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THE (IN)SIGNIFICANCE OF THE *FILIOQUE* IN CONTEMPORARY
INCLUSIVE SOTERIOLOGIES

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
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INCLUSIVE SOTERIOLOGIES

Brian Lee Walls

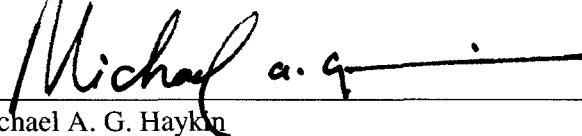
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To Kara

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Abl.</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Concerning We Should Think of Saying That There Are Not Three Gods</i> to Ablabius
BST	The Bible Speaks Today Commentary
<i>DSS</i>	Basil of Caesarea, <i>De Spiritu Sancto</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>JBMW</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood</i>
<i>JES</i>	<i>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>MJT</i>	<i>Mid-America Journal of Theology</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
P/C	Pentecostal/charismatic
PNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary
<i>SBET</i>	<i>Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology</i>
<i>SBJT</i>	<i>The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology</i>
SBTS	The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
WCC	World Council of Churches
<i>WJT</i>	<i>Westminster Journal of Theology</i>

PREFACE

My prayer and fervent hope is that this dissertation will ultimately serve Christ's church and in some small way contribute to his greater glory. It has been the privilege of a lifetime to study under the erudite professors of Southern Seminary, by whom I have been inspired not only to greater heights of academic excellence, but more importantly, to greater heights of sanctification. May our scholarly work never serve merely to placate man's intellectual curiosity, but rather be a means of loving God with all of our minds. I am particularly grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Chad Brand, for all his instruction. The other members of my committee, Dr. Stephen Wellum and Dr. Michael Haykin, have also been a tremendous encouragement not only through their instruction, but also through their fellowship and friendship. This dissertation would not have been possible without these men.

To the members of Cornerstone Community Church I also owe a sincere debt of gratitude. They hired me as pastor knowing that they would have to share me with this project for significant period of time. We have labored together in the cause of the gospel through many trials and tribulations over the past two years, and yet we have continued to see God's faithfulness displayed in our midst. May He who began a good work in us carry it on to perfection until the day of Christ Jesus.

To my parents and parents-in-law my sincerest thanks. My mother, who took me to church unfailingly as a child, built in me a lasting legacy of faith. My father, who

came to know Christ later in life, now serves Him as a pastor of great patience and faithfulness in the power of a transformed life. My wife's parents have been incredibly supportive, even as I moved their daughter and grandchildren multiple times during my studies. Their godly example has encouraged me more than I can say.

Finally, to my wife, Kara, and to Samuel and Jonathan, our two sons my most grateful thanks. They have borne the brunt of the burden that comes with obtaining a seminary education, and have done so without complaint or regret. Time that could have been spent with them has been spent in the study instead, and they have regarded it as an act of service to the kingdom of Christ. May it be that God causes our two boys to become men of great service in his kingdom work.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There can be little doubt that some of the most dominant theological themes of the past few decades have been soteriology, pneumatology, and the doctrine of the Trinity. While these topics are certainly important in their own right, each has taken on particular significance as it pertains to Christianity's encounters with other world religions. The rise of relativism and pluralism, for example, has led to demands for revisions in the historic doctrine of salvation—revisions that seek to bring Christian doctrine more in line with the near-universal rejection of absolute claims to truth while nevertheless seeking to say something ultimate about Christ's place in the world of religions.¹ Partially as a result of this trend (but for many other significant reasons as well),² the doctrine of the Holy Spirit has emerged as central to many versions of evangelical soteriology that have generally been labeled "inclusivism."³ Pneumatology has become central to such soteriologies because it ostensibly provides a suitable basis

¹For an example of an inclusivist attempt at such a project see Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992).

²Of course, the rise of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements have called particular attention to the work of the Spirit over the past century. Their enormous influence has been paramount in contributing to the current emphasis on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

³The categories generally used to describe the place of Christ in the world of religious truth claims are exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. The first of these is simply the historic orthodox position that salvation is available only through conscious faith in Christ. Inclusivism, on the other hand, denies that knowledge of Christ is necessary to salvation, and yet affirms Christ as the sole source of salvation. Finally, pluralism argues that faith in Christ is but one of many means of salvation. This

for a theology of religions that is simultaneously universal enough to address the concerns those who tend toward pluralism (i.e., it is not so christocentric as to be offensive to non-Christians), and yet also particular to the Christian faith since the Spirit is the “Spirit of Jesus.”⁴ The Spirit, inclusivists argue, can make salvation accessible to the unevangelized masses that have no cognitive knowledge of Jesus himself, while nevertheless grounding this salvation in the unique redemptive work of Christ.⁵ But no less important than pneumatology and soteriology is the doctrine of the Trinity. Not only has this doctrine received enormous attention over the past century, but it is now being utilized as grounds for various theologies of religion, many of which are either pluralistic or inclusive in nature.⁶

One connection between these three doctrines is that they all converge in the debate over the *filioque*.⁷ The importance of these three loci over the past century has,

taxonomy may be found in John Hick et al., *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic Age*, ed. Dennis Okholm and Timothy Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996).

⁴There has been a clear shift from cosmic Christology to pneumatology as the basis for both inclusive soteriologies as well as various theologies of religions over the past few decades. The trend has now begun to shift to the Trinity as a suitable basis for such theologies. Nevertheless, the emphasis on the work of the Spirit remains dominant, even in theologies that are ostensibly trinitarian in nature. For an example of an attempt at a pneumatologically based theology of religions, see Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003).

⁵Inclusivists differ from pluralists by affirming the work of Christ as the only *ontological* ground for salvation. However, they differ from exclusivists by denying that there is an *epistemological* necessity for one to know Christ in order to have access to the salvation that he alone provides. Amos Yong, for example, states, “Inclusivism . . . has always affirmed the distinction between salvation as ontologically secured (through the person and work of Christ) and as epistemically accessed (through the preaching of the gospel, among other providential means of God).” *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶For a helpful survey of several of these theologies see Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism: The Doctrine of the Trinity in Christian Theology of Religions* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004).

⁷Gerald Bray offers a helpful, concise definition of the *filioque* when he states, “The *filioque* clause, properly understood, is the addition [of the Latin word *filioque*—meaning, “and from the Son”] to the Latin text of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed which was first made in Spain at some time in the late fifth or early sixth century.” Gerald Bray, “The *Filioque* Clause in History and Theology,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 34 (1983): 91. The addition of this word thus makes the Creed to say that the Spirit proceeds

along with the ecumenical movement, brought new awareness to the debate over the *filioque*.⁸ The ancient dispute over this addition to the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed⁹ is certainly no longer limited to Catholic/Orthodox circles, but now occupies a much larger theological arena. This is due in part to the aforementioned theological emphases of our day, all of which impact the *filioque* debate in one way or another. Beyond this, however, the participation of Eastern Orthodoxy in the worldwide ecumenical movement¹⁰ has brought this somewhat arcane discussion to the forefront of the minds of more ecumenically-minded theologians.¹¹

However, the *filioque* debate has particular importance for pneumatological inclusivism because of the role that the Holy Spirit plays in these soteriologies. Not only has pneumatology become the *de facto* foundation for most inclusivist soteriologies,¹² but the perceived scope of the Spirit's economy in pneumatological inclusivism raises questions about the impact that the *filioque* has on this economy. In other words, if the

immanently from both the Father and the Son. It was originally intended to guard the full deity of the Son against the Arians by giving him equal place alongside the Father in the procession of the Holy Spirit. The dispute over this one word addition to the Creed eventually led to the split between the Eastern Orthodoxy Church and the Roman Catholic Church in AD 1054.

⁸I am not arguing that emphasis on these three topics *alone* has led to a renewal of the *filioque* debate, but rather that they are important, contributing factors. But it is also the case that without the rise of inclusive soteriologies and religious pluralism in general (and in particular, the rise of the worldwide ecumenical movement), the issues that are raised by the acceptance or rejection of the *filioque* might have remained more obscure.

⁹Henceforth this will be referred to simply as the Nicene Creed.

¹⁰For an ecumenically driven attempt at moving toward resolving the *filioque* issue, see Lukas Vischer, ed., *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy* (London: World Council of Churches, 1981).

¹¹Although not normally participants in the ecumenical movement, some evangelicals have also sought dialogue with the East as a possible source of evangelical renewal. See, for example, Bradley Nassif et al., *Three Views on Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism*, ed. Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004).

¹²I will argue in this dissertation that this is true even of those who espouse a trinitarian basis

filioque ties the economy of the Spirit to that of the Son, then this creates a dilemma for pneumatological inclusivism. Consequently, it is often the case that such theologians view the *filioque* as a hindrance to their soteriological program precisely because they view its acceptance as promoting a type of christocentrism that hinders the Spirit's freedom in the economy of salvation.¹³ For some inclusivists the *filioque* seems to circumscribe the Spirit's work within the confines of the Son's economy.¹⁴ Thus, a number of prominent inclusivists have included as an essential part of their pneumatology a resolute opposition to the *filioque* as one means of "freeing" the Spirit from the limitations of Christology.¹⁵ As such, these theologians tend to side with Eastern Orthodoxy when it comes to the *filioque* dispute. They see a greater freedom for the Spirit in Eastern pneumatology, and generally attribute this to a denial of the *filioque*. However, although several works have questioned the inclusivists' broader theology,¹⁶ as of yet no one has devoted a study to investigating whether the acceptance or rejection of

for their theology of religions.

¹³The "economic" Trinity refers to the persons of the Trinity as they are revealed and act in the created world. The "immanent" Trinity refers to the Trinity as it exists apart from creation. The *filioque* discussion is concerned primarily with the latter, but can have implications for the former as well.

¹⁴Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 196-97. Note that rejecting the *filioque* is only one of a series of steps that inclusivists use to undergird their pneumatology, and it is not necessarily the most important step. Nevertheless, its rejection is consistent with their emphasis on pneumatology as a whole and their desire to elevate the person and work of the Spirit.

¹⁵One of Amos Yong's motives for this separation is the difficulty of attempting to discern the work of the Spirit in other religions based solely upon a "christological criterion." He states, "The most crucial question that has emerged so far is how the christological criterion informs the discernment of the Spirit's presence and activity in the world of the religions. To insist on a robust christological criterion is to mute the identity of the other and to act imperialistically toward other faiths; to loosen the christological criterion is to risk the loss of Christian identity in the interreligious encounter." Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 103.

¹⁶Perhaps the most significant work along these lines is Daniel Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation Among the Unevangelised: An Analysis of Inclusivism in Recent Evangelical Theology* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2002).

the *filioque* in fact *does* have significant impact on the Spirit's independence from the Son in the economy of salvation, thus opening the door to a pneumatologically-driven inclusivism.¹⁷

Thesis

This dissertation will therefore broadly examine the impact of the *filioque* on the relationship of the Spirit and the Son, particularly as it pertains to the economy of salvation and the availability of salvation to the unevangelized. More specifically, it will argue that rejection of the *filioque* cannot serve as a means of gaining an independent economy for the Spirit, nor does this rejection contribute anything of significance to the inclusivists' contention that the Spirit's salvific work may be severed from gospel proclamation or from the economy of the Son. Therefore, rejection of the *filioque* cannot legitimately be used to commend the argument that the Spirit is at work salvifically among the unevangelized. On the contrary, this dissertation will seek to demonstrate that the Spirit's work must be closely tied to the Son's activity, irrespective of one's position on the *filioque*.¹⁸ Other factors also impact how the Spirit relates to the Son in the economy, and these factors speak more directly to this relationship than one's position on the Spirit's procession. I will seek to demonstrate this thesis first historically, by

¹⁷The independence of the Spirit from the Son really is crucial to the inclusivists' soteriology. Without an independent economy for the Spirit they are left with very little. For this reason, Daniel Strange argues that a proper discussion of the *filioque* clause is central to assessing the validity of Clark Pinnock's inclusivism. Ibid., 233-34. For a thorough assessment of the contemporary penchant for separating the Spirit from the Son in contemporary soteriologies, see Todd LeRoy Miles, "Severing the Spirit from the Son: Theological Revisionism in Contemporary Theologies of Salvation" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006).

¹⁸This is not to say that there are no important implications stemming from one's view of the *filioque*, but only to argue that the Spirit's independence from the Son in the economy cannot be purchased solely by rejecting the *filioque*.

examining Spirit/Son economic relations as they have been historically viewed in Eastern Orthodoxy. Following this, I will offer a theological defense of my thesis by arguing that the Father's role is central in the economy of salvation, and thus determinative for the work of both the Son and the Spirit. Finally, I will defend this thesis by offering a critique of inclusive pneumatology from the standpoint of systematic theology—arguing that inclusivists who seek an independent economy for the Spirit ignore the major themes of Scripture as they pertain to the work of the Spirit. In each case, it will be argued that rejection of the *filioque* simply cannot be a significant factor in constructing a view of the Spirit's economy.

It should be noted that the inclusivists are driven by the very worthy motive of seeking to understand what they see as two fundamental principles of Scripture: the universal salvific will of God (1 Tim 2:4), and the particular nature of redemption as found in Christ alone (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). Clark Pinnock refers to these as the axioms of universality and particularity. "The two axioms," he states, "are inseparable, and both are primary in their own way."¹⁹ He goes on to say, "The first axiom insists that the promises of God are not tribal or restrictive. It is God's good pleasure to bless all the nations in Abraham and in his seed, Jesus. The gospel has an emphatically global reach."²⁰ At this point, practically any evangelical theologian could agree with Pinnock. However, it is clear that for Pinnock, God's salvific will is not universal solely in terms of people groups, but is universal *individually*, and in an absolute way. The problem for Pinnock and other inclusivists, is that the universality axiom is met by the scandalous

¹⁹Clark H. Pinnock, "Toward an Evangelical Theology of Religions," *JETS* 33 (1990): 360.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 361.

particularity of Jesus Christ, whom they believe to be God's sole means of salvation. Although Pinnock seeks to tie these two axioms together in something of a symbiotic relationship, there can be no doubt that the particularity axiom presents him and other inclusivists like him with a pressing problem. How can God's universal salvific will, which extends to every individual, be realized if one has no access to the gospel message about Christ? Such an epistemological limitation does not change God's desire for all to be saved, and so, they conclude, he must not require such knowledge of Christ for salvation to be available.

The amount of attention given to the Holy Spirit since the rise of Pentecostalism has been unparalleled in the Church's history.²¹ The chronological proximity of the Azusa Street revival of 1906 and the birth of modern aviation in 1903 might seem to have little connection, but the new attention on the Holy Spirit and the subsequent shrinking of the world through faster modes of transportation meant that as Christians were increasingly confronted with the reality of other faiths, they were also seeking to understand the workings of the Spirit based on the experience of Pentecostal and charismatic believers. Subsequently, pneumatology came to displace Christology as a basis for interaction with other faiths.²² This shift seemed to solve what had come to be known as Christianity's scandal of particularity since the Spirit, it was argued, could be at work in those places where Christ had not yet been named, and perhaps even provide a

²¹I am not of the opinion, however, that the Holy Spirit was the "forgotten member of the Trinity" prior to the rise of the Pentecostal movement. B. B. Warfield, after all, referred to John Calvin as "the theologian of the Holy Spirit." However, there can be no doubt that there has been a burgeoning interest in pneumatology since the early twentieth century. Even so, by no means have all of these pneumatological developments been positive.

²²For a brief synopsis of this shift, including the various factors that led to it, see John Bolt, "The Ecumenical Shift to Cosmic Pneumatology," *Reformed Review* 51 (1998): 255-70.

means of salvation to those who just happened to be born in places where there was no access to the gospel. However, this view of the Spirit's work proved to be at odds with the historic, orthodox position of the church, which is that explicit faith in Christ is necessary for salvation. Thus, those who have sought to find greater breadth for the Spirit's economy have made various attempts to find not only theological, but historical precedent for their views.²³ For some inclusivists, such historical grounding is to be found in the pneumatology of Eastern Orthodoxy.²⁴ The Eastern tradition, it is argued, gives greater freedom to the Spirit than does traditional Western theology, and this is partially attributable to its rejection of the *filioque*.²⁵

Therefore, the thesis of this dissertation will first be defended by demonstrating the close relationship between the Son and Spirit in the economy that has historically characterized Eastern Orthodoxy. This close, even inseparable economic relationship prevails *in spite of* its rejection of the *filioque*. Conversely, the inclusive soteriologies that seek to appropriate aspects of Orthodox pneumatology because of its greater emphasis on the work of the Spirit fail to reflect adequately either the monarchy²⁶

²³Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, for example, argues that even in the Old Testament, there is a tension between particularism and universalism. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to the Theology of Religions: Biblical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 39-40. Kärkkäinen proceeds to trace this tension throughout the history of the church, and even though he finds a strong strain of openness toward other religions, he is forced to admit that an exclusivist position has been the majority view. He attributes this to the influence of Augustine. *Ibid.*, 55.

²⁴Clark Pinnock demonstrates a strong penchant for leaning in the direction of Eastern Orthodoxy on various matters such as the nature of salvation and the church's relationship to truth. In each instance he regards the Eastern Orthodox position as more compatible with his views than Western theology. *Flame of Love*, 151 and 233 n. 33. However, I will argue in this dissertation that he neither correctly understands nor appropriates the Orthodox tradition.

²⁵Pinnock, *Wideness in God's Mercy*, 78.

²⁶The *monarchy* of the Father refers to his status as the sole source of the deity of the Son and the Spirit. This is a major emphasis of Eastern trinitarian theology, and will have implications for later

of the Father or the unity of Son and Spirit in the economy, both of which are prominent in Eastern thought historically.²⁷ Contrary to Eastern theology, the inclusivists' rejection of the *filioque* is not intended to guard the monarchy of the Father, but to free the Spirit from both the church and gospel proclamation by emphasizing his work in all of creation.²⁸ In contradistinction to Eastern Orthodoxy, however, inclusivism's pneumatology actually severs the Spirit from the Father (as well as from the Son) rather than uniting them. It is the Father after all who stands as the "Grand Architect, the Wise Designer of all that has occurred in the created order," including the plan of redemption.²⁹ Freeing the Spirit from the particularity of the Son has consequences for the Spirit's relationship with the Father as well, for it is in essence disconnecting the Spirit from the one whom the Father has chosen to be the object of saving faith (John 3:16; Rom 10:14; 1 John 5:11-12). Consequently, any rejection of the *filioque* that seeks to free the Spirit from the confines of the Son must necessarily result in severing the Spirit from the Father. Such economic independence is simply unwarranted in Scripture.³⁰

portions of this dissertation.

²⁷Although rejecting the *filioque* has traditionally been a means of preserving the monarchy of the Father for the East, inclusivists do not have this primarily in mind when they reject the *filioque*, but rather the freeing of the Spirit from the economy of the Son. However, by moving in this direction they have actually *undermined* the monarchy of the Father by granting the Spirit a type of freedom that is independent not only of the Son, but also of the Father as well, as will be demonstrated in this dissertation.

²⁸Pinnock, for example, frequently highlights the work of the Spirit in all of creation, and seems to assume that this work is always oriented toward salvation. Pinnock, *Wideness in God's Mercy*, 30.

²⁹Bruce A. Ware, *Father, Son, & Holy Spirit: Relationships, Roles, & Relevance* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 51. I am indebted to Ware for this language of the Father as the "Grand Architect."

³⁰Far from being independent of either Father or Son, the New Testament is clear that the ministry of the Spirit is oriented toward both the Father and the Son. John 16:13-15 clearly shows that the ministry of the Spirit is parallel to that of Jesus in the sense that neither speak on their own authority (John 12:49; 16:13), but only as the Father gives them to speak. Furthermore, since the Son glorifies the Father (John 17:4), and the Spirit glorifies the Son (John 16:14), it is "entirely appropriate that the Spirit's ministry

The inclusivists' rejection of the *filioque* thus serves not to preserve the monarchy of the Father, but rather to liberate the Spirit from both Father (by seeking for the Spirit a virtually absolute economic independence) *and* the Son (whose particularity would otherwise limit the Spirit's ministry). Their overall pneumatology and soteriology actually *undermines* the monarchy and priority of the Father which is so central to Eastern thought. It is thus illegitimate for pneumatological inclusivists to appeal to Eastern theology because of its (supposed) greater emphasis on the work of the Spirit while simultaneously undermining the larger theological structure into which Eastern pneumatology fits. It is critical to understand that in spite of its adamant rejection of the *filioque* and its general emphasis on the three persons of the Trinity rather than the one essence, Eastern Orthodoxy has nevertheless maintained a close relationship between the Son and the Spirit in the economy, so much so that some Eastern theologians can and do permit the use of the term *filioque* when referring to the economic Trinity.³¹ Recognition of trinitarian unity in the divine works is essential to a healthy doctrine of the Trinity. It is the unity of the *energeia*, or works, of the economic Trinity that leads both Basil of Caesarea and Athanasius to recognize their unity of *ousia*, or essence.³² The unity of the divine operation in the economy is "derivative from the prior unity of the Divine Nature."³³ This dissertation will seek to demonstrate this characteristic of Greek patristic

be designed to bring glory to the Son," for in so doing he also glorifies the Father in the Son. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 541.

³¹Benedict Englezakis, "Should the Orthodox Speak of a 'Temporal Procession' of the Holy Spirit?" *Eastern Churches Review* 9 (1977): 91-94. Note that when the term *filioque* is used in this way, it functions as a sort of shorthand, referring to the procession of the Spirit from the Son.

³²John McIntyre, "The Holy Spirit in Greek Patristic Thought," *SJT* 7 (1954): 356-57.

³³*Ibid.*, 357.

thought by examining the writings of several major Eastern theologians whose thought forms the backbone of this theological tradition.

With this historical background in mind, I will proceed to offer a theological defense of my thesis by demonstrating that even if one rejects the *filioque* there must nevertheless remain a strong connection between the work of the Spirit and the work of the Son in the divine economy of salvation. That is to say, it is not the *filioque* alone that ties the Spirit to the work of the Son but it is rather the role that the Father plays in the economy of salvation that indissolubly ties the Spirit to the Son. Both the Son and the Spirit are portrayed in Scripture as those who work in the economy to fulfill the will of the Father. Texts such as John 5:30 and 16:13 clearly articulate an understanding of the economy of redemption that centers around the will of the Father being fulfilled in the ministries of both the Son and the Spirit. Therefore it cannot be the case that either of these persons of the Trinity functions independently of the other or without reference to the work of the other. Indeed, it has been a central affirmation of trinitarian faith that “God in his economy always acts as unity, although one person of the Trinity may act differently from but not independently of the other. It is the conviction of the patristic tradition that ‘where the Spirit is, there Christ is also. For wheresoever one person of the Trinity is, there the whole Trinity is present’.”³⁴ This understanding points to a *singular* economy of salvation rather than separate economies, however unified they may be.³⁵ Nevertheless, it is all too often the case that pneumatological inclusivists give a type of

³⁴Emmanuel Clapsis, “The Holy Spirit in the Church,” *Ecumenical Review* 41 (1989): 340.

³⁵Clark Pinnock speaks, for example, of the “twin, interdependent missions of Son and Spirit.” Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 192. I believe it is more helpful and biblical to speak of one divine economy in which both the Son and the Spirit participate. This gives the impression of a singular trinitarian work rather

freedom to the Spirit that is not in harmony with the affirmation of trinitarian unity cited above. This type of freedom is necessary to their contention that God is working salvifically among the unevangelized, and yet such freedom is not consistent with the biblical revelation of the Spirit's work because it fails to take into account the Father's role in directing both the Spirit and the Son in the economy. The biblical text points to the will of the Father as being determinative and decisive in giving expression to the work of the Son and the Spirit.

The soteriology that frequently results from emphasizing an independent economy of the Spirit is one that fails to achieve a proper balance between the sovereignty of each person of the Trinity and the biblical portrayal of *taxis*³⁶ within the Trinity. Within this *taxis*, the Father is always seen to be the one who has the priority in terms of sending and directing. Soteriologies based on an independent work of the Spirit fail to recognize that both the Son and the Spirit voluntarily submit themselves to the will of the Father even though they share the same nature as deity. The notion of *taxis*, therefore, is not based upon any difference of essential nature, but rather on the difference of *role relationships* that characterize the persons of the Trinity. In each of these relationships the Father stands as the One who has the priority. The Son *is begotten* by the Father, whereas the Spirit *proceeds* from the Father (or from the Father and the Son).

than a Tri-theistic economy where the sovereignty of each trinitarian *person* is emphasized.

³⁶The term *taxis* refers to the ordering among the persons of the Trinity. Robert Letham helpfully points out that the patristic use of the term must not be “understood in terms of human arrangements, such as rank or hierarchy, but in terms of an appropriate disposition” that is fitting to each person. Even so, Letham goes on to say that “despite the elements of mutuality reflected in these different orders [i.e., the ordering of names seen in Scripture], the Father sends the Son, and the Son never sends the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, but the Father never proceeds from the Holy Spirit or the Son.” Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2004), 383. I will argue in this dissertation that the Son and the Spirit voluntarily submit themselves to the will of the Father, thus giving him a priority that is reflected in his role

Never are these relationships reversed in Scripture, and thus the monarchy of the Father is established and preserved by the biblical witness. Prioritizing pneumatology, on the other hand, tends toward the reversal of this *taxis*. By using pneumatology as a starting point for a theology of world religions, inclusivism fails to give proper place to either the Father (as the Architect of salvation) or the Son (the particular one to whom God demands that faith must be directed). More specifically, it fails to give full attention to the unique role of the Son in revealing the Father. Rejecting the *filioque* does nothing to mitigate these factors even if one accepts that its rejection aids in giving freedom to the Spirit's work.

It is ironic that in a very real sense the Father himself is now the “forgotten member” of the Trinity in such soteriologies.³⁷ As a result, pneumatological inclusivism's soteriology does not reflect the harmony that the Bible portrays between the works of Father, Son, and Spirit in the one economy of salvation. Rather, what is often regarded to be the work of the Spirit by inclusivists appears both out of step with the redemptive work of the Son, and superfluous to the redemptive plan of the Father.³⁸ This plan includes the proclamation of the gospel to all the world as the *means* of fulfilling the

as the Architect of the economy of salvation.

³⁷Richard Gaffin observes, “Twenty years ago, when I was a seminary student, there was a slogan to the effect that the Holy Spirit was ‘the forgotten member of the Trinity’. Today, no one at all aware of more recent developments in the church and theology, will be able to say anything like that.” Richard B. Gaffin, “The Holy Spirit,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 43 (1980): 59. It seems that the Father has now replaced the Spirit as the “forgotten member” in many respects. See, for example, Thomas A. Smail, *The Forgotten Father: Rediscovering the Heart of the Christian Gospel* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1980).

³⁸Inclusivists are quick to attribute anything good in world religions to the work of the Spirit. For example, Amos Yong's pneumatological criteria are primarily experiential, ethical, and (loosely) theological in nature. He sees the pathway to discernment in a “pneumatological imagination” based in these three elements, and argues that when the Spirit's presence is discerned, then one may regard the religion as “salvific in the Christian sense.” Such criteria, however, cannot be regarded as soteriological under biblical scrutiny. Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to*

redemptive will of the Father (Matt 28:18-20). In contradistinction to inclusivism, the preaching of the gospel plays an indispensable role in the conversion of the lost (1 Cor 1:18-25). The Father seeks to exalt the Son and herald his redemptive work to all the world in order to save those whom he will call to himself (John 8:54; 2 Cor 4:1-6). For this reason it is troubling that inclusivists have developed a theology designed to overcome the particularity of the Savior that *denies*, rather than *embraces*, the preaching of the gospel as necessary to overcoming that particularity. Instead, they have grounded their soteriological hopes in a virtually nebulous work of the Spirit among the unevangelized rather than on the proclamation of the gospel message. Their rejection of the *filioque* is inadequate to overcome the biblical mandate to preach the gospel as the Father's appointed means of procuring the salvation of the lost (Rom 10:13-17).

Beyond the historical and theological problems that face one who seeks an independent economy of the Spirit through rejection of the *filioque*, there is the difficulty faced from the standpoint of biblical, and ultimately, systematic theology.³⁹ This final section of this dissertation will seek to demonstrate that various thematic and structural elements in Scripture tie the work of the Spirit closely to that of the Son's such that acceptance or rejection of the *filioque* cannot solely establish an independent economy for the Spirit. Inclusive soteriologies fail to recognize these basic structures and themes that constitute the storyline of Scripture, and by doing so they fundamentally distort the

Christian Theology of Religions (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 312.

³⁹By biblical theology, I am referring to the inner unity of the Bible centered around the person and work of Christ. While this understanding of the Bible is present even in the earliest church fathers, it has been particularly recovered in this past century by Geerhardus Vos, Herman Ridderbos, and other such theologians. For a helpful if brief overview of biblical theology, see Craig G. Bartholomew, "Biblical Theology," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 84-90. It is from the framework of biblical theology that systematic

Scripture's witness to the Spirit's work. Among these themes are the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work under the new covenant, the centrality of the work of Christ and the Spirit's role as witness to that work, the nature of covenant itself (particularly the elements of discontinuity between the old and new covenants), and the constitution and identity of the covenant people of God.

One of the themes that is virtually ignored in the construction of pneumatologically based inclusivist soteriologies is the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work under the new covenant. This eschatological context is crucial for understanding not only the Spirit's work, but also his relationship to the Son.⁴⁰ Ignoring the role of eschatology and the distinction between the Spirit's work under the old and new covenants will inevitably lead to distortions in biblical interpretation. For example, Clark Pinnock's inclusivism is fueled by a view of the Spirit's work that regards it as universal both prior and subsequent to the coming of Christ.⁴¹ He thus flattens the contours of the Spirit's work by emphasizing the universality of that work without

theology is ultimately constructed. Biblical theology is not an end goal, but a means to achieving a systematic theology that is faithful to the Bible's redemptive-historical storyline.

⁴⁰Michael Horton contends that eschatology, rather than being regarded as merely a single locus of systematic theology, should serve as a lens through which we view all of Scripture. Michael S. Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology: The Divine Drama* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 5. If this is the case, then eschatology must color one's pneumatology no less than other theological loci. Given the emphasis on covenant in Horton's methodology, one could argue that the work of the Spirit in the new covenant era is *particularly* impacted by this eschatological framework. The coming of the Spirit is regarded in the New Testament as that which ushers in the last days (Acts 2:16-21), in effect inaugurating the era of the new covenant. Still, the person and work of Christ must be viewed as central to the new covenant work of the Spirit. It is not as though the Spirit was about his new work with no reference to the Son, since it is the exalted Christ who, as Lord of the church, is given authority to pour out the Spirit on his people (John 15:26; Acts 2:33). To flatten out the Spirit's work as though there was no distinction between his working under the old and new covenants is to miss a fundamental structural element of Scripture.

⁴¹According to Pinnock, "The incarnation should not be viewed as a negation of universality but as the fulfillment of what Spirit had been doing all along." Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 195. The incarnation is, in essence, bracketed by Pinnock as parenthetical to the Spirit's work, making it only one stage of the Spirit's universal operations.

considering the shifting of the ages that occurred with the coming of Christ (Acts 2:17, 33).⁴² This principle of the universality of the Spirit's work is foundational to Pinnock's pneumatology, and the theme recurs again and again in his works.⁴³ The same axiom is foundational for Amos Yong's pneumatologically based theology of religions.⁴⁴

However, as these inclusivists construct their pneumatology with this axiom as the foundation, it quickly becomes clear that both fail to understand the provisional nature of the Spirit's work under the old covenant and the subsequent and titanic *shift* in that work that resulted due to Christ's redemptive work. As a result, their pneumatology flattens out the contours of the biblical witness to the Spirit's work.

Another biblical-theological motif of Scripture that is minimized by inclusivists is the centrality of Christology in terms of the Spirit's work. Inclusivism fails to recognize that the fundamental nature of the Spirit's work in the new covenant era is to witness to the risen Christ (John 16:13-14).⁴⁵ This is not only a primary teaching on the work of the Spirit in John's Gospel, but a survey of the book of Acts will reveal that this formed the very essence of the early church's experience of the Spirit. As one probes further into the teaching of the New Testament on the work of the Spirit, it also becomes evident that the Spirit and the Word are closely related in such a way that the Spirit of God works through the instrumentality of the Word of God to bring about the salvation of the lost. The preaching of the gospel both *reveals* the object of faith as the person of

⁴²Pinnock, "Toward an Evangelical Theology," 359-63.

⁴³Pinnock devotes an entire chapter to Spirit and universality in Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 185-214.

⁴⁴Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 44.

⁴⁵Miles, "Severing the Spirit," 2-3.

Christ, and simultaneously *produces* that faith in Christ through the working of the Spirit (Rom 10:13-17; Jas 1:18). However, the object of faith in pneumatological inclusivism is very often left undefined because in place of the preaching of the Word inclusivists have substituted the witness of general revelation, at least so far as the unevangelized are concerned.⁴⁶ The measure of faith's existence is, for Pinnock, a certain level of morality.⁴⁷ Such a criterion fails to do justice to both a biblical definition of faith and a proper understanding of the Spirit's working through the word in order to produce that faith.

There are other thematic elements of Scripture that are either passed over completely or fundamentally distorted by the inclusivists, not least of which is the centrality of the person and work of Christ. Their dependence upon a supposed universality of the Spirit which always manifests itself soteriologically virtually *requires* that they minimize some of these themes while simultaneously causing them to miss the nuances in others.⁴⁸ This dissertation will attempt to trace out some of these themes with a view to demonstrating that rejection of the *filioque* simply cannot be a primary means for producing an independent economy of the Spirit. When one takes these biblical

⁴⁶Amos Yong notes with reference to the categories of general and special revelation that “a pneumatological perspective emphasizes dynamic process rather than intractable dualisms.” Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 48. Likewise, Clark Pinnock observes, “Grace is extant not only in Christian contexts but in every place where the Spirit is. There is grace in general revelation and special revelation, and both are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. God reaches out to sinners in a multiplicity of ways, thanks to the provenience of the Spirit.” Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 194.

⁴⁷This is evident in Pinnock's statement, “faith is more than assent to theological propositions. It involves a relationship of trust in God that manifests itself in godly living” (*Flame of Love*, 195). Of course, Pinnock is correct that faith is *more* than assent to propositions, but the problem is that he wants to make it *less* than that.

⁴⁸For example, it is hard to imagine that one could over-emphasize the biblical theme of the love of God. However, D. A. Carson has ably demonstrated how this biblical teaching can be grossly distorted by ignoring the nuances in its biblical presentation. D. A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the*

structures into account, it becomes clear that they are far more determinative of the Spirit's work than the *filioque*.

In short, the burden of this dissertation is to prove that rejection of the *filioque* does little or nothing to mitigate the aforementioned historical, theological, and biblical truths. The inclusivists' rejection of the *filioque* thus contributes little of substance to an already faulty pneumatology that distorts in a radical way the Spirit's work in the economy of salvation, and ultimately contributes nothing to inclusivism's larger theological enterprise of making salvation accessible to those with no knowledge of Christ. The only hope for the unevangelized is not an epistemologically empty faith, but the preaching of the gospel.⁴⁹

Significance of this Dissertation

I believe this avenue of research will prove valuable for the following reasons. First, the *filioque* sits at the point of convergence of three of the most heavily studied loci of systematic theology at the present time: soteriology, pneumatology, and the doctrine of the Trinity. The *filioque* is receiving renewed attention for this reason alone. Although, as Alasdair Heron once stated, the *filioque* "is today probably regarded as one of the more trivial elements in our Western theological heritage," he nevertheless understood that both East and West felt that something very crucial was at stake in its acceptance or

Love of God (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000).

⁴⁹Pneumatological inclusivists argue for the salvation of the unevangelized based not only upon an independent economy of the Spirit, but also on a particular view of general revelation—one that regards all instances of general revelation to be potentially salvific. Russell Moore warns against this error when he states, "An accurate vision of general revelation transforms the missiological life and apologetic focus of the church. This vision must include both the *reality* and the *limits* of general revelation, to prevent the church from absorbing errors significant enough to wreck the Great Commission enterprise itself." Russell D. Moore, "Natural Revelation," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2007), 114. Emphasis mine.

rejection.⁵⁰ It has been almost forty years since Heron penned those words, and in that time interest in the *filioque* has grown significantly.

Second, no one has yet produced a work of significant length that investigates the legitimacy of using the *filioque* as a means of gaining an independent economy for the Spirit. The freedom of the Spirit to operate soteriologically apart from the proclamation of the gospel is axiomatic for inclusivists. Yet they have failed adequately to ground this contention from Scripture. One of their means of grounding this important foundation for their inclusive theology is rejection of the *filioque*. An investigation of the legitimacy of this move and its results is thus crucial to understanding whether inclusivism is a viable option for evangelicals.

Third, there has been a tremendous surge in trinitarian studies over the past century. The liberalism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries denied the validity of verbal revelation and any access to divine reality itself, bringing into question both the revelational and metaphysical grounding for the doctrine of the Trinity. Karl Rahner noted the resultant apathy with which most Christians of the twentieth century approached the doctrine when he famously stated that, “should the doctrine of the Trinity have to be dropped as false, the major part of religious literature could well remain virtually unchanged.”⁵¹ Nevertheless, there has been a theological renaissance of sorts where the doctrine of the Trinity is concerned.⁵² The increase in trinitarian studies has

⁵⁰Alasdair I. C. Heron, “‘Who Proceedeth from the Father and the Son’: The Problem of the Filioque,” *SJT* 24 (1971): 149.

⁵¹Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 10-11.

⁵²Colin Gunton has remarked, “Suddenly we are all trinitarians, or so it would seem . . . the doctrine of the Trinity is now discussed in places where even a short time ago it would have been regarded

led to a renewed interest in the *filioque* as well, particularly as many have sought to move away from a Western approach toward a more Eastern understanding of the Trinity.⁵³

The economic impact of one's acceptance or rejection of the *filioque* thus has relevance for more than just pneumatological inclusivism. This dissertation will seek to offer a way of understanding the Son/Spirit economic relations that is not primarily dependent upon one's acceptance or rejection of the *filioque*.⁵⁴

Finally, there is a tremendous appeal currently from pneumatological inclusivists for an independent economy of the Holy Spirit whereby he can be regarded as working among those who have never heard the gospel in such a way as to produce their salvation. This dissertation will argue that even if one rejects the *filioque* in the immanent Trinity, as inclusivists tend to do, there is nevertheless a strong case to be made for an economic interpretation of the *filioque* that explicitly connects the work of the Son and the Spirit. Such an economic understanding of the *filioque* has been affirmed by the East in various ways and is on solid ground both biblically and theologically.⁵⁵

This dissertation assumes an explicit connection between the economies of Son and

as an irrelevance." Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), xv.

⁵³For one such example, see Colin Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," *SJT* 43 (1990): 33-58.

⁵⁴Again, this is not to say that acceptance or rejection of the *filioque* is irrelevant to the economic relationship of the Son and the Spirit, but simply that the rejection of the *filioque* cannot in and of itself overcome other biblical and theological factors that strongly connect the economic work of the Spirit to the Son. My own stance toward the *filioque* is more Western than Eastern.

⁵⁵One way that Eastern Orthodox theologians have affirmed this notion is through the distinction between the divine *essence* and the divine *energies*. Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation*, 234. But they have also been willing to affirm that the Spirit proceeds from the Son so long as one understands this in a purely economic manner. Their willingness to confess an *economic* procession in spite of their vehement denial of the *filioque* is evidence of the close connection they see between the work of the Son and the Spirit in the economy. Englezakis, "Should the Orthodox Speak of a 'Temporal Procession'?" 91-94.

Spirit, and will in fact propose a *single* economy of salvation whereby the Son and the Spirit are viewed as the “two hands of God,” both working to accomplish the will of the Father, who is the Grand Architect of the plan of salvation. If such a singular economy can be demonstrated, then it would show that rejection of the *filioque* is unable to support the theological weight placed upon it by pneumatological inclusivists.

Methodology

The methodology of this dissertation will consist of first examining the place of the *filioque* in current models of pneumatological inclusivism. Following this the remainder of the dissertation will engage these models in terms of their treatment of the *filioque* and critique them based upon historic, theological, and biblical-theological criteria. My primary partners for discussion will be evangelicals Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong, although there will also be others with whom I interact substantially—notably, the Finnish theologian Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. Their proposals will be examined in chapter two, along with the current status of the *filioque* debate itself.

Although this dissertation primarily consists of a critique of current proposals, this critique will most fully be realized through the offering of constructive alternatives to the pneumatological inclusivists.⁵⁶ Chapter three will offer a reading of Eastern Orthodoxy that differs from the sometimes superficial treatment given it by my dialogue partners. It will propose a reading of Orthodoxy that does not support the independent economy for the Holy Spirit that inclusivists often find there. In spite of the historical nature of this chapter, there will be no extensive treatment of the history of the *filioque*,

⁵⁶Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen affirms that “systematic theology by its very nature is both critical and constructive. Even the critique of other positions always entails at least a tentative understanding of one’s own position.” Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism*, 164.

but there will be copious interaction with patristic and other historic writings of relevance. Following the historical response, chapters four and five will respond to the inclusivists' rejection of the *filioque* from theological and biblical-theological perspectives. As with chapter three, each of these chapters will consist of a critique that takes the form of a constructive counter-proposal that seeks to demonstrate that the rejection of the *filioque* is not able of itself to sustain an independent economy for the Spirit, and even further, that rejection of the *filioque* offers nothing of substance to inclusivist contentions that the Spirit is the director of the economy of salvation.⁵⁷

The argument of this dissertation is not based on any one passage of Scripture,⁵⁸ but more so upon multiple texts, as well as the biblical themes and structures that influence the way in which one constructs systematic theology—in this case, pneumatology, soteriology, and the doctrine of the Trinity. Therefore, there will not be an extended section of this dissertation that is devoted solely to exegesis, but rather, the methodology will be to insert exegesis when necessary to provide support for the argument. This will be done through the use of footnotes and in the main body of the dissertation itself.

Chapter 1 constitutes the introduction to the dissertation. It presents the thesis and describes the place of both pneumatology and the *filioque* in contemporary inclusive soteriologies. Furthermore, it introduces the argument of the dissertation in outline form and establishes the methodology used to address the subject at hand. Chapter 2 is essentially a survey of both the place of the *filioque* in contemporary Western theology as

⁵⁷Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 194.

⁵⁸This is to say that it is not merely one's interpretation of John 15:26, the text on which the

well as the various ways that the *filioque* is treated by pneumatological inclusivists. This chapter clarifies that my dialogue partners do not handle the *filioque* in precisely the same way, nor do they base their arguments for an independent economy of the Spirit solely on the way they understand the *filioque*. Nevertheless, this chapter shows the importance that both Eastern Orthodoxy and rejection of the *filioque* play in their soteriological proposals. My primary interlocutors will be the evangelicals Clark Pinnock, for whom the rejection of the *filioque* is particularly relevant, and Amos Yong, along with others who will play less significant roles.

Chapters 3 through 5 will offer three main lines of critique regarding the inclusivists' use of the *filioque*. First, chapter 3 demonstrates that some proponents of pneumatological inclusivism attempt to align themselves with the Eastern Orthodox position on the *filioque* and pneumatology in general, assuming that this view allows more freedom for an independent economy of the Spirit. Through an examination of various Orthodox theologians, both past and present, I argue that this is a fundamental misunderstanding of the Orthodox position, and demonstrate that Orthodoxy has historically viewed the work of the Spirit as tightly connected with that of the Son.

Chapter 4 shows that the inclusivists' rejection of the *filioque* fails to purchase an independent economy for the Spirit because it does not take into account the biblical portrayal of *taxis* in the Trinity, whereby the Father gives direction to the works of both the Son *and* the Spirit. This understanding of the works of the Son and Spirit leads me to argue that it is best to view the economy of salvation as *one* economy wherein the Son and the Spirit operate together to implement the redemptive plan of the Father. The

filioque is largely based, that can decide the legitimacy of the *filioque* for theology.

Father, as Grand Architect, administrates the economy of salvation *through* the works of the Son and the Spirit. Sufficient exegesis of biblical passages is given to make this point abundantly clear.

Chapter 5 argues that pneumatological inclusivists have failed to take into account multiple biblical-theological themes of Scripture, and as a result their portrayal of the Spirit's work is distorted. Such distortion is responsible, at least in part, for their mistaken belief that the *filioque* is the cause of what they perceive to be a subordination of the Spirit to the Son in modern Western theology. This chapter elucidates the themes that are overlooked by inclusivists—including the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work and the Spirit's witnessing to the Son as foundational to New Testament pneumatology. Finally, this chapter offers a brief constructive proposal of the Spirit's work under the new covenant. Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation by offering both a summary and theological implications for the project.

CHAPTER 2

THE PLACE OF THE *FILIOQUE* IN CONTEMPORARY INCLUSIVE SOTERIOLOGIES

It is no accident that there has been a burgeoning interest in the *filioque* over the past few decades. Contemporary trends in theology that have their roots in the previous century have virtually ensured that the debate over the Spirit's procession will be relevant for the foreseeable future. The rise of the Pentecostal movement, with its emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit, has, by some accounts, single-handedly renewed interest in the so-called "forgotten member" of the Trinity. Recent emphasis on the Holy Spirit has grown to such a degree that Sinclair Ferguson has felt it necessary to remind his readers that the Holy Spirit has not been discovered, *de novo*, in the twentieth century.¹ The Pentecostal movement in particular has contributed to the rise in literature devoted to the person and work of the Spirit over the past century, and as such it is understandable that at least some of this literature would seek to understand the place that the *filioque* may or may not have in contemporary pneumatology.

Beyond the Pentecostal movement, however, there have been other influences contributing to a renewal of the *filioque* debate and its possible implications for soteriology. The first section of this chapter will seek to set forth two of these factors as supremely important in the rise of interest in the *filioque* as it pertains to pneumatological

¹Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 12.

inclusivism. First, there is the participation of the Eastern Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement. This participation has had enormous impact upon the perceived importance of the *filioque* in general, but beyond this it has raised awareness in the West of the prominent place that pneumatology enjoys in the Eastern church.² This emphasis on the person and work of the Spirit, prevalent in Eastern theology for centuries, dovetails nicely with the new emphasis on pneumatology in the West brought about by the Pentecostal movement. Eastern pneumatology has also been appropriated by pneumatological inclusivists seeking to bolster their case for a more inclusive soteriology. Part of this appropriation includes the rejection of the *filioque*, which is a fundamental characteristic of Eastern Orthodoxy.

In addition to this however, a second factor has caused the *filioque* to receive renewed attention, and that is the shift from cosmic Christology to pneumatology as a basis for both an inclusive soteriology and a fully developed theology of religions.³ This move away from Christology as a basis for inclusivism was driven at least partially by a desire to address the “scandal of particularity” inherent in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The incarnation of the Son of God in the man Jesus of Nazareth provided only limited access to information about his person and work, and thus if knowledge of Christ were necessary for salvation, then clearly not everyone could be saved. Pneumatological inclusivists feel that they have largely solved the particularity problem by appealing to the universal aspects of the Spirit’s work, conceiving of it as potentially salvific for the

²For a helpful summary of Orthodoxy’s participation in the ecumenical movement and the subsequent importance of this participation, see David Tustin, “Orthodox Participation in Early Ecumenical Conferences,” *The Ecumenical Review* 51:4 (1999): 386-93.

³For an overview of this shift, see John Bolt, “The Ecumenical Shift to Cosmic Pneumatology,” *Reformed Review* 51 (1998): 255-70.

unevangelized.⁴ There is, of course, a downside to this scheme, and that is that the Spirit's work becomes somewhat generic—the Spirit can no longer *explicitly* be the Spirit of Christ lest the Spirit's ministry be hindered or limited by Christ's particularity. But this is a problem that the inclusivists are attempting to solve.⁵ In the meantime, the *filioque* has come to be viewed by some inclusivists as something that ties the Spirit's economy too closely to that of the Son, thus restricting what could otherwise be a broader, more universal work of the Spirit.

After examining these historical factors that have led to the current place of the *filioque* in theological discussion, this chapter will assess the importance of the *filioque* for the theologies of Clark Pinnock, Amos Yong, and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen—three inclusivists who particularly emphasize the work of the Spirit among the unevangelized.⁶ Certainly not every pneumatological inclusivist places the same weight on the rejection of the *filioque*, and this will prove to be true even among those who agree that rejecting the *filioque* is of some importance. However, for Clark Pinnock, rejecting the *filioque* plays a decisive role in freeing pneumatology from subordination to Christology, and the economy of the Spirit from subordination to the economy of the Son. Pinnock will therefore serve throughout this dissertation as a primary dialogue partner. His conception

⁴Both Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong emphasize the Spirit's universality—so much so that it becomes a bedrock principle for their inclusive soteriology. Clark Pinnock, "Toward An Evangelical Theology of Religions," *JETS* 33 (1990): 360-62; Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 44-45.

⁵Most pneumatological inclusivists still retain a tacit connection between the economies of Son and Spirit, and would still regard the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. Nevertheless, the means that the Spirit uses to connect the unevangelized to Christ are often difficult to discern by inclusivists' own admission, and thus the relationship between Christ and the Spirit is often evacuated of any tangible meaning. Amos Yong discusses this problem in *Beyond the Impasse*, 125-26, 129-61.

⁶There are other inclusivists who pay far less attention to pneumatology, such as John Sanders and Terrance Tiessen for instance. Pneumatology is not irrelevant for these theologians, but it plays a far less significant role than it does for Pinnock, Yong, or Kärkkäinen.

of the Spirit's work among the unevangelized is rooted in a pneumatology that is virtually independent of Christology, and thus for him rejection of the *filioque* is critically important.

Factors Contributing to the Elevated Importance of the *Filioque* in Contemporary Inclusive Soteriologies

In recent years the debate over the procession of the Holy Spirit has been met with some amount of theological fatigue. Whether the *filioque* has any real significance for Christian theology in general is a question that is still being debated, with many in both the East and West agreeing that it does.⁷ More important for the purpose of this dissertation, however, is the current interest in the way that the *filioque* might impact one's perception of the Spirit's work. There have been two particularly significant developments that have led to a resurgence of interest in the *filioque*—the rising influence of the Orthodox Church, and the role it now plays in the ecumenical movement, and the shift from cosmic Christology to pneumatology as grounds for the potential salvation of the unevangelized.⁸

The Participation of Eastern Orthodoxy in the Ecumenical Movement

One of the most significant factors leading to the prominence of the *filioque* in contemporary inclusive soteriologies has been the participation of the Eastern Orthodox

⁷See, for example, the article by Marc A. Pugliese, "How Important is the *FILIOQUE* For Reformed Orthodoxy?" *WJT* 66 (2004): 159-77; and Gerald Bray, "The Double Procession of the Holy Spirit in Evangelical Theology Today: Do We Still Need It?" *JETS* 41 (1998): 415-26.

⁸Gerald Bray also speaks of the "growing awareness of the importance of the charismatic movement" as a factor in the renewed interest in the *filioque*. Gerald Bray, "The *FILIOQUE* Clause in History and Theology," *Tyndale Bulletin* 34 (1983): 103.

Churches in the ecumenical movement.⁹ Through such participation Orthodoxy has become much more widely known in the West than in previous years (or even centuries). As a result, even those who do not directly participate in ecumenical dialogue have been exposed to Eastern thought. With this exposure came inevitable tensions over that which separated East from West in the first place. The *filioque* has been an infamous barrier to East/West relations since the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches separated in 1054. Some Orthodox theologians regard it as *the* major cause that led to the division.¹⁰ On the other hand, many Roman Catholic theologians today regard the *filioque* as far less important to reconciliation than other issues (such as papal authority),¹¹ although this is not a sentiment that is shared in the larger ecumenical community. The pains of separation between East and West are felt perhaps nowhere more keenly than among those within the ecumenical movement as they seek to foster unity not only between East and West, but also between all Christians. So important is the *filioque* issue to those in

⁹According to Tustin, “Orthodox churches effectively began taking part in the ecumenical movement in 1920.” Tustin, “Orthodox Participation,” 386. Tustin states that three primary reasons lay behind the new desire for cooperation with other churches. First, there was the shock wrought on Christian consciences by the first world war; second, the Russian revolution of 1917, which had particular consequences for the Orthodox Church; and third, there was the impact of the 1911 ecumenical conference held in Constantinople by the World Student Christian Federation—a conference which had enormous influence on some individual Orthodox church leaders.

¹⁰Vladimir Lossky has famously stated, “Whether we like it or not, the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit has been the sole dogmatic grounds for the separation of East and West. All the other divergences which, historically, accompanied or followed the first dogmatic controversy about the term *the filioque*, in the measure in which they too had some dogmatic importance, were more or less dependent upon that original issue.” Vladimir Lossky, “The Procession of the Holy Spirit in Orthodox Trinitarian Theology,” in *Eastern Orthodox Theology: A Contemporary Reader*, ed. Daniel B. Clendenin, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 163.

