

Questions for December 6

- 1.) This is a request for elaboration of the status of married love, of the "we" beyond I and Thou (pp. 33 & 57 of Method) This clearly is of some significance since "what holds for the love of a man and woman, also holds in its own way for the love of God and man." (Method, p.113)

Barth criticized Schleiermacher for suggesting the ideal of an undifferentiated "we" beyond the "I & Thou" of the individual marriage partners. Barth also criticized Roman Catholic theology for exalting this relation to something metaphysical or absolute. (Church Dogmatics, Vol 3, Part 4 pp.121-125). Both, Barth believed, lost sight of the essential dualism and the creaturely status of the relationship. Would you care to comment?

Is this "we" relationship possible between people of the same sex?

- 2.) If theology mediates between religion and its cultural matrix, a distinction between religion and theology is implied. This in itself implies the further possible distinction between religious authority and theological authority, that is, the difference between the congregatione fidei promulgating a doctrine, and Edward Schillebeeckx publishing a work. But a closer analysis further distinguishes the theologian as subject (with his own religious life) and the results of his or her theological speculation. The theologian, in some way, provides religious authority for his or her theological conclusions. What is at stake here with regard to the problem of authority? Is the distinction between religious authority and theological authority a real one?
- 3.) Revelation, while mentioned and assumed in Method receives little explicit attention. Why is that? Is it because of the distinction between religious living and theological reflection, where religious life provides the "given" for theology?
- 4.) How do you respond to the Marxist critique of religion that suggests religion is not only the "opiate of the people" but also the "sigh of the oppressed"?
- 5.) The empirical notion of culture has given rise to a number of "theologies": black theology, feminist theology, liberation theology, theologies of hope and play. Would you call these attempts at theology as Method understands theology or are these attempts in the eighth functional specialty of communications?
- 6.) The recently reported disciplining of William Callahan raises this question: how does one ^{was} ~~was~~ one's responsibility on the fourth level of consciousness with respect to ~~xxx~~ religious obedience under the vow?
- 7.) The Christian church is described on p. 363 as a process of "self-constitution." Read antagonistically, this might be construed to mean "arbitrarily self-legislating." But a fundamental concern of your work is the control of meaning. For the subject, the foundations of this control are to be found in the transcendental precepts and the three-fold conversion. What analagous controls operate for the church? Does the word Selbstvollzug have a different

connotation ~~is~~ to German ears? What is the background to the use of this term which led you to use it here?