Iustitia Christi and Iustitia Civilis in Lutheran Ethical Theory from 1840 to 1960

by

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BIBLIOGRAPHY
INTRODUCTION

The concept of *iustitia christi* and *iustitia civilis* is one which appears to have had relevance for Lutheran ethical theory since the time of Martin Luther himself. In this thesis it will be my task to investigate this concept in order to ascertain what that relevance might be. In order to do this I have chosen to survey this concept in the writings of five theologians.

I will begin in my first chapter to investigate the interpretation which Martin Luther gave to this concept in order to be able to see what relationship, if any, the later theologians bore to him. As such, this first chapter really will serve as a general introduction for the entire thesis.

In the second chapter I will study the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher who, although not a Lutheran, must be included in this work for three reasons. First, we must study his writings because of the impact and the challenge which he made not only upon Reformed theology, but upon Lutheran theology as well. Second, we must study his work because he himself considered there to be no theological reason for a distinction to exist between the Reformed and Lutheran communions. Third, we must include Schleiermacher because of the present situation that exists in Lutheran ethical theory which finds theologians more and more returning to his work in order better to understand what the relationships between the disciplines of Christian ethics and philosophical ethics might be. The fact that by the year 1840 Schleiermacher had published his finest works and making his ideas felt is the reason that I have selected this date as my first time limitation, notwithstanding the Luther chapter, which, as I said, serves as an introduction to the concept.

In the third chapter I will turn to the writings of Ernst Troeltsch. With Troeltsch my study enters the twentieth century.

In the fourth chapter I will pursue my study of the *iustitia* concept in the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Chapter five will be an investigation of the position taken by Helmut Thielicke. It is with Thielicke's works that I will conclude this study, hence, I have chosen the date 1960 as a general limitation for this
thesis, not to signify the literal cessation of Thielicke's theological output, but in order to gain a sharpness and compactness by such a limitation. As such, the range of this thesis includes the first half of the nineteenth century and the second half of the twentieth.

It will not be my purpose to go into great detail concerning the major features of the theologies of each man. This would be pointless in view of the purpose of the thesis. What we will be looking for in each case is how the theologian relates the two justitiae to each other and what result this has for his ethical formulations. We will also be looking to see what features are carried forward and incorporated into the theologies of the later theologians and which ones are disposed of.

I will allow the theologians themselves to speak as often as possible and, where not possible, to paraphrase their ideas. Except where good English language translations exist, especially in the cases of Luther and Schleiermacher, the translations are my own.
Chapter I

Martin Luther

Luther preached a sermon sometime late in 1518 or early 1519 titled Two Kinds of Righteousness, using as his text Philippeans 2:5-6. In it he drew the distinction between the righteousness of Christ (Christus iustus) and what he called our proper righteousness (nostra et proprie). In an earlier sermon of 1518 titled "Three Kinds of Righteousness" he distinguished not only these two, which are essentially identical as we shall see, but a third form of righteousness in which man accepts his civil responsibility and performs actions in and for society. This third type he called civil righteousness (iustitia civilis). Much later, in the year 1535, in the introduction to his Galatian commentary, he further describes the righteousness of Christ in man as man's passive righteousness and civil righteousness as man's active righteousness. Luther was drawing distinctions which were

1 Weimar Ed., 2, pp. 145-152. (Hereafter cited as WA)

2 Ibid., pp. 143, 144. F. E. Cranz's comment, that Luther's distinction between civil righteousness and actual righteousness is an ambiguous one, lacks an understanding of the difference between civil righteousness per se vitiosa and the actual righteousness of Christ. Cf. Cranz's work, An Essay on the Development of Luther's Thought on Justice, Law, and Society., pp. 75, 91. He also discusses how often Luther's theology of the orders of creation and the kingdom of God have been understood as being static, timeless moral or religious forms, rather than as eschatological incursions of God into the present historical situation, i.e., as possessing existential characteristics, which is an accurate interpretation of Luther.

vital to his theology. The distinction between *iustitia christi* and *iustitia civilis* is one which weaves itself throughout all of Luther's writings, and one which is of significance for an understanding of the Reformer.

I

Let us begin by examining what Luther referred to as the righteousness of the world, before men (*coram hominibus*),\(^4\) that active *iustitia civilis*. Being a realist to sin, a man whose eyes did not avert in the presence of sin, Luther affirmed that men are fallen, sinful creatures. There are criminals and all manner of evildoers abroad in this world. And these must be held in check by the power of the civil authority and its laws so that the world does not destroy itself, but may be preserved. By such civil laws the wicked are punished and those who are not criminals, but are, rather, law-abiding citizens remain unaccused, free from guilt.\(^5\) These civil laws, therefore, which guard the community against the attacks of homicidal maniacs, sacrilege, and robbery can be said not only to protect the innocent, but to make them righteous men. Simply by existing, these civil laws make the non-lawbreakers, the innocent, the law-abiding citizens righteous.\(^6\) And these men who are pronounced good or righteous in the eyes of the law are those who are examples of civil goodness, civil righteousness. As a result of the laws of government, the civil

\(^4\) WA 2, p. 43.

\(^5\) Ibid.

\(^6\) Ibid.
laws, the laws which proceed from God-ordained forms of government, as Luther believed, there emerge the good men, the righteous. And it is in this sense that Luther does not hesitate to call the laws of government a form of righteousness.\(^7\) The word good is here to be understood in the moral philosophical sense, in the sense that the good man is he who does the good and refrains from doing evil, i.e., an ethical value judgment.

There are many forms which this civil righteousness assumes in existence. A better word than form would be moment. There are many moments which this righteousness assumes in existence. We use moment rather than form in order to avoid the implication that \textit{justitia civilis} is to be understood as a static, timeless, quality of man rather than possessing the character of an existential relationship.\(^8\) Luther said that there was a political, a ceremonial, and a Decalogic civil righteousness; the political refers to the good actions or judgments of kings, emperors, and politicians; the ceremonial refers to the good which arises where certain traditions or ceremonies are observed; and the Decalogic refers to the good which occurs when the Law of Moses is obeyed.\(^9\)

\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Cf. Regin Prenter's \textit{Schöpfung und Erlösung}, pp. 190-193, 279, 80.
"For there be divers sorts of righteousness. There is a political or civil righteousness, which emperors, princes of the world, philosophers and lawyers deal withal. There is also a ceremonial righteousness, which the traditions of men do teach. This righteousness parents and schoolmasters may teach without danger, because they do not attribute unto it any power to satisfy for sin, to placate God, or to deserve grace:..."\(^{10}\)

These are all moments of active righteousness, i.e., righteousness which occurs when men and women respond to the situations in this age which demand that a choice be made. This again refers to the notion of good as moral philosophers often describe it, namely, good as understood within the context of choice.\(^{11}\) To give an example of a ceremonially moment of civil righteousness: A wolf attacks a child; the child's mother shoots the wolf. The mother has responded to this situation which demanded that a choice be made. In shooting the wolf, the mother performed an ethically good or righteous action because she saved her child by doing it. In this example, which was one which Luther used, it is possible to classify the action as a ceremonial one as well as Decalogic righteousness in that the mother fulfilled the second Mosaic commandment.

For Luther, there was no question but that the source of this righteousness was God. God has created civil authority to keep order and to protect the innocent, and thereby he fulfills his purposes for his creation by means of political,

\(^{10}\) A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Martin Luther, revised and edited by Philip Watson of the 'Middleton' edition of 1575, Fleming Revell Co., Westwood, N. J., 1953, p. 21.

ceremonial and Decalogic righteousness which ensure that men will be motivated to keep the laws of civil authority. God's lordship over creation and his desire and actions to redeem his creation are to be found in this civil righteousness.12 More specifically, we can say that for Luther all civil laws are in some measure expressions of divine law, whose essence is love. Luther referred to those obstinate people who act contrary to love and love's demands as acting contrary to God and natural law.13 Since God is the creator of iustitia civilis the basis of this iustitia must be love; the goal of this iustitia is love. And this relates the iustitia civilis intergrally with the iustitia christi. Here G. Törnvall's words are especially relevant.

"Whether or not iustitia civilis is per se vitiosa, it is nevertheless a righteousness;... The righteous moment in iustitia civilis is, therefore, nothing else than the righteousness of Christ applied to the worldly government. In this way iustitia civilis is not in addition to iustitia christianana and foreign to it, but has an organic connection with it."14

What Luther was trying to say was that iustitia civilis exists under the all-encompassing power of God's Word, both as Law and as Gospel. And here Luther is realistic. Unlike some who would give no respect, not even lip service, to the state or government, which they considered to be Godless in many forms of its expression, Luther affirmed the validity of the

12 Cf. G. Törnvall's, Geistliches und Weltliches Regiment bei Luther, esp. the footnote on p. 79.
existence of iustitiae civilis and government on the basis that they were God-created. True, there are Godless forms of statecraft just as there are Godless laws. Only fools would deny this. But is this admission capable of abrogating that fact that God created government? No! (By "government" I do not mean any particular form of government but government as Obrigkeit, Cf. D. Bonhoeffer, Ethik, p. 353.) A concomitant factor of government and its laws is iustitiae civilis. Now this means, of course, that ultimately God also created iustitiae civilis. In his Disputation Concerning Justification Luther was faced with this very dilemma, namely, that iustitiae civilis, like all creation, tends to be impious while remaining a divine creation. His response to this dilemma was to say this at one point:

"I said before that our righteousness is dung in the sight of God. Now if God chooses to adorn dung, he can do so. It does not hurt the sun, because it sends its rays into the sewer."15

This does not deny that God created and preserves government and civil righteousness but affirms in vivid language the faithfulness of God in whose hands rests the very existence of any civil righteousness.

The two primary questions which arise immediately out of this notion of Luther that God continues to preserve iustitiae civilis and bad governments, that is, everything associated with this world, are these. On what basis or for what reason does God preserve bad government? Secondly, is there any point at which the Christian could revolt against a bad

15 Luther's Works, vol. 34, p. 184.
government? Needless to say, both of these questions have occupied the minds and consciences of scholars and laymen for centuries. Such questions are asked of Luther's position as: Does God continue to preserve a good government, and if so, how long? Does the Christian have the right, theologically, to revolt against a bad government and, if so, at what point may he exercise that right?

In order to answer both of these primary questions we must come to an understanding concerning the relationship of God's Law to government. Our position is that, for Luther, government and civil righteousness, which is a result of government, have been created by God's Law. (We assume that Luther conceived God's Law as a comprehensive and thoroughly biblical reality under which one could subsume natural law, which is really a metaphysical reality and not a biblical one). Government is the product of the Law of God because God has commanded that there be government. Governments are responsible not merely to their subjects, therefore, but to God's Law.

This means that government can not do anything that it pleases. "For God the Almighty has made our rulers mad; they actually think they can do - and order their subjects to do - whatever they please. And the subjects make the mistake of believing that they, in turn, are bound to obey their rulers in everything." Government is responsible to God's Law; but some governments are not responsible, they are rather

\[\text{Luther's Works, vol. 45, pp. 81, 82, 85-129.}\]
\[\text{Ibid., p. 83.}\]
demonic. Some governments regard themselves as the final authority; they believe that the authority they possess has been created by themselves. They become, as it were, bad governments.

It is at the point, when government becomes perverted, that Luther believed that God would not tolerate it. "Of this I am certain, that God's word will neither turn nor bend for princes, but princes must bend themselves to God's word." God's word might cause the people to revolt against the perverted government, which would be a situation in which God's word judged the impious government. If a government becomes impious and usurps its God-given authority it should expect the worst from God's judgment. This is Luther's answer to the first question.

The question about the point at which Christians should revolt against such a bad government is one about which Luther could not give anything but a negative warning. He admitted the possibility that the time might come when revolt is the direct result of an impious and demonic government, but he also frequently issued warnings against those who might consider revolt as the best means of creating a better political situation. For Luther revolt could never create a better political situation; revolt was always destructive and never constructive. "The fact that the rulers are wicked and unjust does not excuse tumult and rebellion, for to punish wickedness does not belong to everybody, but to the worldly rulers who...

\[18\] Ibid., p. 121.
bear the sword."

The peasants were often warned in this way by Luther that even though revolt might seem necessary in an extreme situation of bad government, their action of revolt could never be justified in God's sight.

There is a definite ambiguity in Luther when one considers what he says about bad government's punishment by God's Law and his lack of willingness to give sanctions, even modest ones, for revolts of any type, especially ones led by charismatic heroes. Our conclusion must be that although bad governments will be punished by God Christians are not to engage in revolutions because they, too, stand condemned for such action. There is no point, then, at which Luther believed men could revolt against bad governments.

Thus far it has been shown that Luther regarded God as the creator of government and civil righteousness by means of his Law. It has also been demonstrated that Government and its accompanying righteousness although created and even sustained by God, is permeated with sin. Every act of civil righteousness is tainted and defiled by man's condition of being in sin. Every act of civil goodness or righteousness is per se vitiosa. As Törnvall says, this sin or evilness


20 Professor Lau has also noticed this ambiguity in Luther's thought concerning bad government and a charismatic hero-led revolt, both of which Luther deplored. Cf. Franz Lau, "The Lutheran Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms," Lutheran World, XII, No. 4, (1965), 364.
"proves itself as a power in the orders of Creation which God established."\textsuperscript{21} What Luther did was to set sin over against \textit{justitia civilis} in such a way as to show that sin negates and undermines every act of bestowal of this same righteousness by God. "We must not consider the excellence of good works or virtues which are in the Godless, but the goodness of God which bestows rewards even upon the unworthy."\textsuperscript{22}

For Luther, every act of civil obedience produces an accompanying righteousness which is corrupt, tainted, and frustrated by sin.

"9. In fact, the righteousness of man, no matter how much God honors it here in time with the best gifts of this life, nevertheless is a mask and impious hypocrisy before God."\textsuperscript{23}

But this does not prohibit God from rewarding this same righteousness with abundant blessings out of his love for his creation.

"10. The riddle is astonishing, because God rewards the very righteousness which he himself regards as iniquity and wickedness."\textsuperscript{24}

The only way to understand this riddle, said Luther, is on the basis of God's free love.

We must refer immediately to Luther's distinction, already referred to, between actions performed before God (\textit{coram deo}) and those performed before men (\textit{coram hominibus}) in order to

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Luther's Works, vol. 34, p. 192.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid., pp. 151-152.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
avoid confusion. The phrase "by human standards" might be another way of translating *coram hominibus*, and "by divine standards" could translate *coram deo*. By human standards there are many laudatory acts of men in history. By divine standards, and this for Luther meant that one compares one's actions with those of Christ's, no actions of men are praiseworthy. For Luther all men's actions are corrupt unless they are motivated by faith in Christ. Luther came down heavily against all acts of civil righteousness performed without a living faith in Christ in his sermon built upon Christ's words, "For apart from Me you can do nothing", (John 15:5).

"This is a brief conclusion and a clear explanation. 'Apart from Me,' says Christ, 'that is, if you do not remain in Me and become regenerated Christians through Me, you will do nothing, try as you will.' But how can Christ make such an exaggerated statement? How can He be so offensive? Could it be possible that all the pious and excellent people there were at that time among the Jews, and all there may still be among the Christians, accomplish nothing? Could all their efforts have been in vain? Is it not true that they performed, and still perform many more works, and greater ones, than the poor, wretched, little flock, which can boast of nothing but of this Christ? Oh, these are offensive and blasphemous words to the ears of the great saints - the holy Jews, the Pharisees, and others, such as St. Paul in his fine and irreproachable righteousness according to the Law...

As one can see from this extract, few things were more obnoxious and detestable to Luther than the thought of men boasting of deeds accomplished and honor won, of civil righteousness attained without having the faintest notion of what faith in Christ means, what it does to all acts of civil righteousness. Again, in his preface to the epistle to the Philippians in 1522, Luther said concerning the author of this letter:

virtue and goodness. In other words, Luther believed that if acts of civil righteousness are performed apart from faith in Christ their motivation can not be one of love but some form of self-satisfaction, some form of egocentric fulfillment. Apart from faith in Christ an act of civil righteousness never has unselfish love as its motivation but always a selfish or greedy form of self-satisfaction. This is so because only in faith in Christ can this sin-ridden civil righteousness be transformed. Civil righteousness which is not caused by one's faith in Christ is the product of God's Law in society, a law which government implements, a civil law which forces all men, especially non-Christians, to abide by and demands that they produce a good work in society in order to maintain society. In his Treatise on Good Works Luther expressed this notion in this way:

"XIV. You might say; 'Why then do we have so many laws of the Church and of the State, and many ceremonies of churches, monastic houses, holy places, which urge and tempt men to good works, if faith does all things through the First Commandment?' I answer: Simply because we do not all have faith or do not heed it. If every man had faith, we would need no more laws, but every one would of himself at all times do good works, as his confidence in God teaches him." 28

Of course, as in Luther's own day, so today unrepentant, unbelieving men vigorously attack this position calling it foolish nonsense. Nevertheless Luther asserted the New Testament position that the virtue and righteousness of any act performed apart from faith in Christ cannot overcome the power of sin which inhabits and inhibits it.