¹¹Gerald Bray points out that papal authority has perhaps exceeded the *filioque* in terms of importance for Catholic/Orthodox reconciliation. He states, “In any event, Roman Catholic scholars generally do not accept Lossky’s belief that the *filioque* clause is the fundamental obstacle (*impedimentum dirimens*) to the reunion of the churches, and regard the theological issue as of little real importance.” Gerald Bray, “The *filioque* Clause in History and Theology,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 34 (1983): 95. It would seem, however, that it matters little if Roman Catholics think the issue irrelevant so long as the Orthodox still place a great deal of importance on it.

the ecumenical movement that in 1981, the fifteen-hundred year anniversary of the Council of Constantinople, the World Council of Churches (henceforth WCC) published a report, along with accompanying papers by representatives of various churches, that was the result of a two-year study on the *filioque* controversy. Lukas Vischer, who edited the resulting documents, offers the reason that the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC undertook the study of the *filioque* issue: “The addition of the words ‘and from the Son’ to the text of the Nicene Creed is one of the issues which divided East and West for many centuries and still divides them today. The restoration of unity is inconceivable if agreement is not reached on the formal and substantial justification for this formula.”¹² For the WCC at least, the full restoration of relations between the Orthodox churches and the Western world must begin with a substantial resolution of the *filioque* controversy.¹³

In addition to conflict resolution, however, the impact of the *filioque* dispute on the doctrine of the Trinity itself is not lost on the WCC. It is often the case that the question of the *filioque* is framed not so much as a pneumatological or christological issue, but as a trinitarian issue—that is, it is seen as essential to the further development of our understanding of God as Trinity. The resolution of the *filioque* is therefore essential to a fully developed doctrine of the Trinity. This, too, fits nicely with the contemporary emphasis on all things Trinity,¹⁴ so that the *filioque* is (rightly) seen as *both*

¹²Lukas Vischer, ed., *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981), v.

¹³The relationship of the *filioque* to recent inclusivists’ proposals is evidenced by Amos Yong’s parallel assertion that a pneumatological theology of religions may not be possible without a resolution to the *filioque* debate. Amos Yong, “The Turn to Pneumatology in Christian Theology of Religions: Conduit or Detour?,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 35 (1998): 450 n. 51.

¹⁴Of course, the doctrine of the Trinity does stand as the defining characteristic of the Christian doctrine of God. What I have in mind here, however, is the contemporary penchant to find in the Trinity

a pneumatological issue and a trinitarian issue. As a result Vischer can state that “The only meaningful context in which to raise and deal with the special question of the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father and of the role played by the Son in this procession is that of the trinitarian understanding of God. The question of the *filioque* thus becomes an opportunity to develop together the meaning of the Trinity.”¹⁵ This understanding is certainly characteristic of the way that Clark Pinnock develops his pneumatological inclusivism. His rejection of the *filioque* is the result of his particular development of Spirit Christology and his understanding of intra-trinitarian relations.¹⁶ In all of these Pinnock has been influenced by Eastern Orthodoxy, which he believes affords him a broader and much more independent economy for the Holy Spirit than Western thought. Thus, it seems that Orthodox participation in the WCC has had ramifications not only for the *filioque* itself, but also, at least for some Western theologians, for the larger development of trinitarian thought.

As the influence and awareness of Orthodoxy has risen in the West there has

the grounding for every conceivable theological cause. Keith Johnson, for example, states, “One is told that the Trinity provides the basis for a proper understanding of human personhood, that the Trinity represents the model for the proper form of church government, that the Trinity provides the model for societal relations, that the Trinity offers the model for an egalitarian political democracy, that the Trinity provides the basis for affirming same-sex marriage, that the Trinity offers the model for relating theology and science, and so on.” Keith E. Johnson, “Does the Doctrine of the Trinity Hold the Key to a Christian Theology of Religions? An Evaluation of Three Recent Proposals,” *SBJT* 10 (2006): 38.

¹⁵Vischer, *Spirit of God*, v-vi. I would argue that T. F. Torrance takes perhaps a healthier approach to the *filioque* question by reversing this sentiment and arguing instead that the only way to treat the issue is from the perspective of a more or less fully developed doctrine of the Trinity. He states that “It is in light of [a] developed doctrine of the Triunity of God, which holds together the conceptions of the identity of the divine being and the intrinsic unity of the three divine Persons, that we may best consider the issue of the procession of the Holy Spirit.” T. F. Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith: The Evangelical Theology of the Ancient Catholic Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 235.

¹⁶As Pinnock lays out his vision of Spirit Christology two things are evident. First, he sees the Western subscription to the *filioque* as part and parcel of an Augustinian tendency to depersonalize the Spirit and subordinate his economy to that of the Son. Second, Pinnock is indebted to Eastern Orthodox theology for its particular emphasis on both the economy of the Spirit and for its understanding of intra-trinitarian relationships. Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 92.

been a corresponding increase in appreciation for Eastern theology in general, and its approach to pneumatology in particular.¹⁷ As a result, there are increasing numbers of theologians who sympathize with traditional, but perhaps newly rediscovered, Eastern criticisms of the West. This sometimes manifests itself in a fairly thorough rejection of traditional Western approaches to the Trinity, and sometimes in an appreciation for Eastern thought that picks and chooses more selectively particular elements of their theology which are then incorporated into an existing system.¹⁸

There have been mixed responses in the West to the numerous calls for reconciliation with the East. There are, for example, many in the West for whom the *filioque* seems quite literally to be “much ado about nothing.” Consequently, they passively acquiesce to the recommendation of the WCC report, which states that “the words, ‘and from the Son’ are an addition and [the commission] concludes, therefore, that all churches should revert to the original text of the Nicene Creed as the normative formulation.”¹⁹ Although the study commission qualifies its recommendation by adding that “This does not mean simply ‘dropping’ the addition,” it seems as though this is

¹⁷This rising influence may be demonstrated in at least two ways. First, there have been limited but notable evangelical conversions to Eastern Orthodoxy, including some prominent names in evangelicalism such as Frankie Schaeffer, son of Francis Schaeffer. Second, there has been a rise in both mutual awareness and in comparisons between Pentecostal/charismatic theologies and that of Orthodoxy. For the former, see ACUTE, *Evangelicalism and the Orthodox Church* (London: Acute, 2001), 2; and also, Daniel B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 11-12. For the latter, see the work of Edmund J. Rybarczyk, “Spiritualities Old and New: Similarities between Eastern Orthodoxy & Classical Pentecostalism,” *Pneuma* 24 (2002): 7-25; as well as his larger work, *Beyond Salvation: Eastern Orthodoxy and Classical Pentecostalism on Becoming Like Christ* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2004).

¹⁸One Western theologian who has rejected much of the traditional Western approach to the Trinity is Colin Gunton, who seems to find in Augustine the cause of all ills in Western trinitarian theology. This attitude is nowhere better illustrated than in his seminal article, Colin E. Gunton, “Augustine, The Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” *SJT* 43 (1990): 33-58.

¹⁹Vischer, *Spirit of God*, v.

exactly what the report calls for. The fact that the commission also recommends further investigation into the reasons behind the *filioque*'s insertion into the Creed likewise rings rather hollow. It appears that from the perspective of the WCC the best way to deal with the *filioque* debate is simply to side with the East! This policy, Alasdair Heron notes, is perfectly acceptable to many Western theologians precisely because they see no useful place for the *filioque* in their theology, and as a result exercise a sort of *passive* rejection of the *filioque*.²⁰

On the other hand there have been increasing calls by some Western theologians for the abandonment of the *filioque* that have not been driven primarily by ecumenical concerns, but rather by a legitimate preference for Eastern trinitarian theology. These theologians have been much more thoughtful in their rejection of the *filioque*, and as a result they have given some measure of legitimacy to those inclusivists who ground their understanding of the Spirit's economy (to whatever degree) in rejection of the *filioque*—and this not only through strength of numbers, but also in terms of theological rationale. Perhaps the most vocal Western opponent of the *filioque* in recent years has been the Reformed theologian Colin Gunton, who has been quite critical of Augustine, regarding him as the source for much that is misguided in Western theology, including adherence to the double procession of the Holy Spirit.²¹ Gunton's has been an

²⁰Alasdair Heron, one of the few Reformed theologians represented in the WCC's report, admits that "not a few theologians—and the great majority of members of Reformed churches—would be likely not so much to reject the *filioque* as to be totally uninterested in the whole question. This has nothing to do," he continues, "with the objections of the Eastern Orthodox churches to the doctrine, but simply with the fact that it has no significant place in their own perspective." Alasdair I. C. Heron, "The *Filioque* in recent Reformed Theology," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, ed. Lukas Vischer (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981), 112.

²¹Gunton, "Augustine," 33. Here, Gunton states that modern culture's skepticism about the existence of God is, at least in part, the result of "a theological tradition which encourages thought in the

influential voice in calling for a reassessment of the traditional Western approach to the Trinity, including the acceptance of the *filioque*. Beyond this however, there are certain aspects of his thought that find parallels in the thinking of those pneumatological inclusivists who also reject the *filioque*, and thus a brief overview of his rationale may prove helpful.

For Gunton, Augustine's error was an approach to the knowledge of God based not in the economy of salvation, where the Trinity is experienced, but in an overly intellectual and highly "Platonic schema" most clearly characterized by his analogy between the knowledge of God and the inner workings of the human mind.²² The importance of this analogy for Augustine was that it took its starting point from (and thus was intended to protect) the unity of God, which was a paramount concern in developing his doctrine of the Trinity. This is in contradistinction to the Eastern tendency in trinitarian thought, which is to begin with the threeness of the persons. Gunton sees Augustine's analogy as having its roots in the platonic doctrine of knowledge as recollection. In this concept of human knowledge there is a threefold constitution of the mind consisting of memory, understanding, and will. Augustine ties each person of the Trinity to one of these three, attributing to the Spirit the function of the will. The decision to relate the Spirit to *will* and the Son to *understanding* seems rather arbitrary to Gunton, and has no real grounding outside of Augustine's Platonic schema.²³ But the

essential unknowability of God." His essay lays most of the blame for the Western tradition squarely upon Augustine.

²²Colin Gunton, "The Spirit in the Trinity," in *The Forgotten Trinity*, ed. Alasdair I. C. Heron (London: Inter-Church House, 1991), 131.

²³Gunton, "Augustine," 49. Augustine's Platonic schema, according to Gunton, becomes a procrustean bed upon which his conception of the Spirit is forced to lie.

real flaw of this schema for Gunton is that Augustine's understanding of the Spirit is formed by an imported, artificial blueprint rather than the Spirit's economic work.

According to Gunton, by locating the knowledge of God in the human mind rather than in the divine economy several things resulted. One of these is that the Spirit's personal distinctiveness is lost (a common Eastern criticism of Western pneumatology, and a common complaint leveled against the *filioque* by pneumatological inclusivists and others). The Spirit loses hypostatic weight in Augustine's characterization of him as the love which connects Father and Son (or in the analogy of the mind, the *will* that connects understanding to memory). Gunton finds this illustrated in Augustine's justification for attributing to the Spirit the particular title, "gift" of God.²⁴ Although this is a perfectly acceptable title for the Spirit, Gunton regards Augustine's efforts to distinguish between the Son and the Spirit on this grounds ineffective and strained, for the Son also may rightly be regarded in Scripture as the "gift" of God.²⁵ After surveying Augustine's justification for attributing the title "gift" of God solely to the Spirit, Gunton states, "One can only conclude that the whole justification is very thin and the result is that Augustine's conclusion in XV.37 has all the air of special pleading."²⁶ The upshot of all of this for Gunton is that even though Augustine knew that a personal distinction between

²⁴The titles "love (or charity)" and "gift" are made virtually synonymous by Augustine, and are paralleled by the title "will." This is so because it is the mutual "love" of the Spirit that unites Father to Son, just as the "will" ties the memory to understanding. Augustine connects the titles "love" and "gift" when he states, "As then holy scripture proclaims that charity is God, and as it is from God and causes us to abide in God and him in us, and as we know this because he has given us of his Spirit, this Spirit of his is God charity. Again, if there is nothing greater than charity among God's gifts, and if there is no greater gift of God's than the Holy Spirit, what must we conclude but that he is this charity which is called both God and from God?" Augustine, *The Trinity*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1991), 424. Note that all future referenced to this work are from this edition.

²⁵This is particularly true, Gunton argues, with reference to the New Testament's language of the Son as sacrifice (e.g., Rom 8:32).

²⁶Gunton, "Augustine," 53.

the Son and the Spirit was absolutely essential for the doctrine of the Trinity, he failed to give adequate grounding to this distinction because his understanding was based in Neoplatonism, not in the economic work of the Spirit. Simply stated, Augustine was more influenced by Plato than by Paul.

Gunton admits that there is truth in Augustine's claim that the Spirit is the gift of God (parallel to the Spirit's title of *will* in the mind analogy), but his single-minded commitment to attribute this title *solely* to the Spirit causes him to lose the distinction between Son and Spirit, as well as appreciation for particular features of the Spirit's economy. The Spirit therefore loses not only hypostatic weight in Augustine's schema, but also economic weight—that is to say, Augustine fails to take the Spirit's economic work seriously because he has a preconceived notion of the Spirit's place in the Trinity.²⁷ The love attributed to the Spirit is turned *inward* toward God rather than outward toward the world, with the result being that “the immanent Trinity is in effect conceived in terms contradictory of the economy.”²⁸ According to Gunton, the root cause of this is that Augustine's doctrine of God is actually *grounded* in this Neoplatonic analogy of the mind rather than merely *illustrated* by it.²⁹ A less platonic approach would have grounded knowledge of God in the economy, where the Spirit is central in the “concrete historical

²⁷Ibid., 55.

²⁸Gunton, “The Spirit in the Trinity,” 131. The contradiction is that in the economy of the Spirit we actually experience God turned *outward* toward the world, whereas in Augustine's schema the Spirit is that which turns God inward toward himself. According to Gunton, Augustine has lost the eschatological aspect of the Spirit's work—and one of the ways this manifests itself is the *type* of love that Augustine attributes to the Spirit. It is a love grounded in a *unitive* function (again, because based in the mind analogy) rather than a dynamic love that seeks the other. Such love is that which is displayed in the economy, particularly in the incarnation of the Son. Thus, “By attributing to the Spirit the kind of love that he does, Augustine thus attracts attention away from the economy of salvation.” One of the ways he does so is by obscuring “the specific hypostatic uniqueness of the Holy Spirit.” Gunton, “Augustine,” 54.

²⁹Gunton, “Augustine,” 50.

events in which God is present to the world.”³⁰

What does all of this mean for pneumatological inclusivism’s rejection of the *filioque*? First of all, Gunton regards Augustine’s argument for the dual procession of the Spirit³¹ to be closely tied to his failure to consider the Spirit’s hypostatic distinctiveness and the significance of his economic work.³² This type of argumentation parallels precisely that of inclusivists like Clark Pinnock, who argues that adopting the *filioque* subordinates the Spirit’s economic ministry to that of the Son—in effect, undermining the otherwise universal breadth of the Spirit’s reach by tying him too closely to the revelation of the Son in the gospel.³³ Such a move constitutes a subordination not only of the economic *mission* of the Spirit, but also the hypostatic *being* of the Spirit. Consequently, the *filioque* calls into question the personal distinctiveness and full deity of the Spirit because it regards him as other than the Lord of creation who “blows where he wills” (John 3:8). This understanding will become fully manifested in Pinnock (as well as some other pneumatological inclusivists) by a drastic flattening of the contours of biblical pneumatology. For Pinnock the work of the Spirit in relation to Jesus seems little more than a confirmation of what the Spirit is seeking to do in all of creation rather than an epic and eschatological work unparalleled in the rest of history.

³⁰Ibid., 51.

³¹Augustine’s understanding of the dual procession is found most clearly in *the Trinity* 15.29, where he states, “And yet it is not without point that in this triad only the Son is called the Word of God, and only the Holy Spirit is called the gift of God, and only the Father is called the one from whom the Word is born and from whom the Holy Spirit principally proceeds. I added ‘principally’, because we have found that the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son.”

³²Gunton, “Augustine,” 55.

³³Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 196.

In a similar fashion Gunton's approach parallels pneumatological inclusivism in that his rejection of *the filioque* is tied to an over-emphasis on the economic work of the Spirit as it relates to his anointing of the man, Jesus of Nazareth. This over-emphasis results in an unbalanced pneumatological mission in which the Spirit's role as the one who *witnesses to* Jesus subsequent to his ascension is neglected or even denied. Gunton argues that an Augustinian approach fails properly to appreciate the Spirit's relationship to the humanity of Christ, and that the success of the Son's mission should be regarded as a function of the Spirit's economic work in the man, Jesus of Nazareth, rather than as a result of Jesus' own innate deity (as he argues is typical in the West).³⁴ Now, there is certainly some element of truth in this since the New Testament clearly regards Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ who is anointed with the Spirit in an unequalled way according to Old Testament prophecy (Isa 11:2; Luke 3:22; 4:1, 14, 18). However, Gunton's observations can be overstressed, as a survey of Pinnock's theology will later show. Although Pinnock seeks to approach the Spirit/Son relations in terms of the Irenaean model of the "two hands of God,"³⁵ his pneumatology clearly overshadows his Christology. In his construal of the Spirit's economy, Pinnock actually *reverses* what he regards as the result of accepting the *filioque*—that is, subordinating the Spirit's economy to that of the Son—by making the Son's ministry a *subset* of the Spirit's universal

³⁴Gunton makes it clear that in his mind there has been an overemphasis on the deity of Christ in Western theology (again, because of Augustine) that is a direct result of ignoring the Spirit's role in the Incarnation. So, he follows Edward Irving in attributing Jesus' sinless life *solely* to the work of the Spirit. This becomes the Spirit's primary function in regard to Jesus, so that Gunton's pneumatology is, in a sense, fundamental to his Christology. Gunton, "The Spirit in the Trinity," 126-27. This is also true of pneumatological inclusivism in general, as evidenced in Pinnock's statement that Christ's "sinlessness was really due to his relation with the Spirit, not his own deity." Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 88.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 92.

economic activity.³⁶ Thus Pinnock echoes Gunton in his construal of the Spirit's economic work, and develops a type of Spirit Christology that requires a rejection of the *filioque* to achieve its ends. For both Gunton and Pinnock, to accept the *filioque* is to subordinate the Spirit's economic activity to the Son—in essence, denying his lordship and complete deity. Additionally, it is part and parcel of a pneumatology that calls into question the full personhood of the Spirit. For these theologians the rejection of the *filioque* seems a small price to pay for the recovery of the Spirit's true place in the economy of salvation.

More frequently, however, Western theologians are regarding the rejection of the *filioque* not merely as a prerequisite to ecumenical unity, but as a preferred way of understanding the place of the Spirit in the Trinity. Gunton's theology has been provided here as but one illustration of the anti-Western sentiment that has gained influence given the recent increased exposure to Eastern trinitarian theology.³⁷ This exposure, as argued above, has been brought about largely by the Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement. But Gunton is certainly not alone in his call for an abandonment of the *filioque*.³⁸ There is a pneumatological culture growing in the West that increasingly emphasizes a broad understanding of the Spirit's economic work, and this culture is fed

³⁶Although he denies that this is his intention, it will be demonstrated later the Pinnock in reality subordinates the Son's economy to that of the Spirit.

³⁷It should be made clear that pneumatological inclusivists do not base their arguments for rejecting the *filioque* specifically on Gunton's work (although Pinnock, in *Flame of Love*, 34, expresses appreciation for Gunton's social understanding of the Trinity). What I am arguing here is merely that Gunton's theology contains many of the themes and basic arguments that inclusivists like Pinnock will use to justify moving away from a traditional Western approach to the Trinity toward a more Eastern understanding.

³⁸For one example of this embracing of the Orthodox view on the *filioque*, see Nick Needham, "The *Filioque* Clause: East or West?" *SBET* 15 (1997): 142-62. Needham argues (161) that one of the benefits of the Eastern view is an expanded understanding of the trinitarian nature of God's works.

at least partially by a perception that the West has traditionally diminished the role of the Spirit in favor of a more christocentric theology.³⁹ Pneumatological inclusivists are part of this growing culture, and as such often utilize the same lines of thought found in Gunton's theology to justify a salvific work of the Spirit beyond the boundaries of gospel proclamation. Rejection of the *filioque* is perhaps only a small part of their argument, but for some, like Pinnock, it is certainly not an insignificant part. Furthermore, it seems to be part and parcel of a broader and growing movement in the West to at least reconsider whether the *filioque* is necessary to Western theology as a whole.⁴⁰

Theologies like that of professor Gunton's have flourished in an environment of increased exposure to Eastern theology. Such exposure has come about largely, though not exclusively, through the participation of the Orthodox church in ecumenical dialogue. It is perhaps too much to argue that Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement has led *directly* to the development of theologies such as that of Gunton. On the other hand, even though Gunton does not appear to be overly driven by ecumenical concerns, Alasdair Heron nevertheless argues that such approaches to the *filioque* question are part and parcel of an outlook that is "encouraged both by increasing contact with Orthodox theologians and churches and by a certain growth of fresh interest in the theology of the Greek Fathers—not to mention a new critical awareness of what has been

³⁹Molly T. Marshall, *Joining the Dance: A Theology of the Spirit* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2003), 5. Marshall cites Jürgen Moltmann as arguing that a new paradigm is emerging in pneumatology, one that is more holist rather than anthropocentric, and thus embraces the whole creation. It is not coincidental that Moltmann ties the emergence of this new paradigm to the increasing rejection of the *filioque* among Western theologians.

⁴⁰There have been several recent articles questioning whether the *filioque* is a necessary part of Western theology—some affirming and some denying. The very fact that the question is being raised with more frequency points to a shift in understanding the perceived importance of the *filioque* to one's overall theology. See, for example, Needham, "The *FILIOQUE* Clause"; Bray, "The Double Procession of the Holy Spirit"; and Pugliese, "How Important is the *FILIOQUE*?"

aptly called the ‘Latin captivity’ of Western theology.”⁴¹ Thus, even those not enmeshed in the ecumenical movement are bound to feel the influence of increased exposure to Eastern theology that has in some measure come about through their participation in ecumenism.

This influence is further illustrated by the increasing dialogue between East and West that has taken place in the recent years. When Lukas Vischer, editor of the WCC’s study on the *filioque* issue, spoke of the urgency of resolving the *filioque* question, he did so against the backdrop of an emerging conversation that was already beginning to take place between Orthodoxy and various Western churches. He even partially grounds the urgency of the question in such conversations when he states, “The fact that individual Western churches have already broached the question in discussions with the Orthodox Church lends added urgency to the ecumenical debate.”⁴² Vischer was referring to dialogue taking place between the Old Catholics and Anglicans on the one hand, and the Orthodox on the other. In the intervening years since this report was commissioned, however, Orthodoxy’s dialogue with Western churches has grown so that Orthodoxy now enjoys active discourse with groups such as evangelicals,⁴³ and even the Pentecostal movement.⁴⁴ As these conversations continue and evolve the pressure will

⁴¹Heron, “The *Filioque* in recent Reformed Theology,” 114-15. This phrase would certainly have met with the late professor Gunton’s approval.

⁴²Vischer, *Spirit of God*, v.

⁴³For an example of opinions regarding Orthodox/evangelical dialogue, see Bradley Nassif et al., *Three Views on Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism*, ed. Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004).

⁴⁴See, for example, the works by Rybarczyk cited above in n. 15. Even negative assessments of one another illustrate this dialogue. See, for example, John Warren Morris, “The Charismatic Movement: An Orthodox Evaluation,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 28 (1983): 103-34.

undoubtedly increase upon Western theologians to at least reexamine the *filioque*, and there will certainly be more calls for the abandonment of the *filioque* as the price of more visible unity with the East.

The Shift from Cosmic Christology to Pneumatology

There is however one other important factor that has led to the relevance of the *filioque* question for pneumatological inclusivism, and that is the shift from cosmic Christology to pneumatology as the grounding for both contemporary attempts to provide a means of salvation for the unevangelized and for engagement with world religions.⁴⁵ The ecumenical movement in the mid-twentieth century almost universally employed cosmic Christology as a grounding for a theology of engagement with other religions. The concept of cosmic Christology was not new, but was based on Colossians 1:15-20 and other such passages that pointed to the cosmic scope of Christ's person and work. This passage was the basis for Joseph Sittler's use of the term as the title of his well-known 1961 work, "The Cosmic Christ."⁴⁶ Later scholars began to use this terminology to refer to a universal redemptive work of God in the world that would be the basis for religious dialogue. The foundation of this supposed universal work of salvation was the relationship of Christ to the creation. As J. C. Hindley points out, "The term 'Cosmic

⁴⁵Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen asserts that "Christian theology of religions has taken several significant turns despite its relatively short history. . . from christocentric to theocentric to pneumatocentric approaches, and finally toward Trinitarian approaches. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "How to Speak of the Spirit among Religions': Trinitarian Prolegomena for a Pneumatological Theology of Religions," in *The Work of the Spirit: Pneumatology and Pentecostalism*, ed. Michael Welker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 50. I will argue that even those supposedly trinitarian approaches to a theology of religions are heavily weighted toward pneumatology—so much so that the notion of being trinitarian is called into question.

⁴⁶Sunand Sumithra, "Conversion: To a Cosmic Christ?" *Evangelical Review of Theology* 16 (1992): 386.

Christ' has been used to cover both the idea of Christ as the author of creation and the teaching that the redemption won on the cross has a significance for the whole created universe."⁴⁷ The envisioned redemption in some cosmic Christologies is not limited to the physical universe (Rom. 8:22), but also includes the principalities and powers of this age (Col. 1:16, 20). Christ's victory over the forces of darkness thus has a cosmic influence, a universality that will encompass all things in the eschaton (Eph. 1:10).⁴⁸ Antonio Bruggeman speaks of the universal redemption inherent in cosmic Christology when he states, "The cosmos, through the *perichoresis* of nature and grace, is progressively being transformed into the 'Body of Christ', into the *Pleroma* or to put it in Johannine categories, into the new Jerusalem, the new heavens and the new earth. Since the incarnation, and even before, nothing is 'profane', nothing 'a-theistic' or 'a-Christian'."⁴⁹ The ecumenical movement in the mid-twentieth century argued that the best Christian theology had always been both centered on the history of salvation and desirous of dialogue with the world.⁵⁰ Cosmic Christology therefore became the means of embodying both of these goals since it focused on the cosmic scope inherent in the history of redemption. Those who were ecumenically minded thus began to search the world religions for evidence that Christ was at work within them in his capacity as the universal Lord of creation. One of the most notable and ambitious projects of this type

⁴⁷J. C. Hindley, "The Christ of Creation in New Testament Theology," *Indian Journal of Theology* 15 (1966): 89.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 95.

⁴⁹Antonio Bruggeman, "The Cosmic Christ: Some Recent Interpretations," *Indian Journal of Theology* 15 (1966): 142. Emphasis in original.

⁵⁰Jacques Dupuis, "The Cosmic Christ in the Early Fathers," *Indian Journal of Theology* 15 (1966): 107.

was Raimundo Panikkar's *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*.⁵¹ Corresponding to Panikkar's work was Karl Rahner's concept of the anonymous Christian, which held that even those who have never heard of Christ may nonetheless partake of his salvation through their own religious tradition.⁵² Many variations on the cosmic Christology theme were developed in order to meet the need for a theological basis for the ecumenical movement's inclusive soteriology.⁵³ Cosmic Christology allowed for a potentially universal salvation while still honoring the particularity of salvation through Christ.⁵⁴ Bayart affirms both particularity and universality when he says, "The synthesis of these two affirmations [that Christ is the only mediator and that the unevangelized can be saved without knowing him] is found in the universal, active presence of Christ the Redeemer, 'Who enlightens every man that he may finally have life'."⁵⁵ Bayart's statement reflects the essence of cosmic Christology.

However, the ecumenical movement increasingly began to view Christology as potentially offensive to those non-Christian religions with which they sought dialogue.⁵⁶

John Bolt has said that "the current ecumenical interest in the cosmic or universal work

⁵¹Ironically, Hinduism has also tried to find the hidden Vishnu within Christianity. See, for example, K. Klostermaier, "Raymond Panikkar's *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*," *Indian Journal of Theology* 15 (1966): 72.

⁵²Molly Truman Marshall, *No Salvation Outside the Church? A Critical Enquiry* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993), chap. 4.

⁵³There have been many versions of cosmic Christology, each with its own nuances and emphases. Two that are commonly referenced are Allan D. Galloway, *The Cosmic Christ* (London: Nisbet & Co., 1951), and George A. Maloney, *The Cosmic Christ* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968).

⁵⁴For these two principles as necessary to a theology of religions, see Pinnock, "Toward An Evangelical Theology," 361-62.

⁵⁵J. Bayart, "The Cosmic Christ and Other Religions," *Indian Journal of Theology* 15 (1966): 145.

⁵⁶According to Amos Yong, cosmic Christology, in spite of its universal dimension, was nevertheless a form of christocentrism. Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 97.

of the Holy Spirit represents a significant shift from an earlier christological focus.”⁵⁷ The reason for this shift is that “A cosmic pneumatology provides more possibilities for an inclusive Christianity than the focus on Christology which accents the particularity of our Lord.”⁵⁸ This perceived need for less particularity and more universality is indeed one of the primary reasons for the shift from cosmic Christology to pneumatological inclusivism. However, there are other reasons as well, and some of these reasons are instructive both for the current status of the *filioque* debate and also for the larger emphasis on pneumatology as a grounding for contemporary inclusive soteriologies.

Even as the ecumenical movement focused upon cosmic Christology as a tool for religious dialogue, several factors were leading to a shift from Christology toward pneumatology as a basis for inclusivism. The ecumenical movement had always connected cosmic Christology with the work of the Holy Spirit to some degree.⁵⁹ Such views saw the Spirit as the instrument of Christ’s work in the world, and thus fit nicely within the framework of cosmic Christology. However, the growing influence of Eastern Orthodoxy and the Pentecostal/charismatic movement, already mentioned above, brought about an increasing uneasiness with the perceived subordination of pneumatology to Christology (and, to a lesser degree, ecclesiology). Both of these groups are heavily

⁵⁷Bolt, “The Ecumenical Shift to Cosmic Pneumatology,” 255.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 256.

⁵⁹In “The Cosmic Christ and Other Religions,” Bayart says, “I submit that whatever is genuinely religious, whatever explicitly or implicitly contributes to a sense of dependence on God, to a trustful reliance on God’s goodness, to a hope of salvation (however much cast in mythology and mixed with doctrinal error), whatever contributes to a fundamental option of humility and openness before God and of charity and love for one’s fellowmen, all that may be, or even must be, recognized as ‘seed of the Word’, *fruits of the Holy Spirit*, and may be attributed to the saving presence of the ‘Cosmic Christ’. Whatever closes man upon himself, whatever is pride and self-sufficient autonomy, whatever is self-love as against love of God and love of the neighbour, all that in non-Christian religions, as in Christian religion, too, is *not of the Holy Spirit*, but of the spirit of sinful man, of the Evil One” (147). Emphasis mine.

focused on the work of the Holy Spirit, and their participation in the ecumenical movement was a significant factor in the shift to pneumatology as a foundation for inclusivism.⁶⁰ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen calls attention to this dual influence when he says, “It seems that two factors have been the primary catalysts in contributing to this development [of a resurgent pneumatology]. On the one hand, the voice of Eastern Orthodox theology, especially after its inclusion in the WCC; on the other hand, the dramatic growth and spread of Pentecostalism and Charismatic movements.”⁶¹ As these two voices have grown, so too has the perception that somehow the church as a whole has neglected pneumatology.

The participation of the Orthodox churches in the ecumenical movement, beyond simply making the *filioque* a relevant question in contemporary Western theology, has also been influential in the development of pneumatologically based inclusive soteriologies.⁶² The Orthodox Church is generally understood by contemporary inclusivists to be more focused on the work of the Holy Spirit than its counterpart in the West. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, for example, frames the East/West differences thusly, “Generally speaking, Eastern theology has been more ‘spirit-sensitive’ than its Western counterparts. Eastern Orthodox theology is heavily imbued by pneumatology; Western theology in the main is built on christological concepts rather than on pneumatological

⁶⁰This shift is particularly noticeable in the theme of the 1991 World Council of Churches meeting in Canberra, Australia. The theme, “Come, Holy Spirit—Renew the Whole Creation,” assumes and extols a cosmic pneumatology which clearly replaced the cosmic Christology of former years.

⁶¹Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostals and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Yong (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), 78.

⁶²This is not because Orthodoxy is necessarily inclusive in its soteriology, but simply because of its emphasis on the economy of the Spirit.

ones.”⁶³ This “spirit-sensitivity” made available to the ecumenical movement a potentially broader base for its inclusivism than the Christology upon which it had previously been built. This pneumatological emphasis is evident in the cosmic role assigned to the Holy Spirit by the Orthodox Church, a role which resembles that assigned to the cosmic Christ in earlier ecumenism. Meyendorff refers to the liturgy of Pentecost as that which “glorif[ies] the Spirit as ‘the One who rules all things, who is Lord of all, and who preserves creation from falling apart’ Since, after the Fall, the cosmic elements are controlled by the ‘prince of this world,’ the action of the Spirit must have a purifying function.”⁶⁴ Here, it is the Holy Spirit, rather than a cosmic Christ, who functions in a sustaining, purifying role—and that in a cosmic context.

Additionally helpful to both the ecumenical movement and pneumatological inclusivism is the relatively independent role the Spirit is allowed in the divine economy within an Eastern framework. The Eastern churches have emphasized the divine economies of the Son and the Spirit rather than the notion of salvation history, with the Spirit’s economy being wider than that of the Son and (assuming an Eastern rejection of the *filioque*) in no sense subordinate to it.⁶⁵ The benefit of such thinking for pneumatological inclusivists is that soteriology may be removed from under the heading of ecclesiology (as in the traditional *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*) and given a broader

⁶³Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 68.

⁶⁴Jean Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 169-70.

⁶⁵Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 87. According to Yong the subordination of the Spirit’s economy to that of the Son “makes sense” given the Western acceptance of the *filioque*.

range through the economy of the Spirit.⁶⁶ With the aid of an Eastern model, the Spirit is set free to work outside the church and with no necessary subordination to the economy of the Son. Practically then, the ecumenical movement has regarded Orthodox theology as a means for finding God at work in non-Christian religions⁶⁷ without having to resort to the potentially offensive category of Christology. Even so, Eastern theologians are quick to deny the resulting charge of pneumatocentrism—and it is indeed the case that the best representatives of Eastern theology have maintained the Spirit’s close connection to the Son. Constantine Tsirpanlis speaks for a great many in the Eastern tradition who clearly disavow any neglect of Christology:

Those who speak of an Orthodox ‘pneumatocentrism’ opposed to the so-called ‘christocentrism’ of the Roman Church may express their personal theology but they speak a language alien to the Fathers and to the saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The three Persons, in the Holy Trinity, share in the activity of each of them. The Father and the Son are included in every action of the Spirit.⁶⁸

Nevertheless, it is commonly believed that the Spirit’s role in Eastern thought is much more easily separated and given independence from Christ than in the West. Grace, the Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky says, has a source independent of the Son—“The Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶Ibid., 86.

⁶⁷Ibid., 88.

⁶⁸Constantine N. Tsirpanlis, *Greek Patristic Theology: Basic Doctrines in Eastern Church Fathers* (New York: EO Press, 1979), 1:99.

⁶⁹Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: Latimer, Trend and Co. 1957), 184. In order to be fair to Lossky, it must be acknowledged that his intention is *not* to separate the economies of Son and Spirit entirely, but to preserve the monarchy of the Father as the one from whom both the Son and the Spirit proceed. However, this statement demonstrates that Eastern theology finds it easier to posit the independence of the Spirit than the traditionally more christocentric theology of the West. Lossky personally had great reservations about the Ecumenical Movement. At the date this work was first published (1944), he equated the ecumenical movement with an “attitude of compromise which is ready to sacrifice the truth to the exigencies of ecclesiastical economy in relation to the world,” 186-87.

Although Pentecostals and Charismatics⁷⁰ have been slow to embrace the ecumenical movement,⁷¹ their influence has nonetheless been as widespread there as it has in the rest of the Christendom. This is especially the case among those who seek to expand the role of pneumatology. First of all, the P/C emphasis on the Holy Spirit comports well with the Eastern view of the Spirit. The influence of these two bodies was no doubt mutually reinforcing since both were perceived to be more pneumatologically minded than traditional Western theology. However, one significant factor the P/C movement enjoyed that Eastern Orthodoxy did not was sheer numbers. Kärkkäinen points out that “as of 1990 Roman Catholics constituted 58% of all affiliated Christian church members, while Pentecostals made up 21%.”⁷² This percentage is staggering when one considers that the P/C movement is roughly one hundred years old. Such an enormous number of Christians whose distinguishing characteristic is a specific focus on the work and power of the Spirit should inevitably be expected to have a substantial influence on the rest of Christianity. Nevertheless, despite its progressively growing numbers, P/C entry into the WCC and the larger ecumenical movement was a slow, painful affair. Beset by fear of compromise, the more fundamental elements of Pentecostalism resisted vigorously any fellowship with the WCC and like bodies.⁷³ There were those, however, who called for engagement with the larger Christian world. Men like Donald Gee and David Du Plessis were pioneers in the Pentecostal Church’s

⁷⁰Henceforth these two groups will be referred to jointly by the abbreviation P/C.

⁷¹Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, 39-51. The title of chap. 3 is telling—Kärkkäinen refers to Pentecostals as “Anonymous Ecumenists.”

⁷²Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, 55.

⁷³Walter Hollenweger, “Two Extraordinary Pentecostal Ecumenists: The Letters of Donald Gee and David Du Plessis,” *The Ecumenical Review* 52 (2000): 395.

involvement in ecumenism.⁷⁴ From the beginning Du Plessis and Gee focused on the unity of the Spirit as a basis for ecumenical dialogue. After hearing the reports of Du Plessis and J. Roswell Flower, who had attended the 1954 assembly of the WCC (the only two Pentecostals to do so), Gee began to recognize the difficulty of inter-denominational fellowship and lamented, “Christians might be more willing to study the idea that their true unity subsists in the Spirit and not in organization.”⁷⁵ Despite the difficulties, each of these men recognized the assembly as a worthwhile endeavor and saw the quest for visible unity a laudable goal.⁷⁶ Such views would later cost Du Plessis his ordination in the Assemblies of God.⁷⁷

Men like Gee and Du Plessis have been in the minority among P/C theologians in their support for the efforts of the ecumenical movement. It has historically been the case that the WCC was more interested in the P/C movement than vice-versa. Claire Randall states:

Throughout its life the World Council of Churches has given self-conscious attention to the Pentecostal churches, including some of them in its membership.... In addition to Pentecostal church membership, the World Council has also sought to reach out to the charismatics within its member churches, in order to enrich spiritual renewal in the ecumenical movement.⁷⁸

The lack of interest in the ecumenical movement among P/C Christians has changed in recent years however. Ecumenically-minded P/C theologians such as Amos Yong, Clark

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Cecil M. Robeck, “A Pentecostal Looks at the World Council of Churches,” *The Ecumenical Review* 47 (1995): 61.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid., 63.

⁷⁸Claire Randall, “The Importance of the Pentecostal and Holiness Churches in the Ecumenical Movement,” *Pneuma* 9 (1986): 51.

Pinnock, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, and others have encouraged ecumenical dialogue. These men, and others like them, have led the call for a more robust theology of the Spirit as grounds for both a theology of religions and soteriological inclusivism. They have come to believe that there are very real advantages offered by a pneumatological approach to the theology of religions. The result is that Christology has become less attractive as a means of engaging other religions, principally due to its particularity, while at the same time the universal potential of pneumatology was being explored as a comfortable alternative. In this environment, pneumatology began to function as a means of inclusivism because it was familiar to P/C Christians. The P/C focus on the Spirit has thus given to the ecumenical movement an indispensable tool for achieving its primary goal, the unity of the church. Beyond this, however, pneumatology has come to be regarded as a superior means of developing a workable soteriological inclusivism.

Pneumatological Inclusivism and the *Filioque*

The prior discussion demonstrates that a variety of factors have led to pneumatology becoming central for inclusive soteriologies in recent years—paramount among these being the rising awareness of Eastern Orthodox theology and the shift away from cosmic Christology as grounding for an evangelical theology of religions. Now that pneumatology has become the driving force behind inclusive soteriologies the *filioque* has taken on new significance as a potential hindrance to the pneumatological economy that is necessary to ground these “wider hope” theologies. This manifests itself in the way that some pneumatological inclusivists regard the *filioque*. Though some see its rejection as more crucial than others, it is nevertheless the case that for those inclusivists who ground their soteriology in a wider work of the Spirit the *filioque* is almost

universally regarded a hindrance since it ties the Spirit's economic work too closely to the economy of the Son, and may possibly even subordinate the Spirit's economy to that of the Son. The remainder of this chapter will survey three prominent inclusivists whose work is grounded more or less in pneumatology: Clark H. Pinnock, Amos Yong, and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen.⁷⁹ Among these, the rejection of the *filioque* is most important to the theological scheme of Clark Pinnock, and for this reason he will remain the primary dialogue partner throughout this work. However, each of these theologians represent important branches of Christianity (Baptist (with a heavy Wesleyan influence), Pentecostal, and Lutheran respectively), and so illustrate the broad range of pneumatological inclusivism. Each of these theologians has been influenced by both Orthodoxy and P/C theology to a greater or lesser degree, and thus each has borrowed from the East in terms of their arguments against the *filioque*.⁸⁰ For these writers the rejection of the *filioque* offers some very tangible benefits for pneumatology, particularly as it relates to the economy of the Holy Spirit.

Clark Pinnock

Clark Pinnock has walked a long and circuitous theological road to where he is today.⁸¹ He was the earliest of these three theologians to endorse a form of

⁷⁹I say "more or less" because Kärkkäinen, in particular, is seeking to move toward a more trinitarian orientation for his understanding of religious pluralism. However, his theology is still heavily weighted toward the work of the Spirit.

⁸⁰However, it will be argued in subsequent chapters that the Orthodox rejection of the *filioque* is rooted in significantly different theological issues than those of the inclusivists.

⁸¹For a short survey of this journey, see Daniel Strange, "Biographical Essay: Clark H. Pinnock: The Evolution of an Evangelical," in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000), 1-18.

pneumatological inclusivism. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen says of Pinnock that “his views can be regarded as representative of a more progressive, ecumenically conscious segment of the rapidly growing Christian family of churches, which is not united by a common denominational label but rather a set of theological convictions.”⁸² The fact that Pinnock’s views are representative of a larger movement of more ecumenically minded, ‘left wing’ evangelicals makes him a good candidate for a survey of pneumatological inclusivists. Pinnock has become something of a champion of ecumenical dialogue, calling on evangelicals actively to engage other religions as fellow recipients of God’s grace.⁸³ Beyond this, however, he is a prime example of one who has shifted from a Christologically centered inclusive soteriology to a pneumatologically oriented model in recent years. Kärkkäinen says of Pinnock, “In hindsight, one could say that Pinnock as a leading evangelical theologian started his move towards inclusivism with christological convictions; simultaneously, his work with Open theism encouraged this move, and it came to its recent state finally through a fresh focus on pneumatology.”⁸⁴ While Kärkkäinen attempts to frame Pinnock’s recent emphasis on pneumatology as an effort to

⁸²Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism: The Doctrine of the Trinity in Christian Theology of Religions* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 97.

⁸³Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 101-03. Note that Pinnock denies any distinction between common and special grace, arguing that any presence of God is gracious and potentially salvific. Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 187-88; see also Stephen J. Wellum, “An Evaluation of the Son-Spirit Relation in Clark Pinnock’s Inclusivism: An Exercise in Trinitarian Reflection,” *SBJT* 10 (2006): 9. Daniel Strange argues that there is some ambiguity in Pinnock’s use of the category of prevenient grace, and that Pinnock’s view has evolved substantially. Strange helpfully attempts to re-categorize Pinnock’s usage as an ontological category of the Spirit’s presence in man and in creation rather than merely an external work of the Spirit. Daniel Strange, “Presence, Prevenience, or Providence? Deciphering the Conundrum of Pinnock’s Pneumatological Inclusivism,” in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2000), 233-34.

⁸⁴Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism*, 98.

formulate a truly trinitarian doctrine of religions,⁸⁵ Pinnock has yet to produce any substantial work on the Trinity. His focus has remained clearly on pneumatology as the source for his inclusivism.

However, this is not to insinuate that Pinnock has nothing to say about the Trinity. It is Pinnock's understanding of the Trinity which functions in many ways as foundational to his pneumatological inclusivism as well as his rejection of the *filioque*. Pinnock begins his study of pneumatology by placing it in the context of a social doctrine of the Trinity. This understanding of the Trinity regards God as a "triadic community" rather than a "single, undifferentiated unity."⁸⁶ Such an understanding is a move away from traditional Western categories of trinitarian thinking toward a more Eastern model which tends to take as its starting point the threeness of the persons rather than the unity of the single, divine nature.⁸⁷ The danger in this recent Western trend toward a social approach to the Trinity according to Robert Letham is a tendency toward a "loose tritheism."⁸⁸ Pinnock is not unaware of this criticism, and thus he states, "In order to avoid tritheism, we say that the Trinity is a society of persons united by a common divinity."⁸⁹ However, it is clear that for Pinnock the triadic community takes precedent over the common divinity, which remains somewhat nebulous and essentially

⁸⁵Ibid., 101.

⁸⁶Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 35.

⁸⁷This is not to say that Eastern theology as a whole has a social trinitarian bent, but simply that Pinnock himself sees his view as leaning toward the East more than the West. Robert Letham notes the tendency of Eastern trinitarianism to begin with the threeness of the persons in Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2004), 3.

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 35.

ungrounded in social trinitarian theology.⁹⁰

Pinnock's social understanding of the Trinity finds expression in his pneumatology in that the Spirit seems to function in an almost independent manner when compared to traditional Western theology. The Trinity, after all, is constituted by three *individuals* whose unity is defined by a perichoretic relationship of love.⁹¹ Each of these individuals then is sovereign and fully Lord. Added to this is Pinnock's seeming rejection of any notion of hierarchy within the Trinity. The Trinity, according to Pinnock, is characterized by *mutuality* and *reciprocity*.⁹² To argue otherwise would be to deny the fundamental perichoretic unity which is the essence of the Trinity. The result of acknowledging any such *taxis* or *ordering* would be tantamount to a denial of the Spirit's full lordship and deity. This notion of mutuality is intended by Pinnock to redress what he sees as Western christocentrism that subordinates the Spirit to the Son so that he may then move toward a more prominent role for the Spirit and his economy in salvation history. He believes this goal to be more achievable within an Eastern trinitarian

⁹⁰Henri Blocher argues that "the trend toward 'social' views of the Trinity looks dangerously unaware of the gravity of tritheism: assigning to the three a generic or corporative unity equals tritheism, it is tritheism" (emphasis original). Henri Blocher, "Immanence and Transcendence in Trinitarian Theology," in *The Trinity in a Pluralistic Age: Theological Essays on Culture and Religion*, ed. Kevin Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 107.

⁹¹Pinnock's view of *personhood* does seem to mitigate against seeing the persons of the Trinity as a community of *individuals* (Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 36). For Pinnock, personhood is *defined* by relationship, not an individual's ontological constitution. Nevertheless, by emphasizing the threeness of God *while simultaneously* avoiding all notions of hierarchy within the Trinity (see chap. 4 below), Pinnock has opened the door for a pneumatological mission that functions relatively independently of the Son and the Father. Furthermore, he does state categorically that "the divine Persons exist in relationship with others and are constituted by those relations. They are *individuals* in a social matrix." Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 30. Emphasis mine.

⁹²*Ibid.*, 117. Pinnock also states that "creative love theism . . . envisions God as a mutual and interrelating Trinity, not as an all-determining and manipulative transcendent (male) ego." Clark H. Pinnock and R. C. Brow, *Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 8.

framework.⁹³ This is so because Western theological traditions, according to Pinnock, “have diminished the role of the Spirit by giving the Son an ontic role and the Spirit only a noetic one.”⁹⁴ This is primarily due to the West’s adoption of the *filioque*, which regards the Son as in some sense the *originator* of the Spirit along with the Father. Pinnock prefers to see the Spirit working alongside the Son as one of the “two hands of God”—so much so that he regards the death and resurrection of the Son as “the event in which the Father saves humanity through Son *and* Spirit.” As such, the death and resurrection of Christ is “a trinitarian event in which the three Persons experience the mutuality and reciprocity characteristic of the triune God.”⁹⁵ The Spirit thus becomes, in some sense, a co-mediator of the grace of God along with Christ.

Working from a primarily Eastern orientation toward the Trinity, it is understandable that Pinnock would be basically opposed to the *filioque*. However, for Pinnock the rejection of the *filioque* holds a foundational place in his pneumatological scheme. Of all the pneumatological inclusivists prominent today, Pinnock has the most to gain or lose with regard to the status of the *filioque*. Daniel Strange argues that to miss the significance of the *filioque* for Pinnock is fundamentally to misunderstand his inclusivism altogether, since it is an essential component of his attempt to expand the role

⁹³Some have argued that Pinnock has moved beyond *any* orthodox categories in his doctrine of the Trinity. Alan Howe writes of Pinnock that he “rejects the whole spectrum of views of God, including those of Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, and even Arminianism”; Alan Howe, cited in Tony Gray, “Beyond Arminius: Pinnock’s Doctrine of God and the Evangelical Tradition,” in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000), 135. Howe charges Pinnock with a hybrid trinitarian theology that is essentially Socinian. This may very well be true, but it is also true that Pinnock *sees himself* as more Eastern than Western in his trinitarian thought (Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 92, 196-97).

⁹⁴Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 92.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 93.

of the Spirit in the economy of salvation. Therefore, “Far from being a ‘futile and useless question’, Pinnock thinks that a denial of the *filioque* is crucial to the universality axiom.”⁹⁶ According to Strange, there is a traditional line of thinking in evangelicalism that directly links the *filioque* clause to the economic relationship between the Son and the Spirit. According to this tradition (which Strange illustrates by referencing Herman Bavinck, Louis Berkhof, and Wayne Grudem), rejection of the *filioque* is liable to lead to mysticism wherein the Son and the Spirit are viewed as two different means of reaching God—each person leading to the Father in his own particular way.⁹⁷ Thus Pinnock’s rejection of the *filioque* is consistent with his call for a broader, virtually independent economy for the Holy Spirit that parallels the economic work of the Son. These two economies are intended to function together in Pinnock’s scheme, and are characterized by particularity and universality respectively. These two principles form the backbone of Pinnock’s theology of religions.

Pinnock’s characterization of the Son and Spirit’s economies are expressed in two principles of ostensibly equal importance that serve as foundations to his inclusivism: particularity and universality.⁹⁸ These principles are, in fact, not alien to pneumatological inclusivism generally. Particularity is exemplified by Christ, who because of his incarnation was necessarily limited in time and space. Conversely, universality is the function of the Spirit, who is omnipresent and thus can manifest the grace of God in

⁹⁶Daniel Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation Among the Unevangelised: An Analysis of Inclusivism in Recent Evangelical Theology*, Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2002), 106.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 233.

⁹⁸Pinnock, *Wideness in God’s Mercy*, 17. These two principles are also articulated in Pinnock, “Toward an Evangelical Theology,” 359-63.

places where the name of Christ is not known.⁹⁹ These two economies should be seen as complementary rather than contradictory.¹⁰⁰ However, the acceptance of the *filioque* threatens this reciprocity and means, for Pinnock, that Christology overshadows pneumatology. The *filioque* thus has the potential to restrict the otherwise free work of the Spirit. It's acceptance, characteristic of the Western tradition, subordinates the Spirit to the Son and limits his economic mission to those places where the gospel has been preached, or even within the church itself. Pinnock states,

The idea of adding *filioque* was not perverse theologically. The risen Lord did and does pour out the Spirit on the church. But the phrase in the creed can lead to a possible misunderstanding. It can threaten our understanding of the Spirit's universality. It might suggest to the worshiper that Spirit is not the gift of the Father to creation universally but a gift confined to the sphere of the Son and even the sphere of the church. It could give the impression that the Spirit is not present in the whole world but limited to Christian territories. Though it need not, the *filioque* might threaten the principle of universality—the truth that the Spirit is universally present, implementing the universal salvific will of Father and Son. One could say that the *filioque* promotes Christomonism.”¹⁰¹

Pinnock goes on to say, “In my view the phrase diminishes the role of the Spirit and gives the impression that he has no mission of his own. It does not encourage us to contemplate the broad range of his operations in the universe. It tends to restrict Spirit to the churchly domain and deny his presence among people outside.”¹⁰² So for Pinnock, rejecting the *filioque* is a means of preserving the possibility of a universal presence of the Spirit, and ensuring that his mission in the world remains unfettered by the economy of the Son. He supports his rejection of the *filioque* first of all by taking sides with

⁹⁹Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 187. Furthermore, the Spirit was present *before* Christ in time as well. Thus his ministry is broader in both space and time than that of Christ.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, 196.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*

Eastern Orthodoxy in both the ecclesiological¹⁰³ and theological aspects of the dispute.¹⁰⁴ He states that his principal objection to the *filioque* is that the word was inserted unilaterally into the creed by the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁰⁵ While this objection does not necessarily constitute agreement with the Eastern position on the authority of church councils versus papal authority, it is nevertheless a show of support for the East in one of its principle complaints against the West. More importantly, however, Pinnock finds himself in agreement with Timothy Ware that acceptance of the *filioque* has caused the West to pay too little attention to the work of the Spirit.¹⁰⁶

Pinnock's disowning of the *filioque* fulfills a strategic role in his pneumatological inclusivism. It serves to free the Spirit from the constraints of both the Word and the church. However, it is legitimate to ask whether this is a burden that the rejection of the *filioque* can bear. A clue to answering this question is found in Pinnock's admission that there is something true in the *filioque*, at least in the sense that "the risen Lord did and does pour out the Spirit on the church."¹⁰⁷ Even the Orthodox Church is comfortable with affirming the *filioque* in this sense.¹⁰⁸ Can it therefore be the case that

¹⁰³For an excellent summary of the ecclesiological side of the *filioque* issue, see Nicolas Afanassieff, "The Church Which Presides in Love," in *The Primacy of Peter*, trans. Katharine Farrer (London: The Faith Press, 1963), 57-110.

