealing with human sin shows God enduring every depth of anguish for the sake of His children. What is portrayed under the figure of physical suffering and literal blood-shedding is only a part of the pain which sin inflicts on God. We see Him suffering in the absolute frustration of His Will. We see Him in the abyss of despair, as perfect adherence seems to end in utter failure...No further entry of the Supreme God into the tangle and bewilderment of finitude can be conceived. All that we can suffer of physical or mental anguish is within the divine experience⁵³⁷

Forsyth speaks of God as 'stung to the core'⁵³⁸ by sin, but there the emphasis seems to be primarily on wounded holiness; here, the focus is on wounded *love*. Temple's God, like Ramsey's, acts in solidarity with human suffering, and in a sinful world God's ultimate self-disclosure must needs be through suffering. Yet note the linkage of suffering with the 'frustration of His Will' as even that 'perfect adherence' of Christ 'seems to end in utter failure': suffering may be a means of sharing in human experience, but the divine purpose is always upper-most in Temple's mind. Hence suffering is not just a sharing in human experience: it also reveals the unity of all creation grounded in the loving purpose of God which wins the individual to that divine purpose through fellowship. Thus Christ's life of self-giving reveals that 'sacrifice is the root principle of Reality because it is the characteristic activity of God... No one dared to attribute self-sacrifice to Absolute Godhead until Christ died upon the Cross. Yet it is just this that is needed to make sense of all experience, and

⁵³⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 269-270.

⁵³⁸ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 82.

to set forth God as veritably All-mighty, King not only of conduct but of hearts and wills.’⁵³⁹

Temple’s definition and account of sin is thus indelibly moulded by his understanding of the divine purpose. Sin is not simply an obstacle to that purpose: rather it is made a constituent part of that purpose not by any inherent merit of its own but by the intrinsic character of God which is seen to be revealed in Christ. For Temple, the Incarnation can thus be said to be a response to sin only insofar as sin moulded the summative expression of that principle already prefigured in creation but which is nonetheless found to be operative throughout eternity, being rooted in the fibre of the divine being.

Defining Sin: Ramsey

There is a subtle, but significant, difference between Temple and Ramsey’s account of sin. For Temple, sin is selfishness – a conscious rejection of the divine Purpose. For Ramsey, sin is defined as pride: ‘[i]t is not only that men in crude unbelief set the pride of human rebellion against God: it is that they also twist their God-given privileges into a means of human self-glorification.’⁵⁴⁰ The distinction between ‘pride’ and ‘selfishness’ in Temple and Ramsey should not be overdrawn: both men sometimes seems to use the terms interchangeably. Hence Ramsey can speak of ‘the old principle of self-centred selfishness’ at work in humanity.⁵⁴¹ Equally, a range of other terms are sometimes employed: ‘Man has misused his freedom and lent himself and his powers to pride and greed and self-aggrandizement’⁵⁴² – though it should be noted that greed and self-aggrandizement are not only consistent with the concept of sin as pride, but also means by which that pride can seek satisfaction. Yet, in the final analysis, it is the language of pride which predominates: ‘[t]he peril, in short, is for

⁵³⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 272, 273. Again, ‘[o]nly such a God can be the God of the world we know... Because, and only because, His goodness is so perfect as to include self-sacrifice, His power is known to be supreme and all-controlling’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 273.

⁵⁴⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 26. Again, ‘[o]ur sin is – basically all sin is – pride and self-centredness’ - Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 38, also 14. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 23, 50-51; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 26, 51; Ramsey, “Christ Crucified for the World,” 7.

⁵⁴¹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 87. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 19; Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 36, 39, 47; Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 39. Equally, Temple sometimes defines sin in terms of pride: ‘the supreme sin and the fountain-head of all the others is pride, not lust...’ Temple, *The Church Looks Forward*, 75.

⁵⁴² Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 21.

the devout Churchman to turn his religion into a “glory to me,” “glory to this movement,” “glory to the Church” religion instead of a “glory to God” religion.’⁵⁴³

The root cause of this subtle but significant distinction lies in each man’s account of the divine nature. Both men agree that sin is, at its core, rebellion against God: there are echoes of Temple in Ramsey’s declaration that ‘[t]he word sin concerns the relation of all this to God, and what wrong things mean to God... the little word sin says simply that it is our relationship with God that goes all wrong.’⁵⁴⁴ Yet each man conceives the divine differently. Temple’s portrayal of God seeking fellowship as a purposive means to the realisation of Value naturally leads him to conceive of humanity’s rebellion against that purpose in terms of selfishness, an unwillingness to share in the common task. Ramsey’s is a God above all else loving and self-sacrificing. The rebellion is thus, in essence, against *self-giving love*; Ramsey’s emphasis on self-giving leads him to emphasise the divine humility as definitive manifestation of that self-giving: ‘[i]t is by the humiliation of the Son’s winning of glory in the toils of history that the eternal glory of the divine self-giving is most signally disclosed.’⁵⁴⁵ Insofar as humility is a revelation of the essence of divinity, so pride and self-assertion become the defining feature of sin. Compare this with Forsyth: his ethical, holy God is offended by the immorality of human action (sin); injustice creates a debt which must be paid. As a result, it is the ethical, not the loving element of the Atonement which predominates in bringing humanity to recognition of the essence of its rebellion: ‘[t]he Incarnation as an article of our faith

⁵⁴³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 56. Again, the question is ‘whether modern or secular man is self-sufficient or whether he still needs in his pride to seek those means of grace which the humble God of the Incarnation brings to him’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 25. Also Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 87.

⁵⁴⁴ Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 13.

⁵⁴⁵ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 86. Again, ‘[i]t was in humiliation that the glory was revealed on earth. There was the humiliation whereby the eternal Word took upon Himself the particularity of historical existence with all the limitations which that particularity involved. There was the humiliation involved in the “messianic secret” which the Synoptists describe: for Jesus could not express His messianic claims outright to all and sundry without the continual danger of distortion of claims... There was the humiliation whereby His mission was completed only in suffering and death. But if this threefold humiliation was, viewed from one angle, a concealment of the glory, it was, viewed from another angle, only an aspect of the glory’ - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 84-85; Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 38.

rests on our experience of the Atonement alone, on our ethical experience there, on the treatment of our sin there, on what God found precious and divine there.’⁵⁴⁶

Of course, it is hardly surprising to find that sin is defined in contra-distinction to the divine. Moreover, this does not of necessity lead to the assumption that fellowship, not sin, was the primary motive behind the Incarnation. After all, it would be natural to assume a divine desire to counter anything contrary to its nature, with the Incarnation thereby becoming the contingent means of effecting that neutralisation. Nevertheless, when that divinity is, crucially, revealed as eternally, *purposively*, seeking after fellowship, then one would reasonably expect sin’s definition to embrace opposition to that purpose. As such, if that purpose is primary, and is to be fulfilled, then sin must be subsumed within that purpose, and thereby revealed to be subordinate to it.

Ramsey: Sin and the Divine Purpose

This sense of sin/pride as subsumed in the divine quest for fellowship – with all its implications for the place of substitutionary atonement in his thought – is reinforced by a more detailed study of the way Ramsey’s concept of sin is indelibly shaped by his understanding of God’s purpose for creation. Dominant in Christ’s suffering response to sin is the divine desire to enter into human experience: ‘[t]he death is – first of all – the deepest point of the Son of God’s identification of Himself with men and of His entry into the stream of human life.’⁵⁴⁷ Compare this with Forsyth, whose emphasis on the need of a holy God for propitiation leads him to emphasise that Christ ‘stood between men and God, not with men before God.’⁵⁴⁸ Crucially, Ramsey has a stronger sense than Temple of death as the ultimate expression of the human condition: ‘death is not merely a physical fact, the cessation of the organic processes of life; it has a moral meaning since it marks and declares the sinfulness and

⁵⁴⁶ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 71. Again, the love of God ‘is the love for sinners of a God above all things *holy*, whose holiness makes sin damnable as sin and love active as grace. It can only act in a way that shall do justice to holiness, and restore it’ - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 79.

⁵⁴⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 21. Again, ‘[i]f He is near to men in the joyful contact of His ministry in Galilee, teaching and healing and blessing, He is nearer still as He goes to the Cross... the Christ enters by the way of the Cross into nearer and nearer contact with the grim human realities of sin and creatureliness and death’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 21-22.

⁵⁴⁸ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 106.

creatureliness and fragmentariness of mankind which is gripped by sin.⁵⁴⁹ Death marks the ultimate separation of humanity from God through sin. True, there is an ethical element here – but it is subsumed within the emphasis on fellowship. If God eternally seeks the closest possible fellowship with humanity through experience, and if Incarnation is the surest means of achieving this, then it is first and foremost out of God’s desire to experience humanity’s separation which leads to Christ’s death, not his concern for his own holiness and the resultant need to cancel the debt of sin.

It is important to note that Ramsey is very clear that Christ’s sacrifice ‘is an eternal fact about His heavenly life... the Son for ever possesses the character of one who gives His life utterly in love,’ and whilst such a character, being from all eternity self-expressive, seems naturally to lead to Incarnation, yet ‘when wrought out in a world of sin and pain the life of sacrifice involves death and destruction.’⁵⁵⁰ The key point is the clear sense here that it is the events of Christ’s life as lived, not the initial fact of his sharing a human life, which is rooted in the human condition of sin and separation. Christ would become incarnate irrespective of human sin, but that sin necessarily shaped the events of his life and death. Fellowship, not sin, remains the dominant note. In this respect at least, Ramsey obviously lacks Temple’s explicit sense of God’s engaging in order to incorporate sin into the divine purpose. Yet at this level, that is to be expected - if the account of sin is indeed dominated by each man’s underlying sense of the divine nature. Temple’s purposive God makes use of sin in pursuit of Value; Ramsey, lacking that emphasis on Purpose and Value pictures a God that seems, superficially, somewhat more passive. In this respect at least, sin seems a more significant force in the Incarnation than it does for Temple – indeed, were it not for that sense of the divine as *eternally* seeking the closest possible fellowship with humanity, and in a manner which implied Incarnation, one might even argue that, from this narrower perspective, Christ’s advent appears to be primarily a reaction to humanity’s Fall.

⁵⁴⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 22. Again, death ‘characterizes man in the essential contrast between man and God’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 22.

⁵⁵⁰ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114.

Yet this, of course, is not the whole picture. ‘His selfhood is so laid down, that His power and authority centre in His humiliation’:⁵⁵¹ God’s primary purpose may be to share in human experience, but that sharing inevitably reveals the divine nature as eternally, purposively seeking to win humanity into fellowship. Sin and suffering *can* be used. Hence in the nativity scene ‘[t]he great humility, the divine humility of the stable, opens our eyes to see our pride and selfishness.’⁵⁵² Unlike Forsyth, what is revealed is not wounded holiness, but rather the deep underlying unity of creation grounded in the divine self-giving love:

Cross and Resurrection, of course, always go together, but Easter is the victory of the Crucified and it is the cost I would emphasise. The reason for that emphasis is this. I am sure that in our world, tormented as it is by divisions, by cruelties, by economic frustrations, with war here and hunger there, our Christian assertions about the existence of God and the sovereignty of God can too often sound facile... The existence of God, the sovereignty of God are propositions only to be made meaningful in terms of that union of power and love seen on Calvary⁵⁵³

In Christ is revealed that which compellingly “makes sense” of the world.⁵⁵⁴ Ramsey’s apologetic concern here reflects a sense that it is in the ability of Christ’s life and death to give *meaning* to human existence in the face of sin and suffering that the power of God over human lives is rooted. Yet note that here too, with Temple, there is no sense that sin was crucial to the divine purpose. The human condition moulds but does not generate the divine response: in *our* world Christian assertions about the existence of God and divine sovereignty would sound facile were it not for the union of power and love revealed in Calvary. The *shape* of that sharing, but not the *act* of sharing, was contingent. Hence it is important to stress again the distinction between the divine desire for loving self-expression which necessitates an incarnation, and the *degree* to which that self-expression is subsequently moulded by historical circumstance.

⁵⁵¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 24. Again, divine sovereignty has ‘divine humility as instrument & sacrificial love as the weapon’ - Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.190.

⁵⁵² Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” Christmas Day sermon, 1967. v.317 f.135.

⁵⁵³ Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” Address to the Church Union Congress, 27th April 1968. v.317 f.161.

⁵⁵⁴ Again, ‘in this lonely death there is present already the truth which underlies the words “church,” “fellowship,” and “unity”’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 21.

That moulding is nevertheless consistent with the divine purpose. In that revelation in Christ lies the root of a new creation: through Christ's self-giving Christians 'were begotten and born anew...'; citing Harnack, he sees this as the beginning of "'a new creation which exhibited and realized whatever was old and original in religion.'"⁵⁵⁵ On the whole, Ramsey does not go as far as Temple in explicitly seeing sin as being redeemed into a means to the realisation of a richer fellowship (and Value). Yet, by implication, that is the result: hence, for example, he stresses that 'the Christian's present access to the Father has been created by the Lord's sacrifice.'⁵⁵⁶ In the final analysis Ramsey comes closer to Temple than Forsyth when it comes to the relationship between sin and the divine purpose. As with Temple, Ramsey's emphasis on the divine nature and purpose sets sin within a wider context that effectively subordinates it to the ultimate goal of fellowship with God.

The Cross and Sacrifice in Temple and Ramsey's Thought

Rejection of Penal Substitution

For all three theologians, it is their understanding of the divine nature and purpose which shapes their account of Christ's sacrificial death. Forsyth's emphasis on divine holiness naturally leads him to emphasise substitutionary atonement:

[s]in, in the sinner He loves, against the law of His own nature, which He loves better still, could not leave Him either indifferent, or merely pitiful. For love would then desert its own holiness. And being holy, God's concern with sin is more than pity, and more than pain. It is holiness in earnest reaction. It is wrath unto judgement. That wrath Christ felt, not indeed as personal resentment, but as the dark valley, as the horror of thick darkness⁵⁵⁷

Forsyth's sense of the divine love leads him to stop short of seeing the cross as simple punishment: 'God did not punish Christ, but Christ entered the dark shadow

⁵⁵⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 55. Again, at the last supper 'our Lord declared that His death was an act of sacrifice [which] created a new covenant between God and men' (Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 100) and this 'implies at once the creation of a people' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 101.

⁵⁵⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114.

⁵⁵⁷ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81. Again, '[t]he Incarnation as an article of our faith rests on our experience of the Atonement alone, on our ethical experience there, on the treatment of our sin there, on what God found precious and divine there' - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 71, also 74.

of God's penalty on sin.⁵⁵⁸ Yet he is clear that this is above all else expiation: '[p]eople object to the pagan suggestions of a word like expiation. But it is the want of the thing, truly and ethically understood, that is the real pagan danger, the absence of any satisfaction in holiness to the grieved holiness of God.'⁵⁵⁹ One should not lose sight of the element of divine love in Forsyth's thought – yet it is clear that in the cross the wounded divine *holiness* takes precedence: '[t]he Apostles found in the Cross that involution of mercy and sanctity, of grace and righteousness, that revelation of sin as well as love, which met at once the greatest intuitions of their religious history, and the deepest need of their shamed conscience.'⁵⁶⁰ As such, this lays the foundation for a very different understanding of ecclesiology, and of the Christian life: '[t]he Eternal Spirit of Christ's self-oblation to God is the inspiration of the new world... Christian ethic in a Christian society is the mutual relation of sons, not under a loving father, but under a certain kind of loving father – under the Father revealed by a Cross whose first concern was holiness and the dues of holiness.'⁵⁶¹

For Temple and Ramsey, by contrast, the dominant note in their account of Christ's sacrificial death is the divine quest for fellowship. It is this which leads both men not only to reject simplistic theories of penal substitution, but to downplay substitutionary atonement as a whole. For Temple, the rejection of penal substitution springs from a concern to assert the supremacy of the divine loving Purpose. It is, for Temple, the ground of all hope that this Purpose could not be deflected from its goal, least of all by a divine desire for 'satisfaction.' Despite echoes of Forsyth's notion of 'holy love', it is the 'love' rather than the 'holy' which predominates: '[n]o doctrine can be Christian which starts from a conception of God as moved by any motive alien from holy love. If it is suggested by any doctrine of the Atonement that the wrath of God had quenched or even obscured His love before the atoning sacrifice

⁵⁵⁸ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁵⁵⁹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 71.

⁵⁶⁰ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 70.

⁵⁶¹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 73. Again, '[t]he prime vocation of the society of the Cross is holiness unto the Lord... It sounds the dominant over all – even over love... If we are to fill life full, and spread the reign of love, let us preach the holy God, and the Cross where He is at His fullest and Holiest of all. Our Gospel is not simply God is love, but God's love is holy, for the Holy One is love' - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 73, also 67.

was offered by Jesus Christ, that doctrine is less than Christian.⁵⁶² Instead, Temple offers an account of atonement which reworks the concept of substitution without endorsing any sense of transferred penalty:

our Lord did make it possible for us to avoid suffering continual alienation from God and the consequences of this; and therefore, in a sense, His suffering is substituted for ours; but it is not a transferred penalty: it is something in the nature of a price paid; it is something which He gave, by means of which we are set free. It is a real redemption; but what He is concerned with all the time is delivering us, not from the consequences of sin, but from sin; and the centre of sin is self⁵⁶³

Moreover, the social dimension in Temple's account of the divine purpose – his call for humanity to work together with God for the realisation of Value – naturally pulls against any account of atonement which stresses concern for “my” sins and any substitutionary payment for them: hence the Western Church was historically guilty of concentrating ‘attention on deliverance from the penalty of sin rather than on deliverance from sin itself, and thus remains incompletely spiritual with a tendency to a self-centred pietism.’⁵⁶⁴

For Ramsey, the rejection springs from his overwhelming sense of God as self-giving love: ‘sacrifice’ has sometimes been seen as if Christ were

...on Calvary and in the Eucharist, propitiating an estranged Father on man's behalf. Now certainly the New Testament teaches that Christ is a propitiation for sin (Rom. 3²¹⁻²⁶, I John 2¹), but both S.Paul and S.John make it clear that the initiative in the act of propitiation belongs to God Himself... “God loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation.” (I John 4¹⁰.) “God commendeth His own love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5⁸.) Hence while both Calvary and the Eucharist are a “sacrifice for sin,” both are the utterance of God's own self-giving towards men⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 257. Again, ‘our Lord came to save His people from their sins and not merely from the punishment of their sins. It is only through preoccupation with thoughts of punishment that people have come to invent doctrines of transferred penalty’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 259. Also Temple, ‘The Divinity of Christ,’ 241; Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 76; Temple, ed., *William Temple : Some Lambeth Letters*, 20-21.

⁵⁶³ Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 80. Also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 126.

⁵⁶⁴ Temple, ‘The Divinity of Christ,’ 234.

⁵⁶⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 117. Also Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 51-52.

Ramsey's talk of propitiation does acknowledge that there is something for which an act of appeasement is necessary⁵⁶⁶ - though he eschews Forsyth's language of wrath, and instead (crucially) casts propitiation in terms of the divine self-giving love. Equally, Temple also sees an antagonism within God towards sin, but his account is likewise indelibly stamped with the dominant emphasis on the divine purposive will: 'so long as there is ill-will in me there is an antagonism on His side to be ended as well as on mine... It is not anger, if by anger we mean the emotional reaction of an offended self-concern; it is anger, if by anger we mean the resolute and relentless opposition of a will set on righteousness against a will directed elsewhere.'⁵⁶⁷

There is nonetheless, in both men, at least *some* sense of sin as "wrong deeds," and of the cross as the means of dealing with the consequences of those deeds. Witness, for example, Temple's declaration that atonement is 'something even bigger than the forgiveness of human sin' - the implication being that sin is nevertheless one element in atonement.⁵⁶⁸ The sense is more pronounced in Ramsey: '[t]he true doctrine of atonement is the doctrine of *Christus Victor*: but it includes (what some of its exponents forget) expiation as the price and the means of victory.'⁵⁶⁹ However, both quotations reveal the degree to which this sense of "dealing" with sin is subsumed within a wider purposive context. This point is underlined by each man's account of the essence of Christ's sacrificial suffering. For Temple, that suffering is not about payment, but self-giving obedience: '[i]t is, of course, fundamental to Christianity that real progress in this sinful world comes by sacrifice. But the essence of suffering is not sacrifice but obedience - with the clear recognition that this may

⁵⁶⁶ Again, elsewhere he can speak of Christ 'bearing our penalty' - Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 52; Michael Ramsey, "The Christian Concept of Sacrifice," (Oxford: SLG Press, 1974), 7.

⁵⁶⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 259. Again, '[a]re we to say then that God is not angry at sin, that He is incapable of moral indignation? Certainly not. Love can be indignant. A father can be indignant at the ingratitude of the son he loves...' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 140. See also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 77.

⁵⁶⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 269. This is more than just an Abelardian account of atonement: 'in this... I believe there is contained every valuable element that was present in any of the great historic theories of the Atonement. We realise our own absolute impotence to change ourselves; but we realise also that we are changed as we contemplate the love of God revealed in Christ; we realise that we owe to God something that we can never pay, but which in His love He remits as though it were paid already; and we realise an absolute unity between ourselves and Him as something which is at least possible, and is beginning already to be actual, because to love like that we must respond with love; and love is the union of spirits' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 135-136.

⁵⁶⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 76.

involve any degree of suffering and is bound to involve some.⁵⁷⁰ That obedience, of course, is obedience to the divine purpose and it is obedience rooted in love: the cross reveals ‘the power of love expressed in sacrifice, of love (that is to say) doing and bearing what apart from love would not be willingly borne or done.’⁵⁷¹ For Ramsey too, self-giving love is dominant, though there is a stronger sense that this is an end in itself, rather than as the means to effecting obedience to a divine purpose: ‘the essence of the sacrifice is the giving of life, though the death is the mark and significant fact about the life’⁵⁷² – the distinction is a subtle one, but the emphasis is on the *gift* of life, with the death as summative expression of that gift, rather than as payment for sin.

The Cross as Judgement

Each man’s account of the cross as judgement likewise underpins this sense that fellowship, not sin, is the central concern. Thus for Temple, “judgement” is rooted in the decision of the individual to embrace or reject the fellowship that the cross offers: ‘[w]henver He comes it must be in judgement, though this is not the purpose of His coming; His purpose is always to establish the Kingdom of God and to draw men into it; but as they refuse or reject His invitation and His claim they condemn themselves.’⁵⁷³ That same emphasis on experiential encounter through the medium of a human life as *the* means to discerning the divine nature underpins this account of judgement: ‘when Jerusalem fell for a characteristic which involved repudiation of Christ, the Son of Man came in Judgement. So it was when the turn of Rome itself came. Rome fell largely because its social fabric rested increasingly on slavery; slavery is contrary to the truth about human nature as it is revealed in Christ; and when Rome fell because it based its civilisation on a principle alien from the mind of Christ, the Son of Man came in Judgement...’⁵⁷⁴ Judgement, for Temple, thus becomes a creative act, drawing one through encounter with Christ to seek out those

⁵⁷⁰ Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," Letter to Irwin dated 4th December 1932. v.46 f.329.

⁵⁷¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 400. Again, ‘He puts forth His power by the completeness of His self-sacrifice; He reigns over the souls of men from the Cross of His agony’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 169.

⁵⁷² Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114. Again, on the Old Testament concept of sacrifice: ‘[t]he essence of the old sacrifices was the offering of an animal’s blood which represented its life. The death was necessary to release the blood, but the essence of sacrifice was the offering of the life...’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 113. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 137.

⁵⁷³ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 338. See also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 136, 138.