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This does not mean, however, that Luther wished to do away with all examples of civil righteousness as being valueless. Even though civil righteousness is a different kind of righteousness from the righteousness of Christ, nevertheless it does serve its purposes. And those purposes are to establish and maintain civic justice and order and to open the way for salvation for men in the kingdom of this world. If the civil authorities do not use their corrupted reason to administer justice and equity, an equity which is often wide of the mark and a poor second to God's justice and order, they would nevertheless be truckling to the destructive forces of Satan, whose purpose is to destroy all forms of order and to bring about chaos. Luther would yet save this poor second civil righteousness, when compared to God's perfect righteousness in Christ, this sin-ridden civil righteousness, as a lesser of two evils when compared with total chaos. Justice or civil righteousness keep the criminal in check and promote a community sense of well-being respectively.29

29 "Therefore this is the sum of the matter. To a certain extent all other kings are tyrants and have no scepter of equity. Their rule is not carried on without offenses, crimes, and tyranny, as we see in the cases of the best kings, David and others. Christ alone has in His kingdom a scepter of equity. Why is this so? Because our King has God's Word, which is pure even to the smallest detail. You know, however, that in his Ethics Aristotle compares moral points with physical matters and not with mathematical points. A lawyer, who propounds the law, does not touch the mathematical or the invisible. It is enough to have touched the circumference, so that the closer to the center the better... In matters of justice or injustice one should make the point two paces wide, but the circumference should be about as large as a city. If you do this you will not miss the mark completely... It is enough, however, that laws and kings try to hit the mark so that they do not miss it altogether." Luther's Works, vol. 12, p. 238.
as justice not only holds civil offenders in some degree of check, but it helps to create an atmosphere in which men come to experience God in and through his creation, in which they may come to faith in God and his righteousness. This still, however, makes civil righteousness and its laws "quasi mendici pallium consutum ex variis laciniiis", a poor second, a beggar, to the righteousness of Christ, and yet a poor second which is better than its alternative, total evil.

Not only did Luther find civil righteousness corrupt and second-rate when compared with Christ's righteousness, but in a similar way he saw the church terrestrial as a corrupt and imperfect vessel. Sin has corrupted this organism also, and yet Luther would have both civil righteousness and the church tolerated because of Christ, who is the head of both. So a dialectical tension is evident in Luther's appraisal of the sin-riddled situation which finds civil righteousness corrupted by the sinners who perform it, as are all earthly institutions, and, yet, it is to be honored by all men because, in the first place, it was created by God from eternity, and secondly because it was redeemed by Christ. This redemption by Christ

30 WA 40, II, pp. 526, 527.

31 "But though the church is wrinkled and spotted in itself, it is nevertheless holy and spotless in its head... You should, therefore, learn this diligently so that you may see that in their external aspects the church and civil society are not absolutely pure. You should also accept the attitude that one ought to tolerate offenses in the household, civil affairs, and the church. Whoever is unwilling to do this should really enter another world. For he is a half-baked, vain, boorish character, who neither knows nor has seen anything. If he had the opportunity to rule in the matters where he finds fault in others, he would have no more luck ruling them than Phaeton did with the sun;" Luther's Works, vol. 12, p. 241.
means for Luther that the righteous content of *iustitia civilis* is Christ himself. Christ, for Luther, related himself to *iustitia civilis* in that he died in order to give this righteousness which cannot save a man but which is Christ-like in the peace it affords men and the temporary respite from guilt and despair. To put it slightly differently we might say that *iustitia civilis* cannot deliver a man up before God as a creature worthy of salvation. Men cannot save themselves by doing socially approved works of kindness and mercy, especially if these are done apart from a faith in Christ. On the other hand, men naturally do perform these socially approved acts if they are motivated by faith in Christ, and in this way the actions themselves help to remove a man's guilt or despair simply because of their magnanimity and graciousness and the effect this has on the doer. The difference between the non-Christians who perform *iustitia civilis* and Christians is to be found in the motivation of each.

For this reason Luther did not place acts of civil righteousness, and here he meant acts done apart from faith in Christ by Jew and Gentile alike, on the same level with acts of righteousness performed by Christians motivated by a confident faith in Christ. Acts of civil righteousness do not penetrate into, and have no jurisdiction on, the level of faith in Christ, the level of man's ultimate concern and existence, we might even say on the level of love. This means that Luther at times had to deal quite roughly and intolerantly with respect to the good intentions and deeds of non-Christians. The
Jew and the unrepentant Gentile perform acts of civil righteousness - charity, kindness, mercy, and justice. They can never perform acts of love. Clinging to Christ's own words in John 15:5, 16:10, Luther affirmed that such acts of secular, civil righteousness are inferior to the righteousness of Christ because of their motivation which is not that of love. 32 Therefore, any degree of intolerance which Luther's expositions expressed toward such secular acts of righteousness was due to the element of judgment and condemnation which he found in God's Word against such acts performed apart from faith in Christ. The final arbiter in all matters for Luther, both non-Christian and Christian, was God's Word. Luther would say that if his words sound harsh and unfair to the secularists let them hear Christ's words. In them, also, he will find little consolation, not to mention tolerance, of justitia civilis without faith.

This civil righteousness, then, Luther opposed to the similar species of civil unrighteousness which manifest themselves in all forms of violence and evil in the kingdom of this world. And yet, if this civil righteousness is only able to check the spread of crime, to administer justice to all men with partial equity, and to gain some order out of a chaotic world, but has no reference to the deepest level of existence, the level wherein is found the cause of crime, injustice and chaos, namely the level of motivation, the level governed by

original sin. What form of righteousness can reach that level? If civil righteousness is unable to plumb to the depths and overcome the core of its own problem, sin, what righteousness can? Luther posed this question and answered it in this way.

There are two kinds of sin, original and actual: original sin, as Psalm 51:5, Matthew 6:23, 7:18, Romans 5:19, 7:19, and Galatians 5:17 give expression to it, and actual sin which is the fruit of this original corruption and can be called our proper sin. Actual sin is every man's very own possession just as is original sin and it reveals itself in our eagerness to judge others (Romans 2:1), while standing condemned ourselves; it reveals itself in our desire to commit adultery, to steal (Romans 2:21), and to take another's life. Just as there are these two kinds of sin, so Luther distinguishes between two kinds of righteousness which are able to oppose these two kinds of sin. And this direct opposition of righteousness to sin is consistent with Luther's theological assertions about sin, where he says that the opposite of the righteousness of Christ, which is the type of righteousness now under consideration, is sin.

"Thus the sin which condemns the world in its entire existence is related solely to unbelief in Christ or to hostility toward Him, and the righteousness which is valid centers only in Christ; and both this sin and this righteousness are related to the words 'because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more.'"

33 WA 2, p. 44.
34 Ibid., p. 45.
It is interesting to note in passing how Luther's basic pessimism about man-in-society's incapacity to will that which is perfectly good influences his thoughts at this point. Luther turned away from the iustitia civilis, the righteousness of this world, man's active attainment of goodness, because he experienced first-hand how futile it is for one to believe that iustitia civilis in and of itself alone is able to solve the problems of anxiety and despair which take their rise out of man's ethical situations in life.36 This he learned on the cold, Augustinian monastery floor. He knew that from man's side, by means of ethics, science, and religion, there is no way, finally, of overcoming the despair which can occur when one interprets the righteousness of God solely in terms of God's demand that man be righteous, i.e., solely in terms of Law. But from God's side there is a solution.37 From the point of view of revelation of God's Grace there is an answer to despair and guilt, an answer which is the only

36 Here I acknowledge the profound study made by G. Törnvall in his Geistliches und Weltliches Regiment bei Luther. He says that many have often supposed that iustitia civilis is the antithesis of iustitia christiana, because they have too rigidly equated iustitia christiana with justification by faith and iustitia civilis with justification by works. One has inadequately realized the relationship between iustitia civilis and justification by faith. (Cf. pp. 142-144.) This is partially correct. The justified Christian's actual or visible righteousness is none other than iustitia civilis. What Luther wanted understood was the correct order or sequence in which meaning occurs, namely, iustitia christi first and then iustitia civilis. But apart from this order there is a definite identification in Luther himself between iustitia civilis and works righteousness, iustitia christi and justification by faith in spite of what Törnvall says. Without careful reading, it is easy to say that Luther plays the one righteousness off against the other. As Törnvall points out, this is not what Luther intended to do.

37 Watson, Philip, Let God Be God, p. 39.
solution to sin (man's constant struggle to gain a foothold in God's kingdom by means of some form of righteousness).

II

Let us look, then, at what Luther knew as alien righteousness (iustitia aliena), that is, the true righteousness of Christ, (iustitia Christi).

"The first is alien righteousness, that is the righteousness of another, instilled from without. This is the righteousness of Christ by which he justifies through faith, as it is written in I Cor. (1:30): 'whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.'"36

The connection which Luther made between this alien righteousness of Christ and his expositions of the doctrine of justification was essential. He could not speak about God's justifying loving activity toward men and their response of faith without at all points referring to this alien righteousness of Christ (alien, in that it does not originate with men, it is not a "domestic" righteousness). Alien righteousness, in that it is so essentially connected with justification, might be called the essential gift of God's grace. And, as such, it is bestowed on men "in baptism and whenever they are truly repentant".39 This means that a man, by the power of the Holy Spirit, daringly and boldly throwing himself onto the mercy and love of God, trusting implicitly in Him rather than in his own efforts and strength, shall have his original, essential sin covered by this essential, alien righteousness

38 Luther's Works, vol. 31, pp. 297-299.
39 Ibid.
of Christ. Thus for Luther it seems that justification by faith and iustitia christi are synonymous:

"Righteousness, then is such a faith and is called 'God's righteousness,' or 'the righteousness that avails before God', because God gives it and counts it as righteousness for the sake of Christ, our Mediator, and makes a man give to every man what he owes him. For through faith a man becomes sinless and comes to take pleasure in God's commandments:... Such righteousness nature and free will and all our powers cannot bring into existence. No one can give himself faith, and no more can he take away his own unbelief;"

We said a moment ago that for Luther this alien iustitia christi is a gift of God and is actualized through the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us look more closely at these two terms, gift and power.

(a.) First, Luther understood iustitia christi as a gift of God. On the basis of Luther's assumption that man cannot provide the answer to the dilemma of any concrete moral situation in which God demands perfect righteousness, Luther turned his attention (possibly during the writing of his lectures on the Psalms) to the only source of a solution, namely, the death and resurrection of Christ. This work of Christ's is the basis for an end to the despair in the life of an individual. This work of Christ is that alien righteousness. And God is the source of this work. God takes the initiative (it is his gift to us). God gives this righteousness of Christ to men in that he forgives their sin, he covers the believer, as Luther often said, like a mother hen, under his wings of

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40 Ibid., p. 298, also volume 34, p. 153.
righteousness. God imputes his righteousness to men as a gift. This gift is based on God's love in Christ's sacrifice. Man has no part in it. Man is alien to this righteousness. It is given to men as a free gift apart from any worthiness on man's part.

But this gift of iustitia christi is not a substance, a quality, nor is it visible.

"This righteousness, however, is completely concealed, not only from the world but also from the saints. It is not a thought, a word, or a work in ourselves,... Christ placed this outside our senses; we cannot see and feel it. The only way it can be grasped is by faith in the Word preached about him, which tells us that He Himself is our Righteousness."42

Iustitia christi is the divine gift which is given to men at the moment of revelation; at the moment when the gift of God's loving forgiveness is proclaimed the gift itself is given. And men hear the proclamation and respond either in trust or mistrust. In other words, faith in the auditory event of revelation is essential before one can know or understand the reality and meaning of this gift of alien righteousness. One must accept the gift of Christ's righteousness before one can appreciate it as a gift. It is in the acceptance of the gift that a relationship between God as the giver of the gift and man as the receiver is established. For Luther man only receives the gift when he is in a faith relationship to God. This living faith relationship to God is what allows

man to receive the gift. It is only when man responds in faith to God that he experiences the gift. (It is this close linking of iustitia christi as gift with the faith-appropriating relationship which forces us to evaluate G. Törnvall's analysis as weak at the point where he said that Luther did not equate iustitia christi with justification by faith. We believe that Luther did just that. Cf. above.) But we cannot fully understand how this alien righteousness can be a gift unless we understand that it is also as power.

(b.) Secondly, for Luther iustitia christi is a power. Here we must immediately include a reference to the Holy Spirit, whose power this righteousness is. Luther said that the Holy Spirit instills "in us a new spirit, which renders God's Word and Law pleasing to us. Now I take delight in the command to trust God above all things. I sense that I can do it;..."

The full extent of this power of iustitia christi is best seen in Luther's reference to the incompleteness of iustitia christi and yet at the same time, its power to create that completeness in the individual's total righteous situation before God.

"23. For we perceive that a man who is justified is not yet a righteous man, but is in the very movement or journey toward righteousness. 24. Therefore, whoever is justified is still a sinner; and yet he is considered fully and perfectly righteous by God who pardons and is merciful."44

43 Luther's Works, vol. 22, p. 144.

44 Luther's Works, vol. 34, pp. 152, 153. Luther elsewhere says that "The Holy Spirit comes into my heart and engenders a spirit in me that delights in His words and works even when He chastises me and subjects me to cross and temptation".
This brings us to say something about the relation in Luther between this powerful, alien righteousness and sin. A man of faith who appropriates this alien righteousness of Christ to his own life nevertheless remains sinful. His is the original sin in that he is a member of the human race and is continually mistrusting God's promises. Faith and this covering _iustitia christi_ do not immediately eliminate sin. But because one clings to this _iustitia christi_ in faith this sin, original and actual, is not imputed to him. Luther never questioned the reality of this alien righteousness of Christ covering our sin, and yet he firmly believed that sin remains, even in the justified Christian.

"The adversaries do not want to admit this. Therefore they laugh when we say that faith justifies and yet sin remains. For they do not believe that incredible magnitude of God's power and mercy beyond all mercy. He who is righteous is willing to conceal this, but he who is not righteous wants to consider himself righteous. This imputation is not something of no consequence, but is greater than the whole world and all the holy angels."45

It is the most boastful cry Christians can make to those who do not believe that Sin remains in the justified man to say to them, as Luther did to his adversaries:

"Therefore, it is the sweetest righteousness of God the Father that he does not save imaginary, but rather, real sinners, sustaining us in spite of our sins and accepting our works and our lives which are all deserving rejection, until he perfects and saves us."46

Here we find the true power of this *iustitia christi*, in that God is able to cover the persisting, real sins of each believer. He does this by accepting his own mercy, his own obedience, his own righteousness. This means that God looks at men through the person and work of Christ. God looks at men through himself. God covers men's sin with his righteousness because he has decided to do it. The righteousness which avails before God is his own. The basis for an understanding of righteousness as power is to be found in this change which took place in God himself.

And this power of the proclaimed *iustitia christi* provides a new freedom, a new release from despair, for individuals. *Iustitia christi* creates totally new situations for believers. It opens up new vistas of ethical possibilities in their lives. It opens up the possibility of love in their lives. A man can now find hope for his life, rather he finds that a new life has been given to him, and it is now possible for him to turn his thoughts off himself and onto others. He now has an end to his crying in despair of his life and he finds himself boasting. And it is precisely in this power of God that a man may boast. By putting all the emphasis on the alien character of *iustitia christi*, Luther was affirming God's extreme Godliness and power. And it is precisely in this power of God's love to pardon and grant mercy that Christians can boast, rather than in any righteousness which might suppose to be within themselves.

"If I am a sinner and my life does not pass muster before God, and if I find no righteousness in myself, I have another treasure, which is the righteousness of which I boast and on which I rely. This is Christ's going to the Father, which He has presented to me as a gift."God is both the powerful Giver and the Gift for Luther. He is the only righteous one and it is He who covers our sinful ugliness with this mantle of His own righteousness. We only appropriate this righteousness to ourselves in faith. It does not originate in us.