¹⁰⁴Pinnock, *Wideness in God's Mercy*, 78. However, I will argue later that the Eastern Orthodox Church's rejection of the *filioque* has its roots in very different concerns than those of Pinnock. It is legitimate to query whether Pinnock has misappropriated Eastern Orthodox theology in an attempt to buttress his rather unorthodox theology.

¹⁰⁵Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 197.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.* The ecclesiological issue, perhaps more than the theology of the *filioque*, is the point of contention for the Orthodox Church. Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, new ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1963), 43-72.

¹⁰⁷Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 196.

¹⁰⁸Benedict Englezakis, "Should the Orthodox Speak of a 'Temporal Procession' of the Holy

rejecting the *filioque* as it pertains to the immanent Trinity can have such drastic impact as Pinnock claims while he continues to affirm an economic aspect of the *filioque*? This question will be addressed in chapter 4, but for now it is sufficient to show that Pinnock's pneumatological inclusivism is firmly grounded in a rejection of the *filioque*. Daniel Strange is certainly correct when he states, "Pinnock thinks that the denial of the *filioque* is crucial to the universality axiom."¹⁰⁹ This axiom forms the basis for his "wider hope" soteriology.

Amos Yong and "Sufficient" Ambiguity

Another theologian who grounds his pneumatological inclusivism by arguing for a universal economy of the Holy Spirit is the Pentecostal theologian Amos Yong. Like Pinnock, Yong believes his pneumatological emphasis to be part of an ostensibly trinitarian theology of religions.¹¹⁰ However, also like Pinnock, Yong's basic framework for constructing a theology of religions is almost exclusively pneumatological in nature. The reason for this is simple: Yong believes pneumatology to be the most fruitful starting point for both ecumenical dialogue and an evangelical theology of religions because it lacks the particularity or specificity that is the hallmark of Christology.¹¹¹ Yong is unapologetic about his desire for a sufficiently vague theological foundation that will

Spirit?" *Eastern Churches Review* 9 (1977): 92.

¹⁰⁹Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation*, 106.

¹¹⁰Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 20.

¹¹¹Like Pinnock, Yong characterizes pneumatology as that which provides universality. But unlike Pinnock he also points to the Spirit as reflecting the particularity generally associated with Christology in that the Spirit is the "Spirit of Jesus." Thus, "because the Spirit is both universal and particular. . . pneumatology provides the kind of relational framework wherein the radical alterity—otherness—of the religions can be taken seriously even within the task of Christian theology." Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 21.

allow for the broadest dialogue possible. He says:

A pneumatological starting point furnishes the broadest of contexts for the interreligious encounter, both by beginning with the doctrine of creation (of the cosmos and of the *humanum*), and by supplying conceptual and linguistic resources by which to inquire into the divine presence and agency in the world. . . . What this does is highlight the themes common to the human religious quest even as it provides the kind of latitude for the emergence of comparative categories to facilitate further dialogue. . . . This is not only because a foundational pneumatology is motivated by the idea that God is the ‘object’ of religious encounter regardless of one’s traditional affiliation, but also because it trades on the most *general or abstract categories drawn from our common human experience* as mediated by the Spirit as divine presence and agent.¹¹²

Consider Yong’s critical view of the ‘christocentrism’ of some of his inclusivist colleagues. Although Yong praises Donald Gelpi’s work, *The Divine Mother*, as one of the most ambitious efforts to develop a foundational pneumatology, he nonetheless chides Gelpi for his appeal to the category of Christian conversion as a means to understanding the work of the Spirit. This category, it seems, is too narrow for Yong’s purposes. He states, “I query the propriety of insisting, as Gelpi does, on Christian conversion as a prerequisite for pneumatological understanding.”¹¹³ By choosing such a narrow methodology, Gelpi “forfeits appeal to the breadth of human conversion experiences which are complex and always in *via*. Instead, his methodologically constructed foundation turns out to be a rather limiting platform.”¹¹⁴ Other categories that might appear sufficiently broad to allow religious dialogue are nonetheless rejected by Yong as too ‘Christian’ to be inclusive of other religions. For example, Yong praises Jacques Dupuis for “focusing on a doctrine of sacred scripture [because] the notion of

¹¹²Amos Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency: Toward a Foundational Pneumatology,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3 (2000): 178. Emphasis mine.

¹¹³Ibid., 170.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

sacred scripture is sufficiently vague so as to be potentially applicable to the Confucian or even Taoist canons.”¹¹⁵ He then proceeds, however, to criticize Dupuis for defining sacred scripture in Christian or theistic terms of divine revelation. Yong sees a twofold error resulting: “On the one hand, what began as a sufficiently *vague* category was too abruptly delimited by a less than neutral subcategory; on the other hand, the adequacy of the new category remains questionable as long as it is described only in one instance and not sufficiently tested against a greater variety of specifications.”¹¹⁶ In other words, any category that is unnecessarily narrow or untested for validity against a variety of religions is *de facto* unusable.

Yong’s use of wideness as a criterion for comparative categories stems from his understanding of pneumatology as necessarily independent from Christology. He attempts to qualify his position by saying, “I am certainly not arguing for a view of the economy of the Spirit as completely sovereign or unrelated to that of the Son. I am, however, affirming that the turn to pneumatology may allow for more neutral categories to emerge when attempting to discern the presence and activity of the Spirit on other traditions.”¹¹⁷ Yong admits that the Spirit may not necessarily be found in other religions.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, it is important for Yong that the Spirit’s freedom permits him to work outside the church in an unlimited number of ways—even through non-Christian religious structures. For Yong, the construction of a workable inclusivism requires the understanding that a cosmic pneumatology has replaced the older paradigm of cosmic

¹¹⁵Yong, “The Turn to Pneumatology,” 452.

¹¹⁶Ibid. Emphasis mine.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 453.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

Christology. “What is important from this discussion,” Yong says, “is that the recognition of the autonomy of the Spirit’s economy liberates comparative theology from the categorical boundaries of Christology.”¹¹⁹ Without Christology as a hindrance, Yong is free to build a theology of religions that does not rule out, a priori, a possible work of God (through the Spirit) in other world faiths. Yong is thus able to endorse Samartha’s category of ‘interiority’ precisely because “it is sufficiently vague such that it can be made more specific by the various traditions on their own terms.”¹²⁰ This move by Yong is very much akin to that of Clark Pinnock, who can posit a work of the Spirit in the world which is tied to general revelation and thus sufficiently vague and universal to serve his inclusivism.¹²¹ Both Yong and Pinnock demonstrate that the need for sufficiently vague criteria both for dialogue with the world religions and the Spirit’s work in the world is essential to an inclusivistic soteriology. Christology (cosmic or otherwise) is simply too distinct to function as a broad enough foundation for today’s inclusivists.

Amos Yong and the *Filioque*

Such a broad understanding of the Spirit’s economy must be grounded in some way, and like Pinnock, Yong seeks to support his pneumatology, at least in part, through a rejection of the *filioque*. Yong echoes Pinnock’s sympathy with the Eastern rejection of the *filioque*, arguing that the acceptance of this doctrine subordinates the Spirit to the Son.¹²² This is especially true of the economy of the Spirit, but it also bespeaks of

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 194.

¹²²Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 169 n. 5.

subordination within the immanent Trinity.¹²³ Yong sees himself as following a long line of thinkers who all agree that “the Spirit blows wherever the Spirit wills.”¹²⁴ Similar to Pinnock’s dual principles of universality and particularity, Yong holds to three axioms that frame his pneumatological theology of religions, and the *filioque* is a potential threat to each one. First, “God is universally present and active in the Spirit;” second, “God’s Spirit is the life-breath of the imago Dei in every human being and the presupposition of all human relationships and communities;” and third, “The religions of the world, like everything else that exists, are providentially sustained by the Spirit of God for divine purposes.”¹²⁵ Yong’s rejection of the *filioque*, while not explicitly referred to in this context, clearly serves these axioms. His real goal is to develop a pneumatologically based theology of religions, but the “problem” of Christology continually confronts him, threatening to overshadow the Spirit. “To insist on a robust christological criterion,” he states, “is to mute the identity of the other and to act imperialistically toward other faiths; to loosen the christological criterion is to risk the loss of Christian identity in the interreligious encounter.”¹²⁶ So while the question of Christology remains important for Yong, there is little to be gained from an outright acceptance of the *filioque*, particularly since doing so would endanger his three controlling axioms by tying the ministry of the

¹²³Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 126.

¹²⁴Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 103. While Yong wants to argue for independent, reciprocal economies of Son and Spirit, he recognizes that the absolute severing of the two is problematic. The Spirit cannot be absolutely free of the “christological moment” (103). It is somewhat telling that Yong sees this as a problem to be overcome rather than a biblical understanding of the Spirit’s ministry. Furthermore, he claims that he is not calling for complete autonomy for the Spirit, but simply for “more neutral categories” by which to discern the Spirit’s work in other religions (186).

¹²⁵Ibid., 44-46.

¹²⁶Ibid., 103.

Spirit too closely to the Son.

It is, however, worth noting at this point that both Pinnock and Yong see some benefit to the *filioque*, but only as a means of retaining a christological balance that prevents an “equally dangerous” pneumatocentrism.¹²⁷ However, Pinnock’s tacit approval of some aspect of the *filioque* has been characterized by Yong himself as a “theological abstraction” with little real substance behind it.¹²⁸ Likewise, Yong’s recent recognition of some value in the *filioque* is only as one of many models that demonstrate a trinitarian salvation history.¹²⁹ Furthermore, it is only acceptable if one is willing to accept the equally important concept that the Son is also sent by the Spirit, which balances the christological emphasis of the *filioque* with a Spirit-Christology that acknowledges the Spirit’s role in the Son’s economy.¹³⁰ Neither of these men can convincingly argue that they support the *filioque* in any real sense.¹³¹

Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen

While perhaps lesser known than Pinnock or Yong, the Finnish theologian Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen is nevertheless a prolific writer. Coming from a Lutheran background (with heavy Pentecostal influence) Kärkkäinen’s work has a decidedly pneumatological emphasis and, like Yong, is actively engaged in ecumenical dialogue.

¹²⁷Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 211; Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 226.

¹²⁸Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 126.

¹²⁹Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 226.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Yong seems to have more tolerance for the *filioque* if it is understood in terms of relations rather than source or origin. Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 72.

Also like Pinnock and Yong, Kärkkäinen recognizes a pneumatological deficiency in the West, and sympathizes with the more robust Eastern emphasis on the person of the Spirit.¹³² He feels that too often in contemporary theology “there is a subordinate, secondary role assigned to the Holy Spirit, who is thrust aside and controlled.”¹³³ One reason for this, Kärkkäinen cites Bernd Hilberath as saying, is Augustine’s de-personalization of the Spirit, which laid the groundwork for the *filioque*.¹³⁴ In contrast to this penchant in Western theology, Kärkkäinen lauds Eastern Orthodoxy for its recognition of the reciprocity between Christology and pneumatology. “The mutual relation between the Son and Spirit,” he suggests, “is manifested in that just as the Son comes down to earth and accomplishes His work through the Spirit, so the Spirit comes into the world, being sent by the Son (John 15:26).”¹³⁵ Thus it would seem that for Kärkkäinen the reciprocity of Son and Spirit is at least called into question if one accepts the *filioque*. Like Pinnock, he recognizes the Son and Spirit working in two different, though mutually complementary realms. “The christological aspect creates the objective and unchangeable features of the church, while as a result of the pneumatological aspect there is the subjective side of the Church. In other words, the christological aspect guarantees stability while in its pneumatological aspect the church has a dynamic character.”¹³⁶ Although rejection of the *filioque* does not serve a foundational role in Kärkkäinen as it does for Pinnock (and to a lesser degree, for Yong), it is nevertheless

¹³²Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, 17.

¹³³*Ibid.*

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, 18.

¹³⁵Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, 85.

¹³⁶*Ibid.*

clear that for Kärkkäinen the *filioque* has the potential for hindering a proper understanding of the Spirit's ministry.

Conclusion

For Pinnock, Yong, and Kärkkäinen there is something inherent in the *filioque* that limits the Spirit's mission and subordinates him to the Son, both immanently and economically.¹³⁷ These inclusivists see a net gain for both pneumatology and soteriology in rejecting the *filioque*. The Spirit is freed to mediate the grace of God to the entire creation, not just within the confines of the church or within the reach of the gospel. The question is whether these inclusivists have sufficiently grounded their claims for such a gain in the rejection of the *filioque*, or whether there are other factors that have been ignored. Daniel Strange, speaking of Pinnock's rejection of the *filioque*, properly assesses the importance of the *filioque* for the economy of the Spirit when he states, "I would like to argue that this equivalence of the *filioque* to the separation of Son and Spirit is too simple an association and that denying the *filioque* does not necessarily lead to the 'freeing' of the Spirit from the Son."¹³⁸ At best, Strange goes on to say, "it can be used as supplementary evidence to re-enforce the bond between Christ and the Spirit."¹³⁹ The following chapters of this dissertation will seek to demonstrate that the rejection of the *filioque* alone fails to provide the foundation for an independent mission of the Spirit.

¹³⁷As noted above, this opinion is not limited to pneumatological inclusivists. Colin Gunton, for example, voices the same frustration, arguing that the *filioque* endangers not only the immanent position of the Spirit, but also his economic mission. Gunton, "Augustine," 55.

¹³⁸Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation*, 234.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL RESPONSE: PNEUMATOLOGICAL INCLUSIVISM AND EASTERN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY

It is far too easy when considering the status of the *filioque* in contemporary theology to categorize opposing theological viewpoints in terms of absolutes—the *filioque* is, after all, something that must finally be either accepted or rejected. However, Alasdair Heron has helpfully observed that in both the East and the West, attitudes toward the *filioque* vary widely in terms of the underlying rationale that leads one either to accept or reject it.¹ In spite of this diversity of motives however, those in the West who break with historical precedent by rejecting the *filioque* do seem to have a common pattern behind this rejection. Heron summarizes this common critique of the *filioque* when he states that Western trinitarianism “involves a subordination of the person of the Holy Spirit to the person of Jesus Christ which tends towards a ‘depersonalisation’ of the Spirit, his reduction to a mere ‘power’ flowing from Christ and so loses sight of his sovereign freedom and initiative as the Spirit who, like the Word, is one of what Irenaeus called ‘the two hands of God’. No longer does he ‘blow where he will;’ rather, ‘it goes where it is sent.’”² This characterization of Western trinitarian theology is common among pneumatological inclusivists. The *filioque*, they argue, is part and parcel of a

¹Alasdair Heron, “The *Filioque* in Recent Reformed Theology,” in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ*, ed. Lucas Vischer (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981), 110.

Western theology that treats the Holy Spirit as less significant than either the Father or the Son. For this reason those inclusivists who argue for an independent economy for the Spirit commonly appeal to Eastern trinitarian thought as a theological resource for the development of their pneumatology because they feel that the Eastern theological tradition, partially through its rejection of the *filioque*, is more open to recognizing the Spirit's work.³ While the accuracy of inclusivism's assessment of Western trinitarian theology is certainly debatable, it is the Eastern view of the Trinity, particularly its view of the Trinity at work in the economy of salvation, that will serve as the focus of this chapter.

The burden of this chapter is to demonstrate that that the inclusivists' appeal to Eastern pneumatology constitutes an illegitimate appropriation of Eastern trinitarian thought rather than a justifiable adoption of a useful theological teaching. The contention among inclusivists that rejecting the *filioque* is a means to a pneumatology that is *independent* of or *separable* from Christology⁴ is problematic for inclusivists in that historically the Spirit in Eastern thought has not been regarded as independent from the Son. For all the inclusivists' talk of *reciprocity* between the missions of Son and Spirit the actual result of their theology is a pneumatocentricism that is consistently rejected by

²Ibid., 113.

³Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 92.

⁴To be fair to inclusivists, they do not characterize their pneumatology as *independent* of Christology, and would certainly dispute that this is their intention. However, as Todd Miles has demonstrated, evangelical models of pneumatological inclusivism were not created in a vacuum, "but share much in common with the theological constructions of non-evangelical inclusivists," who, Miles argues, were explicit in their desire to separate the Spirit from the Son. Todd L. Miles, "Severing the Spirit from the Son: Theological Revisionism in Contemporary Theologies of Salvation" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 282. Furthermore, by arguing that the Spirit works separately from

Orthodox theologians. The inclusivists fail to reflect the consistent and more carefully thought out notion of reciprocity that is found in the best of Orthodox theology historically.⁵ Boris Bobrinskoy speaks of this strain of thought in Orthodoxy when he states, “In the totality of the Orthodox tradition, from St Irenaeus to St John of Damascus, there is an extraordinary continuity concerning the reciprocity of the relations between Christ and the Spirit in the dispensation of salvation.”⁶ In spite of the reciprocity that Bobrinskoy lauds, however, the Orthodox church remains firmly committed to the centrality of Christology as witnessed in the New Testament⁷ *without* sacrificing a robust understanding of the Spirit’s ministry—and this in a context where the *filioque* is almost universally rejected. In its attempt to appropriate something of the Eastern tradition that they see as supportive of their cause, inclusivism has actually ripped a theological concept out of its context, and torn it away from the historical moorings that have kept the vast majority of Orthodox theologians from endorsing the type of independent pneumatology that inclusivists propose.

In light of this misuse of Orthodoxy by inclusivists, the thesis of this chapter

the knowledge of Christ they have significantly hindered (or perhaps destroyed) any attempt to use christological criteria to discern the Spirit’s presence and work.

⁵As we will see below, contemporary Orthodox theologians *do* sometimes lean toward emphasizing either Christology or pneumatology as they seek to work out the nature of the economy of salvation. However, the variations in their schemes are often much less pronounced than the differences between pneumatological inclusivism and traditional Western understandings of the Son/Spirit relationship in the economy. In other words, though they vary in leaning toward an emphasis on either Christology or pneumatology they are still largely in agreement that the two cannot be separated.

⁶Boris Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity: Trinitarian Experience and Vision in the Biblical and Patristic Tradition*, trans. Anthony P. Gythiel (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1999), 278.

⁷Serge Verkhovsky states that in terms of the relationship of the Son and the Holy Ghost “the Son has a priority of the Holy Ghost for reasons which I have already made clear: the Holy Ghost is with the Son, for Him, by Him, through Him, of Him! And this order of the *hypostases* is confirmed by Scripture and Tradition.” Serge S. Verkhovsky, “Procession of the Holy Spirit According to Orthodox

will be argued primarily by appeal to both contemporary and ancient Eastern theologians. First, a brief survey of current Eastern thinking regarding the relationship of the Son and the Spirit in the economy of salvation will demonstrate that the rejection of the *filioque* does little to sever the Spirit from the Son in the manner that inclusivists propose. Eastern theologians have vociferously resisted the move to sever pneumatology from Christology, owing largely to their theological heritage which, like its Western counterpart, understands that pneumatology cannot be treated in isolation from Christology if one is to remain faithful to the trinitarian theology of the New Testament.⁸ This Eastern heritage deserves careful consideration, and so the second major section of this chapter will consist of a historical survey of some relevant Eastern fathers on the topic. This survey will reveal that the inseparability of the Son and Spirit in the economy has been built into the very foundation of Eastern thinking since its inception, and this *in spite* of the fact that this same tradition has consistently rejected the *filioque*. This survey of Eastern thought both present and past will make abundantly clear that the rejection of the *filioque* in no way allows for an economy of the Holy Spirit that is independent of the Son, nor does it serve to allow the Spirit the type of economic freedom desired by pneumatological inclusivists. On the contrary, it will be demonstrated by appeal to both the present and the past that the Eastern church explicitly *affirms* virtually everything that the *filioque* was intended to guard, except for the procession of the Spirit from the Son in

Doctrine of the Trinity,” *St Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly* 2 (1953): 24.

⁸Constantine Tsirpanlis, for example, expresses some frustration with the common characterization (which inclusivists, incidentally, are happy to exploit) of the Orthodox Church as more centrally focused on the Holy Spirit than on Christ as compared to the Western church. He states, “Those who speak of an Orthodox ‘pneumatocentrism’ opposed to the so-called ‘Christocentrism’ of the Roman Church may express their personal theology but they speak a language alien to the Fathers and to the saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The three Persons, in the Holy Trinity, share in the activities of each of

the immanent Trinity.⁹ They affirm the full deity of Christ, as well as the closest possible relationship between the Son and the Spirit in both the economy and in the immanent Trinity. It could even be argued that the only thing that the Orthodox Church denies about the *filioque* is the *filioque* itself (that is, the *immanent* procession of the Spirit from the Son) , not those things that the Western church uses the *filioque* to affirm.¹⁰

Contemporary Eastern Trinitarian Theology

Inclusivists like Clark Pinnock believe that rejecting the *filioque* gives more freedom to the Spirit to work where Christ has not been named. In essence he severs the Spirit from the Son so that the Spirit may work in a salvific manner even among the unevangelized, unfettered by the particularity of Christ. He argues for an economy of the Spirit that is virtually independent of both the Son and the Father, and sees the Spirit working with salvific intent throughout all of creation rather than in the restricted domain of gospel proclamation. However, the Eastern trinitarian tradition that Pinnock credits with opening his eyes to the limitations of Western theology¹¹ offers little grounds for

them.” Constantine N. Tsirpanlis, *Greek Patristic Theology: Basic Doctrines in Eastern Church Fathers* (New York: EO Press, 1979), 1:99.

⁹This is certainly not to say that the rejection of the *filioque* in Orthodoxy has no consequences for pneumatology. It has been argued that such a rejection leads toward a greater propensity for mysticism. But a tendency toward mysticism and a pneumatology devoid of christological moorings are two entirely different things. The presence of mysticism may be acknowledged in the Eastern church without accepting that they permit the type of independent pneumatological economy that inclusivists desire and need. Thus, the inclusivists have moved well beyond what an Orthodox rejection of the *filioque* allows.

¹⁰Orthodox Protopresbyter John Romanides seems to acknowledge as much when he states, “Some contemporary Orthodox theologians accept in their writings the presuppositions of the doctrine of the Filioque, but reject the doctrine as such.” John Romanides, *An Outline of Orthodox Patristic Dogmatics*, ed. George Dion. Dragas, trans. George Dion. Dragas (Rollinsford, NH: Orthodox Research Institute, 2004), 37. Romanides rejects this as an option for Orthodoxy. However, he also refers to the *filioque* as a heresy, referring to it as a form of “Semi-Sabellianism.”

¹¹Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 92.

Pinnock's "wider hope" optimism.¹² Rather, the Eastern tradition itself, a tradition in which rejection of the *filioque* is fundamental, maintains the closest possible relationship between the economic work of the Son and the Spirit. This has been true historically, and remains true even to this day. One of the evidences for this close association is that the Eastern churches can and do speak of an *economic filioque* wherein the Son is understood to send the Spirit in the economy of salvation. Such an admission affirms the inseparable nature of the economic work of Son and Spirit, and further demonstrates that the Eastern tradition to which inclusivists like Pinnock appeal fails to affirm the independent economy of the Spirit that is required for pneumatological inclusivism to be a viable soteriology. Therefore, the following section of this chapter will seek, not to examine every detail of Eastern pneumatology, but simply to illustrate by reference to prominent contemporary Orthodox theologians that even in the context of a universal rejection of the *filioque*, the Word and Spirit still enjoy the closest of relationships, and thus Eastern theology cannot serve to ground the independent economy of the Spirit that inclusivism requires. As this chapter will demonstrate, some Orthodox are feeling it increasingly necessary to oppose what they see to be, in some instances at least, theological chaos in contemporary Western pneumatology.

¹²The Eastern tradition, like most others, *does* have within its ranks those who lean toward "wider hope" soteriologies (see, for example, the article by Kallistos Ware, "Dare We Hope for the Salvation of All?" in *The Inner Kingdom* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001), 1:193-215). This does not change the fact, however, that the Eastern tradition, like the West, historically holds to an exclusive soteriology. Nor does it necessarily lead to the conclusion that the Eastern tradition is more conducive to an inclusive soteriology than the Western tradition. More important is the fact that Orthodox theologians who do lean toward some form of inclusivism or universalism do not ground these theologies through an independent economic work of the Holy Spirit in the same manner that Pinnock, Yong, and other pneumatological inclusivists do. Thus, even if their views are similar, they arrive at them through very different means.

Two contemporary Orthodox theologians, Boris Bobrinskoy and Sergius Bulgakov, will serve as the primary examples of current Orthodox thinking. However, several others will also be contrasted and compared throughout in an attempt to provide a well-rounded survey of the relationship between Christology and pneumatology in current Orthodox thinking.¹³ This survey will demonstrate that although the differences between these theologians may vary significantly at some points, yet the spectrum of views on the relationship between the Son and Spirit in the economy could best be classified as *theological nuances* rather than *substantive disagreements*.¹⁴ Both of these theologians have been widely published and continue to be highly influential. Beyond this, however, both serve as excellent examples of Orthodox pneumatology precisely because each has written extensively in the area of pneumatology. Additionally, although all of the theologians interacted with below are universal in their rejection of the *filioque*, there are at times drastic distinctions in the approaches taken to the question. Thus they offer a broad cross-section of the spectrum of contemporary Orthodoxy. Of these, Bobrinskoy and Bulgakov have been chosen for more detailed analysis because of their unique contribution to Orthodox pneumatology over the past century.¹⁵ Taken together,

¹³Like Western theology, Eastern theology is not monolithic in its pneumatology. There are some significant differences between the theologians who will be used as examples, even differences in how to approach the *filioque* question. These will be pointed out when and where necessary. Nevertheless, there is substantial agreement on the inseparability of the Son and the Spirit.

¹⁴Jaroslav Z. Skira, "The Synthesis between Christology and Pneumatology in Modern Orthodox Theology," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 68 (2002): 436.

¹⁵The choosing of two Russian theologians as primary representatives of this one aspect of contemporary Orthodox theology may be further justified by the dominance of Russian influence in Orthodox theology in the twentieth century. Rowan Williams states, "For most of the twentieth century, the story of Orthodox theology is the story of Russian theology, both in Russian itself before 1917 and in the emigration afterwards (especially in Paris)." Rowan Williams, "Eastern Orthodox Theology," in *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century*, ed. David F. Ford, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997), 499. Even stronger is the assessment of Alar Laats, who states,

these contemporary Orthodox voices will demonstrate the illegitimacy of inclusivists' attempts to appropriate the Eastern tradition in service of a pneumatology devoid of christological foundations.

Boris Bobrinsky

Perhaps none of the Orthodox theologians mentioned in this chapter has written more extensively on the relationship of Christology to pneumatology than Boris Bobrinsky. In 1984 he regarded the “fundamental ‘interconnectedness’ between christology and pneumatology” as representing the “major focus” of his theological work over the previous years.¹⁶ For this reason he is a good candidate for beginning this survey, but not for this reason alone. Bobrinsky’s theology exhibits some themes that are common in contemporary Orthodox theology—themes which are rooted in the earliest trinitarian writings of the church. Among these themes is the reciprocity of trinitarian revelation, the inseparability of the Son and the Spirit in the economy, and the necessity of christological criteria for discerning the Spirit. These themes will surface repeatedly in Orthodox theology both past and present.

Bobrinsky has spent considerable scholarly energy emphasizing the inseparable connection between Christology and pneumatology in his writings. This emphasis is a function of his commitment to the unity of the works of the Trinity, and it is only within this larger framework that he highlights reciprocity between the economic

“For most of the modern times Russia has been the main centre of the orthodox theology. Only in the second half of this century prominent orthodox theologians have appeared from other traditionally orthodox countries. . . .” Alar Laats, *Doctrines of the Trinity in Eastern and Western Theologies: A Study with Special Reference to K. Barth and V. Lossky* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999), 74.

¹⁶Boris Bobrinsky, “The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ: ‘Pneumatic Christology’ in the Cappadocian Fathers,” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 28 (1984): 50.

work of the Son and the Spirit.¹⁷ Nevertheless, he regards Christology as central for Orthodox theology. Both of these elements are evident in the introduction to his *magnum opus* on trinitarian theology, *The Mystery of the Trinity*:

Throughout the Gospels, what unfolds in the life of Christ is the trinitarian Revelation. Thus, to speak of Christ is to speak of the Holy Spirit and of the Father (and vice versa). My study on the trinitarian Revelation in the Gospels is actually a chapter on christology. For the Father is “working” (Jn 5:17) and the Holy Spirit cannot be separated from the work of Christ (Lk 4:14-22). He is the focus, the center of Orthodox theology reflection. Everything else derives from this; and one should always keep to this trinitarian perspective of the work of Christ, of His Person, His sacrifice. Likewise, the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost is an actualization of the work and presence of the Savior in the days of the Church. Thus, the life of Christ and the presence of the Spirit coincide totally and perfectly. The Spirit is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Spirit, in a total transparency and reciprocity. Jesus in turn, promises, sends, gives the Spirit with which He is filled.¹⁸

Here, the centrality of Christology for Orthodox trinitarian thinking is affirmed, as is the close connection of the Spirit’s work with the Son. The incarnate Christ first *receives* the Spirit from the Father, and then “promises, sends, [and] gives the Spirit.” This makes Jesus the central figure in the redemptive economy in the sense that the Spirit’s work in the new covenant era flows from, and is dependent upon, the fulfilled work of the Son, which means, among other things, that the Spirit’s work is *eschatological* in nature.¹⁹ Additionally, Bobrinskoy makes it clear that the works of both Son and Spirit are a product of the Father’s work, so that both are fulfilling the will of the Father. This paragraph is illustrative of Bobrinskoy’s theology as a whole, which is rooted in the understanding that all action of God is always trinitarian. Thus, all forms of revelation

¹⁷That is to say, it is not a pneumatological emphasis that drives Bobrinskoy, but a truly trinitarian emphasis.

¹⁸Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity*, 10-11.

¹⁹Pneumatological inclusivism virtually ignores the eschatological aspect of the Spirit’s work,

must also be trinitarian.²⁰ Never is one person of the Trinity operative singly, apart from the others, but all function together even as each exercises that which is appropriate to his person. He states, “God’s action is always Trinitarian. The whole Christian tradition reminds us that God’s creative work proceeds from the common wisdom, love and will of God but that each of the divine persons acts in accordance with its personal being: ‘The Father ordains, the Son accomplishes, the Spirit vivifies and sanctifies’, declared the fathers of the church.”²¹

Yet within this trinitarian emphasis of Bobrinskoy there is a central place for Christology (though not at the expense of a robust pneumatology). For Bobrinskoy, the proper place of both Christology and pneumatology is found in their relationship to one another.²² Thus, he argues that both have been somewhat truncated in various theological traditions of the past, both East and West, when one is isolated from the other. Bobrinskoy believes, for example, that the classic scholastic teaching on Christology is fundamentally inadequate because it has all too often “grossly neglected” or “totally ignored” the role of the Spirit in the life of Christ.²³ The failure of this system, according to Bobrinskoy, is a failure to incorporate pneumatology sufficiently into Christology. Similarly, scholastic pneumatology has been truncated, he argues, in two principal ways. First, “by being reduced to a single speculative chapter of trinitarian theology, focussing

as will be demonstrated in chap. 5.

²⁰Nevertheless, Bobrinskoy recognizes the centrality of Christology in terms of new covenant revelatory import, as will be shown below.

²¹Boris Bobrinskoy, “The Holy Spirit—in the Bible and the Church,” *Ecumenical Review* 41 (1989): 357.

²²Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity*, 72.

²³Bobrinskoy, “The Indwelling of the Spirit,” 49.

on the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father alone, or from the Father through the Son;” and second “by limiting its account of the function of the Spirit to a consideration of his gifts (*charismata*) within the Church and his sanctifying activity in the spiritual life of individual believers.”²⁴ The problem, according to Bobrinskoy, is that “in both cases, the organic, ‘normative’ link of pneumatology with christology has been lost or ignored.”²⁵ However, this is not to argue for the *reciprocity* called for by the inclusivists (which in Pinnock’s case actually seeks to make Christology a *subset* of pneumatology²⁶). Rather, it is to recognize the distinctive work of both the Son and the Spirit in the context of a fully united, trinitarian economy of salvation while nevertheless maintaining the centrality of Christology *in terms of its revelatory uniqueness and significance*. Thus, Bobrinskoy goes on to say, “It is essential, nevertheless, not to lose sight of the *absolutely central* place of christology in the exposition of revelation and in our reflection upon the Holy Trinity, in such a way that the theological structures of our various christologies determine our very conception of the Trinity, whether those christologies reflect Alexandrian, Antiochian or Roman influence.”²⁷ In such a scheme it would be unthinkable that the Spirit would be at work salvifically apart from and independent of the revelation of the Father in the Son.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82.

²⁷Bobrinskoy, “The Indwelling of the Spirit,” 49. Emphasis mine. Bobrinskoy is also careful not to overemphasize the Spirit’s role in the life of Christ in such a way as to deny the absolute deity of the Son. He regards such extremes as moving toward Nestorianism. Ibid., 61.

Clearly, Bobrinskoy does not seek to define his pneumatology based solely upon a particular understanding of the Spirit's procession.²⁸ Rather, his central concern is to articulate a trinitarian theology that recognizes the appropriate *functions* of the Father, Son and Spirit while also fervently denying that there is any immanent or economic independence among the persons. The Son and the Spirit *never* function in isolation from one another since they serve as the "two hands" of the Father. There is, in Bobrinskoy's theology, an understanding that both Christology and pneumatology derive their meaning from one another, and thus each depends upon the other for its proper context and understanding. This means that the centrality of Christology in no way detracts from the mission of the Spirit, as pneumatological inclusivism wants to suggest.²⁹ This is a crucial insight that pneumatological inclusivists have missed in their haste to appropriate what they see as the Eastern emphasis on the Holy Spirit—that is, that for both Eastern and Western theology Christology can remain central even as the economic work of the Spirit is fully affirmed and its implications explored. This is directly at odds with the desires of inclusivists, who find it impossible to maintain the centrality of Christ when his very particularity hinders their ability both to engage other religions and to find a means of salvation for the unevangelized. For both of these desires to be achieved, inclusivists find it necessary to regard pneumatology as central.

²⁸Of course, Bobrinskoy soundly rejects the *filioque*. He states, "The notion of a procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son *tamquam ab uno principio* (as if from one principle) is radically unacceptable to Orthodox theology, whatever may be the explanations or attenuations of the formula." However, as suggested in the introduction to this chapter, he finds positive aspects of the *filioque* that he can affirm in agreement with the Western tradition. Bobrinskoy, *Mystery of the Trinity*, 301-02.

²⁹One of the fundamental tenets of Pinnock and Yong is that the Spirit has historically been subordinated to the Son. For one example see Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 111.

Bobrinskoy, however, maintains the centrality of Christology even as he explores the various models of trinitarian revelation depicted in the New Testament, and in doing so he explicitly rejects one of the primary commitments of pneumatological inclusivism—an entirely distinct and separate realm where the operation of the Spirit is independent of the Father and the Son.³⁰ For Bobrinskoy, no such separation is possible due to the trinitarian foundation of all the works of the persons of the Trinity. The interconnectedness of the persons means that each person witnesses to the others, and yet there is a sense in which Christology is always central since it is in Christ that we see the Father revealed. Bobrinskoy summarizes his position when he states,

Thus there is no temporal period that is proper to the Spirit alone; nor is there a reign of the Spirit before the coming in fullness of the trinitarian Kingdom. This primacy of the consubstantial and undivided Trinity, however, should not hinder us from distinguishing the several pathways by which trinitarian revelation is accomplished. Nor should it prevent us from affirming, *in the strongest terms and as a fundamental principle*, that in the age of the Gospel *the mystery of Christ is primary*: in Him we discover the Father, as in Him we receive both the promise and the gift of the Spirit.³¹

“Accordingly,” he goes on to say, “we need to affirm that the first approach to the trinitarian mystery is Christological.”³² Bobrinskoy argues that the first approach can

³⁰Clark Pinnock, for example, makes much of the Spirit’s operations prior to the coming of Christ—so much so that he refers to the Spirit as “the source of creation *and* redemption.” Thus, the work of Christ bringing grace is nothing more than the manifestation of “the same grace that has always been there since the foundation of the world.” If Pinnock somehow sees the Son or the Father involved in the Spirit’s universal operation prior to the coming of Christ, he is silent as to how. Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82. Emphasis original. Similarly, Amos Yong grounds his pneumatological approach to the world religions by emphasizing the universality of the Spirit’s work, and its centrality to the work of God in the New Covenant. Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 38-39. While it is certainly true that the Spirit’s work in the new covenant era is foundational, it is not so in a way that detracts from the centrality of the revelation of Christ.

³¹Boris Bobrinskoy, “Models of Trinitarian Revelation,” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 39 (1995): 118. Emphasis mine.

³²*Ibid.*, 119.

only be christological, for “Christ Himself is the incarnate Son, and He announces the Holy Spirit.”³³ Not only does the Spirit witness to Christ, but there is a very real sense in which Christ reveals the Spirit.³⁴ There is, in Bobrinskoy’s Eastern theology, a type of reciprocity between the work of the Son and the Spirit that is not found in pneumatological inclusivism, which instead subsumes Christology under pneumatology, relegating it to parenthetical status.³⁵

The failure to maintain the interconnectivity between Christology and pneumatology will inevitably lead, in Bobrinskoy’s opinion, to theological imbalance, distortion, and a fundamental misunderstanding of the true nature of the church.

Bobrinskoy quotes with approval the words of John Meyendorff:

There is no way of separating or isolating the Spirit from the Son, from the ‘fullness of Divinity’ which has been revealed in Christ once and for all. It is such attempted separations which lead to *various reductions of the Christian message*: the notion of a ‘third covenant’ of the Spirit, still forthcoming; charismaticism, which opposes itself to a christocentric and eucharistic understanding of the Church.³⁶

Thus, an overemphasis on pneumatology and a rejection of the centrality of Christ can lead to a loss of the only type of criteria by which the Spirit of God (as opposed to the

³³Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity*, 64.

³⁴This theme can be traced back to Athanasius, as will be shown below.

³⁵Inclusivism’s error is not simply that less attention is given to Christ, but a fundamental change in theological method, so that the work of the Spirit forms the grid through which Scripture is read. In Pinnock’s scheme the Son’s work is *bracketed* by the universal work of the Spirit which both precedes and follows it, virtually unchanged. Such a methodology leads Daniel Strange to ask, “If God’s love is grounded in creation and the presence of the Spirit, then what exactly is the purpose of the incarnation and the atonement? If the cross is not the source of God’s saving grace, then why is it needed?” Daniel Strange, “Presence, Prevenience, or Providence? Deciphering the Conundrum of Pinnock’s Pneumatological Inclusivism,” in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000), 248-49.

³⁶John Meyendorff, “The Theology of the Holy Spirit,” in *Catholicity and the Church* (New York: n.p., 1983), 20; cited in Bobrinskoy, “The Indwelling of the Spirit,” 50. Emphasis mine. Bobrinskoy also cautions here against an overemphasis on Christology, which ignores the work of the Spirit and

spirits of the world) may be rightly discerned since these criteria are all christological. Such a loss will inevitably result in displays such as the one by Chung Hyun Kyung at the 1991 Canberra conference of the WCC where she invoked various “spirits” of modern and ancient oppressed peoples and virtually identified them with the Holy Spirit. Such lack of discernment is sadly predictable where pneumatology is divorced from Christology.³⁷

Sergius Bulgakov

Like Bobrinskoy, Sergius Bulgakov³⁸ is an Orthodox theologian who has written extensively on pneumatology, and who maintains the inseparability of the Son and Spirit in both the economy of salvation and in the eternal being of God. However, it is Bulgakov’s contribution to the *filioque* dispute that makes him indispensable to this discussion. His position on the *filioque* is both unusual *and* non-Orthodox.³⁹ Nevertheless, his major work on pneumatology, *The Comforter*, contains what his translator has called “the most important twentieth-century contribution to Filioque

regards the church as institutional rather than as the living Body of Christ.

³⁷Even Amos Yong recognizes that severing pneumatology from Christology leads to a problem of discernment. He says of Clark Pinnock’s inclusivism that “Pinnock does not quell the misgivings of exclusivists when he speaks of the Spirit as the ‘empirical power that breaks forth in perceptible ways’ without providing assistance for an investigation of this empirical reality. They are not comforted when they read, ‘we do not claim to know how the Spirit works among non-Christians, but only that he is active.’” Amos Yong, “Whither Theological Inclusivism? The Development and Critique of an Evangelical Theology of Religions,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 71 (1999): 344.

³⁸See Williams, “Eastern Orthodox Theology,” 502-05 for more biographical information on Bulgakov.

³⁹Bulgakov was prone to unorthodox approaches to certain theological issues. This may stem from the fact that his education was entirely secular, and he never obtained an advanced theology degree. Paul Gavrilyuk states that “As a theologian he was largely self-taught.” The result was that he was sometimes given to “flights of fancy” in his theology, and was even condemned at one point as a heretic by some elements of the Orthodox Church. Paul L. Gavrilyuk, “Universal Salvation in the Eschatology of Sergius Bulgakov,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 57 (2006): 115. In spite of his eccentricities, however, he is still regarded by Gavrilyuk as a “towering figure” in twentieth-century Orthodox theology.

studies from the Orthodox side.”⁴⁰ Bulgakov is unusual among both Eastern and Western theologians in that, despite spending significant time and energy on the *filioque* debate, he nevertheless denies that one’s position on the *filioque* has any real significance.⁴¹ He supports this contention by repeatedly pointing out that the church has never properly defined the Holy Spirit’s relationship to the Son—that is, “*there is no dogma of the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Son.*”⁴² Bulgakov argues that differences of opinion on this issue do not, therefore, constitute heresy, and should not be called such. To bolster his argument, he adds that, in terms of practical results “West and East do not differ in their veneration of the Holy Spirit, despite their divergence regarding the procession.”⁴³ While this judgment would certainly be disputed by theologians from both East and West, it is nevertheless significant that a respected Orthodox theologian can argue this cogently from an informed position. More significantly for the purposes of this dissertation, however, is that Bulgakov’s opinion, even if overstated, supports the

⁴⁰Sergius Bulgakov, *The Comforter*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), xi. Boris Jakim, Bulgakov’s translator, also refers to the book as a whole as “the most comprehensive and profound book about the Holy Spirit ever written by a Russian theologian, and perhaps one of the most profound books about the Holy Spirit ever written” (vii).

⁴¹Of course, many in both the East and West would dispute this. For a Reformed opinion on this question, see Marc A. Pugliese, “How Important is the Filioque for Reformed Orthodoxy?” *Westminster Journal of Theology* 66 (2004): 159-77. On the other hand, the contention of this dissertation is that one’s stance on the filioque *does not* significantly alter this one aspect of Son/Spirit relations—the inseparability of the Spirit from the Son in the economy of salvation.

⁴²Bulgakov, *The Comforter*, 148. Since the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed makes no statement on the relationship of the Son and the Spirit, and since no truly ecumenical council has given an official ecclesial voice to this issue, then there is no Orthodox doctrine from which to deviate. Bulgakov argues that the doctrine on the Holy Spirit is *incomplete* in the Creed. *Ibid.*, 92-93.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 148. Note that one other significant reason that Bulgakov makes this assertion is that all theologians in both the East and the West can agree on the *economic sending of the Spirit by the Son*, and on their inseparability in the work of the economy. He states, “One could say that the Fathers adhere not to a dogmatic but to a practical Filioque doctrine, in the sense that no one disputes or can dogmatically dispute the ‘sending down’ from the Father of the Holy Spirit through the Son or by the Son.” *Ibid.*, 131.

contention that rejection of the *filioque* alone is an insufficient basis on which to argue for an independent economy of the Spirit.

Bulgakov's position on the *filioque* is perhaps singularly unique among Orthodox theologians. He argues that both East and West have allowed the discussion to descend into a virtually inescapable quagmire of theological bitterness because *both sides* have assumed, and now argue from, a faulty premise, which is that the *filioque* (and, as a corollary, the issue of the Son's begottenness) should be understood as a question of *causality*, or *origination*. The basic problem with the *filioque* is that it is, in a sense, an imaginary problem. Such an understanding of this doctrine, he states, involves an "obvious logical and ontological contradiction: namely, that the uncaused has a cause and the beginningless has an origin."⁴⁴ Now, it must be said that Bulgakov is not so naïve as to believe that actual *generation* is being asserted, as though the Son and the Spirit are literally brought into being by the Father, for "this aspect of generation belongs only to temporal being, to being that has an origin."⁴⁵ Rather, the problem with speaking of some sort of ineffable "generation" or "procession" is that it elevates the divine *nature* over the divine *hypostases* since the latter is regarded as originating in the former.⁴⁶ Such a construal of the begottenness/procession question inevitably leads to some form of "quantitative subordinationism."⁴⁷ "Aseity in the hypostatic self-definitions," he states,

⁴⁴Ibid., 132.

⁴⁵Ibid., 136.

⁴⁶Ibid. Bulgakov cannot accept that the nature should ever be understood as something *apart* from the three hypostases. "The nature," he states, "does *not* exist in Divinity as an independent principle, in which the difference of the hypostases is abolished and two are as one." Ibid., 140. Emphasis his.

⁴⁷Ibid., 124. Note that for Bulgakov, this is true for both East and West. In other words, simply accepting the faulty premise that produced the *filioque* dispute tends toward subordinationism since

“equally concerns both the hypostatic being and the natural being of each of the hypostases.”⁴⁸ There must be no priority given to either the nature or the hypostases—both are equally important and equally primary.⁴⁹ Bulgakov states it thusly: “Ontologically, both possess a primordial equi-eternity, alien to any origination of the one principle from the other given their indivisible and eternal conjugacy.”⁵⁰

If Bulgakov’s opinion on the Spirit’s procession is accurate, how then does he understand the biblical terminology of begottenness and procession? The answer to this reveals the reason that, for him, the Son and the Spirit are absolutely inseparable. He offers two primary ways of understanding this language. First, setting aside the biblical nature of the terminology for a moment, and approaching the question purely from the standpoint of historical theology, he states,

In general, if we examine the application of this category to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, where the word ‘cause’ is invariably used as a logical trope alongside others, and not as a strict logical definition, we will arrive at the conclusion that, in describing the interrelations of the hypostases by the concept of causality, the doctors of the Church were attempting to express, first of all, the monarchy of the Father.⁵¹

The importance of monarchy will be reserved for the next chapter, but without question this is a foundational concept for Eastern trinitarian theology. However, Bulgakov offers a second, theological way of understanding the biblical language of generation and

the Father must be regarded as possessing deity in a way that the Son and the Spirit do not.

⁴⁸Ibid., 140-41.

⁴⁹Ibid., 123.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., 135.

procession,⁵² and that is in terms of *revelation*. The relations between the hypostases must not be understood to derive from some form of generation, but taken as a given, being known by the self-revelation of God and accepted as part of the self-definition of God. Bulgakov states,

The interrelation of the hypostases, as the interrelation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, should be understood not on the basis of their origination but on the basis of their concrete self-definition. The Trinity of hypostases is already given in its being in the very interior of the absolute hypostatic (i.e., trihypostatic) subject by the manifestation of the absolute I as I, Thou, He, We, You. It is in vain that Catholic theology attempts to ground the hypostases through their origination from relations. On the contrary, it should be affirmed that the three hypostatic centers of the triune Subject *are already given apart from their hypostatic qualifications as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*⁵³

The relations between the hypostases are *not*, according to Bulgakov, rooted in cause or origination, but rather exist *simply because this is who God is and who He reveals Himself to be.*⁵⁴ This self-revelation is centered on the Father in that the self-revelation of God is precisely this—the Father revealing himself *through* both the Son and the Spirit. As a result, in Bulgakov’s scheme the monarchy of the Father is fully affirmed, and just as important as ever, though for a different reason than is normal in Orthodox theology. “The Father,” he states, “is also the principle (and in this sense also the source, root, and

⁵²Interestingly, Bulgakov makes clear his elevation of Scripture above the Tradition in terms of authority. He seems once again to break with traditional Orthodox theology when he bemoans the “duel by means of patristic texts,” which he regards as “hopeless.” He goes on to sound almost evangelical when he states that “the very idea of equating patristics with the infallibility of Scripture is not only a scholastic exaggeration, but even an outright heresy.” *Ibid.*, 114.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 136. Emphasis mine.

⁵⁴Bulgakov is clear that “the fatherhood of the Father, the sonhood of the Son, and the spirithood of the Holy Spirit—are *eternal* and therefore absolutely unalterably self-definitions of the hypostases. . . . But this is a result not of unalterable relations of origination which would introduce into the life of the Holy Trinity the principle of *necessity* with its mechanical unalterability, but of the divine freedom of autonomous being, *aseitas*, which has unalterable validity for all three hypostases. All the hypostases supra-eternally posit themselves in defining themselves; and the self-definition of each of them includes and presupposes not only a distinct and personal but also a trihypostatic self-definition. In other

cause) in the Holy Trinity. He is the source hypostasis, for He reveals Himself in the other hypostases, is their subject, in relation to which they are predicate and copula.”⁵⁵ Thus the monarchy is construed to point to the *revelatory* primacy of the Father as the One who reveals Himself through the Son and the Spirit.

The significance of Bulgakov’s construal of both the filioque debate and the monarchy of the Father for the present discussion of pneumatological inclusivism is that both of these theological constructions stem from his understanding of the relationship between the Son and the Spirit as being *rooted in their mutual revelation of the Father and of one another*. For Bulgakov this is expressed in his notion of the Divine Sophia.⁵⁶ According to Bulgakov this doctrine bears some similarity to the Chalcedonian definition of the Son’s two natures in one person. The two hypostases of Son and Spirit “are united through the self-revelation of the Father in the Divine Sophia *without separation and without confusion*.”⁵⁷ While this doctrine is problematic on multiple levels, there is an element of it that is accurate—through it Bulgakov upholds a principle, prevalent in

words, it is both personal and trinitarian.” *Ibid.*, 138. Emphasis his.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 137.

⁵⁶A full discussion of this doctrine is well beyond the scope of this dissertation. For the mature articulation of Bulgakov’s doctrine of the Divine Sophia see his volume on Christology, *The Lamb of God*. Essentially, the Sophia is the bi-unity of the Son and the Holy Spirit as one self-revelation of the Father. Bulgakov’s doctrine of Sophia is complex and troublesome on multiple levels, and would certainly merit criticism from evangelicals. However, the essential usefulness for this dissertation is simply that Bulgakov recognizes the inseparability of the Son and the Spirit in both the economy of salvation and in the immanent Trinity, and this in a context of absolute denial of the *filioque*. Thus, the inclusivists argument that rejecting the *filioque* opens the door for distinct and isolated economies of Son and Spirit is certainly not supported by this major representative of Eastern pneumatologists.

⁵⁷Bulgakov, *Comforter*, 178. Emphasis his.

Eastern theology historically, that the Son and the Spirit *reveal one another*, and thus one cannot be known *without* the other.⁵⁸ Bulgakov states,

The *one cannot be revealed without the other*, just as they cannot be united to the point of complete fusion or identification. The inseparability and inconfusibility of the hypostases of the dyad signify at the same time the perfect concreteness of their interrelation, in which there can be no mutation or replacement: the first cannot take the place of the second, or the second the place of the first. To be sure, this concreteness must not have the slightest trace of subordinationism. The concreteness does not diminish their equal divinity, linked to their separate hypostatizedness; it refers, rather, to the equal necessity and irreplaceability of the hypostases in the divine self-revelation of the Father.⁵⁹

Bulgakov upholds a type of *mutuality* between the Son and the Spirit that the inclusivists would no doubt reject⁶⁰ in that each is experienced only in conjunction with the other. Additionally, each functions in a way that is *proper* to his person so that their *roles* are not reversible. The Son is the *content* of divine revelation, without which there is no substance to revelation, and to the Spirit belongs the *power* or *accomplishment* of the divine revelation. Bulgakov articulates this as follows:

It is proper to the Second hypostasis to be the Word of all words and the ideal objective content of the self-revelation, whereas the Third is *not* the Word, although It does not exist without the Word. Likewise, the Word does not possess that power of quickening and accomplishment which is proper only to the Third hypostasis. And in this sense the Holy Spirit reposes upon the Son, Who receives this reposing, but not vice versa. In the interrelation of these two hypostases there can be no reversibility, for the latter would signify the abolition of their personal properties, that is, it would mean hypostatic nondifferentiation together with the denial of the inseparability and inconfusability of the Second and Third hypostases.⁶¹

⁵⁸This principle will be explored in more detail below, but its roots go back at least as far as the theology of Athanasius.

⁵⁹Bulgakov, *Comforter*, 178. Emphasis mine.

⁶⁰Bulgakov's doctrine ties the revelation of the Son and Spirit together so that the knowledge of the Spirit cannot function as a *substitute* for the Son. This is precisely what the inclusivists are trying to avoid.

⁶¹Bulgakov, *Comforter*, 178-79. Emphasis original.

In Bulgakov's theology the Spirit cannot take on the role of a dispenser of divine revelation without reference to the Son, as though God were making himself known to the world apart from the revelation of Jesus Christ. It has been argued that the dependency of the Spirit upon the Son for the content of divine revelation, far from being merely one characteristic of the relationship between the Spirit and the Son, actually *defines* this relationship.⁶² Bulgakov seems to agree with this characterization when he states, "The Holy Spirit Himself is not Truth, but the 'Spirit of Truth', the 'Spirit of Wisdom'. The Spirit of truth . . . will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. . . . He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you' ([John] 16:14)."⁶³ That is, the Spirit witnesses to the Son and does not speak of himself. Thus, in spite of the *reciprocity* that Bulgakov sees between the Spirit and the Son, there is nevertheless a sense in which Christology still maintains priority in terms of revelatory content. The "supra-eternal interrelation in the immanent Trinity becomes accessible for us in the economic Trinity, that is, it becomes accessible christologically."⁶⁴ This is because "the Son Himself becomes, both for Himself and for the Father, the revelation of Divinity, while the Holy Spirit is [the] very inspiration."⁶⁵ The Son is content, the Spirit is inspiration and accomplishment—this is Bulgakov's understanding of Son/Spirit reciprocity in the economy. The mutuality of the divine economy reflects the inseparability of the Son and the Spirit in the immanent Trinity.

