

## Fragments toward a Seventh Chapter of *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*

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**Editor's Introduction:** Among the more interesting items found among Bernard Lonergan's archival papers is a set of fragments that belong to what was probably a series of attempts to write a seventh chapter of *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*.<sup>2</sup> The chapter was entitled 'De Nexu Mysteriorum' ('The Connection of the Mysteries). All of the fragments can be found on the website [www.bernardlonergan.com](http://www.bernardlonergan.com), the site for the Lonergan Archive. Most of them belong to item 78800DTL060, with several others being rejected pages that now serve as the reverse of other pages on which Lonergan wrote something he intended to preserve.

The most secure fragments consist of a two-page outline of the chapter, where it is clear the chapter was to be divided into three sections, and a sequence of pages that match perfectly the third of these sections. The present edition will present these parts, divided by an incomplete set of remarks opening the entire work.

It would seem that Lonergan is attempting in these pages to construct an analogy of 'word': the word of the gospel, the incarnate Word, and the eternal Word, and that he is doing so in order to make the material in chapters 2 through 5 of *De Deo Trino* more concrete, more connected to the biblical bases (especially as found in the fourth Gospel), and more relevant to the spiritual lives of believers. The pages that constitute part 3, 'The Eternal Word,' may have an

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<sup>1</sup> The material in this contribution was translated by Michael G. Shields and edited with comments by Robert M. Doran.

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo Trino: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964). This is a revised version of what appeared from the same press in 1957 and 1959 as *Divinarum personarum conceptio analogica*. The Collected Works edition is *The Triune God: Systematics*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

enduring value as part of Lonergan's systematics of the Trinity. They constitute a new expression of that theology.

These three relatively secure portions of the fragments are reproduced in translation here.

## 1 The Outline

**Editor's comments:** These two pages are headed 'De Deo Trino II Index (p. 302 ad p. 241).'

This refers to page numbers in *Divinarum Personarum*, where the index (Synopsis) begins on p. 298 and continues to p. 303; on p. 302 we find that appendix 1 begins at 241; thus Lonergan meant to insert this outline as 'index' items at this point. The outline provides an overview of the intended chapter. Lonergan added by hand the page numbers of the chapter in his typescript. These are included here. Most of the pages in the fragments, however, do not correspond to the page numbers in this outline, which is one of the reasons for presuming the work went through more than one draft. But the pages of the third section, 'The Eternal Word,' match perfectly the numbers inserted in the outline.

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## **2 Introductory Remarks**

**Editor's comments:** These comments consist, first, of two pages, headed, respectively, 'De Deo Trino II [inter p. 240 et p. 241]' and "'De Deo Trino II Cap 7 – 2' that represent a draft of the beginning of the chapter. The second of these is incomplete. 'Inter p. 240 et p. 241' refers again to *Divinarum personarum*, where p. 240 is the last page in chapter 6 and p. 241 is the first page in Appendix 1. Thus this chapter is to be inserted between chapter 6 and appendix 1. These two pages indicate something of a desire on Lonergan's part to speak more concretely and with closer connection with the biblical text than his systematic treatise has done to this point.

Next, there is a full page 'De Deo Trino II cap 7,' numbered 4, which seems to fit with the same introductory comments. This page points to an analogy of the word of the gospel, the incarnate Word, and the eternal Word. This analogy, it would seem, is the means through which a more concrete way of speaking can be had.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### ON THE CONNECTION OF THE MYSTERIES

[1] There are two sources, not one, for understanding the mysteries that the First Vatican Council affirmed. One is from an analogy with what is known naturally, and the other is from the connection of these mysteries with one another and with our ultimate end. I believe, however, that these sources are not so diverse that each of them offers a different understanding, and so the sole aim in this chapter is to complete, extend, and perfect what has already been presented.

What has been said up to now concerning the divine processions, relations, and persons, the metaphysical and psychological understanding of the persons, and their properties, notional acts, circumincession, perfection, and missions. All of these, as the discerning reader will have already perceived, are reducible to two headings. The first of these, also known through philosophy, is *ipsum esse subsistens*, self-subsistent being; the other lies in the two intelligible emanations, that of the word from the speaker and that of love from both speaker and word.

These emanations, if admitted to be infinite in perfection and considered under one or other aspect, ground virtually the whole of the systematic theology of the Holy Trinity.

But no matter how purely and perfectly the intelligible emanations are conceived, it seems to accord with a certain law that the nearer we approach what is worthy to be said about God, what we say becomes more and more remote not only from all human experience but also from the biblical way of speaking. Therefore it is best now, [2] when we are seeking a fuller and more concrete doctrine, that we leave aside the more abstruse and return to what is better known and familiar.