Two further points which Luther made concerning this alien iustitia christi were these. First, this iustitia is not given or bestowed on believers all at one time. Here we are again able to see how closely Luther related iustitia christi to justification and particularly sanctification. He believed that according to Pauline theology God first proclaims men to be righteous (this is the gift element), and then proceeds to make them righteous in fact (this is the power element). But this notion of the perfecting process of iustitia christi has no relationship to any mechanical, quantitative or qualitative notion of infused righteousness, as we said earlier, especially a righteousness which is based on human merit. In the first place, this iustitia bears no relationship to an individual's merit or worthiness. If it did it could no longer be regarded as gift. Iustitia christi is a freely given gift which men

49 Luther's Works, vol. 34, p. 152.
50 Luther's Works, vol. 31, p. 299.
can appropriate in faith if they so desire. The act of be-
stowal of iustitia christi is completely free from any influ-
ence or compulsion from man.

Secondly, Luther did not consider sanctification a quanti-
tative matter. We are observant of his notion of sanctifica-
tion at this point because it ties in so closely with our
problem. Sanctification is the action of the Holy Spirit in-
side the justified Christian, convincing him of his sin and
assuring him of Christ's forgiveness. And this working of
the Spirit is a constant struggle, a continuing warfare be-
tween God and Satan within us. Sanctification is a daily,
hourly, struggle for Luther.51 And because of this struggle
we are dependent upon God's Word for its renewal of trust in
us until faith is at last perfected in us by God through death.
I will say more about the perfection of righteousness through
death in the section dealing with proper righteousness.

It can be seen from what we have just said how important
the Word of God is. There can be faith only when and where
this gift is announced, only where the Word is spoken. Here,
too, the spoken word of the preacher plays its part. Luther,
himself, many times expounded this doctrine of iustitia
from his pulpit so that believers could hear about Christ's
going to His Father for us, thus enabling the Holy Spirit to
grasp them in faith, thus enabling this iustitia christi,
which was meant for them and which would struggle powerfully
within their breasts with unbelief, eventually to win all of
the battles at their death.

Thus far I have looked at the first moment of righteousness in Luther, the alien \textit{justitia christi}, a righteousness not of men but of God, apprehended only by faith. But in order to bring this discussion onto the ethical level, the level of social responsibility, of a faith which is active in loving acts, we must look at Luther's further delineation of \textit{justitia christi} as \textit{justitia propria}, of our proper righteousness. It is this proper righteousness which brings our discussion of Luther onto the level of Christian behavior.

As we saw earlier, Luther, interpreting Paul, divided sin into the classifications of original and actual. Opposite to original sin he placed the alien righteousness of Christ. Opposite to actual sin he placed our proper righteousness, \textit{justitia propria}.

"The righteousness which is contrary to this (Peccatum actuale) is actual, flowing from faith and essential righteousness, (I Cor. 15:49, Ps. 85:13)."\textsuperscript{52}

This positioning of actual righteousness opposite to actual sin was not fortuitous. In the first place, it is a thoroughly biblical distinction. Luther drew on the epistles and gospels not merely to substantiate his position, but primarily because this position as stated in scripture was to him so clear and unequivocal. He found that Paul and the gospel writers knew the reality of actual sins in a Christian's life to be corrupting, defiling, and debasing. He also found that they were just as aware of the reality and value of concrete

\textsuperscript{52} WA 2, p. 46.
forms of righteous, loving deeds, i.e., deeds stemming from faith in Christ and His righteousness (Rom. 6:19, Lk. 7:36-50). In the second place, this distinction is in keeping with the basic distinction, and is itself part and parcel of the distinction, which Luther and the other reformers made between Law and Gospel,\textsuperscript{53} and of the Christian who, in relation to God's Law and Gospel and God's two-fold rule via the two kingdoms, is "simul iustus et peccator", simultaneously righteous and sinner. In other words, the theological distinction between the \textit{iustitia christi} and our own \textit{iustitia propria} which flows from it is certainly biblical in regard to its theological implications.

But for Luther there was more to such a position than its scriptural authority or theological cogency. There was always the factor of what Professor Prenter has called Luther's "realistic understanding of the redeeming presence of Christ in faith,\textsuperscript{54}

\textquote{For Luther, Christ himself is extraordinarily present. He is present as Spirit. He is able to come into men's hearts, to get inside a person. He is never far from those who call on him. Wherever Christ is, there is God's love. For Luther the Spirit of Christ was not an abstraction, but a present reality. The \textit{iustitia christi} which is given as gift and as power is nothing else than Christ himself as Spirit at work in man. The Holy Spirit of Christ comes into a man, resides within him, and turns our thoughts and will}


\textsuperscript{54} Prenter, Regin, \textit{Spiritus Creator}, p. 29.
toward Himself. The indwelling Spirit destroys any thoughts or desires about one's own goodness. The living Christ fulfills all civil righteousness in men.\textsuperscript{55} The conscience of a man must be attacked, his delusion of righteousness be injured by Christ.\textsuperscript{56} And this happens when Christ's Spirit comes into a man.\textsuperscript{57}

On the basis of this real, indwelling Christ as alien righteousness for the man in whom He dwells, Luther began to clarify what \textit{iustitia propria} is. Here again Luther will permit no confusion about whose righteousness this is. All righteousness is Christ's. Man cannot manufacture any righteousness. Therefore even man's proper righteousness is only proper to him because it is Christ's alone and proper to Christ. The \textit{propria} or properness really refers to the perfect nature of Christ's righteousness, that which man's righteousness should be but is not, rather than to man's possession of it as a quality in himself. A man's proper righteousness is to be found alone in Christ. The proper righteousness never ceases to be alien to man, because man remains a sinner even at the moment of faith. When a man turns to Christ's righteousness he finds that in himself he is a loathsome, abominable creature who is full of pride and the old Adam. Man, in turning to Christ, discovers how disgusting and worthy of judgment his

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{55} Luther's Works, vol. 12, pp. 274, 275.
\item \textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{57} I owe a debt to R. Prenter who cogently presents \textit{iustitia aliena} in Luther's theology in terms of the real, living presence of Christ. "Our alien righteousness is to Luther the living personal Christ, not a certain abstract contribution of Christ. And this Christ is not away from us somewhere in foro coeli but dwells in us by faith." Spiritus Creator, pp. 47-49.
\end{itemize}
desires and thoughts are. He also discovers that he is incapable of destroying his self-centered desires. And this often leads a man to despair of himself. Here is the situation of man experiencing what Luther called Anfechtung or inner spiritual anguish and temptation. If these desires within man are to be crucified, and they must be (carnem suam crucifixerunt cum viciis et concupiscentiis),\(^58\) then they must be crucified by Christ, who alone is able to perform this work in us. That there is inner spiritual struggle going on inside a man is a sign that he already has been granted the gift of justitia christi (Christ) and that his power is at work. This struggle or conflict is the beginning of man's proper or actual righteousness which encounters man's proper or actual sin. This struggle or Anfechtung is that very encounter of Christ with our own sinfulness.

The result of this inner conflict is that a man comes to hate himself, he despairs of himself, and, where Christ is active in him, trusts rather in God's forgiveness and righteousness. The Christian man is at once despairing and confident, as Luther said to Spalatin:

"You again subjoin two little questions. First, as to what should be the attitude of mind of one who is about to sacrifice or to do other pious works. I answer briefly: You should be at once despairing and confident in doing any work, despairing on account of yourself and your work, confident as regards God and his mercy..."\(^59\)

\(^{58}\) WA 2, p. 147.

\(^{59}\) Luther's Correspondence, Smith and Jacobs, vol. I. Lutheran Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1913, p. 70.
Because a man turns himself over completely to God and his mercy he begins to look outside; he begins to take an interest and concern in others. He finds himself performing acts of love to his neighbor (in charitate erga proximum). Luther said that as a man does this he follows the example of Christ (I Peter 2:21, II Cor. 3:18). In Christ's righteousness a man is set free from the Law (the demand of righteousness), from himself, and finds that he is now a slave to all men (I Cor. 9:19), i.e., seeking the good and justice of others rather than his own. And yet this is not he himself working for others but Christ working through him. The exchange between what we possess, namely, sin, and what Christ possesses, namely, righteousness has been made. Christ possesses our sin and struggles with it to finally overcome it in us. We possess his righteousness as both gift and power and it works in and through our lives for others. The reality that the Christian experiences now is that it is no longer he who lives but Christ living and working in him.

At the moment of faith the Christian is not really concerned whether or not his actions on behalf of others are righteous or not in the world's opinion. At the moment of mistrust in God, however, he does care; he wants to be regarded as being righteous; he seeks after righteousness in and of

60 WA 2, p. 147.
61 Luther's Works, vol. 31, p. 300.
62 Ibid., p. 301.
63 Ibid., p. 299.
himself and his works. At the moment of faith a Christian is truly beyond that righteousness which is qualified by political laws, ceremonial laws, or Decalogic ones (iustitiae civilis); he is beyond good and evil as moral categories. In disbelief, on the other hand, a Christian searches for a iustitiae civilis with which to cover himself and his actions. This is the dialectical tension in the moments of the life of a man who is simul iustus et peccator. This means that Christians will perform acts of civil righteousness, as all men do, as well as acts which are beyond categorization in terms of righteousness. The only time that a Christian's deeds may be strictly classified as being examples of iustitiae civilis rather than iustitiae christi is when they are not motivated by faith in Christ.

Conclusion

In conclusion, then, we may fairly say that these distinctions which Luther drew regarding these two moments of righteousness are distinctions which are only somewhat accurate in a theological discourse, but which are humanly indistinguishable when experienced as life situations. This is so not only because one may dissect in a theological discussion what is

64 By this I mean that it is not the doing of a good deed, so called, which would make him good or righteous which is paramount for the Christian at the moment of faith, but, rather, the neighbor who is in need. There is nothing good or righteous apart from faith and "if anything is done in faith it is a good work not by any virtue of its own, but simply because of the faith which prompts". Works of Martin Luther, vol. I, p. 197.
incapable of dissection in life, but, more importantly, because for Luther these two righteousnesses do actually cohere in reality at the express will of God; there is an organic connection between them as there is between Creation and Redemption. There can never be one righteousness without the other simply because Christ has redeemed the whole world. For Luther everything, and this includes *iustitia civilis*, belongs to Christ; everything has meaning and validity only in him.

This does not mean that there are not two distinct moments of righteousness for Luther. There is a distinct difference of quality between *iustitia civilis* and *iustitia christi*. The former is vitiated by sin, the latter is totally holy. The former has its primary source in God and its secondary source in men. The latter has both primary and secondary sources in God. The former pertains to the Law and Creation, the latter to Gospel and Redemption. But the Law has been perfectly fulfilled by Christ and Creation redeemed by him. On this basis Luther advised George Spenlein in 1516:

"Therefore, my sweet brother, learn Christ and him crucified; learn to pray to him despairing of yourself, saying: Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, but I am thy sin; thou hast taken on thyself what thou wast not, and hast given to me what I was not. Beware of aspiring to such purity that you will not wish to seem to yourself, or to be, a sinner. For Christ only dwells in sinners. For that reason he descended from heaven, where he dwelt among the righteous, that he might dwell among sinners. Consider that kind of his, and you will see his sweetest consolation...."  

65 *Op. cit.*., *Luther's Correspondence*, p. 34.
CHAPTER II

F. D. E. Schleiermacher

Having reviewed the salient features of Luther's exposition of the two iustitias, we now move ahead in time and theological history some three hundred years in order to see what relationships to Luther's exposition there might be in the work of F. D. E. Schleiermacher. What we want to investigate in this chapter is whether there is either theological proximity to or distance from Luther's position in Schleiermacher on this matter of the two iustitias. Does Schleiermacher at all parallel Luther's thought or does he separate himself from Luther on this issue? This is the question to which we shall address ourselves.

One might ask why, in a dissertation with the date limitations of 1840 to 1960, as well as the limitation imposed by a study devoted to a particular area of Lutheran ethical theory, a chapter should be devoted to an investigation of F. D. E. Schleiermacher's theological positions with regard to iustitia christi/iustitia civilis. The answer lay in the fact that Lutheran as well as Reformed theology throughout the nineteenth century was indebted to him, either in that he provoked forthright denials challenging his efforts, or that he drew favorable responses, not only from his contemporaries, but from theologians up to the present day. Whether he was discussed with approbation or disapproval, he was and is...
discussed. This influence and reaction is rather to be expected from someone who "is mainly responsible for the redirecting of Protestant theology at the beginning of the nineteenth century." In regard to the fact that Schleiermacher was of the Reformed communion and this dissertation deals with problems in Lutheran ethical theory, I take as my defense Schleiermacher's own attitude toward the difference between Reformed and Lutheran, which was that there are no sufficient grounds for the separation of the two. Under these circumstances I feel that this dissertation would be incomplete without the inclusion of a study of his position on the iustitia concept.

In this study I propose to show what possible relationships exist between Luther's understanding of the two iustitias and Schleiermacher. I will use two major sections: (A) an analysis of iustitia christi as seen in the relationship between men and the God-man, Jesus Christ, (B) an analysis of what Schleiermacher meant by iustitia civilis.

SECTION A

Inasmuch as I have set myself to the task of describing Schleiermacher's understanding of iustitia christi and relating it to Luther's understanding, I will first briefly recall the

1 In 1937 H. R. Mackintosh wrote that Schleiermacher was studied on Continent with closer scrutiny than anyone except Luther. Cf. Types of Modern Theology, H. R. Mackintosh, London: Nisbet and Co., 1937, p. 31.


main features of Luther's theological understanding of that concept as I have presented it. I do this in order to have a background against which to view Schleiermacher's interpretations.

It will be recalled that for Luther the only solution to the problem of original sin and alien righteousness, the only solution to the fact of original sin which is everlasting or continually present, the sin of the human race, is the alien righteousness, the true righteousness, of Christ (alien because it does not reside in men). Only the alien righteousness of Christ can cover the original sin of all men. It must also be remembered that for Luther there was a distinction but no separation possible between alien righteousness and justification; the two realities were synchronomous. In addition to this, Luther asserted that this alien righteousness was invisible and imperceptible to the senses of man, a non-qualitative, non-substantive reality which can be apprehended only by faith, especially after the preacher has proclaimed and expounded Christ's going to the father for us. Finally it must be remembered that Luther, following Paul, not only distinguished between original and actual sin, but also between alien and proper righteousness in such a way that Christ's own righteousness, our alien righteousness, overcomes the original sin in man and works in such a powerful way as to give man a proper righteousness which in turn covers his actual, concrete sins.

4 Cf. chapter one, pp. 13-19.
5 Cf. chapter one, pp. 20-21.
In reading Schleiermacher, one is led to the conclusion that where Luther used the words alien righteousness, Schleiermacher used the words original righteousness. The meaning of this term as used by Schleiermacher would appear to parallel Luther's. But this must be proved. The first questions which must be asked are on what occasions and in what context did Schleiermacher use the expression original righteousness? If we can understand the occasion and context in which the term appeared we should be able to understand Schleiermacher's meaning.

Schleiermacher worked in some detail with the concept of original righteousness in The Christian Faith. It must be noted that, regarding the occasion and context of usage of the term, his analysis of the universality of the feeling of absolute dependence demands that a study of all the possible areas of the world's original perfection be made.\(^6\) This is the reason for the study of original righteousness. Having discussed the difficulties associated with the inclusion of the designation 'image of God' in a dogmatic presentation, Schleiermacher broached the subject of original righteousness. It is obvious that Schleiermacher wished to retain the notion of original righteousness even though it presented difficulties of interpretation for him. The first difficulty is seen in his attempt to show that original righteousness must be understood as a condition which provides the proper basis for an effective

\(^6\) Cf. Par. 57.
expression of the God-consciousness. This means that for Schleiermacher original righteousness cannot be understood solely as the "uniform temperamentum of the bodily functions", not solely as a "basal disposition" in man toward righteousness, but must be understood as a unity of both.