⁵⁷⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 202. Also Temple, *Palm Sunday to Easter*, 10; Temple, "Why Does God Allow War?," 3.

principles ‘in accordance with which we may order life so as to express the Mind of Christ.’⁵⁷⁵ Hence judgement reveals ‘the sacredness of personality’,⁵⁷⁶ ‘the reality of membership... all are members of one family’,⁵⁷⁷ ‘the duty of service’,⁵⁷⁸ and ‘the power of sacrifice.’⁵⁷⁹

Equally, for Ramsey, judgement is rooted in humanity’s response to the divine invitation to fellowship both with God and, through God, with all humanity: the cross is ‘a mirror of humanity in its pride wherewith it wounds the love of God.’⁵⁸⁰ On the whole there is a stronger emphasis than Temple on judgement in Ramsey’s work, and perhaps increasingly so as his career progressed.⁵⁸¹ Likewise there is a stronger sense of the cross as the measure of the cost of humanity’s sinful actions: ‘the act of forgiveness is a very costly thing because there is going to be in this good man who has been injured the embodiment of a thorough-going condemnation of the wrong.’⁵⁸² Yet this tends to be as the means of teasing out the profound depth of the divine loving response. Hence Ramsey speaks of the ‘terrible lovingkindness of God’⁵⁸³ revealed in Christ’s suffering in the face of human intransigence: ‘[t]he mystery of Christ is full of comfort and strength, but only when it has first shattered any thought of our own adequacy and has made us know once again our poverty, darkness, impotence.’⁵⁸⁴ Thus for both men, judgement takes its ultimate bearing from humanity’s response to the divine purpose, and though judgement may reveal

⁵⁷⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 203. Those principles are ‘the sacredness of personality’ (203); ‘the reality of membership... all are members of one family’ (204); ‘the duty of service’ (205); ‘the power of sacrifice’ (206).

⁵⁷⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 203.

⁵⁷⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 204.

⁵⁷⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 205.

⁵⁷⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 206.

⁵⁸⁰ Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 50. Again, ‘[t]he crucifixion of Jesus stands as the divine judgement upon every man’s insensitivity to every man’ - Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” Sermon to mark the start of Human Rights Year, 10th December 1967. v.317 f.134. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 160; Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 44; Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 23.

⁵⁸¹ Witness, for example, the emphasis in his later writings on the Holy Spirit as ‘the convicting Spirit’ (Ramsey et al., *Come Holy Spirit*, 39-40) or his sense that the cross is felt to be not just one more in a series of the world’s martyrdoms but the ‘confrontation between God’s judgement and compassion and the sin and suffering of mankind’ - Ramsey, *Jesus and the Living Past*, 13.

⁵⁸² Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.173. Again, ‘[w]e look to Jesus crucified and there we see how all the sinfulness and selfishness of man here, there and everywhere rejects and wounds the love of God.’ - Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 12.

⁵⁸³ Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” Sermon, 3rd January, 1966. v.317 f.4.

⁵⁸⁴ Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” Sermon, 3rd January, 1966. v.317 f.3.

the depth of human sin, that sin is always defined as opposition to the divine purpose; loving purpose, not wounded holiness, is at the heart of each man's account.

Forsyth, too, shares this sense of judgement as grounded in human response to the revelation of the cross. Hence in the cross '[t]he world's condemnation of Him was His condemnation of the world – but a condemnation unto forgiveness and salvation.'⁵⁸⁵ Yet Forsyth's stress on divine holiness also leads him to a much stronger sense that in the cross Christ was suffering the divine judgement against sin, both as an end in itself and as the means to revealing the true depth of the divine love: 'His act of sacrifice became an endurance of judgement. Nothing else than atonement could do full justice to Love. Love might do much, but if it did not suffer, and suffer not only pain but judgement, it could not do its divine utmost.'⁵⁸⁶ The blend of love and ethics in the divine meant that this was not mere punishment: nonetheless, 'being holy, God's concern with sin is more than pity, and more than pain. It is holiness in earnest reaction. It is wrath unto judgement...'⁵⁸⁷ In part this reflects the act of the divine self-giving love in echo of Ramsey's own position: '[m]ust a divine love not go so far with us and for us as to enter the wrath of holiness?'⁵⁸⁸ More importantly, it reflects the divine holiness itself: God was a 'God of mercy, truly, but also a God of right... He was a God of grace, but of grace that could never sacrifice His moral nature, or simply waive His moral order. He must honour it... He was a God whose great act of grace was also, because He was holy, a great act of judgement.'⁵⁸⁹

Atonement

Not surprisingly, then, Forsyth understands atonement above all as an act which satisfies the divine wrath against sin: 'I do not mean that He changed God's *feeling* to the race. That was grace always, the grace that sent Him. But He did change the *relation* between God and man... To do this He had to bear the wrath, the judgement,

⁵⁸⁵ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁵⁸⁶ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81, also 74.

⁵⁸⁷ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁵⁸⁸ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁵⁸⁹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 70. Again, 'Christ could not show the power of forgiving love in full unless He felt the weight of God's wrath in full, i.e. not God's temper but God's judgement; which for Him was God's withdrawal, the experience of God's total negation of the sin He was made' - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 82.

the privation of God... The more love there is in a holy God, the more wrath.⁵⁹⁰ There is a concomitant sense of atonement as revelation of divine love, and one which foreshadows Temple and Ramsey - '[n]othing else than atonement could do full justice to Love'⁵⁹¹ - but this element is subservient to the quest for the satisfaction of holiness. For Temple and Ramsey, by contrast, the Atonement is not, first and foremost, simply the cancelling of a debt. Rather, it is a means to fellowship. Thus for Ramsey it is, above all, *glory*: 'glory not only provides a pattern for the doctrine of Atonement but illuminates the inner unity of some aspects of that doctrine which have been too often separated.'⁵⁹² Chief amongst those aspects is the sense that it is a revelation of the divine self-giving love.⁵⁹³ It is characteristic of Ramsey's linkage of creation and redemption that expiation is incorporated into his account of the Atonement, but articulated in terms of God's creative, loving purpose – a purpose in the process of realisation through the victory of the cross: hence 'in the story of the Passion the imagery of the victorious king who reigns from the tree is blended with the imagery of the sacrificial victim who expiates sin and brings communion between God and man... The victory and the expiation are inseparable, and the δόξα expresses this.'⁵⁹⁴

Equally, Temple can declare that the atonement is 'something even bigger than the forgiveness of human sin. The method and cost by which that forgiveness is wrought and made effective reveals new depths in the divine.'⁵⁹⁵ True, it may be natural for the individual to focus on the forgiveness of sins:

The religious man is concerned with the problem of evil chiefly as a problem of sin and its forgiveness; but this concern at once assumes the view-point, or level of thought, of a man who is by his sin alienated from God. It is therefore a mockery to speak to such a man from the view-point of the unity of all things in God, unless he is first told how he may himself recover that unity with God, and therewith the apprehension of the world and life which it makes possible. For this reason the Atonement is commonly thought of as only a means to the Forgiveness of Sins; it is in fact much more than that; it is the mode of the Deity of God. But for

⁵⁹⁰ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁵⁹¹ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 81.

⁵⁹² Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 86.

⁵⁹³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 86.

⁵⁹⁴ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 87.

⁵⁹⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 269.

men it is first the means to forgiveness, and must be understood as such before its deeper meaning can be apprehended⁵⁹⁶

Nevertheless, this language clearly emphasises fellowship: if the individual is conscious of sin, it is because of a deeper sense that this sin has alienated him from God. Hence ‘the forgiveness that Christ wins for us is not chiefly a remission of penalty; it is the restoration to the affectionate intimacy of sons with their Father.’⁵⁹⁷ And that, for a purpose: ‘[t]he Atonement is accomplished by the drawing of sinful souls into conformity with the divine Will.’⁵⁹⁸

Yet the extended quotation above refers to humanity’s quest to ‘recover’ unity with God; Temple goes on to speak of forgiveness as presupposing ‘alienation, a severed unity.’⁵⁹⁹ Such language is curiously at odds with the prevailing sense of the Incarnation as drawing humanity forward into an intimacy of fellowship that surpasses any which has gone before. How are the two elements to be reconciled? Temple does not say, and consequently any answer must be speculative. However, it would seem that Temple is talking of an intimacy grounded in unity: the unity which existed between God and humanity existed prior to the Fall – but, as already noted, that Fall was a fall “upwards” into a conscious state capable of realising Value. It does not equate to a state of sin, though Temple acknowledges that sin was almost bound to enter the world thereby. The conscious state which existed (in theory) post-Fall but pre-sin was one whose finite perspective required a fellowship with God on a level of intimacy which exists between the divine and the rest of creation, and which had existed with humanity prior to the rise of finite consciousness. The advent of a conscious state required an intimacy which was therefore in one sense akin to that which had gone before yet, because of the unique appearance of consciousness within creation, nonetheless had the potential for an experience quite beyond anything that had previously arisen. In the quotations noted, Temple would seem to

⁵⁹⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 254-255. There are echoes here of Forsyth: ‘lay’ religion ‘properly means an experienced religion of direct, individual, and forgiven faith’ - Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 12; also 9, 13, 333.

⁵⁹⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 258. Again, ‘[w]hen a child who has done wrong says to his father, “Please forgive me,” he does not only mean, “Don’t punish me”; he also means, “Please let us be to each other as if I had not done it”’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 25. Also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 75; Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 171-172; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 143; Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 193.

⁵⁹⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 259, also 264.

⁵⁹⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 255.

be referring to the former of these two elements; set within the context of his argument, it is clear that Temple is looking at the problem of sin from the practical perspective of the human condition, rather than the broader philosophical context of the divine purpose: his focus is on '[t]he religious man... concerned with the problem of evil chiefly as a problem of sin and forgiveness; but this concern at once assumes the view-point, or level of thought, of a man who is by his sin alienated from God.'⁶⁰⁰ Viewed from the philosophical perspective, the broader concern of the divine purpose is dominant: atonement is more than the forgiveness of sins, 'it is the mode of the Deity of God. But for men it is first the means to forgiveness and must be understood as such before its deeper meaning can be apprehended'⁶⁰¹ – yet the apprehension of that deeper meaning is clearly the ultimate goal, and with it the divine purpose which it reveals.

Temple: The Power of the Cross

For Temple, the divine purpose for the realisation of Value through fellowship necessitates an incarnation via the medium of a human life. Therein is contained the power of God to marshal the disparate wills of human beings. Just as the life of Christ is a summative work of art, expressing the divine nature and purpose, so in the cross is distilled all the power of that life in a single scene. For Temple the cross reveals the divine love: 'this revelation is an altogether new fact... And yet when this breaks in is itself the power which had always been in control... What we see in Him is what we should see in the history of the universe if we could apprehend that history in its completeness. What have been called immanence and transcendence are here perfectly combined.'⁶⁰² The individual's 'heart and will can only be controlled by the manifestation of love,'⁶⁰³ and both must be controlled if God is truly almighty:

⁶⁰⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 254.

⁶⁰¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 255.

⁶⁰² Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 317-318. Again, 'St John's Gospel brings the embodiment of the Divine Character and Method to the threshold of His Passion with these words upon His lips, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee... And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." All that prayer refers to the approaching sacrifice; the full manifestation of God's glory is the Cross. When the self-surrender is complete, the manifestation of the eternal glory and excellency of God is complete also' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 286.

⁶⁰³ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 312. Again, self-will can only be overcome 'by the revelation of a love so intense that no heart which beats can remain indifferent to it...' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 125, also 137, 138, 151, 168-169. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 182-183; Temple, *Christ's Revelation of God*, 59.

‘authority is to be exercised not against hostile and recalcitrant wills, but only through winning a free allegiance.... Its power is the power of love to call forth answering love. This it does by its own method of sacrifice...’⁶⁰⁴

The cross thus “breaks open” the recalcitrant human heart: ‘[t]here we see what selfishness in us means to God; and if evil means that to God, then God is not indifferent to evil. He displays His utter alienation from evil by showing us the pain that it inflicts on Him. So more than in any other way he rouses us from acquiescence in our own selfishness...’⁶⁰⁵ For Forsyth, such an account would be marred by insufficient attention to the ethical dimension of divine holiness and the sense of the cross as judgement: Christ might have done justice to God’s holy love ‘by a sinless but statuesque personality, who embodied His love, and visualized it to us as its living image and our perfect example or type. But... that is more of a spectacle than salvation; it is something more aesthetic for our spiritual contemplation than dynamic for our moral redemption.’⁶⁰⁶ Rather, it is the ethical experience of atonement as payment of a debt to the wounded holiness of God which wins the heart: ‘lay’ religion ‘properly means an experienced religion of direct, individual, and forgiven faith’⁶⁰⁷ such that ‘the Incarnate is immediately known to us only as the Saviour.’⁶⁰⁸ Above all, it is the profound sense of divine love as grace (rather than self-giving), reaching out to pay the debt against holiness caused by human sin, which wins the human heart:

The coming of Christ in the long course of history is the coming of God the Redeemer. Man’s hunger for deliverance is the greatest movement in all the soul’s life except one – God’s passion to save ...Valuable as

⁶⁰⁴ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 337, also 313. Again, the power of Sacrifice is ‘the driving power of progress... There are in the world two kinds of Victory. One is the Victory of Pride or Self-assertion... And there is the Victory of Love – the only kind of victory with which God is content. Here there is no defeated party, for the victory consists in the conversion of the enemies into friends. The means to this victory is not force, but sacrifice...’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 206. Also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 74, 80-81; Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 38; Temple, *Church and Nation*, 138.

⁶⁰⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 184; ‘[w]e cannot go on wounding One who accepts our wounds like that; we are filled with fear, not the old craven fear of punishment, but the fear of wounding the tenderest of all hearts’ - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 135. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 21; Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 45; Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 62-64, 140; Temple, *Church and Nation*, 69; Temple, *Citizen and Churchman*, 27; Temple, *Palm Sunday to Easter*, 5-6, 34-35; Temple, *The Church Looks Forward*, 102.

⁶⁰⁶ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 77.

⁶⁰⁷ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 12.

⁶⁰⁸ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 333.

speculative versions of the Incarnation may be, we only really have it and believe in it when we sit inside it, by the saving action which sets us in Christ, and assures us of the incredible fact that we are included by God's strange grace in the same love wherewith he loves his only begotten Son⁶⁰⁹

Forsyth is clear: grace does not mean 'either God's general benignity, or His particular kindness to our failure or pity for our pain. I mean his undeserved and unbought pardon and redemption for us in the face of our sin...'⁶¹⁰ Perhaps not surprisingly, that theme of grace is rather more muted in Temple.⁶¹¹ Yet Temple's theology does not negate the importance of sin in the cross. Rather, he uses it in a subtly different way to Forsyth, thanks to his different conception of the divine purposive nature. Temple's understanding of God leads him to lay greater stress on the cross as a revelation of wounded divine *love*, not holiness, and a love reaching out to humanity in search of self-giving fellowship with humanity. The cross shows the depth of that wound, and in that revelation of wounded love is the divine power contained: 'by showing what sin costs God'⁶¹² it 'fills me with horror of the selfishness and calls out an answering love.'⁶¹³

For Temple, it is because the world is sinful that the revelation of love must take the form of sacrifice, yet that sacrifice should not be allowed to obscure the underlying cosmic concern for the realisation of Value:

The fact that in human history the Atonement takes the form of the Passion is largely due to human sin. But human history is only an episode in the cosmic process, and the Divine Self-sacrifice, wherein is expressed the Love which is the inner heart of the Universe and its supreme Law, has a range of efficacy far beyond human history. What constitutes the problem is not only the sins of men, but what St. John calls the "sins of the world" (cosmos)... What is set before us in the cross of Christ is not merely the reaction of the divine Nature to human sin; it is the unveiling of a mystery of the Divine Life itself - the revelation of the cost whereby God wins victory over the evil which He has permitted, and thereby

⁶⁰⁹ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 343.

⁶¹⁰ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 2.

⁶¹¹ Temple does make occasional mention of grace, defining it as 'active love' (Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 92), but the references are relatively scant.

⁶¹² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 260. Also Temple, *Issues of Faith*, 44-45, 51; Temple, *Basic Convictions*, 66, 68-70; William Temple, "One Lord, One People," (London: Lutterworth Press, 1941), 18.

⁶¹³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 263.

makes more glorious than otherwise was possible the goodness which triumphs⁶¹⁴

What is won from humanity is above all a commitment to share in the divine purpose: '[i]t is precisely the indiscriminating and apparently immoral universality of His love which most of all lifts those who believe in Him out of the selfishness, which leads to crimes and injuries, up to the justice of action whose law is, "Do unto all men as you would that they should do unto you" and to the justice of emotion and purpose whose law is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."' ⁶¹⁵ Hence Temple emphasises the social implications of the cross as agent for effecting the divine purpose: for example, faced with one who has hurt us we must follow the example of Christ and 'be ready to go to any lengths of self-sacrifice to soften his heart and win him first to repentance and thereby to fellowship' and the Value which fellowship realises. ⁶¹⁶ Even when, in later years, there was greater emphasis on the power of sin in his thought, ⁶¹⁷ yet the cross remained the embodiment of the divine purpose, the self-sacrifice of Christ the means to the realisation of Value by winning self-sacrifice from humanity in return: 'we are called to sacrifice. It is the way of fellowship with Christ.' ⁶¹⁸ Hence it seems that through-out his life Temple's account of the cross remained wholly consistent with his emphasis on the divine quest for fellowship.

⁶¹⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 262.

⁶¹⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 183. Again, '[i]f the aim is to make man, who is naturally selfish, truly just in his dealings, or, in other words, to convince him that he is only one among others of equal worth with himself, the method of rewards and punishments can never succeed; for it is an appeal to self-interest, which by that appeal is confirmed and strengthened. No; if selfish man is to be raised from self-concern to true justice it must be by something which makes no appeal to his self-interest, but calls him out altogether from his self-concern; it must be by the stimulation of his generosity; it must be by self-sacrifice calling for self-sacrifice in answer' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 180-181.

⁶¹⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 268. Again, humanity's moral good consists in the 'life of love and the fellowship of which that love is the binding power... But the very methods upon which secular civilization relies [in order to achieve this] are proofs that this attempt can never by itself be successful; for the obstacle to fellowship is self-will, and self-will cannot be ejected merely by the restraint which law can exercise. There is needed some power... which shall break in alike upon the individual and upon society from without, capable of effecting not only change but renovation. There is only one power known to men which is capable of producing such results; it is the power of an entirely self-forgetful love expressing itself as love always expresses itself, in sacrifice...' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 352.

⁶¹⁷ Witness, for example, a greater emphasis on that element of the cross as reconciliation between sinful humanity and God - Temple, *The Church Looks Forward*, 180.

⁶¹⁸ Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," Transcript of radio broadcast, 7th September 1942(?). v.68 f.268.

Ramsey: The Power of the Cross

For Ramsey, the cross is not only the means of entering into human experience: it is also, with Temple, the sole power by which fellowship between God and humanity can be effected. Thus ‘the humiliations of the Christ are the disclosure of the power of God.’⁶¹⁹ In part, that power lies in the cross’s ability to reveal the meaning of creation, echoing Temple’s own sense of its cosmic meaning: hence, the Wisdom of God is set forth in ‘its very essence in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ... Christians... discover in the Cross a key to the meaning of all creation. The cross unlocks its secrets and its sorrows, and interprets them in terms of the power of God.’⁶²⁰ Yet the cross’s ultimate meaning and power is rooted in the divine self-giving. Again, Forsyth’s account helps tease out the subtlety of Ramsey’s thought here. Forsyth’s focus is on the wounded holiness of God as the measure of divine grace; for Ramsey, the focus is on a wounded self-giving love which consequently tends to “downplay” the element of grace precisely because of Ramsey’s more limited attention to divine holiness. True, the recognition of human sin is important: God

...is going to bring over to the wrong-doer the great seriousness of the moral law; the horribleness of the offence. He is going to bear that sense of the greatness of the moral law & the horribleness of the offence in the suffering of his own heart & mind, and he is going to convey to the wrong-doer the tremendousness of the moral law and also the cost of the suffering that he is himself bearing... the crucifixion is the costly act in which God carries out forgiveness in such a way that men may see the meaning of it, repent & believe⁶²¹

Yet this recognition of the enormity of human sin is the means by which the individual recognises the enormity of God’s self-giving in the ‘costly act’ of

⁶¹⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 18. Again, the divine sovereignty has ‘divine humility as instrument & sacrificial love as the weapon’ - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.190.

⁶²⁰ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 125.

⁶²¹ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.173-174. Again, ‘God shows us on His side the overwhelming generosity that is in Him, coupled with His implacable condemnation and judgement of our sin, and we, kneeling before Him confessing our sinfulness, confessing that we put the glory of man before the glory of God, face up to the pain of God’s condemnation and, at the selfsame moment, the generosity of God’s love reaching out to us to restore us’ - Ramsey, "Christ Crucified for the World," 10-11. Also Michael Ramsey, "Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Sermon Preached by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Centenary Celebrations of Lincoln Training College on 2nd June 1962," (London: Church Information Office, 1962), 5.

crucifixion.⁶²² Thus, whilst for Forsyth ‘nothing can destroy guilt but the very holiness that makes guilt guilt,’⁶²³ yet for Ramsey sin can only be overcome ‘by its opposite replacing it, and its opposite is self-giving love.’⁶²⁴

Contemplation of the cross breaks open the heart of the believer to receive the divine spirit of fellowship: ‘it is only through facing the Cross and its disclosure of the awful realities of sin and of God’s forgiving love that men have free access to God in sonship.’⁶²⁵ Yet this is fellowship that brings with it a call to reflect back the divine glory of self-giving; as such it marks the on-going realisation of a new creation: the death ‘implies at once the creation of a people.’⁶²⁶ That self-negation by Christ’s followers brings the concomitant benefit of revealing to the world (and to the wider Church) the self-giving love of God, thereby helping to further the new creation grounded in ever more intimate fellowship between God and humanity. For Ramsey, that power is revealed in the second letter to the Corinthians which ‘shows us a glimpse of the apostle’s way of facing the agonizing situation’ of a divided church: ‘[h]e sees it as a call to share in the suffering of Christ rather than to drift into a sense of grievance, and by his nearness to the suffering of Christ he finds the power of Christ to reconcile and restore.’⁶²⁷ Clearly, then, the power of the cross is not simply the means by which the debt of human sin is cancelled (though this is certainly one element in Ramsey’s thinking) but rather, principally, the means of effecting fellowship through self-giving love.

Salvation in Temple and Ramsey

Not surprisingly, then, salvation is understood by both men primarily as a relationship to the divine purpose. Thus for Temple, salvation is ‘not a fixed state,

⁶²² Hence, ‘his death so far from contradicting the sovereignty of God is a showing of what the reign of God is like and how the reign of God enters effectively into human lives’ - ‘God and the Bible’, the Larkin-Stuart Lecture, 18th October 1971 - Ramsey, “Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336,” v.318 f.86. Also Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 22.

⁶²³ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 75.

⁶²⁴ Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 38.

⁶²⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114. Again, ‘[t]he power which will draw the nations to him will be the self-sacrifice of his death, bringing to them both the divine judgement and the divine appeal of love’ - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 144, also 186-187. Also Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 21-22, 36; Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 97, 100.

⁶²⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 101, also 25. Again, ‘[n]ot only did the crucifixion make possible the giving of the Spirit, but the life bestowed by the Spirit is a life of which the crucifixion is a quality, a life of living through dying’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 30.

⁶²⁷ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 32.

identical for all, to which each mind individually and separately attains. It is in its own nature a fellowship primarily with God, and secondarily (and derivatively) of all souls with one another.⁶²⁸ Salvation is not salvation *from* but salvation *for*. Heretofore the individual's finite/particular perspective on the world has generated a tendency to focus on the self and its needs to the exclusion of all others; salvation means a recognition that one is a child of God, and as such part of a family that includes all God's creatures – with all the sense of obligation to the whole that this entails.⁶²⁹ Salvation thus

consists in the substitution of the spirit of the Whole for the spirit of the particular self in the control of all life – conduct, thought, feeling. If a man can say truly, “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,” he is “saved.” And this alone is salvation... the repudiation of all that belongs to the particularity of the self alone and has no part in universal good. The pain of such self-sacrifice is a necessary cost or price of salvation; but the self-sacrifice itself is not a price of salvation; it *is* salvation, and salvation *is* such self-sacrifice⁶³⁰

This self-sacrifice is, of course, always focussed on the realisation of Value: ‘we are called as Christians to the service of God here and now... not then but now is salvation to be won and made manifest.’⁶³¹ For Forsyth, by contrast, there is much greater emphasis on salvation as “freedom *from*”: the cross ‘*effects* the reconciliation of man and God... It does not simply provide either a preliminary which God needs in a propitiation, or the stimulus man needs in a spiritual hero, or a moving martyr. The propitiation is the redemption. The only satisfaction to a holy God is the absolute establishment of holiness...’⁶³² True, it brings with it a communion with the divine which is a new creation: ‘saving faith... does not view him as the pledge of our human future, but as the foundation of our new communion with a holy God,’⁶³³ and one which seems qualitatively to go beyond the pre-Fall communion.⁶³⁴ Yet these

⁶²⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 415.

