

Prolegomenon

On Starting with the Spirit

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The rich and capacious narrative of Holy Scripture is suffused from beginning to end and back again with the presence of the triune God in creating, speaking, saving, transforming, and perfecting creation; in ordering all that is not divine into fellowship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; in bringing everything under the authority of the risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ; and permeating all things, animate and inanimate, with “the Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of life” (the third clause of the Nicene Creed). God’s economic activity is made manifest as a coherent, ordered, and

triune work in which the Almighty fructifies his creation. In the traditional language of conciliar theology, the Father creates, the Son sustains, and the Spirit perfects. While prone to static and modalist interpretations, such orthodox usage supports neither interpretation. Instead, it is witness to the unity of God’s economic action, summarized in the Latin phrase *Omnia opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt* (the external operations of the Trinity are undividedly the work of the entire Trinity). Such a rule does not imply, however, that each person of the Trinity ceases to have its own particular subsistence, and hence

certain work is appropriated to one or another of the divine persons. Manifestly evident in the scriptural account of God's economic work is the unction of the Spirit upon the world and its creatures, creating, sustaining, and perfecting them, bringing order out of chaos, turning lament to praise, transfiguring humans into gods.

While occluded, oppressed, or consigned to the margins by a christomonistic myopia, the Holy Spirit has often suffered at the hands of Christian theologians. Older textbook accounts of systematic theology had little time for pneumatology, often dealing with the topic as a short subsection of the more important doctrine of God (theology proper), or reserving the work of the Spirit to applying the benefits of the atonement to believers and thus consigning the Spirit to perpetual servitude or bonded labor to the work of Christ. Western Trinitarian theology, following Augustine's profoundly important and influential work, has explicitly constructed a Trinitarianism in which the Spirit is the fruit of a prior and superior relationship that exists between the Father and the Son.¹ The Spirit then has

the role of being the bond of union between Father and Son, or that which flows from or is the result of their relationship. Eastern Trinitarianism, especially that of an Athanasian and Cappadocian flavor, has several "models" of the Trinity—namely, the monopatrism (the Father as sole source), the perichoretic (social-personal-relational), and the apophatic (essence-energies)—that mitigate the implicit subordination of the Spirit. But even so there remains a regnant relegation of the Spirit to the periphery in standard Orthodox accounts (more acute in certain doctrines than others).

Beyond a Theology of the Third Article

Third Article Theology (TAT) is proposed as one way to address this less-than-Trinitarian articulation of the faith. While a new initiative on the theological scene, TAT is not a novel enterprise, if by "novel" is meant something created *de novo*. Dogmatics is about faithful witness, not poetic creation. TAT owes its name and initial conception to Methodist and Pentecostal theologian D. Lyle Dabney. In a series of seminal essays,

1. The legacy of Augustine on this question has, of course, been complexified by the work of Lewis Ayres in his *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2004); and *Augustine and the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Dabney set forth a proposal for identifying several pathologies in what he called First and Second Article theologies following the Nicene Creed, before offering an insight and a call for a theology of the Third Article, one which starts with the Spirit.² Garnering biblical, philosophical, sociological, and theological support, Dabney called for the church to grow up and “act its age,” arguing that “Christian theology should begin its task, that is to say, with an account of the Spirit; and thus that should now be *first* which has traditionally been *last*.”³ Dabney referred to such a program as a “theology of the third article.”

While this account takes its impetus from Dabney’s own theological program, it exhibits subtle but important differences. TAT has to be distinguished from dogmatic accounts that are simply pneumatological, something more appropriately termed a theology of the

Third Article. TAT, by contrast, is not simply a study of pneumatology but is, rather, a conscious and considered approach to conceiving of theology and witnessing to God’s self-revelation in Word and works, from the perspective of the Spirit where questions of pneumatology set the agenda and control the trajectory of the dogmatic enterprise, rather than pneumatology being the sole focus. As such, TAT is a specific and technical name for a method of theology. It seeks to articulate the contours of a Christian theology in a Trinitarian fashion, but one that starts with the Spirit.

On the Way Toward a Third Article Theology

Across the Christian traditions, calls for a pneumatological enrichment of the received tradition are mounting. Despite the fact that TAT has been self-consciously employed by very few theologians to date, and thus it is something of a pioneer theology, a growing number of works contribute to such an approach. A brief overview of these provides the context for the contributions of the present work.

In his justly famous chapter “Concluding Unscientific Postscript on Schleiermacher,” Barth reflected on his own christological

2. See especially the four essays by D. Lyle Dabney in *Starting with the Spirit: Task of Theology II*, ed. Stephen Pickard and Gordon Preece (Hindmarsh, SA: Australian Theological Forum, 2001): “Starting with the Spirit: Why the Last Should be First” (3–27); “Naming the Spirit: Toward a Pneumatology of the Cross” (28–58); “The Justification of the Spirit: Soteriological Reflections on the Resurrection” (59–82); and “The Nature of the Spirit: Creation as a Premonition of God” (83–110).