There exists, then, an intelligible emanation from the grasp of the essence of some thing to a clear and distinct exposition of it. One who understands something, because of understanding it, is able to explain it very well. But how often does anyone understand anything! There are those who do not understand, those who understand poorly, those who have little understanding, those whose understanding is not perfect. Yet they do not remain silent. And so their conception and their explanation is largely incoherent, distorted, confused, obscure, inadequate, incomplete.

There exists also an intelligible emanation from a grasp of sufficient evidence to a judgment that is true and certain. For one who grasps the sufficiency of evidence, precisely because of grasping it, judges reasonably, truly, and with certitude. Still, not all judgments are of this sort. Besides those that are certain, there are those that are probable; besides those that are true, there are those that are false; and besides the rational ones, there are those that emerge rather from feelings and passions, from anger and jealousy, and from one or other psychological, professional, national, cultural, or social bias. This is why it is a commonplace that there are as many opinions as there are human beings.

There is, to be sure, an intelligible emanation that proceeds from a true judgment of value and leads to a right decision of the will. One who recognizes what is to be done, because of this recognition does it. This surely is what human rationality, human goodness, and our very notion of morality desire: it is immoral not to do what must be done. And yet perhaps it would have

been better to have written, not ‘therefore one does it’, but ‘therefore one ought to do it.’ For humans, this third intelligible emanation is far more easily begun than seen through to its end. Nor is that all. Evil is so pervasive that it cannot be reduced to weakness, error, or lack of understanding, so that hypocrites take refuge in excuses, and ... [page beaks off here]

[4] Thus, although there are many different means of communication, the word is more common, more widely used, easier, more exact, and more clear than the others. By ‘word’, then, we understand that means of communication which either in articulate sounds or in written letters contains, expresses, and manifests meaning. A meaning that is being communicated is spoken and heard; as spoken, it is uttered according to the intelligible emanations of the speaker, and as heard it tends to arouse and produce intelligible emanations in the hearer. The importance of a word, therefore, can be seen in this, that through the mediation of words the inmost being of a person together with his/her intelligible emanations are rendered interpersonal, social, and historical.

So then, besides a human word there exists the word of God; there exists the Word made flesh who dwells among us; there exists the Word that was in the beginning and was God with God.

If the whole world is in the power of the evil one (1 John 5.19), the human word is also; ‘out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks’ (Matthew 12.34).

If the word of God is preached in the world, it must be preached in clarity and truth; and it must be listened to in integrity and holiness. Thus the word of God, preached and heard, as it is connected with intelligible emanations, so it is ordered to the end which is eternal life.

But if besides the word of the gospel there is acknowledged the Word, eternal and incarnate, we might ask in what sense is it called ‘Word’, whether it itself is interpersonal or social or historical, and whether it is spoken by anyone and heard by anyone. And if the answer to these questions is in the affirmative, some connection among the mysteries will surely come to light. First, then, let us inquire about what the scriptures teach, first about the gospel word, next about the incarnate Word, and thirdly about the eternal Word.

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### 3 Part 3: The Eternal Word

**Editor's Comments:** Eighteen pages (seventeen of them sequential in the file) correspond point by point to the outline for the third part. The pages were first numbered 1-18, but then Lonergan changed the page numbers of 2-18 to 55-71. The number of page 1 was not changed, nor was that page found together with the other seventeen, but it is clearly the first page in this section.

### III The Eternal Word

#### *1 The inner word and the uttered word*

[1 (=54)] The Greek word λόγος, 'word,' in its everyday use was so ambiguous as to mean either speech or reason or even perhaps both. When a dispute was arbitrated κατὰ τόν λόγον, 'according to *logos*,' the quarrel or question at issue was settled not by the whim of some autocrat but by rational discourse, by discussion and reason. But the Stoics disliked this sort of ambiguity as being the cause of confusion and so they decided to eliminate it by a distinction, introducing a distinction between inner word (λόγος ἐνδιάθετος) and spoken word (λόγος προφορικὸς).

Hence whenever St John had used this ambiguous Greek word, St Theophilus of Antioch judged that a distinction should be made, so that 'God with God' would be the inner Word of God, and the Word 'through whom all things were made' would be the spoken word (*Ad Autolyicum* 2, 22; RJ 182).

Still, one may doubt whether this ambiguity can be found in John such that the word λόγος in one place refers to a spoken word and in another place 'reason.'

First, then, in John the gospel word is not only uttered outwardly but also remains within (John 5.38, 8.31, 1 John 1.10, 2.14); but as uttered outwardly it is a spoken word; and a word that remains within seems to be simply and solely an inner word.