⁶²⁹ Until the mid-nineteenth century people's ‘main concern was with their prospect of “salvation” in another world’ (Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 205); there was in this view ‘a real self-centredness which is plainly out of harmony with the religion of Christ’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 206. Also Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 81.

⁶³⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 221.

⁶³¹ Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 207-208.

⁶³² Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 78.

⁶³³ Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, 324.

⁶³⁴ Hence in Christ we see ‘the divine act of new creation in which we are given our true moral place in a saved world’ - Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 77.

elements are not central in Forsyth's thought: above all, the emphasis on divine holiness focusses attention on salvation as the satisfaction of the divine opposition to sin: '[t]he world is not God's expression but His action, His conflict, His conquest.'⁶³⁵

Temple's position might seem to lead to universalism: if each individual is a unique centre for the appreciation of Value, then *every* human life is needed if God is to fulfil his purpose of realising the maximum possible value in his creation. Temple's view seems to oscillate during his career: in *Mens Creatrix* he hints that even Judas Iscariot might, in theory, be saved;⁶³⁶ by contrast, in the later *Christus Veritas* he can declare that 'if it is true that the free response of each individual is necessary to his entry into that fellowship with God which is "salvation"... it must be possible for the individual to persist in refusal, and that persistence may become final...'⁶³⁷ The resolution to this ambiguity seems to lie in a clarification of Temple's account of the divine purpose. God wills the maximum possible Value from his creation *within the very real constraints of humanity's freedom to choose*. The apparent ambiguity of Temple's position can be resolved by highlighting the fact that the quotations cited above only, in fact, assert the reality of choice. For Temple, it would seem that the Value which is realised as a consequence of that very real choice is eternally greater than the Value which might be realised if humanity were always inevitably won over by the divine self-disclosure. Put crudely, the qualitative sum of Value is greater if human beings not only have the theoretical choice to reject God, but also actually do so in practice.

For Ramsey, by contrast, salvation means above all a recognition of our dependence on Christ and our being joined to his Body: 'in every place where Christians are found they dare to assert that the Christ is *in them*, and that their relation to Him is not only the memory of a past event but the fact of a present indwelling. The

⁶³⁵ Forsyth, *Positive Preaching*, 69.

⁶³⁶ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 357; see also 290.

⁶³⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 208-209, though note his later comment that Heaven is not a place, but 'the universal fellowship of all spirits in the Love of the Divine Spirit. As long as any existing spirit remains outside, rebelling against the fellowship and refusing the self-sacrifice which constitutes membership, so long Heaven does not exist for anyone – not even for God' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 225.

presence of the Spirit mediates the presence of the Christ Himself,⁶³⁸ reflecting the eternal glory back to the divine. In other words, salvation means fellowship as an end in itself, irrespective of the divine purpose for a new creation. Yet as with Temple, there remains the sense that salvation is freedom *for* something: citing (and endorsing) Hoskyns, Ramsey declares: “the Son of God consecrates His blameless life as an effective sacrifice on behalf of the disciples in order that they might be set forth in the world as the concrete righteousness of God.... Dedicated to the service of God even to death for His glory.”⁶³⁹ For Ramsey, the boundaries of salvation are defined not so much by questions of sin and repentance, as by the degree to which any individual, irrespective of whether they know of Christ and the cross, yet lives a life animated by loving fellowship with the divine source: consequently, he acknowledges that: some ‘may awake to discover that in their acts of compassion to sufferers they were serving him without knowing him.’⁶⁴⁰ Salvation always means, first and foremost, an entering into the most intimate relationship possible with God.

An Aside: The Resurrection in Temple and Ramsey’s Thought

For Forsyth, the cross’s “dealing” with sin makes possible a regeneration of life rooted in the Resurrection: there is thus a sense that these are two separate acts, albeit the latter flows out of the former. For both Temple and Ramsey, cross and Resurrection are altogether more clearly inextricably linked. Hence, for example, Ramsey argues that the Transfiguration symbolizes ‘some of those unities – Cross and Resurrection, redemption and creation – which mediaeval and post-mediaeval theology in the West often missed.’⁶⁴¹ For Temple the cross and Resurrection are a unity which reveals ‘the nature of the world’s totality.’⁶⁴² As such, the Resurrection is understood by both men as bound up with the divine self-giving, purposive, quest

⁶³⁸ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 31. Again, ‘[b]y its dependence on the Church of history [each group of Christians] will die to self-consciousness and self-satisfaction’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 44.

⁶³⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 79.

⁶⁴⁰ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 44-45.

⁶⁴¹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 44. Again, ‘[i]t is this pair of events that in the Christian religion are drawn together to be as one event and as one single symbol’ - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.184. Whilst Ramsey notes that ‘[i]t is right for us... to distinguish between the glory in the Passion... and the glory beyond the Passion...’ yet he goes on to argue that ‘there is an inseparable unity between the two stages’ - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 72, also 62.

⁶⁴² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 271. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 116; Temple, *Basic Convictions*, 69.

for fellowship. Yet for both there is a sense that the Resurrection seals the crucifixion and reveals its deeper meaning. Consequently, though the two elements of cross and Resurrection are closely bound, yet it is the cross which provides the light, and the Resurrection which acts as the prism revealing the constitutive range and depth of its meaning. For Temple, the Resurrection serves to “make sense” of the cross: ‘[i]f there were no Resurrection the revelation in Christ would be tragic. There would still be nobility, but to no purpose...’⁶⁴³ Resurrection discloses the cross as the means whereby evil is made constitutive to the process of realising Value: it ‘is not merely a victory which cancels the former defeat; it is a reversal which makes defeat itself into the very stuff of victory... This is possible, of course, because the failure of good was apparent only.’⁶⁴⁴ True, it reveals the divine purposive goal - and the power behind it - and as such is distinct from the crucifixion: resurrection is to ‘a new order of being, of which the chief characteristic is fellowship with God.’⁶⁴⁵ Yet Temple’s account of the divine purpose means that he is unwilling to treat the two in isolation of one another. Temple is concerned to emphasise humanity’s role in the realisation of Value: to focus on the Resurrection in isolation from the cross is to focus (arguably) on personal reward; to focus on the cross is to focus on the divine action within history in which humanity must share. Temple’s account of the divine nature means that service, rather than hope, predominates - even if hope is a necessary spur to that action.

Ramsey equally emphasises this sense of the Resurrection as sealing the divine purpose as revealed in the cross. Thus he highlights with approval the degree to which ‘S. John draws the death and the resurrection so closely together that the one is the inevitable divine sequence of the other; the Cross is to him not a defeat needing the resurrection to reverse it, but rather a victory so decisive that the resurrection follows quickly to seal it.’⁶⁴⁶ The Resurrection “makes sense” of the cross: in the unity of cross and Resurrection is found the meaning of life as ‘the way of living through dying, of losing life so as to find it.’⁶⁴⁷ In doing so, it unlocks the fulness of

⁶⁴³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 271.

⁶⁴⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 270.

⁶⁴⁵ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 464; Temple, *Christ's Revelation of God*, 62.

⁶⁴⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 26; the Resurrection marks ‘the vindication of Jesus by the Father’ - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 84. See also Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 27; Ramsey et al., *Come Holy Spirit*, 37; Ramsey, “The Meaning of Prayer,” 13.

⁶⁴⁷ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 116-117; Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 86.

its power: it is only ‘after the Resurrection and Pentecost that the lips of the new Israel are unsealed to give glory to God in the fullness of the truth of the new covenant.’⁶⁴⁸ Admittedly, resurrection is a sharing in Christ’s life, but it is a life whose root is found in the cross; ‘[t]ogether they say: self-sacrifice is victorious, self-sacrifice is divine, here is God’s way, here is the very heart of God himself.’⁶⁴⁹ True, the Resurrection serves as a corrective to “wrong religion”: ‘[k]eep in mind the Resurrection; and you will know that the goal is heaven and will never slip into a secularized religion’;⁶⁵⁰ yet even here, the sense is of resurrection pointing to a heaven characterised by self-giving love. Hence ‘heaven is in its essence a state of unselfish goodness and sacrificial love’⁶⁵¹ and as such is ‘the final meaning of man as created in God’s own image for lasting fellowship with God.’⁶⁵² For Ramsey, then, resurrection means the fellowship of a new creation, but it is a fellowship defined in terms of that self-giving found on the cross.

Conclusion

It has been the contention of this chapter that concepts of sin, atonement, judgement, salvation and resurrection are all moulded by each man’s concept of the divine nature and purpose, and in a way consistent with the claim that the Incarnation is to be understood not, primarily, as a response to sin, but as a sacrificial means of deepening the union between God and humanity. Close comparison with the thought of Forsyth has highlighted the sensitivity and depth of this link. This sense of moulding is further underlined by the degree to which divergence in each man’s account of that nature are reflected in the differences noted in this chapter. For

⁶⁴⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 95. Only ‘the fellowship which shares in His death and resurrection shall be led by the Holy Spirit to interpret all life and all history’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 124. Also Ramsey and Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church*, 25.

⁶⁴⁹ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Easter message, published in *The News of the World(?)* – date unknown. v.317 f.281. Again, ‘[t]he Resurrection vindicated the divine significance of the Crucifixion and enabled the followers of Jesus to understand what they had not understood before. But the Resurrection could not of itself create the apostolic confession. It was not the Resurrection of “X”, it was the Resurrection of Jesus whose life and teaching had already made their impact, above all through the cross’ - Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 91.

⁶⁵⁰ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 47.

⁶⁵¹ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 24, 37. Again, worship must point ‘beyond men’s needs and feelings to the divine sacrifice on the Cross and in heaven, and beyond the individual and the local fellowship to the continuous life of the universal Church’ - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 96. Also Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Radio interview for BBC Schools, 19th May 1972. v.319 f.122.

⁶⁵² Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 115, also 116.

Temple, sin is selfishness, whilst for Ramsey it is pride. The distinction is about more than mere semantics. In a selfish world, the cross stands as a call to humanity to work alongside God in the quest for the realisation of Value; sacrifice is loving, obedient fellowship in pursuit of a fixed end within (and beyond) creation. In a world tainted by pride, the cross stands as a call to humility, to a giving away of the self as the means to an intimacy of worshipful fellowship. As such, this reinforces the sense that sin and substitutionary atonement were indeed downplayed in each man's thought, and in a manner in keeping with this thesis's core claim.

Moreover, there is evidence that the downplaying of substitution was consistent with a coherent alternative rationale for the Incarnation. True, if the Resurrection gives meaning to the cross, it is a meaning grounded in the realisation of two subtly distinctive accounts of the divine purpose. Distinctive – but, here too, not necessarily conflicting. Ramsey's cross brings about an intimacy of fellowship which *inevitably* spills over into loving service of neighbour. Temple's cross brings about the marshalling of the will to the divine purpose, but it is a marshalling grounded in the recognition of a wounded love which is the metaphysical key to the universe and which inevitably leads to worship: at every point the aspiration towards good 'requires a denial of self, and in the measure of its attainment passes over into worship, of which the meaning is total self-giving and self-submission to the Object of worship. This then, it seems, is man's true good – to worship.'⁶⁵³ Whilst there are slight differences in each man's emphasis on the cross as "dealing" with sin, both men nevertheless see in it above all a compelling revelation of the divine purpose and one which breaks down the barriers of the human heart as a means to effecting fellowship. It is *this* process which, for both men, constitutes atonement, the winning of the human heart. True, this chapter has highlighted a number of areas where Ramsey seems closer to Forsyth than Temple, and this might suggest a more central role for substitutionary atonement in his thought. Yet such a claim would be to ignore the overwhelming similarities in Temple's and Ramsey's approach. Of course, it may be unwise to try to draw them too closely together. Each man's approach enables him to give due weight to that element of the divine which he emphasises in his thought: to blend the two might merely risk creating a rather bland

⁶⁵³ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 518.

amalgam that loses the value of those distinctive elements. Yet this is not to deny that coherence already noted. Nor is it to detract from the evidence so far accumulated that the concept of fellowship is central to their theology.

To understand more fully the central role that fellowship plays in their account of the Incarnation, and the implications for substitutionary atonement that this brings, it is necessary finally to explore in more detail two questions: *how* does the Incarnation effects fellowship? and *what* is the precise nature of the fellowship that is created? If Christ's coming is indeed understood as much more than an exigent response to sin, then it must be seen to effect a fellowship consistent with the eternal purpose and in a manner which is focussed on more than simply the removal of sin.

Chapter Five: The Means to Fellowship

Introduction

For both men, the cross marks a decisive revelation of the divine love, and one which overwhelms human resistance, drawing the individual into fellowship. But how, exactly, is the individual brought into that fellowship, and what is the relationship between that process and the divine purposive nature? For Temple, salvific fellowship is effected through the concept of 'Influence': the revelation of Christ introduces into constitutive social relationships a compelling force that draws humanity into fellowship. For Ramsey, Christ is the one perfect human being wherein is found the union of complete divine self-giving with perfect human response – the deepest possible fellowship. Christ saves by drawing humanity into that fellowship. Crucially, in each case the means for the realisation of fellowship is both consistent with, and expressive of, their presentation of the rationale for Christ's incarnation in a human life – a rationale rooted in the eternal divine purpose.

Given that both men emphasise the role of fellowship, it may seem odd that their accounts of the manner by which it is realised seem so different. Yet this fact in itself highlights the importance of the underlying divine purposive nature in each man's thought - given the eternal quality of that nature, this rooting seems further to point to the Incarnation as an eternally planned act for the realisation of fellowship, rather than as an exigent response to sin. Hence on the one hand, the philosophical foundations underpinning that account of the divine nature which lies behind Temple's rationale for the Incarnation lead to an emphasis on the Christian society as the medium through which an animating fellowship is effected in pursuit of the realisation of Value. On the other, Ramsey's account of the divine purposive nature helps lead to an emphasis on the Church as medium of a fellowship rooted in the intimacy between Christ and the Father. Consequently, the process by which fellowship is effected, and in particular its consistency with that divine purpose and nature already fleshed out in earlier chapters, reinforces the sense that substitutionary atonement is downplayed in each man's work.

Taking each theologian in turn, this chapter will explore, firstly, the degree to which the means to the actualisation of fellowship is consistent with the divine purpose; secondly, the degree to which differences in their account of the divine purpose are seen distinctively to mould the means of its actualisation.

Temple's Path to Purposive Fellowship: Christ's 'Influence' and the Christian Society

A System of Mutual Influence

At the heart of Temple's rationale for the Incarnation was the divine desire to marshal the human will into a fellowship necessary for the realisation of the Value of creation. Temple's philosophy led him to emphasise dialecticism and experiential encounter – supremely through the medium of a human life – as the means, eternally inherent in the nature of creation, for the realisation of that fellowship. Disparate human wills could only be won by the revelation of God in a human life, irrespective of human sin. The ability of Christ to effect that fellowship is rooted in an innate characteristic of humanity: the degree to which the individual ('mind') is susceptible to the wider influence of other 'minds', supremely as those minds reveal the one eternal Mind. Hence, for Temple the dominant formative influence on the individual is found in the wider society of which they are a part: 'human life is essentially social, and... therefore man's relation to God must be interpreted through a society.'⁶⁵⁴ It is society that moulds his character: if the individual's impulses are left undisciplined, they 'will not make up a single moral life at all; the man will remain a chaos of impulses; and he cannot himself conduct this discipline at first (though as it moulds him he becomes able to co-operate with it and to conduct it altogether at last), because at first he is just the chaos of impulses. Society educates and disciplines him.'⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵⁴ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 306. Again, '[h]uman nature is so constituted that we are all exceedingly susceptible to influence' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 196. Also Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 142; Temple, *Church and Nation*, 175; Temple, *Christian Faith and Life*, 35; Temple, *Christianity in Thought* 60.

⁶⁵⁵ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 169. Again, '[w]hen... I am praising the English traditional education, I am praising education by means of a corporate life...' cited in Iremonger, *William Temple*, 60. Also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 169, 186; Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 81-83; Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 30; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 161.

Temple argues that the individual cannot escape this social influence: ‘Man was made for unity but has chosen division; and as each man is by his nature in large part a focussing point for his environment, it is not possible that, when once this false start has been followed by any, there should be others who are totally unaffected by it.’⁶⁵⁶ Crucially, the formative influence of society is not a product of human susceptibility to sin, any more than is the disparate nature of the individual’s will in the formative years after birth: ‘society would still arise if men were entirely unselfish; for men have different gifts and each needs the service of all.’⁶⁵⁷ It is through this eternal, inherently social nature that the no less eternal divine purpose operates in that fellowship effected by Christ. Of course, this in itself does not prove that the Incarnation was primarily concerned with the quest for fellowship, rather than “dealing” with sin, but it does add to the cumulative sense of a consistent picture rooted in Temple’s conception of an underlying divine plan for creation.

This emphasis on the formative influence of society ultimately highlights the importance of Temple’s concept of Value in moulding his thought. For Temple, the realisation of Value is an inherently social, relational process: it can only come about when the mind finds in the object a sense of harmony between that object, itself, and the creative Mind. Admittedly, there are moments in Temple’s writings when he seems to come close to implying that the individual is *entirely* a product of his or her society, with little or no original contribution of their own to make to that relational process. Witness his assertion that ‘[i]f you take all these social relationships away, there is nothing left...’⁶⁵⁸ Yet Temple recognises that this risks implying a determinist standpoint: ‘if everything is made what it is *entirely* by the influence of other things, the process of mutual determination can never start. Every entity – every section into which Reality can be mentally divided – contains something that is

⁶⁵⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 75. Again, ‘[t]he social order at once expresses the sense of values active in the minds of citizens and tends to reproduce the same sense of values in each new generation’ - Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 35. Also Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 197.

⁶⁵⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 341. Again, ‘[e]ach individual is born into a family and a nation. In his maturity he is very largely what these have made him. The family is so deeply grounded in nature and the nation in history that anyone who believes in God as Creator and as Providence is bound to regard both as part of the divine plan for human life’ - Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 64. Also Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 68; Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 366-367.

⁶⁵⁸ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 70 – though Temple later adds a footnote ‘[o]f course each must be something on his own account to start the whole process of mutual determination’ - Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 118. But see also his comment that the individual is always ‘a particular variety of the social institution to which he belongs’ - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 210.

unique, its own underived contribution to the sum of things whereby it becomes capable of action and reaction. This element of distinctness makes the core of every object.’⁶⁵⁹ Ultimately, then, the overriding sense is that the subject *does* bring something original to the dialectical interaction that realises Value: ‘every individual is in a small degree original and creative; no one is utterly the prey of circumstance ...’⁶⁶⁰

The crucial point is that individuals are dependent on the society of which they are a part for the fullest possible actualisation of self and the Value that it realises:

[t]he original contribution which every man brings into the world is a capacity of capacities; that is, it is always something which may or may not become something else, as circumstances determine; and the greater the number of these capacities, the greater is the man’s dependence... the infant who is capable of being a great statesman or a great artist depends for his character almost wholly on his environment. There may be a capacity for scholarship, for painting, for music, for finance – all latent in one child; if his environment develops these capacities he becomes a great man; if not, he remains, it may be, a casual labourer, warped in sentiment and sluggish in mind⁶⁶¹

In this subject-object-Mind interaction, the individual has the potential to become, in echo of Christ, a summative expression of the whole. Value resides in *each* such summation precisely because of the unique experiential perspective of the individual. Even now the individual’s ‘whole being is a condensation of society. He *is* his fellow-men’s experience focussed in a new centre. There is no impenetrable core of self-hood which is his, and his alone; his distinctness is his angle of vision. This is the core of self-hood which, along with his own principle of self-directed growth, he brings as an original contribution to the scheme of things.’⁶⁶² In sum, then, the relationship between the individual and their society implies a system of mutual

⁶⁵⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 56. Again, ‘[t]he individual and his fellows ‘actually, in large measure, constitute each others’ characters (or growing unifications) by their mutual influence, but... each system of experience is also self-determining from a core of original being which is that individual’s own contribution to the total scheme of things’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 213.

⁶⁶⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 76. Also Temple, *Church and Nation*, 94.

⁶⁶¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 79-80. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 268.

⁶⁶² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 71. Again, the individual is always ‘a particular variety of the social institution to which he belongs. I am not first myself and then an Englishman; I could not be anything but English any more than I could be the child of other parents than my own... I am, so to speak, the “Englishman” expressed and interpreted in a particular way’ - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 210.

influence which has the potential to realise, through that fellowship, the ultimate divine goal for the realisation of Value. It is *the* vehicle by which that process can be achieved, and it is one that must embrace the whole of society for it to have the fullest effect.

Christ's 'Influence'

It is in this context that Temple argues Christ's salvific work of creating purposive fellowship with God is ultimately effected. Christ's salvific power is rooted in the fact that his is 'a human soul free from the constitutive influence of its social environment so far as this is evil or defective.'⁶⁶³ Thus he is enabled to reveal the compelling fullness of the divine nature and purpose:

Into this system of mutually influencing units Christ has come; but here is a unit perfectly capable, as others are only imperfectly capable, both of personal union with all other persons and of refusing to be influenced by the evil of His environment. It is this more than anything else which proves Him to be more and other than His fellow-men. But thus He inaugurates a new system of influence; and as this corresponds to God's Will for mankind, its appeal is to the true nature of men. So He is a Second Adam; what occurred at the Incarnation was not merely the addition of another unit to the system of mutually influencing units, it was the inauguration of a new system of mutual influence, destined to become, here or elsewhere, universally dominant. "By His Incarnation," therefore, the Lord did indeed "raise our humanity to an entirely higher level, to a level with His own"; but this was not accomplished by the unspiritual process of an infusion of an alien "nature" but by the spiritual process of mutual influence and love that calls forth love⁶⁶⁴

Temple's meaning seems clear. What Christ realises is a 'new system of mutual influence,' and one that 'corresponds to God's Will for mankind': the essence of the redemptive act is the realisation within humanity of the means to the actualisation of Value; substitutionary atonement is here again downplayed.

True, one might argue that Christ effects such a fellowship simply by expediently removing the obstacle of sin, but such a view fails to do justice to the sense that Christ's action expresses and realises the divine purpose in an on-going, creative act:

⁶⁶³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 218.

⁶⁶⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 152 (the citation is taken from a work by Temple's own father). Salvation is 'accomplished through personal influence' - Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 253. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 92; Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 3.

‘as we contemplate the Life and Death, or as we associate with those who have come under its spell, as we commune with the Living Christ, the Influence that streams from Him moulds our own affections and purposes; gradually we are drawn to return His love and accept His Purposes as ours...’⁶⁶⁵ Temple acknowledges that his concept of Influence seems, superficially, rather weak: but (he argues) the perception of weakness lies in our failure fully to appreciate our mutual inter-dependence, reflecting the degree to which ‘we have let our pride teach us to emphasise separateness as the fundamental characteristic of our personality, so that influence only shapes but does not constitute us.’⁶⁶⁶ This concept of Influence is an important one in Temple’s schema, precisely because it allows him to honour his sense of the importance of the individual as a unique locus of perception and as such a centre for the realisation of Value. Here again, then, is a further point of consistency between, on the one hand, Temple’s account of the eternal divine purpose and nature, and on the other Christ’s salvific work: the whole means of effecting fellowship is grounded in the principal importance of the individual as the means to the realisation of Value. Christ’s life, death and resurrection centre, not on the atoning satisfaction of divine holiness, but the inauguration of the final stage in the evolution of creation: ‘the accomplishment by this power of the end which is set before it... will take long centuries... What was to appear immediately was the power sufficient for that accomplishment.’⁶⁶⁷

The Role of the State

One of the consequences of Temple’s approach is a particular emphasis on the importance of the State as a crucial medium enabling Christ’s influence to reach its maximum effect. That importance is rooted in the fact that it is the State which comes closest to encompassing and expressing the totality of the individual’s earthly relationships. Hence ‘[h]uman life is fundamentally social, and if the revelation of God is to have in it redeeming power for human life, it must be given to and in a divinely ordered society... Consequently the revelation must in the first instance be to a nation rather than mankind, for mankind was not then, and indeed is not now, an

⁶⁶⁵ Temple, ‘The Divinity of Christ,’ 253. Again, ‘He has taken possession of us so completely that whatever is true of Him is true of us also’ - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 71-72. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 96-97; Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 192-193.

