

## Introduction

“He is God not of the dead, but of the living.”<sup>1</sup> With these words, Holy Scripture testifies to the God of the living, the God who raises the dead.<sup>2</sup> This project inquires into this God. I argue that it befits God to be the God of the living because God is the living God, that is, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The God of the living is the triune God.

Where may this living God be sought? The central locus of the living God’s self-disclosure is *the resurrection of the crucified Jesus Christ*. In the Easter event, God is once for all revealed as the living God and the God of the living. In this event, God is revealed as the Father who raised Jesus Christ from the dead; as the Son who was raised, who arises, and who will be present even to the end of the age; and as the Holy Spirit by whom the Father raised Jesus Christ, in whose power Jesus Christ arises, and in whose promise Jesus Christ is present. The God who acts in the Easter event is the living God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

This is the Trinitarian grammar of Christ’s resurrection as it comes to expression in Karl Barth’s mature theology. Barth stands with the tradition in identifying the triune God as the *subject* of Christ’s resurrection. However, he differs from the tradition in two important ways. First, he expounds the Trinitarian grammar of the Easter event in a dialectical fashion, so that the distinctive participation of each triune person comes more sharply into focus in accordance with the shifting christological motifs of *Church Dogmatics IV/1–3*. This dialectical strategy highlights the differentiated unity with which the triune God acts in the Easter event. Barth thereby avoids both the tendency of traditional theology to render moot the Trinitarian differentiation in God’s

1. Mark 12:27a; Matt. 22:32b.

2. For a recent survey of the relevant biblical texts from both testaments, see Kevin J. Madigan and Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection: The Power of God for Christians and Jews* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

external works and the tendency of much contemporary theology to regard the triune persons as autonomous agents among whom the works of God are divided.<sup>3</sup> This dialectical approach is Barth's first major contribution toward a Trinitarian theology of Christ's resurrection.<sup>4</sup>

Second, and at a deeper level, Barth asks after the Trinitarian ground of Christ's resurrection. The triune God is not only the subject, but also the *basis*, of Christ's resurrection. In view of his thoroughgoing commitment to divine self-correspondence, Barth treats Easter's Trinitarian grammar as a point of entry for inquiring into the ground of the Easter event in God's own life. In doing so, Barth shows that he does not merely apply the doctrine of the Trinity as a set of grammatical rules to the case of Christ's resurrection; rather, he re-conceptualizes the doctrine of the Trinity in light of the Easter event. So, over the course of his reflections, a striking picture of the living God emerges, one in which Barth speaks of the generation of the Son as a movement of grace, of the procession of the Spirit as a history-in-partnership, and of divine perichoresis as a purposive communication. By means of these various re-conceptualizations, Barth testifies to the triune God's readiness for resurrection. This readiness

3. For examples of the former, see the discussion of Jesus Christ as God raising himself as man in Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, §20, §26, and §32, and the more sophisticated account of the same in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* III, q. 53, a. 4. For examples of the latter, see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), esp. chs. 3–5, as well as the far more subtle account in Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), esp. Part II. Karl Rahner is an important critic of the tradition on this question, who, like Barth, avoids the tri-theistic tendency of much contemporary theology; see "Remarks on the Dogmatic Treatise 'De Trinitate,'" in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. IV (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966), 77–104, and *The Trinity* (New York: Crossroad, 1997). Although I will have occasion to cite Rahner positively, he does not develop his Trinitarian reflections in direct connection with Christ's resurrection, as does Barth in *CD* IV/1–3.

4. Perhaps this is good a time as any to identify both my indebtedness to as well as my difference from Moltmann's classic *The Crucified God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974). The title of this book (*The Resurrected God*) is a riff on Moltmann, and the recurring phrase "Trinitarian theology of Christ's resurrection" also alludes to the title of a central section of *The Crucified God* (ch. 6, sect. 5, "Trinitarian Theology of the Cross," 235–49). Beyond these titular allusions, the substantive decision to treat Christ's resurrection and the doctrine of the Trinity as mutually interpreting is a twist on Moltmann's thesis: "The material principle of the doctrine of the Trinity is the cross of Christ. The formal principle of knowledge of the cross is the doctrine of the Trinity" (*ibid.*, 241). However, inspiration is not endorsement. For one, the shift from the cross to the resurrection itself entails a critique of the one-sidedness of *The Crucified God*. Furthermore, I defend Barth's model of the Trinity (as one subject in three modes of being), which Moltmann explicitly rejects in both *The Crucified God* and *The Trinity and the Kingdom*. In fact, he argues that Barth's doctrine of the Trinity prevents him from perceiving the Trinitarian theology of the cross or the resurrection. I will show that this is simply not the case.