"Uniform temperamentum of the bodily functions" is the expression which the Apology of the Augsburg Confession used to describe the original state of perfection in terms of a sound physical condition of the first pair of humans. The confession also discussed original righteousness as the first couple's inclination or power to trust and fear God, which is really what Schleiermacher referred to as a "basal disposition" in man. Both the physical soundness (uniform temperamentum of the bodily functions) and the inclination or power to trust and love God (basal disposition) have been lost to man. In other words, Schleiermacher wanted to say that both the physical and the spiritual aspects in man have been disturbed by man's fall into Sin. For Schleiermacher there was no question but that there was an original condition of righteousness. To think contrary to this was for him to fall prey to the Pelagian doctrine. Schleiermacher needed to affirm this

7 Cf. par. 61 (5) Schleiermacher is correct, it would appear, in selecting the first class of passages, namely from the type found in the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, as bearing more directly on his discussion of perfection as it relates to the God-consciousness. The reason for this bearing would appear to be that in these older doctrinal formulations which he quotes stress is laid on both a "balanced physical constitution" as well as the "gifts" of a "surer knowledge of God, fear of God, trust in God," in other words, on the total natural and spiritual constitution of men, the self in its totality." It was on this total constitution that Schleiermacher based his understanding of self-consciousness. For this, cf. pp. 121-123 of R. R. Niebuhr's Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion.
original condition of righteousness in man, difficult as it was, which was a unity of the physical and spiritual aspects in man, in order to provide himself with a background upon which to construct his understanding of the dependence of the self upon God. This, for him, constituted the redemption of the self.8

The second difficulty arises from an attempt by Schleiermacher to discuss the original condition of perfection and original righteousness without wishing to refer to an historical person. The difficulty lay in Schleiermacher's refusal to discuss the original perfection in terms of a first historical man who might possibly have possessed some developed states of God-consciousness or attributes of perfection. As he said regarding any descriptions or doctrines of the first man, "there is no reason why we should lay down any special doctrines concerning the first men".9 Having said this, Schleiermacher continued to talk about original perfection in terms of someone who was there. "But this (the discussion concerning the lower and higher impulses in man, which shall be considered consequently) leads us over to the other point of view--namely, the representation of original righteousness of the divine image as an actual condition of the first man."10

Schleiermacher was aware of the dilemma which was caused by

8 For Schleiermacher, redemption is predicated upon the existence of the original attributes of perfection. Cf. The Christian Faith, p. 253.
9 Ibid. pp. 251, 252.
10 Ibid. p. 255.
the reference of original righteousness to a "first pair," and yet he himself seemed incapable of not doing it.

Apart from these obstacles, however, Schleiermacher made definite constructive points concerning original righteousness. The first is that to which we have already alluded, namely that there must be a doctrine of original righteousness (here we must point out that Schleiermacher seems to have equated the original perfection of man with original righteousness, since original righteousness is one of the sections which is used to elaborate the original perfection thesis),11 a condition of original good in human nature, in order to make possible a doctrine of sin. "For sin must have been preceded by knowledge and recognition of the divine will, and in that case it must have been preceded by free activity which was not sinful."12 For Schleiermacher, sinfulness is the necessary situation out of which arises a need for redemption and a redeemer.13 Although it appears at this point that sin is a somewhat deficient reality, a reality which is nothing more than a necessary point in an argument, I hope to show that for Schleiermacher the reality of sin is much more.

Thus, for Schleiermacher's systematic approach to theology, original righteousness must have been an actual condition in

11 Ibid., par. 61 (1).
12 Ibid., p. 255.
13 Ibid., p. 256, Cf. also p. 270, "...we may regard sin on the one hand as simply that which would not be unless redemption was to be."
order that the Redeemer "can come in as the turning-point" to restore our present condition to a condition which was precipitated in Creation. We know that there was a precipitated or prior condition of original perfection or righteousness not by looking at Adam but at Christ. This leads us to a crucial point in Schleiermacher's work. One can know what original righteousness was only by looking at the person in whom alone it was perfect, namely Christ. "But if we are to see everything that can develop out of such original perfection all together in a single human instance, it is not to be sought in Adam, in whom it must have again been lost, but in Christ, in whom it has brought gain to all."¹⁴ But what is the content of this righteousness which was fulfilled in Christ? It will be possible to answer this question only after describing what Schleiermacher meant by his references to Christ's redemptive activity as well as to Schleiermacher's understanding of original sin.

According to Schleiermacher this original condition of righteousness was a continuous God-consciousness.¹⁵ What is meant by continuous is this. Man's present God-consciousness, unlike the original condition, is weakened or interrupted by the constant influence of his desire to obey the "lower powers of the soul", whereby he "fails to recognize himself as the

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 256.

¹⁵ "So we account it part of the original perfection of man that in our clear and waking life a continuous God-consciousness as such is possible." Ibid., p. 245.
place in which the earth achieves self-consciousness..."16

This means that the God-consciousness is predicated upon an understanding which credits man with higher and lower impulses.17 These impulses are governed by the God-consciousness and the God-consciousness is in turn affected by the impulses.18 Here Schleiermacher's discussion is circular. The original righteousness is continuous God-consciousness and this is an uninterrupted, higher impulse toward God and conscious self-awareness.

It is this continuous God-consciousness or original righteousness which Schleiermacher places in opposition to sin.19 Sin is "a powerlessness of the God-consciousness, and...develops in man in consequence of impressions received from the totality of finite existence".20 We see that the action of the impulses, both higher and lower directly affect the God-consciousness, the original righteousness; sin is the action of the lower impulses, received through the totality of finite existence, to

16 Niebuhr has put his finger on the heart of what Schleiermacher means in his discussion about the higher and lower self-consciousnesses as well as the notion that the God-consciousness informs and qualifies man's self-consciousness and vice versa. Cf. pp. 244-246, The Christian Faith.

17 Ibid., p. 255.

18 Ibid., p. 234.

19 Cf., par. 63, p. 262, where Schleiermacher relates this original righteousness, the God-consciousness, to sin. Also in par. 65 (1) and 63 (2) the relationship between the original righteousness and the state and actuality of sin is explained.

20 Ibid., p. 269.
destroy those higher impulses. These lower powers are called "the flesh" and the higher ones "the spirit". Sin, to turn round Barth's expression with regard to redemption in Schleiermacher, is man's descent from the spiritual state to the sensory one. This means that for Schleiermacher to be able to discuss sin he must presuppose the prior state of original righteousness or what might be called the original, uninterrupted God-consciousness. "Thus the state of sin over its entire range actually presupposes the original perfection of man, and is indeed dependent upon it." We must ask whether this sin can be called original? Schleiermacher hesitated to call sin either original or actual, although he did describe sin as having two sources; a source outside ourselves (original sin) and a source inside of ourselves (actual sin), and, as such, could be said to have had an understanding of the doctrine of original sin. This original or outside source of sin is infinitely destructive of the original righteousness as a subjective state in man, although the original righteousness remains as an objective state to which man forms a relationship. The original sinfulness has such a destructive force that even man's moment of God-consciousness, "though the best thing in him, is thus polluted and untrustworthy".

21 Cf., par. 66 (1) The Christian Faith.

22 Protestant Thought; From Rousseau to Ritschl, K. Barth, Harper and Row, New York, 1959, p. 345.

23 Schleiermacher, op. cit., p. 278.

24 Ibid., pp. 279-282.

25 Ibid., pp. 282, 283.
The original sinfulness, as understood by Schleiermacher, brings him close to asserting a doctrine of total depravity. By total depravity we mean man's inability, because of his sin, to co-operate in any way with his salvation, and his inability, in and of himself, to appropriate any portion of Christ's work of redemption. Although he does not permit a position such as this, Schleiermacher does affirm that the effects of original sin persist, in the form of actual sins, in the lives of redeemed individuals.

Original sin, then, presupposes original righteousness. But is this original righteousness in Schleiermacher the same as that alien righteousness (iustitia aliena) which Luther distinguished as the theological counterpart for original, alien sin? I think that although Schleiermacher stated his propositions using a language different from Luther's the two understandings are identical. They are identical both with respect to the fact that Christ is the source of this alien righteousness, that is, the one who commands and demands righteousness, as well as the one who effects or produces righteousness in men. This distinction between command and effect is nothing more than the distinction which we noted in Luther between righteousness as demand and gift.

Let us examine these two aspects more fully. With regard to the assertion that for Schleiermacher Christ commands and...

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26 "Yet we must not magnify our congenital sinfulness to such an extent as would involve the denial of man's capacity to appropriate redemption." The Christian Faith, p. 283.
rewards righteousness we make these points. First, according to Schleiermacher, original righteousness was the result of omnipotent causality whereby man was created by God "good, righteous, and holy".27 This immediately reveals that one can in no way conceive of man as having anything to do with the source of righteousness. Secondly, there is a relationship established between God, who created this original righteousness in man, and Jesus Christ. In his early work The Life of Jesus Schleiermacher recognized the difficulties he would face if he could not identify Jesus' historical life with the will and purposes of God. Fortunately for him he was able to make a strong identification between God and Jesus. Jesus, as the Hebraic Son figure, lived his life in such a way that his will was always in perfect harmony with his father's. As Schleiermacher said concerning this unity of will, "I remember another expression of Christ's by which he described this relationship to his efficacy when he said that the Father was in him".28 This early endeavor to relate Jesus to God reached a more mature and sophisticated stage in his Christian Faith. There, attempting to avoid what he called the scholasticism present in the christological formulae, which, he said, make


28 Schleiermacher, Das Leben Jesu, p. 106. It is also noteworthy in this connection that Schleiermacher, in this same work, attempted to express Jesus' relationship to God not only within the framework of a unity of wills, but within the broader framework of the Judaistic titles of Messiah and Son.
these formulae extremely difficult to teach or to explain, he sets forth what he means by God being in Christ. The first thing that he means by the being of God in Jesus is that the historical Jesus was entirely free from sin while at the same time possessing a complete human nature. Schleiermacher describes this sinlessness as being an internal, essential quality of his nature rather than as something external. "Of the Redeemer, on the contrary, we must hold that the ground of His sinlessness was not external to Himself, but that it was a sinlessness essentially grounded in Himself, if he was to take away, through what He was in Himself, the sinfulness of the corporate life." The second meaning is that there was no spiritual conflict in Christ. This means that there was no inner conflict which would have given rise to any sin in Jesus. This happens or is possible because in Jesus there is what Schleiermacher calls an "undisturbed identity of the relationship" between God and himself. This leads to the third and summary point that God in Jesus means that Jesus possessed what Schleiermacher calls a "peculiar dignity"; this dignity was a constant factor throughout Jesus' life, rather than one which could be seen more in one particular moment of His life and less at another. It must be added at this point that underlying this discussion was the understanding that Jesus' peculiar dignity was the result of the eternal divine nature

30 Ibid., p. 377. 'The German Würde translating dignitas, meaning worth, merit and majesty.'
of the Christ entering into union with human nature. This eternal, divine nature of Christ, the factor which conditions everything Schleiermacher says about Christ, and especially His sinlessness and lack of spiritual conflict, permits us to say that Christ, as well as God and the Holy Spirit, possesses original righteousness. (This, as we shall see in chapter five, is what Thielicke calls Jesus' ontic possession of righteousness.)

Christ also effects righteousness in men according to the work of redemption which He has accomplished. There is no question but that in Schleiermacher's presentation this righteousness which is given to men or effected in them by Christ is that original righteousness, that peculiar dignity, that unique physical and spiritual perfection, which was Christ Himself;... "the communication of blessedness no less than the communication of perfection is given immediately in the assumption into vital fellowship with Christ". But why is the Christian drawn into this communion with Christ? What purpose or end does this bestowal of Christ's perfect righteousness serve? The answer is a simple one. The Christian has Christ's righteousness effected in him in order that, through Christ, he may enrich and ennoble the society in which he lives and works. Every "religious emotion is essentially a modification of human existence".

31 Ibid., pp. 391, 392. (Schleiermacher was obviously not able to avoid completely what he called the scholasticism in the ancient formula.
32 Ibid., p. 432.
33 Ibid., p. 111.
ness to work through him modifies human existence for others in some way.

Thus far, then, viewing Schleiermacher's ideas on Jesus' unique unity with God, as the one who commands and demands original righteousness, as well as the one who effects this righteousness, it begins to appear as if he is in essential agreement with Luther's position. But this assertion cannot be effectively demonstrated without turning immediately to this problem of how Schleiermacher thought Christ to have effected or given this original righteousness in men.

We begin our discussion by referring to a point made in chapter one. There we said that Luther regarded alien righteousness and justification as having an essential unity. The relationship between alien righteousness and justification might be likened to the act of giving a gift and the act of receiving the gift. Luther could not discuss the giving of the gift from its reception. Justification (the reception) was predicated upon alien righteousness (the gift). According to Schleiermacher, the action of Christ in redeeming men is his evoking within us his own activity and life; and this activity within men "can never be anything but the act of his sinlessness and perfection as conditioned by the being of God in Him". Original righteousness is here linked up with redemption rather than with justification as it was in Luther and will be in Bonhoeffer's and Thielicke's theology. The

34 Cf., chapter one, p. 20-22.
35 Schleiermacher, op. cit., p. 425.
difference between justification and redemption in Schleiermacher would appear to be this. Redemption is the increment of the God-consciousness through self-consciousness by means of the influence of impulses from Christ and his living activity upon our higher powers of soul, whereas justification is not only the momentary God-consciousness brought about by conversion, but it is that action of Christ which removed the divine displeasure and allowed this increment of impulses from Christ to be the valid beginning of a new life.36

The pivotal point of comparison for this entire discussion lay not primarily in the relationship between justification and redemption, but rather in the role which Christ plays in each, according to Schleiermacher. Here, of course, we reach the heart of the many discussions about Schleiermacher's Christology. Ours is not the task of attempting to explicate Schleiermacher's complex Christology, but only to show in which directions his Christological thought moved with regard to the *justitia christi* problem.

The first factor which appears to relate to our discussion of Christ's role or position in bringing redemption is Schleiermacher's reference to Christ's death as ransom. Commenting upon Matthew 20:28, Schleiermacher said that the act of ransom (Auslösung) which Christ performed refers to his entire life of suffering and confinement, as the Son figure, as well as to his death; but his death is no more effective

36 Ibid., pp. 478-480. Here Schleiermacher would unite conversion and justification due to the impossibility of discussing the one without the other.
than his life, simply because "we can separate off no moment in His life which does not contain His powerful God-consciousness,..." What Schleiermacher was emphasizing at this point was that Jesus' death should not be seen in isolation from his life, because both together constituted the ransom.

There is a difference between Schleiermacher and Luther to be noted concerning their emphasis upon the death of Christ. Schleiermacher, due to his understanding of Christ's God-consciousness, understood in the sense of a continuum, could not emphasize Christ's death any more strongly than he could any moment in his entire life. Luther, however, did over-emphasize Jesus' death as well as his resurrection. For Luther Christ's death and his resurrection qualified his life and vindicated it. Christ's death and resurrection were the victorious vindicators of his life of suffering. Christ's death and resurrection, for Luther, are the guarantors of the forgiveness of man's sin. Christ's death is the basis for the non-imputation of sin to a man who trusts in Christ. This is so because at

37 Schleiermacher, Das Leben Jesu, pp. 346-347.

38 Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, It has been this emphasis, which is onesided, it must be admitted in this early work, which many scholars have regarded as being the primary one for Schleiermacher's theory of Christ's death; and they have concluded that for him this death was not the significant, unrepeatable event. I think that Schleiermacher has been misinterpreted at this point.

39 "For the believer knows that his sin is forgiven him on account of Christ, who has expiated it by His death." "But now that the light of truth is shining, we see with utter clarity that Christ and the apostles designate as saints, not those who lead a celibate life, who are abstemious, or who perform other works that give the appearance of brilliance or grandeur but those who, being called by the Gospel and baptized, believe that they have been sanctified and cleansed by the blood and death of Christ." Luther's Works, vol. 27, pp. 76,
Christ's death God died. 40 For Luther it is not only important that one emphasize that it was God who died, but that the death be emphasized. In this case the death of Christ was more important for Luther than his life because the death qualified the life.

But how did Schleiermacher conceive of Christ's ransom? In the same passage Schleiermacher refers to freedom: "The Son can alone make free, the liberation", 41 a freedom from sin. Christ's life and death has the effect of making "complete and perfect our imperfect consciousness of sin". 42 This means that Christ's death is more than a reminder to men of their sinfulness, which would be to take this last statement by Schleiermacher at its surface value, but in his death is the Law of God condemning man's sinfulness. It should be noted here that Schleiermacher rarely discoursed on the theme of God's non-imputation of sin to the redeemed man in terms of his mercy, a theme which was often on the lips of Luther when he discussed the death of God. For Schleiermacher God does not punish man, does not exact punishment upon man's injustice and sin, because he loves man, but because Christ stands between God and man. For him there could be no attribute of

40 It was extremely vital for Luther’s theology of Jesus’ death that the man who died on the cross was completely God. "That is to say, if it cannot be said that God, not a mere man, died for us, we are lost." Works of Martin Luther, vol. V, p. 223.