⁶⁶⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 152.

⁶⁶⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 337.

organic society.’⁶⁶⁸ Temple argues that ‘[i]f we believe in a Divine Providence, if we believe that the life of Christ is not only the irruption of the Divine into human history but is also and therein the manifestation of the governing principle of all history, we shall confess that the nation as well as the Church is a divine creation.’⁶⁶⁹ Nonetheless, the secular nation ‘is not yet Christian, and until it is, there is not the remotest chance of any individual person being completely Christian... Consequently, we are bound to secure that the society in which we live shall itself become as Christian in all its institutions as it can be made; for it is only when the secular society is Christian that the Church, whose life is in the midst of that secular society, will be able with full power to carry out its missionary responsibility.’⁶⁷⁰

For Temple, the State - being divinely ordered - must be purposive in the same way that God is purposive: the kingdoms of this world ‘are to become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ.’⁶⁷¹ This leads to an understanding of “authority” with clear implications for ecclesiology - highlighting again that link between Incarnation, atonement and Church noted in the thesis’s Introduction. Hence he declares ‘morality consists in the subordination of our own Purpose and subconscious aims to the Purpose of the society of which we are members – in the last resort of the human race... This incidentally involves an inability on our part to determine with absolute certainty what is right or wrong in any circumstances... we must always take the moral convictions, which have grown up out of the experience of the race, as our guide.’⁶⁷² In Temple’s earlier writings he seems altogether more optimistic about the progressive “Christianisation” of the nation: ‘[w]e may expect then that the course of history will continue in the future, as in the past, to consist in the conversion of nations, the building of the Christian state, and the incorporation of the Christian

⁶⁶⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 305. Again, nation states ‘are the operation of God immanent in history, while the life of the church is the energy of God transcendent’ - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 324.

⁶⁶⁹ Temple, *Church and Nation*, 44, 45, 52, 144. Also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 130; Temple, *Essays in Christian Politics*, 32-41.

⁶⁷⁰ Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 72-73, also 76. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 145; Temple, *Church and Nation*, 43.

⁶⁷¹ Temple, *Church and Nation*, 144. Also Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 92.

⁶⁷² Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 60. He goes on to note that those moral convictions may have survived from the age to which they were adapted into one to which they are no longer so well suited: ‘and then we must no doubt denounce them. But the only ground on which we can do this is the principle underlying those convictions themselves. We are bound to defy conventional moral judgements when we see that they are wrong; but we are bound to obey them so long as we only fail to see that they are right...’ - Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 60.

states within the fellowship of the Church, until at last Christendom and Humanity are interchangeable terms.’⁶⁷³ Yet even then, Temple is not so naïve as to believe that such progress will be easy, and his schema allows for the possibility of setbacks and ‘great catastrophes.’⁶⁷⁴

Whilst there is, in later years, a greater sense of the enormity of the task ahead in seeking such a Christian nation,⁶⁷⁵ Temple nevertheless clearly still believes that such a society is essential to the divine purpose. Hence, writing in 1942, he could declare that ‘[n]ations exist by God’s providential guidance of history and have their part to play in His purpose; but man’s self-centredness infects his national loyalty, which in its own nature is wholesome, so that the nation is made an object of that absolute allegiance which is due to God alone...’⁶⁷⁶ This is not to ignore the importance of the Church; indeed, Temple is clear that the Church is the dominant medium for Christ’s salvific work: ‘the matter of most vital import for the life of the individual or for the advance of the Kingdom is that the growing character should breathe an atmosphere that is truly Christian... Here is the supreme function of the Church...’⁶⁷⁷ Yet that work cannot be complete without the influence of the State: ‘[t]he State and the Church are the channels through which these two forms of the one spiritual influence play upon men.’⁶⁷⁸ Only thus can be realised the New

⁶⁷³ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 332.

⁶⁷⁴ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 337.

⁶⁷⁵ Witness his recognition that the unity of all things in God is being ‘fashioned by toil and strife, by agony and bloody sweat’ - Temple, “Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111,” Sermon given at the “Service of Intercession for China,” 8th July 1942. v.69, f.40. Also Lowry, ‘William Temple’, 36. Suggate links the shift to a reaction against the horrors of the First World War - Suggate, ‘The Concept of Sacrifice in Anglican Social Ethics,’ 236.

⁶⁷⁶ Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 92. Also Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 89; Temple, *Citizen and Churchman*, 28-30, 70 – though note also 88; Temple, *Religious Experience*, 142.

⁶⁷⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 347.

⁶⁷⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 332. Elsewhere, Temple outlines the relationship between Church and nation-state in more detail: ‘[t]he nation is a natural growth with a spiritual significance... The Church is a spiritual creation working through a natural medium... its members are men and women who are partly animal in nature as well as children of God. The nation as organised for action is the State; and the State, being “natural,” appeals to men on that side of their nature which is lower but is not in itself bad. Justice is its highest aim and force its typical instrument... The Church, on the other hand, is primarily spiritual; holiness is its primary quality... Both State and Church are instruments of God for establishing His Kingdom; both have the same goal; but they have different functions in relation to that goal. The State’s action for the most part takes the form of restraint; the Church’s mainly that of appeal. The State is concerned to maintain the highest standard of life that can be generally realised by its citizens; the Church is concerned with upholding an ideal to which not even the best will fully attain...’ - Temple, *Church and Nation*, 52-53, also ix, 88. Also Temple, *Essays in Christian Politics*, 78; William Temple, *Social Witness and Evangelism* (London: The Epworth Press, 1943), 11-12.

Jerusalem, 'the moral and social life of mankind made perfect in the love of God.'⁶⁷⁹ This emphasis on the State is consistent with that element of social concern already noted in Temple's works, and which has, at its root, the divine purpose for the realisation of Value through the deepening of fellowship within humanity, and between humanity and God. For Temple the means of effecting fellowship is not only consistent with the rationale for the Incarnation, it is also primarily understood as advancing the divine purpose as rooted in all eternity.

Criticisms of Temple's Christ

Temple's account of the means by which fellowship is effected leads him to a presentation of Christ's nature that has, for some, raised a question over the authenticity of his humanity. Put crudely, Temple's presentation is seen to set the Son of God so far above the reality of human experience as to leave his humanity in some sense incomplete. This in turn naturally raises questions as to the efficacy of his salvific work. This, along with his theodicy, is the area of Temple's thought which has come in for the most criticism over the years. Such criticisms are significant to this thesis for two reasons. Firstly, and on a positive note, they actually help to reinforce a sense of the degree to which Temple's account of Christ's humanity is indelibly moulded by his understanding of the divine purpose - albeit in a way that leaves him susceptible to criticism. But secondly, they raise a question over the coherence and integrity of the weight given by Temple to fellowship in his Christology. Temple endorses orthodox Christology: his Christ must therefore be fully human. If his Christ is nonetheless shown to be somehow lacking in this respect, at least in practice, and on account of insufficient attention to the reality in human experience of sin and suffering, then the overall coherence must demand a fuller place for sin and suffering as rationale for the Incarnation. In other words, do such criticisms highlight a division between, on the one hand, the logic of Temple's thought, and on the other its presentation in practice? Irrespective of what Temple may do in practice, does the logic of his thought necessitate a greater role for sin in his account of the Incarnation?

⁶⁷⁹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 332.

Craig speaks for many when he declares that ‘Temple emphasises that Christ's humanity was real, but we search in vain for recognition of His essence and experience as that of a finite human subject. Temple never explicitly says so...’⁶⁸⁰ Vidler has also picked up on this, famously declaring that Temple was ‘a theologian for Christmas rather than for Passiontide’, and noting that ‘[i]t is remarkable in Temple’s theological books and in his published sermons how comparatively little there is about the Passion and all that goes along with that.’⁶⁸¹ There is some truth in the argument. Witness Temple’s assertion that, throughout his life

Jesus was the perfection of that stage of human life. The temptations that came to Him were perfectly real, and so was His resistance. He overcame them as every man who does so overcomes a temptation – by the constancy of the Will, which is the whole being of a man organised for conduct. That will always shows its strength in certain splendid incapacities... in Christ this incapacity towards evil was absolute; His perfect freedom showed itself, as perfect freedom always does, in an inability to sin... This is nothing contrary to human nature; rather it is exactly what human nature is always aiming at...⁶⁸²

There is certainly something rather untroubled about Temple’s Christ here. The problem arises because of the degree to which Temple’s presentation of Christ is moulded by his emphasis on the divine purposive quest for Value. God seeks to win humanity by the revelation of the divine purpose: Christ is not only the summative expression of the divine purpose in creation, he is also the compelling revelation of what it means to be human, and indwelt by the divine spirit: ‘[o]ur hearts and wills are drawn to God so that we take His Purpose as our own; as we do so we vindicate the claim made for Christ that His Personality is representative and inclusive... When we call his Personality representative we mean that in it we see what all men shall become.’⁶⁸³ God purposes Value; *both* purpose and Value must be compellingly expressed in a human life if the individual’s will is truly to be won to that goal. Only experiential encounter with Christ the “perfect work of art,” the perfect human being realised as the goal of all humanity, can win humanity to God. Christ is, in effect, proto-human. Yet such a presentation of Christ as the perfect human can lead to just that sense of his floating above the messy realities of human existence that Temple’s

⁶⁸⁰ Craig, 'William Temple,' 58.

⁶⁸¹ Vidler, 'The Limitations,' 38.

⁶⁸² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 147-148.

⁶⁸³ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 254.

critics have claimed to identify. Does Temple's fundamental appeal to orthodoxy demand a greater emphasis on sin and suffering than he in fact allows?

Craig's is, on the face of it, the most persuasive critique of Temple's position. He argues that the limitations of Christ's humanity as presented by Temple are rooted in the latter's failure to give due regard to Christ as *a man*, and not just Man.⁶⁸⁴ For Craig it is in Christ as *a man* that his humanity is most truly to be found, because it is as *a man* that Christ is subject to the enemy of self-will: '[s]elf-will is an essential part of our nature as finite human beings.'⁶⁸⁵ Only in such a Christ could it be said that 'the enemy was present within, as it is in each one of us.'⁶⁸⁶ Craig seems to believe that such self-will is absent in Temple's Christ. If so, his position is grounded in a misunderstanding. Temple does not deny the reality of Christ as *a man*, though he is wary of confusion caused by the formative influence of Greek thought: '[b]y the method of thought then in use, to regard Him as *a man* was to make Him an example only – an individual for other individuals to copy. If His union of Deity and Humanity is to avail for me, He must have taken to Himself not a human personality but Human Nature itself.'⁶⁸⁷

Temple goes on to offer a sophisticated account of the relationship between Christ as Man and Christ as *a man*:

We still believe in "real universals," but they are concrete, not abstract, universals. There is no such thing as human nature apart from all individual human beings. But there is a perfectly real thing called Mankind or Humanity which is a unit and not a mere agglomeration. As each man is a focussing point for Reality as seen from the place within it which he occupies, he is very largely constituted what he is by the character of his fellow-men... Mankind or Humanity is a close-knit system of mutually influencing units. In this sense the humanity of every one of us is "impersonal"; and the greater the man, the less merely "personal" is his humanity. He is more, not less, individual than others; but he is individual by the uniqueness of his focus for the universe, not by

⁶⁸⁴ Craig, 'William Temple,' 58.

⁶⁸⁵ Craig, 'William Temple,' 58.

⁶⁸⁶ Craig, 'William Temple,' 59.

⁶⁸⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 137.

his exclusion of all that is not himself. He more than others is Humanity focussed in one centre⁶⁸⁸

Christ is Man, the perfect focussing in one centre of all Reality; but he is also *a* man precisely because such a focal point carries within it, as ‘self’, a unique angle of vision.⁶⁸⁹ Within that summative expression there must therefore be contained the reality of human self-will; such self-will is not, in Temple’s schema inherently sinful, but rather a product of humanity’s capacity for the realisation of Value. True, Temple can indeed argue that Christ was free from ‘the enemy of self-will,’⁶⁹⁰ but only in the sense that Christ’s self-will was so focussed on God that his will was uniquely able to oppose any temptation; moreover, that unique angle of vision brought with it a very human experience of pain and suffering: ‘His Will was at each stage undamaged by the previous admission of sin. Pain to Him was as painful as it is to us; the desire to avoid it was in itself as strong; but in us that desire is fortified by the incompleteness of our dedication, the partial formation of our Will.’⁶⁹¹ One might add that Temple’s grounding of the rationale for the Incarnation in the inherent nature of reality actually presses the case for Christ as *a* man: ‘[e]very artist knows that a universal only finds expression in what is perfectly individual. Indeed, individuality is the perfect synthesis of universal and particular, and if either fails the individuality is lessened.’⁶⁹² Consequently it seems that Temple’s theological account of Christ does not lead him into an unorthodox denial of the fulness of his humanity.

Temple’s Christ is, then, in theory *a* man: but is this born out in practice in his presentation of him? Critics have tended to cloud the picture by drawing attention to the relatively untroubled private life of Temple, claiming that the equanimity of that

⁶⁸⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 151-152. Knox argues that the nature of this union of humanity and divinity, when extended as the model for divine-human fellowship, implies that the assimilation of our wills to Christ’s is ineffectual, ‘a similarity only, and comes no nearer to being an identity’ (R.A. Knox, *Some Loose Stones : Being a Consideration of Certain Tendencies in Modern Theology Illustrated by Reference to the Book Called "Foundations"* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1913), 154). Yet Knox seems to miss Temple’s sense of the will’s potential to govern the whole self: the will is only fully actualised by recognition of, and sharing in, the divine purpose; when so actualised, it takes control of the whole personality in a manner wholly synchronous with the divine will. As such, this seems to imply a deeper union than mere similitude.

⁶⁸⁹ For a more sympathetic critique of Temple on this point, see Thomas, ‘William Temple,’ 115-116.

⁶⁹⁰ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 143.

⁶⁹¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 148.

⁶⁹² Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 59.

life was almost inevitably carried over into his public theology, and in a way that moulded his thought into a presentation of Christ whose humanity they have found lacking. Witness Vidler's claim that Temple's 'life could hardly have run more smoothly... did not those circumstances inevitably limit his capacity to bear witness to Christ? In a sermon to boys at Repton he once said: "Have we ever realised that to follow Christ is to share the outcast's life?" But it cannot be said that he had ever known what it was to be an outcast.'⁶⁹³ Yet the reality was not so clear cut. Vidler plays down Temple's lifelong struggle with gout, or the degree to which he set himself at odds with the Establishment by his membership of the *Life and Liberty* movement and its call for the Church of England to be self-governing.⁶⁹⁴ Nor is his presentation of Christ so one-sided as critics claim: there are a number of references to Christ suffering as *a* man. Hence comparing Christ's final few days on earth to the life of St Paul, Temple can draw 'attention rather to His whole temper – the shrinking, the fear, the final despair.'⁶⁹⁵ Or again declare that '[t]here is no more lonely figure imaginable than that of Christ as He enters Jerusalem to die there.'⁶⁹⁶

Nevertheless, the lingering question over his presentation of Christ's humanity remains. In part, this neglect may reflect the influence of apologetics on his approach: speaking at a conference of the Student Christian Movement he could declare: 'if our Lord was truly Man, then He was also *a* man. I daresay in this audience it is hardly worth while to insist on that point of view, because, according to my experience, most of the people in our universities feel quite sure that he was *a* man...'⁶⁹⁷ Above all, the problem with Temple's account is not that he implicitly denies the reality of Christ's individual suffering, but that he covers the ground too quickly in his haste to press the case for Christ as the goal of humanity. Even in one of the clearest examples of Temple's sense of God's sharing in human experience through Christ, there remains a wider emphasis on the suffering caused in God by the frustration of his will:

⁶⁹³ Vidler, 'The Limitations,' 36.

⁶⁹⁴ Archbishop Davidson – himself a friend of Temple's – was opposed to the unseemly (as he saw it) haste with which the movement pursued its goals - Spencer, *William Temple*, 31.

⁶⁹⁵ Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 20.

⁶⁹⁶ Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 22, also 23. Again, '[t]he Humanity there set forth is undoubtedly individual...' - Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 89, also 93.

⁶⁹⁷ Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 85.

The revelation of God's dealing with human sin shows God enduring every depth of anguish for the sake of His children. What is portrayed under the figure of physical suffering and literal blood-shedding is only a part of the pain which sin inflicts on God. We see Him suffering in the absolute frustration of His Will. We see Him in the abyss of despair, as perfect adherence seems to end in utter failure...No further entry of the Supreme God into the tangle and bewilderment of finitude can be conceived. All that we can suffer of physical or mental anguish is within the divine experience; He has known it all Himself. He does not leave this world to suffer while He remains at ease apart; all the suffering of the world is His⁶⁹⁸

Or again, witness his assertion that for Christ '[t]he Agony in Gethsemane is a real Agony, and the prayer then uttered is a real cry of humanity to its Creator. But all the while through the human channel comes flooding the divine Love and Power and Knowledge of the souls of men...'⁶⁹⁹ In both quotations there is a sense of the presence of a human experience, but it is an experience in danger of being lost in Temple's haste to press the wider divine purpose.

At one level, Temple is led to do this by the logic of his argument: for him it is the compelling power of Christ the perfect human being that alone can win the free love of humanity in pursuit of the purposive realisation of that perfection for all humanity and creation. If he rushes past sin it is because he believes in the power of that perfection to make sense of sin and to subsume it within the divine purpose. It must be said that Temple does not seem to recognise the degree to which Christ's humanity can seem *unattainably* perfect because it is not seen to be sufficiently rooted in the full reality of present human experience. Moreover, such an emphasis would be wholly compatible with his account of Christ's salvific work: indeed, by drawing greater attention to Christ's struggles with self-will, whilst retaining his emphasis on Christ's perfection and fellowship with God, Temple might actually reinforce the sense of sin as being subsumed within the divine purpose. To be fair, this emphasis, already present in some degree, seems to have come rather more to the fore towards the end of his career: witness, for example, his assertion that God in Christ is fashioning a unity 'by toil and strife, by agony and bloody sweat; the Word

⁶⁹⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 269-270. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 233-234.

⁶⁹⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 122; also Temple, 'The Godhead of Jesus,' 24.

of God is the Captain of that enterprise and He calls us to be His fellow-workers.⁷⁰⁰ Consequently, then, if Temple's Christ sometimes seems less than fully human, this does not constitute a fundamental flaw in his emphasis on the divine quest for purposive fellowship. Whilst a stronger sense of Christ's experience of human suffering and struggle with self-will might be required, such an emphasis would actually serve to reinforce the dominant element of fellowship in his thought, not undermine it in favour of an account of the Incarnation understood primarily as response to human sin through a substitutionary atonement.

Ramsey's Path to Fellowship: The Church and Union with Christ

Society and the State

Three key elements have been identified at the heart of Ramsey's rationale for the Incarnation: firstly, a divine loving desire to share in human experience; secondly, a quest to draw humanity into a loving fellowship grounded in worship; and thirdly, the concern thereby to effect a new creation. As with Temple, fellowship is central. Likewise, for Ramsey as for Temple, such fellowship demands experiential encounter with a compelling revelation of the divine nature through the medium of a human life. Yet despite such similarities, Ramsey's account of the means by which Christ effects fellowship is significantly different from Temple's. These differences are rooted in his distinctive account of the divine purposive nature. For Temple, a central concern is the crucial role humanity has to play in the realisation of Value; that realisation is rooted in humanity's social relationships, and in a manner which gives an important place to the State. Christ's salvific work is thus rooted in a compelling Influence which honours the importance both of individuality and nation. Temple's Christ is conceived as an agent within creation (albeit a supremely compelling one), a kind of leaven drawing humanity into fellowship in pursuit of the realisation of Value.

Crucially, Ramsey lacks this emphasis on the importance of the individual to the realisation of Value. What matters for Ramsey is, above all, the laying aside of self

⁷⁰⁰ Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," Sermon given at the 'Service of Intercession for China,' 8th July 1942. v.69 f.40.

in order to realise an eternal fellowship with God grounded in that self-negating worship that reflects the divine glory as an end in itself. Yes, there are important implications for intra-human fellowship,⁷⁰¹ but this element is not dominant in Ramsey's account of the divine purpose; consequently both play a much smaller part in his portrayal of Christ's salvific work than is the case for Temple. Witness, for example, Ramsey's assertion that whilst spirituality is 'inseparable from service, love, duty' within society, yet 'in deep down essence it is the spirit of worship.'⁷⁰² The result is a presentation of fellowship with Christ not so much as a means to an end (as in Temple) but as an end in itself. Ramsey's Christ is a perfect embodiment of what it means to be both divine and human. As will be shown, salvific fellowship means an entry by humanity into the perfect fellowship that exists between Father and Son.

Ramsey does not place so great an emphasis as Temple on the role of society in forming the individual. True, Ramsey, like Temple, emphasises the importance of dialecticism and experiential encounter – supremely through the medium of a human life – in his rationale for the Incarnation. Such encounter is the only means by which true fellowship can be effected: 'it is only through facing the Cross and its disclosure of the awful realities of sin and of God's forgiving love that men have free access to God in sonship.'⁷⁰³ Likewise it seems that the State still has a role in effecting this encounter: 'the divine order or pattern includes the State... And the coming of God's kingdom means... the learning by human institutions of their proper God-given role.'⁷⁰⁴ Yet, as noted in Chapter Three, there is less of a sense in Ramsey that such encounter can be discerned as an inherent fact of reality, except insofar as this is endorsed by the act of incarnation itself. This hints that, for Ramsey, society is not so easily rendered transparent to the divine as might be the case in Temple's thought.⁷⁰⁵

⁷⁰¹ Hence entry into the one Body brings an obligation to use one's gifts in the service of the whole: '[t]o possess a gift is to feel no pride of possession, for only in the life of the one Body is it of use or significance; to lack a gift or function is not to feel hurt since the member's selfhood dies in the one Body' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 53. Also Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," sermon 'Beyond Religion?' delivered in 1964, precise date and venue unknown. v.316 f.125.

⁷⁰² Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Address given at Louvain University, 3rd May 1963. v.316 f.33.

⁷⁰³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114.

⁷⁰⁴ Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 43. Also Michael Ramsey, 'Towards World Sovereignty,' *Ecumenical Review* 19, no. 2 (1967), 207.

⁷⁰⁵ Indeed, Ramsey was an advocate for greater separation between Church and State: 'Establishment has never been one of my enthusiasms' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 176. Yet

In part this seems to be because Ramsey has a stronger sense of the importance of that element of distinctive originality within the individual in the process of the formation of self. Yes, he shares some sense of the constitutive power of society as a whole over the individual - hence, for example, his assertion that the individual's spirituality is 'lived out in all the complexities of our social life, in family, city, country, industry, culture, joy and sorrow; for it is the spirituality of a man, and a man is involved in all these things';⁷⁰⁶ as a result, the individual's spirituality is 'inseparable from service, love, duty, the moulding of the common life.'⁷⁰⁷ Nonetheless that influence does not seem to have the potential to be so effective as is the case in Temple's thought: witness Ramsey's assertion that the individual is only '[i]n part... subject to the traditions and influences of a human race which has collectively gone wrong.'⁷⁰⁸

The Church

A more effective medium of encounter is required. This leads Ramsey to a more exclusive sense than Temple of the importance of the Church: 'as he receives the Catholic sacrament and recites the Catholic creed, the Christian is learning that no single movement nor partial experience within Christendom can claim his final obedience, and that a local church can claim his loyalty only by leading him beyond itself to the universal family which it represents. Hence the Catholic order is not a hierarchical tyranny, but the means of deliverance into the Gospel of God and the timeless Church.'⁷⁰⁹ Ramsey is not fundamentally different from Temple in this: the difference is one of degree, but it *is* significant in terms of its implications for his account of Christ's salvific work, as will be shown. What is revealed here is a

Ramsey is not altogether incompatible with Temple here. He was perhaps more sceptical of the State, but he remained committed to the view that the State 'has a God-given role for the provision of order, justice and the well-being of a nation... the State understands its duty to them [its citizens] only if it knows that they have a heavenly goal bound up with absolutes of right and wrong' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 83, also 84, 85; also Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 45.