3. Dabney, “Starting with the Spirit,” 4.

program and made the astounding comment that all his theological investigations could have been pursued from the perspective of pneumatology. In his words:

What I have already intimated here and there to good friends, would be the possibility of a theology of the third article, in other words, a theology predominantly and decisively of the Holy Spirit. Everything which needs to be said, considered, and believed about God the Father and God the Son in an understanding of the first and second articles might be shown and illuminated in its foundations through God the Holy Spirit, the *vinculum pacis inter Patrem et Filium*.⁴

The great christocentrist was advocating the possibility of a thorough TAT, one which would complement his Second Article Theology of the *Church Dogmatics*: a christological program pursued from a Trinitarian perspective, highlighting the mutual relations between the Son and the Spirit in

4. Karl Barth, “Nachwort, or Concluding Unscientific Postscript on Schleiermacher,” in *The Theology of Schleiermacher: Lectures at Göttingen*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 278.

the incarnation. Many have directly or indirectly followed Barth’s suggestion. Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic,⁵ Pentecostal,⁶ and Protestant theologians are taking up the challenge of a pneumatically oriented dogmatics—something now known as a TAT.

Similarly to Barth, Pope John Paul II famously issued in 1996 the encyclical *On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World*, in which he encouraged believers to be attentive to the Spirit of God as they prepare for the third Christian millennium.⁷

5. See especially David M. Coffey, “Spirit Christology and the Trinity,” in *Advents of the Spirit: An Introduction to the Current Study of Pneumatology*, ed. B. E. Hinze and D. L. Dabney (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001), 315–38; and Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

6. Notably Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission*, ed. A. Yong (New York: University Press of America, 2002); Kärkkäinen, *A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World*, vol. 1, *Christ and Reconciliation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 196–209; and Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

7. See the full text at: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_18051986_dominum-et-vivificantem_en.html.

Pope John Paul II rehearsed the efforts in Roman Catholicism to reclaim a pneumatological focus, as seen in several encyclicals and of course the focus of Vatican II. He then asserted:

In our own age, then, we are called anew by the ever ancient and ever new faith of the Church, to draw near to the Holy Spirit as the giver of life. In this we are helped and stimulated also by the heritage we share with the Oriental Churches, which have jealously guarded the extraordinary riches of the teachings of the Fathers on the Holy Spirit. For this reason too we can say that one of the most important ecclesial events of recent years has been the Sixteenth Centenary of the First Council of Constantinople, celebrated simultaneously in Constantinople and Rome on the Solemnity of Pentecost in 1981. The Holy Spirit was then better seen, through a meditation on the mystery of the Church, as the one who points out the ways leading to the union of Christians, indeed as the supreme source of this unity, which comes from God himself and to which St. Paul gave a particular expression in the words which are frequently used to begin the Eucharistic liturgy: “The grace

of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”⁸

While less than a call for a TAT, this does provide significant impetus for such a program by others. More recently in 2013, Pope Francis reflected upon the work of the Spirit in the life of the church and has exhorted the faithful to

. . . let ourselves be imbued with the light of the Holy Spirit, so that He introduces us into the Truth of God, who is the only Lord of our lives. In this Year of Faith let us ask ourselves if we have actually taken a few steps to get to know Christ and the truths of faith more, by reading and meditating on the Scriptures, studying the Catechism, steadily approaching the Sacraments. But at the same time let us ask ourselves what steps we are taking so that the faith directs our whole existence. Do not be a “part-time” Christian, at certain moments, in certain circumstances, in certain choices, be Christian at all times! The truth of Christ, which the Holy Spirit teaches us and gives us,

8. Ibid., paragraph 2.

always and forever involves our daily lives. Let us invoke him more often, to guide us on the path of Christ's disciples.⁹

Roman Catholicism

An invoking of the Spirit in theology has been heeded by a number of significant Roman Catholic scholars working toward a TAT, each in their own way. Yves Congar produced a survey of pneumatology from the early church into the twentieth century, and along the way provided thick descriptions of theological positions such that his was a contribution to post-Vatican II theology and twentieth-century pneumatology more generally, almost unrivalled in its scope and perception.¹⁰ Heribert Mühlen developed a proto-Spirit Christology before applying such insights to the doctrine of the Trinity, and then to ecclesiology, suggesting with idiosyncratic force that the Spirit is the “we,” the unity of “I” and “thou.” The leitmotif of Mühlen's work may be summarized by his assertion: “The doctrine and person of the

9. General audience catechesis, Wednesday, May 15, 2013, http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Blog/2260/pope_francis_reflects_on_the_work_and_power_of_the_holy_spirit.aspx#.Urd6SI2IppM.

10. Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, trans. D. Smith (New York: Crossroad, 2000).

Holy Spirit is not one doctrine among others, but a fundamental doctrine and reality in the Church.”¹¹ Ralph Del Colle and David Coffey were colleagues at Marquette University (with D. Lyle Dabney) and together they forged a formidable contribution to Spirit Christology and, by means of such, a reevaluation of how to conceive the doctrine of the Trinity along more relational and pneumatological lines.¹² Del Colle's work *Christ and the Spirit* establishes for modern theology the integrity and orthodoxy of a Trinitarian Spirit Christology and situates it among his Catholic interlocutors, while Coffey's work is more speculative, developing what he calls a “mutual-love” doctrine of the Trinity.¹³ In both attempts we find a partial but significant

11. Heribert Mühlen, *Una Mystica Persona: Die Kirche als das Mysterium der heilsgeschichtlichen Identität des Heiligen Geistes in Christus und den Christen; Eine Person in vielen Personen* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1967), 5; translated by Wolfgang Vondey in *Heribert Mühlen: His Theology and Praxis* (Dallas: University Press of America, 2004), xv.

12. The fruits of a 1998 conference at Marquette University on a pneumatological approach to theology can be found in Hinzey and Dabney, *Advents of the Spirit*.

13. See especially David Coffey, *Deus Trinitas: The Doctrine of the Triune God* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Coffey, “The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son,” *Theological Studies* 51, no. 2 (1990): 193–229.

contribution to the rise of a TAT in ways that are influential on others.

Pentecostalism

In addition to Barth and calls for a TAT from Roman Catholics, Pentecostalism too is joining the chorus. Arguably the most significant theological movement of the twentieth century, Pentecostalism brought a renewed emphasis to the work of the Spirit, the fruits of which are being enjoyed in theology and practice today. Among recent Pentecostal labors one finds a renewed sense of impetus and imagination for dogmatics fueled precisely by starting with the Spirit.¹⁴ A representative example here is James Smith, the Pentecostal philosopher who

argues in his *Thinking in Tongues* for a distinctly “spiritual” way to think, worship, and speak.¹⁵ The work is replete with testimony, a theology from below to above, and is suffused with an approach compatible with what we term a TAT. Smith’s work makes compelling claims about the community locus of mediated authority, for spirited readings of inspired texts, and for an articulation of a worldview by which the strength of the lens is not measured by diopter, but the presence of the Holy Spirit.

While largely positive, Pentecostal theology in some quarters is tending to dislocate the work of the Spirit from the work of Christ in such a way that their respective missions are conceived as *separate* operations, each with its own integrity and ends, rather than as distinct but coordinated missions.¹⁶ Contemporary Pentecostal scholarship is divided over an understanding of the economic activity of God, with many positing a freedom of the Spirit from Christ such that any catholic

14. Older works of theology by Pentecostals show little sustained focus on or integration of the work of the Holy Spirit throughout a dogmatics, as seen, for example, in J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988–92); or Larry D. Hart, *Truth Aflame: Theology for the Church in Renewal* (1999; repr., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005). Even the work of the Reformed Charismatic theologian Wayne Grudem gives little time to developing a Third Article perspective on theology, relegating any meaningful discussion of the Spirit to soteriology (sanctification), spiritual gifts, and a traditional Western discussion of the Trinity (*Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994]).

15. James K. A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

16. The clearest statement of this may be found in Steven M. Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 176–85, especially his appeals against any forms of “christocentrism.”

notion of the Trinity has to be abandoned for a version of a social doctrine of God, or for an implicit tritheism. In either case, the notion of the *Omnia opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt* is abandoned and God's missions lack any coordination with God's processions. A Trinitarian theology shorn of its christological center threatens to distract theologians and derail dogmatics from a Christian enterprise into religious studies or a theology of religions. For some, admittedly, this is an invitation and not a challenge; for others, this spells the end of catholic theology and the beginning of a novel turn to a sub-Christian discourse. The view of Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen is more conducive to a TAT when he states, "Whereas traditional theology, not only Western scholasticism but also contemporary Eastern Orthodox tradition represented by Vladimir Lossky, quite categorically distinguishes the two 'missions' of the Son and Spirit in the one divine economy, it is more useful to speak of christological and pneumatological dimensions of the one divine economy."¹⁷ In a terse summary he rightly contends, "'Christocentrism' and the turn to the Spirit cannot be considered as alternatives."¹⁸

Another key voice in Pentecostal theology today, Frank Macchia, argues in his work *Justified in the Spirit* for a Pentecostal "solution" to what I am here calling a First Article Theology (represented most fittingly by Roman Catholicism) and Second Article Theology (represented most fittingly by Reformational theology), and looks to baptism in the Spirit as a Pentecostal metaphor to do so.¹⁹ Macchia argues neither for a moral and anthropological notion of justification (Roman Catholicism) nor for a purely forensic account (Reformed Protestantism), but rather for a participatory account wherein the Spirit grants sinners access to the divine *koinōnia*; and thus righteousness is creative and not cooperative (First Article Theology) or merely declarative (Second Article Theology). While deeply Pentecostal, Macchia's account also anticipates a TAT in many ways by highlighting how in the tradition accounts of justification have looked to the Spirit for their establishment and yet, to date, have failed to adequately develop the intuition. In his words,

The declaration of extrinsic righteousness from Protestant pulpits and the infusion

17. Kärkkäinen, *Christ and Reconciliation*, 206.

18. *Ibid.*, 209.