In response to this, however, it would seem that in John, in the same sense, not only λόγος but also ῥήματα (John 15.7) remain within; but where ῥήματα remain within, it is not a question of interior reason but of speech kept within oneself, as we read in Luke: ‘And his mother kept all these words (ῥήματα) in her heart’ (Luke 2.51). Hence inasmuch as can be argued from this chapter, it seems we must say that the word λόγος is not ambiguous in John but simply means ‘speech.’

[55] And so one can argue as follows from the identity of the Word (John 1.1) with the true light (John 1.9): what enlightens all people is that which creates every person (John 1.9-10); what is found universally in every person belongs to human nature and results from its creation; therefore it is the same thing to enlighten every person and to create every person. But the enlightenment that every person has from creation is the light of reason. The source of this light is the true light and therefore the Word. Thus the Word is the supreme principle of all light of reason, and therefore the Word is the inner word, or reason.

To this argument there is the following response: (1) it is absolutely valid; (2) it does not seem to express the mind of John. For according to John, the light enlightens both believers and unbelievers. It enlightens believers: ‘I have come as light into the world, so that one who believes in me does not remain in the dark’ (John 12.46). It enlightens unbelievers: ‘And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people have loved darkness rather than the light, for their deeds are evil’ (John 3.19). Believers, therefore, are enlightened because they do not remain in darkness. But unbelievers are enlightened because they are judged, are shown to be evil. And this enlightenment is not natural but supernatural and is to be accepted voluntarily.

This is confirmed in the next verse: ‘All who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed’ (3.20). True, this ‘light’ can be understood as the natural light of reason: for sinners act against the light of reason. But in the context the ‘light’ is



Christ, and similarly in John 1.9 the true light is the Word. Nor is there any text where John does not speak in concrete terms but rather distinguishes and to some extent separates the natural and supernatural orders.

[56] 2 *Word spoken proleptically*

If 'word' in John means not 'reason' but 'utterance,' it seems to follow that God-with-God is named 'Word' not on account of any eternal function or office, but proleptically from his temporal function of either creating or also enlightening and revealing.

This opinion is favored by the fact that John seems not to have given much thought to the eternal divine processions. For while he otherwise has spoken very clearly about the Son and the Onlybegotten, he makes no mention of any eternal day as mentioned in Psalm 2.7, 'This day I have begotten you.' Nor does he note that the Word came forth from the mouth of the Most High (Sirach 24.3) or was ordered and conceived from eternity (Proverbs 8.22-24). Although he has identified the Word with the true light, he spoke first about the light of humankind (John 1.4-5, 1.9). He knows the glory of the Onlybegotten (John 1.4) and the glory of the Son before the foundation of the world (John 17.5, 17.24) and that God is light (1 John 1.14), yet omits both the 'splendor of glory' (Hebrews 1.3) and the 'emanation of glory' and 'reflection of light' (Wisdom 7.25-26). Finally, in speaking of the Spirit of truth hearing and accepting, he situates this in the future rather than in the eternal present (John 16.13-15).

This being granted, however, it does not follow that John has apparently excluded the eternal function of the Word. For he does not suggest that the Word received the status of 'Word' only upon his incarnation, but rather supposes that same Word to have been in the beginning who in time became, not Word, but flesh. Similarly he supposes that that through which all things were consequently made was already in the beginning the Word. For although Moses wrote 'in the beginning,' John, unlike Moses, did not immediately relate the creation of the world but postponed it to verse 3, after first saying that the Word was in the beginning, that the Word was with God, and that the Word was God. After saying this, he did not hasten to talk

about creation, so as finally to arrive at what was his principal intention; rather, he took up again and repeated what he had previously said, so that between verses 1 and 3 there is this insertion: 'He was in the beginning with God' (John 1.2).

Accordingly, even though John said nothing about an eternal function or office of the Word, still it seems that the question about such a function seems to have been raised.

Someone, of course, may say that where John has had nothing to say, both exegetes and historians of doctrine should also be silent. With this I completely agree. For a question concerning the eternal Word is not about what has been written or about the opinions of certain authors, but about the things themselves. Now when there is a different question, so there is a different method. For one who is asking about things is attentive to truth; but truth, since it has the quality of the unconditioned, is not bound by conditions. What is truly affirmed in one place or time is not truly contradicted at another place or time. What is truly affirmed in accordance with the mentality of this or that culture can also be transposed such that it may be truly affirmed according to the mentality of another culture. For this reason, what John truly said about certain things was not said for his time alone; nor can it just be said at other times, but also it can supply premises from which other true conclusions can be arrived at.

### *3 The procession of the Holy Spirit*

One who asks why the Paraclete is called the Spirit of truth (John 14.17, 15.26, 16.13) will find the reason in the text itself; for the Spirit will teach you all things (John 14.26), will give testimony about Christ (John 15.26), will teach you all truth (John 16.13), and therefore he is the Spirit of truth because he teaches the truth and guides into all truth (John 16.13, Gk.).