implies that we may speak with confidence of God as the God of the living, because God is himself the living God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In short, according to Karl Barth, the *subject* and *basis* of Christ's resurrection is the triune God. Tracing these two themes—the Trinitarian grammar of Easter and its corresponding Trinitarian ground—in Barth's mature theology is the primary task of this book. In order to properly execute this interpretive task, we must first assess the state of the question in Barth research. What, if any, connection has been drawn by Barth's interpreters between Christ's resurrection and the doctrine of the Trinity?

### THE STATE OF THE QUESTION

A survey of the literature on Karl Barth shows that attention is only beginning to be focused on the relationship between resurrection and Trinity in his theology. Studies of Barth's understanding of Christ's resurrection have moved through three basic phases. It is crucial to note at the outset that the later phases do not ignore the concerns of the earlier phases, but rather reframe them in terms of a new central question.

The earliest phase focused on the question of the *historicity* of the resurrection. As early as 1933, Walter Künneth criticized Barth for having an insufficiently historical view of the Easter event.<sup>5</sup> In English-language reception, the works of Richard R. Niebuhr and Van A. Harvey are representative of this phase.<sup>6</sup> Both figures criticized Barth for placing the resurrection event outside of history, though the latter noted Barth's later shift toward historicity.<sup>7</sup> Investigations of this sort have continued in recent decades.<sup>8</sup>

5. Walter Künneth, *Theologie der Auferstehung* (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1933). Even earlier, Rudolf Bultmann argued against Barth that appearance reports in 1 Corinthians 15 were intended by Paul as historical "proofs" of Christ's resurrection in *Faith and Understanding* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 83–86. Since he shared Barth's judgment that such proofs are misguided, Bultmann's challenge remained only at the exegetical level. Later, Wolfhart Pannenberg elevated this exegetical critique of Barth in his attempt to rehabilitate the systematic significance of the historical probability of Christ's resurrection in *Jesus—God and Man* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968), 88–99.

6. Richard R. Niebuhr, *Resurrection and Historical Reason* (New York: Scribner's, 1957); Van A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer: The Morality of Historical Knowledge and Christian Belief* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 153–59. A similar criticism aimed at Barth's early theology can be found in James D. Smart, *The Divided Mind of Modern Theology: Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann, 1908–1933* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967).

7. V. A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer*, 153–59. Gerald O'Collins identifies Barth's supposed turn from dialectic to analogy in 1931 as the cause of this shift in "Karl Barth on Christ's Resurrection," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 26:1 (1973): 85–99. O'Collins's reliance on this now-defunct account of Barth's development dilutes an otherwise insightful essay.

The limitation of this phase of interpretation was its tendency to abstract Barth's understanding of Christ's resurrection from its broader dogmatic context. Questions concerning the historicity of the resurrection are not irrelevant, especially since Barth often places his discussion of Christ's resurrection within the larger debate concerning "faith and history." But such historical questions cannot be adequately answered without understanding more fully the theological meaning and significance of Easter.

Despite this general trend toward abstraction, an important dogmatic question arose during this phase of reception: What is the relationship between resurrection and revelation? It is common in Barth interpretation to assert that his doctrine of Christ's resurrection is over-determined by his doctrine of revelation, and then to identify this over-determination as the cause of his insufficiently historical view of the Easter event.<sup>9</sup> This claim is half right. On the one hand, Barth certainly assigns a revelatory function to Christ's resurrection, and did so throughout his career.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, that Barth *reduces* resurrection to a function of revelation can only reasonably be asserted of his earlier theology.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the causal link between this reduction and the non-historical character of Easter is suspect, for even in the earlier stages of his development Barth asserted the corporeality of Christ's resurrection.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, the complex relationship between resurrection and revelation remains an important question for Barth research. Although answering this question is not the purpose of this book, I will have occasion to