19. Frank D. Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption, and the Triune God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

of virtues in the creature's cooperation with grace assumed in traditional Catholic settings has required a developed appreciation of the baptism in the Spirit to link and anchor them both. Though relatively undeveloped, this metaphor came to prominence through the Pentecostal movement in the twentieth century.²⁰

Taking this a step further and developing a soteriological account that does not rely on Spirit baptism as defined by Pentecostalism, but rather offers an account of justification that is pneumatologically driven, will be the task of a TAT, but Macchia has shown the way, as it were, opening the door for others to enter.

Protestantism

Protestants of all stripes are seeking to “re-enchanted” theology and work from more robustly pneumatological perspectives. The late Clark Pinnock, a Baptist scholar, stands out for special mention in this regard, with his bold and insightful survey of theology in 1996 that was, in brief, a pneumatological approach. It is unique, as far as I am aware, in being an attempt to think through several major theological *loci* from a pneumatological perspective. “Far from being an incidental

or isolated topic in theology,” argued Pinnock, “Spirit is a major theme, supplying a standpoint, in fact, for surveying the whole vista of Christian truth.”²¹ Pinnock’s working hypothesis is that “though we speak of the Spirit as a third person, from the standpoint of experience Spirit is first, because it is Spirit that enables us to experience God’s flying by and drawing near.”²² Working not from a systematic theological perspective but, rather, with what he calls a “nondeterministic theology,”²³ Pinnock reconceives the theological task in terms more precisely articulated by James Smith as a “storied epistemology,”²⁴ wherein knowledge is not antirational but is antirationalist, where cognitivism is critiqued and an affective understanding is prioritized. Over seven chapters, Pinnock moves from the Trinity to creation, Christology, ecclesiology, soteriology, religions, and missions;

21. Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 10.

22. *Ibid.*, 14.

23. *Ibid.*, 18. For a comprehensive account of this approach, see Thomas F. Torrance, *Theological Science* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969). The following essay by Alan J. Torrance is also worth consulting: “Analytic Theology and the Reconciled Mind: The Significance of History,” *Journal of Analytic Theology* 1 (May 2013): 30–44.

24. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*, 48–85.

20. *Ibid.*, 318.

at each point his focus is on a pneumatologically construed account of God's ways in the world. The details of Pinnock's theology are open to critique (for example, his social doctrine of the Trinity, implicit universalism, and the move to a form of religious pluralism); however, his commitment to a TAT is consistently worked out and highly suggestive at key points—the relational ontology of the Godhead, Spirit Christology, *theōsis*, and ecumenism—such that it sets an agenda, even a manifesto, for others. Not without good reason Pinnock styled his a “pilgrim theology.”²⁵

Liberation Theologies

While not using the language or the self-conscious conceptuality of TAT, a number of feminist, liberation, and majority world theologians are adopting an implicit TAT approach to dogmatics, especially in the doctrine of the Trinity. Roman Catholic feminist theologian Elizabeth Johnson turns to the priority of the Spirit in her book *She Who Is* to order her account of the triune God and apply that to womanist concerns.²⁶ While endorsing

theological themes not conducive to orthodox Christian belief, Johnson's feminist reading of Scripture and interpretation of experience lead her to start her theologizing at “the juncture where the dialectic of God's presence and absence shapes life in all its struggles.”²⁷ That juncture is neither the unity of the divine nature nor the person of the Father, but the Spirit. In Johnson's words, “What results is a theology of the triune God that sets out from the experience of the Spirit.”²⁸ In contrast to Johnson, a TAT locates the fundamental human experience of the Spirit in the life of Christ and only then accepts Johnson's point that this approach “allows a starting point more closely allied to the human experience of salvation, without which there would be no speech about the triune God at all.”²⁹ While Johnson's journey takes her onto theological paths more orthodox pilgrims will certainly not want to traverse, it is her starting point and reasons for it that advocates of a TAT might want to share.³⁰

25. See Clark H. Pinnock, “A Pilgrim on the Way,” *Christianity Today*, February 9, 1998, <http://www.ctlibrary.com/ct/1998/february9/8t2043.html>.

26. Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992).

27. *Ibid.*, 121.