42 The Christian Faith, p. 462.
mercy in God which would temper his justice, because this
would presuppose an emotional state in God, a state in which
God could feel pity and love for man, a state which would di-
minish God's justice. Here Schleiermacher's analysis of God's
justice precludes mercy as a divine attribute. Because of this
Schleiermacher was forced into asserting that God withholds
punishment of sin not because of man or because of a change of
heart in God, but because of Christ.

"The rewarding side of the divine justice can have no
other object than Christ, and Him only as one who is dif-
ferent from all other men. From our own religious con-
sciousness, therefore, we can know only of God's punitive
justice; His rewarding relatively to ourselves we must
simply leave out of account."43

We observe that from Luther's point of view Schleiermacher's
philosophically-oriented theology has determined his christolo-
gical assertions, especially regarding the ransom which Christ
has obtained from God for man. We might add that from Luther's
understanding of God as a person and as a loving father, as
a person whose justice could be tempered by mercy, Schleier-
macher's understanding of Christ's ransom of man from God's
punitive justice is really arriving at the right answer,
namely, Christ's procurement of a verdict of innocence from
God, for the wrong reason, namely, to save man from a wrathful
God whose justice dictates that there be no love for man. The
difference between Luther and Schleiermacher at this point,
then, really concerns the difference in their interpretations
of God's justice. Schleiermacher could use the term ransom,
when referring to Christ's death because of his idea of God's

43 Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, vol. 1, pp. 346,
347.
justice as being punitive, which was a result of his understanding of God as absolute causality. In such an understanding mercy can not intrude.

This difference between Luther and Schleiermacher concerning God's justice should not obscure the point upon which they both agreed, namely, that God does not punish man because of Christ and not because of any worthiness on man's part. For both Luther and Schleiermacher Christ, in his life, death, and resurrection, absorbed the full wrath of God's holy justice and has become the true and only mediator between man and God, the most complete revelation of God's love, which love is the "very essence of God".44

But a study of the word ransom alone will not make Schleiermacher's interpretation of Christ's role in redemption clear. There is a second factor or reality which must be added to ransom and that is the one of Christ's sacrifice.

Christ's life and death has to be seen as having been a sacrifice which, in his High-Priestly work, he has completed. Schleiermacher refers to Christ's High-Priestly death, especially, in this way.

"It was just like the complementary sacrifice of the High Priest: that had special reference to those trespasses which had not been consciously recognized, so that his sympathy, regarded as the source of his action, took the place of that consciousness, and the people then felt

44 It is helpful at this point to bear in mind that Schleiermacher held that love, not justice or holiness, was the divine essence and this divine essence is only manifest by one who is in perfect harmony with the divine will, that is, Christ. The Christian Faith, vol. 2, pp. 727-732.
themselves as free from all anxiety about divine punishment for the sins they had committed as if each one himself had fulfilled everything that the law required where there was consciousness of sin.\footnote{45}

Christ, in his death, did exactly what the High-Priest would do for Israel, namely, he represented the only one who was capable of fulfilling the Law, sacrificing himself to that Law for man.\footnote{46}

It should be noted that Luther also referred to Christ as man's only true Aaronic high priest. "Make the high priest Aaron, then to be nobody but Christ alone,..."\footnote{47} "For He is also a priest, as Psalm cx says: 'Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek'; because He intercedes for us in heaven, receives our prayer and sacrifice, and through himself, as a godly priest, makes them pleasing to God,..."\footnote{48}

For Luther as for Schleiermacher Christ, in his death, absorbed the wrath of God both man's as pascal lamb and high priest and thereby redeemed man. But Christ for Schleiermacher can not be seen as the one who brings about a change in God's attitude

\footnote{45} It must be admitted here that this presentation by Schleiermacher is not what Dr. Aulén has called the Classical idea of the Atonement with its special feature which interprets atonement as a "continuous Divine work", i.e., a work in which God's own attitude toward his creation is itself changed. And, yet, this presentation can not be regarded as the "Latin theory" as Aulen describes it, "in speaking of Christ's work, the emphasis is all laid on that which is done by Christ as man in relation to God". Cf. pp. 81-83 of Christus Victor. Schleiermacher's position is a combination of both these theories, making it difficult to categorize as either strictly the Classical or the Latin theory.

\footnote{46} Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, p. 461.
\footnote{47} Luther's Works, vol. 35, p. 247.
\footnote{48} Works of Martin Luther, vol. 1, p. 314.
to man (Aulén's Latin theory of Atonement) without at the same time being seen as the king whose attitude changes. "For how can that which Christ is thought of as obtaining from His Father be separated from that which He Himself as king brings about,\ldots\"\textsuperscript{49} The important word here is the word "king".

Christ, the sacrificed and sacrificing High Priest was also the King during his entire life on earth. Christ's kingship relates to his power to create a fellowship of believers, or a "kingdom of grace". Christ's kingship and lordship is founded on the ordinances which he founded, namely, to have faith in him and to love one's fellowman. The difficulty which Schleiermacher encounters in his discussion of Christ's kingly power lay in his desire to distinguish between this kingly power of Christ and the power of God the Father.\textsuperscript{50} He will not allow the two powers to be equated. He said that both Scripture and the Church will not allow the two to be confused.

This was not a particular problem for Luther as far as we can tell, basing our conclusions on the fact that he often equated the power of the first two persons of the Trinity.

Although there is this problem in Schleiermacher's thought about Christ's kingly power not being exclusively God's power, we would emphasize something that we said earlier (page 9), namely, that for Schleiermacher the will of Jesus was in perfect

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p. 463.

\textsuperscript{50} Schleiermacher, \textit{The Christian Faith}, vol. 2, pp. 468, 469.
harmony with the will of God. This might be one way to bridge the problem of the two powers in Schleiermacher's complex theory of atonement. In other words, we would say that although God was not the Son, a position, we might add, which leads Schleiermacher into what Aulén has described as the Latin theory of atonement, the will of God was and is the will of Christ, an emphasis which unites the first two persons of the Trinity and provides a basis for our conclusion that for Schleiermacher Christ's actions, as ransom, as High Priest, and as King, are the actions of God himself.

But does this emphasis upon the unity of the wills of the first two persons of the Trinity mean that Christ's actions in life and death guarantee to men the alien righteousness of God as Luther maintained? For Schleiermacher the answer was an unequivocal yes. This unity of wills, which can be described in terms of Christ's obedience to God, his humiliation and exultation, in other words, his active and passive obedience, forms the basis whereby God judges men and absorbs them into a living fellowship with himself.51 This means that by Christ's unity of will with God, which is also expressed in terms of his identity with the human situation of sin and sympathy for it, men who unite themselves with Christ are judged by God as righteous because of Christ; this means that they pass through the judgment. This also means that there is absolutely no

51 "The true view is that the total obedience - dikaioma - of Christ avails for our advantage only in so far as through it our assumption into vital fellowship with Him is brought about, and in that fellowship we are moved by Him,..." Ibid., pp. 456-464.
other way in which a man can be regarded as righteous in God's sight.

"What this implies is that, apart from connexion with Christ, no individual man, not yet any part of the corporate life of men is at any time, in and for itself, righteous before God or the object of His good pleasure. And just as of the whole Jewish people the High Priest alone appeared immediately before God, and God saw the whole people as it were only in him, so Christ too is our High Priest because God sees us only in Christ." 52

It appears to me that here Schleiermacher's emphasis upon the ransom which Christ obtains as man's High Priest before God, and its validity, which is based on Christ's unity of will with God, although being a different approach to the problem of Christ's gift of original righteousness from Luther's arrives at the same conclusion as had Luther. For Schleiermacher, as for Luther, man is forgiven of his sin, he is blessed, he is granted amnesty before God, because Christ, the righteous High Priest, represented man in his redeeming activity, "Christ appears before the Father, first, to establish our fellowship with Him, and then, further, to support our prayer before the Father." 53 These words sound very much like Luther's. Christ is the source of man's forgiveness for Schleiermacher. "In virtue, therefore, of that relation to us which is based upon His peculiar dignity, He remains the representative of the whole human race, for, like the High Priest, He brings our prayer before God and conveys to us the divine blessings." 54

52 Ibid., p. 454.
53 Ibid., p. 464.
54 Ibid.
Indeed, these are Luther's thoughts exactly. Christ is the only righteous one who is man's sole righteousness. This is what allows us to say that for Schleiermacher Christ's life and death, conceived as a unity, becomes man's alien righteousness. Schleiermacher's theology of Christ's High Priestly work of redemption is nothing other than that referred to by Luther as man's alien righteousness. Although the phrase Christ's alien righteousness is not used by Schleiermacher, its reality is nonetheless present in his works.

There are differences between Luther and Schleiermacher, however, which must be noted. The most important difference lay in Jesus' identification with man and his human situation. For Luther Christ had made a total identification with man, and lived in men of faith.\textsuperscript{55} For Schleiermacher it appears that Christ becomes similar to man; he represents man, however his divine nature has no capacity for suffering;\textsuperscript{56} Christ is sympathetic to man's sin but does not participate in it.\textsuperscript{57} There is no total equation made between Jesus and men, as there was in Luther. The result is that this limits the extent to which men feel able to relate to or identify themselves in concrete situations with Christ. Christ remains to some extent a stranger rather than becoming our brother, which qualifies, in turn, what Schleiermacher calls Christ's sympathy for man's sinful condition. It qualifies this sympathy in the sense

\textsuperscript{55} Cf., chapter one, pp. 22, 23.
\textsuperscript{56} Schleiermacher, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 460, 461.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
that although Christ represented man and identified himself with us he did not become sin for us, as Luther put it. He is able to draw men, to attract men, to let them identify themselves with him, by means of his sinless perfection, according to Schleiermacher, "and the recognition of the sinless perfection in Jesus Christ, definitely constraining us to the new corporate life, must in the same way be still His work."58 Now this is not what attracts men to Christ from Luther's point of view. For Luther it was because Christ became a curse for man, because he became sin for us, that men can identify themselves with him. For Luther it was not Christ's sinlessness but his having become sin which allowed men to identify themselves with him.59 It is the suffering Christ with whom men identify themselves as a brother. As Luther said: "This means that when you see or hear of Christ doing or suffering something, you do not doubt that Christ himself, with his deeds and suffering, belongs to you. On this you may depend as surely as if you had done it yourself; indeed as if you were Christ himself."60 This exchange between man and Christ is only possible for Luther because man is able to identify himself with the human, suffering Christ rather than with the perfect, sinless Christ as related by Schleiermacher.

A second difference between Luther and Schleiermacher concerns the content of original righteousness. For Luther Christ

58 Ibid., p. 363.
59 Cf. especially Luther's discussion of Christ's having become sin for us in his lectures on Galatians of 1519, Luther's Works, vol. 27, pp. 259-263.
60 Luther's Works, vol. 35, p. 119.
was the content of original righteousness; he was the righteousness of God.\textsuperscript{61} For Schleiermacher Christ fulfills the Law of God but is seldom regarded as the sum or content of that Law; Christ's righteousness is his procurement from God of a righteous verdict, but he is not himself God the Father, therefore, Schleiermacher finds it difficult to consider Jesus as the total content of righteousness. This in no way effects what we have said about Christ's demanding and bestowing righteousness. It will, however, effect what Schleiermacher has to say about Christian ethics, which we will discuss under the heading of man's proper righteousness.

Having referred to two differences between the two men I want now to take note of similarities of thought regarding original righteousness. There is unanimity in their emphasis that faith (God-consciousness is Schleiermacher's term) is necessary and essential before one is able to comprehend the reality of this alien original righteousness.\textsuperscript{62} Schleiermacher was affirming the same position as Luther when he said, "The reference to redemption is in every Christian consciousness simply because the originator of the Christian communion is the Redeemer; and Jesus is Founder of a religious communion simply in the sense that its members become conscious of redemption through Him."\textsuperscript{63} In other words, one can only understand

\textsuperscript{61} Luther's Works, volume 31, pp. 298, 299. Luther also says that Christ's righteousness accomplished more than the original righteousness of Adam.

\textsuperscript{62} See above, chapter one, pp. 21-23.

\textsuperscript{63} Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, vol. 1, p. 56.
the meaning of redemption after the God-consciousness has occurred, that is, only after one has experienced conversion and justification.\textsuperscript{64} Theological discussion for Schleiermacher occurs a posteriori and not a priori. Further, for Schleiermacher the self-consciousness of the work of Christ within the believer as the bringer of righteousness must be evoked in us before we can begin to experience the new life which the influence of his perfection may have upon us. In other words, the act of faith (Luther), the apprehension of Christ's righteousness by our self-consciousness (Schleiermacher), precedes any experience of the possession of Christ's activity in us, his alien righteousness.\textsuperscript{65} Here we find Luther and Schleiermacher in essential agreement.

A final correlation between Luther and Schleiermacher concerning alien righteousness is evident in the understanding they both had about the invisible nature of alien righteousness. Luther said that alien righteousness was not capable of being seen, nor sensed by any of man's senses; it is completely hidden from the world.\textsuperscript{66} There is some difficulty at

\textsuperscript{64} Here R. Niebuhr is correct in saying that for Schleiermacher the "apprehension of the common life in the church, the life and the Spirit of Christ, can occur only when the religious consciousness is awakened to the meaning of the language in and through which it is related to the historic church". Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion, p. 89. For Schleiermacher, as for Luther, the reality of alien righteousness could be understood only a posteriori, i.e., from within the life of the church.

\textsuperscript{65} Schleiermacher's entire analysis of the work and influence of Christ upon Christians is based upon the self-consciousness which apprehends it. Cf. para. 100 (1), (2), (3).

\textsuperscript{66} Cf. chapter one, p. 22.
this point in correlating Schleiermacher's understanding of this invisible nature of alien righteousness because what one ends up describing is the relationship between Christ and men rather than that between alien righteousness and men simply because Schleiermacher did not use the phrase alien righteousness of Christ. The influence of Christ upon men is due to the "communicability of His self-consciousness by means of speech" through the preaching of his church. It is by means of the preached word that Christ communicates himself (and, as Luther thought, enabled the Christian to grasp iustitia aliena in faith). This spoken word is the one sure way that Christ powerfully communicates his perfection to us.

"The constant factor is above all the divine power of the Word-taking the expression in its widest sense-by which conversion is still effected and faith still arise." This means that for Schleiermacher the communication of Christ and all that he is takes place within the community of those who have been concerted and occurs through human instruments. Christ communicates his righteousness to man by means of men, his preachers, his community.

"The difference is simply that the self-revelation of Christ is now mediated by those who preach Him; but they being appropriated by Him as His instruments, the activity really proceeds from Him and is essentially His own." 69

67 Schleiermacher, op. cit., para. 15 (2).
69 Ibid., pp. 490, 491.
The community of the Church is nothing more than those in whom Christ is at work exerting his influence or impulses.

"Hence the modes both of comprehension and of action are the same in the Church as in the Redeemer, because there are present in every member, and therefore in the whole, the very same powers which in Christ's case were taken up into unity with the divine principle." 70

This communicated perfection results in a changed state of mind. 71 In that this communication of Christ's perfection results in an animated and regenerate state of mind, we would suggest that it is because of the non-quantitative nature of righteousness (its invisibility) that the object of its reception can only be the mind.

Having considered these last points comparatively, I am convinced that Luther and Schleiermacher had much in common in their understanding of this alien (Luther), original (Schleiermacher) righteousness.

But Luther, it will be remembered, distinguished between alien and proper righteousness. Alien righteousness he opposed to original sin and proper righteousness to actual sin. We must now inquire whether or not there is any such distinction in Schleiermacher's thought.

To begin, Schleiermacher, too, distinguished between original sin (that which "we bring with us, prior to any act of our own," 72) and actual sin (sin which is "Predicated of the real act"). 72 Actual sin "Proceeds unfailingly from original

70 Ibid., p. 579.
71 Ibid., para. 13 (2).
72 Ibid., para. 69 (1), (2), (3), particularly his Postscript to this section.
sin,"73 therefore, there must be some reality which would be able to overcome this actual sin. For Schleiermacher that reality is called redemption rather than actual righteousness. It is, however, not only a different name which is used here; there is a difference in content between Luther's actual righteousness and Schleiermacher's redemption.