⁷⁰⁶ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Address given at Louvain University, 3rd May 1963. v.316 f.33.

⁷⁰⁷ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Address given at Louvain University, 3rd May 1963. v.316 f.33. Again, '[w]e sin because we are part of a sinful situation and are bound to go on doing so' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 19.

⁷⁰⁸ Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 26.

⁷⁰⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 135. Again, the Church is 'the one body in which alone men can grow into the fulness of Christ' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 75.

consistency between each man's account of the divine purposive nature, his rationale for the Incarnation, and the means by which salvific fellowship is effected.

Crucially, Ramsey conceives of the Church as more than simply the corporate life of a group of believers; rather, it is, quite literally, the Body of Christ: 'the Church is The Body of Christ. You see how literal that is...' ⁷¹⁰ Just as Christ was the summative expression of the divine purpose and as such the means by which the first disciples unlocked the meaning of scripture, so Ramsey stresses the 'place of the Church's corporate life, tradition and liturgy as the context in which the Bible is rightly known, expounded and understood.' ⁷¹¹ *Only* through relational, experiential encounter with that Body can the individual be drawn into the fullest possible fellowship with God: 'Christ brings his grace, power, love, truth to bear upon human lives in each generation. But those who receive this impact can never do so as isolated units. Each of them depends on somebody who helps to make Christ known by speech, or writing, or influence. And those who are Christ's "agents" in this way must somehow be connected with him and with one another in their own generation and across the generations...' ⁷¹² The Church *is* Christ, and it brings humanity into an experiential contact with God that engenders fellowship: '[b]y his presence in the Body of which he is the head, he has given to us already unity in himself and in the Father.' ⁷¹³ If the divine is self-giving love in search of the fullest possible self-expression, and if the Incarnation is the means by which the divine is most perfectly revealed, then Ramsey's emphasis on the Church as the Body of Christ and the vehicle of experiential encounter highlights again the degree to which the salvation at the heart of the Incarnation story is rooted not in an expedient response to sin and

⁷¹⁰ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Transcript of broadcast for BBC Radio 4's 'Thought for the Day,' 2nd October 1972. v.319 f.190. Ramsey's own emphasis. Again, '[i]t is never true to say that separate persons are united to Christ, and then combine to form the Church; for to believe in Christ is to believe in One whose Body is a part of Himself and whose people are His own humanity, and to be joined to Christ is to be joined to Christ-in-His-Body' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 36. Also Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 77. Ramsey goes on to suggest a number of different images for the Church (Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 87), but this does not negate the central importance of an understanding of Christ's living presence in the Church.

⁷¹¹ Church of England, *Lambeth Conference Papers* (1958), LC195 f.5. Again, 'the one body in which men alone can grow into the fulness of Christ' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 75, also 73.

⁷¹² Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 31. Again, Christ's is 'the more subtle power of loving influence, of the winning of minds and consciences to the truth' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 76. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 27.

⁷¹³ Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 55. Again, 'Christ by his whole mission and his gift of the Holy Spirit enables men and women to be drawn into his response, and thus through him to know the truth and to grow up into the Christ-life which is Man's true goal' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 20.

concomitant emphasis on substitutionary atonement, but in the eternal divine purpose for fellowship.

Salvation in Christ

How then, in practice, does God effect his salvific work in and through the Church as the locus of experiential encounter? Orthodox doctrine states that, first, Christ must assume the fulness of our humanity. Ramsey's account of that assumption is indelibly stamped by his understanding of the divine nature and its concomitant downplaying of substitutionary atonement. For Ramsey, the taking of humanity is not, primarily, a prerequisite for Christ's offering a sacrificial payment for sin; rather, it is understood in terms of the divine loving nature and its purposive desire to enter into the fullness of human experience. Hence '[t]he death is – first of all – the deepest point of the Son of God's identification of Himself with men and of His entry into the stream of human life.'⁷¹⁴ Indeed, it is the emphasis on the divine desire to enter into human experience as an end in itself that enables Ramsey to avoid the pitfalls of Temple's characterisation of Christ's humanity. For Ramsey, God cannot be loving and self-giving unless he shares the very worst of humanity's struggles with self-will. Consequently there is a greater emphasis on Christ's suffering than is found in Temple. Witness, for example, his assertion that 'our Lord enters so deeply into the meaning and the pain and the darkness of a race cut off from God by sin that He seems momentarily to lose the vision of the Father, and He is never more man's brother and never more "totus in nostris" than in the cry of dereliction.'⁷¹⁵ Nonetheless, the key point is this: in practice, Ramsey sees Christ's assumption of humanity as rooted in the eternal divine purposive nature.

The point is reinforced by Ramsey's emphasis on Christ's humanity as uniquely and definitively defined by fellowship with the divine. Ramsey's God seeks the satisfaction of his nature by giving himself to humanity in order to call forth an answering love which is the image of that nature in glorious self-giving. Only the perfect human being can perfectly reflect that divine glory; consequently, Christ not

⁷¹⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 21.

⁷¹⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 22-23. Again, 'He came in order to die, so as to be man, in man, of man, going whither men must go. And his coming to die does not mean the negative act of a suicide seeking self-destruction, but the positive act of one whose love embraces man and all that is man's...' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 23.

only marks the fullest possible entry of the divine into human nature, he also constitutes the perfect response of humanity to that self-giving. Christ *is* perfect humanity in the act of a responsive self-giving love, quickened by the divine. Christ *alone* is Israel, and in a manner prefigured in the Old Testament:⁷¹⁶

For when he comes to proclaim the Kingdom of Israel, to fulfil the law, to gather the lost sheep, to reign in Israel – His own reject Him. Israel rejects the Son, the Servant. The vineyard has been lost to its former husbandmen, and the *people of God* consists only of the *One* who, rejected by His own, is dying on the Cross, alone the servant who obeys and alone the place where the name and the glory and the will and the promises of God are seen. Jesus Christ, in his solitary obedience, *is* the Church...⁷¹⁷

Crucially, for Ramsey it is *only* in Christ that true fellowship with the Father is to be found. True, alongside this there is in Christ also the perfect act of contrition for sin, such that no human could make – but it is an act of contrition set within the wider context of worship:

The perfect act of worship is seen only in the Son of Man. By Him alone there is made the perfect acknowledgement upon earth of the glory of God and the perfect response to it...And in Him too man's contrition for his own sin and the sin of the race finds its perfect expression; for the sinless Christ made before God that perfect acknowledgement of man's sin which man cannot make for himself⁷¹⁸

If humanity is to enter into that fellowship with God which is the divine purpose, then it must be through its union with Christ: 'in every place where Christians are found they dare to assert that the Christ is *in them*, and that their relation to Him is not only the memory of a past event but the fact of a present indwelling. The presence of the Spirit mediates the presence of the Christ Himself, so that to be "in the Spirit" is to be "in Christ."⁷¹⁹ To be fair, Temple shares a sense of the Church as

⁷¹⁶ Hence his assertion that 'the Old Testament prepares us for the closest possible union between the Messiah and His people' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 20.

⁷¹⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 21. Again, 'He died to self, morally by the will to die throughout His life, actually by the crucifixion. He died with men, as man, coming by the water and the blood. God raised Him, and in the death and resurrection the fact of the Church is present' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 27.

⁷¹⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 93.

⁷¹⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 33. Again, '[i]n union with its heavenly Lord the Church on earth worships... It is a worship in Christ and through Christ' - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 94. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 28; Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 83; Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 16; Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 75.

Christ's body: 'the Church is the Body of Christ. It is not a "voluntary organisation" any more than my body is a voluntary organisation of limbs or cells...' ⁷²⁰ Salvation means union with Christ: 'we are members of Christ, limbs of His Body; we are not something alien from Him which is grafted onto Him; we are part of Himself.' ⁷²¹ Yet there is a subtle but significant difference of emphasis from Ramsey: the sense in Temple is of one coming under the influence of Christ's will to such a degree that the individual becomes "as one" with Christ. Hence, for example, he describes the Church as 'the Body of Christ, that is to say, the instrument of His will...' ⁷²² Compare this with Ramsey's sense that Catholicity means 'living in Christ our divine saviour.' ⁷²³ For Temple, Christ enters into the believer through animating influence; for Ramsey, the believer enters into Christ the one perfect human. The distinction is very slight – and yet highlights the degree to which each man's account of the divine purposive nature shapes their understanding of Christ's salvific work.

For Ramsey, Christ then is not simply an agent effecting the divine purpose – a means to an end – but, rather, an end in itself. Only in him is found the end of all humanity, and only by sharing in him can humanity enter into fellowship with God. The question immediately arises: could such perfect fellowship have been effected without an Incarnation, were it not for the Fall's marring of humanity? If so, might one argue that the Incarnation was, after all, primarily a response to sin - the removal of a key obstacle to such fellowship? Yet here again it must be stressed that the Incarnation shows, above all, that God was *capable* of entering into just this kind of intimate relationship with humanity revealed in Christ – and if God seeks the fullest possible entry into human experience then the fact that such an Incarnation was possible also implies that it was the logical fulfilment of the divine nature,

⁷²⁰ Temple, *Church and Nation*, 26. Also, Temple, *The Church and Its Teaching*, 12; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 2. The picture is not always quite so clear cut: there are hints of just such a voluntary organisation in his account of the Church as 'the whole assembly of believers, each bringing to it his own contribution, and each deriving from it a strength whose source is in the contribution of others. And so we have to consider what our duty will be not simply as individuals, but as members of a community' - Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 2.

⁷²¹ Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 2.

⁷²² Temple, *Church and Nation*, 30. Elsewhere he asserts that 'we are "in Christ" already in the sense that our hearts (we trust) are open to His influence...' - Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 79. Also Temple, *The Church and Its Teaching*, 15, 19; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 2-3; William Temple, "Life and Liberty," (London: Macmillan, 1917), 18; Temple, *Issues of Faith*, 17-18, 20-21; Temple, *Christ in His Church*, 8; Temple, "The Coming of the Kingdom," 20.

⁷²³ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Transcript of speech 'We Belong to One Another' delivered 12th December 1972 at unknown location. v.319. f.234.

irrespective of the Fall. This point is reinforced here by Ramsey's stress on the uniqueness of the union between God and humanity in Christ, and the need for the individual to be drawn into that fellowship: '[r]isen and ascended the Son for ever glorifies the Father; and in this glorifying (which was from all eternity) the human nature, assumed in the Incarnation, now shares.'⁷²⁴ The implication is that it is only when God gives himself to humanity in *this* absolute sense that that perfect fellowship which is the divine purpose from all time finally becomes possible – and in a manner quite independent of any sense of an exigent response to human sinfulness.

Ramsey's emphasis on Christ's perfect humanity might seem to bring him close to Temple's concept of Christ as inspirational "proto-human", yet Ramsey is wary of blurring the boundaries between Christ and humanity, preferring to emphasise the uniqueness of Christ as the one perfect human. Witness, for example, his assertion that if we are to see 'the wonder of the Incarnation we must firstly think of God and man in the utter contrast that there is between them.'⁷²⁵ Rather, the power to win humanity into fellowship is rooted in Ramsey's distinctive account of the divine nature. It is the depth of identification between God and the human condition, as revealed in the divine self-giving, which, above all else, constitutes the fullest expression of the divine love for humanity and as such serves as the ultimate tool opening the individual's heart to receive the Spirit: '[t]he Church exists because He died. That which had been the cause of despair and tension and offence throughout Israel's history – the suffering of the righteous ones – has become the centre of Israel's being. The Servant has become the "light to lighten the Gentiles" because the servant has suffered and identified Himself with the death of all mankind.'⁷²⁶ For Ramsey, it is God's identification with the divisions, frustrations and cruelties of human existence which renders his love effectual over the human heart. It is for this

⁷²⁴ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 94.

⁷²⁵ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Sermon (undated – c.1940?). v.314 f.12.

⁷²⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 18-19. Again, 'Easter is the victory of the Crucified and it is the cost I would emphasise. The reason for that emphasis is this. I am sure that in our world, tormented as it is by divisions, by cruelties, by economic frustrations, with war here and hunger there, our Christian assertions about the existence of God and the sovereignty of God can too often sound facile... The existence of God, the sovereignty of God are propositions only to be made meaningful in terms of that union of power and love seen on Calvary' - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Address to the Church Union Congress, 27th April 1968. v.317 f.161. Also Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 21-22.

reason that he can say that Christ's 'power and authority centre in His humiliation.'⁷²⁷

The centrality of the Church is reinforced by Ramsey's sense that, through the divine act of identification with humanity, the individual is moved by the Spirit to share in Christ's life through a union that is both expressed and deepened in the sacraments – the corporately experienced vehicle of experiential encounter with Christ: 'Baptism is into the death and resurrection of Christ, and into the one Body...; the Eucharist is likewise a sharing in Christ's death and a merging of the individual into the one Body.'⁷²⁸ Temple saw the coming of the Spirit as the power to effect a fellowship which generated a sharing in the divine purpose; Ramsey, by contrast, can declare that 'the life bestowed by the Spirit is a life of which the crucifixion is a quality, a life of living through dying'⁷²⁹ – that is, a life of self-giving rooted, supremely, in the Church and its worship. Hence 'eucharistic worship of the Church is on its Godward side a participation in Christ's glorifying of the Father, and on its manward side a receiving of Christ's glory – the glory of the Cross.'⁷³⁰ It is, then, for Ramsey through an entering into the life of the Church, Christ's Body, and supremely through its Godward worship that fellowship is ultimately realised.

Conclusion

Each man's account of the means by which Christ effects salvation has been found to be consistent with their emphasis on the Incarnation as a means to fellowship, rather than as expedient response to sin. This lends further weight to a sense of a coherent alternative to a substitutionary atonement centred Christology. Yet there is a fundamental difference in each man's account of the means by which that fellowship is effected. That difference flows out of the differing accounts of the divine purposive nature. Temple stresses the importance of the individual as a constituent

⁷²⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 24. Again, divine sovereignty has 'divine humility as instrument & sacrificial love as the weapon' - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.190.

⁷²⁸ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 50, also 58, 60, 96, 106. At the Last Supper the disciples, 'by eating the bread and drinking the cup... will be brought within the death. In an unutterable way they partake of it' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 106.

⁷²⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 30. Again, citing Thornton with approval: "'Spirit is the quickening cause, the indwelling of Christ is the effect of that cause'" - Ramsey, *Holy Spirit*, 56.

⁷³⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 98.

element in the realisation of Value; equally, his account of the inherent nature of creation, rooted in the divine purpose, leads him to stress the importance of the widest possible range of social relationships as constitutive of the individual. This brings two consequences. Firstly, the desire to respect individuality leads Temple to emphasise the notion of Influence in Christ's salvific work. Christ is conceived as a kind of leaven, realising the Kingdom by revealing the divine loving purpose and by winning humanity to the pursuit of Value. Fellowship is with the divine purposive will much more than with Christ. Secondly, whilst the Church remains the dominant element, yet the wider State has a greater role to play than is found in Ramsey's thought, precisely because of its power to mould the individual. For Christ's Influence to reach its maximum effect, it must be realised in all areas of human life.

Ramsey, of course, would agree with this last point, but for different reasons: for Ramsey it is the divine desire for an all-embracing fellowship of self-giving love that demands such entry into all aspects of human life. Ramsey's God seeks intimacy of fellowship as an end in itself: unique individuality is much less important, as is the concept of Value. Only in Christ is found perfect humanity offering the perfect response to the divine love. Consequently, for Ramsey there is a stronger sense that fellowship is with Christ, much more than with the divine purposive will. The fact that there is such a difference at this level of each man's thought implies that the relatively subtle differences heretofore noted are magnified when it comes to some aspects of the wider working out of their thought. This would seem to suggest that the downplaying of substitutionary atonement was not in favour of an altogether comprehensive, coherent alternative account after all – though before drawing any definitive conclusion it would be necessary to tease out the full implications of the potential reconciliation in their thought highlighted in the conclusions to previous chapters, and the potential consequences of such a reconciliation for their accounts of the means by which fellowship is effected. More work would need to be done. Yet that magnification does at least highlight again the far-reaching implications of each man's account of the divine purpose, and the power of that rationale for the Incarnation to effect a downplaying of substitutionary atonement in their thought.

Chapter Six: The Nature of Fellowship

Introduction

It has been argued that, for Temple and Ramsey, God's primary concern in creation is for the fullest possible fellowship with humanity, with the Incarnation being the agent of that eternal purpose. In the process, the importance of substitutionary atonement has been downplayed in each man's thought. In order to reinforce that claim, it is important to look in detail, finally, at the nature of the fellowship effected in Christ: is that fellowship in practice such as to strengthen the case for the primacy of the divine purpose over and against exigent substitutionary atonement?

To answer this question it is necessary, first, to show that each man's concept of fellowship is consistent with that purpose; and second, that the character and quality of this fellowship is something more than might be realised had the Incarnation simply been a means of "dealing" with human sin. Inevitably this chapter will cover some of the same ground already touched upon in the earlier part of the thesis, but only in order to bring the link between fellowship, Incarnation and the divine purpose into sharper focus. It explores the nature of that fellowship from a number of related angles. It begins by looking at fellowship from the perspective of the divine: in particular it focusses on the person of Christ, and the degree to which the purposive concern for divine-human fellowship is modelled and actualised therein. It then further highlights the degree to which the divine purpose moulds each man's engagement with the concept of kenosis. The chapter then looks at fellowship from the human perspective, and the nature of humanity as drawn into fellowship with God. Is the individual simply absorbed into the divine, or is there retention of an element of individual originality – and what does this say about the degree to which their account is moulded by the divine purpose? It then turns to look at the nature of that fellowship as realised in the community of the Church, before going on to touch briefly on the degree to which this account of fellowship moulds each man's wider thought, and in particular their account of ethics. Finally it will look at the nature of eschatological fellowship, teasing out the degree to which the fellowship effected now is an actualisation of that fellowship realised at the Eschaton, and as such a manifestation of an eternal divine purpose rooted not in a response to sin but rather in

a quest for the consummation of a creation whose realisation had only just begun at the Fall.

Fellowship and Divinity

Rejection of Kenotic Christology

Both Temple and Ramsey eschew orthodox kenotic Christology, and in a manner underlining the centrality of the divine purposive quest for fellowship in their thought. True, as Williams⁷³¹ and Cramer⁷³² have noted, there is a kenotic element in both men's recognition that Christ assumed the limits of a historical human mind; however, their overall position is far from that concept of kenosis then current in wider theology. Hence, for example, Temple laid particular stress on the idea that fellowship with God is effected by the divine spirit indwelling the individual: '[w]e shall expect, therefore, to find that when God supervenes upon humanity, we do not find a human being taken into fellowship with God, but God acting through the conditions supplied by humanity. And this is the Christian experience of Jesus Christ.'⁷³³ This view is consistent with his philosophical argument that the lower elements in creation only reveal their full nature when indwelt by those higher than them in the scale. It is because of this emphasis on indwelling, coupled with his stress on the unity of all things in God, that Temple rejects kenosis in his account of the union of divinity and humanity in Christ. For Temple, it is a condition of indwelling that the higher is not set aside, but actualised in the union with that which is lower. Consequently, the difficulties of kenosis 'are intolerable. What was happening to the rest of the universe during the period of our Lord's earthly life?'⁷³⁴ Such a view runs counter to the metaphysical unity of the universe, for it 'is to assert that for a certain period the history of the world was let loose from the control of the Creative Word... All these difficulties are avoided if we suppose that God the Son did indeed most truly live the life recorded in the Gospel, but added this to the other

⁷³¹ Rowan Williams, 'Theology in the Twentieth Century,' in *A Century of Theological and Religious Studies in Britain*, ed. Ernest Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 238.

⁷³² Jared C. Cramer, *Safeguarded by Glory: Michael Ramsey's Ecclesiology and the Struggles of Contemporary Anglicanism* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2010), 66.

⁷³³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 138.

⁷³⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 142. Also Temple, 'The Godhead of Jesus,' 24.

work of God.⁷³⁵ Consequently, ‘God the Son, who is the Word of God by whom, as agent, all things came to be and apart from whom no single thing has come to be, without ceasing His creative and sustaining work, added this to it that He became flesh and dwelt as in a tabernacle among us... He who is always God became also Man - not ceasing to be God the while.’⁷³⁶

Temple recognises the potential criticism that this implies Christ did not fully experience the hardship of a human life, retaining as he did all the while the compensatory riches of his glory. He responds, in this context at least, by drawing out and emphasising the significance of Christ as *a* man, not just as Man, experiencing the struggles and hardships of the individual in their finitude, and as a necessary vehicle to divine self-disclosure:

If God the Son lived the life recorded in the Gospels, then in that life we see, set forth in terms of human experience, the very reality of God the Son. The limitations of knowledge and power are conditions of the revelation, without which there would be no revelation *to us* at all; but the Person who lives under those limitations is the Eternal Son in whom the life of the Eternal Father goes forth in creative activity and returns in filial love. The Incarnation is an episode in the Life or Being of God the Son; but it is not a *mere* episode, it is a *revealing* episode. There we see what He who is God’s wisdom always is, even more completely than any kenotic theory allows. This view makes the humiliation and death of Christ “the measure of that love which has throbbled in the divine heart from all eternity...” what we see is... the divine glory itself⁷³⁷

It is because Christ is *a* man experiencing the struggle of existence that he can reveal the divine purposive nature: by indwelling Jesus’ humanity the limitations of knowledge and power which that finite centre of consciousness creates become the crucial means for divine self-disclosure. Consequently, Temple’s understanding of the means by which fellowship with God is created not only leads to a rejection of kenotic Christology, but it serves to reinforce the importance of the individual’s distinct character and gifts within that fellowship as engendering a unique centre of consciousness acting to realise the Value of creation.

⁷³⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 143.

⁷³⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 140.

⁷³⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 143-144.

In contrast, one might expect that Ramsey's emphasis on divine self-giving would lead him to embrace kenosis as the ultimate expression of the sacrifice lying at the root of fellowship.⁷³⁸ Yet Ramsey rejects kenotic Christology. Thus he argues that '[n]owhere does Saint John tell us that this glory was veiled or laid aside during the Son's incarnate life.'⁷³⁹ Whilst Ramsey acknowledges that John's gospel pictures Christ praying to receive glory (implying thereby that the glory has indeed been laid aside), he nonetheless argues that '[t]he right solution of this problem of Johannine exegesis seems to be that it is in His *human nature* that the Son receives glory from the Father, and he asks that through the Passion and Resurrection the human nature may be exalted into the eternal glory of the Godhead.'⁷⁴⁰ This rejection of kenosis stems from Ramsey's account of the rationale for the Incarnation: Christ saves by revealing the nature of God; only through the vehicle of a human life can that nature be revealed in its fulness: consequently, that which is revealed must be God in his fulness. There can be no sense in which some element of God is laid aside: rather, the 'eternal glory is manifested in the death on the Cross whereby the Father glorifies the Son, and the Son the Father.'⁷⁴¹ Yes, the Incarnation is an act of self-negation, but it is the negation of an essence nonetheless eternally present within that incarnate nature: indeed, the negation is an element within that essence and inextricably bound up with it, such that both need inevitably to be present in the incarnate Christ. Meanwhile, where Temple is concerned to emphasise the importance of Jesus' unique, individual human experience as vehicle for divine self-disclosure and means to the realisation of Value, Ramsey's emphasis on the divine sharing in human

⁷³⁸ Though Dales has identified *kenosis* as a key concept in Ramsey's thought, he understands the word in terms of Christ's self-giving to the world, rather than in the sense of laying aside a divine nature - Dales et al., *Glory Descending*, 159-160.