⁶²Miles, "Severing the Spirit," 2-3.

⁶³Bulgakov, *Comforter*, 184.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

In spite of Bulgakov's rather unusual position on the *filioque*, he nevertheless affirms what has already been seen in the Eastern theology of Boris Bobrinsky—the inseparability of the Son and the Spirit in both the economy and in the immanent Trinity. This is consistent with what Eastern theology has held from the beginning. Bulgakov's construal of trinitarian revelation has particular significance in terms of pneumatological inclusivism, because his theology builds upon a pre-existing theme in Orthodox theology that is prevalent from Athanasius forward, and that is the relationship of the Son and Spirit in terms of *mutual revelation* of one another, and also in terms of their common work of revealing the Father. A brief survey of some of the Eastern Fathers will demonstrate that in this they are agreed.

Historical Eastern Trinitarian Theology

When one thinks of the *roots* of Orthodox trinitarian theology one inevitably thinks of Athanasius and the Cappadocians. These theologians form not only the backdrop against which Orthodox theology has been developed, but also serve, along with Augustine, as foundational for *all* trinitarian theology.⁶⁶ Part of the reason for this is

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Certainly, Augustine is also a critically important figure in the historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity. However, his works are generally regarded as more important for the doctrine of the Trinity that was to develop in the West. Although there is substantial agreement between Augustine and the theologians that will be surveyed here, there have also been some much written about distinctions as well—not the least of which is the *filioque*, the development of which is normally attributed to Augustine's understanding of the Spirit's procession. For an Eastern view of Augustine's trinitarian theology that critiques it along these lines, see Alexei Fokin, "St Augustine's Doctrine of the Trinity in the Light of Orthodox Triadology of the Fourth Century," in *The Trinity: East/West Dialogue*, ed. Melville Y. Stewart (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 131-52. Note also that in recent years there has been a concerted effort among Reformed and Orthodox leaders to address the distinctive aspects of their doctrines of the Trinity and to see if substantial agreement might be reached. The result is the "Agreed Statement on the Holy Trinity" between the Orthodox Church and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, in *Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, ed. Thomas F. Torrance (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1993), 2:219-26.

the fact that Athanasius in particular, and the Cappadocians⁶⁷ after him, developed and expounded a biblical doctrine of the person and work of the Holy Spirit that the Nicene Creed failed fully to explicate, and in doing so, firmly established the doctrine of the Trinity that would serve as the standard of orthodox theology in the East from that point forward. The doctrine of the person and work of the Holy Spirit that these men articulated was forged on the anvil of battle against the Arians and the Pneumatomachi. Furthermore, as John Behr points out, “the significance of the council convoked by Constantine, the Council of Nicaea in 325, took most of the fourth century to determine.”⁶⁸ Although the Cappadocians were the central figures in fleshing out the implications of Nicaea’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit, they were preceded by Athanasius, who also made significant contributions to orthodox pneumatology from which the Cappadocians borrowed. As a result, their trinitarian doctrine and their doctrine of the Holy Spirit is essentially the same, albeit with some “linguistic differences or emphases.”⁶⁹ While space will not allow for anything like a full exposition of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit articulated by these four theologians, even a brief examination will be enough to demonstrate that they are in complete agreement that the Holy Spirit does not fulfill the soteriological aspect of his economic mission in isolation from or independent of the revelation of God in the Son. For both Athanasius and the

⁶⁷The Cappadocian theologians include Basil of Caesarea, his brother, Gregory of Nyssa, and their friend, Gregory of Nazianzus.

⁶⁸John Behr, *The Nicene Faith* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2004), 2:61.

⁶⁹George Dion Dragas, “St Athanasius on the Holy Spirit and the Trinity,” in *Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Reformed Churches*, ed. Thomas F. Torrance (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1993), 2:57-58.

Cappadocians, this economic unity is a necessary correlate of the immanent unity within the Trinity.

Athanasius

Athanasius' primary writings on the Holy Spirit are found in the letters he wrote to his friend, Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis, who was dealing with a significant outbreak of semi-Arian denials of the Spirit's deity. Athanasius' methodology in dealing with this heresy is instructive of, among other things, his understanding of the relationship of the Spirit to the Son. C. R. B. Shapland, in the introduction to his English translation of these letters argues that one of the key aspects of Athanasius' argument for the Spirit's deity consists in his connecting the Holy Spirit inseparably to the Son.⁷⁰ He states, "By reaffirming the propriety of the Spirit to the Son, Athanasius not only secured, at a decisive hour, the Church's faith in the one Godhead; he fixed the line upon which its Pneumatic doctrine was to develop."⁷¹ There was, in the theology of Athanasius, an inseparable connection between the Son and the Spirit such that to deny the deity of the latter was also to deny the deity of the former. This is why he was able to maintain that his opponents, the Tropici, were unorthodox even though they confessed the deity of the Son. He essentially treated those who would question the consubstantiality of the Spirit

⁷⁰C. R. B. Shapland, "Introduction," in *The Letters of Saint Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit*, trans. C. R. B. Shapland (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), 34-35. (All references to *Letters* are from this edition.) It must be stated that Athanasius' concern in expressing the unity of the Spirit with the Son was quite different from that of this dissertation. Pneumatological inclusivists clearly accept the Spirit's deity. However, Athanasius' argument is certainly instructive for Son/Spirit relations far beyond simply proving the deity of the Spirit.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 43.

with the Son and Father as a form of Arianism.⁷² The importance of this for present purposes is the *manner in which* he argued for the Spirit's deity. For Athanasius, our knowledge of the Spirit's consubstantial unity with the Son (and the Father) is grounded in the unity of their *economic works*. As Shapland explains, in Athanasius' doctrine of the Spirit,

we recover once again the New Testament conception of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Son, not only inasmuch as the Son gives and sends Him, but because He is the principle of Christ's life within us. His ministry is the ministry of the Son; and all the activity of the Son is accomplished in Him. We may justly say of Athanasius what Lebreton says of Paul: 'behind his conception of the Spirit stands Christ'.⁷³

For Athanasius, pneumatology divorced from Christology is inconceivable.⁷⁴

Two elements of Athanasius' pneumatology will serve to demonstrate the inseparability of the Spirit from the Son—and the two are fundamentally related. First, there is the Spirit's economic unity with the Son—that is, what the Spirit *does*. Second, there is the mutual revelation of the Son in the Spirit and the Spirit in the Son—that is, what the Spirit *reveals* and how the Spirit *is revealed*. The first of these must be understood in light of the historical context. For Athanasius, the question at hand was the consubstantiality of the Spirit with the Son and the Father.⁷⁵ His first line of

⁷²This is why his arguments for the Spirit's deity are very similar to those he used against the Arians. As T. F. Torrance states, "Since this [denial of the Spirit's deity] clearly threatened the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and of course the integrity of holy Baptism, by tearing the Unity of God asunder, Athanasius combated it with basically the same Christological, soteriological and ontological arguments that he had deployed in his long debates with the Arians." Thomas F. Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 10.

⁷³Shapland, "Introduction," 35.

⁷⁴Whether this is possible is the question that Amos Yong wrestles with in *Beyond the Impasse*. It is perhaps telling that, for Yong, to force the Spirit to be discerned through the lens of Christology is to subordinate the former to the latter. Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 173.

⁷⁵Michael A. G. Haykin notes that Athanasius' opponents in the *Letters to Serapion*

argumentation in defense of the Spirit's deity was to derive the unity of essence from unity of economic works—in other words, what the Spirit *does* reveals who the Spirit *is*. Since the Spirit performs works that only God can perform, and since he does so in conjunction with the Father and the Son, he must be of one nature with them.⁷⁶ As Theodore Campbell states, “Athanasius has a simple fundamental argument for the divinity of the Holy Spirit: the Spirit performs certain functions and exhibits certain characteristics that can be ascribed only to God.”⁷⁷ These functions, as Athanasius explains, are both *revelational*, that is, he points the believer to the Son and through him, to the Father, and *soteriological*, whereby he unites the believer to the Father through the Son. The very nature of these economic works of the Spirit argue against their being accomplished in epistemological isolation from the Son or the Father.

The unity of the trinitarian economic work is the central theme of a paragraph that Shapland describes as “the most complete statement of Trinitarian doctrine in Athanasius’s writings.”⁷⁸ Athanasius states,

There is, then, a Triad, holy and complete, confessed to be God in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, having nothing foreign or external mixed with it, not composed of one that creates and one that is originated, but all creative; and it is consistent and in nature indivisible, and *its activity is one*. The Father does all things through the Word in the Holy Spirit. Thus the unity of the holy Triad is preserved. Thus one

“maintained that the Holy Spirit is a creature, albeit of angelic nature. This group is thus the first to whom the name ‘Pneumatomachi’ (‘fighters against the Spirit’) may be applied.” Michael A. G. Haykin, “‘The Spirit of God’: The Exegesis of 1 Cor. 2:10-12 by Origen and Athanasius,” *SJT* 35 (1982): 520.

⁷⁶John McIntyre argues that there were essentially three principles employed by the Greek Fathers as they developed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The first principle is that “identity of *ousia* (of Persons within the Godhead) is to be derived from unity of *energeia*, the implication being that since the Holy Spirit is indivisibly united with the Father and the Son in the Divine Activity, His own Divine Nature is thereby guaranteed.” John McIntyre, “The Holy Spirit in Greek Patristic Thought,” *SJT* 7 (1954): 355. Emphasis original.

⁷⁷Theodore C. Campbell, “The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Theology of Athanasius,” *SJT* 27 (1974): 412

⁷⁸Shapland, *Letters of Saint Athanasius*, 134 n. 3.

God is preached in the Church, ‘who is over all, and through all, and in all’—‘over all’, as Father, as beginning, as fountain; ‘through all’, through the Word; ‘in all’, in the Holy Spirit.⁷⁹

Two things stand out in this paragraph. First, there is the clear understanding that trinitarian activity is directed by the Father and carried out by the Son and the Spirit.⁸⁰

The unity of the Trinity’s economic activity was clear evidence of the Spirit’s deity.

Second, however, is the confessional structure of the Christian faith. That is, none of the three Persons can be confessed without the other two, as though faith in one were sufficient for Christian confession. Father, Son, and Spirit must be confessed together.

As a result, the soteriological and revelatory aspects of Athanasius’ argument work together.

Both of these aspects are found in *Letters to Serapion* 1.19. Here, the soteriological⁸¹ and the revelatory work in conjunction with one another. The primary aspect of the Spirit’s work for Athanasius is his soteriological activity whereby he, together with the Son, unites the believer to God the Father. It is crucial to note here that for Athanasius this soteriological work of the Spirit happens conjointly, never separately, from the Son; otherwise, his argument for the Spirit’s deity would be ineffective since it is grounded in the notion that joint *energeia* requires joint *ousia*. He finds the initiatory impetus of salvation with the Father, the revelatory radiance of the Father coming

⁷⁹Athanasius *Letters to Serapion* 1.28. Emphasis mine.

⁸⁰This points to a unified economy of salvation initiated and directed by the Father, and will be discussed in detail in chapter four. Here it suffices to say that such a conception of the trinitarian economy mitigates against any notion of an *independent* economy of the Holy Spirit that is separable from the Son.

⁸¹Dominique Gonnet regards the use of the soteriological aspect of the Spirit’s work as the most significant of Athanasius’ arguments for the Spirit’s deity. Dominique Gonnet, “The Salutary Action of the Holy Spirit as Proof of his Divinity in Athanasius’ *Letters to Serapion*,” in *Papers Presented at the Thirteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford, 1999*, ed. P. M. Parvis, Maurice F.

through the Son, and the enlightening of individuals coming through the Spirit, who points people to the Son. Thus, none of these can function in isolation from the others. He uses biblical metaphors to illustrate the connection between Christ and the Spirit in their economic activity: “As then the Father is light and the Son is his radiance . . . we may see in the Son the Spirit also by whom we are enlightened. . . . But when we are enlightened by the Spirit, it is Christ who in him enlightens us.”⁸² Furthermore, “as the Father is fountain and the Son is called river, we are said to drink of the Spirit. . . . But when we are made to drink of the Spirit, we drink of Christ.”⁸³ Continuing this line of thought he states, “If by the Spirit we are made sons, it is clear that it is in Christ we are called children of God.”⁸⁴ And finally, “But as the Son is Wisdom, so we, receiving the Spirit of Wisdom, have the Son and are made wise in him.”⁸⁵ It is clear that for Athanasius the Spirit is he who unites us to the Son, who in turn unites us to the Father. This is essentially a *soteriological* work, the nature of which reveals to us the Spirit’s *essential* unity with the Father and Son. Simply stated, if the Spirit were a creature he would have no power to unite us to God in this manner.

This is particularly evident in *Serapion* 1:22ff., where Athanasius lays out the Spirit’s work in terms of the *sanctification* of the believer. The Spirit is called the “Spirit of holiness and renewal,” the “quickenning Spirit,” and the “unction” and “seal” of the

Wiles, and Edward Yarnold (Louvain: Peeters, 2001), 509.

⁸²Athanasius *Letters to Serapion* 1.19.

⁸³*Ibid.*

⁸⁴*Ibid.* Here, Athanasius ties the believer’s sonship to the reception of Christ. Thus, we are made sons in the Spirit, *through* our knowledge of Christ.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*

believer.⁸⁶ Again, Athanasius' point is that none but God can do these things, but the importance for the purpose of this dissertation is that in each of these works the Spirit is shown not to be working alone, but in conjunction with the Son to accomplish all that the Father has initiated. All of the Scriptures used by Athanasius in 1.22-23 point not only to the Spirit's *work*, but also to his *unity with the Son* in that work. Thus, as the "Spirit of holiness and renewal," the Spirit sanctifies the believer, but this is accomplished "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 6:11). Furthermore, the Spirit's work of regeneration and renewal comes not in isolation from Christ, but *from* the Father through the Son, having been "poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3:4-6). In addition, the "quickening" power of the Spirit, Athanasius states, comes through the Son as well, having been distributed by him as a "well of water springing up into eternal life" (John 4:14). Finally, as "unction" and "seal," the Spirit bears the stamp of Christ, for it is Christ himself who *applies* the seal. Thus, "The seal has the form of Christ who seals, and those who are sealed partake of it, being conformed to it."⁸⁷ This final quotation seems clearly to point to the believer's transformation into the image and likeness of Christ, and may perhaps be an offhand reference to Romans 8:29. In any case, it is difficult, if not impossible, to construe the works spoken of here as taking place

⁸⁶Ibid., 1.22-23.

⁸⁷Ibid., 1.23. Shapland points out in his footnote to this text that "we do not find in Athanasius the rigid distinction between nature and grace which belongs to medieval theology." Rather, "his doctrine of creation emphasizes the perpetual presence of the Word in His works." Shapland even goes so far as to suggest that Athanasius *equates* the ἀνεκαίνωσις of Ps 104:30 with that of Titus 3:5 in 1:22. This would certainly please the inclusivists, but this view is not only unnecessary, but also highly unlikely. It is much more likely, as Shapland himself notes, that Athanasius himself has in mind here only the manner in which the work of Christ has import not only for man, but also for all of creation. As with man, the creation receives the benefits of this work only through the Spirit. Similarly, see Campbell, "Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," 415, where he states, "In the Spirit the Word glorifies the creation, and, by giving it divine life and sonship, draws it to the Father, because everything existing is ordained and actuated through the Word in

by the Spirit when there is no epistemological knowledge of Christ.⁸⁸ On the contrary, it seems that in Athanasius the soteriological work of the Spirit, which leads him to affirm the Spirit's consubstantiality with the Son and Father, is accompanied by and grounded in the revelatory work of the Spirit, so that the two works are inseparable.

If it is true that the work of the Spirit in uniting the believer to Christ (and through him to the Father) is the basis of our knowledge of his deity for Athanasius, it is no less true that the Spirit's work of revealing the Son points to his deity.⁸⁹ It could be argued that the soteriological work of the Spirit is *grounded in* his revelational work. This revelational work is developed primarily by arguing that the Spirit's relationship to the Son is *parallel* to the Son's relationship to the Father. That is, as the Father is revealed by the Son, so the Son is revealed by the Spirit. Therefore, Athanasius can say in *Serapion* 1.20, "As the Son is in the Spirit as in his own image, so also the Father is in the Son." The result of this, as he goes on to argue, is that as the Son is sent by the Father to glorify him, so also the Spirit is sent by the Son to glorify him. Further, as the Son speaks from the Father, so also "the Spirit takes of the Son." As the Son comes in the name of the Father, so the Spirit is sent in the Son's name.⁹⁰ Thus, the Spirit does not operate in an epistemological vacuum, but in the context of the revelation of God the Father through the Son. For this reason, Campbell states,

the Spirit." Certainly there is no hint here of universalism.

⁸⁸It must be said here that while Athanasius' intention is not to argue for the *epistemological* necessity of Christ for the Spirit to be soteriologically operative, it seems clear that he is *assuming* it.

⁸⁹Both McIntyre and Breck (see below) see the Greek Fathers as developing the Spirit's work in terms of both soteriological and revelatory principles. McIntyre refers to this as the *epistemological* or *conceptual* principle, which states that "knowledge of any one of the Persons within the Trinity is at the same time knowledge of the other two." McIntyre, "Holy Spirit," 363.

⁹⁰Athanasius *Letters to Serapion* 1.20.

This focusing upon his understanding of the Spirit's relationship to the Son is essential to grasping Athanasius' doctrine of the Holy Spirit, for it brings to the fore the epistemological principle that undergirds his theology of the Spirit: knowledge of the Spirit must be taken from the Son. The relationship of the two involves: the Spirit's mission from the Son; the coinherence of the Spirit and the Son; [and] the parallel of the Spirit's relationship to the Son with the Son's to the Father.⁹¹

Just as the Spirit comes to glorify and reveal the Son, so also the Spirit is known only *in Christ*, for it is Christ who pours out the Spirit. For inclusivists to argue, therefore, that the Spirit can work apart from the knowledge of Christ in a soteriological manner simply finds no support from this Eastern father. Furthermore, to argue that rejection of the *filioque* might somehow dissolve the link between the Son and the Spirit that Athanasius finds in the economy is overly simplistic in that it ignores other economic factors that tie the Son and Spirit together inseparably.⁹²

The Cappadocians

Following closely on the heels of Athanasius, the three Cappadocian theologians, Basil of Caesarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus are credited with "having given to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity the intellectual form which ultimately prevailed throughout the Greek-speaking East."⁹³ In essence, they both built upon and expanded the work of Athanasius, further developing the trinitarian doctrine that he had championed.⁹⁴ Their contribution to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is reflected in Jaroslav Pelikan's comment on the relatively brief timeframe of the

⁹¹Campbell, "Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," 414.

⁹²Some of these factors will be explored in chap. 4.

⁹³Henry Barclay Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers* (London: Macmillan, 1912), 230.

⁹⁴Edmund J. Fortman, *The Triune God: A Historical Study of the Doctrine of the Trinity*

controversy over the Spirit's deity when compared to the debate over the deity of Christ: "for while the question of the person of the Son of God dominated Christian thought from the conflict with Gnostic Docetism in the second century to the Monothelistic and Monergist controversies of the seventh century, and even beyond, the question of the Holy Spirit was raised, debated, and settled in two decades or so."⁹⁵ A brief survey of each of these theologians will suffice to demonstrate that, like Athanasius, they regard the Son and the Spirit as inseparable both in the immanent Trinity and in their economic activity.

Basil of Caesarea. Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* (*DSS*) is one of a small number of writings on the Holy Spirit that determined the course of pneumatology in both the East and West for the millennium that followed.⁹⁶ Like Athanasius, he sought to defend the Spirit's deity against those who denied it—in this case, the *Pneumatomachoi*, or fighters against the Spirit.⁹⁷ Also like Athanasius, he built much of his argument on the inseparability of the Spirit from the Father and the Son in the economy of salvation.

(Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1999), 75-76.

⁹⁵Jaroslav Pelikan, "The 'Spiritual Sense' of Scripture: The Exegetical Basis for St. Basil's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," in *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, ed. Paul J. Fedwick (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 1:337. Note this comment is made with specific reference to Basil of Caesarea.

⁹⁶*Ibid.* Note that all references to *DSS* are taken from *The Holy Spirit*, trans. David Anderson (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980).

⁹⁷However, unlike Athanasius, Basil did not use the term *homoousios* in *DSS*. Nor did he speak of the Spirit's consubstantiality with the Father and Son. For a helpful discussion of the possible reasons why this is the case, see Howard Griffith, "The Churchly Theology of Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto*," *Presbyterion* 25 (1999): 91-108. Michael A. G. Haykin also points out that, although Basil regarded 1 Cor 2:11 as the greatest proofs of the Spirit's unity with the Father and the Son, he rarely referred to the passage. The reason was perhaps his fear of being labeled a Sabellian, which could have resulted from heavy dependence upon this text. Michael A. G. Haykin, "'A Sense of Awe in the Presence of the Ineffable': I Cor. 2.11-12 in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century," *SJT* 41 (1988): 347.

Once again, what the Spirit *does* (in conjunction with the Father and the Son), and what the Spirit *reveals* demonstrate his deity. Basil begins his defense of the Spirit's deity by appealing to the baptismal formula that was commonly used in his day, in which the Spirit was confessed alongside the Father and the Son.⁹⁸ From this common confession, Basil argued, it was clear that the Spirit is to be ranked with the Father and the Son (*DSS* 10.25). This is because the common confession made clear that the Spirit was a joint partner in the work of salvation and not merely a created agent, and was therefore to be worshipped (*DSS* 26.64) alongside Father and Son.

However, two things about Basil's argument in *DSS* are particularly helpful for demonstrating the inseparability of the Spirit and Son. First, there is the christocentric nature of our knowledge of the Trinity. Basil spends a significant amount of time early in *DSS* demonstrating that the Father and the Son are united perfectly in their works due to their unity of will (*DSS* 8.20). Only after this acknowledgement does he begin to press the Spirit's participation in their works. The reason Basil followed this order is that he interpreted the Trinity christocentrically. Pelikan observes, "It was axiomatic for him that 'when we name the name of Christ, we confess the whole [Godhead]'."⁹⁹

Furthermore, Basil seems to proceed in this manner because he sees a symmetry between the revelation of the Father in the Son, and the revelation of the Son in the Spirit. This

⁹⁸Basil appeals to this common formula in *DSS* 10.26. As Michael Haykin points out, "The [trine] confession of faith to which Basil refers in this text was made by the baptismal candidate in the church of Caesarea prior to his trine immersion in the water." Michael A. G. Haykin, "In the Cloud and in the Sea': Basil of Caesarea and the Exegesis of 1 Cor 10:2," *Vigiliae Christianae* 40 (1986): 136. Similarly, Rowan Williams affirms that "with one exception . . . we have no evidence that pro-Nicenes and anti-Nicenes habitually used radically different liturgies." Rowan Williams, "Baptism and the Arian Controversy," in *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts*, ed. Michael R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 149.

⁹⁹Pelikan, "The 'Spiritual Sense' of Scripture," 341.

symmetry means, at least in part, that as the Son reveals the Father, so also the Spirit reveals the Son. Basil can therefore state, “We learn that just as the Father is made visible in the Son, so also the Son is recognized in the Spirit” (*DSS* 26.64). This parallel requires that it is only through the Spirit that we recognize Christ (just as it is only in Christ that we know the Father), and therefore it is reasonable to conjecture that Basil is here referring to the Spirit’s *witness* to the Son (John 16:14). Just as the Son witnesses to the Father, so also the Spirit witnesses to the Son.¹⁰⁰

Basil’s conception of the parallel relationships between Father/Son and Son/Spirit leads to a second way that the Spirit is tied to the Son in Basil’s theology, and that is the necessary epistemological connection between each of the three Persons of the Trinity. For Basil, knowledge of God moves from the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father.¹⁰¹ There is an inseparable relationship between knowledge of any one Person of the Trinity and the knowledge of the Trinity itself. For example, in *DSS* 11.27, Basil points out that rejecting any one Person, whether Father, Son, or Spirit, is tantamount to rejecting all three because the three are inseparably united in the Christian confession of faith. As Basil demonstrates in *DSS* 18.46, each of the trinitarian Persons receives glory from the others, and none can be properly known *apart* from the others. The Spirit’s identity is discerned *precisely through* his connection with the Father and the Son. He is the Spirit of the Father through procession, and of Christ, “since He is naturally related to Him” (*DSS* 18.46). Likewise, “Only the Spirit can adequately glorify the Lord,” that is,

¹⁰⁰John Behr points out that for Basil “the Spirit’s dignity derives from his origin, the one from whom he proceeds, while his activity relates to the one who sent him.” Thus, the Spirit’s economic activity is oriented around his witness to Christ. Behr, *Nicene Faith*, 2:312.

¹⁰¹Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship*

the Son. The Spirit glorifies Christ by revealing him as the image of the Father. Thus, one simply cannot know any one of the Persons of the Trinity *in epistemological isolation* from the others. It is impossible to conceive of the Spirit glorifying the Son in Basil's scheme in epistemological isolation from the Son. As they are united in nature and in economic work, so also they are united in confession and worship.

Gregory of Nazianzus. Harold E. Ernst says of Gregory of Nazianzus that he “is sometimes credited with having ‘invented’ the doctrine of the Trinity, for having provided the first full expression of what was to become classical trinitarian language and categories.”¹⁰² Such a statement points to the significance of Gregory's work, as does the moniker, “the theologian,” a title given to him among Eastern churches which is only shared by the Apostle John.¹⁰³ As with Athanasius before him, and his friend Basil of Caesarea, Gregory was committed to the Nicene faith, and sought to further expound on its sparse pneumatology by defending the deity of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁴ In his second letter to Cledonius (*Letter 102*), he states, “I never have and never can honour anything above the Nicene faith . . . and by God's help ever will be, of that faith, completing in detail that

(Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2004), 151. See also Basil, *DSS* 18.47.

¹⁰²Harold E. Ernst, “A Clearer Manifestation of the Spirit” Gregory Nazianzen on the Divinity of the Holy Spirit,” in *The Spirit in the Church and the World*, ed. Bradford E. Hinze (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003), 18.

¹⁰³Letham, *Holy Trinity*, 157.

¹⁰⁴In *Oration 31.10*, he concludes, “What, then? Is the Spirit God? Certainly. Is he consubstantial? Yes, if he is God.” Behr says of this text, “In the context of the fourth century, this was indeed a radical claim to make.” Behr, *Nicene Faith*, 2:363. Note that all references to the *Theological Orations* and *Letters to Cledonius* are taken from Gregory of Nazianzus, *On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters to Cledonius*, trans. Frederick Williams and Lionel Wickham (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002).

which was incompletely said by them concerning the Holy Spirit.”¹⁰⁵ A large portion of Gregory’s pneumatology may be found in *Oration 31*, which is on the Holy Spirit, and is one of five theological orations for which Gregory is justly famous.¹⁰⁶ In this treatise alone there is ample enough evidence to understand that in Gregory’s theology the persons of the Trinity are indivisible in both their works and in their being.

Gregory’s trinitarian theology has been shown to move almost effortlessly between contemplation of the oneness of God and the threeness of God.¹⁰⁷ Thus in Gregory’s own words from *Oration 40.41*, “No sooner do I conceive of the one than I am illumined by the splendour of the three; no sooner do I distinguish them than I am carried back to the one.” Such unity among the three extends beyond the *being* of the trinitarian persons to their economic activity as well, so that, once again, the Spirit is shown to be God by his *works*. In this context Gregory makes an explicit connection between the Son’s economic activity and the manner in which he is accompanied by the Spirit: “Look at the facts: Christ is born, the Spirit is his forerunner; Christ is baptized, the Spirit bears him witness; Christ is tempted, the Spirit leads him up; Christ performs miracles, the Spirit accompanies him; Christ ascends, the Spirit fills his place.”¹⁰⁸ Clearly, the Spirit’s economic activity is centered around the revelation of the Father in the Son, and as these

¹⁰⁵Cited in Hilarion Alfeyev, “The Trinitarian Teaching of St. Gregory Nazianzen,” in *The Trinity: East/West Dialogue*, ed. Melville Y. Stewart (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 117.

¹⁰⁶These are *Oration 27-31*.

¹⁰⁷T. F. Torrance says of Gregory’s theology that “the knowledge of the Three and of the One, or of the One and of the Three, is perfectly coincident, being given through one illuminating flash of God’s self-revelation.” Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives*, 27.

¹⁰⁸*Oration 31.29*.

activities are works of God, then the Spirit must *be* God. As Gregory states of the Spirit, “All that God actively performs, he performs.”¹⁰⁹

In addition to this joint activity, however, there is a connection between the Spirit and the Father and Son in terms of worship and divine titles, so that he is known not *apart from* but *together with* the Father and the Son. For example, Gregory asks whether there is any title belonging to God that cannot be applied to the Spirit (other than ingenerate and begotten). These titles belonged *first* to the revelation of God the Father, and then to the Son, and now also Gregory applies them to the Spirit. Likewise, we first knew of the Father, revealed in the Old Testament, then of the Son in the New Testament, and then the Spirit was known more clearly. Certainly there is an underlying epistemological pattern underlying Gregory’s thought pointing to the progressive revelation of the Trinity. What is left unstated, but also underlies what Gregory is saying, is that the Spirit would simply not be known or worshipped without prior knowledge of the Father and the Son. It was in the presence of the Son that we saw a “glimpse of the Spirit’s Godhead.”¹¹⁰ Thus the Spirit is known *together with* the Father and the Son. Knowledge of God is essentially trinitarian for Gregory. We know the Father *through* the Son *in* the Holy Spirit. Thus, in terms of being the Holy Spirit was “everlastingly ranged with and numbered with the Father and the Son. For it was not ever fitting that either the Son should be wanting to the Father, or the Spirit to the Son.”¹¹¹ In terms of knowledge, the Spirit is the one “by Whom the Father is known and the son is glorified;

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰*Oration* 31.26.

¹¹¹*Oration* 40.9.

and by Whom *alone* He is known.”¹¹² Furthermore, in terms of the Spirit’s relationship to the Son, Gregory points out that at Pentecost the Spirit “came in the form of Tongues because of His close relation to the Word.”¹¹³ In Gregory’s conception of the Trinity the Spirit is not to be found in isolation from the Father or the Son, but is known and worshipped together with the Father and the Son. Given this unity it seems inconceivable that Gregory’s thought could be construed such that the Spirit works in epistemological isolation from either the Father or the Son, or that his economic activity, which Gregory understands to be oriented around glorifying the Son, could be exercised in isolation from any knowledge of the Son.

Gregory of Nyssa. Of the three Cappadocians, Gregory of Nyssa is the least known in terms of biographical information.¹¹⁴ Yet because of his writings he has been called “the most brilliant of the three great Cappadocians and the most systematic thinker.”¹¹⁵ He is also attributed with being more philosophical and scientific than his brother Basil.¹¹⁶ This is no doubt due to the way he expanded on the work of Basil in terms of the trinitarian language of *ousia* and *hypostasis*, which added “greater clarity to how we speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”¹¹⁷ Like Basil and Athanasius, Gregory sought to defend the deity of the Holy Spirit, and he did so in very similar ways,

¹¹²Ibid. Whether this text is read to mean that we know the Son *only* in the Spirit, or the Spirit *only* in the Son is irrelevant at this point. It is the *joint knowledge* of the three together that is important.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Behr, *Nicene Faith*, 2:409

¹¹⁵Letham, *Holy Trinity*, 153.

¹¹⁶Swete, *Holy Spirit*, 247.

¹¹⁷Behr, *Nicene Faith*, 2:414.

one of which was by pointing out the connection of the Spirit with the Father and Son in *ad extra* works. However, Gregory's teaching is found in the context of expounding on the language of *ousia* and *hypostasis*, so that he is dealing specifically with the possible problems that may arise from such language.¹¹⁸ One such problem that Gregory wants to avoid is giving the impression that any one of the trinitarian persons operates in isolation from the others.¹¹⁹ As a result, he states,

No activity is divided to the *hypostases*, completed individually by each and set apart without being viewed together. All providence, care, and attention of all, both of things in the sensible creation and of things of the heavenly nature—and the preservation of what exists, the correction of things out of tune, the teaching of things set right—is one and not three, kept straight by the holy Trinity. It is not severed into three, according to the number of persons beheld in faith, so that each activity, viewed by itself, is of the Father alone or of the Only-begotten individually or of the Holy Spirit separately.¹²⁰

In this one paragraph Gregory explicitly denies that any person of the Trinity has an individual economy that may be thought of separately from the other two persons.

Furthermore, he regards the activity of the Son and the Spirit as both having their origin in the will of the Father.¹²¹ Behr's comments on Gregory's intention here are valuable, and worth quoting at length.

¹¹⁸One of these problems is the potential for a tri-theistic understanding of these terms. Gregory therefore writes his well known letter to Ablabius, *Concerning We Should Think of Saying That There Are Not Three Gods (Abl.)*. Page number references to this work are taken from *The Trinitarian Controversy*, ed. William G. Rusch, trans. William G. Rusch (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 149-61.

¹¹⁹This notion itself is the product of a tendency toward tritheism. Thus, a tendency toward considering the Holy Spirit's economic work in isolation from Christology seems also to betray a tendency toward tritheism.

¹²⁰*Abl.*, 156-57.

¹²¹He continues the quote above, saying, "The movement of good from the Spirit is not without beginning. We find that the power thought of as proceeding it, which is the only-begotten God, does all things, without whom nothing of the things which exist comes into origin. Again this spring of good things started from the Father's will." *Abl.*, 157.

Gregory is insistent that the single activity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit cannot be likened to three people working together, a cooperation in which *independent agents mutually agree to produce a unified work*. . . . In particular, the Son and the Spirit, while being distinct divine *hypostases* from the Father, do not ‘co-operate’ with him in the accomplishment of his will, as if they could have chosen to do otherwise. Rather the Son *is* the one who activates or brings into effect, and the Spirit *is* the one who perfects or completes the will which comes from the Father alone.¹²²

The unity of the trinitarian work is such that it prevents us from conceiving of three *individuals* working together. As Gregory puts it, “the unity of activity prevents a plural counting.”¹²³ Therefore, there are *not* three Gods, but one, as the work is one.

In addition to the unity of economic activity, there is a second stream in Gregory’s thought that prevents the Spirit from being severed from the Son. Gregory sees the three Persons of the Trinity as mutually glorifying one another, so that the worship of any one of the three is worship of all three.¹²⁴ However, as with Basil, such an understanding does not mean that one can worship the Spirit, for example, in isolation from the Father and the Son as though worshipping any one of the persons is equal *in toto* to worshipping all three. Gregory’s point, like Basil’s, is that one cannot reject one of the three as *less than* God while worshipping the other two as *fully* God. There is, then, an epistemological/revelatory element in Gregory’s thought that ties the three trinitarian persons together in terms of knowledge such that none of them may even be *known* apart from the others.¹²⁵ On the one hand, Gregory states that “it is not possible for any one to

¹²²Behr, *Nicene Faith*, 2:431. Emphasis mine.

¹²³*Abl.*, 157.

¹²⁴Letham, *Holy Trinity*, 156.

¹²⁵This epistemological order is *mirrored*, as it were, in reverse, by an order of being in which the Father alone is ingenerate, the Son derives from the Father, and the Spirit derives from the Father and “is always contemplated together with the Son.” Behr, *Nicene Faith*, 2:419.

conceive of the Son if he be not previously enlightened by the Spirit.”¹²⁶ However, the converse is also true according to Gregory, and so the Spirit “is known *after* the Son and *together with* the Son.”¹²⁷ Not only does the Spirit witness to the Son as in Basil, but neither can the Spirit be known *without* the Son. The Spirit, in Gregory’s thought, is inseparably united to the Son not only in economic activity, but also in terms of knowledge. He cannot be known *apart from* the revelation of the Son.

Even given the brief nature of this survey, it should be clear that for both Athanasius and the Cappadocian theologians there is no independent *knowledge* of the Holy Spirit in isolation from the knowledge of the Son and the Father. The roots of Eastern theology are clear on this point. The Spirit simply cannot be identified apart from the Son since he *is* the Spirit of the Son. Furthermore, the Spirit is not *independent* of the Son or Father, as though he could be working in isolation from them. To regard the Spirit as working in such an independent manner is, at least for Gregory of Nyssa, tritheism. Thus, one of the common themes that was present in each of these ancient Eastern fathers is the intimate connection between the Spirit and the Son in the economy of salvation.

Eastern Support for an Economic *Filioque*

While the contemporary debate over the *filioque* is as contentious as ever, very few who deny the *filioque* would also deny that in the economy of salvation the Spirit is sent by the Son. Even many Eastern Orthodox theologians, to whom the inclusivists so

¹²⁶This citation is taken from Basil *Letter* 38, which is often attributed to Gregory of Nyssa. References are taken from the translation by Blomfield Jackson, *Letter* 38, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, American ed., vol. 8 (n.p.: Christian Literature, 1895; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994).

frequently look for support in their fight against the *filioque*, admit the economic double procession of the Spirit from Father and Son.¹²⁸ This fact alone demonstrates that denying the *filioque* as it pertains to the immanent Trinity does not necessitate a rejection of an economic procession of the Spirit from or through the Son. However, such an admission would seem to connect Son and Spirit more closely than the pneumatological inclusivists might want to allow, especially since they believe that an immanent *filioque* inherently limits the ministry of the Spirit. They therefore seek to minimize the importance of the economic procession through the concept of reciprocity, or, in extreme cases, by denying an economic procession altogether. However, the biblical case for economic procession is virtually unassailable. For this reason, many Greek Fathers and modern Orthodox theologians affirm an economic *filioque*. The acceptance of an economic procession of the Spirit from the Son will have far-reaching implications for the supposed independent mission of the Spirit that inclusivists affirm, and will minimize, if not altogether negate, any benefit they perceive in rejecting the immanent procession of the Spirit from the Son.

Economic Procession as an Immanent/Economic Problem

As difficult as it is to conceive given the clear statement of John 15:26, the affirmation of an economic *filioque* is not universal, and is particularly troubling to those

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸The term *filioque* refers strictly to the one word addition to the Nicene Creed, as mentioned above in chap. 1 n. 7. However, the terms *economic filioque* or *economic procession* will be used to refer to a particular understanding the Spirit's relationship to the Son, one which allows for the Spirit's procession from the Son in the economy of salvation, but from the Father alone within the immanent Trinity. When used in this way, the word *filioque* functions as shorthand for the procession of the Spirit.

who seek a more independent role for the Spirit. There is therefore a hesitancy on the part of some to admit an economic procession of the Spirit from the Son. One of the predominant reasons seems to be that an economic *filioque* may potentially be read back into the immanent Trinity in accordance with the axiom that the economic Trinity reveals the immanent Trinity. Such an economic/immanent connection might be viewed as leading to a necessary acceptance of the Western formulation of the double procession, and so *both* are denied. This fear seems to be the motivation behind the statement issued by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC drafted in the summer of 1979.¹²⁹ In the section on the place of the Son in relation to the procession of the Spirit the commission states:

The Son's participation in the procession of the Spirit from the Father cannot be understood merely in terms of the *temporal mission* of the Spirit, as has sometimes been suggested. In other words, it cannot be restricted to the "economy" of the history of salvation as if it had no reference to, no bearing upon and no connexion with the "immanent" Trinity and the relation within the divine life itself between the three consubstantial persons. The freedom of God in his own being and as he acts in history must always be respected; but it is impossible to accept that what is valid for his revelation of his own being in history is not in some sense also valid for his eternal being and essence.¹³⁰

The commission clearly feared that the acceptance of an economic procession must of necessity lead to its acceptance in the immanent Trinity, and so they reject both.

The economic/immanent connection is also used by a second group of theologians who seek to affirm both the *filioque* and the economic procession. David Coffey, for example, commenting on the economic missions of Son and Spirit states,

¹²⁹The full text of the commission's report can be found in Lukas Vischer, ed., "The Filioque Clause in Ecumenical Perspective," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy* (London: World Council of Churches, 1981), 3-18. Participants of the commission included, among others, Alasdair Heron, Boris Bobrinskoy, Jürgen Moltmann, and Dumitru Staniloae.

“From the data alone it is not only legitimate, but *necessary*, to infer that in the Godhead itself the Son proceeds from the Father, and the Holy Spirit from both.”¹³¹ Likewise, Alasdair Heron attributes to both Karl Barth and Anselm the notion that “We can understand the inner economy of the Trinity only as we see it worked out and made known to us in Revelation.”¹³² This principle is one of the reasons that Barth endorsed the *filioque*.¹³³ There is also, however, a third group made up of those who reject the *filioque*, but nevertheless recognize an economic procession of the Spirit from the Son. Serge Verkhovsky argues that the economic/immanent relationship was problematic even for some of the Greek Fathers as it related to the issue of the Spirit’s procession through the Son, but whatever the confusion of their language at times, at a very minimum it is certain from the nature of this language that they accepted an economic *filioque*.¹³⁴ Acknowledging this fact of history, he explains, is difficult for Orthodox theologians because of the implications an economic procession would have for one’s conception of the immanent Trinity. Verkhovsky states,

Orthodox Theologians explain quite often *Dia Tou Yiou* (Through the Son) by relating it *solely to the mission of the Holy Ghost in the world*. Such an explanation is legitimate, but it does not explain everything. There are cases when the Fathers use *Dia Fiou* [*sic*] without specifying the divine activity *Ad Extra*, and moreover the

¹³⁰Ibid., 14. Emphasis original.

¹³¹David M. Coffey, “A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit,” *Theological Studies* 47 (1986): 232-33.

¹³²Alasdair I. C. Heron, “‘Who Proceedeth from the Father and the Son’: The Problem of the Filioque,” *SJT* 24 (1971): 152.

¹³³Letham, *Holy Trinity*, 217. Letham points out that for Barth rejecting the *filioque* “isolates God’s self-revelation from who he is eternally and antecedently in himself.”

¹³⁴Jaroslav Pelikan states that the congruence of the immanent and economic Trinity was “one of the methodological errors to which Greek theologians attributed the Western idea of the Filioque.” It therefore seems that both sides struggled with this issue. Jaroslav Pelikan, *Development of Christian Doctrine: Some Historical Prolegomena* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969), 131.

manifestation of the Trinity in the world can be considered with difficulty as having no relation whatever with the Trinitarian life of the Godhead: one should rather suppose a dependance [*sic*] and an analogy between the two.¹³⁵

In spite of this difficulty, it seems, as will be shown below, that many Orthodox theologians are willing to confess that the Spirit proceeds from the Son in the economy. Therefore, the theological axiom that the economic Trinity reveals the immanent Trinity, when followed absolutely, has led in two directions. First, those who want to deny the *filioque* are forced to deal with the economic sending of the Spirit by the Son in some rather unusual ways. Second, those who accept the *filioque* tend to find this doctrine explicitly reflected in the economy. However, there are those who do not make an absolute of this axiom. Alasdair Heron, for example, addresses the economic/immanent issue by arguing that,

in order to advance to an understanding of the inner economy of the Trinity, we cannot simply excerpt any text from Scripture which appears to refer to the relations between the Persona of the Trinity and project what it says or seems to say into the inner-Trinitarian relationships. Rather we have to find what is the whole overall pattern of relationships linking the three persons in the whole work of Revelation and Redemption, and take *that* as the basis for our understanding of the Trinity.¹³⁶

This illustrates that there are some for whom rejecting the *filioque* in the immanent Trinity does not necessitate the rejection of an economic procession. There are a great many Orthodox theologians, *all* of whom oppose the *filioque*, who hold to an economic procession of the Spirit from the Son. Such a procession will link the missions of Son and Spirit in a way that negates the perceived pneumatological benefits of rejecting the *filioque* sought by some inclusivists.

¹³⁵Verkhovsky, "Procession of the Holy Spirit," 22. Emphasis mine.

¹³⁶Heron, "'Who Proceedeth from the Father and the Son'," 156.

Economic Procession as a Viable Theological Concept

Notwithstanding the protestation of the WCC report and the problem inherent in Eastern theology of affirming an economic *filioque*, there are few outstanding voices in either the East or West that deny some type of economic “sending” of the Spirit by the Son. The witness of Scripture is so clear that it is only with great difficulty that one can deny or question an economic *filioque*. This section will seek to demonstrate briefly that the idea of an economic *filioque* has been well received by past and present theologians both in the West *and* in the East, where the very word *filioque* brings near instantaneous opposition.¹³⁷ Take, for example, the Chambésy meeting of the Orthodox-Old Catholic Theological Commission in August, 1975. The statement produced by the commission seemed to accept a “temporal procession” (χρονική ἐκπόρευσις) of the Holy Spirit from the Son. The wording here is significant, because since the First Council of Constantinople (381) the term ἐκπόρευσις has meant for the Greek Fathers a “natural manner of existence” rather than a “volitional activity,” and has been normally used of the procession of the Spirit in the immanent Trinity.¹³⁸ Accepting such terminology would therefore be akin to affirming a “temporal *filioque*.” In a somewhat smug response to the commission’s report, Benedict Englezakis states:

To these theological and linguistic factors is due the continuing inability of Latin-speaking theology to appreciate in its true sense the ineffable antinomy between ‘generation’ and ‘procession’. And precisely because of this, the Eastern Churches have always accepted as orthodox the Latin-speaking councils and Fathers in whom is found the *filioque*, rightly explaining this as signifying the *economic and*

¹³⁷The terminology “economic *filioque*” is seldom used in the literature, but even though various phrases are used to describe the concept, the idea is easily discernible.

¹³⁸Benedict Englezakis, “Should the Orthodox speak of a ‘Temporal Procession’ of the Holy Spirit?” *Eastern Churches Review* 9 (1977): 92.

*operational (ἐνεργητική) mission of the Spirit.*¹³⁹

Continuing on, Englezakis states, “In view of the above, and in order not to ‘quarrel about words’, we could accept in an Orthodox sense the term ‘procession’ used in relation to the ‘ekphantic’ or ‘energetic’ going-out, sending and outpouring of the Paraclete, provided that the ‘sound sense’ is there.”¹⁴⁰ This “sound sense” means understanding the ἐκπόρευσις of the Spirit in economic terms only.

Englezakis is preceded by many centuries of teaching that affirms the temporal procession of the Spirit in one form or another. It was a fairly common strategy of some Eastern theologians, in response to the *filioque* controversy, to distinguish between the eternal and temporal procession of the Spirit.¹⁴¹ This distinction was frequently tied to the Palamite¹⁴² distinction between the essence and energies of God. Stated briefly, for Orthodox theologians the essence of God is ineffable and unknowable, and so it is only the uncreated energies of God that are encountered in the economy. This is a critical distinction in the Greek Fathers as well, and is often used to differentiate the immanent and economic relationship between the Son and Spirit, as Mark Orphanos points out.

This outlook enabled them to make a clear distinction between the Holy Spirit’s essential derivation and his energetic manifestation. On this ground they argued that the καθ’ ὑπαρξιν procession of the Holy Spirit is quite different from the κατ’ ἐνέργειαν procession. In his καθ’ ὑπαρξιν procession the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, yet in his κατ’ ἐνέργειαν or κατ’ ἐκφανσιν he comes out from the Father through the Son and even from the Father and from the Son,

¹³⁹Ibid. Emphasis mine.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 93.

¹⁴¹Vischer, “The Filioque Clause in Ecumenical Perspective,” 11.

¹⁴²This term comes from the name, Gregory Palamas, who is most often credited with formalizing the distinction between the essence and energy of God. However, as is shown below, prior Greek Fathers had made this distinction well before Palamas’ time.

because all divine energies are realized from the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit. Thus the prepositions ‘from’ and ‘through’, according to the Greek Fathers, bear the same meaning and they can be interchanged only when referring to the Holy Spirit’s energetic manifestation. In respect to his *essential derivation* the Holy Spirit proceeds ‘from’ the Father and by no means ‘from’ or ‘through’ the Son.¹⁴³

Indeed, this precise view was held by Greek Fathers such as Gregory the Cypriot, Gregory Palamas, and Mark of Ephesus.¹⁴⁴ Gregory of Nyssa is credited with making this same distinction, even though Palamas would not formalize this teaching for another millennium. Dietrich Ritschl states,

It could be argued that Gregory of Nyssa places all emphasis on the economic concept of the Trinity. It is more plausible, however, to say that this is not so. The Father is *ἀΐτιον*, the Son and the Spirit are *ἐκ τοῦ ἀΐτίου*. It follows clearly: no the filioque concept is being taught. The *αἰτια* of the Spirit is in the Father, *but the Son mediates in the works of the Trinity ad extra*. The Holy Spirit is *διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ* and not from the Son.¹⁴⁵

Gerald Bray likewise attributes this thought to Gregory: “The Holy Spirit is transmitted through the Son, who as mediator gives Him to men.”¹⁴⁶ Even Photius, the East’s most strident critic of the *filioque*, “admits that both Father and Son participate in the temporal mission of the Spirit into the world, though he draws a careful distinction between this and the eternal procession.”¹⁴⁷ The end result of all of this is that for Eastern theologians both past and present the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone in regards to his essence,

¹⁴³Markos A. Orphanos, “The Procession of the Holy Spirit According to Certain Later Greek Fathers,” in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, ed. Lukas Vischer (London: World Council of Churches, 1981), 44. Emphasis mine.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 27, 38.

¹⁴⁵Dietrich Ritschl, “Historical Development and Implications of the Filioque Controversy,” in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, ed. Lukas Vischer (London: World Council of Churches, 1981), 58. Emphasis mine.

¹⁴⁶Gerald Bray, “The *Filioque* Clause in History and Theology,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 34 (1983): 109.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 123.

but in the economy his energies are communicated by the Father *through* Son. Therefore, both in the immanent Trinity and in the economy the Spirit is communicated by both the Father and Son—in the immanent Trinity as an expression of their mutual love, and from the Trinity to creation in the divine economy.¹⁴⁸

Although the Palamite distinctions are not generally accepted in the West, there is nevertheless a parallel, commonly held understanding that the Spirit proceeds in the economy from the Father *through* the Son. This view tends to be held whether or not one accepts the *filioque*. Gerald Bray, for example, argues that if the Son is regarded merely as the recipient of the Spirit (as, for example, in Pinnock's Spirit Christology), then the Western doctrine of the double procession would be practically impossible. However, he points out that in such a case the double procession would still have validity in the temporal mission of the Spirit.¹⁴⁹ Similarly, John Feinberg rejects entirely the notions of eternal begottenness and procession, and relegates these two concepts to the economy alone, where, concerning the procession of the Spirit, both Father and Son are agents.¹⁵⁰ Robert Reymond holds precisely the same view.¹⁵¹ Likewise, Richard Muller shows that the question regarding whether the procession of the Spirit is to be understood

¹⁴⁸John Breck, "The Two Hands of God': Christ and the Spirit in Orthodox Theology," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 40 (1996): 241. Alasdair Heron points out that "from the Father through the Son" was the most commonly used formula in the Fathers. Alasdair I. C. Heron, "Who Proceedeth from the Father and the Son': The Problem of the Filioque." *SJT* 24 (1971): 149.

¹⁴⁹Gerald Bray, "The Double Procession of the Holy Spirit in Evangelical Theology Today: Do we Still Need It?" *JETS* 41 (1998): 421. Incidentally, Bray also argues here that a temporal *the filioque* would probably be rejected in the East because it would destroy the harmony between the internal relations of the persons and their temporal missions. However, as we have seen this is clearly not the case.

¹⁵⁰John S. Feinberg, *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God*, ed. John S. Feinberg, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 491.

¹⁵¹Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 337.

as an *ad intra* event or merely an *ad extra* sending was very much an issue for post-Reformation scholastic scholars.¹⁵² He cites Matthew Poole on the two possible meanings of John 15:26: “What proceeding from the Father is here meant, is questioned among the divines: some understand it only of his coming out from the Father, and being poured out upon the disciples in the days of Pentecost: others understand it of the Holy Spirit’s eternal proceeding.”¹⁵³ Regardless of their stance on the *filioque*, scholars in the West virtually without exception have understood biblical language of the Spirit’s procession to require an economic procession of the Spirit from the Son.

The Impact of Economic *Filioque* on Pneumatological Inclusivism

Once it is established that an economic procession of the Spirit from the Son is all but unavoidable, what does this mean for the pneumatological inclusivism of those who place so much emphasis on denying the *filioque*, such as Clark Pinnock? Constantine Tsirpanlis, referring to Basil’s *De Spiritu Sancto*, nicely summarizes the meaning of all this for pneumatology: “In the ‘economy’ of salvation, the Son and the Spirit are inseparable.”¹⁵⁴ This inseparability of the Son and Spirit constitutes the first major obstacle for pneumatological inclusivists—one which a rejection of the *filioque* does little to overcome. Clark Pinnock is adamant that the Spirit is not confined to working in places where the Son has been proclaimed. “The life-giving power of the

¹⁵²Richard A. Muller, *Post Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 4:378.