Yet this same Spirit is not the first source and origin of this truth that he teaches: '... for he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears ... he will receive from what is mine' (John 16.13-15). Therefore the Spirit of truth teaches truth that has been heard and accepted.

[58] Moreover, this Spirit of truth is God. Therefore, if in a divine person there really and truly exists any dependence, any hearing or acceptance, this dependence is necessarily eternal. Thus even if John thinks expressly about the future instruction of the disciples, and even if he puts almost all the verbs in the future tense, still this means that, if it is true, it necessarily derives ultimately from the eternal procession of the Spirit.

Moreover, there is no division in a divine person, no ‘this’ and ‘something other,’ and therefore a divine person can accept nothing except the totality of what is (cf. DB 691). Thus if John taught that the Spirit would accept a truth which he would be going to teach, still if there is true and real acceptance, necessarily the whole divine essence or substance is received.

With these premises and presuppositions, it remains for us to ask what sort of hearing or acceptance there could be in the Spirit of truth. And so we add a brief catalogue to illustrate Johannine usage.

*Hearing*: Christ has *heard* truth from the Father (John 6.45; see 8.26, 15.15, 3.32); everyone who has *heard* and learned from the Father comes to Christ (John 6.45); one who is from God *hears* God’s words (John 8.47); everyone who belongs to the truth *hears* the voice of Christ (John 18.37); sheep *hear* the voice of the shepherd, but do not *hear* the stranger (John 10.3-5, 10.8, 10.27); anyone who *hears* the word of Christ and believes the Father possesses eternal life (John 5.24).

On the contrary there are those who do not *hear* what is spoken to them (John 9.27, Gk.); or those who say, ‘This teaching is difficult; who can *hear* it’ (John 6.60); or ‘He has a demon and is out of his mind; why *hear* him?’ (John 10.20); there are those who *hear* (Christ’s word) and do not keep it (John 12.47), those who do not *hear* it (John 8.47), and those who could not *hear* it (John 8.43).

In these passages it is not about hearing with the ears, as elsewhere where we read, ‘He made the deaf hear’ (Mark 7.27), nor about listening favorably to a request (John 9.31, 11.41), but about a spiritual reception or receptivity that comes from God.

[59] *To accept* (Gk. λαμβάνειν): One cannot *accept* anything unless it has been given from heaven (John 3.27); the world cannot *accept* the Spirit of truth (John 14.27); there are those who do not *accept* Christ's testimony (John 3.11, 3.32), who do not *accept* Christ himself and yet *accept* glory from one another (John 5.43-44; see 12.43), who reject Christ and do not *accept* his words (John 12.48).

Christ *accepted* the Father's command (John 10.18); he *accepts* testimony from the Father but not human testimony (John 5.34, 5.37); whoever *accepts* Christ's testimony certifies that God is true (John 3.33); to as many as *accepted* him he gave power to become children of God (John 1.12); from his fullness we have all *received* (John 1.16); the disciples have *received* and know ... (John 17.8); they *received* the Holy Spirit (John 20.22); the disciple *received* the Mother of Christ into his home (John 19.27); 'whoever *receives* one whom I send *receives* me; and whoever *receives* me *receives* him who sent me' (John 13.20).

Hence various aspects can be distinguished in acceptance: it is *voluntary*, because those who accept are opposed to those who don't; it is *real*, for word, commandment, testimony, glory are received; it is *personal*, whether because a person is accepted or not, or whether because not to accept the words of someone is to reject that person, or whether because not to accept Christ and not to accept his testimony amount to the same thing, or whether because acceptance concerning a person [60] passes to another person, so that the sender is accepted when either the one sent or one sent by the one sent is accepted.

With this in mind, it may be helpful to add the following considerations concerning the Spirit who hears and accepts, according to John 16.13-15.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> John 16.13-15: 'When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.'

First, there is an interpersonal aspect. This is expressly present in accepting, for ‘he will receive from what is mine’ (John 16.14-15) is repeated; but it is also implicit in hearing, since there is no sense in the Spirit hearing when no one has spoken.

Second, this interpersonal aspect regards the Father and the Son. For although the word *meum*, ‘mine,’ refers to the Son, the Father and the Son have all in common, as is said in the same text (John 16.15, 17.10).

Third, it is clear that in Johannine usage ‘to hear’ and ‘to accept’ are by no means restricted to ‘hearing with the ears’ or ‘accepting in the hand,’ but, even in humans, often signify spiritual operations.