28. *Ibid.*, 122.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Similarly critical of Johnson's feminist and revisionary theology, Luke Timothy Johnson agrees that her starting with the Spirit is an inspired move allowing an enrichment of the tradition rather than requiring a wholesale revision (“Something

Elizabeth Johnson speaks for most advocates of a TAT when she expresses her concern about the relative absence of the Spirit in traditional theological discourse. She asks what has gone wrong: “For despite the pervasiveness of the dialectic experience of the Spirit, theological articulation about the Spirit has traditionally lagged considerably behind reflection on God unoriginated source of all and God incarnate, classically named Father and Son respectively. The history of doctrine shows that the Spirit, while the first and most intimate way God is experienced, was yet the last to be named explicitly divine.”³¹ She goes on to note that even when this was achieved at Constantinople in 381 the Spirit did not receive attention commensurate with this confession. While the possible causes for this situation are many, Johnson concludes, “For whatever reasons, theology of the Spirit remained in an embryonic state.”³² Johnson then proceeds to catalogue the ways in which the Spirit has remained in such a state throughout the Western theological tradition in both its Roman Catholic and Protestant guises. Johnson points to

the inability of Aquinas to identify a proper name for the Spirit and thus his inability to name the processions that follow, the pervasive privatization of the Spirit within Pietism, Barth’s insistence on describing the Spirit as the subjective side of the event of revelation, Pentecostal enthusiasm, the tendency of post-Tridentine Catholicism to bind the Spirit to ecclesiastical structures, and the tendency of Catholic piety to displace the work of the Spirit onto the pope, the cult of the Blessed Sacrament, or the Virgin Mary. Johnson’s assessment, correct in my opinion, is that “[t]he cumulative effect of this meagre Western pneumatological tradition has been that the full range of the reality and activity of God the Spirit has been virtually lost from much of Christian theological consciousness.”³³ A TAT accepts all of these criticisms and offers a new perspective for dogmatics capable of addressing such concerns.

In similar fashion to Johnson, but with a more orthodox feminist theology, Anglican theologian Sarah Coakley provides a comprehensive and perceptive account of the priority of the Spirit in dogmatic accounts of

Fundamental is Afoot,” *Commonweal* 120 [January 29, 1993]: 17–22).

31. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 128.

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*, 130. For my own account of some of these pneumatological ailments, see Myk Habets, “Veni Cinderella Spiritus,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10 (2001): 65–80.

the Trinity, Christology, prayer, asceticism, ministry, and worship in the first volume of her project in systematic theology. Coakley's self-styled *théologie totale* has much in common with the approach of TAT, most especially in her provocative remarks regarding the doctrine of the Trinity.³⁴ Coakley argues for an "incorporative trinitarianism" whereby the Spirit is more than a bonding agent (*vinculum amoris*) but is constitutive of the triune relations, following the pattern of Romans 8, linking that to the concept of desire, gender, prayer, and asceticism. Her doctrine of God propels her to the conclusion that "there can be in God's trinitarian ontology no Sonship which is not eternally 'sourced' by 'Father' in the Spirit (in such a way, in fact, as to query even the usual and exclusive meanings of Fatherly 'source' . . .)."³⁵ Grasping the fact

that all theology is integrated, Coakley concludes volume 1 of her theology with a vision for the future of theology once it genuinely, in my terms, starts with the Spirit.

[W]e must start afresh with our celestial number system, and allow the Spirit's primary propulsion to allow us to rethink, even now, trinitarian number in God, and just as much, and correctively, number in the human realm of gender. It has been the daring invitation of this book to make the problematic 'third' in God the 'first' in human encounter, not because the Spirit is thereby jostling *competitively* with the Father to be the primary ontological source, but because we humans have to cleanse our hearts and minds of any suggestion that the paternal divine 'source' could ever involve that sort of rivalry: 'source' here has become ecstatic goal as much as ecstatic origin, propelled inherently towards the transformative appearance of the God/Man. If, finally, we make this mind-shift, then everything changes.³⁶

What is true of her account is shared by those advocating a TAT; when we make this shift, everything changes.

34. Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay 'On the Trinity'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), especially 1–65.

35. *Ibid.*, 332. In a footnote (34) Coakley acknowledges her broad concurrence with the similar proposal of Thomas G. Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995). In this her proposal is also conducive to my own—Myk Habets, "Getting beyond the *Filioque* with Third Article Theology," in *Ecumenical Perspectives on the Filioque for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Myk Habets (London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2014), 211–30.

36. Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self*, 333–34.