¹⁵³Matthew Poole, *A Commentary on the Whole Bible* (London: Banner of Truth, 1962), 3:362. Cited in *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴Tsirpanlis, *Greek Patristic Theology*, 1:98.

holy breath,” he asserts, “is everywhere at work in creation furthering the saving work of God. The Spirit works in advance of mission beyond the confines of the Christian community. As a result, we may hope that wherever we go as ambassadors of Christ, the Spirit has gone there first.”¹⁵⁵ However, he advances practically no exegetical evidence in support of this contention. Furthermore, Pinnock and other inclusivists like him are going against a long tradition of Christian testimony that sees the Son and Spirit as inseparably related in the outworking of God’s redemptive plan. For example, John Thompson states that “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are so interrelated that the work of each, while distinctive, is so joined with and related to the others that it becomes and is one work.”¹⁵⁶ This inseparability is even found prominently among Orthodox theologians who, like Pinnock, reject the *filioque*. Bobrinskoy states, “In the Bible, the Spirit is never defined; rather, we are shown the Spirit at work. . . . The Spirit is at work in the world, always conjointly with the Word. . . . In the order of creation, therefore, there is a simultaneity between the Word and the Spirit.”¹⁵⁷ Pinnock’s severing of the Spirit from the Son does not result in the reciprocity that he desires, but rather in a pneumatocentrism that eclipses the New Testament emphasis on the Spirit’s witness to the Son (John 16:13-14).

There is, however, a second issue that an economic *filioque* raises for the pneumatological inclusivists. Any acknowledgement of it reinforces the biblical priority

¹⁵⁵Clark H. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” in *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, ed. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 105.

¹⁵⁶John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 72.

¹⁵⁷Bobrinskoy, “The Holy Spirit—in the Bible and the Church,” 359.

of Christology in the New Testament—the christological emphasis that the pneumatological inclusivists are trying so hard to avoid. Kärkkäinen, for example, argues that the failure to recognize the mutuality and reciprocity of pneumatology, Christology, and ecclesiology has led to christomonism in the West.¹⁵⁸ However, Boris Bobrinskoy has rightly argued, as shown above, that while there are several models of trinitarian revelation in the New Testament, there is a certain priority given to Christology in the gospel era. He states that, “in the age of the Gospel the mystery of Christ is primary: in Him we discover the Father, as in Him we receive both the promise and the gift of the Spirit.”¹⁵⁹ What is particularly helpful about Bobrinskoy’s quote, is that he articulates the priority of Christ *in the context* of the unity and consubstantiality of the Trinity. This is the true reciprocity of the New Testament, one that recognizes that the Spirit’s ministry in the New Testament is not minimized or belittled simply because it is focused on the Person of Christ. Carl Braaten echoes Bobrinskoy, and regards the move away from christocentrism as a move *away* from trinitarian theology. He argues that “any move away from Christology as the Christian way of speaking and thinking about God leads automatically to a pattern different than that of the Trinitarian pattern of God-talk. The result is some kind of unitarian theocentrism that invites us to think of God without Christ and vice versa.”¹⁶⁰ While it is not the intention of Pinnock, Yong, or

¹⁵⁸Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Yong (Lanham: MD, University Press of America, 2002), 93.

¹⁵⁹Bobrinskoy, “Models of Trinitarian Revelation,” 118.

¹⁶⁰Carl E. Braaten, “The Triune God: the Source and Model of Christian Unity and Mission,” *Missiology* 18 (1990): 420. It is important to note here that Braaten is arguing against an explicitly pluralistic soteriology, specifically that of Paul Knitter. Such theology is far more liable to the critique of Unitarianism than the inclusivism of Pinnock et al. However, when Braaten speaks of a “theocentrism that

Kärkkäinen to deny Christology as vital to Christian witness, it is ironic that theologians who pride themselves on being trinitarian have, by glorifying pneumatology at the expense of Christology, moved in a direction that is away from, and not toward, a fully trinitarian theology. In the economy of salvation the Spirit glorifies the Son—that is the explicitly stated center of Jesus’ pneumatology (John 14:24, 15:26, 16:7-15; Acts 1:8). The economic procession of the Spirit from the Son, which is the very *least* that can be taken from John 15:26, maintains the scriptural focus on Christ, and means that a mere denial of the *filioque* is not enough to “free” the Spirit from the boundaries of Christology.

Conclusion

John Breck expresses his (and Orthodoxy’s) concern with the current direction of much Western pneumatology during his address to the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox consultation on “Come, Holy Spirit—Renew the Whole Creation: an Orthodox Approach” prior to the WCC’s 1991 meeting in Canberra, Australia. He refers to both his rejection of the *filioque* and Irenaeus’ imagery of the “two hands” of the Father just prior to what is clearly meant to be a rebuke to the current trend toward isolating pneumatology from Christology in contemporary ecumenical thinking. He deserves to be quoted at length.

If the church invokes the coming of Christ as Judge and Redeemer, she does so only in the power of the Spirit. Similarly, if she invokes the descent of the Spirit to renew the whole of creation, she does so only through the power and authority of Christ. Each epiklesis, addressed either to the Spirit or to the Son, is ultimately addressed to God the Father, from whom the Son is eternally generated and the Spirit eternally proceeds. In the poignant image of St Irenaeus, the Son and the Spirit are the “two hands” of the Father. . . . *The Spirit, then, is not some*

invites us to think of God without Christ and vice versa,” one wonders if this is not precisely what inclusivists are doing when they invite us to think of the salvation of the unevangelized, which is *by definition* without reference to Christ, at least epistemologically. Might they not be liable to the charge of epistemological Unitarianism vis-à-vis the salvation of the unevangelized?

*independent, autonomous charismatic power, nor is his sanctifying and deifying work the product of his will alone, acting upon its own authority. His will and operation are one with the will and operation of the Father and the Son.*¹⁶¹

As if this were not clear enough a rebuke, he goes on to say,

In current ecumenical dialogue, there is a certain danger to which Orthodox Christians should be especially sensitive. Under the influence of various charismatic and liberation movements, a temptation exists to emphasize the role of the Spirit in such a way as to separate him from the work of Christ and consequently from the tri-unity of the Godhead. Just as earlier generations risked neglecting the Spirit with their unique stress on “Christology,” in the present day the danger is that a renewed awareness of the presence and power of the Spirit, within the church and the world as a whole, will lead to a pneumatology devoid of a Christological foundation.¹⁶²

Breck argues that “An Orthodox pneumatology, grounded in the witness of scripture, must be essentially Christological: it is the person and mission of Christ, the eternal Word, that determine, constitute and communicate the mystery of the Spirit.”¹⁶³ Breck’s concerns about the dangers of a pneumatology severed from Christology were not at all unfounded, for at the actual Canberra conference in 1991 Chung Hyun Kyung began her provocative address¹⁶⁴ to the general assembly by invoking various “spirits” from both biblical and modern times, both personal and non-personal. The response from Orthodox participants and evangelical observers was one of outright alarm. As Molly Marshall recalls, “It seems that a great deal of the negative reaction was over Chung’s generic use

¹⁶¹John Breck, “The Lord is the Spirit: An Essay in Christological Pneumatology,” *Ecumenical Review* 42 (1990): 115. Emphasis mine. This statement is all the more instructive when one compares it to the following statement from Clark Pinnock, who speaks of the Spirit’s seeming autonomy and sovereignty by saying, “If history is thought of as a stage play, Spirit is its director, touching the world and directing the economy of salvation by subtle influences.” Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 194.

¹⁶²Breck, “The Lord is the Spirit,” 115.

¹⁶³*Ibid.*, 120.

¹⁶⁴The entire address may be found in Chung Hyun Kyung, “Come, Holy spirit—Renew the Whole Creation,” in *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report of the Seventh Assembly*, ed. Michael Kinnamon (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), 37-47.

of spirit and the relating of the Holy Spirit to creation. Her identification of the movement of the Spirit with the cries of the oppressed and her bold call for repentance unnerved those more accustomed to a domesticated Spirit, consigned to familiar ecclesial rhythms.”¹⁶⁵ The reaction of the Orthodox attendees is instructive of Eastern attitudes towards such syncretism. One stated, “We must guard against a tendency *to substitute a ‘private’ spirit, the spirit of the world or other spirits for the Holy Spirit* who proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son.”¹⁶⁶ Another observed, “Our tradition is rich in respect for local and national cultures, but we find it impossible to invoke the spirits of ‘earth, air, water and sea creatures’.”¹⁶⁷ While Kyung’s address is an extreme example of a pneumatology divorced from biblical and christological moorings, the inclusivists are treading down a similar path in that their pneumatology lacks the christological criteria required for distinguishing the Spirit of God from the spirits of the world. Orthodox theology, even with its adamant rejection of the *filioque*, stands historically with the West at least in this—that the Spirit cannot be severed from the Son either in the immanent Trinity or in their economic work.

Clark Pinnock’s appropriation of Orthodoxy is symptomatic of a theological methodology which has been characterized by Daniel Strange as “impressionistic” in its feel. What he means by this is that Pinnock’s methodology “‘picks and mixes’ ideas from differing Christian traditions, transposing them into [another] theological

¹⁶⁵Molly T. Marshall, *Joining the Dance: A Theology of the Spirit* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2003), 6.

¹⁶⁶Quoted in Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 201. Emphasis original. Cole observes on this same page that “The common complaint of both the Orthodox participants and the evangelical observers was that pneumatology had been severed from Christology.”

framework.”¹⁶⁸ The result is a theology painted in broad strokes, but lacking the necessary detail required to be a realistic alternative to other, more fully rounded systems.¹⁶⁹ This methodology allows Pinnock to attempt to buttress his pneumatology by appeal to Eastern categories while simultaneously ignoring the way that rejection of the *filioque* functions in Eastern thought. More importantly, however, Pinnock fails to take into account the close relationship between the Son and the Spirit that is characteristic of Eastern trinitarian thought generally. In spite of his rejection of the *filioque*, Pinnock is not so Eastern as he likes to think. His “impressionistic” methodology allows him to be content with suggesting that rejecting the *filioque* might lead to a fuller, broader, and more independent economy for the Holy Spirit without explicitly or adequately explaining how this could be the case. An examination of Orthodox theology both present and past will quickly demonstrate that Pinnock’s claim is without warrant.

Finally, in terms of pneumatological inclusivism’s attempted adoption of Eastern Orthodox pneumatological categories, it must be said that the Eastern tradition does not constitute the final authority for all things pneumatological simply because it

¹⁶⁷Ibid.

¹⁶⁸Strange, “Presence,” 221. Note that Strange’s comments are directed at Clark Pinnock rather than inclusivists generally. I find the term “impressionistic” extremely appropriate for Pinnock’s theological method. His theology is characterized by broad, sweeping statements that often lack any significant justification or even ample explanation. It tends toward creating an impression, but lacks any detail or clarity.

¹⁶⁹Like a good worldview, a good theology should be able to answer the “big questions” if it is to be regarded as worthy of consideration. One example of how inclusivism fails to meet this test is its superficial treatment of the one passage in the New Testament that seems to address the very question of the fate of the unevangelized—Rom 10:13-17. Amos Yong shrugs off the text with a call to keep engagement with other religions and the question of the unevangelized separate (Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 50). Pinnock turns immediately to a discussion of Rom 10:18 and points to the ubiquity of general revelation as a source of potentially salvific grace. Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 104. Neither theologian adequately addresses the text.

may appear to offer the potential for a more robust reciprocity sought by inclusivists.¹⁷⁰ No, any pneumatology, Eastern or Western, must stand under the scrutiny of Holy Scripture. It is the Scriptures after all, not the Fathers of the East or West, that must serve as final authority in Christian theology. Thus, even if it can be successfully argued that the Eastern tradition gives more freedom to the Spirit than is often supposed in the West, this proves little except that the two traditions differ on this point. What remains is to determine whether one or both of these traditions fails accurately to reflect biblical teaching. Chapter five of this dissertation will offer a brief exposition of biblical pneumatology and its relationship to Christology, but for now it suffices to point out that Western appeals to Eastern pneumatology carry little weight theologically if they ultimately fail the test of genuine orthodoxy.

¹⁷⁰Edmund J. Rybarczyk compares Eastern Orthodoxy and American Pentecostals, and concludes that both traditions see themselves as “the true pneumatologists of Christianity; the Orthodox, because (briefly) they rejected the insertion of the *filioque* clause into ancient Christian creeds; the Pentecostals, because they believe they are re-presenting the Holy Spirit to the church universal.” In other words, both traditions see themselves as the guardians of pneumatology for the church. Nevertheless, each must withstand the scrutiny of Scripture. Edmund J. Rybarczyk, “Spiritualities Old and New: Similarities between Eastern Orthodoxy & Classical Pentecostalism,” *Pneuma* 24 (2002): 9.

CHAPTER 4

THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE: TRINITARIAN TAXIS AND THE ECONOMY OF SALVATION

Pneumatological inclusivists such as Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong are attempting to use pneumatology as a solution to the “scandal of particularity” that is inherent in Christology. They see Christ’s particularity as having troubling consequences for both an evangelical theology of religions and a soteriology that is inclusive of those who have never heard the gospel. Amos Yong believes that pneumatology holds the key to overcoming the dichotomy of particularity/universality once one understands that Christ was only who he was *because of* the ministry of the Spirit in his life.¹ It is this emphasis on pneumatology that is at least partially responsible for enhancing the importance of the *filioque* for inclusive soteriologies. Inclusivists who emphasize pneumatology² hold both the *filioque* and Western trinitarian theology in general largely to blame for what they regard as a lack of emphasis on the person and work of the Holy Spirit.³ Clark Pinnock illustrates this line of thinking when he argues that the *filioque*

¹Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward A Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 47.

²Not every inclusivist grounds the salvation of the unevangelized in a special work of the Holy Spirit. For example, John Sanders is thoroughly inclusive in his soteriology, but does not seem to ground his “wider hope” theology in pneumatology (that is to say, he does not give pneumatology the emphasis that it enjoys with some other inclusivists.) John Sanders, *No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992).

³Mention has already been made of Colin Gunton’s scathing critique of Augustine and the Western heritage that followed him. Both Pinnock and Yong follow him in this critique.

hinders the Spirit's economic ministry by restricting his movements to those places where Christ has been named.⁴ But one would be right to question whether the centrality that pneumatology enjoys in the theologies of inclusivists like Yong and Pinnock comes at the expense of Christology and theology proper. Pinnock is certainly right when he says that the Spirit should not be neglected, but has the pendulum swung too far in the opposite direction? Pinnock, for example, equates acceptance of the *filioque* with a tendency toward what he calls "Christomonism."⁵ While this is certainly a drastic overstatement, it serves to illustrate two points that aid in introducing the thesis for this chapter.

First, it illustrates that perhaps pneumatology has become so central to pneumatological inclusivists that it now holds an unhealthy (and unbiblical) place as the grounding for their entire soteriology, and furthermore, as the central focus of their entire theological agenda. One indication of this is that Pinnock regards the Spirit as the preeminent figure in the economy of salvation.⁶ What Pinnock refers to as "Christomonism" would more likely be regarded by evangelicals as a faithful reflection of Scripture's emphasis on Christology.⁷ More importantly however, Pinnock's

⁴Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 196-97.

⁵Ibid., 196.

⁶This is not to say that there are not times when pneumatology might be the central focus of a particular area of theology (a theology of spiritual gifts, for example). Nor is it to suggest that the person and work of the Spirit is not central in many ways even as regards the doctrine of salvation. The point is simply that in Pinnock and Yong's theology, the Spirit seems to usurp at times the roles of both the Father and the Son. He serves, for example, in Pinnock's theology as the "director of the economy of salvation," (*Flame of Love*, 194.) a role that this chapter will argue is reserved in Scripture for the Father alone. Additionally, when Pinnock and Yong argue that the Spirit can bring salvation to those who know nothing of Christ they seem to make him a second mediator, who replaces Christ as the "one mediator between God and men."

⁷This chapter argues that the Bible clearly depicts the Father as the Initiator of salvation who accomplishes this work through his "two hands"—the Son and Spirit. Nevertheless, it is also true that the

statement serves as a vivid illustration of the overall thesis of this dissertation, which is that rejection of the *filioque* is given far too much weight in the pneumatologies of some inclusivists. If it is an overstatement to suggest that acceptance of the *filioque* leads to Christomonism (and it is), it is also an exaggeration to argue that its rejection will free the Spirit from the boundaries of Christology. This is because there are other theological factors that tie the Spirit's work to the glorification of the Son. These other factors are of such weight that the manner of the Spirit's eternal procession cannot serve as the sole determining issue in understanding the nature of the Spirit's economic activity. Two of these factors will constitute the focus of this chapter. First, there is the priority of the Father in the Trinity whereby he serves as the "Grand Architect, the Wise Designer, of creation, redemption, and consummation."⁸ This priority is normally spoken of in terms of a *taxis*,⁹ or *order* that exists within the Trinity. Second, there is the biblically demonstrable unity in the economy of salvation, which is grounded in the aforementioned priority of the Father and the unity of the Trinity itself. This unity ties the Spirit inextricably to the Son in the economy of salvation, and is reflective of the perichoretic unity that is shared in the immanent Trinity as well as the voluntary subordination of the Son and the Spirit to the will of the Father. Given this trinitarian unity, it seems healthier to understand the economy of salvation as a singular work of the Trinity directed by the Father and carried out by the Son and the Spirit as opposed to distinct *economies* of the

Father seeks to glorify the Son, and as such, he holds forth his Son for the world to see and worship. For this reason the New Testament's emphasis on the person and work of Christ does not mitigate the fact that the Father is regarded in Scripture as the Architect of the economy of salvation.

⁸Bruce A. Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Relationships, Roles, and Relevance* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005), 51.

⁹See chap. 1 n. 35 for a definition of *taxis*.

Son and Spirit that may touch only peripherally (in that they share only a common goal or end).¹⁰ As a result of these factors, this chapter will argue that acceptance or rejection of the *filioque* cannot be determinative of an independent economy of the Spirit whereby he is free to work salvifically among the unevangelized apart from the message of the gospel.¹¹

The Priority of the Father and *Taxis* in the Trinity

Edith Humphrey laments the current trend toward altering the church's traditional (and biblical) language of God as Father. "Today," she complains, "hierarchy and patriarchalism are undesirable. Since our talk about God is simply that of human images, we should now change the symbols: our picture of God should avoid gender terms (Father) or use both equally (Father, 'Mother')." ¹² Harkening back to Athanasius, Humphrey points out that language of God as Father "is intertwined with our understanding of God the Son and God the Holy Spirit." As such, it is often the case that "when we say Father, we have in mind the entire Godhead, referring to the Father as, if you like, the head of the household."¹³ Here, Humphrey helpfully encapsulates one of the hotly debated issues concerning God language in contemporary theology—the

¹⁰Pinnock actually sees these two economies as completely different, yet complementary to one another in that the Spirit characterizes universality while the Son exhibits particularity. This is a drastic oversimplification of the economic work of Son and Spirit. The universality/particularity dichotomy that Pinnock and other inclusivists advocate is a false one that fails to appreciate the more nuanced biblical data.

¹¹Though it is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is fair to ask whether positing such an independence of the Spirit betrays a tendency toward tritheism. Pinnock seems to recognize that his social model of the Trinity requires careful qualification if it is to avoid tritheism (*Flame of Love*, 35).

¹²Edith M. Humphrey, "Why We Worship God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit," *Crux* 32 (1996): 6.

¹³*Ibid.*, 4. Humphrey goes on to say, "Already you will see that I am using images of

seemingly unavoidable association of the name “Father” with hierarchy, patriarchy, and authority.¹⁴ Speaking to the issue of authority and hierarchy within the Trinity, Bruce Ware points out that egalitarians¹⁵ have a hard time explaining the vast preponderance of masculine biblical references to God apart from appealing to the patriarchal social context in which the biblical texts were written.¹⁶ He suggests that this explanation is inadequate given the widespread worship of feminine deities throughout the Bible’s cultural milieu, and that perhaps there is a better way to understand the masculine biblical language of God as “Father.”

Jesus said over and over again throughout his ministry that he came to do the *will* of his *Father*. Clearly, a central part of the notion of ‘Father’ is that of fatherly authority. Certainly this is not all there is to being a father, but while there is more, there certainly is not less or other. The masculine terminology used of God throughout Scripture conveyed within the patriarchal cultures of Israel and the early church the obvious point that God, portrayed in masculine ways, had authority over his people.¹⁷

While few if any would argue the point that individual believers are to submit to the authority of God, the notion of the Son having an eternal relationship of voluntary submission to the authority of his heavenly Father has received much criticism in recent years from religious feminist and evangelical egalitarian theologians who argue that such notions relegate women to subordinate positions in the church, the home, and the culture

authority: I cannot help it! Democracy is a wonderful idea, but it does not describe the Kingdom of God.”

¹⁴The notion of *reciprocity* so beloved by Pinnock and other inclusivists is also being championed by feminist theologians. It is perhaps for this reason that both find the social model of the Trinity so appealing. For the wide appeal of the social model, see John L. Gresham, Jr., “The Social Model of the Trinity and its Critics,” *SJT* 46 (1993): 325-27.

¹⁵Evangelical egalitarians differ from more radical religious feminists in that they generally hold to biblical authority, and thus tend to give more weight to the biblical text. On the other hand they join with other feminists in rejecting role distinctions between men and women.

¹⁶Bruce A. Ware, “Tampering with the Trinity: Does the Son Submit to His Father?” *JBMW* 6 (2001): 8.

as a whole.¹⁸ The reason for this is that the voluntary functional subordination of the Son to the Father might be seen as grounding the functional subordination of women to men in the church and in the home, as seems to be taught in several biblical passages (e.g., Eph 5:22-24; 1 Tim 2:9-15). Egalitarians argue instead for a view of the Trinity that rejects all notions of hierarchy and authority, and limit the submission of the Son to the Father solely to the period of the incarnation.¹⁹

What does this have to do with pneumatological inclusivism? The connection may be demonstrated in several ways. First, the hierarchy that historic, orthodox Christianity has seen in the Trinity is not limited to the relationship between the Father and the Son, but also extends to the Spirit as well.²⁰ Both the Son *and* the Spirit are understood to submit voluntarily to the authority of the Father.²¹ This understanding of full essential equality along with eternal functional subordination of both the Son and the Spirit to the Father has a long history within the church, and is rooted in the notion of the Father's monarchy, which is ardently maintained in the Nicene Creed. Second, the connection comes when one sees that in order for the inclusivists to argue for an economy of the Spirit that is *separate from* and in a sense, *independent of* that of the Son, they must posit a kind of independence and even sovereignty of the Spirit that is out of keeping with the biblical portrayal of the trinitarian *taxis*. In other words, by attributing

¹⁷Ibid. Emphasis original.

¹⁸For one example, see Gilbert Bilezikian, "Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead," *JETS* 40 (1997): 58.

¹⁹Ibid., 58-59.

²⁰Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, 125-27. Ware's characterization of the Spirit's role in the Trinity is both biblically based, and historically orthodox.

to the Spirit this sort of independence, they have not only severed the Spirit from the Son, but also from the Father as well.

Pneumatological Inclusivism and Trinitarian *Taxis*

Recognizing the Father's role as the Grand Architect of the economy of salvation is crucial to understanding properly the roles of both the Son and the Spirit in their respective work. Acknowledging the Father as the One who sends both the Son and Spirit in the economy will lead to a much more unified economy than the inclusivists seem to recognize.²² Such unity does not allow for the independent operation of the Spirit that the inclusivists require for their soteriology to be viable. Merely rejecting the *filioque* cannot overcome the unity of the economy derived from a proper understanding of the Father's priority in the trinitarian *taxis*, and thus this rejection cannot, in and of itself, ground an independent economy of the Spirit. The following section will explore this thought along two lines, and will be followed by a critique of the inclusive view. First, there will be a brief examination of the inclusivists' denials of *taxis* among the trinitarian persons. Following this, we will examine the resultant manner in which some inclusivists overemphasize the notion of the Spirit's sovereignty.

Inclusivism's Denial of *Taxis*

The inclusivists' rejection of hierarchy within the Trinity generally falls under

²¹Such submission is inherent, for example, in the "two hands of God" metaphor used by Irenaeus, and to which both Pinnock and Yong appeal.

²²Thomas Smail says in this regard: "The Father is the integrating factor within the Godhead and the gospel. It is his purpose for his whole creation that gives meaning to the coming of the Son and the sending of the Spirit." Thomas A. Smail, *The Forgotten Father: Rediscovering the Heart of the Christian Gospel* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1980), 17.

two categories. First, there are a limited number of explicit denials that any sort of hierarchy exists within the Trinity. More commonly, however, their denials of trinitarian *taxis* are discernable as the inevitable outcome of other theological commitments—for example, their commitment to a social view of the Trinity and an independent economy of the Spirit.²³ These tend to be *implicit* denials rather than explicit assertions.²⁴ That is, they are the logical corollary of their pneumatology rather than something that is explicitly denied. Pneumatological inclusivism’s denial of hierarchy, or *taxis* in the Trinity is therefore mostly (though not entirely) to be discerned by the way it characterizes the Spirit’s work in the economy of salvation rather than by explicit assertions.

Both Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong, in their zeal to elevate our estimation of the Spirit’s work, make use of the “two hands of God” analogy that was first articulated by Irenaeus.²⁵ Crucial for the purposes of this chapter is that both Pinnock and Yong use this metaphor to deny any subordination of the Spirit to the Son, thereby promoting an egalitarian vision of equality between their respective economies.²⁶ Yong, for instance, while understanding that the original context of Irenaeus’ metaphor involved teaching the full essential equality of the Son and the Spirit with the Father, nevertheless moves

²³Inclusivists are not necessarily social Trinitarians. However, the primary dialogue partners for this dissertation, Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong, both adopt this way of thinking.

²⁴Kovach and Schemm speak of a “recent trend in Trinitarian thought that denies the eternal subordination of the Son by implication.” Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, “A Defense of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son,” *JETS* 42 (1999): 462.

²⁵Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 58-60; Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 43.

²⁶Todd L. Miles, “Severing the Spirit from the Son: Theological Revisionism in Contemporary Theologies of Salvation” (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 121-22.

beyond this, using it to promote hypostatic and economic equality as well.²⁷ He states,

More important theologically, however, is that the two hands explicitly posits an *intratrinitarian egalitarianism*. . . . Yet at the same time, because of its non-subordinationist vision of Spirit and Word, it also contained the seeds for the radically relational trinitarianism developed by the fourth century Greek fathers.²⁸

This quote serves to demonstrate that the analogy of the Son and the Spirit as the two hands of God serves, for Yong, not primarily to undergird *unity* in the trinitarian economy (as it did for Irenaeus), but rather to *deny* any sort of functional hierarchy between the Son and the Spirit, and perhaps even in the Trinity as a whole. This notion is crucial to Yong's entire pneumatological project, as the following statement illustrates: "the primary challenge for pneumatological theology," he observes, "is to preserve, without disengaging the Spirit from the Son altogether, the integrity of the Spirit's mission against the theological tradition's tendency to subordinate the Spirit to the Son."²⁹ Both Yong and Pinnock regard this subordination as a tendency of Western trinitarian theology that diminishes the work of the Spirit and, more importantly, circumscribes his soteriological work within the bounds of gospel proclamation.

Like Yong, Pinnock makes use of Irenaeus' analogy to promote a vision of equality between the economic work of the Son and the Spirit and to ensure that the Spirit is not regarded as functionally subordinate to the Son. One of the ways he does this is by

²⁷Ibid., 121.

²⁸Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 51. Cited in Miles, "Severing the Spirit," 121. Emphasis mine.

²⁹Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 111. Interestingly, Yong here admits (n. 81) that some of his earlier works *intentionally* and *consciously* "erred on the side of distinguishing the mission of the Spirit from that of the Son in order to purchase theological space for understanding the distinctiveness of the mission of the Spirit." He regards *Spirit Poured Out* as returning to a "more centrist position." Whether this is the case is open to debate.

using the two-hands analogy to tie both economies of the Son and the Spirit to the entirety of creation by attributing creation to the Son, and the perfection of creation to the Spirit.³⁰ It is crucial here to understand that for Pinnock, there is no distinction between nature and grace, between creation and redemption. God's presence is *always* potentially salvific.³¹ The result of using the two hands analogy in this manner is twofold. First, it becomes a means for Pinnock to universalize the particularity of Christ's economy, which serves his inclusive soteriology.³² Second, however, it serves, as it did for Yong, to eradicate any notion of hierarchy between the Son and the Spirit by emphasizing that both Son and Spirit participate equally in the redemption of creation. As Pinnock states,

We emphasize God's sending the Son and must not lose the balance of a double sending. God sends both Son and Spirit. Irenaeus spoke of them as God's two hands, implying a joint mission. . . . The relationship is dialectical. The Son is sent in the power of the Spirit, and the Spirit is poured out by the risen Lord. The missions are intertwined and equal; one is not major and the other minor. It is not right to be Christocentric if being Christocentric means subordinating the Spirit to the Son. The two are partners in the work of redemption.³³

Pinnock's primary concern here seems to be that the Spirit not be regarded as taking a place *subordinate* to that of the Son, while the *unity* of the redemptive economy is, at best, secondary in importance. He seeks to balance the biblical truth that the Son pours

³⁰Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 58-60.

³¹Only one of many such statements by Pinnock is found in Clark H. Pinnock, "An Inclusivist View," in *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, ed. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 105, where he states, "The life-giving power of the holy breath is everywhere at work in creation furthering the saving work of God."

³²According to Daniel Strange this is one of the major flaws in Pinnock's pneumatological inclusivism. The particular gets, as it were, swallowed up by the universal. Daniel Strange, "Presence, Prevenience, or Providence? Deciphering the Conundrum of Pinnock's Pneumatological Inclusivism," in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000), 256. Strange speaks of Pinnock's "subtle universalization of the particular."

³³Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82.

out the Spirit³⁴ by arguing that in the economy the Spirit sends the Son.³⁵ The analogy thus serves to mitigate any reading of the Son's sending of the Spirit to mean that the Spirit's mission is *limited* by being too directly tied to the Son's economy.

The two hands analogy, as it is used by Yong and Pinnock, may seem at first merely to promote unity of mission and work between the Son and the Spirit. Nevertheless, they mean for it to accomplish much more—namely, the denial of any functional subordination between the Son and the Spirit. For this reason the analogy goes along nicely with their rejection of the *filioque*, which Pinnock in particular regards as promoting a hierarchical view of the relationship between Son and Spirit.³⁶ He states, for example, “In my view the [*filioque*] diminishes the role of the Spirit and gives the impression that he has no mission of his own.”³⁷ The two hands analogy is indeed helpful when understood to illustrate the *unity* of the economic work of the Son and the Spirit. Likewise, it rightly emphasizes that both the Son and the Spirit are sent by the Father. However, at least two problems arise with this analogy as it is used by Pinnock and Yong. First, their use of the two hands analogy fails fully to consider the

³⁴However, Pinnock seems to downplay, or completely ignore the fact that Christ pours out the Spirit *on the church as God's new covenant people*, and not on the world in its entirety. Pinnock explicitly and vehemently denies that the work of the Spirit is limited to the Church. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” 105.

³⁵Amos Yong also follows this line of thinking. He asserts a limited benefit to the *filioque* if, and only if, it is balanced by a *Spirituque*, so that the Spirit and the Son have perfect reciprocity in the economy—sending one another. Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 226.

³⁶This notion is common among those who reject the *filioque*, as attested by the tendency among some Eastern theologians to argue that acceptance of the *filioque* leads to the establishment of hierarchy within the church along the lines of the Roman Catholicism. This tendency is referred to in Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, new ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 216. See also Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 216, for this notion in Vladimir Lossky. By way of contrast, Robert Letham regards this connection to be “far fetched.” Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology and Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2004), 207.

ramifications of an economic *filioque*—that is, the Spirit’s procession from the Son in the economy. As argued in chapter three, even Orthodox theologians confess that in the economy of salvation, the Spirit proceeds from the Son, and they see this as intimately connecting the economic work of the Spirit to the Son. It is out of step with the historic use of this analogy to regard it as a means of downplaying the sending of the Spirit by the Son in the economy. Furthermore, the Son’s sending of the Spirit cannot be so easily reciprocated merely by appealing to the incarnation as the Spirit’s *sending* of the Son, as will be shown below.

Far more crucial, however, is that both Pinnock and Yong use the two hands analogy to promote *distinctive* economies of Son and Spirit. Pinnock, for example, rather than using the analogy to strengthen the *unity* of the trinitarian economic work, prefers to speak of the “double mission” of the Son and the Spirit—“the two hands with which God creates and perfects.”³⁷ “The double mission of Son and Spirit,” Pinnock argues, “can provide the perspective we need to handle the tension of universality and particularity.”³⁸ It is biblically questionable at best to regard the economies of the Son and the Spirit as separate and independent (though oriented toward the same goal) rather than seeing them as the singular outworking of the Father’s redemptive plan. It may be that using the two hands analogy as Pinnock and Yong do not only denies any notion of hierarchy between the Son and the Spirit, but also promotes an unbiblical separation of their work in the

³⁷Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 196.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 58.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 194.

economy by subtly endorsing a concept of “separate/distinct but equal” economies.⁴⁰

The effect of such autonomy, they believe, is to open the door to a wider soteriological work of the Spirit that is unfettered by Christ’s particularity.

The Spirit and Divine Sovereignty

Flowing out of pneumatological inclusivism’s denial of *taxis* within the Trinity is an overemphasis on the Spirit’s sovereignty. More specifically, the manner in which Pinnock and Yong see the Spirit exercising sovereignty seems to promote a view of the Spirit that is largely *independent* of both the Father and the Son. The result is a pneumatology that actually undermines their appeal to the two hands analogy by downplaying the authority of the Father in the trinitarian hierarchy. After all, the two hands analogy is rooted in a view of the Trinity whereby the Son and the Spirit are *sent* to serve together the redemptive plan of the Father, and thus assumes a model of the trinitarian work in the economy of salvation that is unified by and under the Father’s will. In contrast, the pneumatological emphasis of Pinnock and Yong serves to undermine this unity by highlighting the Spirit’s economic sovereignty, which in turn serves to minimize the Father’s will as the source of both the Son and Spirit’s ministry.

Pinnock’s overemphasis on the Spirit’s sovereignty is found in both explicit denials that the Spirit serves the economy of the Son, as well as in the way he downplays the role of the Father in the trinitarian hierarchy. Ultimately, however, it is rooted in his

⁴⁰Yong sees Vladimir Lossky as understanding the economies of Son and Spirit in this way and tying such an understanding to the rejection of the *filioque*. He states of Lossky that “the removal of the *Filioque* thus allows the Orthodox retrieval of Irenaeus’s image of the Son and Spirit as the ‘two hands of the Father’. The separate—that is, *related but distinct*—economies of the Son and the Spirit then lead to the soteriological and ecclesiological thesis that “Pentecost is not a ‘continuation’ of the Incarnation. It is its sequel, its result.”” Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 216. Emphasis mine.

social understanding of the Trinity and in his open view of God.⁴¹ Pinnock's social trinitarianism and open model of God, combined with his view that God so desires our libertarian freedom that he voluntarily limits his power and knowledge, presents to the reader an image of God that is the very antithesis of hierarchy. While confessing the sovereignty of God, Pinnock also argues that God's relationship to the world is reflective of the triune community in that God does not monopolize power.⁴² Rather, his power is exercised in perfect coordination with his love, and the model for God's love is not domination, but "nurturing and empowering."⁴³ Since God willed to create other creatures who exercise their (libertarian) free wills, Pinnock regards the created economy as "pluralistic: there is no single and all-determining divine will that calls all the shots."⁴⁴ Such a view sets love against power, such that to exercise one is to diminish the other to some degree.⁴⁵

It seems that, for Pinnock, God's relationship to his creatures mirrors, at least to some degree, the intra-trinitarian relationships. It therefore seems doubtful that Pinnock would accept a characterization of the Spirit's relationship to the Father as one involving functional subordination and willing submission. However, the evidence appears conflicting. On the one hand, Pinnock acknowledges the Spirit as one of the

⁴¹For Pinnock's openness theology, see Clark H. Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), and idem, "Systematic Theology," in *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 101-25. For his social trinitarianism, see Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 33-35; and idem, *Most Moved Mover*, 83-84. By no means do all inclusivists hold to open theism or social trinitarianism.

⁴²Pinnock, "Systematic Theology," 113. This view is reflective of Pinnock's open theism.

⁴³Ibid., 114.

⁴⁴Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover*, 53.

⁴⁵Ibid., 96. Here, Pinnock states that God "wants to love and not overpower."

“two hands” of the Father, an analogy that is based on the Father’s *sending* of the Spirit and the Son. On the other hand, he seems to attribute to the Spirit a sovereignty that is incompatible with a relationship of functional subordination when he states,

We also confess and believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, the dynamic and free presence of God in the world, which blows where it wills (John 3:8). In the economy of God, the Spirit is under nobody’s control but free to grace any person or sphere, however remote from the church’s present boundaries. The Spirit embodies the prevenient grace of God and puts into effect that universal drawing action of Jesus Christ. The world is the arena of God’s presence . . . the Spirit is ever working to realize the saving thrust of God’s promise for the world.⁴⁶

One is left to wonder what Pinnock means by “nobody’s control,” (does this include the Father?). What theologian has ever asserted that the Spirit was under the control of any man or institution? While Pinnock does go on to say that the Spirit is “pursuing his assignment from the Father to make all things new,”⁴⁷ one is given the impression that this assignment was lacking any real detail, and that the Spirit is thus free to fulfill the task as he pleases.⁴⁸ Such a view removes virtually all hierarchical implications from the *sending* of the Spirit and Son by the Father, and portrays instead a trinitarian model devoid of any real authority and submission between the persons.⁴⁹ This suspicion is confirmed when Pinnock assigns to the Spirit a place that would normally have been attributed to the Father—that of the director of the entire redemptive economy. “If

⁴⁶Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” 104.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 105.

⁴⁸Such a view would be commensurate with Pinnock’s open theism, wherein God creates a world with no definite “plan” or “blueprint.” In a statement that is breathtaking in its implications for Pinnock if his view proves to be wrong, he states, “Only a pathetic god would reign over the world in dictatorial ways. Imagine having to control everything in order to be able to achieve anything! Who admires such dictatorial power? One can submit to, but not love, such a despot. The God of the gospel doesn’t need a blueprint to feel confident.” Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover*, 95.

⁴⁹One must be extremely careful in the way that one depicts authority among the fully equal persons of the Trinity, as will be seen below.

history is thought of as a stage play,” he states, “Spirit is its director, touching the world and directing the economy of salvation by subtle influences.”⁵⁰ Such a statement undermines any notion of *taxis* in the Trinity, and instead illustrates Pinnock’s commitment to functional egalitarianism in the trinitarian relations.⁵¹ If the Spirit’s functional subordination to the Father is questionable for Pinnock, he is even more adamant that the Spirit must never be subordinated to the Son. “It is not right to be Christocentric,” he states, “if being Christocentric means subordinating the Spirit to the Son. The two are partners in the work of redemption.”⁵²

Evaluation of Inclusivism’s Denial of *Taxis*

Before examining the biblical and systematic data that affirm a *taxis* within the Trinity a brief critique of Pinnock and Yong is in order. First of all, both Pinnock and Yong take great pains to emphasize mutuality and reciprocity between the Son and the Spirit. It is in this light alone that both confess a limited acceptance of the *filioque*.⁵³ That is, so long as one *also* confesses a type of *Spirituque*, whereby the Spirit sends the Son, then mutuality is maintained and a tacit acceptance of some aspects of the *filioque* might be affirmed.⁵⁴ This move is clearly designed to avoid any notion of hierarchy between the Son and the Spirit, with the result being that the Spirit is not bound at all by

⁵⁰Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 194.

⁵¹Such a view once again completely undermines Pinnock’s appeal to the two hands analogy, since it is based on the Father *sending* the Son and Spirit economically. If the Spirit is *sent* by the Father, then surely it is the Father, not the Spirit, who is the Director of the redemptive economy.

⁵²Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82.

⁵³See chap. 2, 57-58. Neither of these men can realistically be said to support the *filioque*.

the particularity of Christ. In other words, the Spirit, for both Pinnock and Yong, must not be regarded as serving the limited economy of the Son, but must have his own economy.⁵⁵ They seek to overcome the particularity of the Son's economy by means of the Spirit's universal economy in one of two ways, either by rejecting the *filioque* outright, or by adding to it a corresponding *Spirituque*. There are multiple problems with this approach, only three of which will be offered here.

First, Scripture never states that the Spirit sends the Son, while it does explicitly state that both the Father and the Son send the Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26). The notion of the Spirit sending the Son seems legitimate only because both Pinnock and Yong downplay or ignore entirely the role of the Father as the one who sends the Son. This strategy allows them to understand the birth narratives merely as one part of the larger redemptive work that they attribute to the Spirit—that is, the coming of Christ becomes an aspect of the Spirit's work.⁵⁶ As a result, Pinnock can state, “The virginal conception speaks of the coming of Christ as a gift of the Spirit. The Spirit's earlier creative activity is coming to a head in his birth.”⁵⁷ For Pinnock, this appears to constitute the Spirit's sending of the Son. However, as Gerald Bray points out, this construal of the Spirit's role in the incarnation must be rejected.⁵⁸ The reason is that if one were to apply the generally accepted trinitarian axiom that the temporal mission

⁵⁴Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 226; Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82. Neither Yong nor Pinnock actually advocates using this term.

⁵⁵Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 196.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 82, 86.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 86.

⁵⁸Gerald Bray, *The Doctrine of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 161.

accurately reflects the inner relationships between the persons of the Trinity, then one would be faced with the dilemma that the birth narratives could indicate the Son's dependence on the Spirit for his hypostatic existence.⁵⁹ Bray therefore points out that "the work of the Spirit in the womb of Mary has always been held to refer to the virginal conception of Christ's *human* nature, not to the implantation of the Son's divinity."⁶⁰ While Pinnock is correct to assert that the birth of Christ is the first act of the new creation, and to point to the Spirit's role in the birth of Christ, he is wrong to construe the birth narrative as constituting the Spirit's *sending* of the Son in the same manner that John 15:26 speaks of the Son and the Father together sending the Spirit.⁶¹ This attempt to create the appearance of reciprocity fails to achieve Pinnock's goal.

A second problem that emerges from an examination of Pinnock and Yong's denial of the trinitarian *taxis* is that despite their calls for reciprocity, their pneumatology clearly overshadows their Christology—reversing the tradition so that the Son becomes functionally subordinate to the Spirit. In their zeal to promote a vision of a fully egalitarian Trinity along the lines of a social trinitarian model they actually promote a pneumatocentrism that eclipses the centrality of Christ as seen in the New Testament, in

⁵⁹Ibid. In other words, the Spirit's role in the Incarnation could be regarded, on Pinnock's reading, as reflecting some sort of eternal procession (or begottenness) of the Son *by the Spirit*, rather than by the Father.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Interestingly, some Pentecostals feel that Pinnock has not gone far enough in his portrayal of the Spirit's work. Steven Stuebaker states, "Conceiving the primary work of the Spirit in terms of empowerment extends a subordination of the Spirit in christological thinking and in the doctrine of grace. This is the case because the Spirit does not play a constitutional role in the incarnation, but rather comes upon something that is already given: namely, the incarnated divine Son. Thus the consequence of portraying the Spirit empowering Jesus' work is to reduce the Spirit to a super-additum." Steven M. Stuebaker, "Integrating Pneumatology and Christology: A Trinitarian Modification of Clark H. Pinnock's Spirit Christology," *Pneuma* 28 (2006): 6.

essence promoting another *taxis* wherein the Son is subordinate to the Spirit.⁶² This may be seen in Pinnock's theology when he argues for "placing Christology in the context of the Spirit's global operations."⁶³ He suggests seeing "what results from viewing Christ as an aspect of the Spirit's mission, instead of (as is more usual) viewing Spirit as a function of Christ's."⁶⁴ What results is that the work of Christ becomes a parenthetical aspect of the Spirit's mission, which both precedes and supersedes that of the Son.⁶⁵ As Daniel Strange explains, speaking of Pinnock's pneumatology,

From the perspective of the Spirit, there is a continuity in what the Spirit has always been doing in creation, and what we see in the incarnation: 'Salvation can be a universal possibility if we recognise the universal, loving activities of the Spirit. God has always wanted friendship and reconciliation with sinners. What Jesus made explicit and implemented has always been true'.⁶⁶

Strange goes on to critique this aspect of Pinnock's pneumatology as eclipsing Christology. He wonders, given Pinnock's view of prevenient grace, "what are the benefits of Christ to the unevangelized if grace is universally present outside the incarnation and has always been universally present"?⁶⁷ Strange concludes that Pinnock's inclusivism stems from a "salvific pneumatocentricity over

⁶²Part of the reason for their desire to make the Spirit central may be a theological method that seeks to support their charismatic *experience* of the Spirit. Yong, for example, states in *Spirit Poured Out*, 9, that this book "reflects my attempts to think through my own pentecostal experience and the pentecostal 'tradition' toward a pentecostal theology that is authentically, thoroughly, and unabashedly pentecostal from beginning to end."

⁶³Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 80.

⁶⁵As Pinnock states, "The Spirit who brought about the birth of Jesus has always been present and working in the world. Spirit is thus the source of creation *and* redemption. Active in creation, Spirit is active also in steering the world toward the goal of union with God." Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82.

⁶⁶Strange, "Deciphering the Conundrum," 248, citing from Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 105.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 249.

Christocentricity.”⁶⁸ This has drastic consequences for Pinnock’s soteriology, as Strange explains.

The above analysis leads me tentatively to the conclusion that although Pinnock confesses a high constitutive Christology, it would appear in reality that the unevangelized *can be saved outside Christ* (but of course not outside God’s grace) because Christ’s work of re-creation and God’s grace in creation are identical. At an epistemological level, the incarnation is unique, final and exclusive, but ontologically it only represents (albeit normatively) what the Spirit has been doing always from creation. Pinnock confesses a constitutive Christology and an objective redemption but his position on the unevangelized appears to question whether in fact he can coherently hold on to both doctrines. Rather than being Christocentric in his inclusivism, which I believe he would claim to be, *Pinnock’s position is pneumatocentric and as a result the particularity of Christ is compromised.*⁶⁹

If it is wrong, as Pinnock suggests, to regard the economy of the Spirit as a function of Christ’s redemptive work, can the solution really be found in reversing this analysis? Pinnock’s inclusivism turns biblical pneumatology, which sees the Spirit’s economic work centering around the person of Christ, on its head, making Christ serve the redemptive economy of the Spirit. Once again Strange questions the validity of this approach, this time by quoting from Gary Badcock.

There is a strong sense in New Testament pneumatology, however, and indeed in the Christian theological tradition in general, that the gift of the Spirit is something that flows from the Christ-event, and that it is of decisive importance precisely because it is an eschatological event, something that ruptures the previous continuities of natural human existence. . . . The fact that the Spirit appears . . . to be given fundamentally at creation, appears to conflict with the links of Scripture and tradition that are made both between Pentecost and Calvary and between the Messianic age and the life to come.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Ibid., 251.

⁶⁹Ibid., 250. Emphasis mine.

⁷⁰Gary Badcock, “Karl Rahner, the Trinity, and Religious Pluralism,” in *The Trinity in a Pluralistic Age: Theological Essays on Culture and Religion*, ed. Kevin Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 153; cited in Strange, “Deciphering the Conundrum,” 251.

Pinnock's severing of pneumatology from Christology is made possible in part, as Badcock indicates, because he ignores the eschatological framework that explicitly ties the Spirit to the Son. The implications of ignoring this biblical framework are crucial for the pneumatologies of both Pinnock and Yong, as will be demonstrated in chapter five.

Third, and perhaps most critically, the role of the Father is nebulous at best in the theologies of Yong and Pinnock. While it is clear that their primary concern is for an egalitarian mutuality between the Spirit and the Son, they nevertheless fail to address adequately the place of the Father in their redemptive schemes. Passing reference is occasionally made to the role of the Father in sending the Son and the Spirit, but the implications inherent in this sending are not acknowledged. The result seems to be a trinitarian economy where each person of the Trinity is largely free to operate as he wishes. This may be at least partly the result, at least in Pinnock's case, of his open theism. Pinnock views God as having limited his sovereign power by creating creatures with libertarian freedom so that the future is at least partly open, even for God himself. There is no blueprint for God, no master plan to achieve his desired ends. The result is that God works together with his creatures to *create* a future that is largely unknown even to God himself.⁷¹ If this is true of God's interaction with finite creatures, why would it not also be true of the Father's interaction with the other members of the Trinity? In other words, given such an understanding of God's nature, could not the Father perhaps assign⁷² a mission to the Son or the Spirit while simultaneously leaving the future open such that the means of accomplishing this task belongs to the *individual* hypostasis to

⁷¹Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover*, 53, 92-96.

⁷²Perhaps "suggest" is a better word here since it is hard to see how a social model of the

which it was assigned?⁷³ Such an understanding would not only serve Pinnock's open theism, but also a social model of the Trinity wherein the focus is *not* on the unity of nature, but on the relationality of persons. If such is the case, then Yong and Pinnock's appeal to the "two hands" analogy of Irenaeus would be rendered virtually useless *except* as a means of promoting reciprocity between the Son and Spirit. This is because the analogy originally called attention to the *unity* of the trinitarian economy, whereas with Pinnock and Yong the emphasis would be on the *separate but equal* nature of the dual economies of Son and Spirit. In all of this, the unifying priority of the Father is eclipsed completely.⁷⁴

The Biblical Portrayal of Trinitarian *Taxis*

When using the term "subordination" of either the Son or the Spirit, one must be extremely clear as to precisely what is meant. Nevertheless, there is a clear line here between orthodoxy and heresy. Michael Bauman, for example, points to various sorts of subordinationism that were prevalent during the Arian controversy.⁷⁵ He argues that there is a clear distinction between *essential* or *emphatic* subordination, and *economic*

Trinity can ground the Father's functional priority over the Son and Spirit.

⁷³John Sanders, for example, argues that Jesus and the Father *together* determined whether or not the cross was necessary as Jesus prayed in Gethsemane. Even up until the moment that Christ was crucified the certainty of the cross was not fixed. John Sanders, *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 100.

⁷⁴In contrast to Pinnock and Yong, note the words of Thomas Smail: "In the New testament there is no such autonomous realm of the Spirit, which evolves from inside itself, building on its own experiences and developing its own techniques. The realm of the Spirit is entirely subordinate to that of the Father and the Son. The Spirit does and brings nothing of himself or on his own authority but simply takes the things of Christ and shows them to us (John 16.15), just as the Son also does nothing on his own authority but only what he sees the Father doing (John 5.19)." Smail, *The Forgotten Father*, 26-27.

⁷⁵Michael E. Bauman, "Milton, Subordinationism, and the Two-Stage Logos," *WJT* 48 (1986): 177-82.

subordination.⁷⁶ The former was essentially an Arian doctrine, and was defined as an inequality of nature or being between the Son and the Father. This type of subordination was declared heretical by the *homoousios* of Nicaea, and remains to this day a departure from the orthodox Christian faith. However, one can fully affirm the essential equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and still hold to a *functional* or *economic* subordination whereby the Son voluntarily submits to the Father, and the Spirit voluntarily submits to the Father and the Son. Essential equality and functional, voluntary subordination are fully compatible. Furthermore, orthodox Christian theology has historically affirmed that the economic subordination of the Son and Spirit is not a temporary state, assumed only for their earthly missions, but rather it is reflective of a voluntary submission to the will of the Father that is eternal.⁷⁷ Functional, economic subordination (here with particular reference to the Son) thus “means that while all three divine Persons are identical in essence, the Son is economically subordinate to the Father with respect to his *eternal mission and function*. The Son is no less than the Father, but has voluntarily submitted himself to the will of the Father.”⁷⁸ Bruce Ware points to the long history this doctrine has enjoyed when he states, “while the early church clearly embraced the full essential equality of the three trinitarian persons (because each of the three divine persons possesses fully and simultaneously the identically same infinite divine nature),

⁷⁶Ibid. I use the terms “functional” and “economic” subordination interchangeably.

⁷⁷Jack Cottrell, for example, argues that “from the second century onward a concept of the Son’s subordination to the Father has been combined with a concept of the full equality among the Three. Each is seen to be fully, equally and eternally divine, although in their relationship to one another, the Father assumes supremacy and the others a subordinate role.” Jack Cottrell, *What the Bible Says about God the Redeemer* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1987), 146; cited in Kovach and Schemm, “A Defense,” 465.

⁷⁸Kovach and Schemm, “A Defense,” 464. Emphasis mine.

nonetheless the church has always affirmed likewise the priority of the Father over the Son and Spirit.”⁷⁹ To suggest that the Son and Spirit voluntarily submit themselves to the will of the Father in both time and eternity is therefore fully compatible with affirming their essential equality with the Father—which is precisely why theologians speak of *voluntary* submission.⁸⁰

With this distinction clearly in mind, there is substantial evidence in both Scripture and the theological legacy of the church that points to a hierarchical *taxis*, or ordering within the immanent Trinity. The following survey must necessarily be brief, but two lines of evidence will serve to argue the point at hand.⁸¹ First of all, there are the implications inherent in the divinely given, biblical appellatives “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” The inferences that may be drawn from the title “Father” for the nature of the trinitarian relationships are not lost on feminists, both evangelical and otherwise. The current trend is toward replacing these titles with others that are less suggestive of hierarchy such as “Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,” or for balancing masculine

⁷⁹Ware, “Tampering with the Trinity,” 8.