Fourth, one who hears and accepts truth ‘does what is true’ (John 3.21, 1 John 1.6), that is, wills and acts in accordance with truth. Also, one who hears and accepts truth can be called a disciple, not, however, in the Greek sense of one who learns speculative truth from another, but in the Johannine sense as in John 8.31, 13.35, 15.8.<sup>4</sup>

Fifth, we have already concluded that the hearing and accepting spoken of in John 16.13-15 is to be retraced ultimately to the eternal procession of the Spirit, so that the Spirit himself is what it is to hear and accept truth. [61] To this conclusion we must add this recent consideration, that the Spirit is said to hear and accept truth, not as if he learns speculative truth, but because he puts into effect what is meant by truth.

Sixth, the Spirit not only puts into effect what is signified through the truth but also does this on account of the very truth proposed. For in hearing and accepting and doing the truth there is a moral aspect; for truth is heard not by some blind impulse or some sort of spontaneous feeling, but truth is heard consciously, virtuously, and devoutly because it ought to be heard,

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<sup>4</sup> John 8.31: ‘Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples ...”’ John 13.35: ‘By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.’ John 15.8: ‘My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.’

accepted because it ought to be accepted, and observed because it ought to be observed. This conclusion is entirely coherent with the fact that the Spirit of truth is more commonly named the Holy Spirit.

Seventh, if you ask what truth it is that the Spirit hears and receives, there is a twofold answer. John had in mind that truth which the Holy Spirit would teach to the disciples. But when we think about the eternal procession of the Spirit, we are not investigating the mind of John but that reality about which John spoke. Hence one may move to conclusions in two ways: in one way, one proceeds from the antecedents to the consequents; in the other way, one rises from the consequents to the antecedent.

Now, one who seeks to know what truth the Spirit hears from all eternity wants to ascend to what is antecedent. For there is to be sought a truth

- (1) that implies interpersonal relations, according to the expression ‘he will receive from what is mine’;
- (2) that one does, and indeed not temporally and contingently but according to the way that is fitting for the eternal procession of the Spirit of God;
- (3) that is proper to divine and indeed trinitarian perfection;
- (4) that is consonant with what John has taught about hearing and accepting; and
- (5) that is consonant with what we know from other sources is to be believed about the Spirit of God.

[62] Concerning divine perfection, John taught ‘that God is love’ (1 John 4.8, 4.16). But if this love, ἀγάπη, is understood, as often in NT, as interpersonal love, we seem to have arrived at the truth we have been seeking.

Where there is interpersonal love, there are interpersonal relations, as (1) above calls for.

Where the truth to be done has to do with love, the Spirit of truth hears and receives this truth inasmuch as he is eternal proceeding love; this satisfies (2) above.

Besides, as John testifies, ‘that God is love’ is proper to divine perfection; and this perfection is trinitarian, where love is understood as interpersonal. This in is keeping with (3).

Nor can any better spiritual hearing or receiving be thought of than that which consists in interpersonal love; this satisfies (4).

Finally, love seems to fit with what is taught about the Spirit, in accordance with (5). For the Spirit’s function is so to teach and suggest all things, to testify to Christ, to guide into all truth (John 14.26, 15.26, 16.13 Gk.), not because he himself reveals what is new and previously unknown, but because he disposes and moves souls to attend to, believe, ponder, penetrate, and keep what has been revealed. Further, the love of God is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Romans 5.5; cf. John 17.26<sup>5</sup>). It is by this Spirit that sins are forgiven (John 20.21-23<sup>6</sup>); by this Spirit that we are born again unto eternal life (John 3.5, 1 Corinthians 6.11, Titus 3.5<sup>7</sup>), this Spirit whom we have as a down payment on a future inheritance (2 Corinthians 1.22 [‘first installment’], 5.5 [‘guarantee’], Romans 8.23,<sup>8</sup> Ephesians

5 John 17.26: ‘I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.’

6 John 20.21-23: ‘Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”’

7 John 3.5: ‘Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being of water and Spirit.”’ 1 Corinthians 6.11: ‘... you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.’ Titus 3.5: ‘... he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.’

8 Romans 8.23: ‘... and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.’

1.13<sup>9</sup>), this Spirit who stays with you and will be in you (John 14.17), who makes us his temple (1 Corinthians 3.16), who possesses us (1 Corinthians 6.19), who works within us (Romans 8.15), who invokes the Father with us (Romans 8.15, Galatians 4.6) [63], who helps us in our infirmity and asks on our behalf (Romans 8.26-27), who is the common principle of the body of Christ (Acts 4.32, 1 Corinthians 12.12, 2 Corinthians 13.13, Ephesians 4.1-7), by whom we are in Christ and are able to be pleasing to God (Romans 8.8-10<sup>10</sup>). Such a Spirit, surely, is fittingly conceived as divine love, eternal, interpersonal, doing this divine truth ‘that God is love.’