8. Peter Carnley, *The Structure of Resurrection Belief* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 132–43.

9. For example, W. Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 111. This critique fits within a larger trend of seeing Barth's theology as one grand reduction of Christianity to its epistemic aspects, exemplified most brazenly by Gustaf Wingren, *Theology in Conflict* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1958). A far subtler version of this critique can be found in Hans W. Frei's early suggestion that Barth's early theology suffered from an epistemological monophysitism. This charge is the centerpiece of Mike Higton's account of Frei's reception of Barth in *Christ, Providence & History: Hans W. Frei's Public Theology* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004).

10. Evidence in support of this claim is provided throughout this book.

11. Most famously, the tangent/circle passage in Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, translated by Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 30: "The Resurrection is the revelation: the disclosing of Jesus as the Christ, the appearing of God, the apprehending of God in Jesus. . . . In the Resurrection the new world of the Holy Spirit touches the old world of the flesh, but touches it as a tangent touches a circle, that is, without touching it. . . . The Resurrection is therefore an occurrence in history. . . . But inasmuch as the occurrence was conditioned by the Resurrection . . . the Resurrection is not an event in history at all." See also *ibid.*, 202–7.

12. *Ibid.*, 203: "the concrete, corporeal person of the risen Jesus." The bodily character of Christ's resurrection is more emphatic in the original: "der leiblich, körperlich, persönlich Auferstandene," Karl Barth, *Der Römerbrief* (Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1922), 183.

address it insofar as the concept of revelation looms large *both* in Barth's doctrine of Christ's resurrection *and* in his doctrine of the Trinity. Systematically, the three doctrines together form a triangle in which the interpretation of one draws on the other two. But this triangle does not fall from the sky; it emerges over the course of Barth's development. First, during his early period (for example, *The Epistle to the Romans* and *The Resurrection of the Dead*), Barth interpreted Christ's resurrection in terms of his emerging doctrine of revelation. Second, during the development of his dogmatic prolegomena, Barth employed a reciprocal interpretation of the doctrines of the Trinity and revelation, each influencing the interpretation of the other.<sup>13</sup> Third, and finally, in his mature theology Barth completed the triangle by unfolding Christ's resurrection and the doctrine of the Trinity in light of each other. Although this last connection is my focus, I will not ignore the revelatory aspect of Easter highlighted by the first phase of Barth interpretation.

The first major interpreter to break from the narrowly historical focus of the first phase of reception and locate Barth's doctrine of Christ's resurrection in its broader dogmatic context was Berthold Klappert. In two early works, Klappert directed his attention to the differentiated unity of cross and resurrection.<sup>14</sup> In so doing, he initiated the second phase in the reception of Barth's doctrine of Christ's resurrection, which was *soteriological* in focus. Klappert has effectively shown that Barth's mature understanding of Christ's resurrection includes a revelatory aspect, but is not reduced to it. Christ's resurrection is a distinct event from the cross, in which God enacts his verdict on Jesus Christ and us in him. This verdict concerns the work of the cross, and so is united with it. According to Klappert's interpretation of Barth, the rich meaning of Christ's resurrection can be seen only in its differentiated unity with his crucifixion.

Although my focus is different from his, Klappert's work provides two crucial insights relevant for discerning Barth's Trinitarian theology of Christ's

13. Karl Barth, *The Göttingen Dogmatics*, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), §5; idem., *Die Christliche Dogmatik in Entwurf* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1927) §9–13; idem., *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. I, Part 1 (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975), §8–12, hereafter cited as *CD I/1*.

14. Berthold Klappert, *Diskussion um Kreuz und Auferstehung: Zur gegenwärtigen Auseinandersetzung in Theologie und Gemeinde* (Wuppertal: Ausaat Verlag, 1967), 105–44; idem., *Die Auferweckung des Gekreuzigten: Der Ansatz der Christologie Karl Barths im Zusammenhang der Christologie der Gegenwart* (Neukirchen-Vlyun: Neukirchener Verlag, 1971). Cf. his later summation and development, "Die Auferweckung des Gekreuzigten," in *Auferweckung Jesu, Auferweckung der Toten, Auferweckung der Welt: Karl Barths Theologie aufnehmen und weiterdenken*, ed. Berthold Klappert and Michael Weinrich (Herrenalb: Evangelische Akademie Baden, 1989), 7–22.