⁷³⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 77. Again, Christ was 'realizing in humiliation a glory which had been His from all eternity' - Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 85. See Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, 35 for a critique by Ramsey of early twentieth century Anglican kenoticism; also 32-33 for criticism of continental kenoticism of the same period.

⁷⁴⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 85. Ramsey was similarly wary of metaphysical interpretation of Philippians 2: 5-11 - Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, 30-31. Interestingly, Ramsey feels Forsyth offers the most plausible reworking of the concept of kenosis. Forsyth, he argues, grounds his kenotic thought in a particular understanding of omnipotence and omniscience, as defined in Christ's incarnate life: omnipotence is the limitless power of love; divine omniscience is 'the power of the infinite mind and will to share in the movement and discursiveness of the finite: "The omniscience of God does not mean that it is incapable of limitation, but rather that, with more power than finitude has, it is also more capable of limitation. Only it is self-limitation: He limits Himself in the freedom of holiness for the purposes of His own end of infinite love." Thinking thus of the divine attributes, we may see how they are not renounced, but rather manifested, in the life and Passion of Christ' - Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, 39.

⁷⁴¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 92.

suffering and concomitant self-negation, coupled with his lack of emphasis on the importance of the individual in the divine pursuit of Value, means that there is much less emphasis here on Jesus' individuality: though he is very much *a* man for Ramsey, yet the emphasis on the uniqueness of his perspective, grounded in some sense of his individuality and giftedness, is a theme largely absent from his thought, at least in this respect.

Of course, Ramsey – and Temple – are both reacting against an earlier form of kenotic Christology, and one which emphasised the discrete divine act of self-emptying. More recently, theologians such as Rahner and Torrance have argued for a form of kenosis characterised by an understanding of the divine act not as a one-off action, but as a continuous, on-going movement of self-emptying, even as Jesus *retains* within himself the fulness of divine glory. Thus Torrance can understand the divine act not as God emptying ‘anything *out of* himself’ but rather as an action whereby ‘he emptied *himself* out of a heavenly and glorious *morphē* into an earthly and inglorious *morphē*.’⁷⁴² It is not altogether clear that Temple and Ramsey might be reconciled to such an account of kenosis: Temple might object to the notion of Christ being emptied *out of* a heavenly *morphē* which, as Torrance notes ‘corresponds to inner nature’:⁷⁴³ Temple would prefer to stress the fellowship and union between *morphē* and *morphē*. Equally, Ramsey might object to Torrance’s suggestion that Christ was ‘stripped of the effulgence of his glory that our weak eyes might behold him in the meek and lowly Jesus’,⁷⁴⁴ if only insofar as such an observation obscures the degree to which the meek and lowly Jesus *is* the glory of God – hence, for example, ‘the feet-washing so far from being a veiling or an abandoning of the glory is a manifestation to the disciples of the nature of the glory of the eternal God.’⁷⁴⁵

Rahner’s account, though only subtly different from Torrance’s, might yet prove more fruitful. Witness his assertion:

⁷⁴² Thomas F. Torrance, *Incarnation : The Person and Life of Christ* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), 74, also 75.

⁷⁴³ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 74.

⁷⁴⁴ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 77.

⁷⁴⁵ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 69.

the basic element, according to our faith, is the *self*-emptying, the coming to be, the κένωσις and γένεσις of God himself, who can come to be by *becoming* another thing, derivative, in the act of constituting it, without having to change in his own proper reality which is the unoriginated origin. By the fact that he remains in his infinite fulness while he empties himself – because, being love, that is, the will to fill the void, he has that wherewith to fill all – the ensuing other is his own proper reality⁷⁴⁶

Temple in particular shares this sense of God's 'coming to be in Christ', without the explicit linkage to self-emptying:

It is sometimes said that the Incarnation and the experiences of Jesus Christ on earth cannot have made any difference to God. But this is only a half-truth. Eternally God is what He revealed Himself in Jesus Christ to be; therefore to say that He then became this would be false. But temporally God passed from creation to creation - from the creation of Light to the creation of worlds, of animals, of man... This does not make Him different, but it does not leave Him unaffected. He is indignant at cruelty; He yearns over His wayward children; He rejoices in their love. If this is not so, the Bible is merely false and the Gospel story no picture of God. If He is thus affected by temporal occurrences, this must be true especially of the Incarnation. God eternally is what we see in Christ; but temporally the Incarnation, the taking of Manhood into God, was a real enrichment of the Divine Life. God loved before; but love (at least as we know it) becomes fully real only in its activity, which is sacrifice. Temporally considered, we must say that the Love, which eternally God is in full perfection, attained its temporal climax when Christ died on the Cross... The act of sacrifice enters into the very fibre of love and makes the love deeper and stronger... At that time God put forth His power; but also God therein fulfilled Himself⁷⁴⁷

Temple's comments echo Rahner: and if he consciously avoids the language of self-emptying it is presumably because of his wariness of the more traditional concept of kenosis. Ramsey, by contrast, lacks this sense of God's 'becoming,' but his stress on the divine act of self-giving love, which, though self-negating, yet expresses the fulness of divine glory, echoes Rahner's sense already cited that God 'remains in his infinite fulness while he empties himself – because, being love, that is, the will to fill the void, he has that wherewith to fill all.' There is a sense in Ramsey that what is set aside in the Incarnation is a heavenly context, rather than an inner nature, and as such this prefigures the life of the Christian: '[t]here is thus a kind of *kenosis* or self-

⁷⁴⁶ Karl Rahner, *More Recent Writings*, trans. Kevin Smyth, *Theological Investigations* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966), 114-115.

⁷⁴⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 279-280.

emptying in the Christians' witness and influence in society...' such that, when the Christian has the courage to speak out against injustice, it is because 'the source of the courage and the humility are supernatural and from Christ [that] the witness has the "kenotic" power of coming down to the natural and appealing to the natural in terms of the natural.'⁷⁴⁸ Yet Ramsey might still object to Rahner's assertion that God 'proclaims *himself* as love when he hides the majesty of this love and shows himself in the ordinary ways of men.'⁷⁴⁹ Ramsey would want to argue that to show himself 'in the ordinary ways of men' is a direct revelation of the 'majesty of this love.' Nevertheless, it is enough in this context simply to show the *potential* for reconciliation between Temple and Ramsey and modern kenotic Christology: the potentially fruitful comparison of their thought with the somewhat different kenotic Christology of Rahner and Torrance highlights the degree to which both men's engagement with the kenotic thought of their day is shaped supremely by the eternal divine purpose and the type of fellowship which it engenders, supremely in the model of Christ.

Temple, the Uniqueness of Christ and the Nature of Fellowship

As already noted, Ramsey was keen to stress the absolute division between divinity and humanity, creator and creature in his theology. Temple's account of the divine purposive nature, with its stress on Christ as what might be termed "proto-human," naturally seems to generate an account of fellowship which implies some blurring of the boundaries between divinity and humanity in salvific union. This is particularly the case in his earlier works. Witness, for example, his assertion that in Christ 'we see what all men shall become.'⁷⁵⁰ There is at times a sense that God is simply humanity writ large: 'if we would understand God in whose Being all the universe is grounded, we must conceive that Value, which is real whenever two finite spirits find themselves in each other, raised to Infinity.'⁷⁵¹ One might also argue that an emphasis on Christ as proto-human leads to the belief that the Incarnation was not a necessarily unique event: might an incarnation in a modern context and culture

⁷⁴⁸ Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, 46-47.

⁷⁴⁹ Rahner, *More Recent Writings*, 116.

⁷⁵⁰ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 254, also 250-251. Again, the individual, meditating on the sacrifice of the cross, is led to the belief that 'one day, in the inspiration of the sacrifice, we too shall offer ourselves in like manner' - Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 254. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 213-214, also 238.

⁷⁵¹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 283.

actually serve more effectively to communicate the divine nature? This criticism, at least, seems unfair - primarily because it ignores the degree to which, for Temple, Christ is a perfect, wholly *sufficient* summation of the divine, appealing to that need for experiential encounter which is inherent to a modern generation no less than to Christ's own. Put simply, no further incarnation is necessary. Yet this still implies a blurring of the boundaries between divinity and humanity in Christ: no further incarnation may be necessary, but is there something exclusively unique about Christ? Does Temple's rationale for the Incarnation lead him to an heretical position here, and one with implications for the validity of that downplaying of substitutionary atonement in his thought which this thesis has noted?

No: Temple asserts that Christ's uniqueness is not simply one on a par with that same uniqueness necessarily found in any other individual as a means to the realisation of Value. Witness his assertion that when Paul talks about humanity being built up into one perfect humanity in Christ '[h]e does not mean, of course, that each of us is to become perfect in that sense, that each of us is to attain to the measure of the stature of Christ. Of course not...' ⁷⁵² Likewise he explicitly highlights the failure of early Patristic heresy to recognise the distinctiveness of Christ's humanity: Nestorius is criticised in the degree to which Christ is offered more 'as our Example than our Redeemer...' ⁷⁵³ (This, of course, is for Temple a redemption into an animating fellowship, with the realisation of Value as the ultimate purposive goal.) In Christ alone is found, uniquely, the fulness of God, an absolute divinity; it is that fulness which lends him the compelling power over humanity that defines his uniqueness. The point is strengthened by Temple's stress on Christ's Influence as the means of effecting salvation - a term which implies a very different form of union between God and the rest of humanity than is found in Christ himself.

⁷⁵² Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 163. Again, '[w]e are called to share His [Christ's] apostolic ministry; but no other among men, however inspired, becomes the equal of Christ; for His mission is from the Father without intermediary, and ours is from the Father through him' - Temple, *Readings (Second Series)*, 385. Also Temple, 'The Godhead of Jesus,' 22.

⁷⁵³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 133. Again, "'Does Christ differ from us in kind or in degree?' This question has an appearance of precision which is utterly illusory... The distinction of kind and degree is far from clear... But if the question means 'Is Perfect Man *eo ipso* God?' the answer is 'No. Nothing that happens to a creature could possibly turn him into his own Creator. At that point the gulf between God and Man is plainly impassable'" - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 147 n.1. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 237-238.

Nevertheless, the lingering sense of some blurring of boundaries remains. Ultimately, this is not surprising given the dominance of Temple's understanding of the divine purpose in shaping his account of the Incarnation. Temple's rationale for the Incarnation was grounded in a philosophical understanding of a stratified Reality wherein the higher elements realised the potential of the lower through indwelling. Crucially, the 'higher' elements cannot be understood solely in terms of the 'lower': '[t]o say that we can understand this supreme Reality would be false; and if our view seemed utterly complete that would condemn it.'⁷⁵⁴ Consequently, Christ's divinity is only intelligible *in so far as* it is revealed through the lens of his humanity.⁷⁵⁵ This naturally means that any account of Christ must emphasise those points of harmony between divinity and humanity, and in a way which may superficially appear to blur the boundaries. True, Temple might have been more careful to emphasise the transcendence of God, particularly in his earlier writings, but the recognition of an absolute division was at least present in his thought: writing in the mid-1930s, Temple, though otherwise critical of Barth, yet praised the theologian for his sense of the absolute distinction between creator and creature.⁷⁵⁶ Of course, the question of whether or not Temple quite convinces on this point is immaterial to this thesis, even if the answer seems persuasive: rather, the key point is that his account of Christ's uniqueness is bound up in his rationale for the Incarnation as rooted in the eternal divine purpose for fellowship.

Fellowship and Humanity

The Witness of Christ's Salvific Action to the Nature of Fellowship

The concrete nature of fellowship between God and humanity is dictated by each man's understanding of Christ's salvific act – an understanding itself moulded by their respective accounts of the divine purpose as rationale for the Incarnation. As such this further reinforces the sense that fellowship is not primarily a product of

⁷⁵⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 283. Craig has (unfairly) criticised Temple on this point, arguing that he suggests God became man 'and we must either accept or reject it; we must not try to explain it' - Craig, 'William Temple,' 59. Craig seems to ignore the force of the logic of Temple's philosophical account of Reality which clearly implies that any such explanation must be beyond humanity, at least until humanity enters into ever deeper fellowship with God.

⁷⁵⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 138-139. The nature of that indwelling will be revealed as humanity comes to share in the divine: only when all share in the Purpose of God will, 'for the first time... the God revealed in Christ be fully known' - Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 263.

⁷⁵⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 396.

Christ's expedient "dealing" with sin, but something rooted in the eternal divine purpose. For Temple, Christ's salvific act marks the introduction of a compelling influence into the sphere of human relations in pursuit of Value, but one which must needs honour the distinctiveness of the individual. Furthermore, Temple's emphasis on Christ as a kind of proto-human, a summative fulfilment of the eternal divine purpose for humanity, means that the relationship of divinity and humanity in Christ becomes a role model for the fellowship of all humanity with God. As a result, when Temple talks of the distinctive element of individual human will in Christ, the retention of that same element of individuality is implied for all humanity in fellowship with God: 'there are two wills in the Incarnate in the sense that His human nature comes through struggle and effort to an ever deeper union with the Divine in completeness of self-sacrifice.'⁷⁵⁷ Consequently, 'I do not speak of His humanity as impersonal. If we imagine the divine Word withdrawn from Jesus of Nazareth... I think that there would be left, not nothing at all, but a man. Yet this human personality is actually the self-expression of the Eternal Son, so that as we watch the human life we become aware that it is the vehicle of a divine life, and that the human personality of Jesus Christ is subsumed in the Divine Person of the Creative Word.'⁷⁵⁸

For Ramsey, by contrast, Christ's salvific act means the union of humanity *into* Christ and his self-giving love articulated in absolute self-negation. Here again there is a sense of Christ as model: 'the son finds in the Father the centre of His own existence; it implies a relationship of death to Himself *qua* Himself. The Son has nothing, wills nothing, is nothing of Himself alone. The self has its centre in Another.'⁷⁵⁹ Humans must share Christ's act of self-negation: hence, for example, the sin of the Corinthians is that 'they think of themselves as separate "selfhoods," –

⁷⁵⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 150.

⁷⁵⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 150-151. Again, 'the Will in Him, while always one with, because expressive of the Will of God, is not merely identical with it. In the struggle with temptation the human will or person is at once manifesting and approximating to the Will of God, until as the Passion approaches and Love is about to be exhibited in the perfection of sacrifice, He prays to be glorified with the eternal glory - which is the perfect sacrifice of perfect love. Consequently, though there is only one Person, one living and energising Being, I should not hesitate to speak of the human personality of Christ. But that personality does not exist side by side with the divine personality; it is subsumed in it' - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 150.

⁷⁵⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 25.

(I, mine, he, his) – instead of knowing themselves to be but nothing.⁷⁶⁰ The implication of Ramsey’s model of Christ and his salvific act is that the fellowship created is one in which individuality – as conceived in Temple – has no obvious role in the divine purpose. Whether that means the individual in some sense loses all individuality when united to Christ is something that will be discussed shortly. For the time being, however, the conclusion is that, for both men, the nature of the fellowship created by Christ is one which, in its concrete detail, is wholly consistent with their presentation of the divine purpose.

Temple: The Retention of Individuality in Fellowship

Temple’s account of God’s purpose for divine-human fellowship is such that one would logically expect him to assert the retention of some element of distinctive individuality within the whole. Certainly, his thought emphasises the importance of such individuality to the divine. That distinctive individuality is, above all, characterised by three things: firstly, the ‘will’, understood as the locus of engagement and appreciation with the world and God: will, ‘if it means more than mere appetite... first appears as an activity of a man’s nature as a whole, or in chief part, exercising control over particular desires or impulses.’⁷⁶¹ Secondly, by the individual’s particularity – that is, their distinctive angle of vision on the world and the unique experience associated with it: ‘[i]n every mind there is some peculiarity of experience... this peculiarity and distinctiveness of one mind from another will endure for ever.’⁷⁶² Thirdly, by those unique gifts within the individual to be used in the Spirit’s power ‘to win this world for the Kingdom of God.’⁷⁶³ In part, Temple’s abiding emphasis on the individual’s distinctiveness is rooted in his dialectical/experiential understanding of the nature of creation as the vehicle for the realisation of Value: ‘[e]very human mind is potentially a focussing point for the whole range of possible experience, that is of the whole universe.’⁷⁶⁴

⁷⁶⁰ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 51.

⁷⁶¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 233.

⁷⁶² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 56, also 58.

⁷⁶³ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 164.

⁷⁶⁴ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 54. See also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 47, 70, 72; Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 84; Temple, *The Church and Its Teaching*, 8; Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 18. What is true of individuals is also true of nations - Temple, *Church and Nation*, 200.

Yet the importance of individuality does not simply lie in the unique will, perspective and gifts of the individual. Humanity's very sense of obligation to the divine purpose is itself rooted in that individuality:

It is because man is capable of ideals and principles that he becomes a subject of Rights and Duties as distinct from mere claims and counter-claims. The sense of Obligation carries a man beyond calculation of means devised for the realisation of ends which are fixed by instinct or desire. It leads him to think of himself as a person in a society of persons. Consequently the same qualities which make him supremely individual stamp his individuality as fundamentally and inherently social⁷⁶⁵

Moreover, those distinctive, inherent characteristics of the individual enable them, through the fulfilment of that sense of obligation in interaction with God and society, to discern their proper calling and contribution to the advancement of the whole. Consequently, 'Selfhood is a pre-condition of all true good. There can be no discovery by mind of itself or its kin in its object unless mind be active as a self or conscious system of experience; and this, which is the essential condition of value, only reaches its completeness in the personal relationship of different selves. The self therefore is not to be destroyed...'⁷⁶⁶ Individuality brings a sense of duty which carries wider implications for social action: '[i]f all are children of one Father, all are members of one family. Therefore no individual is entitled to use his own liberty for his own advantage only, but should exercise it in the spirit of membership or fellowship.'⁷⁶⁷ Indeed, '[t]he Body of Christ has many members and the functions of all the separate members must be exercised if the Body is to display the fullness of its power.'⁷⁶⁸ This sharing in a common purpose, rooted in individuality, brings final satisfaction to the divine: God 'claims for the fulness of His own delight in His creation the special excellence that resides in each finite spirit as it both achieves and appreciates the values that are proper to it alone.'⁷⁶⁹

Not surprisingly then, Temple's account of divine-human fellowship naturally concludes that fellowship entails the retention of distinct individuality within its

⁷⁶⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 53. Also Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 230.

⁷⁶⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 376, also 368.

⁷⁶⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 204. Also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 48.

⁷⁶⁸ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 333.

⁷⁶⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 424.

union with the divine.⁷⁷⁰ As already noted, the individual will is animated by the divine indwelling Spirit; but this does not entail its absorption into the divine: ‘[t]he work is His; yet we are not abolished or absorbed. It is our hearts that love, but it is His love that draws our hearts to Him.’⁷⁷¹ Indeed, individuality is also crucial to God: ‘individual means amongst other things irreplaceable’⁷⁷² precisely because that which is loved needs to be *individual*: ‘love is always of individuals... If we conceive the unity of the world, not in the materialist terms of substance, but in the spiritual terms of love, then that unity will not be the unity of the absolutist philosophy in which all distinctions are at last merged, but it will be the unity rather of a family, of a comradeship where all the different members, with their characteristics unimpaired, are united by a common origin, or a common purpose, or a common affection.’⁷⁷³ This stress on the abiding distinctiveness of the individual in union with God does not, for Temple, contradict the emphasis on the unity of all things in the divine: though there for ever remain two distinct wills in fellowship – one human, the other divine – will is only extant when active in purpose.

⁷⁷⁰ Knox and Hoskins have argued that Temple’s Christology does not really imply two wills at all, but only one will ‘viewed successively from two different standpoints’ - (Knox, *Some Loose Stones*, 152). Knox argues that Temple’s primary distinction is between the ‘subjective function’ of Jesus’ human will, and Christ’s Will, which ‘was the Will of the Father’ (Knox, *Some Loose Stones*, 151); because ‘a will without a content can exist only in thought’, Knox argues Temple’s ‘distinction between the human will and the divine will in our Saviour is a distinction between the content and the form of a single will, and is therefore a distinction only in thought’ (Knox, *Some Loose Stones*, 152). Yet Knox – and, by implication, Hoskins (who agrees with Knox - Hoskins, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, 227) – seem to ignore the presence in Christ of the ‘subjective function’ of a divine will, alongside the human will, *both of which* are actualised in the divine purposive Will. Temple’s Christology thus actually implies two wills, actualised and united in a shared purpose.

⁷⁷¹ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 290. Again, In the union of the divine ‘whole’ with the human ‘part’ one finds that ‘the parts are really there in the whole, for each is an original and underived element’ - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 77. The same is true for society as whole: though ‘Humanity is a single unit... the several persons who compose it are real individuals’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 214. Temple does assert elsewhere that in Communion ‘the worshipper blots himself out and merges himself in the whole body that God may be all in all’ (Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 55), but later in the same work he goes on to stress ‘[o]nly in the whole Church is the whole truth known; only indeed when the whole Church is the same as the whole world will the whole truth be fully known; for each has his own contribution to make to the life which is to be lived under the impulse of the divine love; each individual is unique and different from all others; and as long as there is any who is withholding what he alone can give, that life remains imperfect’ - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 161-162. The apparent contradiction might be explained by context: the former quote focusses on Communion, and the individual’s need to lay aside self-*interest* in order to receive the divine fellowship. See also Temple, *The Nature of Personality*, 15.

⁷⁷² Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 78. Again, ‘because he is a unique focussing point of Reality – and in principle for the entire range thereof – he is of strictly infinite significance and value’ - Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 59. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 72; Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 83-84, 180; Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 190; Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 165-166.

⁷⁷³ Temple, *The Universality of Christ*, 63.

Consequently, just as the Father and the Son have separate wills but a shared purpose, so a crucial element of individuality is retained when the individual human will enters into fellowship with God, and yet in a manner which nonetheless reflects the deeper fundamental unity of all things *in* God.⁷⁷⁴

In his later years, Temple's thought shifted slightly, and that element which emphasised the importance of individual gifts to the service of a particular divinely ordered society seems to have become slightly more muted. This was, perhaps, because – as Gessell and others have noted⁷⁷⁵ – the world did not appear to be quite so divinely ordered as he had claimed in the earlier part of his career: consequently the individual needed to shift their allegiance in the exercise of their gifts. Writing as early as 1924 Temple could criticise his earlier 1917 work *Mens Creatrix* for its emphasis on social relationships within the social order of his day: 'I based duty far too exclusively... on social relationships. I should now contend that obligation is the correlative of value – absolute obligation of absolute value.'⁷⁷⁶ This is not to suggest an earlier, naïve, complacency on Temple's part with regard to society: writing in 1917 he could declare that World War One was a divine judgement against Europe's life of 'materialism, ambition, and self-indulgence.'⁷⁷⁷ Rather, Temple simply developed an even stronger sense of the struggles of progress and the need for radical change: 'Man cannot meet his own deepest need, nor find for himself release from his profoundest trouble. What he needs is not progress, but redemption.'⁷⁷⁸ Alongside this – and in spite of criticism to the contrary from Hoskins⁷⁷⁹ - there are also hints of a growing sense of the importance of the individual as an end in themselves: hence, for example, in his 1942 *Christianity and Social Order* Temple argued that one of the key Christian social principles is 'respect for every person

⁷⁷⁴ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 249-250. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 23.

⁷⁷⁵ Gessell, 'Beyond Nature, Man and God,' 238. Also Stephen Spencer, 'William Temple's Christianity and Social Order after Fifty Years,' *Theology* 95, no. 763 (1992), 35-36; Thomas, 'William Temple,' 118.

⁷⁷⁶ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 28 n.1.

⁷⁷⁷ Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 361 n.1. Or again, writing in 1912, Temple recognised the enormity of the task needed to create the Christian society: '[w]e have seen the vastness of the struggle, and we shall not suppose that our puny lives can count for very much in it...' - Temple, *Studies in the Spirit and Truth of Christianity*, 82.

⁷⁷⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 513.