Actual sin persists into the life of the Christian from its point of origin within each human. But there is a means whereby it can be reduced and that is by the appropriation of these impulses from Christ by the individual life. As this appropriation occurs, we possess actual righteousness. This actual righteousness, moreover, is to be found only as we allow Christ to live in us. In other words, actual righteousness is ours only when we relate ourselves to Christ. This can be seen in a key passage of Schleiermacher's description of the redemptive work of Christ upon men.

"But His act in us can never be anything but the act of His sinlessness and perfection as conditioned by the being of God in Him. And so these, too, in addition must become ours... Hence we can know the fellowship of the Redeemer only in so far as we are not conscious of our own individual life; as impulses flow to us from Him, we find that in Him from which everything proceeds to be the source of our activity also a common possession..."74

From this it will be understood that what is being described is actual righteousness, whereupon for Schleiermacher we become actually better men than we were before knowing and being influenced by Christ. The phases of this actual righteousness

73 Ibid., para. 71 (1).
74 Ibid., para. 100 (1).
becoming manifest are these: we are first made aware (self-consciousness) of the presence of sin in our lives (for Schleiermacher sin only exists where there is a consciousness of it), 75 which, as original sin cannot be experienced or understood apart from man's actual sinful acts. In man's actual sinning the original sin, the "received element brought with us is revealed" 76. Original sin is "that inherent quality of the acting subject which is a part condition of all his actual sins and is anterior to all action on his part". 77 Second, we are made aware that there is nothing within us which is perfectly good. For Schleiermacher, however, it was impossible to discuss this awareness of imperfection apart from an immediate consciousness of the forgiveness of sins, that is, the means to perfection. 78 Sin now becomes, through the experience of forgiveness, an alien and despised force, although it is always present within one. Forgiveness means that actual sin is not counted or held against the man who is justified. "And though the new man may still be conscious of imperfection and sin, these no longer pertain to his inner personality, which has become one with Christ;" 79 The term actual righteousness is never used

75 Ibid., p. 277.
76 Ibid., p. 281.
77 Ibid.
79 Ibid., p. 214.
by Schleiermacher, but the reality to which it refers is acknowledged and understood by him. Actual righteousness is the performance of good works and Schleiermacher said that "our reception into living fellowship with Him is the fruitful germ of all good works." In other words, one's experience of Christ's fellowship provides the stimulus for good works, which is one's actual righteousness. So much is this the case, we can say that apart from this reception into Christ's fellowship there can be no good work. Actually, for Schleiermacher it is incorrect to discuss the goodness of works apart from the regenerate will of an individual and equally incorrect to speak of works which are God-pleasing apart from the regenerate will. The reason for this is the pollution of every good will by sin, thus making every work possess a good aspect as well as an evil aspect. "From all this it is very easy to understand in what sense good works are the object of divine good-pleasure. The actual deeds, as they come into view, cannot be so, for they are at the same time good works and sins." The best that one can say about works is that they will of necessity follow from the regenerated man who has "Christ's love working in and through him."

80 Schleiermacher, _op. cit._, para. 112 (1).
81 Ibid., para. 112 (3).
82 Ibid., para. 112 (3). Schleiermacher will not press the distinction between what belongs to Christ and what to man in a good work because "this would be to dissolve the fellowship".
It appears that Schleiermacher and Luther are in agreement at this point. Luther could not assign any human goodness as being the basis of the works of men, even those performed by men of faith, because of their still basically corrupt nature. Schleiermacher did not discuss the freedom from sin which allows one to do good works, as Luther did. He only regarded these works, in that they are good, to be the result of the ever-increasing influence of Christ upon the self-consciousness of the man of faith. It appears, further, that for Schleiermacher, as for Luther, the Christian man remains the passive recipient through whom and by whom Christ works his loving actions. This recipiency Schleiermacher calls "susceptibility". It may be questioned whether or not one is entitled to call this susceptibility to Christ an aspect of man's actual righteousness. For Schleiermacher there seems to be nothing good in our works which is our own or of us. The only good that is ours is so through susceptibility and by the appropriation of Christ's perfection or righteousness working through the regenerated man. This was precisely Luther's point. Man's actual or proper righteousness is always Christ's alien righteousness at work in man.

SECTION B

Let us now turn our attention to Schleiermacher's thoughts about iustitia civilis. He first broaches the subject of civil

83 Cf. chapter one.
84 Schleiermacher, op. cit., para. 112 (1).
righteousness, in his *The Christian Faith*, at the point where he was discussing original sin and man's incapacity for good.

According to Schleiermacher, sin is the cause of evil in the world.\(^{85}\) There are two kinds of evil in the world, natural evil, which is evil "independent of human action," and social evil, which is evil directly dependent upon human action. Both are the direct effect of the existence of sin and are the punishment for that sin because God is just.\(^{86}\) Out of this sinfulness and evil there arises a need for law and order, a need which God has met by ordaining civil government. "For civil government is unquestionably an institution which belongs to the general divine government of the world,"\(^{87}\) God is the author, then, of civil laws for the maintenance of justice and order. Schleiermacher said nothing about the diversity or parallelism of these civil laws which are universal. He was silent about the quality of civil government and laws, with the exception of saying that they are inferior to Christ's kingdom and to the jurisdiction of Christ in his church.\(^{88}\)

But there are obviously two standards or criteria of judgment which this last statement presupposes and Schleiermacher

\(^{85}\) Ibid., para. 76 (1), (2), (3). Cf. also Selbie's comments about sin and evil being related in Schleiermacher's understanding as cause and effect. W. B. Selbie, *Schleiermacher*, E. P. Dutton & Company, New York, 1913, pp. 161, 162.

\(^{86}\) Ibid., para. 84 (1).

\(^{87}\) Ibid., para. 105 (2).

\(^{88}\) Ibid., para. 71 (3).
recognized them. The first criterion is that which the Christian faith regards as a good or worthy action, and the second criterion is that which the world regards as good action.89 This corresponds to Luther's distinction between man being judged by God, on the one hand, and by his fellow man, on the other; man before men (coram hominibus) and before God (coram deo). The difference in viewpoint is a result of the separation which exists in the world itself between believers in God, those who acknowledge his sovereignty, and non-believers, those who do not recognize Him as sovereign. And, yet, even though there are these two standards of judgment of good works there are not two good works. We must emphasize this point. Schleiermacher said that divine causality creates situations in which there are necessary responses made by men. As a man responds, his actions are either good or evil. If he is a regenerate Christian, then his response will be conditioned by Christ's righteousness at work in him, his response will be Christ's perfection actually at work in him. This is the only good in his action. To the extent that he is not influenced by Christ but by his own self-seeking, then his action is evil.90 There is only one good work, and that is the one which Christ makes good. By definition, then, only the regenerate Christian is capable of performing a good

89 Ibid.
90 Ibid., para. 112 (2) Again, this is due to the basic incapacity of man to do good. Cf. para. 70 (1), (2).
work, because only he is open to the impulses or influence of Christ in his actions. This leads one to the conclusion that for Schleiermacher the best magistrate in a civil government would probably be a Christian magistrate because of his Christ-centered motivation.

Our next question must be this: how are good works related to civil righteousness? Schleiermacher viewed the relationship as follows. There is only one good and that is what God creates through Christ. This is Christian piety's good, the good which Christ effects in the regenerate man. But Christ also works through the unregenerate. This work of Christ is identifiable with whatever degree of goodness there is to be found in an act of an unregenerate man. But this is the evaluation which Christians make. There is an evaluation, however, which can be made apart from any reference to regeneration or redemption. This is that which unredeemed men make concerning their actions, and especially their evaluations of actions as being good or worthy apart from any reference to God's grace or Christ. That Schleiermacher permits this idea appears to contradict what he said about there being only one good. But it is not a contradiction, I think. The seeming contradiction lay in Schleiermacher's failure to emphasize the...
two perspectives or viewpoints to any good work such as Luther made. Because of this failure it would appear that we have not only two evaluations of one action, but two quite definite actions as well, one Christian and one secular or civil. If this were the case, then there would be two hard and fast distinctions or classes of men, the Christian and the unregenerate. This would then mean that the actions of Christians in society are in their kind totally different from the actions of unregenerate men; this would also mean that Christians themselves perform two types of actions, those among persons who are Christians and those among unregenerate men. This is exactly what we shall find in the following chapter when we look at the work of Ernst Troeltsch, but this is certainly not at all present in Schleiermacher.

The solution to the problem of the seeming dualism in good works is this. For Schleiermacher there is only one good and one type of action which corresponds to the good. When the Christian performs it, because of his motivation in Christ, it is a Christ-influenced action called his proper righteousness. When the unregenerate performs it, apart from any Christ motivation, it is civil righteousness. But the Christian, as well as the unregenerate, performs actions in society which are not the result of faith or conditioning by Christ; these are the Christian's actions of civil righteousness. This means that the Christian performs one action just as the non-Christian. In that the Christian's action is conditioned by Christ

93 Cf. chapter one.
through the man's faith it is his proper righteousness; in that it is not it is his civil righteousness. In that the unregenerate performs an action it is precluded from being in any way his proper righteousness and can only be regarded as a civilly righteous action.

"Even within the sphere of voluntary action, however, thinkers have always taken care to confine the incapacity in question to what Christian piety regards as alone good in the strictest sense. This again takes for granted that there is a distinction of praise worthy and blame worthy which is quite independant of a man's relationship to redemption; in fact, just as the unredeemed may have in themselves that which is commendable, so the redeemed are conscious of having acquired it without the aid of grace."94

This means that for Schleiermacher the term civil righteousness is to be applied only to these civil actions, performed by both Christians and non-Christians alike, which are not the direct result of an influence by Christ. There are, then, two types of actions, or two possible motivations, for the Christian and only one type possible for the unregenerate man.

Schleiermacher maintained that even though there are two types of good acts there can be no distinction made between acts performed towards God and towards one's neighbor.

"The truth is rather that the latter works, in any sense in which the Christian can regard them as fulfilling the divine law, are in no sense external or carnal; they are truly spiritual works, and are possible only in virtue of an efficacious and purified God-consciousness, so that in this respect no distinction can be drawn between duties towards God and duties towards our neighbor."95

This means that for Schleiermacher only the Christ-influenced acts of proper righteousness fulfill the divine law and that

94 Ibid., para. 71 (3).
95 Ibid.
acts of civil righteousness can never fulfill that law. The
divine law, in other words, is not fulfilled by unredeemed men.
What we do not find in Schleiermacher at this point is Luther's
understanding that the good which is present in the acts of
civil righteousness of unredeemed men is to be attributed to
Christ. Schleiermacher only infers that what makes an act of
civil righteousness good is that it conforms to some human
principle of praise worthiness, commendation, or virtue.

For Schleiermacher, as for Luther, there was no question
but that God has instituted civil good works (iusititia civilis)
for the purpose of ordering and preserving the fabric of society.
Civilly righteous actions, performed by either Christians (proper
righteousness) or non-Christians (civil righteousness), are
really expressions of God's consummate will for His creation
and can be said to be righteous in that He has caused them to
be.96 Apart from Schleiermacher's constant reference to divine
causality, which is really a philosophical idea rather than a
theological one from the point of view of the history of phil-
osophy, a reference which Luther did not use, there is nonethe-
less close agreement between the two men concerning the source
and necessity of civil righteousness.

This agreement can also be seen in the fact that in
Schleiermacher there is a definite correlation between civil
righteousness and civil government, as we have seen to have
been present in Luther also. Civil authority or government
and civil righteousness are related to one another because of
the existence of sin. Sin creates evil, as we saw earlier.

96 Ibid., para. 46 (2) and postscript; also para. 105 (2).
Sin is the dominant force in the lives of the unregenerate and Christ is the dominant force in the lives of Christians. Civil righteousness in the lives of the regenerate and unregenerate, can be considered a civil virtue.  This means that civil virtue is not the same as Christian piety, even though it has been instituted by God. Civil virtue is not equivalent to faith, piety is not equivalent to ethics. This means for Schleiermacher that religion or piety is not essential for the maintenance of justice and order in the world.

"Granted that our civil organizations are still burdened with a very high degree of imperfection and have shown but small power to prevent or to abolish injustice, it would still be a culpable abandonment of a weighty matter...if religion that in itself is not desirable must be called in." 

This corresponds to Luther's emphasis that Christian love (religion in Schleiermacher's word) is seldom sufficient in and of itself in the sphere of government to bring about justice and peace; coercion which is exerted on men by law and punishment is usually the means of attaining these goals among the unregenerate. Religion or piety should not be totally absent from the civil scene, however, because Christians live and work in society. Christian love should qualify and correct society's laws and forms of punishment. Indeed, only the

97 Ibid.

98 Cf. Richard R. Niebuhr's Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion, pp. 102-106. Here Niebuhr points out that for Schleiermacher ethics is a science of human action and "is dependent on the science of nature or "physics". Niebuhr also points out that "Ethics has to do only with 'earthly, resisting life'."

Christian is the best magistrate because he has to seek from Christ "the right temper of mind" in his relationships in administering justice. Christian love tempers justice.

But this only establishes a direct relationship between *iustitia christi* and *iustitia civilis*, it does not show how *iustitia civilis* and government are related. For Schleiermacher one of the primary manifestations of *iustitia civilis* is government. Civil government is the sphere in which *iustitia civilis* is applied. Civil government, for Schleiermacher as for Luther, must relate to the divine ordering of creation and preservation. It does so in establishing laws and maintaining them. The product of this establishment and maintenance of laws is civil goodness, *iustitia civilis*. *Iustitia civilis* is a product of government which in turn is a product of God's love for his creation. As an example of how important Schleiermacher felt government to be, we notice how intent he was upon seeing that the strongest and ablest civil servants and the best possible laws were secured, even if this meant the removal of an unqualified Christian from his civil post and his replacement by an unredeemed but qualified civil servant.101

This leads us to the comment that as a practical result of this theological position regarding *iustitia civilis* Schleiermacher demanded that there be a separation between church and state. Here Schleiermacher contradicted Novalis' notion of

\[\text{\footnotesize 100 Op. cit., para. 105 (2).}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize 101 Schleiermacher, On Religion, p. 19.}\]
theocracy. He wanted to see a separate Church and State, and a strong Church and a strong State. As Karl Barth said, "Schleiermacher no less than Hegel admired and loved the modern Prussianism, and cherished and proclaimed the myth of Sans Souci." Writing about the State, Schleiermacher said, "Improve the laws, recast the whole constitution, give the state an iron hand, give it a hundred eyes if it has not got them already." What stronger language in support of purposeful government could he use? But merely advocacy of separation of the functions and domain of church and state does not mean that he believed that Christians could not participate in the functions of the State. The Christian should have a vocation which involves him to some degree or other in the works government. Indeed, the Christian should seek to strengthen government and _justitia civilis_ wherever possible. Here Schleiermacher is very close to Luther. It would appear, also, that Schleiermacher was more appreciative of the valid goals of _justitia civilis_ than Luther. For both men, civil righteousness was sinful and could not redeem an individual. For both men, _justitia civilis_ is a second best affair when compared with _justitia christi_, although both are

102 Ibid., pp. 24-25. Cf. also _The Christian Faith_, para. 105(3).


105 Barth, _op. cit._, p. 319, 320. "The second ethical point that Schleiermacher constantly stressed in his sermons concerned the civil profession in the exercise of which the Christian is called to prove himself as such. Here Schleiermacher, after his own fashion, was taking up a motif of the Lutheran Reformation."
created and blessed by God. But for Schleiermacher, who was caught up in the Romantic movement's involvement with matters of state and government, there appears to be more of an appreciation of *iustitia civilis*. There is nothing in Schleiermacher's speeches or sermons to suggest that he ever detracted from the weight of his arguments in favor of government by inserting causes or phrases about the unredeemability of acts of civil righteousness, the very thing which we found Luther to have done. On the contrary, Schleiermacher wanted to see a strong Prussian government and army which would direct the affairs of men in a stable and imaginative way.

In conclusion, I think that there is a definite affinity, and in some cases a direct parallelism, between Luther and Schleiermacher, which was the result of an understanding of Christ's relationship to righteousness as well as man's relationship to Christ and to his fellow man which both theologians shared. Schleiermacher's view of civil authority and righteousness was vigorous and in keeping with his total theology of the sovereignty of God and the kingly power of Christ, who bestows his own powerful righteousness on the regenerate.
CHAPTER III

Ernst Troeltsch

We turn now to the work of Ernst Troeltsch in order to inquire whether the ethical theory of iustitia christi and iustitia civilis is further clarified and extended, and, if so, in what particular way; or whether it is changed from the ways in which it was discussed by Luther and Schleiermacher. We add, parenthetically, that because Troeltsch was what one might guardedly call an historical theologian rather than a systematic one, in the sense that he more often surveyed rather than systematized theological issues, means that we will have to look all the more carefully at these surveys in order to be able to interpret his systematic formulations.