resurrection. First of all, the differentiated unity of cross and resurrection is Barth's point of entry for developing the Trinitarian grammar of Christ's resurrection, at least in *CD IV/1*.<sup>15</sup> As Klappert puts it, "The doctrine of the Trinity according to Barth explicates the relationship between the cross and resurrection; it is the taking up of the differentiated relationship of the cross and resurrection into the concept of God."<sup>16</sup> Secondly, Klappert highlights Barth's distinction between the raising (*Erweckung*) of Jesus Christ and his own arising (*Auferstehung*).<sup>17</sup> This distinction aids in the identification of the distinct modes in which the triune persons participate in the Easter event. Although this book moves beyond Klappert in the exploration of this theme, his initial contribution must be acknowledged.

In German scholarship, Klappert's soteriological approach has been followed by Tilman Schreiber in his survey of modern theological interpretation of Rom. 4:25.<sup>18</sup> In English-speaking Barth research, David Mueller draws heavily on Klappert's interpretation.<sup>19</sup> The soteriological lens also shapes the recent work of R. Dale Dawson, who expositis Barth's theology of the resurrection in terms of the movement of the crucified and risen Christ to us.<sup>20</sup> Dawson's work has enriched the discussion by identifying "movement" or "transition" as the unifying theme of Barth's various discussions of Christ's resurrection. Whereas Klappert's early work focused almost exclusively on *CD IV/1*, Dawson explores the role of Christ's resurrection throughout *CD IV/1–3*, in addition to two earlier texts. Although I will critique Dawson's analysis throughout this book, I concur with his basic thesis that, for Barth, the soteriological function of Easter consists in its being Christ's own transition from his life history to us in our sphere.

In the context of its broad soteriological focus, Dawson's work also refers briefly to the Trinitarian aspects of the resurrection. As such, he participates in the emerging third phase in the reception of Barth's doctrine of Christ's resurrection, which is *Trinitarian* in focus. Such a turn is inevitable, since for Barth the question of the purpose of Christ's resurrection is intertwined with

15. See ch. 2, "The Trinitarian Grammar of the Raising of Christ."

16. B. Klappert, *Die Auferweckung des Gekreuzigten*, 306.

17. *Ibid.*, 291–93, 391–95.

18. Tilman Schreiber, *Die Soteriologische Bedeutung der Auferweckung Jesu Christi in gegenwärtiger systematischer Theologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998), 117–32.

19. David Mueller, *Foundation of Karl Barth's Doctrine of Reconciliation: Jesus Christ Crucified and Risen* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1990).

20. Richard Dale Dawson, *The Resurrection in Karl Barth* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007). For an extended summary and analysis of Dawson, see my review in *Koinonia Journal* 19 (2007): 125–29.

the question of the identity of the God who acts in this event. So by asking the “who” question, the third phase does not leave behind the “why” question of the second phase, but rather includes it and gives it a clearer and more secure ground.

Unfortunately, Dawson’s argument falters with respect to this topic because it inadequately addresses the Trinitarian pattern of Barth’s overarching structure and his commitment to God’s self-correspondence in the economy of salvation. Dawson notes Barth’s references to the Father and the Spirit in connection with Christ’s resurrection, but critiques Barth for insufficiently differentiating the triune persons in the Easter event. In his desire for greater differentiation, Dawson moves toward treating the triune persons as multiple agents to whom discrete acts are attributed.<sup>21</sup> Although he has every right to pursue independent justification for this line of thought, it departs significantly from Barth’s own doctrine of the Trinity and therefore obscures Barth’s unique contribution to a Trinitarian theology of Christ’s resurrection. The multiple aspects of the Easter event around which Barth organizes his reflections are not divided among the persons of the Trinity; rather, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit participate in each aspect of the Easter event in a mode that corresponds to their eternal relations.

Three additional scholars interact with Barth in their explorations of the relationship between Christ’s resurrection and the doctrine of the Trinity: Sarah Coakley, Eugene Rogers, and Paul Molnar. The work of each has been an important impetus for my constructive interest in a Trinitarian theology of Easter. However, all of these authors bring their own Trinitarian presuppositions to Barth’s texts without adequately attending to the kind of relationship Barth himself discerns between Christ’s resurrection and the Trinity.