⁷⁷⁹ Hoskins, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, 289-292, 301; cf. 289. Hoskins also argues that Temple's essentially monarchical account of the divine nature similarly undermines human individuality and freedom – yet this is to overlook Temple's emphasis on the divine Kingdom as established 'not on the imposition of authority, but on the winning of a free obedience from those whose hearts have been touched by His love' - Temple, *Issues of Faith*, 13.

simply as a person... there is in each a worth absolutely independent of all usefulness to society.⁷⁸⁰ Such subtle shifts do not detract from Temple's abiding commitment to the importance of a distinctive individuality in fellowship. Indeed, if anything World War Two brought not only a stronger sense of the power of evil, but also of the importance of the individual as an agent in assisting the divine response: the unity of all things 'is something which is being fashioned by toil and strife, by agony and bloody sweat; the Word of God is the captain of the enterprise and He calls us to be His fellow-workers.'⁷⁸¹

This emphasis on individuality likewise moulds that incarnational element in his thought which has far-reaching consequences for Temple's wider theological schema. Chapter Three noted that for Temple the actions of an incarnate life better express the divine nature and unity than can words or teaching, and in a manner consonant with his emphasis on dialectical experiential encounter as the means for discerning the divine. Yet the context dictates the manner of presentation: 'almost every divine message has direct application to a particular occasion, and it is impossible to declare with certainty how far it applies to any other occasion.'⁷⁸² It thus becomes necessary to distinguish between the *eternal truth* being conveyed and its *actualisation* in a particular, historically bounded, context. Hence, for example, Temple can claim that the Bible is not to be seen as revelation in itself but as a record of revelation.⁷⁸³ Consequently '[i]n every age the Church has to perform a double duty; it has to adapt itself to the prevailing habits of mind and currents of thought in such a way as most effectively to commend the Gospel with which it is entrusted; but it has also and above all things to take care that what it commends is indeed the Gospel and not some substitute.'⁷⁸⁴ The individual, guided by fellowship with the divine, is called to incarnate the eternal message in the contingent circumstances of their own lives: 'the Christian faith is little concerned with spiritual states that have no physical effect or expression. Its interest is always in making the physical a true

⁷⁸⁰ Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 67. Also Temple, *The Hope of a New World*, 25, 91-92.

⁷⁸¹ Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," Sermon given at the Service of Intercession for China, 8th July 1942. v.68 f.40.

⁷⁸² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 342. Also Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 11.

⁷⁸³ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 307-308.

⁷⁸⁴ Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 19. Also Temple, *Repton School Sermons*, 90; Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, 85-86, 92, 95.

vehicle and expression of the spiritual. It is sacramental through and through, from the Incarnation onwards.⁷⁸⁵

The degree to which Temple's emphasis on individuality moulds his wider theological schema is clearest with regard to ethics. It is precisely because they are a unique individual that every person is able, through fellowship, to discern the right course of action: the whole universe 'is grounded in the Will of creative Deity, so that this divine Will is at once the source of world-order, and also the determinant for every finite mind of its special place within that order and of the appropriate contribution of each such mind to the life of the whole.'⁷⁸⁶ This being the case, '*the solution of the outstanding problems of Ethics is to be sought neither in terms of Utilitarianism however ideal, nor of Intuitionism, but of Vocation.*'⁷⁸⁷ If there is indeed a Mind 'in whose creative activity all other existents are grounded, then the following by each individual of his own immanent logic – the fulfilment of his true being – must issue in the right act, conceived as the best possible train of consequences.'⁷⁸⁸ Temple teases out the incarnational element by going on to argue that '[i]t does not follow that the right act for him is also right for all agents and not only for this agent.'⁷⁸⁹ This emphasis on individuality in fellowship is thus consistent with Temple's account of the Incarnation not simply as an expedient response to sin but as something rooted in the eternal fabric of creation: from all eternity, God can best be known through the revelation of the eternal in the particular; the individual

⁷⁸⁵ Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 175. Also Temple, *Church and Nation*, 171, 177-179.

⁷⁸⁶ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 406-407.

⁷⁸⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 407. Again, '[i]nasmuch as vocation is of its very nature individual, and to each individual his own vocation is peculiar, the guiding of men towards the discovery of their vocations is a task for the evangelist and pastor rather than for the philosopher' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 407.

⁷⁸⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 410.

⁷⁸⁹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 410. Moore has argued for a shift away from an incarnational element in Temple's ethics towards the end of his career, and in particular its characteristic emphasis on sacrifice - Jeffrey Moore, 'William Temple, Ronald Preston, and the Relationship between Human Community and the Principles of Anglican Social Ethics,' *Saint Luke's Journal of Theology* 34, no. 2 (1991), 54, 59-60. In truth, the shift seems to relate to emphasis *within* Temple's account of the Incarnation: heretofore Temple had emphasised divine self-sacrifice, yet in later years Temple placed greater emphasis on divine judgement and justice (Moore, 'William Temple,' 59). Moore himself effectively acknowledges an enduring incarnational strand in Temple's later thought, and along the lines identified in this thesis: hence, for example, he highlights the degree to which the 'middle axioms' of Temple's later social ethic still implied contextual application (Moore, 'William Temple,' 59-60).

shares in this calling to reveal the divine in the concrete particularity of their own existence.

Ramsey: Individuality and Fellowship

Ramsey is far less concerned both with the question of whether some element of individuality is retained in fellowship, and with the nature of that individuality. Hence on the one hand he can declare: ‘authentic Christian fellowship is a death to self...’;⁷⁹⁰ yet he then goes on to say that ‘[t]rue fellowship... means that [a] person’s self finds itself in and through the relation to other selves.’⁷⁹¹ This ambiguity reflects the influence of Ramsey’s distinctive account of the divine nature and purpose. Ramsey stresses the gulf between divinity and humanity: ‘God and Man, even God and perfect Man, are not synonyms, nor differently graded instances of the same species.’⁷⁹² Humanity is not an integral agent in the divine process for the realisation of Value, and as a result Ramsey’s schema, unlike Temple’s, is not obliged to sketch out how far originality is retained in divine-human fellowship – and nor does it, in practice. Consequently, it is difficult to assess what Ramsey might mean by ‘individuality,’ and whether, or how, he sees that individuality retained in fellowship. On the one hand, if individuality means a distinct will, and a consciousness of self, then Ramsey is clear that such individuality must die in union with the divine: “‘Individualism’ therefore has no place in Christianity, and Christianity verily means its extinction.”⁷⁹³ Christ is the model: ‘He died to self, morally by the will to die throughout His life, actually by the crucifixion.’⁷⁹⁴ This clearly brings a kind of absorption into the divine: ‘[t]hroughout His life His will is wholly submitted to the Father’s will, and He lives and dies not as pleasing Himself but as losing His will and His whole being in the Father and in mankind.’⁷⁹⁵ In the cross ‘men are lost as separate “selfhoods.”’⁷⁹⁶ Likewise, worship means, not an offering of self to God, so

⁷⁹⁰ Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 20. Also Ramsey, "The Meaning of Prayer," 9.

⁷⁹¹ Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 20-21.

⁷⁹² Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 130. Again, if we are to see ‘the wonder of the Incarnation we must firstly think of God and man in the utter contrast that there is between them’ - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Sermon delivered at an unknown venue, c.1940. v.314 f.12. See also Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," v.316 f.162.

⁷⁹³ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 38.

⁷⁹⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 27, also 25.

⁷⁹⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 23.

⁷⁹⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 52, also 31-32. Again, humanity’s relationship with God is ‘one of fellowship and assimilation’ - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Garbett Lectures, 1962. v.315 f.138. Religion ‘can be the servant of faith towards God, and self is lost in the adoration

much as a sharing in a divine act: worship 'is God's utterance of His own sacrifice in heaven and on the Cross and in the Corpus Christi wherein men die and rise again.'⁷⁹⁷ In worship, the worshipper 'forgets his own being and experiences in the adoration of the One who is.'⁷⁹⁸

The distinction between Ramsey and Temple on this point is set in relief by their differing reactions to the teaching of the Fathers. Temple is rather more critical, precisely because he feels the Fathers fail to pay due heed to the importance of the personal element in Christ's humanity, and in a way which negates the importance of abiding individuality in divine-human fellowship.⁷⁹⁹ Ramsey, by contrast, chooses to praise the Fathers' emphasis on the Church as 'verily the humanity of God incarnate'⁸⁰⁰ – an humanity wherein the individual dies to self. In sum then, Ramsey's language seems to imply that individuality is not a contributory factor in the divine purpose, and as such is lost in fellowship.

Yet there remains *some* sense of distinctive individuality in Ramsey's account of fellowship, an individuality rooted above all in his understanding of the divine nature. The individual dies to a perverted perception of self, in order to find their true self – a self that can only exist through fellowship with God:

through the death of "individualism" the individual finds himself; and through membership in the Body the single Christian is discovered in new ways and becomes aware that God loves him, in all his singleness, as if God had no one else to love. He can speak of a conscious union between his single self and Christ: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." Hence two kinds of language have always been legitimate for Christians, the one which dwells upon the Body of Christ wherein the individual is merged, the other which dwells upon the individual Christian in his conscious union with Christ. But both kinds of language describe what is really one fact. For the individual Christian exists only because the Body exists already. The self is known in its reality as a self when it ceases to be solitary and learns its utter dependence, and the "individuality" of Christians, with all its rich variety, springs from their death and resurrection in the Body which

of him and in the service of humanity with a compassion humbled by adoration' - Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Sermon 'Beyond Religion' delivered at an unknown venue, 1964. v.316 f.125.

⁷⁹⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 198.

⁷⁹⁸ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 56.

⁷⁹⁹ Temple, 'The Divinity of Christ,' 225.

⁸⁰⁰ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 141-145, especially 144.

is one. In the Body the self is found, and within the “individual experience” the Body is present⁸⁰¹

Crucially, God loves the Christian ‘in all his singleness’: Ramsey’s God is self-giving love; that love seeks out an object to love; its desire to enter into human experience implies a desire to love not an abstract concept – humanity – but every individual in their ‘singleness’ by sharing in their experience to the fullest possible degree. Ramsey thus seems to be defining individual distinctiveness only in so far as necessary to do so in order to establish it as a fitting object of the divine love; his understanding of the divine nature shapes his account of fellowship.

Moreover, the self is known in its reality *only* through this union with Christ and his Body uniquely made possible by the Incarnation: ‘the self which is lost in this response is found again.’⁸⁰² It is ‘found’ – or, rather, defined - by its sharing in the divine nature of self-giving love: ‘[t]he δόξα is the utter self-giving of Christ to the Father which, released by His death and brought into touch with human lives by His Spirit, can become the new principle of self-giving within them and can banish from them the old principle of self-centred selfishness.’⁸⁰³ That self-giving establishes constitutive social relationships: ‘the act of faith, in releasing man from self, brings him into dependence upon his neighbours in Christ.’⁸⁰⁴ That spirit of living through dying and the relationships it creates reconstitutes the self, ‘[t]he man who is justified is an individual’⁸⁰⁵ and, as such, brings gifts which can be used for the building up of the whole: ‘the gifts that he possesses belong to the Body, and are useful only in the Body’s common life. Thus through membership he dies to self-sufficing, and knows that his life in Christ exists only as a life in which all the members share.’⁸⁰⁶ Above all, those gifts are to be used, as in Christ, to point to the eternal divine nature: the Church ‘is the mystery of the participation of men and women in the glory which is Christ’s. Baptised into His death and made sharers in His resurrection they are members of the Body which is Christ’s, branches of the vine who is Christ. Here the

⁸⁰¹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 38; also 32.

⁸⁰² Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 32, also 52.

⁸⁰³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 87. Again, the Christian faith ‘is costly and glorious – costly, for it is no escapism, no hiding from facts, with sacrifice at its heart – glorious, because it sees man’s destiny reaching beyond the miseries of the moment’ - Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 102.

⁸⁰⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 37.

⁸⁰⁵ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 37.

⁸⁰⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 44.

Spirit glorifies *Christ*, taking the things that are Christ's and declaring them to men... Here the *Father* is glorified by the fruitfulness of the disciples...⁸⁰⁷

Ramsey's account of the place and character of individuality in fellowship with God has implications for his wider theology, and in a manner which reinforces the sense of the central importance of that fellowship in his account of the divine purpose in incarnation. Here too, this is perhaps most clearly revealed in his ethics. As with Temple, there is an incarnational element⁸⁰⁸ to his thought: the individual must seek to incarnate the divine in the unique context in which they find themselves: 'our obedience is always in a place, and always in a time.'⁸⁰⁹ As Griffiss notes, for Ramsey the Incarnation 'functions as a governing image, one which interprets everything else in the Christian belief about God and the world.'⁸¹⁰ Likewise, Ramsey can assert with Temple that '[t]he central fact of Christianity is not a Book [the Bible] but a Person – Jesus Christ, himself described as the Word of God.'⁸¹¹ The divine self-giving nature carries with it the assertion of the intrinsic value of every human life as the object of the divine love, and this undoubtedly carries the concomitant obligation to incarnate Christ in the service of humanity: the hope of heaven 'tells of the infinite worth of every man, woman and child we meet... It affects our attitude to a number of ethical questions, as the eternal value of a person matters more than immediate comfort or utility.'⁸¹² But Ramsey calls on the individual not so much to reveal and to share in the divine purpose, as to enter into the Christ-like spirit of 'living through dying' in order to point beyond themselves to the divine self-giving nature: 'Israel's knowledge of God's glory has its corollary in

⁸⁰⁷ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 87.

⁸⁰⁸ Though note his assertion that it is 'one-dimensional' to see the Church as an extension only of the Incarnation, 'since Ascension no less than Incarnation is at the heart of the Church whose members are already ascended with Christ' (Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 70) - though it is the incarnational element which yet seems to predominate in his thought.

⁸⁰⁹ Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 75. Likewise faith in the sovereignty of self-giving love 'can be commended to the world only by a community of Christians who try to make that way – of living through dying – their own' - Ramsey, *The Cross and This World*, 7.

⁸¹⁰ James E. Griffiss, 'Michael Ramsey: Catholic Theologian,' in *Michael Ramsey as Theologian*, ed. Robin Gill and Lorna Kendall (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995), 35.

⁸¹¹ Ramsey, *The Authority of the Bible*, 1-2. Again, 'it is evident that here is a big difference between his [Christ's] use of the scriptures and a literalistic exegesis... Living under the new covenant, the Church was able to use the ancient scriptures in the new way which the Gospel of Christ had created' - Ramsey, *The Authority of the Bible*, 8, also 12, 23.

⁸¹² Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 42.

Israel's obligation to reflect God's character...'⁸¹³ Consequently, '[t]he Body of Christ shares in His priesthood, for in His Body He lives His life of utter self-giving in the midst of pain and sin.'⁸¹⁴

If the individual is to die to self in the service of human need, it is not as a means, principally, of furthering a divine purpose for the realisation of Value, but rather the expression of the divine self-giving nature.⁸¹⁵ This same understanding of the role of the individual in and through fellowship is likewise reflected in his account of ecumenism: the spirit of 'dying to live' means that each individual must be willing to die to those elements of tradition most dear to them and which yet form a barrier to full unity: in the one Body 'every member and every local community dies to self in its utter dependence upon the whole... And if the problems about schism and reunion mean dying and rising with Christ, they will not be solved through easy humanistic ideas of fellowship and brotherhood, but by the hard road of the Cross.'⁸¹⁶ The Incarnation thus sets the pattern for the life of the Christian, but it is a pattern which is rooted in the eternal divine purpose uniquely effected in the Incarnation. There is thus a clear consistency between Ramsey's account of the divine nature, the Incarnation, and the life of fellowship it creates, and one which downplays the role of substitutionary atonement.

The Fellowship of the Church

As already noted, Schmiechen has highlighted the link between the Incarnation, atonement and ecclesiology. Though beyond the scope of this thesis to explore that link in Temple and Ramsey in any depth, it is nonetheless incidentally possible at least to offer clues as to its nature, in the process of exploring the inter-relationship between these elements and the degree to which fellowship, not substitutionary atonement predominates in the whole. Certainly, for both men the Church is a direct consequence of the Incarnation. Naturally, both see the Church as a fellowship of

⁸¹³ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 14.

⁸¹⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 114. Again, for the Christian the words 'priest' and 'sacrifice' 'signify, first, the fact of Christ, and, next, the whole Body of Christ with its single life and ministry of self-oblation and intercession in the midst of a world of sin' - Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 115.

⁸¹⁵ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Christmas Day sermon, 1961. v.315 f.88.

⁸¹⁶ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 7.

persons, in Temple's words 'gathering into itself all persons and all nations, welding them into unity by relating them to the true principle of their being...'⁸¹⁷ Ramsey speaks of 'the mystery of the participation of men and women in the glory which is Christ's...'⁸¹⁸ More importantly for the purpose of this thesis, the Church is a continuation of that eternal divine purpose which underpinned the Incarnation. Hence for Temple, '[t]he Church, then, is the direct outcome of the divine act of the Incarnation and the continuance of its principle.'⁸¹⁹ Likewise Ramsey can declare that 'the Church is made by God – given by God'⁸²⁰ and by its mission 'the judgement and the glory are made known to mankind.'⁸²¹ The Church is a fellowship grounded in the divine purpose, its origins lying in eternity, in so far as that eternal divine purpose has been shown to have pre-existed the Fall. As such, it is seen not so much as a by-product of Christ's "dealing" with sin, as a crucial part of an eternal divine plan.

Consequently, each man conceives the function of the Church in accordance with that eternal purpose. For Temple, the Church is a union of uniquely gifted individuals whose Christ-inspired, spirit-guided fellowship draws its members into a fulness of being that fulfils the divine purpose: hence it is by becoming a member of the Church that the individual 'comes under the constitutive influence of that divine life offered to men in Christ...'⁸²² Worship is crucial to the Church's life: the Church exists '[p]rimarily to *be* itself and not to *do* anything at all... It exists to be the redeemed community which worships as redeemed... worship is the business of its life.'⁸²³

⁸¹⁷ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 158. Again, 'those who are eternal through their fellowship with God are therein united in fellowship with one another' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 77.

⁸¹⁸ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 87.

⁸¹⁹ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 166. Hence, for example, the individual Christian is deeply aware that the Church exists 'for the permeation of the world and of all human activities with that spirit of love which is the innermost nature of God... He will care for the order and ceremonies of the Church just in so far as they promote this object; he will, above all things, prize the sacramental gift... as the means whereby he and others are filled with this spirit that they may be channels through which it flows into the world' - William Temple, "The Needs and Claims of the Church of Christ," (London: SPCK, 1917), 5; Temple, 'Worship and Life,' 19. Also Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 146, 148, 156, 163, 163-165, 176, 215-216; William Temple, "Christian Unity and Church Reunion : The Presidential Address Delivered in Full Synod to the Convocation of Canterbury, Tuesday, May 25th," (London: SPCK, 1943), 4-6.

⁸²⁰ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Address given at a seminar for bishops, 10th March 1970. v.317 f.248.

⁸²¹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 81.

⁸²² Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 235.

⁸²³ Temple, *The Church and Its Teaching*, 13-14.

Ramsey would surely agree; but Temple goes on to link that worship to humanity's call to service: 'worship cannot be the whole of our activity here, because it is, in its own nature, a concentration upon the God who appoints us our duty in life, and part of our very duty to Him is that from time to time, and indeed for the greater part of our time, we should not be explicitly directing attention towards Him but devoting it with all our energy to the duty which He has given us to perform...'⁸²⁴ For Temple, the Church is 'the sacrament of the human nature indwelt by God'⁸²⁵ – the embodiment of the divine purpose for humanity. For Ramsey, by contrast, the Church is 'a sacrament of the eternal in the midst of time.'⁸²⁶ Temple, of course, would agree; but that which is revealed is not the divine purpose (as conceived by Temple), but rather the divine nature characterised by self-negation and self-giving love as an end in itself. Ramsey strikes a subtly different note from Temple when he declares: 'the relevance of the Church of the Apostles consisted not in the provision of outward peace for the nations, nor in the direct removal of social distress, nor yet in any outward beauty of the Church itself, but in pointing to the death of Jesus the Messiah, and to the deeper issues of sin and judgement...'⁸²⁷

Temple, like Ramsey, recognises the importance, above all else, of intimacy with God: 'the vitality of the society in actuality depends on the depth of conversion and consecration in the individual members.'⁸²⁸ Nonetheless, this is the foundation to a much clearer emphasis on the purposive function of the Church, a function rooted in the distinctive individuality of its members; that individuality is, in turn, eternally rooted in the divine purpose as the means for the realisation of Value. Ramsey, lacking that stress on the necessity of individuality, still sees a practical, purposive role for the Church in bringing about the Kingdom of God: 'the worship which lifts

⁸²⁴ Temple, *The Church and Its Teaching*, 17. Again, '[t]o ask what the Church really is, is to ask what it is in the purpose of God' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 148. Equally, heretofore, 'there has been no united army of Christian people determined to order the world on Christian principles. The Church exists to be such an army, but because we have not appreciated the need for unity of aim and action, it has become a mere organisation for maintaining public worship and ministering to individual souls' - Temple, *Fellowship with God*, 215-216. Also Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, 37.

⁸²⁵ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 235.

⁸²⁶ Ramsey, "Letters & Papers. Vols 1-336," Address given at a seminar for bishops, 10th March 1970. v.317, f.248.

⁸²⁷ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 4.

⁸²⁸ Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 219.

to heaven is mindful of duty upon earth...'⁸²⁹ Indeed, that sense of a practical role seems to grow stronger in his later years, as already noted.⁸³⁰ Nonetheless, it is a by-product of the fellowship created with God; the Church exists to point beyond itself to the self-giving love of God wherein is found the power to win humanity to God. That act of pointing beyond itself is characterised not by the use of otherwise essential gifts in active service, but above all by a self-negation which witnesses to the divine self-negation.

Fellowship in the Eschaton

For both men, the nature of eschatological fellowship is consistent with that effected in this life by the Incarnation. Within that consistency is found a presentation of fellowship which is clearly qualitatively richer than anything experienced pre-Fall. This reinforces the point that what Christ effects is not merely the restoration of humanity, but its fulfilment. For Temple, the degree to which the individual is inherently and eternally social, a being constituted by relationship, necessarily means that the fellowship in this life must be extended into the life beyond:

[i]t does not appear to be possible that there should be eternal life for any isolated finite mind. For if eternity is a mere everlastingness, that for the isolated finite mind would be intolerable. The finite self is constituted in very large measure by its social relationships, and only attains to real unity or to self-consciousness through those relationships... And if eternity, as will be argued later, is something more than everlastingness, then the finite self needs its neighbours as the condition of reaching and maintaining its superiority to the flux of successiveness and the divisive force of mere extension⁸³¹

⁸²⁹ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 145.

⁸³⁰ Witness, for example, his assertion whilst at Canterbury that '[i]n obedience to Christ we take, we break, we offer, we receive; and Christ makes accessible to us his own self-offering into which we are drawn... Feeding upon him they become again his body through which he is working for the refashioning of the world' - Ramsey, *Canterbury Pilgrim*, 9. Also Ramsey, *Canterbury Essays*, 146.

⁸³¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 415. Again, '[t]he reward that is offered is one that a selfish man would not enjoy. Heaven, which is fellowship with God, is only joy for those to whom love is the supreme treasure. Indeed, objectively regarded, Heaven and Hell may well be identical. Each is the realisation that Man is utterly subject to the purpose of Another – of God who is Love' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 466. Also Temple, *Christus Veritas*, 210.

Temple's stress on the crucial importance of the individual to the realisation of Value naturally leads him to posit immortality,⁸³² and he finds evidence to support this in the inherent nature of reality: humanity's capacity for 'free ideas' allows the individual to transcend their earthly body in a way that – for Temple – portends the transcendence of eternity.⁸³³ Hence, 'for the self in fellowship everlasting existence is desirable, and for the ideal perfection of the fellowship is necessary.'⁸³⁴ If the individual's ability to become a unique experiential locus for the realisation of Value demands the widest possible fellowship, then logically that fellowship must embrace not only those one might encounter in this life: it must also embrace all those who have gone before, and all those who will come after.⁸³⁵ That embrace cannot be realised in this life, and consequently eternity cannot, for Temple, mean a continuation of the earth as it now is.⁸³⁶

This leads Temple to posit the concept of the Commonwealth of Value which binds 'into unity all spirits of all periods of time. In other words it involves everlasting life for all who are its members; but this life is something more than everlasting. It must, at least progressively even if never completely, partake of the nature of eternity, wherein all successiveness is united in a single apprehension.'⁸³⁷ That Commonwealth serves the divine purpose: '[e]ternal life is the life of love – not primarily of being loved, but of loving, admiring, and (in love and admiration) forgetting self. Such a life is not only an entering into, but is the actual building of,

⁸³² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 420. Again, 'men die before the victory, which might justify the effort of their life, is come; they die before they see the triumph of the cause for which they are themselves sacrificed. And so there is some element in the world, namely these men's experience, which remains still not quite rational, still not explained by the one divine Purpose. We need the doctrine of immortality...' - Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, 165, also 166.