I

Troeltsch's understanding of Luther's position regarding iustitia/christi/civilis. (Rigorous dualism later modified to synthesis.)

The first observation which we must make in regard to Troeltsch's analysis of the Lutheran ethic is that there were for him two distinct periods of that ethic's formulation. These he called the early and the late Reformation periods.¹

¹ Cf. pages 44 to 57 in Troeltsch's Protestantism and Progress, Beacon Press, Boston, 1958. I hasten to add that although Troeltsch thus divided the Reformation period; he seldom used this division, often writing about Lutheranism or Calvinism without specifying which period he had in mind.

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Calvin and Zwingli and lasted until the close of the seventeenth century. The late Reformation period began at the close of the seventeenth century and has not yet ended. For each period there was a definite theological interpretation of the principle of the iustitias as well as other systematic principles and notions. This being the nature of Troeltsch's organization of his analysis of Reformation principles, we will follow it in order to try to avoid misrepresentation or misinterpretation of his assertions.

Early Protestant ethical principles, although taking their rise from a systematic theology which, Troeltsch thought, was not basically differently oriented from Roman Catholic theology in its world-view, were different from those of Roman Catholicism in that they destroyed the ethical dualism of a priestly piety and a lay piety, a form of Christian ethic which was nothing but a religious modification of the natural ethical principles of Aristotle.\(^2\) The Roman theology could not deny the value of a natural ethic which was founded upon Reason. Therefore it absorbed it into itself thereby incorporating an ethic of reason with its biblically oriented ethic of revelation. And this natural ethic of reason remains unfulfilled if it is not thus incorporated.\(^3\) Thus there are two distinct ethical systems which are incorporated in Roman Catholic ethics, and they remain in tension with each other because

\(^2\) In his Gesammelte Schriften, Band 2, Troeltsch says that for the Roman Church "The Christian-ness of ethics consisted of the subordination of goals which arose from natural moral laws under the final goal of the Church." pp. 554, 555.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 555.
the very nature of divine existence or life is a dualism. "The dualism of both moralities has its basis in the dualism of divine existence itself which reveals its nature in the world of Creation and its super-nature in the world of grace."4 The initial step of bridging these two systems was accomplished, said Troeltsch, by the early Christian apologists who regarded the Stoic idea of Natural Law as identical with the Christian moral law (both Matthean and Pauline),5 and on the basis of this Natural Law they devised the theory of the Divine Right of Kings as well as the theory of the two iustitias.6 In all of this the Divine Right of Kings is only valid where the emperor has the blessing of the organ of God's supremacy, the Church. Likewise, iustitia civilis is only valid when and where there is a iustitia christi to perfect it. This means that both theories function and can be controlled only under clericalism, that is, where the Church has control.7 Speaking about the Imperial authority of Christian emperors, especially, Troeltsch said, "Undoubtedly, however, it may and must be limited from above, by the same God who gave it its power; that, however, means that the imperial authority must be limited or directed by the institution in which God is incarnate - that is, by the Church."8 This is clericalism.

4 Ibid., p. 555.
6 Ibid., pp. 157, 158.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
The world view which lay behind this dualism in Roman Catholic theological ethics, Troeltsch thought, was that of the theory of the Corpus Christianum or Christian civilization. According to Troeltsch, the struggle that occurred in the early post-Constantinian Church between secular and spiritual powers resulted in the adoption by theologians of the medieval period of this theme of a Christian civilization. For Troeltsch this idea or world view was based on the notion of Natural Law, which the Church had already incorporated into its theology, as we have just noticed, and the notion of territorial churches, which developed after the reign of Charlemagne. Because the Church had absorbed the theory of Natural Law into its theology she could now lay claim to the secular forces and areas within society. This meant that such divergent sociological areas as the family, on the one hand, and the emperor, on the other, could come under the purview of the Church and her moral theology. Also, because of the gradual recognition by Rome of the validity of the various territorial churches rather than one imperial one, plus the theology of the Divine Right of Kings, there now occurred the Christianizing of various national territories. This latter expansion from imperial Church to territorial church meant that each emperor or sovereign was "the representative of God in his endeavor to realize a Christian order of life." All of this could be called the practical result of the growth of the

9 Ibid., pp. 201-296.
10 Ibid., p. 219.
theory of the Corpus Christianum. But what is this theological theory, this theory which plays such an important role in Troeltsch's evaluation of Luther's theology?

Troeltsch understood Corpus Christianum to mean this. The struggle which the ancient church witnessed between secular organizations and worldly orders, on the one hand, and the religious community of the Church as a distinct sociological and spiritual organization, on the other, was gradually overcome by the medieval church's understanding that the secular as well as the spiritual communities were not two distinct, separate spheres with little or no relationship one with the other, but that they were "two different aspects of the one individual Christian Society". And this Christian society was composed of all the social organizations which were governed by the relative Natural Law, or Natural Law after the Fall of Man into Sin (the jus gentium), which in turn is related to the absolute Natural Law (the jus naturale) and, thereby, to God Himself who is the source. This meant that the State could not stand apart as an unrelated sphere from the Church and vice versa. It also meant that all morality, all moral behavior, comes, eventually, under the jurisdiction of the Church. This means that iustitia civilis is related by the principle of Law to God and His Church. There can be, on the basis of Corpus Christianum, no sharp distinction between iustitia civilis and iustitia christi in the

sense that the one is solely a public morality and the other a private morality (sola coram Deo). The theory of Corpus Christianum provided the necessary basis whereby the Church could control secular as well as sacred matters. "It is rather that both secular and civil power are alike subject to the Bible." And the State is part of the total Christian society which has the same Christian aims as the Church, to guard the world against Sin. This theory of Corpus Christianum began to emerge at the time of the Christian Apologists and reached its fruition under Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory the Great, St. Isidore of Seville and St. Thomas Aquinas. The reason that we refer to this theory of the Corpus Christianum in our discussion of Troeltsch's theology of iustitia civilis and christi is this. Troeltsch maintained that Luther's theological ethic assumed that the truth of the assertion that there was such a Corpus Christianum was indisputable. Such an assumption, said Troeltsch many times, makes many of Luther's ethical assertions, and those of the early reformers, irrelevant for the generations of the twentieth century. This is so today because "there is no longer any question of a single-moulded Church civilization, based

13 Troeltsch, Protestantism and Progress, pp. 57-58.

14 Op. cit., The Social Teaching, vol. 2, pp. 522-523. "Within any particular State, there is a voluntary agreement between the Christian government and the Church which consecrates all the work of the world, in which the civil authority serves the Church through its administration, while the Church hallows all 'labor in a calling', in the administration of justice, in Society, and in domestic life, as the service of God and one's neighbor."

15 Ibid., pp. 194-195.

16 Ibid., especially pages 493 to 502.
on a creed, embracing the whole of society;\textsuperscript{17} What I will try to show in this chapter is this: (1) Troeltsch's understanding of Luther's position regarding the Corpus Christianum amounts to a distortion of Luther. (2) This distortion of Luther forced Troeltsch's own thought on the matter into a position in which he totally separated the two iustitias from each other, a position which was not only un-Luther-like but (3) led to the promulgation of an ethic which is less relevant to our modern world than Luther's ethic which he thought he was correctly interpreting.

We must examine the first assertion that Troeltsch made concerning Luther's world view. We begin by asking these questions. Was Troeltsch's evaluation correct which said that Luther's ethic was based on the veracity of the Corpus Christianum theory? Is Troeltsch's reading of Luther correct, which enables him to say that the religion of the Reformation is a simplification of the religion of the late Middle Ages? In order to answer these questions, we must turn our attention to the understanding which Luther had of the role of Natural Law, since it is on the basis of the position which Natural Law possessed in Luther's theology, according to Troeltsch's survey of the development of the Corpus Christianum,\textsuperscript{18} that a conclusion can be reached concerning Luther's relation to the Middle Ages.

\textsuperscript{17} Op. cit., Protestantism and Progress, p. 52.

\textsuperscript{18} Cf. particularly pages 193 to 220 in volume 1 of The Social Teaching.
We ask, first, did the Lex Naturae have its source in God for Luther or not? Troeltsch said that Luther believed that it did.\textsuperscript{19} I think that Luther did also but with these very important qualifications.

First, Luther did believe that the truest expression of the Natural Law was the Decalogue of Moses (omitting the strictly Hebraic cultic laws such as the Sabbath),\textsuperscript{20} but that this Natural Law found its fullest expression in Christ's words in Luke 6:31 and Matthew 7:31.\textsuperscript{21} This means that Luther regarded the Natural Law as being fulfilled in Christ and yet as still obtaining, still in force, still capable of condemning a man, still law. It remains such for Luther because there will always be the reality of the two governments, as we saw in chapter one. Christ's words do express the sum and substance of the law of nature, but this does not mean that because of him the law of nature, as demand, disappears. Speaking of

\textsuperscript{19} Cf. the discussion of Luther's interpretation of the meaning and value of the Lex Naturae in volume 2 of The Social Teaching, pp. 504 to 506.

\textsuperscript{20} pp. 292, 3 of Luther's Work, American Edition, vol. 45, Muhlenberg Press, Phila., 1962, wherein Luther considers Luke 6:31 and Matthew 7:12 adequate expressions of natural law. An equation is made by Luther between Natural Law and the law of love which tends to confirm the conclusion that for Luther the law of nature had divine origin. Cf. also pp. 151, 152 and 154 of Luther's Work, American Edition, vol. 22, in which Luther discusses the law which is written on the heart, the natural law, and the Decalogue of Moses and says, "The first mode of knowing God is natural and universal and was reinforced by the Law of Moses." This would seem to indicate that for Luther the contents of the law of nature and the law of Moses are identical and both stand in need of fulfillment by Christ. Cf. also pp. 155-56 of this volume where Luther uses the phrase law of nature interchangeably with the Law of Moses.

Christ's words about the Decalogue in Matthew 5:38 ff., Luther said, "Since the world is un-Christian, however, these words do not apply to all; and all do not act accordingly, but are under another government in which those who are not Christian are kept under external constraint and compelled to keep the peace and do what is good."22 With this in mind, we look to Troeltsch and see him describe Luther's position about Christ's fulfillment of the Natural Law in such a way that the Natural Law is no longer law but gospel.

"The Law of Nature is no longer regarded as the radical expression of the idea of personality, of equability, of community of property, of a life without compulsion or law, but the inspiration of all natural and necessary activity with the spirit of faith, since everything which is required by nature (which is itself of divine appointment) can be combined with the spirit of faith, with love to God and man."23

Here is Troeltsch's major argument for grouping Luther within the medieval church's position of the Primitive State. He thought that Luther believed that the Natural Law and man's response to it could be "impregnated with the religious spirit of trust in God and of surrender to Him."24

This reveals Troeltsch's distorted understanding of Luther's position of the Decalogue and government. For Luther the Decalogue does express the content of the Natural Law. But for him the natural man, the unregenerate, as well as the Christian, is not capable of impregnating the Natural Law or the Decalogue with a religious spirit which is manufactured by the

24 Ibid., p. 506.
Will. Troeltsch's entire discussion of an impregnation of Natural Law by a loving will appears to refer to Luther's Christian individual who has faith and is free from the indictment of God's Law, but it says nothing about that same Christian man who remains under the indictment of that Law. Even the regenerate Christian finds it difficult to impregnate the Law with a loving Will. To be able to do this would mean that the Decalogue is capable of being fulfilled by the regenerated Christian in and of himself, and this Luther never asserted. If Luther had believed about the Law what Troeltsch thought he had, then the Law itself would become Gospel and not Law, proclamation and not demand. And Luther soundly affirmed that the Law can never be anything but Law, and that regenerate Christians never in and of themselves are able to fulfill that Law. The Law is fulfilled for them and quite apart from them by Christ.

This leads us to see another misunderstanding of Luther which is present in Troeltsch's writings. For Luther, as we saw in chapter one, the Natural Law, the Decalogue and man's response to them must still be considered part and parcel of iustitia civilis and not iustitia christi or even iustitia christiana (man's proper righteousness in Christ). Troeltsch never realized this distinction else he could not have said that for Luther the Natural Law and the Decalogue could be "combined with the spirit of faith, with love to God and man."25

Luther said, when speaking of Natural Law, which relates

25 Ibid., p. 506.
directly to *iustitia civilis*, not only that its source was God and that it was vitiated by sin, but that it is nonetheless still in force in this life. *Iustitia christi*, on the other hand, is a righteousness of God which is operative in the arena of this world and which opens the way for eternal life to men and women who live in this arena of the world. But men and women cannot imbue or impregnate their response to Natural Law with a spirit of faith or love to God. Luther, in other words, did not identify the Natural Law's demands and man's response to them with *iustitia christi*, as Troeltsch has done. Luther was also more careful to maintain that the Christian does not possess the righteousness of Christ, he does not own it, and can not, therefore, impregnate the demands of the Natural Law with it. The righteousness of faith always remains a foreign righteousness to man. If there is any impregnating or influencing to be done in relationship to the Natural Law it must be done by Christ. But this entire discussion by Troeltsch of an impregnation of the Laws of Nature by a Christian's righteous faith is a misinterpretation of Luther. This is to be said on the one hand about Troeltsch's confusing statements about Natural Law and *iustitia christi*.

On the other hand, there is Troeltsch's unfounded depreciation of Luther's position about Natural Law's valid role. In his *Social Teaching* Troeltsch refers to Luther's theological dilemma about the relationship between the Natural Law of Paradise and the Natural Law of fallen humanity, as he calls it.

He said that Luther had great difficulty reconciling these two and, as a result, there arose a rigorous dualistic ethic in Luther which was extreme in his early works but which he later modified. This dualism which developed in Luther, as Troeltsch saw it, was that between a personal ethic and an official ethic ("person" and "office"). This dualism was based as much on Luther's insistence upon the separation of the Two Kingdoms and their accompanying forms of righteousness as on anything else. Troeltsch said that such a separation, which was due to Luther's unwillingness to use the patristic and Thomistic doctrines, which were ethically hierarchical, forced Lutherans to renounce the Law of Nature in the name of the Sermon on the Mount, as far as one's private or personal "inner life" was concerned, and to reverse the process, as regards one's "public" or "professional life". If this were the case, it would then mean that Luther really saw no connection between the orders of creation ("office") and redemption ("person"), which is an impossibility. The result of such an oversight on Luther's part would be that there could never be any meaningful or purposeful civil righteousness. It would mean that Luther would have believed that God's Word is more relevant to the spiritual or inner-man than to the secularist. Broadly speaking, this is an attack by Troeltsch on Luther's doctrines.

27 The two most destructive arguments of Troeltsch's understanding of a dualism in Luther's ethic and Troeltsch's attendant failure to understand Luther's placement of iustitia christi as well as iustitia civilis under the theology of creation as well as redemption and not to separate the two are found in Gustav Törnvall's Geistliches und Weltliches Regiment bei Luther (especially pages 136 to 159).
of creation and redemption. More specifically, it is an attack on Luther's understanding of iustitia civilis/christi.

Troeltsch thought, it appears, that Luther's Christian man was not wont to take seriously the iustitia civilis which is created by God and exists under the orders of creation, that is, which exists in the secular world of public morality. The work of present Luther research can surely dispel this illusion. But let us look to Luther himself. The first argument against Troeltsch's dualistic, politically and socially negative understanding of Luther is to be found in Luther's constant assertion of the God-created orders of the world. Luther said, in his Estate of Marriage, of 1522, that those who affirmed celibacy by command or law were "resisting nature so that, contrary to God's implanted ordinance and disposition, it does not produce seed and multiply..." The estate of marriage (Ehe) has been instituted by God through ordinance and disposition. Again, in Luther's Genesis commentary, we read, "The Father creates heaven and earth out of nothing through the Son, whom Moses calls the Word." Finally, in 1528, Luther preached the following concerning the Creed:

"The first article teaches that God is the Father, the creator of heaven and earth. What is this? What do those words mean? The meaning is that I should believe that I am God's creature, that he has given to me body, soul, good eyes, reason, a good wife, children, fields, meadows, pigs, and cows, and besides this, he has given to me the four elements, water, fire, air, and earth." 28

28 Cf. the pertinent work of David Lofgren, Die Theologie der Schöpfung bei Luther, Vandenhoeck und Ruprech, Göttingen, 1960.