In an influential essay, Sarah Coakley identifies the Christian practice of prayer as a source for the doctrine of the Trinity. Drawing on biblical and patristic texts, Coakley shows how the practice of praying to the Father, on the basis of incorporation into the risen Christ, through the Spirit of adoption by whom the Father raised the Son, functions as the experiential starting point for the development of the doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>22</sup> Although Barth does not share Coakley’s interest in an experiential basis for the doctrine of the Trinity, his Trinitarian theology of Christ’s resurrection bears a formal

21. Dawson, *The Resurrection in Karl Barth*, 215–27.

22. Sarah Coakley, “Why Three? Some Further Reflections on the Origins of the Doctrine of the Trinity,” in *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine: Essays in Honour of Maurice Wiles*, ed. Sarah Coakley and David A. Pailin (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 29–56.

resemblance to hers. Unfortunately, Coakley does not address Barth's positive contribution, because she has already relegated him to a different "type" of Trinitarian theology.<sup>23</sup>

In his constructive pneumatology, Eugene Rogers takes the resurrection of Jesus as his starting point.<sup>24</sup> Before treating the role of the Spirit at key points in Jesus' life, Rogers first treats the role of the Spirit in the Father's raising of Jesus from the dead. The Trinitarian grammar of this event casts light on the previous events of Jesus' life, such as the annunciation, baptism, and transfiguration.<sup>25</sup> Again, Barth makes a similar move, inasmuch as he identifies these events as precursors to Christ's resurrection that make sense only in its light.<sup>26</sup> These same events are cited as instances of the work of the Spirit in the life of Jesus Christ.<sup>27</sup> But Rogers criticizes Barth for not giving sufficient autonomy to the Spirit, and so misses out on Barth's contribution to a Trinitarian theology of Christ's resurrection.<sup>28</sup>

Lastly, Paul Molnar uses Barth to advance his thesis that a proper doctrine of the incarnation is the necessary presupposition for a proper doctrine of Christ's resurrection.<sup>29</sup> Much of what Molnar says about Barth's doctrine of resurrection is basically correct. For instance, he is right that Jesus Christ does not become divine upon being raised, but is revealed to be the Son of God he already was. However, in his elucidation of this claim, Molnar appeals to his own reading of Barth's doctrine of the Trinity instead of addressing the explicit connection made between Christ's resurrection and the doctrine of the Trinity in *CD IV/1–3*.

23. *Ibid.*, 33–35. Coakley categorizes Barth (along with Rahner) within the revelational type of trinitarian theology. This is of course totally accurate, especially with regard *CD I/1–2*. But it is not the whole story.

24. Rogers takes as the starting point of his constructive pneumatology the resurrection of Jesus, cf. Eugene F. Rogers Jr., *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources outside the Modern West* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 75–97.

25. *Ibid.*, 98–199.

26. Cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. I, Part 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956), 114, hereafter cited as *CD I/2*; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. III, Part 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1960), 478–80, hereafter cited as *CD III/2*; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. IV, Part 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1958), 135–41, hereafter cited as *CD IV/2*.

27. Cf. *CD I/2*, 199; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. IV, Part 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956), 308–9, hereafter cited as *CD IV/1*.

28. E. Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 19–23, 29–32. Cf. also *idem.*, "Eclipse of the Spirit in Karl Barth," in *Conversing with Barth*, ed. John C. McDowell and Mike Higton (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004), 173–190.

29. Paul D. Molnar, *Incarnation and Resurrection: Toward a Contemporary Understanding* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1–44.



In light of these recent explorations, it is high time for a thoroughgoing analysis of Barth's Trinitarian theology of Easter. This book aims to fill this gap through close readings of selected texts from *CD IV/1–3*. These close readings will substantiate my thesis that, according to Karl Barth, the subject and basis of Christ's resurrection is the triune God.