#### *4 Divine speaking*

Since we have now concluded that the Spirit of truth hears and receives truth eternally from the Father and the Son, we necessarily recognize some sort of speaking that proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son.

Concerning this speaking, it is clear above all that the Spirit is not the one speaking. For just as a messenger does not speak on his own but hears, so one who hears and receives from all eternity presupposes another one who speaks and communicates.

Moreover, it seems that one must grant that it is not the Son but the Father who speaks from eternity. For very often the incarnate Son denies that he is speaking on his own (John 7.17, 12.49, 14.10; cf. 8.26, 8.28, 8.38<sup>11</sup>); nor is it clear that he said this only as to his humanity, since

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9 Ephesians 1.13: ‘you also ... were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.’

10 ‘... those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.’

11 John 7.17: ‘Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own.’ 12.49: ‘I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak.’ 14.10: ‘The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who



in the divinity the Son is called Word, whose function it is not to speak but to be spoken. [64] Also, the Spirit proceeds from the Father (John 15.26) and, although he receives from the Son (John 16.14-15), he does not therefore proceed from two principles (DB 460, 691); it follows that he does not hear two persons speaking together but hears the Father speaking and the Word that the Father speaks.<sup>12</sup>

The nature of this divine eternal speaking seems to be illustrated most of all by two things, namely, by the way in which the Father speaks, and by the motive on account of which he speaks.

As for the mode or way, it cannot be doubted that the Father speaks truthfully. For the truth that the Spirit hears and receives the Father speaks; and one who speaks the truth surely speaks truthfully. But to illustrate this truthfulness we must carefully note both what is similar and what is dissimilar.

First, the similarity. Just as the eternally truthful Father speaks the truth that the Spirit of truth does, so also in time the truthful (John 3.33, 8.26) and true (John 7.28) Father sent into the world the Word full of truth (John 1.14), indeed truth itself (John 14.6), that the truth may be done (John 1.17). Therefore the truthfulness of divine eternal speaking is not different from that upon which the entire Christian religion is grounded.

Next we must look at what is dissimilar. For the devil, in whom there is no truth, a liar and the father of liars, speaks a lie according to his own nature (John 8.44). God the Father and the devil are as far from each other as are the former's veracity is from the latter's mendacity.

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dwells in me does his works.' 8.26: '... the one who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him.' 8.28: 'I speak these things as the Father instructed me.' 8.38: 'I declare what I have seen in the Father's presence.'

12 Editor's question: To what extent might this formulation advance ecumenical discussion with the Orthodox traditions?

Further, to turn now to the motive of divine speaking, it must first be borne in mind ‘that God is light and in him there is no darkness’ (1 John 1.5). What sort of light, then, is this? Certainly it is not physical, since God is a spirit who is to be adored not in any geographical location but in spirit and in truth (John 4.24). Nor is he only some generic ‘ascensional’ symbol that can signify many different things, since in John the context is very determinate. For [65] with him are associated light, truth, love, life, resurrection, so that light is opposed to darkness, truth to lies, love to hate, life to death, resurrection to judgment. Such a symbol, then, is ‘light,’ which for us means ‘evidence,’ not that the meaning is the same but that it is similar. For what we symbolically call ‘evidence’ is associated with veracity and truth; but what John signified by ‘light’ was associated not with intellectual honesty alone but also with love and life. The root of this difference is well known to all; for where speculative inquiry and practical deliberation are distinguished and practiced separately, truth can be obtained as a result of evidence without any reference to goodness; but where there is no such distinction and separation between the speculative and the practical life, it is through light that one arrives at truth and goodness together.

Accordingly, we must conclude, it seems, that God the Father, because he is light itself, speaks the same truth that the Spirit does. Just as we said above that the Spirit does the truth, not out of some blind impulse but because of the truth set before him, and does so morally, virtuously, and devoutly, so also now we must say that God the Father has eternally spoken, not constrained by some blind necessity, not because of some mechanical or vital or sentimental impulse, but on account of that infinite light, that is, on account of his grasp of divine evidence.

But what did the eternal Father grasp? Surely he grasped the evidence of that truth which he himself speaks and the Spirit of truth does. But this was the truth, as we concluded above, ‘that God is love’ (1 John 4.8, 4.16). What the Father, therefore, grasped in the fullness of light, what he has spoken on account of this most clear light, and what he has produced by eternally speaking, was this: that God is not only ‘love itself’ or ‘goodness itself’ but that holy interpersonal love so often signified in the New Testament by ἀγάπη.