Eastern Orthodoxy

Eastern Orthodoxy too deserves mention, in that it has always had an innate ability to fine-tune theology with pneumatological insights. The Orthodox doctrines of *theōsis* are one of the clearest examples of how the Spirit is constitutive across the spectrum of the theological enterprise, from *protos* to *telos*, a theme developed later in this volume. With *theōsis* as the architectonic key to Orthodox dogmatics, all doctrines take their cue from the presence of the triune God. While not necessarily accepting Palamite and neo-Palamite emphases within the Orthodox tradition, such as the radical essence-energies distinction or its Neo-Platonism, the Basilian theme of the creating and perfecting Spirit is present throughout the Orthodox vision, the transcendent determination of the cosmos for communion with God in Christ by the Spirit is evoked across the dogmatic spectrum, and the graced relation of humanity to God from creation through to eschaton is a central theme.³⁷ Each of these moves is conducive to a TAT, offering insights from across

37. As but one example, the theology of Romanian Orthodox theologian Dumitru Staniloae stands out. See his *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, vol. 1, *Revelation and Knowledge of the Triune God: The Experience of God*, trans. and ed. Ioana Ionita

the broad range of the tradition that today are being adopted, adapted, and—in terms of the topic of this volume—being recommended to the theological community as a constructive dogmatics for our time. Slowly but doggedly the foundations for TAT are being developed across the ecclesiological spectrum and across the theological *loci*.

Far and away the most work to date on TAT has been completed in the area of Christology, specifically calls to reclaim a robust and Trinitarian Spirit Christology.³⁸ That Spirit Christology is the area of most study and the first theological *loci* to find an articulation of a TAT is not surprising, given that even in a TAT Christology occupies the center. Accounts of the Trinity that are not simply speculative must work from God's self-revelation in Christ through to an account of the immanent Trinity;

and Robert Barringer (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1994).

38. For the most comprehensive account, see Myk Habets, *The Anointed Son: A Trinitarian Spirit Christology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010). The definitive Catholic account is Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*. There is also an Indian account (Christina Manohar, *Spirit Christology: An Indian Christian Perspective* [Delhi: ISPCK, 2009]) and an Hispanic account (Sammy Alfaro, *Divino Compañero: Toward a Hispanic Pentecostal Christology* [Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010]).

ecclesiology has as its foundation Jesus the Messiah, the Head of the church; eschatology is the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so here too a TAT is developed in connection with Christology. This turn to Spirit Christology in a robust Trinitarian context is welcome and has produced an increasing amount of suggestive and significant works. However, it is also, I suggest, a discipline come of age, and with that, it is poised to move from its preoccupation with definition and methodology—that is, with prolegomena—to constructive and systematic integration. In other words, it has moved from investigation of an individual doctrine (Spirit Christology) to immersion in a full theological program (TAT). Hence the need for a constructive account of what such a theology might look like.

Methodological Theses

This volume represents the first major work that is self-consciously a product of TAT and a constructive and dogmatic attempt to establish TAT as a distinct theological discipline. The exact means by which TAT is to be developed, however, requires comment. In several earlier publications I have sought to outline a criteriological map of what TAT

entails in its broadest contours.³⁹ As TAT is as much a methodology as it is a theology, the rudiments or contours of such a methodology deserve consideration. The following ten criteria begin to establish the methodological concerns of TAT.⁴⁰

1. TAT starts with the Holy Spirit. Pneumatological considerations are not left to a postscript or conclusion but are, rather, incorporated into theological discourse right from the beginning. Questions of the Spirit will no longer act as an “edifying appendage to the doctrine of God.”⁴¹

39. Initial attempts at establishing methodological criteria for doing TAT may be found in Habets, *Anointed Son*, 232–33. Taking his impetus from Ralph Del Colle and my own work, Andrew Grosso presents rudimentary criteria for a TAT in “Spirit Christology and the Shape of the Theological Enterprise,” in *A Man of the Church: Honoring the Theology, Life, and Witness of Ralph Del Colle*, ed. Michel René Barnes (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 206–22.

40. The following ten criteria are a development of those first suggested in Myk Habets, “The Surprising Third Article Theology of Jonathan Edwards,” in *The Ecumenical Edwards: Jonathan Edwards and the Theologians*, ed. Kyle Strobel (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2015), 197–99.

41. Heribert Mühlen, “The Person of the Holy Spirit,” in *The Holy Spirit and Power*, ed. Kilian McDonnell (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 12.

2. TAT looks *through* the Spirit rather than simply looking *at* the Spirit; thus it is a “Third Article Theology” and not a “theology of the Third Article” (which would simply be pneumatology). This does not mean, as the further criteria make clear, that the Spirit remains “nameless” and “faceless.”⁴² Rather, the Spirit’s person and work are fully parsed in a Trinitarian context.
3. TAT should precede First and Second Article Theology, as the most consistent way of coordinating the *ordo salutis*, from which we derive the *ordo cognoscendi* and come to know the *ordo essendi*—from the Father, through the Son, to the Holy Spirit, and back by the Holy Spirit, through the Son, to the Father.⁴³ This

42. Walter Kasper notes how the Spirit is “faceless” in theological accounts of God (*God of Jesus Christ*, trans. Matthew O’Connell [New York: Crossroad, 1984], 198, 223), while Aquinas finds the Spirit “nameless” (*Summa theologiae* I, q. 36, a. 1).