### THE TWOFOLD THESIS

What does it mean to say that the triune God is the subject and basis of Christ's resurrection? The meaning and significance of this claim comes to light when it is heard as the answer to a more basic question: Why the resurrection? For what purpose did the Easter event occur? Barth's basic answer is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ took place *for us*. God was pleased not only to fulfill the covenant in the life history of Jesus Christ, but also to declare its fulfillment in our sphere so that we may participate in it in a manner appropriate to our condition. Christ's resurrection is the divinely enacted transition by which we come to participate in our reconciliation.

The polemical point of Barth's argument is that the transition from Christ to us is not a human work. How does Jesus Christ move from his sphere to ours? Not by our own ingenuity or activity, but by God acting for us in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In order to maintain this point, Barth goes out of his way to identify the divine subject at work in this act. It is here that the doctrine of the Trinity comes into play, for the task of identification requires an explication of the Trinitarian grammar evoked by the Easter event.<sup>30</sup>

Who acts in the Easter event? In the first instance, God the Father acts, initiating a new history beyond the cross by raising Jesus Christ from the dead. In the history that issues forth from this initiating act, Jesus Christ himself is the one who arises in the power of the Holy Spirit. And viewed from either side, we have to do with the one living God-man, Jesus Christ. So there are not three subjects at work here, but the one God in his threefold self-differentiation as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thus, from every angle, the true God is truly at work in the Easter event.

That Barth so explicates his doctrine of Christ's resurrection according to this Trinitarian grammar is the first side of my thesis, that is, that the subject of

30. For the notion of a "Trinitarian grammar" governing our God-talk, I am indebted to Ingolf U. Dalferth, *Der auferweckte Gekreuzigte: Zur Grammatik der Christologie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 200–236. Dalferth is insistent on the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the only means by which we can speak this way (*ibid.*, 38–84), though the focus of his exposition is on the Trinitarian grammar of God at work in the cross of Christ.

Christ's resurrection is the triune God. To understand the second side, we must return to Barth's answer to the question of Easter's purpose. If the transition from Christ to us is a divine work, then it follows that this transition is grounded solely in God. God was not compelled to do this for us, but was pleased to do this for us. And in his being and acting for us, God does not contradict himself but corresponds to himself. Here again the doctrine of the Trinity comes into play, for it is the *triune* God who corresponds to himself in this event. The trinity of God manifest in the Easter event corresponds to the triune God himself. In this sense, the triune God himself is the *basis* of Christ's resurrection.

In pursuing this line of thought, Barth engages in creative reconceptualizations of the doctrine of the Trinity. Such re-conceptualizations are a consequence of his decision to think through the Trinitarian ground of Easter from the perspective of its Trinitarian grammar. In asking after the basis of Christ's resurrection in the triune life of God, Barth does not depart from the plane of history, but rather takes with utter seriousness the idea that God is truly at work in this event. Therefore, the two sides of my thesis belong together. Easter's Trinitarian grammar points to its Trinitarian ground; Easter's Trinitarian ground is perceived only in its Trinitarian grammar. That the triune God is the subject of Christ's resurrection implies that God alone is its basis; that the triune God is the basis of Christ's resurrection underscores that God truly is its subject.

So, in its more detailed form, *my twofold thesis is that Barth (1) explicates the doctrine of Christ's resurrection in terms of a unique Trinitarian grammar, and (2) grounds the event of Christ's resurrection in the eternal triune being of God*. Both sides of this thesis work together to answer the question of the identity of the one who acts for us in the Easter event, which in turn answers more fully the question of its purpose. In his being and acting for us, the triune God remains faithful to himself.

### THE THREEFOLD ARGUMENT

Since they belong together, I will trace both sides of my thesis through each part-volume of *CD IV*/1–3. This means that my twofold thesis will be advanced by a threefold argument. The three steps of the argument correspond to the three central chapters of the book, each of which focuses on the “transitional” discussion of each part-volume: “The Verdict of the Father” (§59.3), “The Direction of the Son” (§64.4), and “The Promise of the Spirit” (§69.4). The Trinitarian titles of these subsections might mislead one to think that Barth divides the works of the Trinity in order to describe them independently.

But this is precisely what Barth avoids. Instead, he develops God's triune self-differentiation from the perspective of three aspects of Christ's resurrection: Jesus Christ was *raised*, *arises*, and is *present*.<sup>31</sup> For Barth, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one complex event that includes all three aspects.