⁸⁰Therefore, however one formulates the idea of *taxis* within the Trinity, it must always be clearly emphasized that the submission of Son and Spirit to the Father is a *voluntary* act among ontological equals. A careful balancing act is required to maintain the dual truths of the full deity of each member of the Trinity as well as the willing submission of the Son and the Spirit to the Father. Gerald Bray points out that the relationship between Father, Son, and Spirit “must be a free connection between equal persons.” The Son’s mission, for example, “was a voluntary submission willingly assumed for our salvation, which explains how it is that when we enter into that relationship in the Holy Spirit we experience the freedom of being sons, not the restrictions placed on servants or slaves.” Bray goes on to say, “Applying the same principle to the Holy Spirit we must conclude that although he was also sent into the world by the Father and the Son he came voluntarily.” Gerald Bray, “The Double Procession of the Holy Spirit in Evangelical Theology Today: Do We Still Need It?” *JETS* 41 (1998): 423-24.

⁸¹Substantial literature exists that more thoroughly argues for the notion of an eternal *taxis* in the Trinity. Even a brief bibliography would not be serviceable here. However, the following quote may serve simply to illustrate the prevalence of this view in church history. J. Scott Horrell states, “From the Cappadocians to John Owen, from Karl Barth to Avery Cardinal Dulles, some form of eternal divine order is frequently defended and may arguably be the dominant perspective of how the Godhead, even the immanent Godhead, has been understood by most Christians in history.” J. Scott Horrell, “Toward a

terminology of God as Father with the feminine terminology of God as Mother.⁸² The reason for this is simple, the title “Father” carries with it the implication of authority. As John Frame points out, “That the Father has some sort of primacy is implicit in the name Father, and of course the doctrines of eternal generation and procession suggest that the Father has some sort of unique ‘originative’ role.”⁸³ Bruce Ware similarly argues that it is rather obvious that the title “Father” carries with it the idea of authority. He cites Malachi 1:6 as scriptural evidence of the inherent understanding of authority in the title “father.” In this text, God queries, “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts.” Ware concludes, “God as Father is rightfully deserving of his children’s honor, respect and obedience. To fail to see this is to miss one of the primary reasons God chose such masculine terminology to name himself.”⁸⁴

This understanding of the biblical titles for the trinitarian Persons has a long history in the church. Athanasius, for example (and the Cappadocians after him), grounded the unity of God in the monarchy of the Father, and in doing so established a functional (though not essential) priority of the Father among the Persons of the Trinity.⁸⁵

Biblical Model of the Social Trinity: Avoiding Equivocation of Nature and Order,” *JETS* 47 (2004): 409.

⁸²According to Ware (“Tampering with the Trinity,” 5), some more radical feminists, like Mary Daly, are even using exclusively feminine or even neo-pagan language of God. Ware refers to Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women’s Liberation* (Boston: Beacon, 1973). Other who call for more inclusive God language include Rosemary Radford Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon, 1983); Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991); and Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992).

⁸³John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2002), 720.

⁸⁴Ware, “Tampering With the Trinity,” 8.

⁸⁵Augustine also rooted the priority of the Father in his monarchy. Kovach and Schemm, “A

In his conflict with the Arians, Athanasius argued for the full equality of the Son with the Father based not on their common participation in some pre-existent nature,⁸⁶ but in the Father's begetting of the Son so that the Son shares with him a common divinity. For Athanasius, "the 'one God' of the Christian faith is unquestionably the Father: 'Other than the Father there is no God' (*Serapion* 1.16)."⁸⁷ Furthermore, these terms do not merely reflect the triune relationships as they are constituted economically, but rather they are (to use the current terminology) *immanent* expressions of the inner relationship between the trinitarian Persons. In other words, these titles are eternal.⁸⁸ As such, they reflect a relationship of submission and authority which is eternal. The result of this conception of trinitarian hierarchy for Athanasius is a unified economy of creation and redemption whereby the Son and Spirit truly function as the "two hands" of the Father in that the Father accomplishes *His* work through the Son and Spirit.⁸⁹

Defense," 470.

⁸⁶The Arians argued that if the Son is eternal, as Athanasius taught, then he should rather be called the *brother* of the Father rather than his Son (a much more egalitarian notion which would perhaps be to the liking of some contemporary theologians if it did not result in tritheism). But for Athanasius, the titles "Son" and "Father" made the Arian conjecture absurd since *the terms themselves* required a relationship whereby the Son is *from* the Father. The terms "Father" and "Son" point to what John Behr calls an "intrinsic asymmetry to their relationship: the Son is *from* the essence of the Father; he is the Son *of* God." As such, "Athanasius never reverses the formula to say that the Father is *homoousios* with the Son, nor yet does he hold the Father and Son to be *homoousios* together." John Behr, *The Nicene Faith, Formation of Christian Theology*, vol. 2 (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 244. Emphasis his.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 242.

⁸⁸For this reason Behr states that "for Athanasius, the difference between Father and Son is one that pertains to theology proper, rather than the economy. . . . Another way of putting this would be to say that for Athanasius the title 'Son', as applied to Jesus Christ, belongs to the realm of 'theology' not only to the 'economy'." In other words, "'sonship' is a hypostatic property, differentiating the one who is Son from the one who is Father." *Ibid.*, 248.

⁸⁹Space does not permit a more thorough survey of church history on this matter, but so ingrained was this doctrine in the church following its articulation by Athanasius and the other Nicene Fathers that Richard Muller can say of its status during the Reformation that "the priority of the person of the Father in the order of the Godhead [was] not a matter of direct controversy." Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca.*

There is, however, a second line of argumentation that points to hierarchy within the Trinity, one that is less prominent in the egalitarian/complementarian debate (the usual arena for this type of discussion), but is nevertheless particularly useful in its applicability to pneumatological inclusivism. This argument is based upon the belief that the eternal assumption of a human nature by Christ points both *back* to a prior relationship of submission (one that made it fitting for the Son, rather than the Father or Spirit, to assume human nature and become incarnate), and also *forward* to a continuing relationship of voluntary submission to God the Father (in that the assumption of human nature was an everlasting assumption by the Son). Stephen Kovach and Peter Schemm point out that modern objections to the doctrine of the eternal subordination to the Son are typically based in the argument that the Son's earthly role was only temporary.⁹⁰ For example, a 1999 Anglican report investigating the doctrine of the Trinity and its bearing on male/female relationships cites two forms of this argument.⁹¹ One simply states that "hierarchy and subordination are features of the relationship between the man Jesus and his heavenly Father, but (it is claimed) not of the relationship between the Father and the Son before the incarnation."⁹² A second form of the argument, articulated by Paul Jewett, claims that the voluntary subordination of the Son is limited only to the economy of redemption.⁹³

This understanding of the Father/Son relationship seems to be paralleled in the

1725 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 4:249.

⁹⁰Kovach and Schemm, "A Defense," 470.

⁹¹This commission report may be found in Kevin Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and the Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 122-37.

⁹²*Ibid.*, 125.

relationship that Pinnock sees between pneumatology and Christology. For Pinnock, pneumatology was (perhaps) limited by Christology during the incarnation only in the sense that the redemptive plan of the Father was at that time focused on the person and work of Christ. However, now that Christ has ascended, pneumatology (again) is central. This centrality is seen in the universal movement of the Spirit throughout creation, which is not simply a work of sustaining creation, but a work of soteriological import.⁹⁴ For Pinnock, Christ's incarnation *temporarily* impacted the economy of the Spirit, but after the ascension, the Spirit's economy is no longer tied to that of the Son. Both egalitarians and Pinnock regard the incarnation as a temporary state of affairs that did not reflect the true nature of either the trinitarian relationships or the trinitarian economy.

However, both Pinnock's view of the Spirit's economy and the egalitarian view of the Son's submission to the Father suffer from the same problem, and that is a failure to take into account the permanence of the Son's incarnation and the implications of biblical passages that speak of both the Spirit and the Son as being *sent*. For egalitarians to argue that Jesus' relationship with his Father was characterized by functional equality *before* the incarnation, willing functional submission *during* the incarnation, and functional equality *after* the ascension raises a host of questions about the full humanity of Christ.⁹⁵ Such a view might even be taken to imply a docetic

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Pinnock, "An Inclusivist View," 104-06.

⁹⁵For example, this view apparently associates Jesus' submission to the Father with the fact that he took on human nature. Therefore, if this submission is a corollary of Jesus' humanity, then returning to functional equality with the Father would seem to *require* that Jesus abandon his humanity. This view thus seems to make Jesus' humanity a temporary state assumed for his redemptive work, and therefore it calls into question his ability to function as an eternal mediator between God and men (1 Tim 2:5). Additionally, such a view of the intra-trinitarian relationships raises questions about whether any of

Christology.⁹⁶ If egalitarians argue that it was only during the redemptive economy that the Son voluntarily submitted to the Father, then what does this imply about the permanence of his humanity, assumed for the purpose of redemption? If his voluntary submission was temporary, was his humanity temporary also? And if this humanity was temporary, could Jesus then be regarded as having become *fully* human? Could he continue to function as a mediator between God and men (1 Tim 2:5)? Certainly, Christ returns to a position of glory with the Father (John 17:5), and certainly his work of redemption was fully accomplished (John 17:4; Heb 1:3). However, egalitarians seem to imply that Christ's relationship to the Father *after* the work of redemption returned to exactly what it had been *before* the Son's work of redemption, as if nothing had changed or the incarnation had never happened.⁹⁷ Scripture is clear, however, that the ascended Christ *remains* in a position of voluntary submission to his Father. First Corinthians 15:28 is unmistakably clear in its assertion that the Son *will be* subject to the Father.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the context of this text is the bodily resurrection, which means that Christ's submission to the Father *post-dates* his redemptive work since it follows his own

the persons of the Trinity could have become incarnate or whether this role was particularly suited to the Son.

⁹⁶In other words, if the humanity of Jesus was only temporarily assumed, then was he *fully* human?

⁹⁷A corollary, yet no less important problem that this raises for egalitarians is that in arguing this way they are denying that the revelation of God in the economy accurately reflects who God is immanently. While this tenet of trinitarian theology has not been adopted without modification by all orthodox trinitarians, it does have strong support. However, egalitarians simply *must* deny its legitimacy, and argue instead that what is revealed of the Trinity in the economy definitely *does not* reflect the Trinity as it is immanently. Such exegesis, it is argued, "has the effect of undermining the reality and truthfulness of God's revelation by positing the idea that what God does economically does not necessarily indicate who he is." Robert Letham, "East Is East and West Is West? Another Look at the *Filioque*," *MJT* 13 (2002): 73.

⁹⁸Thomas R. Schreiner, "Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity: 1 Corinthians 11:2-16," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, ed. John Piper

resurrection from the dead. The context thus points to Christ's future submission to the Father in the context of his permanent humanity.

The supposition of a purely egalitarian relationship (particularly between the Son and the Spirit) is what prompts pneumatological inclusivists like Pinnock and Yong to assert an economic independence for the Spirit.⁹⁹ By rejecting the *filioque* they believe themselves to be simultaneously rejecting any sort of functional subordination or hierarchy between the Son and the Spirit. What Pinnock fails to understand or accurately reflect in his pneumatology is the historical, orthodox position on the Trinity that asserts *both* an essential equality *and* an eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father, and the Spirit to the Father and the Son. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly for Pinnock, he fails fully to address the implications of the biblical texts that speak of the Son *sending* the Spirit. These texts are foundational for the notion of trinitarian *taxis*.¹⁰⁰ They constitute what is essentially an *economic filioque* which ties the economic work of the Spirit directly to the risen Christ. Texts like John 15:26 speak of the joint sending of the Spirit by both the Son and the Father, and are buttressed by other texts such as John 20:21-22, where the Son gives the Spirit to the disciples in the process

and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 129.

⁹⁹Ironically, Pinnock's desire for reciprocity between the Son and the Spirit is what prompts him to reject the *filioque*, and yet for the Orthodox Church the rejection of the *filioque* is tied to the monarchy of the Father. The Eastern emphasis on the Father's monarchy is one of the things that prompted the Nicene Fathers to articulate a trinitarian *taxis*. Pinnock's rejection of the *filioque* and his appreciation for Eastern theology in general ties him in some ways to a view of the Trinity that actually *promotes* hierarchy.

¹⁰⁰Interestingly, there is a trend toward appealing to "apophatic" (or negative) theology to deny any hierarchical significance to the patriarchal titles "Father" and "Son," and the "sending" texts. This trend seeks to appropriate a traditionally Eastern manner of doing theology to negate any perceived *taxis* in the Trinity. For a sound rebuttal of this distortion of apophatic theology, see Patrick Henry Reardon, "Father, Glorify Thy Name! The Patriarchal Shape of Trinitarian Theology," *Touchstone* 13:6 (2000): 22-29. Reardon does not mince words: "Make no mistake: what these new apophaticists want to get rid of is God as *Father*"(25). Emphasis his.

of sending them out on their mission to preach the gospel.¹⁰¹ These texts, along with others such as Acts 1:4-8 and 2:33, inseparably connect the Spirit's new covenant work to the proclamation of the gospel concerning God's Son.

The implications of the trinitarian *taxis* for inclusivism and its rejection of the *filioque* are therefore critical. First of all, if the existence of a hierarchical *taxis* in the Trinity is a defensible biblical position, then the Spirit's economy cannot be construed as in any sense *independent* of the other members of the Trinity, particularly since the traditional, orthodox understanding of the trinitarian hierarchy would regard the Spirit as voluntarily subordinate to both the Father and the Son, and not simply to the Father alone.¹⁰² This understanding of the Spirit's role is partially grounded in those biblical passages that speak of the Son's sending the Spirit (John 15:26, 20:21-22; Acts 2:33). Such passages indicate that the Spirit's ministry is tied to the exaltation of the Son in the proclamation of the gospel message (see, for example, Acts 4:31, 16:6; Eph 6:17), and point to a unity in the economy of salvation that simply does not allow for the Spirit to operate independently of the Father or the Son. This unity in the economy of salvation is rooted in the monarchy of the Father and the consequent priority given to the Father in

¹⁰¹This is a difficult text given the later outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. D. A. Carson interprets Jesus' actions to be essentially an acted out parable pointing forward to Pentecost. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 655. Regardless of one's interpretation of this text, it is important to note that Jesus ties the giving of the Spirit to his sending of the disciples on their gospel mission. Likewise, in Matt 28:18-20 Jesus connects his sending of the disciples with both his authority received from the Father, and with his outpouring of the Spirit ("I am with you always"). This connection is again made in Acts 1:4-8, and in Peter's understanding of Pentecost which he articulated in Acts 2:33. The sending of the Spirit by Christ is fundamentally tied to gospel proclamation in all of these texts.

¹⁰²Paul Rainbow, after presenting the enormous evidence from church history concerning the existence of a functional ordering among the Persons of the Trinity, closes by stating, "With respect to the relations among the triune Persons, the standard of orthodoxy has been set for many centuries." Paul Rainbow, "Orthodox Trinitarianism and Evangelical Feminism," 11 [online]; accessed 12 February 2009; available from <https://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/Orthodox-Trinitarianism-and-Evangelical->

the trinitarian *taxis*, and so the following section will seek briefly to demonstrate this priority and its unifying effects on the redemptive work of the Son and the Spirit. This unity is not dependent solely upon an immanent relationship of procession between the Spirit and the Son for its existence. Rejection of the *filioque* will therefore prove insufficient as grounding for an independent economy of the Spirit.¹⁰³

The One Economy of Salvation

Boris Bobrinskoy notes with reference to the economy of the Holy Spirit that “We can speak of a proper economy of the Son, and a proper economy of the Spirit, *provided one does not contrast them*, and view them in some type of succession that would make them, as it were external the one to the other.”¹⁰⁴ In other words, one can only speak of individual *economies* of Son and Spirit provided that one does so in a qualified manner. But precisely what is it that unifies or connects the economic work of the Son and the Spirit? For Bobrinskoy, as well as for the Eastern tradition upon which he stands, it is the fact that the work of both Son and Spirit is, in essence, the work of the Father who sent them. Thus, Bobrinskoy can go on to say that the redemptive work of Christ is accomplished by the power of the Spirit, but is nevertheless ultimately the work of the Father. “When the oldest layers of the New Testament evoke the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Exaltation of the Lord,” he states, “they present them as a *work of the*

Feminism; Internet.

¹⁰³ Again, this is not to say that one’s position on the *filioque* has no relevance for one’s pneumatology, but simply that, as Graham Cole argues, the mere acceptance of an economic procession of the Spirit from the Son is sufficient to tie the Spirit to the Son in the economy of salvation. Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 202. This is the very least that must be taken from John 15:26.

¹⁰⁴ Boris Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity: Trinitarian Experience and Vision in the Biblical and Patristic Tradition* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1999), 72. Emphasis

Father through and in the Spirit.”¹⁰⁵ This understanding of the Spirit’s work has traditionally been tied, at least in the East, to the monarchy of the Father, and is prevalent in the writings of the Eastern Father Athanasius. C. R. B. Shapland summarizes his thinking on this matter by saying, “For Athanasius, the co-activity of the Three Persons does not simply mean—as it does for Basil and Didymus—that they work together in one activity. The action of the Godhead, as he understands it, *derives from the Father* and is accomplished through the agency of the Son in the Spirit.”¹⁰⁶ Just as Athanasius understood that the monarchy of the Father grounded the immanent trinitarian unity among the persons,¹⁰⁷ he also understood that the works of the Son and Spirit are ultimately the Father’s works, and it was this that brought unity to the economic work of the Trinity.

But ironically, it seems that the *Father* has now become the “forgotten member of the Trinity” as so much interest and attention is currently being focused on pneumatology.¹⁰⁸ The recent emphasis on all things pneumatological, along with the growing prevalence of inclusive soteriologies such as those of Pinnock and Yong, has led both to an increased desire to see the Spirit freed from the boundaries of the church, and also to renewed interest in the impact that the *filioque* might have on the freedom of the

mine.

¹⁰⁵Ibid. Emphasis mine.

¹⁰⁶C. R. B. Shapland, “Introduction,” in *The Letters of Saint Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit*, trans. C. R. B. Shapland (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951): 36.

¹⁰⁷Behr, *Nicene Faith*, 242.

¹⁰⁸Thomas Smail laments the way that pneumatology has overshadowed theology proper in the charismatic movement. As a member of what he calls the “charismatic renewal” for over twenty years, he states, “If I were to diagnose and prescribe for its present ills in a single sentence, I would say that it needs to know the Father.” Smail, *The Forgotten Father*, 13.

Spirit. Alasdair Heron, for example, expresses frustration with the *filioque* akin to that of Pinnock, Yong, and Kärkkäinen when he argues that it constitutes “a reduction of him [the Spirit] to a mere ‘power’ flowing from Christ, and so loses sight of his sovereign freedom and initiative as the Spirit who, like the Word, is one of what Irenaeus called ‘the two hands of God’. No longer does he ‘blow where he will’; rather, ‘it goes where it is sent’.”¹⁰⁹ But even as he asserts the Spirit’s “sovereign freedom and initiative” Heron seems to recognize a fundamental truth—both Son and Spirit are fulfilling the redemptive initiative of the Father in the economy of salvation. They are the “two hands of God [the Father].” Consequently, while it is theologically accurate to attribute sovereignty to both the Spirit and the Son, it is misleading to imply that they act with *independent* freedom and initiative in an absolute sense.¹¹⁰ Their relationship to the Father, as described above, is one of full ontological equality characterized by voluntary functional subordination. This willing submission explains why the Father is portrayed in Scripture as both the initiator of redemption and the one toward whom redemption is aimed. As Orthodox theologian Serge Verkhovsky states, “One should not forget that God the Father, being the Principle of divinity, is likewise its ultimate end. Everything is turned towards the hypostasis of the Father, everything converges *eis auton*, (toward Him,) everything is for Him. The Son and the Holy Ghost themselves tend towards the Father, and their

¹⁰⁹Alasdair Heron, “The Filioque in Recent Reformed Theology,” in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, ed. Lukas Vischer (London: World Council of Churches, 1981), 113.

¹¹⁰Consider, for example, the remarks of William Cannon: “The Holy Spirit is God . . . and he exercises the divine prerogatives of creativity and absolute sovereignty, so that we recognize him as our maker and we obey him as our Lord. . . . But the Holy Spirit *alone* is not God. . . . Our recognition of him as God is therefore always in conjunction with others.” Even in the recognition of the Spirit’s deity, one must also recognize that this is not *independent* deity—that is, apart from the Father and the Son. William R. Cannon, “The Holy Spirit in the Godhead,” *One in Christ* 16 (1980): 169.

relations with Him have a marked character of finality.”¹¹¹ Since this is true, it is simply not helpful to speak of two *separate* or *independent* economies, or to promote what appears to be an *independent* economy of the Spirit. Whereas it may be acceptable for theological purposes to *distinguish* between the two economies, they cannot legitimately be *separated* for any reason. Instead, we should recognize that the Son and Spirit together serve the one redemptive economy of the Father. Doing so would tie together the economic work of Son and Spirit in a manner that is more fully consistent with the “two hands” metaphor by emphasizing the *unity* of their work rather than their *independence* from one another. Furthermore, understanding the economy of salvation in this way retains the biblical emphasis on the primacy of the Father.

The Father as the Initiator of Redemption

Bruce Ware has described the role of the Father as that of “the Grand Architect, the Wise Designer of all that has occurred in the created order.”¹¹² Nowhere is this truth more clearly seen in relation to redemption than in Ephesians 1:3-14. In this “one long sentence”¹¹³ the dual roles of Son and Spirit are unmistakably shown to be in the service of the redemptive plan of the Father, who “works all things according to the counsel of his will” (v. 11). There is full trinitarian participation in redemption, for all that the believer receives in this text is in or through Christ and sealed with the Spirit, yet the passage exhibits an unmistakable “theocentric thrust” that is dominant. “God [the

¹¹¹Serge S. Verkhovskiy, “Procession of the Holy Spirit According to Orthodox Doctrine of the Trinity,” *St Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly* 2 (1953): 17.

¹¹²Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, 51.

¹¹³Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 90.

Father] is the origin and source of salvation as well as its goal.”¹¹⁴ It is the Father who blesses (v. 3), chooses (v. 4), predestines according to the purpose of his will (v. 5), redeems (v. 6), lavishes riches and grace (vv. 5-6), reveals the mystery of his will and plan (vv. 9-10), works all things after the counsel of his will (v. 11), and seals the believer with the Spirit (v. 13). John Stott is certainly correct when he states that in this passage “God the Father is the source or origin of every blessing which we enjoy.”¹¹⁵ The Father’s initiative is clearly paramount in this text, “for he is himself the subject of almost every main verb in these verses.”¹¹⁶ Yet throughout this passage the participation of both Son and Spirit cannot be overlooked. These verses illustrate beautifully that the redemptive work of both Son and Spirit serve the will and plan of the Father.

The priority of the Father in redemption is seen elsewhere in Scripture as he is shown to be the initiator of each major stage in redemptive history.¹¹⁷ This priority is clearly discernible even though the accomplishment of redemption involves the work of the other two members of the Trinity. However, the role of the Father is often downplayed by inclusivists like Pinnock and Yong in an attempt to achieve *reciprocity* between the missions of the Son and Spirit.¹¹⁸ Amos Yong is clear that this is his goal

¹¹⁴Ibid., 92.

¹¹⁵John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians: God’s New Society*, BST (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979), 33.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷To trace this out fully would require much more space than is available here. For the purposes of this section we will focus on some of those elements of redemptive history that directly involve the other two persons of the Trinity and their work.

¹¹⁸The reciprocity emphasized by inclusivists, like their rejection of the *filioque*, is an element of their theology that borrows heavily from Eastern thought. Lukas Vischer, “The *Filioque* Clause in Ecumenical Perspective,” in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, ed. Lukas Vischer (London: World Council of Churches, 1981), 17. However, it must be

when he states, “What must be avoided is subordinating either Spirit to Son or vice versa. Against any and all forms of subordinationism, we must affirm the mutuality of the economies of Word and Spirit.”¹¹⁹ Notice how this line of thinking is brought to bear on the biblical portrayal of the incarnation. The sending of the Son in the incarnation is clearly and repeatedly shown in Scripture to be an action of the Father (John 3:16, 5:23, 10:36) which is accomplished *through* the Spirit (Luke 1:35). However, in an attempt to bolster the Spirit’s work against what they see as Western christocentrism, inclusivists often interpret this event as the Spirit’s “sending” of the Son. Pinnock offers the clearest example of this when he places the incarnation in the larger context of the Spirit’s global operations, which have been going on since creation. The narrative of Luke 1, therefore, “is telling us that the Spirit who brought about the birth of Jesus has always been present and working in the world. Spirit is thus the source of creation *and* redemption.”¹²⁰ According to Pinnock reciprocity is maintained by holding to a *dual sending*—that is, the Son sends the Spirit at Pentecost, but the Spirit also sends Christ in the incarnation.¹²¹ However, in all of this the role of the Father is largely ignored. While there is occasional mention of the Father as the ultimate sender of the Son, the greater emphasis is on the role of the Spirit. The Son’s mission is placed, almost parenthetically, within the economy of the Spirit, which both precedes and follows that of the Son. What begins as an attempt at reciprocity has at times become an unwarranted pneumatocentrism that

remembered, as argued in chap. 3, that the vast majority of Eastern theologians would deny any separation of the Spirit from the Son. The reciprocity they seek is not intended to serve an independent economy of the Spirit.

¹¹⁹Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 226.

¹²⁰Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82.

ignores the *taxis* in the economy of redemption, particularly the role of the Father as Initiator and Architect.¹²²

It was according to the will and plan of the Father that another of redemption's mightiest acts was accomplished—the crucifixion of the Son. Isaiah 53 prophesied the crucifixion in great detail, and makes clear that the Father was the Grand Architect behind all that happened to the Suffering Servant. This figure is described as the “arm of the Lord” who accomplishes peace with God (v. 1).¹²³ The arm of God is portrayed variously in Isaiah as both the tool of God's judgment and the means of his protection over his people. In Isaiah 53 both strands come together as the judgment of the Father falls upon his Servant (v. 4), and in so doing ultimately protects his people from their own iniquities (v. 5). Acts 4:27-28 similarly depicts the Father as the ultimate cause behind the crucifixion. While it was Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel who are blamed for the crucifixion, they were doing what God's hand and purpose had predestined to occur (v. 28). Paul Stolz says it well:

For Jesus, the pain and final hell of confrontation he had to face was that of abandonment, not of his judge and of a distant all-supreme being, but by the one who was his Father. Jesus dies, not ultimately because of the Jews and their understanding of the law, nor because of the Romans or Zealots and their power

¹²¹As was earlier mentioned (p. 142), this understanding of the Spirit's role in the incarnation can lead to problems for one's view of the immanent Trinity.

¹²²Certainly we must not downplay the role of the Spirit as the guiding power behind Christ's work and ministry. The point here is that the sending of the Son into the world for the purpose of redemption was the decision of the Father, not the Spirit, and therefore it is illegitimate to speak of the Spirit “sending” the Son (John 3:16, 6:44; Rom 8:32) in this manner. John Breck shows that Orthodox theologians often argue for reciprocity by speaking of a dual sending of Son by Spirit and Spirit by Son. John Breck, “The Two Hands of God': Christ and the Spirit in Orthodox Theology,” *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 40 (1996): 236-37. While this is a valid observation when considered solely *within* the Son's economy, it cannot be said of the Son's mission as a whole. The Scriptures *never* speak of the Spirit sending the Son in this respect.

¹²³J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 423.

politics, but *simply because of his God and Father.*"¹²⁴

The Apostle Paul makes clear that it was the *Father's good pleasure* for all the fullness of deity to dwell in the Son, and through him to reconcile all things to himself (Col 1:19-20). This does not preclude the role that the Spirit played in leading the Son to Jerusalem, and ultimately to the cross, it is simply to acknowledge that this most crucial part of redemption was initiated by the Father, not the Spirit.

Finally, it was according to the Father's plan that the Son was raised from the dead through the power of the Spirit, and that the Son subsequently poured out the Spirit upon the church. Romans 8:11 ties the believer's future resurrection with the resurrection of Christ through the indwelling power of the Spirit. Scripture never explicitly states that it was the Spirit who raised Christ from the dead. Rather, it attributes the resurrection to the Father (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12).¹²⁵ However, there is a consistent theme throughout the Bible that associates the Spirit with the giving of life,¹²⁶ and so it seems safe to infer that the close association of the Spirit with the believer's resurrection is due in part to his work in the resurrection of the Son. Yet in spite of the Spirit's intermediate role, it is the Father who is regarded as the ultimate power behind the Resurrection (Gal 1:1). In the same way, Acts 2:33 attributes the pouring forth of the Spirit at Pentecost to the Son. Nevertheless, Peter speaks of Jesus' having received the Spirit from the Father.¹²⁷ Thus

¹²⁴Paul M. Stolz, "'As the Father has Sent Me, Even So . . . ' The Theology of the Cross as Impulse for Mission," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 23 (1989): 118. Emphasis mine.

¹²⁵Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 493.

¹²⁶Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostals and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Yong (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), 220.

¹²⁷Edward Every interestingly points out that it was the *human nature* of Christ that poured out

these two great events in redemptive history, although they were performed by the Spirit and the Son respectively, were ultimately accomplished because the Spirit and Son were submitting to the will and plan of God the Father.

All of these events are best understood as constituting one economy of redemption even though certain works in the redemptive economy were particularly appropriate to either the second or third persons of the Trinity. Understanding the redemptive economy in this way has significant ramifications for pneumatological inclusivism and its attempt to procure an independent economy for the Holy Spirit. Simply stated, the priority of the Father as the initiator of the plan of redemption inseparably unites the work of Spirit and Son under his will. This means that merely rejecting the *filioque* does not allow for an autonomous, independent work of the Spirit that is severed from the Son. It means that pneumatological inclusivists are in error when they attribute independence or autonomy to the Spirit in an absolute sense. It is simply not sufficient to quote John 3:8 (“The wind blows where it wishes”), as Pinnock does, and then move on to argue that we must “free” the Spirit from the Son by rejecting the *filioque*.¹²⁸ Nor can we accept without qualification the statement of St. John of Damascus when he speaks of “the Spirit of God, direct, authoritative, the fount of wisdom, and life, and holiness . . . full . . . *all-ruling, all-effecting, all-powerful, of*

the Spirit, and thus he could only do so after receiving the Spirit from the Father. This conjecture does fit well with the biblical theme of Jesus as the Davidic King who is Christ by virtue of receiving the eschatological Spirit. Edward Every, “Proceeding from the Father to the Son,” *Eastern Churches Review* 10 (1978): 145, 147. Bray, however, disagrees with this position, and states that “if Christ sends the Spirit only by permission, then there is a sense in which he is not fully and ultimately God.” However, Bray is not making the distinction between the man, Jesus, and the second person of the Trinity, that Every is making. Bray, “The Double Procession,” 426.

¹²⁸Pinnock argues that “The original wording [of the Nicene creed] upheld the *freedom* of the Spirit to operate everywhere and did not suggest his *confinement*.” Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 197. Emphasis mine.

*infinite power, Lord of all creation and not under any lord . . . sanctifying, not sanctified . . . and participated in by all creation.*¹²⁹ Scripture does not emphasize the autonomy or freedom of the Spirit (John 3:8 notwithstanding) as one who operates independently of the Father or Son. Rather, it emphasizes the fact that the Spirit is *God's* Spirit, which should serve as a reminder that there is a *taxis* within the Trinity that must not be forgotten in the current focus on pneumatology. As Boris Bobrinskoy points out, "God's action is always Trinitarian. . . . *The Father ordains, the Son accomplished, the Spirit vivifies and sanctifies.*"¹³⁰ Even Colin Gunton, who tends toward a social doctrine of the Trinity,¹³¹ speaks of the "economically subordinate functions" of the Son and Spirit.¹³² Orthodox theologian John Breck draws a similar conclusion, but with specific relevance for the work of the Spirit: "The Spirit, then, is not some independent, autonomous charismatic power, nor is his sanctifying and deifying work the product of his will alone, acting upon its own authority. His will and operation are one with the will and operation of the Father and the Son."¹³³ The Spirit's role in the economy of salvation must not be minimized or neglected, but neither may inclusivists, merely by denying the *filioque*, attribute to the Spirit an independence or autonomy that ignores his role as an agent of the

¹²⁹St. John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, cited in Nikos Matsoukas, "The Economy of the Holy Spirit: The Standpoint of Orthodox Theology," *Ecumenical Review* 41 (1989): 401. Emphasis mine.

¹³⁰Boris Bobrinskoy, "The Holy Spirit – in the Bible and the Church," *Ecumenical Review* 41 (1989): 357. Emphasis mine.

¹³¹Yong, *Discerning the Spirits*, 106.

¹³²Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 167.

¹³³John Breck, "'The Lord is the Spirit': An Essay in Christological Pneumatology," *Ecumenical Review* 42 (1990): 115.

Father in the economy of salvation.¹³⁴

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to argue that calling for a rejection of the *filioque* is insufficient to serve as a grounding for an independent economy of the Spirit because there is a biblically demonstrable *taxis* in the Trinity whereby the Father is regarded as the Grand Architect of the redemptive economy. This priority of the Father inextricably links the ministries of the Son and the Spirit in the economy in that both serve the one redemptive plan and will of the Father. Therefore, rather than regarding the Spirit as operating autonomously or independently, or even seeking to parley the notion of reciprocity into an independent economy of the Spirit, a biblical view understands the economy as a singular trinitarian work in which the Father accomplishes his will through the agency of the Son and the Spirit. It is in this light that Sinclair Ferguson interprets the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit—that is, not as the Spirit’s work of *sending* the Son, thereby proving in a sort of tit-for-tat manner that the Son and the Spirit are on equal footing in the economy, but rather as the means whereby the *Father’s* sending of the Son is accomplished.¹³⁵ The result of viewing the economy of salvation as essentially singular is a more profound *unity* in the Trinity. Thus, Ferguson can go on to say of the Spirit’s role in the incarnation,

As such, it underlines the principle that, in the work of redemption which Christ spearheads, each person of the Trinity is engaged. The patristic maxim that all

¹³⁴Breck, ““The Two Hands of God’,” 236-37.

¹³⁵Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 42. Again, it should be made clear that this is not to denigrate the Spirit’s work in the slightest any more than this view would minimize the importance of the Son’s economic work. It is simply to place the work of the Spirit in a fully trinitarian context.

persons of the Trinity share in all external acts of God (*opera ad extra trinitatis indivisa sunt*, 'the external works of the Trinity are undivided') is here (as in the resurrection) perfectly illustrated; yet, in the language of the older theology, there is an appropriation of the conception of the Son of God by the Holy Spirit. The execution of the counsel of the Father and the Son is once more seen to be the great characteristic of his work.¹³⁶

This last sentence in particular, far from making the work of the Spirit of secondary importance, points to the significance of the Spirit's ministry in the work of redemption, as well as to his full deity.¹³⁷ The significance of the Spirit's work indeed lies in its joint connection to the economy of the Son in fulfilling the redemptive plan of the Father. Chapter 5 will now seek to offer just such an understanding of the Spirit's ministry.

¹³⁶Ibid., 42-43.

¹³⁷Ibid., 38.

CHAPTER 5

BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE: THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS TO THE SON IN THE NEW COVENANT ERA

An evangelical theology of the Holy Spirit will, by definition, be grounded in Scripture. Other sources of theology, such as experience, are not to be discounted, but neither are they to be *determinative* of one's theological commitments in the same way that Scripture is determinative.¹ However, this means more than simply proof-texting, citing verses that support a particular view of the Spirit. It is also imperative to examine the function and place of pneumatology in the context of the Bible's own historical unfolding, so that the storyline of Scripture provides the *context* in which one reads individual passages that speak to pneumatology.² Specifically, the redemptive-historical framework of Scripture must be honored as one does theology. The preaching recorded in the New Testament demonstrates that the New Testament writers interpreted their Old

¹John Frame helpfully points out that attempts to ground human knowledge either in experience apart from reason, or in reason apart from experience are both doomed to fail. Likewise, theological knowledge is not built from the study of Scripture *in isolation from* experience. Yet, experience is not the final *norm* of theology, only Scripture is. John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987), 334-35. Similarly, Chad Brand states that "One of the most enduring challenges in theological understanding and indeed in Christian living is to establish an appropriate relationship between Word (Scripture) and Spirit (or the experience of God in one's life)." Chad Owen Brand, "The Holy Spirit and Spirit Baptism in Today's Church," in Ralph Del Colle et al., *Perspectives on Spirit Baptism*, ed. Chad Owen Brand (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2004), 6-7.

²I am following a methodology that regards systematic theology as being inextricably tied to biblical theology. Biblical theology may be defined as "that branch of theological inquiry concerned with tracing themes through the diverse sections of the Bible . . . and then with seeking the unifying themes that draw the Bible together." Grand R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991), 263. This approach assumes the unity of biblical revelation and the divine authorship of Scripture without denying the human element in the Bible.

Testament as unified around a redemptive-historical framework wherein God was acting in the history of the people of Israel, and that this history had culminated in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ (Luke 24:25-27; Acts 2:17; 7:2-53). This redemptive-historical character is at least part of what constitutes the unity of Scripture.³ However, this unity is also rooted in the centrality of Christology in Scripture, which any pneumatology must take into account if it is to honor the Bible's own framework. Again, the preaching recorded in the New Testament demonstrates the centrality of Christology as a thematic element of Scripture (Acts 2:22-36, 8:12; 1 Cor 15:3-4; 2 Tim 2:8).⁴ An evangelical pneumatology must therefore be holistic in the sense that it seeks not only to incorporate all relevant biblical texts, but also to do so in light of the overall thematic structures of Scripture itself.⁵

Theologians in recent years have come to appreciate the decidedly *eschatological* character of the redemptive-historical storyline of Scripture. Michael Horton has recently argued that eschatology is *constitutive* of the Bible's redemptive-historical storyline, so that all of Scripture must be read through the lens of a promise-fulfillment hermeneutic—essentially an eschatological hermeneutic.⁶ If one seeks to do

³Dan McCartney and Charles Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand: A Guide to Interpreting and Applying the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1994), 41.

⁴*Ibid.*, 45.

⁵Pentecostals and charismatics tend to prioritize their experience of the Spirit, and thus often isolate Luke-Acts as theologically central since those books of the Bible are most concerned with the experience of the Holy Spirit. This fits nicely with the pneumatological focus of some inclusivists. For example, the inclusivist Amos Yong seeks to articulate a distinctively Pentecostal theology around a “Lukan hermeneutical approach, a pneumatological framework and orientation, and an experiential base.” Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of a Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 27. However, this methodology isolates pneumatology from its redemptive-historical framework, and inevitably leads to a distortion in the Bible's own presentation of the Spirit's work.

⁶Michael S. Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology: The Divine Drama* (Louisville: Westminster

theology in light of Scripture's own framework, this eschatological backdrop cannot be ignored. David Wells, for example, sees eschatology as an essential element of the Pauline perspective on pneumatology.

When Paul speaks of the God-sent Holy Spirit, his perspective is always eschatological, looking forward to the end, of which our present experience of redemption and life in the Spirit is the beginning. The Spirit is the gift of the new age, the guarantee and foretaste, the pledge and first installment of what is to come when the fullness of salvation is revealed at Christ's return. . . . It is this teaching on the relation between the old and the new, the flesh and the Spirit, the historical and the eschatological that forms the whole context within which Paul expounds his doctrines of the church and of salvation. It is in this context that he elaborates on his doctrine of the Spirit.⁷

One notices immediately that, at least from Wells' perspective, pneumatology, Christology, and soteriology all have a decidedly eschatological flavor for Paul. If Wells is correct, and this chapter will argue that he is, then this creates problems for pneumatological inclusivists who believe that rejection of the *filioque* opens the door to an independent mission⁸ of the Holy Spirit. This is because the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work ties him inextricably to the work of the Son in terms of ushering in the eschatological kingdom of God.⁹ This kingdom oriented work, in turn, is tied to gospel

John Knox Press, 2002), 5. Horton argues that Moltmann's more recent eschatological approach is predated by the Reformed scholastics, who were essentially doing biblical theology, in which "renewed focus [was] given to the unity of scripture around Christ and redemption."

⁷David F. Wells, *God the Evangelist: How the Holy Spirit Works to Bring Men and Women to Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 9-10.

⁸The desire for such an independent mission may be confirmed yet again by Amos Yong, who, in the contexts of discussing the *filioque*, concludes that "a pneumatological theology of religions that validates the distinction between the economy of the Word and Spirit holds the christological problem in abeyance. For now, it is sufficient to grant that there is a *relationship-in-autonomy* between the two divine missions." Yong essentially calls for an understanding of the divine economies not as "interdependent" and thus mutually defining, but rather as "autonomous in relationality." Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 69-70. Emphasis mine. I have earlier classified this sort of view among inclusivists as "separate but equal" economies.

⁹The author holds to a view of the kingdom as both *already* present and *not yet* fulfilled in its completion. Thus, the future has broken into the present age, and yet still awaits a future consummation

proclamation—the call to repentance and faith in Christ (Matt 3:2; 4:17; Acts 17:30-31), through which God gathers to himself a kingdom people. The eschatological nature of New Testament pneumatology constitutes a clear distinction between the old covenant and the new in terms of the Spirit’s work. Yet, this distinction is largely ignored by pneumatological inclusivists. The Spirit in the New Testament is intimately connected with the Messiah and the Messiah’s people. It is the Spirit’s presence *upon* Messiah and his subsequent outpouring upon the covenant community *by* Messiah that indicate the arrival of the new covenant era. Mere denial of the *filioque* cannot eradicate the eschatological nature of the Spirit’s economic work, which means that his economy cannot be so easily separated from the Son. This chapter will attempt to present the Spirit’s work in its eschatological context, and will contrast this eschatological framework with that of pneumatological inclusivists, who generally flatten the contours in Scripture’s presentation of pneumatology by positing a work of the Spirit that is uniform across the ages.¹⁰ The goal is to demonstrate that the Spirit’s economic activity is tied to Christ by the Bible’s own framework. Rejection of the *filioque* does nothing to negate this eschatological framework, and thus fails as a means of arguing for an independent economy of the Spirit.

The Homogenization of the Spirit’s Work in Inclusivism

One of the reasons Clark Pinnock is able to suggest viewing Christology as an

into all its fullness. For an overview of this approach, see George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 105-21.

¹⁰D. A. Carson helpfully states, “I wish to emphasize that what the Bible says about the Spirit must be fitted into the Bible’s plot-line, as contributing elements to what is disclosed of God and of the salvation he has achieved. The word ‘Spirit’ is not to be stripped of its canonical connections and then attached to every vague contemporary usage, as if every occurrence has the same referent.” D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 268.

aspect of the Spirit's work is because he views the Spirit's work *before* Christ and *after* Christ as essentially the same.¹¹ The Spirit has been dispensing grace in all places and at all times, Pinnock argues, and so the incarnation should not be allowed to *restrict* this universal work of the Spirit.¹² Likewise, although Amos Yong recognizes that the Spirit's work should be viewed as an eschatological event, he nevertheless fails fully to explore the implications of this for the Spirit's connection to Christ, choosing rather to regard the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work as pointing forward to the universal renewal of creation.¹³ It is this minimizing of the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work that, at least in part, allows Pinnock and Yong to sever the Spirit from the Son by ignoring the biblical connections between the Spirit's economic activity in the new covenant era and the person of Christ. Gary Badcock recognizes this same tendency in the religious pluralism of Karl Rahner, and subsequently critiques Rahner for ignoring the eschatological aspect of the Spirit's work, which leads him to sever the Spirit from the Son. He argues that "the gift of the Spirit is . . . of decisive importance *precisely because it is an eschatological event*, something that ruptures the previous continuities of natural human existence."¹⁴ If Badcock's assessment is accurate, then to minimize the eschatological nature of the Spirit's economic activity and its relationship to both

¹¹For example, Pinnock states, "What is being offered by Jesus' birth is the same grace that has always been there since the foundation of the world and now is being decisively manifested." Furthermore, "The Spirit is ever working to orient people, wherever they are, to the mystery of divine love. Nowhere in history is grace completely absent." And again, "Spirit's activity in creation underlies his activity through Jesus Christ." Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 82-83.

¹²*Ibid.*, 195.

¹³Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 40-41.

¹⁴Gary Badcock, "Karl Rahner, the Trinity, and Religious Pluralism," in *The Trinity in a Pluralistic Age: Theological Essays on Culture and Religion*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 153. Emphasis mine.

Messiah and the people of God is to misconstrue New Testament pneumatology in a radical manner. It is the Spirit's unique presence upon Jesus the Messiah that is the sign of the arrival of the kingdom of God (Matt 12:28; Luke 4:18-21). Furthermore, Christ's subsequent pouring out of the Spirit upon the church is interpreted by Peter as an eschatological sign that the last days had arrived (Acts 2:17).

Peter's interpretation of Pentecost points to a fundamental distinction between the Spirit's presence with Christ and the people of God in the new covenant era and the presence of the Spirit upon God's people as depicted in the Old Testament.¹⁵ Under the old covenant the Spirit was given almost exclusively to leaders in order to equip them for their appointed task (Num 11:29). The outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost however was upon *all flesh*,¹⁶ and constitutes the Spirit's empowering of all the covenant people of God. This means that the Spirit's work post-Christ is radically *different* than it had been prior to Christ's coming. Yet, this distinction is largely ignored or even explicitly denied by inclusivists. This is indicative of a larger homogenization of the Spirit's work in inclusivism such that the Spirit's work is virtually always and everywhere the same (in both time and space). This homogenization may be demonstrated by Clark Pinnock's denial of several fundamental distinctions in the Spirit's work that have historically been

¹⁵David Wells helpfully summarizes the work of the Spirit as depicted in the Old Testament under seven headings. There are just under 100 references to the Spirit in the Old Testament, and Wells' seven headings demonstrate that the Spirit's work was both diverse, and general in nature. Wells, *God the Evangelist*, 3. In light of this fact, Stephen Wellum is correct when he states, "It is important to stress that this general work in the OT does *not* entail that the Spirit's presence is always a saving or transforming presence (e.g., Balaam, Saul)." Stephen J. Wellum, "Saving Faith: Implicit or Explicit?" in *Faith Comes by Hearing: A Response to Inclusivism*, ed. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 166.

¹⁶As Wellum points out, "all flesh" is to be understood in terms of the new covenant and within the Bible's redemptive-historical framework, as opposed to indicating that the Spirit is given universally to all people, even those who do not know Christ, as the inclusivists would argue. Wellum, "Saving Faith," 168.

held in Christian theology. For example, Pinnock rejects any notion of a distinction between special and common grace, arguing that any grace is potentially saving grace.¹⁷ This homogenization of grace is rooted in Pinnock's denial of another traditional dichotomy—the distinction between nature and grace.¹⁸ For Pinnock, the universal presence of the Spirit in creation means that grace is also universally present. Pinnock ties these two things together when he states,

The world is not chaos but meaningful and good. The Spirit hovers over it and calls us to consider our place in the world and to choose good rather than evil. Love God, do what is right, do not follow paths that lead to death: such truths do not belong only to civic righteousness and common grace but have a larger meaning. They reflect the divine concern for every person and show that no one is far from God's presence.¹⁹

Daniel Strange refers to this aspect of Pinnock's theology as a “uniformity of presence and revelation,”²⁰ which essentially means that Pinnock has flattened out the biblical contours of revelation, grace, and God's presence, all of which points to his homogenization of biblical pneumatology as a whole. Consequently, even when Pinnock does acknowledge the distinction between general and special revelation, he nevertheless

¹⁷Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 200. Daniel Strange says of Pinnock's view of grace, “For Pinnock such a distinction between common grace and special grace is dualistic, as for him it implies two Spirits at work in the world. For him where there is the Spirit, there is grace, for the Spirit embodies grace.” Daniel Strange, “Presence, Prevenience, or Providence? Deciphering the Conundrum of Pinnock's Pneumatological Inclusivism,” in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2000), 232-33.

¹⁸Pinnock unites nature and grace by tying the Spirit's universality to his work in creating and sustaining the cosmos (*Flame of Love*, 62-63). Opposing Pinnock in this regard is Geerhardus Vos, who says of Paul's eschatological pneumatology: “so far as Paul himself is concerned, this soteriologizing aspect of the Spirit's working has been carried to a point, where it can scarcely be understood as a *simple prolongation of the line of his working in the sphere of nature*. The ‘pneumatic’ with Paul is practically equivalent to the ‘supernatural’.” Geerhardus Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1930; reprint, Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1994), 59. Emphasis mine.

¹⁹Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 193.

²⁰Strange, “Deciphering the Conundrum,” 225. Another way that this uniformity is seen in both Pinnock and Yong is their treatment of the world religions. Their writings give ample evidence that they make little or no distinction between the Spirit's *allowance* of false religion and his supposed *approval* of the existence of these religions (though certainly not to every aspect of them).

denies that there is any lack of salvific potential in the former. In arguing against an exclusive view of the gospel he states, “We are told to believe that special revelation is gracious, but general revelation itself is not. It is as if God reveals himself to all people in such a way that the revelation is incapable of helping them to be saved, even though they lack any other possibility. What a strange circumstance!”²¹ Similarly, Pinnock states, “Since God never leaves himself without witness (Ac 14:16-17), people always have divine light to respond to. . . . Because of cosmic or general revelation, anyone can find God anywhere at anytime, because he has made himself and his revelation accessible to them.”²²

The end result of Pinnock’s conflation of both general and special revelation, and common and special grace, is that the Spirit’s universal presence makes salvation available to every individual. In a statement that helpfully summarizes this view he states,

The cosmic breadth of Spirit activities can help us conceptualize the universality of God’s grace. The Creator’s love for the world, central to the Christian message, is implemented by the Spirit. . . . God is always reaching out to sinners by the Spirit. There is no general revelation or natural knowledge of God that is not at the same time gracious revelation and a potentially saving knowledge.²³

Statements such as this one make clear that while Pinnock acknowledges an eschatological component of the Spirit’s work,²⁴ he nevertheless fails to recognize the

²¹Clark H. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” in *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, ed. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 253.

²²Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 104.

²³Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 187.

²⁴Clark H. Pinnock, “Toward a More Inclusive Eschatology,” in *Looking Into the Future: Evangelical Studies in Eschatology*, ed. David W. Baker (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 256.

implications that entail from it. This is not uncommon among pneumatological inclusivists. For example, Amos Yong similarly appeals to the universal presence of the Spirit in creation as grounds for the universal potential of salvation. He states, “It is precisely because the divine Spirit is universally present and active that God is not only Creator but also Re-creator, or Redeemer and Savior.”²⁵ Like Pinnock, Yong views the work of the Spirit in Christ as but an *aspect* of the Spirit’s work which is not dissimilar in kind from what he has *always* and *everywhere* been doing.²⁶

The homogenization of the Spirit’s economic work by inclusivists essentially obliterates the distinction between the Spirit’s work in the Old Testament and the New, and more particularly diminishes the Spirit’s unique connection to the person of Jesus Christ. This is nowhere better illustrated than in Pinnock’s construal of the biblical covenants. Speaking of the universal availability of grace through all forms of revelation, Pinnock concludes,

According to the Bible, persons can relate to God in three ways and covenants: through the cosmic covenant established with Noah, through the old covenant made with Abraham, and through the new covenant ratified by Jesus. One may even speak of salvation in the broad sense in all three circumstances. That is, insofar as salvation connotes a relationship with God, there is salvation for people in all three of the covenants. Of course, there is a more complete saving knowledge of God in the new covenant than in the old, and more in the old than in the cosmic covenant, but a relationship with God is possible in the context of all three covenants.²⁷

For Pinnock, these three covenants are not *consecutive* or *progressive* means of God’s redemptive plan, but rather *simultaneous* and *parallel* ways that people may relate to God, presumably based upon the amount of revelation they have received. Although

²⁵Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 38.

²⁶Ibid. Yong goes on to state, “This is evident *most concretely* in the life, work, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ—the ultimate sequence of pneumatological events in history.” Emphasis mine.

²⁷Pinnock, *Wideness in God’s Mercy*, 105.

there may be actual distinctions between the covenants themselves, there is no distinction when it comes to the Spirit's ability to bring salvation, regardless of the precise content of faith.²⁸ Such a view is only possible when the redemptive-historical progression of Scripture's storyline is completely ignored. Pinnock's construal of the biblical covenants ignores the titanic *shift* that occurred with the coming of Christ and the inauguration of the kingdom of God. For example, even though Pinnock acknowledges that Acts 17:30 demonstrates that "the times of ignorance are over and people are expected to respond to God's love in Jesus,"²⁹ he nevertheless fails to draw any conclusions about the necessity of coming to God through the knowledge of Christ. Yet this text is surely not a mere declaration that God requires repentance, for repentance was part of the old covenant for both Israel and the foreigners attached to her (e.g., 2 Chr 6:24-38). Rather, it is a declaration that something decisive has happened in the appearance of Jesus Christ, so that now *he* is the determining factor in all relationships to God (John 14:6).³⁰ It is not the *repentance* that is new, it is that repentance must now come *through* faith in Jesus Christ as the one who fulfills the promises of redemption given in the Old Testament. More striking, however, is Pinnock's apparent ignoring of the fact that the fundamental inadequacy of the old covenant is a matter dealt with explicitly in Scripture in the book of Hebrews.³¹ The inadequacy of this covenant is demonstrated *precisely* in Israel's

²⁸For an excellent discussion of the debate between inclusivists and exclusivists over implicit or explicit faith, see Wellum, "Saving Faith."

²⁹Pinnock, *Wideness in God's Mercy*, 102.

³⁰This interpretation is confirmed by the fact that the text points in verse 31 to Jesus Christ as the one to whom all judgment has been committed. It is for this reason that repentance must now be directed to God through explicit faith in him. Russell D. Moore, *The Kingdom of Christ: The New Evangelical Perspective* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 112.