43. A comprehensive argument for this priority of TAT can be found in Dabney, “Starting with the Spirit,” 24–26. Grosso independently shares this conviction when he writes, “In other words, participation in the *ordo salutis* of God’s work in Christ and the Spirit is the point of entry into the *ordo cognoscendi* of theological reflection, both of which are grounded in the *ordo essendi* of the new life of

point is rooted in the way God works in the world (economic Trinity) and the way humanity is created and drawn into a re-creation by the Spirit, through Christ, to the Father. Johnson’s words here are apt:

What is most baffling about forgetfulness of the Spirit is that what is being neglected is nothing less than the mystery of God’s personal engagement with the world in its history of love and disaster; nothing less than God’s empowering presence dialectically active within the world in the beginning, throughout history and to the end, calling forth praxis of life and freedom. Forgetting the Spirit is not ignoring a faceless, shadowy third hypostasis but the mystery of God closer to us than we are to ourselves, drawing near and passing by in quickening, liberating compassion.⁴⁴

the risen Christ” (“Spirit Christology,” 217–18). Or again, according to Thomas F. Torrance: “Therefore, there can be no true *ordo cognoscendi* (order of knowing) which is not based upon an *ordo essendi* (order of being) conceived entirely as grace, and the *ordo essendi* reaches its true destiny in the *ordo cognoscendi*” (*Theology in Reconstruction* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965], 116).

44. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 131.

4. TAT complements and thus does not compete with First and Second Article Theologies. As such it is a contribution to a fully Trinitarian theology. This point is well illustrated by David Coffey's remarks on the relationship between Logos Christology (a species of Second Article Theology) and Spirit Christology (a species of TAT): In Logos Christology "no appeal is made to the Holy Spirit, for in such a Christology any and all activity of the Holy Spirit relative to the person and the ministry of Christ is understood as *subsequent* to the constitution of the hypostatic union. Therefore a Spirit Christology that successfully incorporates Logos Christology will be superior to a Logos Christology *tout court*."⁴⁵ By extension, a TAT will be superior to either First or Second Article Theology *tout court* precisely because it is Trinitarian from start to finish in ways that do not overlook the full contribution and significance of the Spirit, not "watered down" or "half-known."⁴⁶
5. TAT recognizes that the Spirit continues to speak today to the church in a retroactive movement of triune discourse. This retroactive hermeneutic is first applied to Scripture and then to the communicative acts of the church empowered and inspired by the Spirit of the resurrected Christ.⁴⁷ Such a move places TAT within the developing discipline of pneumatic hermeneutics on the one hand, and the theological interpretation of Scripture on the other hand, and in the process challenges a number of widely held assumptions around biblical interpretation, namely, historical-critical approaches, historical-grammatical approaches, and reader-response approaches.⁴⁸

the "half-known" God of theology (*I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 3:5).

47. A full articulation of this retroactive hermeneutic can be found in Myk Habets, "Developing a Retroactive Hermeneutic: Johannine Theology and Doctrinal Development," *American Theological Inquiry* 1 (2008): 77–89.

48. See, for example, the suggestive insights from the Renewal tradition in Kevin L. Spawn and Archie T. Wright, ed., *Spirit and Scripture: Examining a Pneumatic Hermeneutic* (London: T&T Clark, 2012). On theological interpretation of Scripture, see J. Todd Billings, *The Word of God for the People of God: An Entryway into the Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); and Matthew Levering, *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A*

45. Coffey, "Spirit Christology and the Trinity," 317–18.

46. Wolfhart Pannenberg speaks of the Spirit as "watered down" from its biblical fullness (*The Apostles Creed: In Light of Today's Questions*, trans. Margaret Kohl [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972], 130), while Yves Congar has spoken of the Spirit as

6. TAT unfolds the story of the Trinitarian mission of God in the world.⁴⁹ In an academic context driven by overspecialization, a TAT reminds us that the church does not exist for itself, that the academy exists to serve its wider constituents, and that the missionary God is at work in the world ushering in the kingdom of God through creaturely media. Starting with the Spirit allows theology to recalibrate and reorient itself in line with the *Creator Spiritus, Spiritus vivificans, and missio Spiritus*. Thus any theology today claiming to be systematic has to include what might be called applied theology, including ethics, worship, and mission.⁵⁰
7. TAT finds its focus in the center of that story—in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. A TAT is no less Christocentric and crucicentric than the Gospel. This is both a consequence of and a stimulus for Spirit Christology, given that TAT is birthed out of such a Christology, following a critical acceptance of Rahner's *Grundaxiom* that “the ‘economic’ Trinity is the ‘immanent’ Trinity.”⁵¹ TAT is thus not a speculative theology, if by that is meant a dogmatics devoid of exegetical foundations.
8. TAT highlights the eschatological nature of God's Trinitarian mission in the world and proleptically incorporates such eschatology throughout its pneumatological dogmatics, whereby the mission of God in Christ remains the center of the divine drama.⁵² An emphasis upon the eschatological

Theology of Biblical Interpretation (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008).