[66] 5 *The eternal Word*

One who speaks what is true not only does not contradict himself but also speaks such matters that having been carefully considered, pondered, and penetrated coalesce of their own accord into a quasi-systematic unity. For this reason it is not altogether surprising that we proceed through conclusions that are not exegetical but theological, and those the more remote ones, so that nevertheless we now arrive at what John has expressly said: 'In the beginning was the Word.'

For what is said by one person and heard by another is indeed a word. But the Father is one person and the Spirit is another; the same truth that the Father speaks, the Spirit of truth hears; in God, therefore, there is a Word. Therefore just as a human word is spoken by one person and heard by another, just as the word of the gospel is preached by the apostles and their successors and heard by the faithful, just as the incarnate Word is spoken to us by God the Father and is heard by us in the Holy Spirit, so also the Word spoken by the truthful Father and heard by the Holy Spirit is also an eternal Word. Common in all this is that a word is interpersonal, uttered by one and heard by another. But the eternal and incarnate Word is different from all other words in that he is not only interpersonal but is also a person; '... for between Creator and creature no similitude can be expressed without implying a greater dissimilitude' (DB 432).

Also, one word is spoken truthfully and heard devoutly, but another word is spoken mendaciously and heard wickedly. The first is one of light, the second one of darkness. For the power of darkness is present in lying, in false witness, in hatred, in murder. The triumph of light is brought about through veracity and truth and love and good works. These two radically opposite elements are sometimes [67] far apart from each other, sometimes intermingled, and finally sometimes so closely found together that they wage war on each other.

For in God there is light without any darkness (1 John 1.5), but in the devil there is no truth at all; hence he is a liar and speaks lies according to his own nature (John 8.44). But the world, lying under the power of the evil one (1 John 5.19), has the devil as its head (John 12.31,

14.30, 16.11). The Father's judgment upon this world is the Word made flesh and crucified (John 19.37). But the same Word for those who hear, believe, and receive, is the Father's Word of life and love. Hence the incarnate Word has two functions, since he reveals some as wicked (John 3.19) and releases others from darkness (John 12.46) into life and love. By this twofold function the world is overcome (John 16.33); the darkness vanishes, and the true light now shines forth (1 John 2.8).

But if we ascend from the incarnate Word to the Word-with-God, we find the same person and the same function, but the same function is performed in different ways. The person is the same, since in the prologue of John it is the same Word with God and God (John 1.1-2) that became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1.14). Nor is there any other function; for the Word of life and love spoken to us by the truthful Father is the same Word of trinitarian life and of that interpersonal love that is the triune God, eternally spoken by the same truthful Father. But the same function is performed in different ways: for what was made flesh and crucified is the judgment upon the world, what, falsely condemned, teaches truth, what in dying reveals life, and what being hated expresses love, that Word spoken to the hardness of heart of us who, 'if we say that we have no sin ... are deceiving ourselves and there is no truth within us' (1 John 1.8). But where the Word is spoken from eternity there is no darkness (1 John 1.5); there no liar opposes the truthful Father, there no lie opposes the truth of the Son (John 14.6), and there no hate opposes the Spirit of truth who hears (John 16.13). [68] For it is grasped in the fullness of light, spoken with the utmost veracity, performed with perfect holiness, 'that God is love' (1 John 4.8, 4.16).

Still, the word of the gospel is not to be confused with the Word, whether eternal or incarnate. For the word of the gospel is either the commandment of love (John 13.34, 15.12) or that divine word 'that God is love': both are spoken in human words. But what signifies and what is signified are two different things. The commandment of love signifies what ought to be; and what ought to be is 'that all may be one, as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, that they too may be one in us ... that they may be completely one' (John 17.21, 17.23). Likewise, what is

written, ‘that they may be one,’ consists only of nouns and verbs. But we can know only analogically what these words signify, for they signify being itself and understanding itself, truth itself and affirming itself, goodness itself and love itself, where being and true and good and understanding and affirming and love are not all different but are the same; and yet it is because of understanding that there is true affirming and because of affirming that there is holy loving – as has been said elsewhere at greater length.

### *6 The analogy of the connection*

It was the teaching of the First Vatican Council that reason enlightened by faith can attain some understanding of the mysteries, both from what we know naturally by analogy and from the connection of the mysteries with one another and with our ultimate end (DB 1796). We are taking these two sources of understanding together, in a way, since we are seeking an analogy not from things by themselves but from connections that we know naturally. These connections we find not in a single mystery but in many connected mysteries.