³¹Space does not permit the development of this critique. However, the following quote may

fundamental inability to keep it (Heb 8:9). As a result, the new covenant rests on God's initiative to do for his people what they were incapable of doing on their own, so that he himself provides the *ability* to keep the covenant through the new birth (Heb 8:10). In doing so, God makes the old covenant obsolete (Heb 8:13). The turning of the eras with the coming of Christ is decisive for the status of the old covenant. For this reason, the Spirit does not seek some generic repentance toward an unknown God, but rather points individuals toward Christ as the only means by which true repentance may be accomplished (Acts 5:31-32).³²

The homogenization of the Spirit's work in inclusivism is problematic on multiple levels. However, only two issues will be addressed here. First, the overwhelming emphasis that inclusivists place upon the salvific potential of the Spirit's universal presence calls into question the necessity of Christ's atoning work and whether this work has any impact whatsoever on the economy of the Spirit. In other words, if the Spirit has always been actively providing grace to all of humanity through his universal presence in creation, then what was the need of Christ's sacrifice?³³ Daniel Strange rightly raises the question of Christ's significance in Pinnock's system when he queries,

serve to support this contention: "The treatment of the two covenants in Heb 8:7-8a exposes the eschatological outlook of the writer. The supersession of the old covenant occurred not simply because of the unfaithfulness of Israel to the stipulations of the covenant. It occurred because a new unfolding of God's redemptive purpose had taken place that called for new covenantal action on the part of God. The writer regards God's taking the initiative in announcing the divine intention to establish a new covenant with Israel (8:8a) as a hint that God fully intended the first covenant to be provisional." William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 47a (Dallas: Word Books, 1991), cxxxii.

³²Notice that this text explicitly ties together repentance and the knowledge of Christ through the witness of the Spirit.

³³Pinnock once again subsumes the work of Christ under the economy of the Spirit when he states, "Jesus Christ is now drawing all persons to himself just as God has always been actively doing from the creation of the world." This statement seems to imply that Christ does nothing more than what the Spirit has *always* been doing, thus calling Christ's necessity into question. Pinnock, *Wideness in God's Mercy*, 105.

“If God’s love is *grounded in creation* and the presence of the Spirit, then what exactly is the purpose of the incarnation and the atonement? If the cross is not the source of God’s saving grace, then why is it needed?”³⁴ For Strange, Pinnock’s appeal to the Spirit’s presence in creation makes it difficult to see how Christ’s work on the cross grounds the Spirit’s offer of grace.³⁵ Beyond this crucial question, however, Pinnock’s view of the Spirit’s economy calls into question any grounds for understanding the Spirit’s work as eschatological in the new covenant era. How can an eschatological work be *defined* in a system that sees virtually no distinction between the Spirit’s work *before* Christ and *after* Christ. Pinnock’s homogenization of the Spirit’s economic work has deprived him of any means of identifying the distinguishing characteristics of an eschatological work of the Spirit. Apparently, the Spirit’s economy only has reference to Christ *for those who already know about him*, while for those who do not (the unevangelized) the Spirit’s operation has no more reference to Christ post-resurrection than it did prior to the resurrection.³⁶ So then, what was the *necessity* of Christ’s incarnation and torturous suffering? The net result of Pinnock’s pneumatological inclusivism according to Strange is that

although Pinnock confesses a high constitutive Christology, it would appear in reality that the unevangelized *can* be saved outside Christ (but of course not outside

³⁴Strange, “Deciphering the Conundrum,” 248-49. Emphasis mine. Part of the problem that Pinnock faces in explaining the atonement as the source of God’s grace is that he largely rejects the penal substitution model of the atonement. Although he claims not to want to cast aside entirely the legal aspect of Christ’s atoning work, he criticizes and rejects the *foundations* of the penal substitution model (such as God’s need for satisfaction) such that it seems impossible to believe that he actually holds to any aspect of it. Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 106-08.

³⁵Strange, “Deciphering the Conundrum,” 249.

³⁶Pinnock’s appeal to a recapitulation model of the atonement does not solve this problem. Although Pinnock argues that the Spirit’s work is now to draw people into a reconciliation that *images* or *models* the journey of Christ in his representation of our humanity, he nevertheless fails to explain how this fundamentally differs from what the Spirit has been doing all along. Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 109.

God's grace) because Christ's work of re-creation and God's grace in creation are identical. At an epistemological level, the incarnation is unique, final and exclusive, but ontologically it only represents (albeit normatively) what the Spirit has been doing always from creation. . . . Rather than being Christocentric in his inclusivism, which I believe he would claim to be, Pinnock's position is *pneumatocentric* and as a result the particularity of Christ is compromised.³⁷

This last statement points directly to the second problem with inclusivism's homogenization of the Spirit's economic activity, which is that it is part and parcel of a faulty theological method which makes pneumatology the controlling center of biblical interpretation rather than the historical-redemptive framework of Scripture itself,³⁸ which is centered around the promise and fulfillment of redemption in Christ (Luke 24:25-27, 44-47).³⁹ This pneumatological lens distorts and negates the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work in the new covenant era precisely because the Bible is read from the standpoint of the Spirit's universality, with Christ's work being merely a *confirmation* (or worse, a *parenthetical interlude*) of what God has been doing through the Spirit all along.⁴⁰ The homogenized economic activity of the Spirit becomes a grid through which the work of Christ is interpreted in direct opposition to the Bible's own testimony that the Spirit's work would have specific reference to Christ (John 16:13-14). Such a system essentially *negates* any eschatological significance to the work of the Spirit because the

³⁷Strange, "Deciphering the Conundrum," 250. Emphasis mine.

³⁸For a helpful overview of this framework, see Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 97-114.

³⁹Graeme Goldsworthy, for example, states, "Central to our understanding of the Old Testament is the fact that Jesus, the apostles and all the New Testament authors saw it as in some way a book about Jesus Christ. . . . The overwhelming testimony of the New Testament is that Jesus fulfills the Old Testament, which is another way of saying that the Old Testament is about Jesus." Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991), 53. The clear evidence of the Gospels is that Jesus himself believed that the Old Testament Scriptures were to be read in a christocentric manner (Luke 24:27; John 5:39-40, 45-46)

⁴⁰Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 82.

Spirit's work remains virtually *unchanged*, and thus cannot serve as any sort of definitive sign pointing to the arrival of the new covenant age. Since the particularity of Christ is seen as a potential hindrance to the Spirit's universality, the eschatological implications of the Spirit's presence with Christ and with the people of God must be minimized or ignored.⁴¹

It may be that the centrality of pneumatology for some inclusivists is rooted in their Pentecostal/charismatic background.⁴² Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen has produced an excellent, if brief, survey of Pentecostal hermeneutics over the years,⁴³ and cites one scholar who argues that the center of Pentecostal interpretation may be oriented around three elements: the pneumatic, the experiential, and the historical.⁴⁴ Likewise, Amos Yong regards the distinctive Pentecostal contribution to a "world Christian theology" to be a Lukan hermeneutical approach and a pneumatological framework and orientation.⁴⁵ However, Pinnock's approach is the most indicative of pneumatological inclusivism's methodology because he has shifted over the years from an explicitly christocentric

⁴¹Pinnock states explicitly that "the incarnation should not be viewed as a negation of universality but as the fulfillment of what Spirit had been doing all along." Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 195.

⁴²Though Pinnock is Baptist, he is very sympathetic to and involved with the larger theological world of Pentecostals and charismatics. Both Amos Yong and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen have Pentecostal backgrounds.

⁴³Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Hermeneutics: From Fundamentalism to Postmodernism," in *Toward A Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. Amos Yong (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), 3-21.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 12.

⁴⁵Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 27. Yong does point to Christology as the "thematic focus" of such a hermeneutic. Yet, like Pinnock, he seems to struggle with the problem of rooting the universal work of the Spirit in the redemptive work of Christ, instead seeing the work of Christ as *rooted in* the preexistent, universal work of the Spirit. It is therefore hard to see how Christology, rather than pneumatology, can be central for Yong. Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 38.

reading of Scripture to an equally explicit pneumatological approach.⁴⁶ His view of the Spirit's work in illumination is instructive of where this new approach has taken him. He states, "The goal of the Spirit as he works within our lives shedding light on the Word is to *deepen our friendship with God*. He came to draw us toward *transformation* and to send us out into the ministry of reconciliation."⁴⁷ No reference at all is made to the Spirit's enlightening the human mind to see the significance of Christ through the witness of the Scriptures (2 Cor 3:18-4:6). Pinnock goes on to downplay any supposed epistemological aspect of the Spirit's work in illumination when he states, "Not primarily intellectual, the goal of the Spirit is to make us *grow in our relationship with God*. God's heart aches over our distance and preoccupation. He longs for our presence."⁴⁸ Note two things about Pinnock's view of the Spirit's work in illumination. First, it lacks any explicitly christological element. Rather, the Spirit uses Scripture to deepen one's relationship to and friendship with God. Second, Pinnock's view is decidedly ethical in orientation. That is, the Spirit's primary use of Scripture seems to be aimed at ethical transformation.⁴⁹ Yet, the Scripture is clear that ethical transformation comes about not apart from, but at least to a significant degree *through* the renewing of the mind (Rom 12:1-2). The New Testament clearly illustrates the christocentric orientation of the

⁴⁶Todd L. Miles, "Severing the Spirit from the Son: Theological Revisionism in Contemporary Theologies of Salvation" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 153-57. Miles demonstrates this shift in Pinnock's approach to Scripture more thoroughly than space here will allow.

⁴⁷Clark H. Pinnock, "The Role of the Spirit in Interpretation," *JETS* 36 (1993): 493. Emphasis mine.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 469.

⁴⁹This ethical orientation to the Spirit contains an element of truth. Certainly, the Spirit uses the Word to change the lives of believers. However, for Pinnock the means of discerning the Spirit's work among the non-evangelized is almost purely ethical (and *must* be since it can have no reference to Christ in a cognitive sense), and may account for that emphasis here. Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 208-11.

Spirit's illuminating work in, among other places, 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:4. Yet this aspect of the Spirit's ministry is conspicuously absent from Pinnock's treatment. Many Scriptures point to the Spirit's use of the Word in conversion (e.g., 1 Pet 1:23; Jas 1:18). The Spirit points the non-believer to Christ *through* the instrumentality of the Word, thereby producing faith (Rom 1:16; 10:17). In short, Pinnock's portrayal of the Spirit's work in illumination differs only slightly from the work he sees the Spirit doing in the world generally apart from the Word. It seems that, for Pinnock, the Scriptures are essentially superfluous to the Spirit's economic work and his ability to save the lost.

For inclusivism generally (and Pinnock in particular), it appears that there is no significant difference between what the Spirit can achieve soteriologically *apart from* knowledge of Christ and the Word, and what can be achieved by the Spirit *with* knowledge of Christ. One's knowledge of Christ can only enhance the Spirit's economic work (again, in terms of soteriology), but cannot fundamentally determine or change that work. The eschatological significance of the Spirit's work that has been almost universally recognized in Christian theology is all but obliterated by pneumatological inclusivism's desire for a universally accessible salvation apart from the gospel of Jesus Christ. The implications of this homogenization of the Spirit's work for inclusivism's rejection of the *filioque* is simply this—the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work is dependent upon reading the Bible as a unified document centered around a redemptive-historical framework of promise and fulfillment. As such, the work of the Spirit in the New Testament becomes part of an unfolding redemptive plan that is centered around the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and his atoning work on the cross. The economic work of the Spirit is both grounded in and inseparable from the person of Christ. However, as

shown above, this aspect of the Spirit's work is minimized to the point of irrelevance in inclusivism. As a result, the *filioque* remains, in their minds, one of the few barriers to a totally independent economy of the Spirit since it ties the Spirit to Christ. The remainder of this chapter will seek to demonstrate that the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work cannot be so lightly minimized when one considers the Bible's own storyline. As a result, even in the context of rejecting the *filioque* the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work may be seen to tie his economic activity inextricably to the glorification of the Son.

Spirit and Eschatology

It is interesting that both eschatology and pneumatology have almost simultaneously come to enjoy prominent roles in contemporary theology, particularly since so many have regarded pneumatology as being largely underdeveloped in the history of the church. No one in the modern theological environment, however, could accurately regard these loci of theology as anything less than fundamental to the writers of the New Testament. Richard Gaffin's reference to the recent surge in pneumatological studies is illustrative of this shift in perception: "Twenty years ago, when I was a seminary student, there was a slogan to the effect that the Holy Spirit was 'the forgotten member of the Trinity'. Today, no one at all aware of more recent developments in the church and theology, will be able to say anything like that."⁵⁰

Similar statements could easily be made about eschatology. The convergence of pneumatology and eschatology is certainly not accidental given that there is a recognizable interconnection between the two in Scripture, particularly in the theology of the Apostle Paul. The current trends in theology are moving toward a greater recognition

⁵⁰Richard B. Gaffin, "The Holy Spirit," *Westminster Theological Journal* 43 (1980): 59.

that eschatology is a central theme in the writings of both Paul, and the Bible as a whole. Richard Gaffin, for example, while regarding Christology as the center of Paul's theology,⁵¹ nevertheless speaks of "a spreading recognition that eschatology is central . . . in the teaching of Paul and the other New Testament writers."⁵² Similarly, Michael Horton argues for a theological method that derives its framework from Scripture itself—and Horton sees the framework of the Bible as redemptive historical/eschatological.⁵³ Horton argues that "eschatology should be a lens and not merely a locus. In other words, it affects the way we see everything in scripture rather than only serving as an appendix to the theological system."⁵⁴ For Horton, eschatology is "the form and shape in which redemptive revelation comes."⁵⁵ The result is that eschatology fundamentally informs all other loci of systematic theology.

If Horton is correct about the foundational nature of redemptive historical eschatology in Scripture, then surely pneumatology must be viewed eschatologically as well, perhaps particularly so. It is, after all, the presence of the Spirit first upon the Son, and then through the agency of the Son upon the church, that signifies the presence of the new age anticipated in the Old Testament.⁵⁶ There is also a sense in which New

⁵¹Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., "'Life-Giving Spirit': Probing the Center of Paul's Pneumatology," *JETS* 41 (1998): 573-74.

⁵²Richard Gaffin, "Life in the Spirit: Some Biblical and Theological Perspectives," in *The Holy Spirit: Renewing and Empowering Presence*, ed. George Vandervelde (Winfield, BC: Wood Lake Books, 1989), 45.

⁵³Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology*, 5.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶Anthony Hoekema regards both of these things as indicative of the Holy Spirit's eschatological work. Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 56-57.

Testament eschatology is pneumatologically driven via the Spirit's work in the Messiah, and subsequently in the church. The Spirit is the agent that empowers Messiah as he moves the redemptive historical plan of God forward. Christology is pneumatologically shaped⁵⁷ since the Father anoints Christ with the Spirit, thus marking him out as the Davidic King through whom the Old Testament covenant promises will be fulfilled.⁵⁸ Likewise, the Spirit's work in the believer is the sign that the age to come has broken into the present.⁵⁹ The Spirit's work, particularly as depicted by Paul, is fundamentally an eschatological work. The following sections of this chapter will seek to demonstrate this in a general way from the writings of Paul. Following this, the relationship of the Spirit to Christ will be explored, beginning with a brief survey of Old Testament expectations regarding the Spirit anointed Davidic King and his role in inaugurating the kingdom of God. Finally, some of the New Testament evidence for this relationship will be surveyed and conclusions for the purposes of this dissertation will be drawn. If eschatology informs pneumatology such that the Spirit's soteriological activity cannot be isolated from knowledge of the Son, then this will have a drastic impact on the ability of inclusivists to argue for an independent economy of the Spirit grounded in rejection of the *filioque*.

⁵⁷This is true, first of all, *by definition*. N. T. Wright argues that the term "Christ" as used in the New Testament, had not yet become a proper name, but was rather a Greek form of the Hebrew "Messiah," and thus referred to the Spirit anointed Davidic King of Israel. The word "Christ," then, is a pneumatologically-oriented title. N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 554-55.

⁵⁸This is not to be understood as an endorsement of "Spirit Christology" as it is constructed by Pinnock, Yong and other pneumatological inclusivists—which, despite claims to the contrary seems to overshadow or even eclipse a *Logos* Christology. It is merely to recognize the role of the Spirit in the life of Jesus the Christ.

⁵⁹Hoekema, *Bible and the Future*, 58.

Pneumatology and Eschatology in Paul

It is a rather simple matter to demonstrate the link between pneumatology and eschatology in Paul, which makes it all the more puzzling that the significance of this relationship is virtually ignored by pneumatological inclusivists.⁶⁰ There are numerous harmful consequences that arise when these two loci are not related as they should be. For example, Richard Gaffin bemoans a common propensity toward individualism in both eschatology and pneumatology which often stems from severing these two loci. This in turn leads to a fundamental misunderstanding of the Spirit's new covenant work, as he demonstrates when he states,

The tendency we are noting, then, is to divorce the present time of the church, the Christian life, from the future, to set the future at a more or less remote, spectator distance from the present. So far as the work of the Spirit is concerned, the tendency is to view that work in a mystical or timeless way, that is, the work of the Spirit becomes a matter of what God is doing in the inner life of the believer, without any particular connection to his eschatological purposes for the entire creation. The result is a largely privatized, individualistic, self-centered understanding of the Spirit's work.⁶¹

Beyond this, however, losing the eschatological nature of pneumatology can easily cause one to flatten out the biblical contours of the Spirit's work—as though nothing in the Spirit's economy changed with the incarnation and resurrection of Christ.⁶² This, in turn,

⁶⁰It is also puzzling that so few works of significant length have been devoted solely to the exploration of this topic. The author found only two monograph length works on this precise topic: Neill Q. Hamilton, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957); and Geerhardus Vos, "The Eschatological Aspect of the Pauline Conception of the Spirit," in *Biblical and Theological Studies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912). There are, however, numerous shorter works that touch on this topic.

⁶¹Gaffin, "Life in the Spirit," 46.

⁶²In a more extreme case, neglecting the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work may be used to support the contention that *multiple* covenants are simultaneously being honored by the Spirit. For example, Pinnock argues that "God has more than one covenant and more than one people." Pinnock, "Toward a More Inclusive Eschatology," 255. Just as Pinnock subsumes Christ under the Spirit's economy, so he subsumes God's covenant dealings with Israel under the larger umbrella of the Noahic

might give ground to the inclusivists' contention that the Spirit's economy is *independent* of the Son's economic work. The key to avoiding both of these unhealthy errors, as Gaffin points out, is to place the Spirit's work in its redemptive historical context. Gaffin argues that this context is essentially eschatological and christocentric: "without denying the presence of other determining factors, Christology and eschatology especially shape the matrix of [Paul's] pneumatology. The death and resurrection of Christ in their eschatological significance control Paul's teaching on the work of the Spirit."⁶³ This is exactly what a survey of the relevant New Testament passages affirms. Paul's pneumatology is found within the larger framework of his inaugurated eschatology, and thus in many respects exhibits the same already/not yet character that is now widely recognized to be the heart of Paul's eschatology. The work of the Spirit is undeniably eschatological, not only in Christ's resurrection, but also in the believer's life, and as such indicates that the new age has dawned and the new covenant is operative.⁶⁴ The following brief survey of Paul's pneumatology will serve to support two primary contentions, which will be more thoroughly explored in the final section of this chapter. First, the Spirit is not a faceless entity, but rather functions as the presence of Christ in believers, thus providing them with all the new covenant blessings that come through their *union* with Christ, albeit in a proleptic and incomplete manner. Second, the Spirit's work is characterized by a *disparity* between the relationship that he has with the world, and that which he has with the redeemed who belong to Christ.

The widespread acknowledgement that the New Testament contains an

Covenant, which he regards as universal in scope. Once again universality swallows up particularity.

⁶³Gaffin, "Life-Giving Spirit," 575.

⁶⁴Paul R. Thorsell, "The Spirit in the Present Age: Preliminary Fulfillment of the Predicted New Covenant According to Paul," *JETS* 41 (1998): 397-98.

inaugurated eschatology centered around Christ and the kingdom of God has in recent years become a unifying force for evangelicals.⁶⁵ The common recognition of present and future aspects of the kingdom by many dispensational *and* covenant theologians has brought about a new consensus regarding the heart of the New Testament's eschatology. This shift in thinking was recognized as early as 1964 by George Eldon Ladd when he stated, "A synthesis of present and future in the understanding of the Kingdom of God is found in the works of a host of other scholars dealing with other subjects. So extensively is this synthesis to be found that we must recognize it as an emerging consensus."⁶⁶ In many respects this inaugurated eschatology was a middle ground between the consistent eschatology of Albert Schweitzer, with its purely futuristic emphasis, and the realized eschatology of C. H. Dodd.⁶⁷ It recognizes that the new age has proleptically invaded the present such that the two overlap, with the Christian thus being a citizen of two worlds at the same time.⁶⁸

Paul's pneumatology finds itself firmly implanted within this inaugurated framework. The work of the Spirit in the believer's life is construed by Paul as the present experience of the future age, which in turn guarantees an even fuller future fulfillment.⁶⁹ Michael Williams helpfully articulates this dual function of the Spirit for

⁶⁵Moore, *Kingdom of Christ*, 23-24.

⁶⁶Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, 38. This work was first published in 1964 under the title *Jesus and the Kingdom*.

⁶⁷Hamilton devotes a chapter to both men in *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul*.

⁶⁸Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology*, 38-39.

⁶⁹Charles Scobie expresses it well: "In keeping with the 'already-not yet' tension so characteristic of the NT, the presence of the Spirit not only is evidence that the new order has dawned, but also points forward to the final consummation of God's purposes." Charles H. H. Scobie, *The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 277.

Paul:

The same Spirit who is our guarantee of redemption is also God's pledge to us of his future completion of redemption. The same Spirit of God who is the seal of our redemption promises that we are but the firstfruits of a greater restoration in the future. The Holy Spirit groans within us and moves us toward the eschaton, for his presence 'is the down payment on the eschaton', and his empowerment is a proleptic opening of the sluice gates of the final Day of the Lord.⁷⁰

Williams' choice of vocabulary here is no accident. The pneumatological terms "pledge," "seal," and "firstfruits" have been widely recognized as indicative of the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work, as well as the already/not yet tension referred to above.⁷¹ These terms clearly demonstrate that "For Paul . . . the reception of the Spirit means that one has become a participant in the new mode of existence associated with the future age, and now partakes of the 'powers of the age to come'. Yet Paul would insist that what the Spirit gives is only a foretaste of far greater blessings to come."⁷² Although only a brief treatment is possible here, these terms nevertheless merit careful attention in terms of relating Paul's eschatology and pneumatology.

The term ἀπαρχή, or *firstfruits* is applied by Paul to Christ in 1 Corinthians 15:20 and 23 with reference to his resurrection from the dead. Its usage here is an indication that for Paul the eschatological resurrection has already begun in Christ.⁷³ He is the first portion of the harvest that is still yet to come. Ἀπαρχή is also applied to the first generation of believers by both Paul and James (Rom 16:5; 2 Thess 2:13; Jas 1:18).

⁷⁰Michael Williams, "A Restorational Alternative to Augustinian Verticalist Eschatology," *Pro Rege* 20 (1992): 18.

⁷¹These Pauline terms have been used by multiple authors as the framework for discussing the Spirit's work eschatologically. For some recent examples, see Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 176-82; Hoekema, *Bible and the Future*, 59-64; and Vos, "The Eschatological Aspect," 225-28.

⁷²Hoekema, *Bible and the Future*, 58.

⁷³Gaffin, "Life in the Spirit," 48.

The only use of ἀπαρχή with reference to the Spirit is Romans 8:23, which speaks of believers as having the “firstfruits of the Spirit.” The application of this term to the Spirit is a reversal of its normal usage. Conventionally the word referred to the first part of the harvest, or similarly of any kind of sacrifice offered to God that consisted in the earliest portion (this included animals as well as the fruit of the field).⁷⁴ In this case, however, it is God who gives the firstfruits of the Spirit to the believer.⁷⁵ The implication of ἀπαρχή, whatever its referent, is that there is more to come in the future. The presence of the Spirit thus signals the arrival of the new age of the Spirit anticipated in the Old Testament (Joel 2:28-32). Moreover, the presence of the Spirit serves to *remind* and *assure* believers that the promises of Christ will be fulfilled in them (John 14:26-28; Rom 8:11).

Sinclair Ferguson points out that the believer’s possession of the firstfruits of the Spirit is not merely some “objective status,” for believers *experience* the love of God through the Spirit (Rom 5:5). However, this love is not merely some mystically interpreted feeling, but is instead christologically defined: “it is historically manifested in and conditioned by Christ’s death and defined in terms of it” (Rom 5:6-8).⁷⁶ In other words, believers experience the love of God *in* Christ, *through* the Holy Spirit. Yet because inclusivists see the relationship between the Son and the Spirit in terms of *contrast* (between particularity and universality),⁷⁷ they must downplay or deny this christological element of the Spirit’s work lest his universal economy be jeopardized.

⁷⁴ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd ed., rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 81.

⁷⁵ Hoekema, *Bible and the Future*, 61.

⁷⁶ Ferguson, *Holy Spirit*, 179.

⁷⁷ Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 192.

However, the believer's experience of the Spirit is the firstfruits of our future likeness *to Christ in his resurrection*.⁷⁸ As Ferguson points out, there is an undeniably christocentric orientation to this aspect of the Spirit's work, which cannot be thrust aside without the term ἀπαρχή losing its future relevance, essentially the heart of its meaning. In such a case the particularity of Christ is once again swallowed up by the Spirit's universality.⁷⁹ Moreover, this aspect of the Spirit's work becomes meaningless when severed from the knowledge of Christ, and thus it can have no universal application.

The Spirit is more than *firstfruits* however, for as Paul demonstrates he is also the *guarantee* of all that the believer will receive by virtue of his or her union with Christ. This understanding of the Spirit as *guarantee* points to the fact that he is “a preliminary installment of what in its fullness will be received hereafter.”⁸⁰ The term ἀρραβώνα (meaning “pledge” or “guarantee”)⁸¹ is used only three times in the New Testament, all by Paul, and twice without a specific object. However, in each case it seems fairly clear what the Spirit is guaranteeing. Second Corinthians 1:22, for example, is set in the context of the believer's position in Christ. All the promises of God find their “yes” in Christ (v. 20), in whom the believer has been firmly established by God (v. 21). God then gives the Spirit, it would seem, as a guarantee of the believer's future salvation

⁷⁸The context of Rom 8:23 makes this abundantly clear. God's ultimate goal for the believer is found in likeness to Christ (vv. 29-30). Consequently, “It is not until the body has been transformed that redemption can be said to be complete.” Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 521.

⁷⁹Strange, “Deciphering the Conundrum,” 256.

⁸⁰Vos, “Eschatological Aspect,” 227.

⁸¹F. F. Bruce says of this term that it is “of Semitic origin; it was probably borrowed by the Greeks in the early days of trade with the Phoenicians. It was a commercial word denoting a pledge—some object handed over by a buyer to a seller until the purchase price was paid in full.” F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 266.

based on his or her union with Christ.⁸² Given that the Spirit mediates the presence of Christ to the believer it is even more certain that this is Paul's meaning.⁸³ Similarly, in 2 Corinthians 5:5 ἀρραβώνα is used without an object, but the context makes it clear that what the Spirit guarantees is the future resurrection of the believer, which is of course patterned after that of Christ (1 Cor 15:20; 1 John 3:2). The first ten verses of 2 Corinthians five deal exclusively with the believer's longing for the resurrection body. In this context Paul asserts that it is God who has prepared us for immortality and who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee of this future blessing (5:5). The final instance of ἀρραβώνα is found in Ephesians 1:14 with specific reference to the believer's future inheritance. The Spirit is given in earnest of our birthright (that is, by virtue of the new birth) until we receive it in all its fullness.⁸⁴

The important thing to note in all three uses of ἀρραβώνα is its forward looking perspective. Once again, this word indicates that the work of the Spirit is eschatological since his presence is not only an assurance of the believer's present status, but also constitutes the present, though partial, experience of the future that God promises in the eschaton. Neill Hamilton can therefore state, "This threefold connexion of the Spirit, by means of the concept ἀρραβών, (1) to the resurrection body of the redeemed [2 Cor 5:5], (2) to the fulfilment of God's promises [2 Cor 1:22], and (3) to the inheritance of redemption [Eph 1:14], brings us to the heart of Paul's conception of the Spirit. *It*

⁸²Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 240-41. Here, Cole regards union with Christ as the *central* blessing of the gospel because it is only *in him* that the blessings of salvation are bestowed.

⁸³Hamilton, *Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, 29.

⁸⁴This "birthright" as it were comes not through natural birth of course, but through adoption. Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 121.

belongs primarily to the future.”⁸⁵ Paul’s pneumatology places the work of the Spirit firmly in its historical redemptive context both in terms of fulfilling Old Testament expectations, and by pointing forward to promises that have a certain future fulfillment. Moreover, it demonstrates that a definite *shift* has taken place in the Spirit’s work subsequent to the incarnation. The Spirit’s presence as a *guarantee* only has meaning with reference to Christ and his place as the *forerunner* of the believer.⁸⁶ Likewise, the Spirit’s work in the believing community is the direct result of his having been poured out by the risen Christ.

Just as with ἄρραβῶνα, there are three New Testament texts that speak of the believer as having been *sealed* by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13, 4:30). Each use of the term σφραγίζω manifests some variation vis-à-vis the nature of the seal or the one doing the sealing. Ephesians 1:13 regards the Holy Spirit as that *with which* the believer is sealed, as does Ephesians 4:30. Second Corinthians 1:22 depicts God the Father the one who seals, while the nature of the seal itself is left unspecified (although it seems likely from the context that the Holy Spirit is the seal here as well). The term σφραγίζω in these three verses primarily refers to a means of identification, “so that the mark which denotes ownership also carries with it the protection of the owner.”⁸⁷ “To be sealed with the Spirit, then, means to be marked as God’s possession.”⁸⁸ To belong to God as his

⁸⁵Hamilton, *Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, 20. Emphasis mine.

⁸⁶Eph 1:14 can make sense only in light of the preceding verses of chap. 1. The Spirit is given as a *guarantee* of the believer’s future inheritance of heavenly blessings (v. 3) through election (v. 4), adoption (v. 5), and redemption (v. 7). All of these things are secured by the believer’s relationship to Christ, and thus, as O’Brien states, this chapter has a decidedly “christological focus.” O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 123.

⁸⁷Arndt and Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 796.

⁸⁸Hoekema, *Bible and the Future*, 63.

possession has all manner of eschatological implications. First, it indicates that believers are part of his kingdom, that over which he rules (Col 1:13). Paul also specifically links the reception of the Spirit with membership in God's household (Eph 2:18-22). In this text having the Spirit of God is a certain indication that one is a fellow citizen with the saints, and a member of God's household (2:18-19). At the same time, however, this house is *being* built into a "dwelling of God in the Spirit" (2:22), an indication that it has yet to be completed. The seal of the Spirit thus distinguishes one as a member of the kingdom of God both in the present *and* in the future. There is more, however, for being sealed in this way is also an assurance that one has been freed from the eschatological judgment of God. The mention, in Ephesians 4:30, of the future day of redemption brings the eschatological nature of the Spirit's sealing clearly into focus. Salvation is now possessed, but not yet fully accomplished. As O'Brien argues, "Believers have already experienced a present redemption which includes the forgiveness of sins (1:7); but one element of that redemption is yet to be realized. On the final day God will 'redeem' his own possession, and the guarantee he has given of this is sealing with the Spirit."⁸⁹ Sealing is thus not only an indication of God's possession, but a guarantee of future deliverance from the eschatological wrath of God, making the seal the means by which the believer is secured for future redemption.⁹⁰

These three New Testament terms clearly demonstrate the eschatological nature of Paul's pneumatology—that is, they are indicative of a *new* work of the Spirit specifically in the gathered people of God as a result of the Spirit's having been present

⁸⁹O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 349.

⁹⁰See Rev 7:3, where the people of God are sealed in order to protect them from the wrath of God.

in Christ, and subsequently poured out upon the church *by* Christ. Additionally, however, these words can *only* have relevance in a context where Christ is known, since they relate to the assurance of future benefits that are secured by *union with Christ*. Although they are in no way exhaustive of the evidence (or of the Spirit's work), they are at least sufficient to lead in the direction of Hamilton's contention—that for Paul the Spirit belongs primarily to the future.⁹¹ Conversely, the Spirit is that which keeps Paul's notion of eschatology from becoming purely future in that the ministry of the Spirit mirrors and in a sense, continues, the ministry of Christ in calling out a people for God's own possession (that is, a kingdom – 1 Pet 2:9-10). As Hamilton observes,

Just as in the Synoptics the future kingdom breaks into the present in the action of Jesus, so in Paul the future age has broken into the present in the action of the Spirit. The role of the Spirit in Paul's teaching is similar to that of the kingdom in the Synoptics. In the Synoptics, 'kingdom' denotes the situation in which God rules; in Paul, 'the Spirit' defines the same situation in terms of the inner dynamic which implements God's rule.⁹²

Here, Hamilton links the work of Christ, the inbreaking of the kingdom, and the work of the Spirit as part of the overarching eschatological framework of the New Testament, which is of course rooted in the Old Testament's anticipation of a Spirit anointed Messiah. To argue, therefore, as Pinnock does, that there are multiple operative covenants, any one of which may be salvific *simultaneously*, is to obliterate this eschatological framework of the New Testament and of the Spirit's work. In effect, it makes the notions of new covenant, kingdom of God, and redemption in Christ *superfluous* to the Spirit's economy rather than essential elements of it. Yet, the Old Testament is framed around the anticipation of a future redemption wrought by God

⁹¹Hamilton, *Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, 17.

⁹²*Ibid.*, 23.

through a Messiah who possessed the Spirit in a manner that no one before him ever had. In view of this anticipation one must regard the role of the Spirit in the life of Christ as eschatological in nature as well. It is the man Jesus who received the Spirit's anointing, and as a consequence received the title "Christ" (Acts 2:33-36). He received the Spirit without measure (John 3:34),⁹³ and was subsequently able to pour out the Spirit on the new covenant people of God at Pentecost (Acts 2:33). It was the Spirit who was the power of God at work in the resurrection of Christ (Rom 8:11).⁹⁴ As a result, the work of the Spirit in the life of Christ is of utmost importance to Scripture's redemptive historical storyline, and therefore to the eschatology of the Bible as a whole.

The Eschatological Spirit's Connection to Christ

One of the ways that pneumatological inclusivism grounds a potentially salvific, universal work of the Spirit is by appealing to the biblical testimony of the Spirit's work in creation.⁹⁵ The presence of the Spirit everywhere leads Clark Pinnock to understand that salvation is available universally since the Spirit mediates God's grace to all of creation. He states, "The Spirit embodies the prevenient grace of God and puts into

⁹³There is some debate about the translation of this passage. Carson regards it as "almost certainly the correct rendering" that God gives the Spirit to Jesus without measure. His explanation is helpful, "Three centuries after John wrote, Rabbi Aha rightly commented that the Holy Spirit who rested on the prophets did so according to the measure (*b'mišqal*) of each prophet's assignment. . . . Not so in Jesus: to him *God gives the Spirit without limit.*" D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 213.

⁹⁴Rom 8:11 specifically makes the Father to be the one who raised Jesus from the dead. However, John Murray argues based on the second half of the verse that "if the Holy Spirit is active in the resurrection of believers, it would follow that he was also active in the resurrection of Christ. For the latter supplies the basis and the pattern for the former." John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, one-vol. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 292.

⁹⁵Pinnock devotes an entire chapter to this topic in *Flame of Love*, 49-77. In this chapter he argues that there should be no severing of creation and redemption, and seems even to ground the Spirit's redemptive work in his universal presence in creation. He contends that "Spirit is the power of redemption only because he is first the power of creation" (63). It is also in this chapter that Pinnock presents his case for subsuming the work of Christ under the economy of the Spirit.

effect that universal drawing action of Jesus Christ. The world is the arena of God's presence, and the Spirit knocks on every human heart."⁹⁶ However, Pinnock's appeal to the Spirit's work in creation as the grounding for his universal redemptive work virtually ignores the contours of biblical pneumatology and the redemptive-historical framework in which pneumatology exists. This framework is characterized by a promise/fulfillment motif centered around the coming of Messiah and his work in ushering in the new covenant and the eternal kingdom of God. The biblical depiction of the Spirit's economy, far from being uniform throughout time, is instead characterized by a decisive shift that coincides with the coming of Christ. Whereas the Spirit's work in the Old Testament is both general in application and anticipatory in nature, the New Testament depicts the Spirit's work in much more universal terms as it relates to the covenant people of God.⁹⁷ No longer would the Spirit be specially given only to a limited few among God's people, but under the new covenant *all* of God's people would be in possession of the Spirit. The Old Testament anticipates this change in the Spirit's work by foretelling of one who would possess the Spirit in a unique manner, and whose work would signal the arrival (though not the consummation) of the new covenant era.⁹⁸ The Spirit's work in the New Testament is therefore tied inseparably to the Messiah.

That the Spirit's work is fundamentally eschatological is due, then, not simply to his work in the believer in anticipation of the final receipt of all the blessings of salvation, but also fundamentally to the economic activity of Messiah. It is the Spirit's

⁹⁶Pinnock, "An Inclusivist View," 104.

⁹⁷James D. G. Dunn, "The Spirit and the Body of Christ," in *The Holy Spirit: Renewing and Empowering Presence*, ed. George Vandervelde (Winfield, BC: Wood Lake Books, 1989), 28.

⁹⁸Wellum, "Saving Faith," 169.

presence with Christ that signals the beginning of the time of fulfillment that was anticipated in the Old Testament. After Jesus' baptism and anointing with the Spirit he began preaching a new message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 4:17). Michael Horton comments on the importance of recognizing the Spirit's role in Christ's fulfillment of his messianic mission, which is fundamentally eschatological in nature:

The interdependence in all of this is as magnificent as it is obvious: apart from the Spirit, not only is it impossible for us to say 'Jesus is Lord'; without the Spirit there would be no *Jesus* in the first place. It is just as true that the Spirit gives us Jesus as it is that Jesus gives us the Spirit. It was the *Spirit* who upheld Jesus and gave his mortal flesh the strength to cleave to every word that proceeds from his Father's lips, and it is the Spirit who unites us to Christ as our representative head.⁹⁹

By definition the Messiah is the "anointed One," and so without the Spirit, there is no Messiah, no Christ. The following section of this chapter will briefly survey selected Old Testament passages that speaks of the Spirit's work in the coming era as it relates to the person and work of Messiah, and then proceed to the New Testament to see how the Spirit's anointing and subsequent presence with Christ is an eschatological work that both ushers in the last days and brings to proleptic fulfillment the intention of God that man would rule all of creation. The Spirit's presence with Messiah and later with the Messiah's gathered people signals a titanic and epochal shift in the Spirit's economic work, and fulfills the programmatic plan of the Father that the Spirit's work be centered around the exaltation of the Son and the gathering of a people for his own possession. As such, the Spirit's work in Messiah is indicative of his economic activity in general—that

⁹⁹Michael S. Horton, *Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 177. Note that I do not see the Spirit's role in the incarnation as equivalent to the Spirit's *sending* of Jesus—something that is nowhere said in Scripture. Nevertheless, it is true that the incarnation is brought about through the instrumentality of the Spirit, and thus his role is indispensable.

is, it is centered around accompanying and witnessing to Christ. As Erich Sauer points out, “the anticipatory presentation in the Old Testament is at the same time a *self*-presentation, for the ‘Spirit of Christ’ was in the prophets (I Pet. 1:11).”¹⁰⁰

Old Testament Anticipation

The Old Testament expectation was of a Messiah who would be anointed with the Spirit in a new and unique way, thus equipping him to be God’s agent of rule in his coming kingdom (Isa 11:1-2; 42:1; 61:1-2).¹⁰¹ Herman Ridderbos emphasizes the messianic nature of the kingdom in the New Testament, as well as in Jewish expectation found in the Old Testament when he states, “The Old Testament tradition of the coming manifestation of God as king and that of the Jews in Jesus’ days prove the close connection between the idea of the coming kingdom of God and that of a future personality which in a general way may be indicated as the Messiah.”¹⁰² This Spirit anointed king will thus be the vice-regent through whom God rules his kingdom. Many Old Testament texts bear this out by tying the coming Davidic King with the possession of the Spirit in a unique way, differentiating the Spirit’s limited presence with figures such as Moses or even David himself (Ps 51:11) with the fullness of the Spirit that would be experienced by the coming Messiah. The Spirit will therefore be the “official equipment” of the Messiah since he is the one who receives the Spirit in its fullness, not

¹⁰⁰Erich Sauer, *The Dawn of World Redemption: A Survey of the History of Salvation in the Old Testament*, trans. G. H. Lang (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 156.

¹⁰¹For the Messianic nature of these texts, see J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 121, 320, 499.

¹⁰²Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom*, trans. H. de Jongste, ed. Raymond O. Zorn (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1962), 27.

partially, as a prophet might.¹⁰³

The Davidic Covenant of 2 Samuel 7 is not the beginning of messianic prophecy, but it certainly introduces a significant element into the biblical picture of the Messiah's person and work. The particular importance of this passage is that it describes in detail the future *rule* of the Davidic King in a context where the adjective "anointed" is beginning to be applied with frequency to Israel's ruler. This rule had been earlier spoken of in Genesis 49:8-10 as uniquely connected to the tribe of Judah, from which David came (1 Sam 17:12). In 2 Samuel 7 David is informed that God will raise up one of his descendants after him and establish his kingdom forever (vv. 12-13). It is not insignificant here that the Hebrew word זרע (or "seed") is singular, since it follows the pattern begun in Genesis, where, as Paul points out in Galatians 3:16, the promises were to Abraham's seed rather than to his seeds, referring to Christ. This Davidic King will have rest from his enemies (v. 11; c.f. Gen 49:8), and will build a house for the name of the Lord (v. 13). He will be like none that preceded him, and there will be none after him since his kingdom is everlasting. Although this text says nothing of anointing with the Spirit, as later texts will, this concept is beginning to be understood as part of the privilege of Israel's kings. God's chosen king is repeatedly referred to as his *anointed* in both 1 and 2 Samuel.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, this passage demonstrates the unique place of Israel's king in relation to God—he is a son to God, one from whom God will not remove his lovingkindness (v. 14). This sense of sonship, as James D. G. Dunn points out, was uniquely characteristic of Jesus' experience of the Father, and was connected to Jesus'

¹⁰³Vos, "Eschatological Aspect," 218.

¹⁰⁴E.g., 1 Sam 2:10, 35; 12:3, 5; 16:6; 24:6, 10; and 2 Sam 1:14, 16; 19:21; 22:51.

consciousness of the Spirit's presence in his life: "It must be clear now that quite basic to Jesus' experience of God, to his self-consciousness and to his understanding of his mission, was his sense of *sonship* and his consciousness of *Spirit*."¹⁰⁵ Later texts will speak of the Messiah's anointing with the Spirit more clearly, but 2 Samuel 7 is important for establishing that Jesus' role as the promised Davidic King means that he is the Son of God in a unique sense, and this sonship is tied both to his rule and his anointing with the Spirit in a manner never before seen. The Spirit is therefore indispensable to Christ's role as the one who ushers in God's universal reign.

The Psalms frequently tie the rule of Messiah to his anointing with the Spirit, thus connecting him with the eschatological kingdom. Evidence of this relationship is found, for example, in Psalm 89 where the seed of David is specifically named as the one with whom God has established his covenant promise of an unending kingdom (vv. 3-4). God says of this king, "With my holy oil I have anointed him" (v. 20), thus marking him out as "Messiah."¹⁰⁶ The result of this anointing is power to rule—the strength of God will be with him (v. 21), no enemy will deceive him (v. 22), and God will crush his adversaries before him, striking those who hate him (v. 23). This Psalm alone makes it clear that God's power to rule is given to his Son in a unique way by virtue of his anointing with the Spirit. Greg Boyd is therefore correct when he argues that the incarnation of Christ was an act of war, brought about through the power of the Spirit, whereby the Father initiated battle against the forces of darkness by sending forth his

¹⁰⁵James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 62. Emphasis original. Note that one of the fundamental ways in which the Spirit works in the lives of God's new covenant people is through producing in them this same sense of sonship (Gal 4:4-5).

¹⁰⁶First Samuel 16:13 links together the anointing with oil and the anointing of the Spirit.

Messiah as king.¹⁰⁷ The New Testament evidence will bear this out, as Jesus is seen to proceed directly from his baptism, where he is anointed with the Spirit and declared the Son of God, to do battle with the devil.

The expectation of a Spirit anointed Davidic King is further confirmed in multiple passages in Isaiah. For example, Isaiah 10 speaks of God's coming judgment through the nation of Assyria, from which only a remnant of Israel will return. Judgment is pictured as the cutting down of a mighty forest (10:34), but from the stump of Jesse a branch will spring forth which will bear fruit (11:1; cf. 27:2-6). It quickly becomes apparent that this shoot is the promised Davidic King.¹⁰⁸ Edward J. Young argues against some interpretations which see in this passage a reference to Hezekiah or perhaps Zerubbabel. He believes instead that the earlier messianic context is decisive: "This passage is dependent upon the fountain prophecy in Isaiah 7, and hence is to be interpreted in light of that revelation."¹⁰⁹ Additionally, verse two attributes to this "shoot" the anointing of the Spirit, which is characteristic of the Messianic king. That this Spirit is specifically given for the purpose of rule is indicated by the benefits he brings—wisdom, understanding, counsel, and strength, so that the Messiah will judge with righteousness and fairness (vv. 3-4). The extent of Messiah's rule also corresponds to that which was earlier depicted in Psalm 89, and even uses similar language, speaking of the anointed one's striking the earth with the rod of his mouth (Ps 89:23; Isa 11:4). Given the messianic context of the early portion of Isaiah, and the similarity of language

¹⁰⁷Gregory A. Boyd, *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 201.

¹⁰⁸Motyer, *Isaiah*, 121.

¹⁰⁹Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 1:380.

between this passage and Psalm 89, it seems that this figure is none other than the Spirit anointed Davidic King who will usher in God's eschatological kingdom. The common threads of rule, judgment, and the Spirit's unique anointing weave their way through these passages.

Further in Isaiah the connection between the Davidic King and the Spirit is again confirmed. Isaiah 42:1-4 contains the same themes that have been seen in the texts above—a Spirit anointed figure who brings justice to the nations (indicative of a world-wide rule).¹¹⁰ Once again the Spirit is given with the purpose of equipping the servant to rule a kingdom that encompasses the entire world. He will bring forth justice to the nations, even to the ends of the earth (42:1, 3-4). Isaiah 61:1-3 offers a similar messianic prophecy from a first person perspective. The speaker has been anointed by the Lord, which he equates with the presence of the Spirit, in order to “bring good news to the afflicted” (61:1).¹¹¹ This mission seems at first to be less oriented to rule and reign when compared with the earlier texts mentioned, particularly because the speaker's mission seems limited to Zion (61:3a). But the greater context indicates that this figure's role of proclamation includes not only the good news to the afflicted, but seems to mediate the institution of God's rule as well. There is, first of all, the comfort that is given to those in exile that brings with it the assurance of God's control over the situation of the afflicted.¹¹² On the other hand this Messiah also proclaims the day of God's vengeance,

¹¹⁰ Space does not permit an argument for the servant as the Messiah. The reader is referred to Motyer, *Isaiah*, 13-16; and Young, *Book of Isaiah*, 3:108-10 for brief discussions on the identity of the servant.

¹¹¹For a brief argument that this text is messianic, see Young, *Book of Isaiah*, 3:459.

¹¹²Young points out that the good news mentioned in this text moves beyond simply a message to Israel's exiles, but that it also has eternal ramifications. Young, *Book of Isaiah*, 3:459.

mediating God's judgment.¹¹³ This judgment seems to be aimed at "strangers," and "sons of the foreigner," and is thus not limited to Israel (61:5). In addition, verse six refers to God's people as a nation of priests, and these are the ones with whom God will make his "everlasting covenant" (61:8), language which is reminiscent of God's promises to David in Psalm 89:3, 28. The overall context of this chapter points toward the institution of God's universal reign, mediated by this one who has been specially anointed with the Spirit, again making the Spirit, or more specifically the Spirit's role in anointing the Messiah, central to the institution of God's kingdom.

This very brief survey of Old Testament texts should serve to illustrate that the Spirit's economy as depicted in the Old Testament was not so universal as some inclusivists want to claim. Certainly there are aspects of the Spirit's work that are related to the giving of life and sustaining of creation, and these works do have a universal aspect (e.g., Ps 104:30). Nevertheless, the testimony of the Old Testament points toward an eschatological work of the Spirit that is both distinct from what had been previously experienced and centered around the figure of Messiah. The Spirit's work is therefore *preliminary* and *Christ centered* even as it is described in the Old Testament. The expectation of God's people of a greater, future work of the Spirit, both in the covenant people and in Messiah, grew with the progressive revelation of God's redemptive purposes. Israel anticipated the arrival of the Messiah as part of an eschatological vindication grounded in their experience of God as their presently reigning king.¹¹⁴ As Ridderbos observes, "The coming kingdom of God will be inaugurated by the great day

¹¹³The preaching of Jesus early in his ministry fulfills both of these roles. His blessings given in the Beatitudes and his admonition to "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" are indicative of the twofold role depicted in Isa 61.

¹¹⁴Ridderbos, *Coming of the Kingdom*, 8.

of the Lord, the day of judgment for the apostate part of Israel, as well as for the nations in general, and at the same time, however, by the day of deliverance and salvation for the oppressed people of the Lord.”¹¹⁵ Peter uses just such “day of the Lord” language in relation to the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, thus linking Christ’s pouring out of the Spirit with the judgment of God’s enemies and the inauguration of his kingdom. All of these kingdom themes present in the Old Testament texts discussed above were indicative of a new work of the Spirit not heretofore experienced, even among those prophets of God who had known the Spirit’s presence personally. In contrast to these Old Testament figures, the coming Messiah would be “the man of the Spirit *par excellence*.”¹¹⁶ He would receive the Spirit in a unique way that would signal his position as the Davidic King, the Son of God whose kingdom would endure forever. Additionally, the presence of judgment as a thematic part of the Spirit’s work indicates not only a distinction between the Spirit’s work in the Old Testament as compared to the New,¹¹⁷ but also points to a fundamental distinction between the Spirit’s work in the people of the God and the people of the world. The New Testament presents the realization of what was presaged in the Old, and solidifies the connection between the Son and the Spirit in their eschatological work of inaugurating God’s kingdom.

New Testament Fulfillment

N. T. Wright argues that there was no universally understood concept of “the

¹¹⁵Ibid., 5.

¹¹⁶Ferguson, *Holy Spirit*, 176.

¹¹⁷For a helpful overview of the Spirit’s limited work in the people of God under the old covenant, see James M. Hamilton, Jr., *God’s Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old & New Testaments*, NAC Studies in Bible and Theology (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 25-55.

Messiah” in Jesus’ day.¹¹⁸ For this reason, various figures could appear on the scene from time to time, making claims to a kingdom, and not be universally condemned by appeal to some commonly accepted notion of what the Messiah would be. However, there was at least one thing that these various concepts had in common, the expectation of an eschatological kingdom. “If these disparate movements had anything in common,” Wright says, “it was the expectation, forming the context for whatever messianic figure might emerge, that Israel’s long history would at last reach its divinely ordained goal. The long night of exile, the ‘present evil age’, would give way to the dawn of renewal and restoration, the new exodus, the return from exile, ‘the age to come’.”¹¹⁹ Early in the life and ministry of Jesus the presence of this new age becomes evident.¹²⁰ It is manifested not only in the preaching and teaching of Jesus and his forerunner, John the Baptist, but also in Jesus’ ability to rule over the created order (via the nature miracles), to break the hold of death (via the healing miracles), and to rule over the forces of the spiritual realm (via his exorcisms). From the beginning of his life to the resurrection and ascension, the Spirit was the power at work in the life of Christ as he inaugurated this kingdom (Matt 12:28).¹²¹ The following brief survey of some of the New Testament evidence is intended to show that Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophetic expectation of the coming Davidic King who was anointed with the Spirit and thereby inaugurated God’s kingdom. As a result, the relationship between the Son and the Spirit is cemented

¹¹⁸N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 482.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*

¹²⁰Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 139.

¹²¹Vos argues that the Gospels are christocentric, and make little of the Spirit as the power behind Jesus’ supernatural works (“Eschatological Aspect,” 222). Nevertheless, the connection is certainly there, particularly when one considers Jesus’ claims in Luke 4:18 and Matt 12:28.

in their joint work of ushering in the dawning of the new age.¹²²

The Gospels. The role of the Spirit in the life of Christ begins in the gospel narratives before Jesus' birth. Matthew relates that Mary was "found to be with child by the Holy Spirit" (Matt 1:18). Luke adds that the Holy Spirit was the power of the Most High that overshadowed Mary so that her child would be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). Even prior to Jesus' birth the Spirit was active in him such that he merited the royal title "Son of God," a title which harkens back to 2 Samuel 7:14 and the promised Davidic King. Additionally, there is a connection between the Spirit's giving Christ life at his physical birth, and his later role as the power that raised Christ from the dead (Rom 8:11). Both are eschatological acts that involve the giving of life, and both center on the person of Jesus Christ. The Spirit first gives physical life to the Davidic King, then later, with the resurrection of Christ, he is the power that begins the general resurrection of the dead.¹²³

It is, however, at Christ's baptism that he is generally regarded as being anointed with the Spirit for his service of ministry.¹²⁴ This anointing, according to David Wells, would have been understood by Jews to be the outpouring of the Spirit which inaugurated the new age.¹²⁵ Regardless of whether this was a universal understanding among those who witnessed Christ's baptism, it is certainly the case that this event was of the utmost significance for the relationship between Christ and the Spirit. It was at this

¹²²Of course, the kingdom is still characterized by a "not yet" aspect, to which the Spirit points in his work in the new covenant people of God, as was depicted above.