⁸³³ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 467. Again, in 'the psycho-physical organism of human personality there is the possibility for a development of the spiritual elements, in response to and in communion with the eternal God, which makes these capable of receiving from God the gift of His own immortality' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 468.

⁸³⁴ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 420.

⁸³⁵ 'The Church will only manifest the whole power of Christ when it embraces all mankind,' alive or dead - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 334.

⁸³⁶ Witness, for example, his assertion '[t]hat this earth can become, and shall become, something worthy to be called God's Kingdom we may believe and affirm. But the final satisfaction of the soul which can only be reached when, filled by God, it finds its own fulfilment in living for and in others, and all others, cannot be expected under the conditions of this life' - Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, 349-350.

⁸³⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 422. Again, if each finite spirit 'is different both in itself, and in what it apprehends, and therefore also in respect of the value which by its apprehension it makes actual, then eternal life must be the life of such a Commonwealth and of spirits that know themselves to be members of it' - Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 423.

that fellowship of mutually enriching selves which we have called the Commonwealth of Value.⁸³⁸ The crucial point, however, is that this Commonwealth must embody a qualitative state of fellowship richer than anything experienced before the Fall: if each new individual is a locus and agent for the realisation of Value, contributing to an ever richer successiveness united in a single apprehension then the end for humanity is inevitably richer than anything which had gone before. But that richness which is the eternal divine purpose could only come about through the indwelling made possible by the Incarnation, an act eternally rooted in the divine purpose expressed in the nature of reality.

For Ramsey as for Temple, the fellowship realised in the End Times is a logical extension of that which is realised through union with Christ in this life. The Spirit's present activity 'is the earnest of the final glory. The Holy Spirit brings into the present life the powers of the age to come.'⁸³⁹ Consequently 'there is no separation between our vocation to the service of God in this world and our salvation unto glory in the age to come, for these are two facts of a single mystery.'⁸⁴⁰ The essence of that eschatological life is grounded in the eternal divine purposive nature: 'because God is love, and heaven is our perfection in love, there is no heaven for him who cherishes a kind of private ambition, "I want heaven"... Furthermore, because heaven is what it is, you cannot dream of your own perfection there apart from the perfection of others.'⁸⁴¹ The Incarnation as salvific means to fellowship is rooted in that eternal divine purposive nature; that unity defines the means by which the End Times are ultimately realised: where Temple defines the Eschaton in terms of the unity of all successiveness in a single apprehension, actualised in the divine indwelling, Ramsey's hope for the future is focussed 'far less upon the coming of the reign of God as a state of things which can be described than upon the coming of Christ himself.'⁸⁴² Ramsey's account of the End Times shares Temple's sense of the affirmation of the eternal worth of the individual, but it is a worth grounded not in the pursuit of Purpose so much as in the loving desire of God for an object of love:

⁸³⁸ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 424.

⁸³⁹ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 55.

⁸⁴⁰ Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 55-56.

⁸⁴¹ Ramsey, *Introducing the Christian Faith*, 81. Again, the individual 'cannot reach his goal except in union with those who shall share with him in the love of God and in the Body of Christ' - Michael Ramsey, *The Resurrection of Christ: An Essay in Biblical Theology* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1944), 114. See also Ramsey, *Glory of God*, 89.

⁸⁴² Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 43, also 14.

the hope of heaven ‘tells of the infinite worth of every man, woman and child we meet.’⁸⁴³

The crucial point for Ramsey, as for Temple, is that the fellowship experienced at the Eschaton is qualitatively richer than that experienced before the Fall. This can be seen in Ramsey’s account of the foretaste of that fellowship realised in this life. That fellowship is not seen as the recovery of an earlier union; rather, the Church exists as a foretaste of the ‘new humanity in Christ.’⁸⁴⁴ Ramsey’s eschatology thus returns to the Incarnation: the End Times do not mark the coming of a new system of laws or actions, still less are they the conformation of the *outward* form or appearance of all things to God. Rather are they constituted by the fullest possible union between God and his creation, a union which was only possible because of the Incarnation of Christ as a constitutive element in the eternal divine plan. The eschatological ‘new humanity’ found in Christ is the fulfilment of the divine purposive nature; that this humanity can only share in that new humanity through the ‘coming of Christ himself’ and through a sharing in him indicates that the Incarnation and the final state which it realises are of a unity grounded in the eternal nature.

Conclusion

Each man’s account of fellowship is thus deeply rooted in their understanding of the divine purpose. That purpose, being eternal, suggests that the fellowship flowing out of it is so construed in each man’s account of the Incarnation as to downplay the role of substitutionary atonement within it. Yet does this also generate a shared, coherent alternative? Certainly, Ramsey and Temple understand the nature of divine fellowship differently. These differences are rooted in their differing accounts of the divine purposive nature. Temple emphasises the retention of an element of originality in the individual’s union with the divine – an element of originality rooted in the will, in the individual’s unique experiential ‘angle of vision’ on the world as a means to the realisation of Value, and in specific gifts to be used in the service of God’s Kingdom. Ramsey lacks this overt sense of a *crucial* element of originality in the individual, emphasising instead the self-negating love which echoes the divine

⁸⁴³ Ramsey, *Freedom, Faith and the Future*, 42.

⁸⁴⁴ Ramsey, *Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 142.

nature. These differences are not always magnified in their wider thought: for example, both men reject the concept of kenotic Christology, chiefly on the grounds that it is inconsistent with their account of the divine purpose and its expression in the Incarnation. Again, both see fellowship as something creative: the individual becomes, in union with God, something altogether beyond what might have been extrapolated from human history and experience, even before the Fall. Yet in other aspects of their thought, these differences *are* magnified. Hence, for example, Temple's account of the Church tends to emphasise its social function as the leaven of the Kingdom; Ramsey emphasises its duty to point beyond itself, supremely in worship, to the divine self-negating love.

It has been a recurring theme of this thesis that such differences are not absolute, being largely a question of degree. Thus for example, Temple's account of the Church does not ignore the importance of worship, any more than Ramsey's ignores the concomitant obligation for social concern which flows out of worship. Equally, in terms of the fellowship between divine and human found in Christ, Temple's emphasis on Christ as proto-human should not obscure that exemplar element implied in Ramsey's own stress on humanity's call to imitate Christ, the one perfect human, and nor should it hide Temple's sense, with Ramsey, of the absolute uniqueness of Christ. Or again, both share some sense of the importance of originality in the individual in fellowship: in Temple, for example, as 'angle of vision' for the realisation of Value, for Ramsey as the source of that unique quality which constitutes the individual as a fitting object for the divine love. There is, moreover, a sense of Ramsey emphasising core elements and concepts of faith which, whilst present in Temple's thought, had been in danger of being lost in his broader philosophical/metaphysical framework: the uniqueness of Christ and the absolute distinction between creator and creature which, though acknowledged in Temple, had been obscured by his emphasis on Christ as proto-human. What emerges, then, are two distinct accounts of fellowship which may yet once again be compatible. The question of compatibility is, of course, not the core concern of this thesis, but one might at least say this: that element of coherence identified between each man's account of the Incarnation, coupled with the fact that two such leading theologians share a fundamental emphasis on fellowship, implies an integrity to the

adoption of such a position that reinforces its plausibility as an alternative underlying rationale for the divine act.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This thesis has offered an in-depth analysis of Temple and Ramsey's rationale for the Incarnation, and the place of substitutionary atonement within it. At the heart of that rationale, it has been argued, is the divine purposive desire for fellowship. That emphasis on fellowship leads both men to downplay the significance of substitutionary atonement, though not to discard it altogether: themes of sin, the cross, judgement and atonement are all shown to have been reworked in the light of this central concern. It has, incidentally, been shown that this moulding process extends to their wider theological schema: hence, for example, the concept of fellowship lies at the heart of their ecclesiology, underpins their account of the nature of Christian living and of ethics, and even informs their understanding of the role and function of the state. Moreover, there is evidence for a complementarity in their accounts of the Incarnation that, when combined with their formidable reputation within Anglicanism and beyond, suggests a significant strand of thought informing Anglican identity – and one worthy of further and broader research.

Summary of the Argument: The Centrality of Fellowship

Fellowship is central to both men's account of the Incarnation. To summarise the argument: Chapter One showed that both men conceive of God as both purposive and loving. As such, he is inherently self-expressive and relational, with human lives and history as the pre-eminent medium of that expression. Crucially, that engagement is rooted in the *eternal* divine nature; this implies that God is free from external compulsion, not least compulsion rooted in the need to respond to human sin. God would be intimately engaged with his creation even without human sin. Chapter Two went on to show that for both men, creation is an on-going process with its final goal set not on some kind of restoration or re-pristination to a pre-Fall state, but rather to a fulfilment that transcends all that had gone before, including that age when humanity had yet to sin. That process of fulfilment is, for both men, realised above all else through an intimacy of fellowship with God that is both its agent and its completion. Nonetheless, there are subtle but important differences. Temple's God is conceived principally in terms of a loving purpose, intent on that realisation of Value in creation which is the eternal divine goal; Ramsey's is conceived as self-

giving love seeking above all else to enter into an intimacy of fellowship which is, concomitantly, the fulfilment of creation. This leads Temple to stress the importance of the individual as the locus of gifts crucial to the realisation of that Value, and in a way which superficially seems to blur the boundaries between the divine and human. Yet Temple and Ramsey are not so very different. Ramsey's God has a purposive element: in particular, he argues for a divine quest for intimacy of fellowship that concomitantly effects a new creation. True, his account of the divine nature lacks Temple's emphasis on Purpose and as such is free from the need to stress the role of humanity as co-creator; nevertheless, his conception of the divine is such as to demand uniqueness in the individual: the divine love must be fixed on the particular, rather than the abstract.

The differences between Temple and Ramsey's views became clearer in Chapter Three, which focussed on the link between the divine nature and the rationale for the Incarnation. Here again, questions of sin and atonement were subsumed in the wider drama of the divine quest for fellowship. For both men, the eternal, inherent nature of reality was such as to necessitate an incarnation as the only truly effective means of disclosing the divine nature and, thereby, of drawing humanity into fellowship. That the Incarnation was rooted in this inherent quality of creation implied that it was to be understood by both men as much more than simply an exigent response to sin. This was reinforced by the degree to which their understanding of the purpose of the Incarnation was found to be moulded by those subtle differences in their account of the divine nature already noted. Hence, for Temple, the Incarnation was a call to share in the power of the Spirit in the divine purpose for the realisation of Value. For Ramsey, it was the ultimate expression of the divine self-giving love, calling out a responding love enabled through the indwelling of the Spirit in fellowship. Here again, the differences seemed reconcilable: Ramsey's emphasis on self-giving, loving, relational worship as the basis of a new creation is not so very different from Temple's account of the subject-object-divine nexus wherein Value is realised. Equally, Ramsey's account of the Incarnation implies a duty on humanity to share in the divine purpose as conceived: the Incarnation as expression of self-giving love brought with it, for Ramsey, a concomitant calling to the individual to find within creation, in imitation of Christ, the medium for the actualisation of loving self-sacrifice - an expression that echoes and thereby furthers the cause of the divine self-

sacrifice as means of winning humanity into that fellowship with God which is the new creation.

Having shown that the Incarnation was both consistent with, and an expression of, the eternal divine purposive nature, the thesis then explored the place of sin, atonement and the cross in Temple and Ramsey's Christology. It showed that each element had been indelibly stamped by that sense of the divine nature and purpose, implying subservience to the wider goal of a fellowship which transcends anything heretofore experienced by humanity. Hence for Temple sin is selfishness, the rejection of the divine purpose in pursuit of one's own interest. For Ramsey, sin is pride, the opposite of that self-giving, self-sacrificing humility which lies at the core of the divine nature. Consequently, for Temple the cross is the revelation of the divine loving nature, marshalling the individual will in pursuit of the divine purpose. Atonement means, quite simply, the act and effect of that revelation wherein the individual is won to that purpose. For Ramsey too, atonement means that revelatory act which wins the individual to the ultimate divine fellowship: the cross reveals the divine nature in its essential character of self-giving love; the clarity of that revelation wins the heart into a responding self-giving love in the power of the Spirit. True, for both men the cross in some sense "pays" for sin, but the overriding sense is that sin *moulds* the manner of the Incarnation rather than *causes* it: the cross is inevitable in a world of sin, but the Incarnation would occur even had there been no sin. Whilst some form of substitutionary atonement is implied in their thought, both men consciously reject notions of penal substitution. Crucially, the dominant emphasis remains on the cross as the sacrificial means to fellowship, not payment for sin.

Chapter Five went on to show that the means by which the cross effected salvation is likewise consistent with their understanding of the divine purpose, not least because that method is once again found to be rooted in the eternally inherent nature of creation: fellowship demands an incarnation. Here again, differences in their respective accounts of the divine nature lead to subtle differences in their understanding of how that fellowship is effected. Temple, concerned to emphasise the importance of the unique element of originality in each individual stresses the concept of Christ's Influence over humanity: Christ works through that inherently

relational element within society whereby the individual is constituted and realised. Ramsey, much less concerned with the uniqueness of the individual, emphasises instead the unique perfection of humanity in Christ, with salvation understood as an entering into that humanity through the Church. Temple's is a fellowship with the divine purpose under the influential indwelling of Christ; Ramsey's is a fellowship with God *in* Christ. However, such differences should not mask the centrality of the intimacy of union between God and humanity in each man's account of the cross. Finally, Chapter Six went on to look in more depth at the nature of that fellowship. It was shown that the fellowship effected through the cross meant, for both men, not a return to a pre-Fall state, but an entry into a new level of existence. This reinforced the sense that the cross was about much more than simply the payment of a debt and liberation *back* into the old, sinless life.

How Compatible are Temple and Ramsey's Rationales for the Incarnation?

Temple and Ramsey share a sense of fellowship as lying at the heart of the rationale for the Incarnation – but just how compatible are their respective accounts? As pointed out in the Introduction, the extent of that complementarity can help reinforce the significance of their thought within Anglicanism. The point was reiterated in Chapter Six: the fact that both men share such a fundamental emphasis on fellowship in their account of the Incarnation points to an integrity in the holding of such a position that reinforces its plausibility as an alternative underlying rationale for the divine act. Hence, this question of compatibility has been a recurring sub-theme of this thesis. There are other – incidental – reasons why it is important, grounded in Brown's claim noted in the Introduction that Anglican theologians had tended to downplay substitutionary atonement in their thought in the twentieth century. Thus, for example, the nature of the coherence between the two men's thought might offer clues as to the reasons for Brown's wider alleged downplaying: if Temple and Ramsey's rationale for the Incarnation proved incompatibly different, this might at least suggest that they were driven more by a reaction against the concept of substitutionary atonement than by the appeal of a coherent, compelling alternative. Or, to go beyond Brown, the compatibility of the two men's thought might point to a distinctive Anglican understanding of the role, character and function of the Incarnation, with consequences for the Church's sense of identity. These questions

highlight potential future avenues for research: to attempt any answer here would be to go far beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet to raise these questions is to highlight the potential significance of the question of coherence to future study, and to justify pausing for a moment to reflect on the question of the compatibility of the two men's position.

On the face of it, there are striking similarities between each man's account: for both, God is at once loving *and* purposive; that purpose is rooted in eternity and centred on the quest for fellowship - and a fellowship which to a greater or lesser degree affirms the importance of the individual as an individual. The Incarnation is understood not as a reaction to human sin, but an element in the eternal divine plan. True, as Chapter Five pointed out, the means by which that fellowship is effected are more difficult to reconcile; yet the division seems relatively minor when set against the wider similarities in their thought. Moreover, those differences should not mask the underlying conviction that fellowship comes above all through encounter with the divine as revealed supremely in the self-sacrifice of the cross, with the Church as the primary vehicle for that encounter. These similarities suggest that both men are driven by something more than a general sense of dissatisfaction with the scope of substitutionary atonement theories – though this is clearly present in their thought. Rather, it points to the compelling attraction of the appeal to fellowship.

Of course, it is important not to ignore the differences between Temple and Ramsey. Those differences noted in the thesis in their respective accounts of ecclesiology, of the role and purpose of the State, of ethics, and of the Christian's social duty are all rooted in their divergent understanding of the divine purposive quest for fellowship. Yet such differences still seem relatively minor when set against the broader underlying themes of fellowship, purposive love, and the fulfilment of creation. The degree to which, as already noted, the differences of emphasis in each man's account of the divine nature can be seen to complement one another suggests that these wider differences are the product of a shift of emphasis rather than of fundamental conviction. This thesis has argued that research into each man's account of the Incarnation may well contribute to an understanding of wider theological themes, not least ecclesiology; the complementarity of Temple and Ramsey's positions seems to reinforce that significance. In sum, at least for Temple and Ramsey, the downplaying

of substitutionary atonement seems to be in favour of a coherent alternative wherein the differences in their thought can yet be reconciled and which has potentially far-reaching consequences for their wider thought.

A Speculative Aside: Why Fellowship over Substitution in Temple and Ramsey?

Why did fellowship take such a central role in Temple and Ramsey's thought? An answer to that question might give added insight into the potential durability of their Christology in contributing to an understanding of Anglican thought and identity. As noted in the Introduction, this thesis did not set out to explore the social, political and economic trends which might help explain that tendency to downplay substitutionary atonement noted by Brown. Clearly, there are limitations on what might be drawn from the thesis. Nonetheless, there are perhaps two important pointers. First: the dialectical, synthesising element characteristic of both men's thought which leads them creatively to engage and incorporate elements of modern thought into their accounts of the Incarnation. Second: an apologetic concern to make the faith reasonable to an age they perceived as increasingly alienated from the Christian message. As early as 1895 Temple had joined 'The Synthetic Society': the society included amongst its objectives an avowed desire to consider agnostic tendencies within society and to formulate a 'working philosophy of religious belief.'⁸⁴⁵ Equally, there is a note of humility in Ramsey's observation that '[i]t may sometimes be our fault when men find themselves rejecting our theism and feeling the attraction of our Christ.'⁸⁴⁶ One might thus speculate: could each man's tendency to subsume substitutionary atonement in the wider divine purpose reflect the degree to which their dialectical approach was influenced by wider theological trends of the early- to mid-twentieth century? Might the importance of apologetics also point to the influence of wider social trends? More research needs to be done, but it is enough at this stage to flag up future areas of enquiry.

This sense of openness might lead one to assume that the emphasis on fellowship reflected a transient, passing phase in wider theology. It is thus important to

⁸⁴⁵ Temple, "Letters & Papers. Vols.1-111," v.67 f.14. Again, writing in 1939, Temple argued that the key concern of his age had been the need to persuade people steeped in the insidious soporific of an apparently rational, secular world 'that they needed a saviour, and that God is something more than a diffused essence of amiability' - Temple, 'Theology to-Day,' 327.

⁸⁴⁶ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 38.

remember that for both men it is an essentially conservative dialectical engagement, and apologetic. Temple's approach, for example, is rooted in notions of Hegelian thesis, antithesis and synthesis: the synthesis 'is not a mere average struck between the two. It is always a reassertion of the "thesis" with all that has proved valuable in the "antithesis" digested into it.'⁸⁴⁷ The quotation neatly embodies Ramsey's own approach, though he lacks Temple's grounding in philosophy: witness, for example, his warning that 'through lack of openness to the past theology can be so obsessed with the contemporary as to lose a true perspective and give to the contemporary far less than it can.'⁸⁴⁸ Each man is trying to maintain an openness to new ideas alongside a desire to remain faithful to the historical inheritance of faith, and in both cases this entails an eschewal of more radical positions in favour of a synthesis that is faithful to tradition: Ramsey, for example, rejects 'secular Christianity,' yet seeks to learn lessons from it.⁸⁴⁹ Equally, for Temple Descartes' philosophical position may have constituted a 'faux-pas', but it constituted a necessary 'antithesis' to a medieval 'thesis' which gave too little regard to the role and importance of experience in theology.⁸⁵⁰ These conservative instincts suggest that each man's account of the Incarnation is rooted in the tradition of their own (and the wider) Church, and in a way which hints at the enduring nature of their thought.

Another Speculative Aside: an Anglican Incarnational Hermeneutic and Ecclesiology?

For both Temple and Ramsey, the Incarnation is the purest expression of the divine nature, and an expression of the eternal divine purpose. It is more than a mere expedient response to sin. As such, it takes a central role in their thought, and in a way that makes it a kind of hermeneutical key for the whole theological task. This was noted most chiefly with regard to ethics: for both men, the individual is called to embody – to incarnate – in their *particular* historical life and context the divine nature and purpose. As Temple noted, 'almost every divine message has direct application to a particular occasion, and it is impossible to declare with certainty how

⁸⁴⁷ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 58-59.

⁸⁴⁸ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 114.

⁸⁴⁹ Ramsey, *God, Christ and the World*, 19.

⁸⁵⁰ See Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 88-108, but especially 103-107, also 405.

far it applies to any other occasion.⁸⁵¹ Yet it also had wider implications too, not least in the sphere of ecclesiology. If the Incarnation is indeed much more than an expedient response to sin, but rather a revelation both of the divine nature and the divine means of self-revelation, then the Church is called to use the Incarnation as a model for all aspects of its life and thought. Consequently, the Church must constantly be seeking to *incarnate* truth, and in an ever-changing context. This necessitates nuances of emphasis and exposition in just such a manner as is found in Temple and Ramsey, and in a way which is compatible with their emphasis on dialecticism and apologetics already noted.

There are implications here for the current Anglican debates on ecclesiology and authority: how far does such an incarnational approach legitimate – necessitate – local variation in seeking to embody the deeper truth of Christ? This need not be a recipe for pluralism or relativism: true, ‘Christians must exercise their own insight and their own intelligence, not only in judging whether or not to submit themselves to Him as Lord, but also in estimating the claim on their allegiance of any particular recorded direction...’⁸⁵² Nevertheless, both men rightly emphasise the historical acts of Incarnation, cross, redemption and resurrection as safeguards against subjective excess. Equally, both emphasise the importance of fellowship with God and dialectical engagement with the wider Church as the necessary means for evaluating any attempt to incarnate Christ afresh in a new context. Could Temple and Ramsey’s embrace of the Incarnation as the summative expression of the divine nature and purpose have far-reaching implications for Anglicanism’s identity? Much depends on the degree to which their account is part of a broader trend, and one which can be shown to be consistent with wider Anglican thought through-out the ages.

Further Avenues of Research

What next? There are a number of areas to pursue. Firstly, and most importantly, how far is the emphasis on fellowship found in Temple and Ramsey echoed in other leading Anglican figures of the twentieth century? Secondly, and in the light of evaluation of the breadth of that trend, why is there this tendency to downplay

⁸⁵¹ Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 342.

⁸⁵² Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, 351.

substitutionary atonement in Anglicanism? So far, the thesis has identified the potential influence of wider theological and social trends: more work is needed on identifying those trends and the nature of Anglican theologians' engagement with them. Thirdly, it must be noted that what is true for the Church of England may not be true of the Anglican Communion as a whole; consequently, it is important to explore how those trends identified within the Church of England are echoed elsewhere. Such an exploration might give important clues as to why this tendency to downplay substitutionary atonement occurred – and, consequently, as to its legitimacy. Lastly, this thesis has highlighted some of the implications of the downplaying of substitutionary atonement for each man's wider thought. The link with ecclesiology might prove a particularly fruitful one to explore at present: what does an ecclesiology born of an Incarnation rooted in the eternal divine purpose as conceived by Temple and Ramsey have to say about authority within the Church? A great deal more work has to be done, but Temple and Ramsey's accounts of the Incarnation clearly have significant implications for the Anglican Communion today.

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