These aspects correspond to the themes of each part-volume of IV/1–3: Jesus Christ was raised for our justification; Jesus Christ arises to be for us and give to us a sanctifying direction; and Jesus Christ was, is, and will be present with us as we fulfill our missionary vocation. Barth's mature Trinitarian theology of Easter emerges out of a consideration of each of these three aspects in turn. It is thus embedded in the complex structure of *CD* IV/1–3, and too much would be lost in an attempt to remove his thoughts from their surrounding context. So, I consider a threefold argument that follows Barth's own threefold structure to be the best approach.

What is this threefold argument? First, I consider the Easter event from the perspective of the *raising* of Jesus Christ. Befitting the christological motif of the humiliated Son of God in *CD* IV/1, Barth appropriates the raising of Jesus Christ to *God the Father*, but in a way that does not exclude the distinctive participation of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was raised as God's free, gracious verdict for us. The basis for the Son's receiving this free grace in time is the eternal movement of grace given by the Father to the Son in the Spirit. This Trinitarian grammar and ground of the raising of Jesus Christ assures us of the utter graciousness of God's justification of us in Christ.

This first step raises a question: Is Jesus Christ only receptive in the Easter event? Is he not also active? So my second step is to view Easter from the perspective of Jesus Christ's own *arising*. Befitting the christological motif of the exalted Son of Man in *CD* IV/2, Barth speaks of the exalted human Jesus acting in his own arising by the power of the *Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit mediates between the risen Christ and us. The basis of the Spirit's mediation between the risen Christ and us is the Spirit-mediated partnership of the Son with the Father. This Trinitarian grammar and ground of Jesus Christ's arising highlights the concrete confidence with which we follow the sanctifying direction of the Son given to us in and by the Holy Spirit.

Though not contradictory, these first two perspectives stand in stark contrast with one another. The third step of my argument is to set forth their unity, which for Barth is teleologically established. I set forth this teleological

31. I.e., *Auferweckung*, *Auferstehung*, and *Parusie*. Cf. Berthold Klappert, "Die Rechts-, Freiheits- und Befreiungsgeschichte Gottes mit dem Menschen: Karl Barths Versöhnungslehre (*KD* IV/1–3)," *Evangelische Theologie* 49:5 (1989): 460–78, esp. 462.

unity by viewing Easter from the perspective of Jesus Christ's risen *presence*. Befitting the christological motif of the glorious mediator in *CD IV/3*, Barth appropriates Christ's parousia to the living *Jesus Christ*. Jesus Christ as both true God and true human was, is, and will be present as the one who came before. The intermediate form of this presence in the promise of the Spirit is no less than the first or final forms. This threefold parousia of the one Jesus Christ is formally analogous to the perichoresis of the triune God. And this ever-new coming of Jesus Christ is materially grounded in the triune God's self-communicative being. The triune God is eloquent and radiant, ever ready to share himself. This Trinitarian grammar and ground of Christ's risen presence assures us that the call of Jesus is truly the call of God, and that we may obey this call with bold humility, for Jesus Christ himself is on the move with us.

After unfolding this threefold argument in support of my twofold thesis, I conclude with some constructive reflections on Barth's Trinitarian theology of Christ's resurrection. These reflections are both retrospective and prospective. Retrospectively, I consider Barth's earlier doctrine of the Trinity from *CD I/1* in light of the concept of God operative in these materials from *CD IV/1-3*. Understanding the revealed God as the resurrected God fleshes out Barth's highly formal doctrine of the Trinity in *CD I/1*. I thereby show that the connection discerned between Christ's resurrection and the Trinity enriches the exposition of both doctrines.

Prospectively, I consider how we might think with and beyond Barth about the being-in-act of the resurrected God. What are the implications of the claim that the triune God is antecedently fit for resurrection? God's eternal readiness for resurrection consists in his triune life. This claim entails a deepening of the sense in which God is the living God. The eternal livingness of God as a fellowship of persons is God's readiness to share his own life with creatures in time. In other words, the living God *is* the God of the living.

The primary contribution of this study, however, is its careful analysis of the Trinitarian grammar and ground of Christ's resurrection as it comes to expression in *CD IV/1-3*. It is time to turn to the first aspect of this analysis.