¹²³Vos, "Eschatological Aspect," 213.

¹²⁴Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 25.

¹²⁵David F. Wells, *The Person of Christ: A Biblical and Historical Analysis of the Incarnation* (n.p.: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1984; reprint, Alliance, OH: Bible Scholar Books, 1992), 38.

event that Jesus' credentials were clearly asserted in the form of a witness by the Father.¹²⁶ There are two common elements in the Synoptic accounts of Jesus' baptism. Both of these elements tie his baptism to the promise of the Davidic King. First, the Spirit of God descended from heaven in the form of a dove and landed on Jesus.¹²⁷ Second, an audible voice declared him to be the Son of God. That Jesus' baptism constituted his anointing with the Spirit is evidenced by his actions immediately following. First, he endured the temptations of the devil, temptations which were each designed to sever Jesus from the role he had received by virtue of his anointing with the Spirit (Luke 4:1-13).¹²⁸ Second, he returned to Galilee *in the power of the Spirit*, and began to preach in the synagogues. It was here that Jesus claimed to be the Spirit anointed servant of Isaiah 61 (Luke 4:16-22).¹²⁹ Immediately thereafter he begins to advance the kingdom by confronting evil spirits (4:33-34, 41), from whom he also received recognition as the "Holy One of God" and "Son of God," (4:34, 41). Finally, it was from this point that Jesus began to preach the kingdom of God (Luke 4:43). All of these actions following immediately on the heels of his baptism indicate that Jesus had been anointed with the Spirit, and that the Spirit was the power behind his preaching (for he taught "with authority," Luke 4:32) and his miracle working.

Both Vos and Wells assert that the Synoptic Gospels give little evidence of the

¹²⁶Macleod, *Person of Christ*, 25.

¹²⁷Only Luke adds that the Spirit "descended upon Him in bodily form" like a dove (3:22). Matthew and Mark speak of the Spirit descending "like a dove."

¹²⁸Wells, *Person of Christ*, 38.

¹²⁹N. T. Wright's contention, mentioned above, that there was no universally accepted understanding of Messiah in Jesus' day receives some support from this passage. No one seemed shocked at Jesus' claim, even though he clearly intended his hearers to understand that it was *in him* that the prophecy of Isaiah 61 was being fulfilled. The worshippers only reacted violently when Jesus mentions God's work among the Gentiles.

relationship between Jesus and the Spirit.¹³⁰ However, as Wells points out, “What is present . . . is enough to declare the arrival of Messiah.”¹³¹ And with that arrival came the inauguration of the kingdom. The power of the Spirit in the life of Christ was thus instrumental in that kingdom’s arrival. That Jesus understood himself to be anointed with the Spirit, and therefore Messiah, is beyond contention. Dunn regards Jesus’ use of Isaiah 61 in Luke 4:18ff. as indicative of his self-conscious awareness that he had been anointed with the Spirit of God. He states, “The probability is therefore that in uttering these words Jesus gave expression to a basic conviction: viz., that he had been anointed by the Spirit of God, commissioned to proclaim the good news of the end-time kingdom.”¹³² Dunn recognizes a clear relationship between the Spirit’s anointing of the Messiah with the proclamation and arrival of the eschatological kingdom.

Perhaps the clearest example of this relationship in the life of Jesus is his claim that the power he wielded over evil spirits came from the Spirit of God, and was therefore an indication that the kingdom of God had arrived (Matt 12:28; Luke 11:20). By making this claim, Jesus ties together his role as the Spirit anointed Davidic King with the inauguration of the kingdom of God.¹³³ Ladd makes much of this text as evidence for an inaugurated eschatology. For him, “The meaning of Jesus’ exorcism of demons in its

¹³⁰Wells, *Person of Christ*, 38; Vos, “Eschatological Aspect,” 222.

¹³¹Wells, *Person of Christ*, 39.

¹³²Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 55. Dunn goes on to say that in the Beatitudes Jesus expresses “an *already established*, deeply held and firm assurance of Jesus that the Isaianic prophecy was being fulfilled in himself and in his ministry.” *Ibid.*, *Emphasis original*.

¹³³Rarely does Jesus bear the title of king in the Gospels. Robert Letham goes so far as to say that Christ never explicitly claimed to be king. It seems, on the contrary, that Matthew 27:11 affirms that he did. For this comment see Robert Letham, *The Work of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 197. On this subject David Wells recalls Oscar Cullman’s argument that Jesus was reticent to own the title Messiah publicly in order to prevent unrestrained nationalistic expectations on the part of the Jews; Wells, *Person of Christ*, 39. The term “Davidic King” is used here simply to affirm that Jesus fulfilled this role, as the rest of the New Testament bears out.

relationship to the Kingdom of God is precisely this: that before the eschatological conquest of God's Kingdom over evil and the destruction of Satan, the Kingdom of God has invaded the realm of Satan to deal him a preliminary but decisive defeat."¹³⁴

According to Ladd, Matthew 12:28 is evidence that Jesus interpreted Old Testament promises in the context of spiritual warfare rather than military conflict.¹³⁵ The role of the Spirit in empowering Jesus to inaugurate the eschatological kingdom is thus clearly manifested in this text. Without the anointing of the Spirit Jesus would still be fully God, but he would not be Messiah, nor would he fulfill the Old Testament expectations of an anointed Davidic King. Furthermore, Jesus without the Spirit would still be fully human, but he would not be the Son of God in terms of kingship, and he would not be qualified to receive the promises of the Davidic covenant.

The eschatological Spirit in Acts. With the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the relationship between Christ and the Spirit underwent a functional change that was clearly and specifically foretold in the Gospels. This change signaled a shift in the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, but nevertheless demonstrates their absolute inseparability in the economic work of redemption. Prior to this time, Jesus had lived in total dependence upon the Spirit, and his anointing had equipped him to fulfill the messianic role. After the Resurrection, however, Jesus becomes the one who baptizes in the Spirit, indeed who pours out the Spirit on his covenant people (John 15:26; Acts 2:33).¹³⁶ There are several results of this outpouring, each of which points to the Spirit's

¹³⁴Ladd, *Presence of the Future*, 151.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, 150.

¹³⁶There is a very real sense in which Pentecost must be viewed as part of Jesus' redemptive

new covenant economic work of witnessing to the Son. First, the Spirit now mediates the presence of Christ in the life of the believer so that the rule of the kingdom extends to those in whom the Spirit dwells (John 14:18; Rom 8:9). The Spirit's presence in *all* believers signals the arrival of the new age of the Spirit longed for in the Old Testament (Num 11:29).¹³⁷ Additionally, the Spirit becomes the power for witness in the lives of believers, so that the kingdom is spread through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8). Third, the outpouring of the Spirit results in *all* of the covenant people of God being specially gifted for service. This giftedness is not only for the purpose of gospel proclamation, but also for building up the people of God and therefore supporting and unifying the Messiah's new covenant people (1 Cor 12:7; Eph 4:3-13). Stephen Wellum's assessment of Pentecost is surely correct:

It is best to interpret Pentecost as a unique, redemptive-historical event, rooted and grounded in OT prophetic expectation; it must be viewed as part and parcel of Jesus' saving work. In fact it is the *culmination* of his earthly work (cf. Jn 7:39) by which he has inaugurated the new covenant age, thus giving the Spirit *to all Christians* so that they may not only come to know him but also be gifted and empowered for service.¹³⁸

This redemptive-historical interpretation of Pentecost is affirmed by Peter's sermon, which places the events of Pentecost squarely within the framework of Old Testament expectation and eschatological fulfillment.¹³⁹ The fact that Jesus is interpreted to be the one who pours out the Spirit at Pentecost is extremely significant for

work. Wellum, "Saving Faith," 168.

¹³⁷Dunn, "Spirit and the Body of Christ," 28. Dunn states, "Of fundamental importance for the New Testament teaching on the Spirit is the contrast with what had been known of the Spirit in the preceding epoch. . . . Scattered within the pages of the Old Testament is also the longing for a time when the Spirit would be more widely experienced."

¹³⁸Wellum, "Saving Faith," 168. Emphasis original.

¹³⁹Peter's sermon is in fact an inspired *interpretation* of the events of Pentecost, and as such provides an authoritative perspective on these events. To ignore the framework in which Peter interprets Pentecost is therefore to miss the biblical perspective on pneumatology in general.

understanding the economy of the Holy Spirit, and its relationship to the exaltation of the risen Christ. Peter connects Christ's sending of the Spirit directly with his enthronement at God's right hand, recalling Psalm 110:1. The flow of thought in Acts 2:22-36 exhibits Peter's understanding that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled the Old Testament expectation of the Davidic King who would rule over an eternal kingdom. First, Jesus had received the promised anointing with the Spirit as evidenced by his miraculous power (22). Subsequently he was crucified and then resurrected, which Peter took as an indication that he was the fulfillment of God's promises to David (25-32). As a result, he was seated at God's right hand in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1, where he poured out the Spirit at Pentecost (33-36). Peter's final word is that Jesus, this man who was crucified, is now both Lord and Christ, the promised ruler of God's kingdom.¹⁴⁰ Peter's earlier reference to Joel 2:28-32 clearly indicates that the outpouring of the Spirit inaugurates the last days, the eschatological kingdom of God. The exaltation of Christ is the catalyst for the sending of the Spirit, and this event signals the arrival of the end times. The Spirit continues this work of exaltation as he witnesses to the Son.

The eschatological Spirit in Romans 8. Of the many passages that deal with the Spirit's work eschatologically in Paul, one must perhaps be regarded as preeminent, Romans 8. In this chapter practically every theme related to the eschatological work of the Spirit is present: the conflict of the two ages, one characterized by the flesh, the other by the Spirit (vv. 5-8); the presence of the Spirit as indicative of one's union with Christ and citizenship in Christ's kingdom (v. 9); the Spirit's identification with Christ by virtue

¹⁴⁰Dunn regards as striking and totally unheard of the claim that Jesus, by his resurrection and exaltation, had become the Lord and dispenser of the Spirit. He states, "The new claim is that the Spirit is now the medium by which Christ is known to and united with his followers." Dunn, "Spirit of Jesus," 22.

of Christ's exaltation (v. 9b); the life giving power of the Spirit that constitutes the guarantee of the believer's bodily resurrection (vv. 10-11); the Spirit's role in the resurrection of Christ (v. 11); and the sanctifying work of the Spirit as evidence of sonship and the guarantee of future glorification (vv. 12-18). Yet for all this mention of the Spirit, Douglas Moo argues that this chapter is not really *about* the Spirit, but rather about what the Spirit *does*.¹⁴¹ This observation resonates with Hamilton's contention that the concern of the New Testament when it comes to pneumatology is not ontology, but redemptive history.¹⁴² The redemptive historical aspects of the Spirit's work in this chapter are undoubtedly paramount—space will only permit a brief survey of two of them.

First of all, the Spirit's role in Romans 8 is indicative of the invasion of the future into the present—that is, of the believer's proleptic experience of future promised blessings.¹⁴³ The contrast between the flesh and the Spirit found in verse four hearkens back to Romans 1:3-4, where Jesus' life "according to the flesh" and "according to the Spirit" stand in stark contrast, and point to two different modes of being for the Son of God—one prior to the resurrection and one after.¹⁴⁴ Although Christ lived a Spirit empowered life prior to his resurrection, there is nevertheless a sense in which he was living "according to the flesh" in terms of human weakness (1 Cor 15:42-44; 2 Cor 13:4;

¹⁴¹Moo, *Romans*, 468.

¹⁴²Hamilton, *Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, 3.

¹⁴³Gary Badcock echoes the commonly held understanding of Pauline pneumatology when he states, "The Spirit in Pauline theology is the eschatological gift, the gift ushering in the age of fulfillment." Gary D. Badcock, *Light of Truth & Fire of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 19.

¹⁴⁴Hamilton, *Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, 13.

Heb 4:15).¹⁴⁵ He was susceptible to the weaknesses found in the human body. He was capable of hunger, weariness, pain, and even being tempted (Heb 4:15).¹⁴⁶ Since the resurrection, however, Christ has been exalted to the right hand of God where he possesses all authority (Matt 28:18), and pours out the Spirit upon his covenant people (Acts 2:33). These two modes of existence are now found in the believer by virtue of the new birth. Romans 8 speaks to believers who have been made alive in spirit (v. 10), and have thus experienced in the new birth a precursor to the resurrection (2 Cor 5:17). Nevertheless, the full consummation of the bodily resurrection awaits future fulfillment. In the meantime the Christian is living proleptically in the new age of the Spirit. The dichotomy in verse five between the flesh and the Spirit has ethical significance, but the ethical import is grounded in the contrast between life in two different aeons. In light of this Vos can say that “if the Spirit be the Spirit of the αἰὼν μέλλων, then his most distinctive task must lie where the coming aeon is most sharply differentiated in principle from the present age. And this, as all the Pauline references to the two aeons go to prove, is the *ethical quality* of both.”¹⁴⁷ Similarly, Vos argues that “this whole opposition between a heavenly and an earthly order of things and the anchoring of the Christian life in the former is a direct offshoot of the eschatological distinction between two ages.”¹⁴⁸

All of Paul’s ethical admonitions to believers can therefore be viewed in light of the

¹⁴⁵This is not to say, as some have argued, that “pneumatic christology originated with the resurrection.” Badcock has shown that Christ *must* have possessed the Spirit from the beginning of his ministry—otherwise, “his ministry itself could not properly have been conceived as messianic.” Badcock, *Light of Truth*, 23.

¹⁴⁶Regardless of one’s view on the issue of Jesus’ impeccability/peccability, the least that must be said is that the temptations Jesus experienced were *real* temptations.

¹⁴⁷Vos, “Eschatology and the Spirit,” 255. Emphasis mine.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 244-245.

distinction between the two ages that Christians simultaneously inhabit. That the new age is characterized as life in the Spirit is indicative of the Spirit's role in ushering in this new age. It is the presence of the Spirit that *produces* the new age.¹⁴⁹

Second, the Spirit in Romans 8 is the power behind the resurrection of Christ, and subsequently the power behind the believer's new life (vv. 10-11).¹⁵⁰ The Spirit is the power behind Christ's resurrection and the believer's spiritual life both now and in the future, when the believer will also be resurrected in the same manner as Christ. Vos connects the believer's possession of the Spirit with Christ's possession of the Spirit, not just as something he can dispense, but as something that is the source of his glorified life. Therefore, one's union with Christ means that the Spirit is working in that vital union. "Paul emphasizes repeatedly," he observes, "that the Spirit who works life in the believer is the identical Spirit who wrought and still is life for the exalted Lord."¹⁵¹ The believer's union with Christ therefore means that he or she will follow Christ in resurrection. This connection between the Spirit and the resurrection links the Spirit inextricably to the believer's future, because in Christ that future is already a reality, a reality that awaits only consummation in the life of the individual believer.¹⁵² The Spirit's presence in the life of the believer offers assurance of both future resurrection and, since he is the Spirit of sonship/adoption (vv. 14-17), of the believer's future inheritance. The already/not yet

¹⁴⁹None of this should be taken to infer that Pinnock's preferred means of discerning the Spirit's presence, which is almost purely ethical in nature, is actually sufficient to do so. Many people depicted in the gospels were very ethical, but were far from Christ because they lacked *faith* in him (John 5:39). Ethical behavior can be indicative of arrogant self-righteousness.

¹⁵⁰Ferguson points out that "although at times Paul attributes Christ's resurrection to the Spirit in a somewhat circumlocutory way, there is no doubt that he does so." Ferguson, *Holy Spirit*, 250-51.

¹⁵¹Vos, "Eschatological Aspect," 242.

¹⁵²Hamilton, *Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, 17.

aspect of the Spirit's work in this text is clear: believers *are* the sons of God (v. 14), and yet they *still await* their final adoption as sons—the redemption of the body (23).

The Spirit's Witness to the Son

The redemptive-historical framework of biblical pneumatology is made evident in the anticipation and fulfillment of a *new* and *unprecedented* work of the Spirit in both the Messiah and in the covenant people of God. There is therefore an eschatological connection between the Son and the Spirit in the new covenant era that cannot be interpreted in such a way as to make the Son's redemptive work *merely* an aspect of the Spirit's universal mission. This is precisely what Clark Pinnock does when he argues that,

[the Spirit] was at work in the world before Christ and is present now where Christ is not named. The mission of the Son is not a threat to the mission of the Spirit, or vice versa. On the one hand, the Son's mission presupposes the Spirit's—Jesus was conceived and empowered by the Spirit. On the other hand, the mission of the Spirit is oriented to the goals of incarnation. The Spirit's mission is to bring history to completion and fulfillment in Christ.¹⁵³

Here, Pinnock fails to do justice to the Bible's redemptive-historical storyline which is oriented around an anticipation/fulfillment theme with regard to the work of the Spirit.¹⁵⁴ Instead, he chooses to impose a pneumatological framework that is foreign to the Bible's own plot, and thus his pneumatology is divorced from its christological moorings.¹⁵⁵ As a result, he and other pneumatological inclusivists seem to ignore the Bible's own

¹⁵³Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 194.

¹⁵⁴Carson helpfully summarizes the biblical framework with regard to pneumatology in *Gagging of God*, 264-68.

¹⁵⁵Notice here that for Pinnock the Spirit's work is oriented toward the *goals of incarnation*, but not necessarily toward a witness to the Son himself. For Pinnock to emphasize this would be to threaten the principle of universality which is so crucial to his pneumatological inclusivism.

testimony concerning the christocentric nature of the Spirit's mission, and the titanic shift that has taken place in the Spirit's work with the coming of Christ. Three particular aspects of this work will briefly serve to illustrate this shift, and that the Spirit is tied inseparably to the Son in his economic work in the new covenant era.

First, the explicitly stated focus of the Spirit's work as given by Jesus Christ himself is that the Spirit would witness to him. John 16:12-14 constitutes what appears to be a programmatic outline of the Spirit's future ministry and its relationship to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.¹⁵⁶ The Spirit's economic activity has specific reference to the Son in that the Spirit witnesses to the Son, bringing glory to him. Verse 13 points to the Spirit's witness to the truth, but this is not to be interpreted as a witness to truth generically, but rather to the truth that is revealed in Christ alone. As F. F. Bruce observes, "the truth which the Spirit will disclose is not truth additional to 'the truth as it is in Jesus' (Eph. 4:21); it is the further unfolding of that truth. It is not that he will guide them 'into' all truth; they had already been introduced to the way of truth by Jesus, and the Spirit would guide them further along that way."¹⁵⁷ The context of the Paraclete passages makes this clear. Jesus had already referred to himself as the "truth" in 14:6. The relationship that the Spirit has with Jesus thus parallels the relationship that Jesus has with the Father in terms of revelation and glorification. Raymond E. Brown states, "Jesus glorified the Father (xvii 4) by revealing the Father to men; the Paraclete glorifies Jesus by revealing him to men. Glory involves visible manifestation . . . and by making witnesses of men (xv 26-27) the Paraclete publicizes the risen Jesus who shares his

¹⁵⁶Miles, "Severing the Spirit from the Son," 2-3.

¹⁵⁷F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel and Epistles of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 320.

Father's glory (xvii 5)."¹⁵⁸ The Spirit's economic work is therefore inextricably connected with glorifying the Son, and making known the truth that is nothing other than Jesus Christ himself.¹⁵⁹

The Spirit's work of glorifying the Son is depicted in the New Testament in at least two ways. First he empowers and sends believers to proclaim the good news of the gospel.¹⁶⁰ The pattern in the book of Acts is instructive, for it shows the Spirit inspiring missionary activity and witnessing to the risen Christ through empowered gospel preaching.¹⁶¹ In one particularly clear instance of the Spirit's work in this regard Stephen is standing before his accusers in Acts 7, about to be stoned, when the Scripture says of him, "But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God'" (7:55-56). Other examples abound: the Spirit empowers Peter's preaching at the temple (4:8), sends him to Cornelius (10:19-20), and sends Paul and Barnabas on their missionary endeavors (13:2, 4). The filling with the Spirit in Acts results in bold gospel proclamation (4:31), but this

¹⁵⁸Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (XIII-XXI)*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 716. Jesus says that the Spirit will *not* speak of his own, but will take of what belongs to Jesus and make it known to his disciples. In parallel fashion, the Son does not speak on his own, but only as he receives from the Father (John 8:28; cf. 5:19).

¹⁵⁹Carson, *Gospel According to John*, 539-40.

¹⁶⁰Bruce Ware helpfully points out that "there is no saving revelation of the Spirit that is not the saving revelation of Jesus Christ and him crucified and risen. Hence, missions is necessary. The hidden people of this world are without hope apart from their learning about Christ and placing their faith in him alone for the forgiveness of their sin." Bruce A. Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Relationships, Roles, and Relevance* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 119.

¹⁶¹The text of Acts clearly does not expect its readers to believe that this activity of the Spirit is inconsequential for the salvation of those who heard the message. For example, Cornelius is told by an angel to expect in Peter's preaching a message by which he would be saved (Acts 11:14). Additionally, the conversions recorded in Acts 16 are the result of missionary activity directed by the "Spirit of Jesus" (16:7).

alone is insufficient for conversion. Therefore, the second way that the Spirit glorifies the Son is through opening human hearts through regeneration and illumination to respond to the preaching of the gospel. As D. A. Carson puts it, “The Spirit is intimately involved in the business of enabling people to understand and know the truth of the gospel.”¹⁶² Thus, Peter’s hearers were “cut to the heart” at his preaching (Acts 2:37). Likewise, Paul’s preaching to the Gentiles resulted in the salvation of those who had been *appointed* to eternal life (13:48). Similarly, the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to respond to Paul’s preaching (16:14).¹⁶³ These examples point to a sovereign work of the Spirit in regenerating and producing faith in some who hear the gospel preached. Ferguson points to this aspect of the Spirit’s work when he says, “Regeneration and the faith to which it gives birth are seen as taking place not by revelationless divine sovereignty, but within the matrix of the preaching of the word and the witness of the people of God (*cf.* Rom. 10:1-15). Their instrumentality in regeneration does not impinge upon the sovereign activity of the Spirit. Word and Spirit belong together.”¹⁶⁴

The second aspect of the Spirit’s work that ties him directly to the Son is that the Spirit in the New Testament is depicted as the Spirit of Jesus (e.g., Acts 16:7; Phil 1:19). As Jesus’ impending departure drew near, he promised alternately¹⁶⁵ that both he

¹⁶²Carson, *Gagging of God*, 266.

¹⁶³This certainly should be understood as a work of the Spirit in Lydia’s life. C. K. Barrett points out that although there is no mention of the Spirit here, this sort of imprecision is not unusual for Luke, whose language is Jewish in this instance. C. K. Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, ICC (London: T&T Clark, 1994), 1:658-59. Note that the comments here actually come from the comments on 13:48, the reader having been directed here from the commentary on 16:14, and applies to both verses.

¹⁶⁴Ferguson, *Holy Spirit*, 126. Clearly, the gospel can be heard without this work of the Spirit, in which case no faith will be produced (1 Cor 1:18-2:5; Heb 4:2).

¹⁶⁵Carson speaks to this variation in language: “If in this passage the Counsellor [*sic*] is given by the Father at the Son’s request, elsewhere he is sent by the Father in Christ’s name (v. 26), sent by

and the Father would send another *parakletos*¹⁶⁶ to be with the disciples (John 14:16). This term points to the Spirit's role among Christ's covenant people as one who continues the Son's work of being *with* the disciples to strengthen and help them. Even as Jesus promises to ask the Father to send another *parakletos* to his disciples, he simultaneously promises them, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (14:18).¹⁶⁷ The impact of this on the Spirit's economic work becomes clear for Ferguson as he considers 1 Corinthians 15:45 ("the last Adam became a life-giving spirit."). He argues first of all that the word "spirit" should be capitalized, and understood to refer to the Holy Spirit. However, understanding the text in this manner should in no way be taken to refer to some sort of "ontological fusion" of the persons. Rather, it points to a parallel between Paul's view of the relationship between Christ and the Spirit and John's—that is, "The Son and the Spirit share an identity of ministry."¹⁶⁸ He goes on to state,

Thus, to have the Spirit is to have Christ; to have Christ is to have the Spirit. Not to have the Spirit of Christ is to lack Christ. To have the Spirit of Christ is to be indwelt by Christ (Rom. 8:9-11). There is clear ontological distinction, but economic or functional equivalence. . . . In effect, Paul is teaching that through his life and ministry Jesus came into such complete possession of the Spirit, receiving and experiencing him 'without limit' (Jn. 3:34), that he is now 'Lord' of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18). With respect to his economic ministry to us, the Spirit has been 'imprinted' with the character of Jesus.¹⁶⁹

Christ from the Father (15:26), proceeds ('goes out') from the Father (15:26), or is sent by Christ (16:7). It is not that the Evangelist cannot distinguish these expressions one from the other, still less that the two ways of referring to the sending of the Spirit are 'in direct tension' Rather, the same sending can be described in various complementary ways, granted the tight cohesion of the Father and the Son (*cf.* 5:19-30)." Carson, *Gospel According to John*, 199.

¹⁶⁶Carson highlights the forensic aspect of this word. That is, the Spirit functions as a *legal counsel*, as well as one who strengthens and gives aid. Carson, *Gospel According to John*, 499-500.

¹⁶⁷Ferguson, *Holy Spirit*, 56.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 54.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 54-55.

Again, this understanding of the Spirit's relationship to Christ is parallel to the relationship of the Son to the Father. If this is correct, then Amos Yong is right to be vexed by the "christological impasse" that accompanies any attempts to construct a pneumatological theology of religions.¹⁷⁰ The *only* criterion for discerning the work of the Spirit given the framework of the New Testament is christological. As Wellum argues, "To affirm that the Spirit may work in us graciously so that we 'believe' in God, but not in Jesus Christ as the object of our faith, is foreign to the entire work of the Spirit as described in the NT."¹⁷¹

The third aspect of the Spirit's work that both demonstrates an epochal shift in his work and ties him inseparably to the Son is the way in which the Spirit in the New Testament is shown to be at work among the covenant people of God in a way that he is specifically said *not* to be at work in the world in general. The outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost is generally interpreted by pneumatological inclusivists in a universal sense—that is, the Spirit is poured out upon all *without exception*.¹⁷² As a result, they argue, the Spirit is not limited to those people within the church (i.e., new covenant believers), but is graciously at work among all people.¹⁷³ However, as Wellum points out, those who

¹⁷⁰Yong comes against this question repeatedly, and seems to regard any explicitly christological criteria for discerning the Spirit as a form of subordinationism. Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 169.

¹⁷¹Wellum, "Saving Faith," 172.

¹⁷²See, for example, Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 131. See also Amos Yong's article, "A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World," *Missiology* 33 (2005): 177.

¹⁷³Clark Pinnock exemplifies this way of thinking when he says, "The world is the arena of God's presence, and the Spirit knocks on every human heart, preparing people for the coming of Christ. . . . From the Spirit flows that universal gracing that seeks to lead all people into fuller light and love." Pinnock, "An Inclusivist View," 104. Pinnock goes on to criticize the traditional theology of the Spirit for

interpret Pentecost in this manner are failing to understand this unique event in light of its Old Testament framework.¹⁷⁴ As a result, they “fail to acknowledge that the words ‘all people’ in Acts 2:17 are defined in terms of the new covenant, not as a reference to the universal work of the Spirit in people where the gospel has not gone.”¹⁷⁵ It seems, then, that the reference here is not to all people *without exception*, but to all people *without distinction*. That is, all of God’s people, not only specialized leaders or prophets, are in possession of the Spirit, so that all are gifted for service and empowered for ministry. This is not a work that the Spirit performs generally among all people, but rather is oriented toward the new covenant people of God.

The explicit words of Jesus make a clear distinction between the work of the Spirit in the world and among his disciples. This is an indication that the Spirit’s work in the world is not uniform among all people, but multivalent. Christ speaks of the Spirit as “the Spirit of truth, *whom the world cannot receive*, because it neither sees him nor knows him” (John 14:17). David Wells point out two primary uses of the word *kosmos* (world) in the Scriptures. First, it is used of creation—the “organic universe that God has made.”¹⁷⁶ Second, it is used of fallen humanity, and “the cultural and social context in which human alienation from God is institutionalized and normalized.”¹⁷⁷ Being then in

its “almost exclusively ecclesial understanding of his work, as if God’s breath were confined within the walls of the church.” He encourages an openness to seeing the Spirit at work in other religions as well.

¹⁷⁴One wonders precisely what distinction an inclusivist like Pinnock sees in the Spirit’s work pre and post Pentecost. To argue that the Spirit’s work in the Old Testament was anything less than universal would be to undermine a key component of his inclusive soteriology. Conversely, to argue that the Spirit in the new covenant era works with special reference to Christ would also undermine the principle of universality.

¹⁷⁵Wellum, “Saving Faith,” 168.

¹⁷⁶Wells, *God The Evangelist*, 35.

¹⁷⁷*Ibid.*

such a fallen and rebellious condition, the Spirit's first work, according to Wells, is "to effect a transition from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light."¹⁷⁸ Such a monergistic work is absolutely necessary in light of the way that John 14-16 portrays the relationship of the world to Jesus.¹⁷⁹ John 15:18-25 depicts the people of the world as those who hate (v.18) and persecute the Son (v. 20). This strong antagonism is based in the world's alienation from God the Father (v. 23) and is carried over to the followers of the Son whom he has chosen out of the world (vv. 18-20). The seemingly out of place¹⁸⁰ reference to the Spirit in verse 26 places the Spirit in a similar relationship of antagonism to the world because it is the Spirit's work to witness to Christ (and to empower the disciples to witness to Christ (v. 27)). The following verses (16:1-11) expand on these relationships of antagonism in reverse order.¹⁸¹ Consequently, in John 16:12-14, when Jesus defines the relationship that the Spirit will have to him in terms of witness, he does so specifically *in light of* the antagonism between Jesus/the Spirit/the disciples and the world.¹⁸² As Raymond Brown observes, the world's failure to see or recognize the Paraclete (John 14:17) does not result in indifference, but hostility—"the same type of

¹⁷⁸Ibid. Such a view of the Spirit's work virtually *demand*s a view of effectual call and unconditional election that would be rejected by most pneumatological inclusivists, who are Arminian at best. Two notable exceptions would be Terrance L. Tiessen, *Who Can Be Saved? Reassessing Salvation in Christ and World Religions* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004); and R. Todd Mangum, "Is There a Reformed Way to Get the Benefits of the Atonement to 'Those Who Have Never Heard'?" *JETS* 47 (2004): 121-36. Although neither are so pneumatologically oriented as Pinnock and Yong, both offer a brand of inclusivism that is flavored by Reformed soteriology.

¹⁷⁹ It is perhaps for this reason that "Reformed theology has almost uniformly regarded regeneration as the first work of the Spirit in us in the 'order of salvation'." Garth B. Wilson, "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Reformed Tradition: A Critical Overview," in *The Holy Spirit: Renewing and Empowering Presence*, ed. George Vandervelde (Winfield, BC: Wood Lake Books, 1989), 61.

¹⁸⁰Carson, *Gospel of John*, 527-28.

¹⁸¹Ibid., 528. John 16:1-4 speaks to the believers and the world, while 16:5-11 shows how the Spirit "continues the same convicting work that Jesus himself undertook during the days of his flesh."

¹⁸²Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 620.

hostility that marked the relationship of the world to Jesus.”¹⁸³ Herman Bavinck

helpfully summarizes these contrasting relationships when he distinguishes between two types of activity in the Spirit’s economic work:

The one is that the Holy Spirit, poured out in the hearts of the disciples, will comfort them, lead them into the truth, and stay with them forever (John 14:16; 15:26; 16:7). But this Spirit of consolation and guidance is granted only to the disciples of Jesus; the world cannot receive this Spirit, because it neither sees him nor knows him (John 14:17). On the other hand, in the world the Holy Spirit engages in a very different kind of activity; living in the church and impacting the world from that base, he convicts it of sin and righteousness and judgment, proving it wrong on all three points (John 16:8-11).¹⁸⁴

Pneumatological inclusivists’ homogenization of the Spirit’s work has caused them to minimize or deny the crucial distinction between the Spirit’s work in God’s new covenant people and the people of the world. Yet this distinction was clearly part of Christ’s teaching on the Holy Spirit’s ministry and its relationship to himself.¹⁸⁵ They fail to acknowledge the clear biblical teaching that the world *does not know* the Spirit, and that they *cannot receive* the Spirit. Such a dichotomy between the world and the people of God has multiple soteriological implications that should not be ignored.

Conclusion

According to Wolfhart Pannenberg, “One of the chief features common to the primitive Christian understanding of the Spirit is that the gift of the *pneuma* is an

¹⁸³Brown, *Gospel According to John (XIII-XXI)*, 711.

¹⁸⁴Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 3:500.

¹⁸⁵Inclusivists minimize (at best) the Spirit’s role in dispensing divine judgment. Might not the existence of world religions be regarded as a form of man’s rebellion against the True and Living God rather than legitimate attempts to seek God? If so, might not the Spirit’s work among those religions be a form of hardening and judgment (e.g., Rom 1:21-28)? Graham Cole quotes with approval Sinclair Ferguson’s admonition to remember that “Not all divine activity is saving activity.” Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 202.

eschatological gift and that his working in the community is an eschatological event.”¹⁸⁶ It is no accident that the early Christians associated the eschatological and the communal work of the Spirit—indeed, this was fundamental to their understanding of the person and work of the Spirit. As was alluded to above, when there is a failure to place the work of the Spirit in its redemptive historical context there is always the danger of construing his work in an overly individualistic manner.¹⁸⁷ The more egregious error, however, is found in pneumatological inclusivism, which ignores this eschatological context of the Spirit’s new covenant work, and thus finds room to sever the Spirit from gospel proclamation. The burden of this chapter has been to argue against the pneumatocentrism of Pinnock, Yong, and some other inclusivists by placing pneumatology within the redemptive-historical framework found in Scripture itself. If this is an accurate understanding of the Spirit’s work in the new covenant era, then it stands in stark contrast to the homogenized work of the Spirit, uniform across the ages, that is characteristic of pneumatological inclusivism generally. On this the New Testament testimony is clear—with the outpouring of the Spirit upon *all* the covenant people of God there has come a decisive shift in the Spirit’s economic work (Acts 2:16-18). As Geoffrey Grogan states, “The New Testament writers assume that the Holy Spirit has now been given in a way which differs qualitatively in important ways from his operations among men previously. The Christian era is distinctively the age of the Spirit.”¹⁸⁸ Even in the context of a more

¹⁸⁶ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 3:7.

¹⁸⁷ Gaffin, “Life in the Spirit,” 46.

¹⁸⁸ Geoffrey W. Grogan, “The Significance of Pentecost in the History of Salvation,” *SBET* 4 (1986): 97.

general and partial work under the old covenant, the Spirit's ministry could nevertheless be shown to center around the Messiah in the sense that the Spirit was *awaiting* and *anticipating* his arrival to begin a new work. This biblical-theological framework so influences the New Testament's presentation of pneumatology that merely rejecting the *filioque* is insufficient to alter the nature of the Spirit's work in the manner that Clark Pinnock suggests. Rejection of the *filioque* only serves Pinnock's need *precisely because* he ignores the biblical framework of pneumatology, and in doing so makes the *filioque* appear to be one of the final barriers to a fully independent and autonomous economy of the Spirit that he and some other inclusivists require to ground their soteriology. The *filioque*, however, simply cannot bear this weight theologically. Pinnock and Yong are in the difficult position of trying to define the Spirit's work in isolation from Christ—something which the Bible's framework simply will not allow.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

David Wells has lamented that “in the Western world, the single greatest cause for diminished interest in and support for evangelism is the erosion of confidence in the uniqueness of Christian faith.”¹ Although inclusivists confess the uniqueness of Christ as the only *ontological* ground of salvation, they nevertheless deny that Christ is the *epistemological* grounding by which salvation is made available to the unevangelized.² Instead, they posit an independent work of the Holy Spirit among those who have never heard the gospel that makes salvation a very real (even common?)³ possibility. One can only wonder, then, whether the effect that inclusivism will have on evangelism is not just as damaging as denying Christ’s uniqueness outright. After all, if the Spirit makes salvation available even among the unevangelized, then what sense of *urgency* can there possibly be to missions?⁴ Even worse, if the Spirit’s offer of grace is extended to every individual without exception, and is grounded in the Spirit’s universal presence in

¹David F. Wells, *God the Evangelist: How the Holy Spirit Works to Bring Men and Women to Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 63.

²Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 23.

³For a brief overview of Pinnock’s rejection of the “fewness” doctrine, see Christopher Partridge, “A Hermeneutic of Hopefulness: A Christian Personalist Response to Clark Pinnock’s Inclusivism,” in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000), 187-92.

⁴This issue is addressed in Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 176-80.

creation, then what role, precisely, does the cross actually play in *securing* this salvation?⁵

The burden of this dissertation has not been to answer all of these questions, but rather to examine whether one of the stated means of achieving an independent economy of the Spirit, the rejection of the *filioque*, actually does so. For some inclusivists, particularly Clark Pinnock, and to a lesser degree Amos Yong and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, rejection of the *filioque* serves as an important tool for constructing a pneumatology that is capable of supporting an inclusive soteriology. So important is this rejection for Pinnock that Daniel Strange states, “Discussion of the *filioque* clause *would appear to be central* in assessing the validity of Pinnock’s inclusivism.”⁶ The reason for this is that the *filioque* is generally understood to tie the Spirit to the Son in such a way as to make pneumatological inclusivism virtually impossible given its acceptance. Certainly Karl Barth, one of the twentieth century’s greatest proponents of the *filioque*, felt that this clause was critical to securing the close relationship between the Son and the Spirit. Its rejection, he felt, could lead to all sorts of pneumatological excesses—including a conception of the Spirit’s work that is independent of the Son.⁷

⁵Daniel Strange, “Presence, Prevenience, or Providence? Deciphering the Conundrum of Pinnock’s Pneumatological Inclusivism,” in *Reconstructing Theology: A Critical Assessment of the Theology of Clark Pinnock*, ed. Tony Gray and Christopher Sinkinson (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000), 249.

⁶Daniel Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation Among the Unevangelised: An Analysis of Inclusivism in Recent Evangelical Theology* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2002), 233-34. Emphasis mine.

⁷For a helpful discussion of this fear in Barth, see George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), 43-52. See also George S. Hendry, “From the Father and the Son: The *Filioque* After Nine Hundred Years,” *Theology Today* 11 (1955): 454, where Hendry says that Barth “raises the question whether a denial of the *Filioque* in respect of the immanent Trinity would not have the effect of tending to encourage, in the economic order, a one-sided conception of the Spirit as the Spirit of the Father, having a mission in the world distinct from the mission of Christ.”

Pneumatological inclusivists have accepted this common line of thinking in their rejection of the *filioque*, seeking thereby to free the Spirit from the confines of Christology. However, this dissertation has argued that rejection of the *filioque*, in and of itself, is insufficient to secure an independent economic work of the Spirit, and should not be taken to lead necessarily to an adoption of religious pluralism. There are simply too many other theological factors that tie the Spirit to the Son to give the *filioque* such weight. This is not to say that one's position on the *filioque* is insignificant, or has no potential consequences for one's theology, but merely that rejection of the *filioque* cannot serve as a substantial grounding for pneumatological inclusivism. Multiple authors have rejected giving the *filioque* such importance of place, among them Daniel Strange, who states, "I would like to argue that this equivalence of the *filioque* to the separation of Son and Spirit is too simple an association and that denying the *filioque* does not necessarily lead to the 'freeing' of the Spirit from the Son, although it can be used as supplementary evidence to re-enforce the bond between Christ and the Spirit."⁸ In other words, the acceptance or rejection of the *filioque* will produce *asymmetrical* results. The *filioque* might serve a strong *positive* function in tying the Spirit to the Son, but its rejection does not produce an equally strong *negative* effect in terms of severing the Spirit from the Son. Likewise, Graham Cole suggests that although at first, it might appear that theologians like Amos Yong and Clark Pinnock have fulfilled the darkest fears of Karl Barth in that their rejection of the *filioque* seems tied to an overly positive view of the world's

⁸Strange, *Possibility of Salvation*, 234.

religions, “it must be emphasized again that the rejection of *filioque* does not necessarily lead to the embrace of religious pluralism.”⁹

The reason that both Strange and Cole reject Barth’s one-for-one correspondence between denial of the *filioque* and a pneumatology that is severed from Christology is that both men recognize that the *filioque* alone is not what ties the Spirit to the Son—certainly not from an economic standpoint. This dissertation has argued in chapter three that even in the Eastern Orthodox Church, where rejection of *filioque* is virtually universal, an economic *filioque* is accepted that keeps the Spirit tethered to the Son economically.¹⁰ For this reason Cole can argue that, “Adhering to a Western understanding of *filioque* is not the only way to preserve the uniqueness and finality of Christ as the Savior of the world. . . . And so even if *filioque* is understood only in economic terms, is not the Christocentric focus of the Spirit’s ministry still preserved?”¹¹ This is precisely what was argued in chapter three—that the acceptance of an economic *filioque* still preserves the connection between Christ and the Spirit even when an immanent double procession is rejected. This economic understanding of *filioque* has prevented a vast majority of Eastern theologians from accepting the division between

⁹Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 200.

¹⁰Strange argues that Pinnock’s adoption of Eastern Orthodox categories is based on an overly simplistic reading of Orthodox theology. Pinnock fails to mention the distinction between the essence and energies of God that is a common characteristic of Eastern thought. Because of these distinctions the East can reject the *filioque* in the immanent Trinity, but still accept a procession of the Spirit from the Son at the level of the divine energies. Ignoring this critical distinction is what allows Pinnock to claim Eastern support for his views. Strange, *Possibility of Salvation*, 234.

¹¹Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 201-02. Cole states, “Pinnock rejects *filioque* and argues that, by doing so, the Spirit’s mission can be more broadly conceived, especially as far as the salvation of those who have not heard of Christ is concerned. . . . None of this necessarily follows if it is the Father and the Son who send the Spirit in the economy of salvation, as I have argued” (202 n. 112). Note that Cole says of his own position on the *filioque* that it is “‘more Eastern than Western’”. The Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father through the Son.” Ibid., 199.

Christology and pneumatology that is becoming prevalent among those engaged in ecumenical dialogue.

In addition to the impact of an economic *filioque*, chapter four argued that the pneumatological approach of Pinnock, Yong, and other like-minded inclusivists eclipses the biblical role of the Father as the Grand Architect of the economy of salvation—in essence severing the Spirit from both the Father *and* the Son. For pneumatological inclusivists, the Spirit seems to function autonomously *in spite* of their frequent appeals to the “two hands” analogy of Irenaeus.¹² Chapter four sought to demonstrate that *neither* the Son nor the Spirit function autonomously, but that both willingly submit to the will of the Father (John 5:19, 16:13-14), and that this willing submission (in the context of ontological equality) brings unity to the economy of salvation in that the Father’s will determines the course of action for both the Son and the Spirit.

Additionally, chapter five argued that the eschatological nature of the Spirit’s work in the new covenant era mitigates against the seeming uniformity with which it is portrayed by pneumatological inclusivists. The homogenization of the Spirit’s work under the new covenant whereby there is no distinction between common and special grace or between the Spirit’s work in the church and his work in the world suggests at least an implicit denial that anything significant has changed with the coming of Christ. Even when Pinnock speaks of the coming of Christ as the “beginning of the age of salvation,”¹³ it is difficult to assign any real meaning to this statement—particularly when

¹²Recall Pinnock’s contention that “in the economy of God, the Spirit is under nobody’s control but free to grace any person or sphere.” Clark H. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” in *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, ed. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 104.

¹³Pinnock, *Wideness*, 178.

Pinnock states elsewhere that the grace offered in Jesus' birth "is the same grace that has always been there since the foundation of the world," or that "what Jesus made explicit and implemented has always been true."¹⁴

These three lines of argumentation from historical, theological, and biblical theological perspectives are meant to demonstrate that it is not the *filioque* alone that ties the Spirit to the Son economically, and that inclusivism's rejection of the *filioque* thus fails as a means of gaining an independent economy of the Spirit. Beyond this, however, chapter five in particular should serve at least in some small measure to demonstrate that the pneumatocentric approach to the Scriptures used by pneumatological inclusivists is an invalid methodology in that it fails to allow the Bible to provide the framework for its own interpretation. Stephen Dempster, for example, speaks of the dangers of imposing an alien framework on the biblical text (in this case, the Old Testament). While he is aware of the postmodern criticism that "all readings of a text are equally valid and hence equally invalid,"¹⁵ he nevertheless argues against such "hermeneutical anarchy."¹⁶ Instead, citing the work of B. W. Anderson, he offers that "there surely is an appropriate reading of a text—one that is faithful to its genre and structure."¹⁷ While offering several extreme examples of inappropriate hermeneutics (including one that views the OT

¹⁴Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 82, and 105 respectively. Pinnock goes on to say (82) that grace is "now being decisively manifested" in the birth of Christ. This could be what Pinnock means by "age of salvation." That is, the source of salvation is now *known*. However, as Strange has argued, it is hard to see how Pinnock grounds salvation in the cross given his arguments for the Spirit's universal work of grace, which seems rooted in the Spirit's universal presence in creation. Strange, "Deciphering the Conundrum," 249.

¹⁵Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 17.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

through the lens of visitation by space aliens), he nevertheless cautions that “less excessive examples may be more dangerous because their biases are not so obvious and often they do make a significant contribution to understanding the text.”¹⁸ I would suggest that the pneumatological lens of Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong is just such a dangerous framework through which to read Scripture precisely because it does make an enormous difference in how one reads the biblical text.¹⁹

One of the impacts that a pneumatological lens has on Pinnock’s understanding of the biblical text is that he sees the Spirit as representing universality while Christ represents particularity. As a result, Christ’s economic activity must be subsumed under pneumatology.²⁰ It seems that Pinnock believes universality capable of containing particularity, but that particularity is incapable of containing universality. However, this false dichotomy²¹ is not only unhelpful in relating the Spirit to Christ, it is unnecessary when one understands that the revelation of God in Christ, rather than the universal, gracious presence of the Spirit, is the focal point of the biblical framework.²² When one

¹⁸Ibid., 18.

¹⁹Mark McLean voices the fear of many Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals alike when he states, “The very reasonable fear of many Pentecostal leaders and educators is that a Pentecostal hermeneutic will soon abandon or so distort the Scripture that the twentieth century Pentecostal movement will founder and cease to be Christian.” Mark D. McLean, “Toward a Pentecostal Hermeneutic,” *Pneuma* 6 (1984): 36.

²⁰Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 80.

²¹Strange, “Deciphering the Conundrum,” 242. See also Edith M. Humphrey, “Why We Worship God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,” *Crux* 32 (1996): 7, where she argues that the very *names* Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all speak to the particularity of our God in that they speak to the God who is Trinity, and not a god who is generic.

²²Dan McCartney and Charles Clayton claim that this emphasis is born out by the way the writers of the NT use the Old, which was “based on the principle of the consistency of redemptive history” in pointing forward to Christ. “For the NT writers,” they argue, “the goal [of interpretation] was Jesus Christ and his redemptive work; the most basic methodological consideration, therefore, was to see how the OT spoke of Jesus’ person and work, and the life of his people that would grow out of it.” Dan McCartney

accepts the understanding of the writers of the New Testament, and even Jesus himself, that the Old Testament points forward to Christ, then one can see that the Spirit's economic activity is christocentric even in the Old Testament. Furthermore, when one reads the New Testament with this framework in mind, it will be with the understanding that there is a certain particularity to the Spirit and likewise a universal aspect to the work of Christ so that neither pneumatology nor Christology submits so easily to the Procrustean bed upon which Pinnock wants to place them. The Spirit in the New Testament is the Spirit of Christ so that it is only through Christ that we can actually come to know the Spirit. This understanding of a mutual revelation between the Son and Spirit is foundational for Athanasius,²³ such that one cannot confess Christ as Lord without the Spirit, but neither can one know the Spirit apart from the Son.

The association of universality *purely* with the Spirit and of particularity *purely* with the Son becomes problematic for Pinnock's theology. Such a hard dichotomy simply cannot be maintained, and so the universality of the Spirit eventually swallows the particularity of Christ.²⁴ However, universality and particularity do not have to be so construed. Bruce Ware offers a helpful assessment of Pinnock's pneumatological inclusivism, and in the process offers an alternative understanding of how the particularity of Christ has a universal aspect. He states,

As Pinnock and other inclusivists would surely initially agree, it is clear that God the Father and Christ want, and have commanded, that God's saving presence be made known through the world. Jesus' Great Commission, as recorded at the ends of the Synoptic Gospels and the beginning of Acts, requires for its fulfillment that

and Charles Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand: A Guide to Interpreting and Applying the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2002), 67-68.

²³Theodore C. Campbell, "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Theology of Athanasius," *SJT* 27 (1974): 414.

²⁴Strange, "Deciphering the Conundrum," 256.

the whole world know of the saving grace of God in Christ and his saving death on the cross.²⁵

With this much Pinnock would surely agree, but Ware goes on to say,

But notice clearly how this is to occur. Jesus never anywhere suggests that somehow, apart from the proclamation of the gospel, people will know about God's free offer of salvation as the Spirit brings God's saving truth and grace into the cultures and religions of the people of the world independent of the knowledge of Christ and the need to believe in Christ to be saved. Never! Instead, Jesus' only instruction and mandate is to take the gospel to the world in the power of the Spirit. Spirit and gospel truth are inextricably linked by Jesus, as they are likewise inextricably linked in the apostolic mission of the early church. Apart from the gospel of Christ, people are without hope.²⁶

With these words Ware calls attention to the universality of Jesus Christ and the particularity of the Spirit, which are found, not in disjointed and independent operations, but in the missionary mandate of the New Testament, expressed most clearly in the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). God's ordained means of extending salvation to the uttermost regions of the world is through Spirit empowered missionary witness to the crucified and resurrected Christ. Paul made this clear when he queried, but "how are they to hear without someone preaching?" (Rom 10:14). To suggest otherwise, as inclusivists do, tears asunder the Trinity, severing Spirit from both Son and Father. As they look for the Spirit in the religions of the world, divorced from any christological criteria, they may be encountering (an)other spirit(s). As Claude Welch states, "The test of the presence of the Holy Spirit, as distinguished from other spirits, lies in the fact that this Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, gives the mind of Christ, works through love, and testifies to Christ. Otherwise, the conception of the Holy Spirit degenerates into only a

²⁵Bruce A. Ware, "How Shall We Think About the Trinity?" in *God Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents God*, ed. Douglas S. Huffman and Eric L. Johnson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 262.

²⁶Ibid.

vague notion of divine immanence or spiritism.”²⁷ Inclusivism’s emphasis on discovering the Spirit could very well lead to easy deception as the spirits of the world assert themselves, dressed as angels of light, in an attempt to usurp the worship that is reserved for the true and living God through Jesus Christ. After all, if the Spirit works in the world with no reference to Christ, then how is he to be recognized? Is it through mere morality or ethical behavior, as Pinnock seems to suggest? May not ethical transformation be put to great use by Satan and his “spirits” as a means of producing a damning self-righteousness (Luke 18:9-14)? The New Testament offers *one*, and *only one* test for discerning the spirits, and that is their witness to Christ. As the Apostle John states,

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already (1 John 4:1-3).

May God give his children discernment, that they may not blaspheme the true Spirit of God by attributing to him every manner of religious expression found in the world, but recognize him as the Spirit of Christ, who bears witness with our spirits that we are indeed the children of God (Rom 8:16).

²⁷Claude Welch, *In This Name* (New York: Scribner’s, 1952), 285; cited in Hendry, “From the Father and the Son,” 455.

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Dissertations

Miles, Todd LeRoy. "Severing the Spirit from the Son: Theological Revisionism in Contemporary Theologies of Salvation." Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006.

ABSTRACT

THE (IN)SIGNIFICANCE OF THE *FILIOQUE* IN CONTEMPORARY INCLUSIVE SOTERIOLOGIES

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This dissertation examines the impact of the *filioque* on the relationship between the Spirit and the Son, particularly as it pertains to the economy of salvation and the availability of salvation to the unevangelized. More specifically, it argues that rejection of the *filioque* cannot serve as a means of gaining an independent economy for the Spirit. Chapter 1 presents the thesis and describe the place of both pneumatology and the *filioque* in contemporary inclusive soteriologies.

Chapter 2 surveys the status of the *filioque* debate in contemporary Western theology as well as the various ways that the *filioque* is treated by pneumatological inclusivists. Primary attention is given to Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong, who serve as the primary dialogue partners for this dissertation.

Chapter 3 examines various Eastern Orthodox theologians, both past and present, and argues that inclusivists have misappropriated Orthodox theology. Specifically, this chapter argues that Orthodoxy has historically viewed the work of the Spirit as inextricably connected with that of the Son in spite of its rejection of the *filioque*.

Chapter 4 addresses the biblical portrayal of *taxis* in the Trinity whereby the Father gives direction to the works of both the Son *and* the Spirit. Attention is given to the unity of the trinitarian economy that results from the Father's administration.

Chapter 5 argues that pneumatological inclusivists have failed sufficiently to consider significant biblical-theological themes of Scripture and their impact on pneumatology. This is particularly true of eschatology. It further suggests that the pneumatological lens through which some inclusivists interpret Scripture distorts biblical pneumatology. This chapter also offers a brief proposal for understanding pneumatology in light of the Bible's eschatological framework.

Chapter 6 summarizes the issues considered in the dissertation and offers some brief closing comments.

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