49. The formula of James B. Torrance is germane at this point: “When we see that the worship and mission of the church are the gift of participating through the Holy Spirit in the incarnate Son's communion with the Father and the Son's mission from the Father to the world, that the unique center of the Bible is Jesus Christ, the apostle and high priest whom we confess (Heb 3:1), then the doctrines of the Trinity, the incarnation, the atonement, the ministry of the Spirit, Church and sacraments, our understanding of the kingdom, our anthropology and eschatology, all unfold from that center” (*Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996], 9).

50. Examples are many, but see Amos Yong, “Primed for the Spirit: Creation, Redemption and

the *Missio Spiritus*,” *International Review of Mission* 100 (2011): 355–66, which traces the implications of pneumatology for theology of mission, in relationship to the doctrines of creation, redemption, and the eschaton.

51. Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Crossroad, 1997), 23. Rahner's rule is not accepted here without critical modification; for an assessment, see Scott Harrower, *Trinitarian Self and Salvation: An Evangelical Engagement with Rahner's Rule* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012).

52. This point too has been independently mentioned by Grosso, “Spirit Christology,” 220–21.

ministry of the Spirit comes with at least two corollaries, one christological, the other ecclesiological. Christologically, it is Christ's resurrection, ascension, and current session that render the ministry of the Spirit effective and cosmic. It is in Jesus' words, works, and continuing ministry that the presence of the Spirit is most keenly felt. The Spirit is about proclaiming and bringing in the kingdom of God, of which Christ is the King. Ecclesiologically, the eschatological work of the Spirit is even now being progressively realized in and through the church, the body of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit. "Thus, in a fundamental sense, the Spirit is both present—already having introduced the coming reign of God—and yet also absent—not yet fully having established the righteousness of God,"⁵³ writes Amos Yong. On this basis Yong helpfully speaks of a "pneumatological prolepsis," whereby the inclusion of a *missio Spiritus* will result in "an enriched patrology and christology, while simultaneously comprehending the full scope of God's redemptive work, both across space (cosmic) and across time (diachronic)."⁵⁴

9. TAT emphasizes the sanctifying work of the Spirit, who moves believers into further holiness or christification—thus it is existentially viable and apologetically effective in today's postmodern milieu.
10. TAT is a thoroughly ecumenical theology.⁵⁵ "Ecumenical" is used here in two senses: first, it indicates a commitment to the ecumenical creeds and confessions of Christendom; and second, it indicates the potential for doctrinal unity among the currently divided traditions of Christianity. The present volume thus draws from theologians across the Christian traditions, bringing together that which should not have been rent asunder. TAT is not a Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, or Pentecostal theology; it is a Christian dogmatics, constructed from the tradition for the church.

These criteria form a very general locus of agreement around which all of the essayists in this volume concur to a greater or lesser extent. At certain points contributors hold strong disagreements with a specific criterion; at others they offer strong assent. Within

53. Yong, "Primed for the Spirit," 363.

54. *Ibid.*, 364.

55. Criteria 1, 6, 7, and 10 are suggested and developed by Dabney, "Starting with the Spirit," 24–26.

these broad criteria, however, each contributor is committed to developing their topics in variegated ways, given the spaciousness of the criteria, the nature of the project, and the very character of TAT, not to mention the many ecclesial contexts of the various contributors. It is hoped this work will be received in the spirit with which it is presented.

With this pneumatological dogmatics, the contributors submit to the academy a partial and incomplete recommendation for how we may go about doing and thinking theologically from and in the Spirit. There is no apology, therefore, for the partial nature of this enterprise. The pneumatological dogmatics presented here lays no claim to being comprehensive; this is not an exhaustive compendium of theology in the traditional sense of the term. Rather, this is a contribution to dogmatics

from a particular perspective and place. The present contribution highlights those *loci communes* that a TAT can further illuminate and for which it can provide additional insights in ways that, to date, have not been the case. For this reason the following should be read as an addition to existing theologies in the hope that a fuller and more comprehensive view of dogmatics is the result. With this prolegomenon now at an end, it remains to provide the evidence for the many claims being made here for a TAT. As Clark Pinnock once remarked, “The Spirit challenges theology at numerous points—this may partly explain our neglect. But let the challenges stimulate growth in us as hearers of the Word of God. Let us ask what light is shed on our central Christian doctrines when they are considered from the standpoint of the Spirit.”⁵⁶

56. Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 11.