Connections can be conceptual or real. There is a conceptual connection between ‘animal’ and ‘mortal’, for example; but there is a real connection between things themselves, and, just as with things, so also with the connections between them, some [69] are found to be more perfect than others. But some things, even if they can be understood, do not themselves understand; others, however, can be understood because they understand. Hence among the former the connection is merely causal; but among the latter the connection is above all intellectual, rational, moral. And so in the case of humans, insofar as they have reached the age of reason at seven years, it is *because* they understand that they are able to speak clearly and distinctly, *because* they grasp the sufficiency of evidence that they are able to make a true judgment, and *because* they make a true judgment of value that they are obliged to choose the good. The first *because* manifests an intellectual connection, the second *because* manifests a rational connection, and the third *because* manifests a moral connection; and here *because* is not

conceptual but real, since it exists and operates effectively long before anyone reflecting on oneself discovers, understands, and conceives such a *because*.

But in John the evangelist, inasmuch as we can gather from his writings, there is not that reflection, discovery, understanding, and conception that clearly and distinctly expresses this *because* thematically. Still, what is not known thematically can not only be very well known in a normal way, in practice, and in everyday living, but it can also be expressed quite clearly. For whoever 'is of age' (John 9.21) exercises his own intellectual, rational, and moral autonomy; and one exercises it precisely because in him that real connection, which here we have called *because* and elsewhere, with St Thomas, *intelligible emanation*, operates not only effectively but also consciously. Moreover, like the man born blind, John himself was also 'of age,' and like him he also knows the conscious force and power that is present in this *because*.

John did not know this *because* in a practical way only but was wholly intent on explaining it, not indeed analytically in order to abstract the connection from the connected terms, but concretely through those really connected terms themselves. He associated light, truth, love, fruit (good works), life, resurrection; he associated darkness, lying, hatred, murder, death, judgment. [70] He stated the mutual opposition between light and darkness, truth and mendacity, love and hate, good works and murder, life and death, resurrection and judgment. In this pattern were defined, as it were, the one divine region of light and the other worldly region of darkness; therein were designated, as it were, the boundaries from which the Son of Man has come to us and to which he desires to take us as he returns; there is explained, as it were, the very *modus operandi* by which there is overcome the world where Truth is condemned by lies, the Word of love crucified by hate, and the Word of life slain by murder. But note the 'as it were': John does not define regions, designate boundaries, explain the *modus operandi*, delight in antitheses; he keeps to his subject and the words follow; the beloved disciple keeps to something new and unheard of and does his best to explain the matter. And I believe that we do not reach the mind of John unless we have pondered his words in our hearts, unless we know by experience our own hatred of the light, unless we are able to detect in ourselves the lies we tell ourselves to lead us

astray. For what we have called real connections, according to clarification, according to truth, and according to goodness, were perfectly known by John, who so acutely and so exactly brought to light those for whom functions that are clearer or more certain or more important have little appeal. It is not only one who has analyzed something who understands, nor is one who explains it thematically the only one who teaches.

Now, a connection that is real according to truth, and similarly a connection that is real according to goodness, are both known naturally and provide an analogy for understanding the mysteries. It is known naturally by one who ponders in one's heart. It provides an analogy, not for illuminating one mystery but for explaining many. For a connection that is real according to truth, that is, according to the fact that a true judgment proceeds from the grasp of evidence, provides an analogy [71] to the way in which the apostles preached the gospel (2 Corinthians 2.17, 4.2, 1 Thessalonians 2.13), to the way in which Christ the Lord according to his knowledge taught us the word of the Father, to the way in which the truthful Father in these last days has spoken to us in his Son, and to the way in which the eternal Father speaks the Word of trinitarian life. And a connection that is real according to goodness provides an analogy to the way in which the faithful hear the word of the gospel, to the way of hearing which they learn from the Spirit of truth who teaches them, to the way in which the Spirit of truth leads the faithful into all truth, and to the way in which this same Spirit of truth eternally hears and receives the truth that the Father speaks in the Word.

But if a similar connection is found in many things, those many things are related not by their likeness only but are also bound together by their connection, so that the understanding of the mysteries that is derived from analogy is increased by this very connection of the mysteries. For the one who truthfully speaks the eternal Word is the same one who truthfully speaks this same Word made flesh, and is the same one who, through the mediation of the Word who was sent and the apostles who have been sent, truthfully speaks the word of the gospel. Again, the one who from eternity speaks the Word of trinitarian love also, loving first, expresses his love in the loving Word, so that also in the word of the gospel he says that he loved us first and bids us

to love one another (1 John 4.10-11). But the one who from eternity hears and does the truth of trinitarian love is the same one who in time enables us to hear and receive the Word of the Father, so that by loving the Father and the Word we might love one another, and by meditating on the Word and on the words of the gospel we may be led to the fullness of truth, until we contemplate that glory which the Son loved by the Father received before the foundation of the world (John 17.24, 1 John 3.2).