Not only did Luther take seriously God's creation of all things, but he believed that these very objects and orders of creation were indissolubly bound to Christ and to his redemption. As D. Lofgren has pointed out, it is impossible to separate Luther's theology of creation from his theology of redemption.33 Further, it was in and through the orders of creation that Luther believed that Christians could fulfill their Christian vocation. For Luther there could be no secular order which was unfit for a Christian's serious participation.34

On the basis of our foregoing remarks can we say that Luther's theology appears to have incorporated the assumptions of the Corpus Christianum theory? On the basis of these remarks about Luther's theology of the orders of creation can we say with Troeltsch that Luther's theology incorporated the assumptions of the Corpus Christianum theory of the Middle Ages? I do not think that it did, for the following reasons.

First, as we have seen, Luther maintained that the Natural Law was still in force in creation as was its more precise expression, the Decalogue. This means that both Christians and non-Christians are responsible to that law under the orders of creation. As I understand Troeltsch's definition and explanation of the theory of Corpus Christianum there could never have been any tension between the secular and the Church powers.


because of the fact that both were theologically incorporated into the overarching Christian Commonwealth which was spiritual.

The Roman Catholic Church apparently adopted this theory of the Corpus Christianum in order to Christianize not only the power of the State but all society. As a result, the State became a religious institution which served the same purpose as the Church, namely, to promote morality and to encourage piety. This very same Roman Catholic theological world view was adopted by the Reformers, said Troeltsch, with the result that "There remains for the State only the character of protector of the disciplina externa and of iustitia civilis, together with the practical care of the material existence of its subjects;"35 It need not be added that in such a theory as this the State serves the Church. Troeltsch recognized what he thought was a difference, however slight, between the Roman Catholic view of the Corpus Christianum and the Protestant view, the State performs its task "from an independent understanding of the Biblico-rational demand, in virtue of its own divinely ordained commission, and in a wholly free co-operation with the professional experts in Biblical knowledge, the bearers of the spiritual office."36 The point to be made in response to these assertions of Troeltsch is that his conclusions about Protestant theology's idea of the State ignore completely the theology of redemption, and, as such,

36 Ibid., pp. 107, 108.
they distort Luther's theology of *iustitia civilis* and *iustitia christi*.

In this connection we must remember, first, that Luther affirmed the godliness of the orders of society, not only because God had created them, but because He continued to preserve them until the last day. The orders themselves possessed laws (civil) which could be separated from the laws of the Church, and these civil laws the Christian especially must obey, since the Christian lives within the orders of society which God has created, letting Christ's love work through him. 37 Second, Troeltsch assumed that the *Corpus Christianum*, as Luther understood it resulted in a Christian way of life which was to be encouraged in all people for the sake of what Troeltsch called the religious element in society. 38 In all my readings from Luther I do not recall any such reference or implication as that. Further, the sinners in society, as referred to in the above note, could not possibly have been

37 "The Christian submits most willingly to the rule of the sword, pays his taxes, honors those in authority, serves, helps, and does all he can to assist the governing authority, that it may continue to function and be held in honor and fear." Luther's Works, vol. 45, American Edition, p. 94.

38 Op. cit., Troeltsch, pp. 499, "Within this unity of the Body of Christ even coarse and open sinners and non-Christians ought to be tolerated...and, further, the primitive masses of the people ought to be kept, at least outwardly, under the control of the Christian way of life,... Grace must not renounce faith in mankind too quickly, but it must gradually permeate a whole people, and for the sake of the religious element in the nation, society must restrain the activities of open sinners."
Luther's reference. Luther referred to all men as sinners, and to those who broke the laws of society as criminals. What Troeltsch has called "open sinners" Luther called criminals. This is a minor point of issue, but it does tend to illustrate Troeltsch's misunderstanding of Luther. The far more important misunderstanding is to be found in Troeltsch's statement that with Luther's adoption of the Corpus Christianum theory there remained for the State the task of protecting the disciplina externa and iustitia civilis. I submit that this notion of Troeltsch is based on a misunderstanding of the iustitia civilis theology in Luther. This we will elaborate upon in the next section. We need only add by way of emphasis that what lay behind Luther's concern that justice be administered and that society be kept from destroying itself by constraining its criminals was an awareness that Christ had redeemed the entire world, rather than merely some idealistic religious element or remnant, as Troeltsch affirmed.39 This was Luther's concern and I do not think that Troeltsch has exhibited a great deal of understanding of it. As if to compound his failure to grasp Luther, Troeltsch not only ignores what Luther had written about the unity of society (not the Corpus Christianum) as based on God's creation and redemption of it,40 but he thought

39 Here see chapter one, pages 2 and 3 where Luther's position is described.

40 Cf. pp. 499-501, op. cit., Troeltsch. Troeltsch seems to have had difficulty here with the whole problem of the worth or dignity of the orders of creation. As H. Thielicke points out in volume I of his Theologische Ethik, for Luther, "the orders of creation do not possess any autonomous dignity which they can communicate to us if we fulfill them. Alien righteousness, which alone can help us, resides exclusively in the reputation of God, which we apprehend in faith." It appears as if Troeltsch believes that because God has created them they possess an autonomous goodness or dignity which can be seen apart from God and faith. p. 11.
that Luther's ethic was dualistic.

In order to illustrate how Luther was misinterpreted concerning this creation and redemption of the world by God and the righteousness pertaining to each, as well as to show that there was no dualism present, as Troeltsch believed, we must move to section II, which will be a discussion of Troeltsch's interpretation of Luther's concept of *iustitia christi/civilis.* We will use the following pattern. We will relate Troeltsch's arguments concerning what he believed this dualism was in Luther and then refer to Luther and to his interpreters in order to make a comparison. In all of this discussion it goes without saying that had Troeltsch been able to benefit from recent Luther research in the same way that we now can his views would probably have been different from what they were. At the same time, of course, we must attempt to be fair to Troeltsch's positions realizing the limitations history has placed upon them.

II

Professor H. Thielicke, whose work we will analyse in chapter five, has said that Troeltsch's essential failure in his study of Luther was to make the distinction between private and official morality the primary distinction in Luther and to draw it in much too rigid terms.\(^{41}\) In this section we shall attempt to survey the subject to which Thielicke's statement refers under the following three headings: (1) What is the dualism and what is its source in Troeltsch's discussion

\(^{41}\) Helmut Thielicke, *Theologische Ethik*, Band I, pp. 592, 593.
of Luther? (2) How and at what points does this dualism relate itself to the concept of \textit{iustitia civilis/christi}? (3) How does Troeltsch's misunderstanding of the \textit{iustitia} concept provide the basis for his own peculiar ethical structures?

(1) Troeltsch once wrote that Luther's distinction of \textit{iustitia civilis} and \textit{iustitia spiritualis} (Troeltsch's phrase instead of \textit{iustitia christi}) had its source in Neoplatonism's scale of distinction between civic-political-social goods and intellectual goods.\textsuperscript{42} He also wrote that the new religion of the Reformation was a simplification of the religion of the late Middle Ages as well as a heightened absorption of Morality into the religious idea.\textsuperscript{43} This absorption of morality into the religious idea or into the \textit{iustitia spiritualis} must be seen as being distinct from the absorption of Nature into supernatural.\textsuperscript{44}

This distinction which Troeltsch was trying to draw between the absorption of morality into the religious idea as distinct from nature into supernature is one which I do not think he has succeeded in making clear and one which only adds to a confusion in his thought.

In spite of this unclear distinction, which by being clarified would have helped to balance his analysis of Luther, Troeltsch asserted that Luther affirmed a Christian ethic which consisted "in aloofness from the world, and in the concentration of attention upon the question of personal salvation..."


\textsuperscript{43} Troeltsch, \textit{Gesammelte Schriften}, Band 4, p. 215.

\textsuperscript{44} Troeltsch, \textit{The Social Teaching}, pp. 472-476.
He also makes it quite plain that this ethic of love and salvation is opposed to the ethic which is produced by the struggle for existence, with its concern with questions relating to law, honour, war, the State, and retribution.45 At this point Troeltsch began to construct his arguments to prove that Luther's ethic was essentially a dualistic one.

The next step which he took was to show that since Luther destroyed the natural/supernatural ethic of Roman Catholicism he had to replace it with something else. That something else, he said, was a "purely religious ethic",46 in which Luther accepted the premise that Jesus' message was solely of a personal nature as distinct from the national ethic of ancient Israel,47 and attempted to propound an ethic which was personal as well as public. Coupled with this argument, Troeltsch said that Luther interpreted both the Natural Law and Decalogue in terms of a "real Christian ideal" of behavior, "an ideal which concerns the inner life of the individual, along with the secular ethic of professional life... to which man belongs either officially, or through being incorporated into the order of Society and State,"48 What Troeltsch had produced was a hard and fast dualism in Luther between a personal ethic based on the Sermon on the Mount and an official ethic based on Natural Law.49

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46 Ibid., p. 496.
47 Ibid., p. 504.
48 Ibid., p. 507.
49 Ibid., pp. 508, 509.
This meant that Troeltsch believed that for Luther there was a secular calling for Christians as well as a sacred calling. The secular calling was what Troeltsch called the official area of a man's ethic and the sacred calling was the personal area. According to Troeltsch, Luther distinguished between a "secular morality" and a "morality of grace". Troeltsch's analysis thus far had been based upon his understanding of Luther's Two Kingdoms theology as being under two separate laws, the lex naturae governing men in their official capacity and the lex divina governing man's personal life. It would appear that this last distinction, namely, that between the Law of Nature and the Law of Love, is determinative for Troeltsch's dualistic estimation of Luther.

Here we must go back to what we said earlier in this chapter about Luther's identification of Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31 with Natural Law. We said that Luther made this identification and that, counter to what Troeltsch believed, the Natural Law remains in force and cannot be impregnated by Christians with religious motives so as to reduce its effectiveness or demands. Going further, we must now emphasize another meaning which this identification of Natural Law with Matthean and Lukan texts reveals. For Luther there were not really two laws present and operative as would often appear (Law of Nature, Law of Love [divine]). There was and is only one law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". This is

50 Ibid., p. 508.
51 Ibid., p. 847.
the Law of Love; but it is also the total content of what is called the Law of Nature, and, being its total content, there can be only one law, the Law of Love. As professor F. Lau has said, "Love, as found in Matthew 7:12,... is the synonym for the lex naturae." 52

This understanding undercuts Troeltsch's premise that there are two laws operating in Luther's theology. There is only one law for all men and its content is love. In matters of legal disputes Luther said,

"If neither party is a Christian, or if one of them is unwilling to be judged by the law of love, then you may have them call in some other judge, and tell the obstinate one that they are acting contrary to God and Natural Law, even if they obtain strict judgment in terms of human law. For nature teaches - as does love - that I should do as I would be done by (Luke 6:31)." 53

This elimination of the seeming dualism of law in Luther is not sufficient to rebut Troeltsch's dualism, however. Troeltsch also saw, as we said above, a personal as well as an official ethic in Luther. The fact is that there are these two terms of delination used by Luther, namely, office (Stand) and vocation (Beruf), especially in his works Temporal Authority: to what Extent it Should Be Obeyed, and An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation. In these works office and vocation are not oriented around two standards of behavior, that is, the Law of Moses applicable for one's official duties in the world and the Law of Christ for one's personal relationship with one's self and family. One's inward disposition or

understanding and expression of God's Kingdom as well as one's outward participation in worldly affairs through one's office are both to be regulated by one motivating factor alone, namely, love. But for Luther this love possesses a double aspect or character which is easily made into a dualism, as Troeltsch has done. This is especially the case when the orders of creation (Ordnungen) are regarded as being "timeless, irreversible, godly sanctioned institutions" in which a Christian fulfills his vocation (Beruf) in and through his occupation (Stand), rather than being regarded as "historical facts". Once the orders have been made into these timeless, static structures, it is not difficult to overlook the fact of their existential

54 "In this way the two propositions are brought into harmony with one another: at one and the same time you satisfy God's kingdom inwardly and the kingdom of the world outwardly. You suffer evil and injustice, and yet at the same time you punish evil and injustice: you do not resist evil, and yet at the same time, you do resist it. In the one case, you consider yourself and what is yours; in the other, you consider your neighbor and what is his. In what concerns you and yours, you govern yourself by the Gospel and suffer injustice toward yourself as a true Christian; in what concerns the person or property of others, you govern yourself according to love and tolerate no injustice toward your neighbor. The Gospel does not forbid this; in fact, in other places it actually commands it." Luther's Works, vol. 45, p. 96. Cf. also especially pp. 296, 297 in G. Rupp's The Righteousness of God. Troeltsch definitely emphasized that each ethical area is dominated by its own individual laws and that these laws are opposed to each other. Cf. here Troeltsch's Social Teaching, p. 509.

55 This double character in creation and redemption as well as a sound criticism of the static character of recent German Luther researchers' appraisal of Ordnung and the veritable institutionalization of the term is described in Regin Prenter's Schöpfung und Erlösung, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1960, pp. 190-200. Reading his analysis of recent German research into Luther, one can see how, on the basis of such a static understanding of the orders of creation, Troeltsch could develop his ethical dualism of personal/official public morality.
character and interpenetration and to begin to divide the one law pertaining to each into two distinct laws. This is what Troeltsch has done.

(2) Our next question must be: How does this dualism in Law and ethics in Troeltsch relate to the concept iustitia christi/civilis? Troeltsch answered this question by saying that it was by means of Luther's interpretation of the Decalogue and the divisions of it into the First and Second Tables of the law that "the great new element... between the justitia spiritualis and the justitia civilis, between the motus spiritualis and general, natural ethical obligations" arose. In other words, Troeltsch thought that it was by means of a distinction within the Decalogue itself that Luther evolved his theory of iustitia christi and civilis. But what is each iustitia? Troeltsch said that it is the ethical content of a man's action in relation to God (spiritualis) and to society (civilis). Both terms appear to refer to the ethical content which men give to their actions in the two areas of life, personal and official. Each area has a corresponding form of morality or righteousness which is dis-

56 Op. cit., Troeltsch, p. 844. Here I understand justitia spiritualis to be Troeltsch's phrase for what we have called iustitia christi, even though it will be shown that this term is not to be understood as equivalent to the latter.

57 "The relative order of reason, tainted by sin, becomes the authoritative, entirely positive order of reality, to which, without thinking very much about it, the Christian has to adapt himself... Increasingly the Lutheran ethic is summed up in the following characteristic features: confidence in God founded on His grace, and love of one's neighbor which is exercised in the social duties of one's calling, combined with an obedient surrender to the order of Society created by the Law of Nature." Ibid., pp. 509, 510.
tistinguishable from the other. In addition to this, each moral-
ity is motivated differently. The morality executed within
the personal area has the love of God and forgiveness as its
motivating principle. This principle is summarized in the
Sermon on the Mount; it forms the basis of what Troeltsch calls
the ideal of the Christian. Troeltsch said that Luther believed
that this principle or ideal could be executed without hin-
drance by the Christian in his personal and religious activity
but that it was thwarted in his official activities by the
counteracting secular structures in society. Therefore the
Christian was forced either to despair of his world or else
to adopt a new principle for his official duties. It is at
this moment, namely, the moment man encounters these secular
structures in society, that the "radical ethic of love dis-
appears, and the ethic of obedience towards authority comes in-
to prominence."58 It was on the basis of this separation of
ethical principles of motivation, as well as the morality re-
sulting from each, that Troeltsch identified iustitia christi
and iustitia civilis in Reformation theology. Iustitia christi
refers to the principle of the love of God (the first table of
the Decalogue) and the results of ethical endeavor in the per-
sonal area of life. Iustitia civilis refers to the principle
of the Law of Nature (second table of the Decalogue) and the
results of ethical endeavor in the official area.

The first observation which strikes one is that his under-
standing of Luther presupposes not only the incompatibility of

58 Ibid., p. 509.
the two iustitias but also of the opposition of the one to the other. He said that the iustitia spiritualis of the early Luther "was opposed to the relative Natural Law of the 'official' ethic,".59 The reason that Troeltsch thought that the iustitias were opposed to each other is because he thought that each iustitia referred to a distinct ethic which had a different operative principle or norm from the other, as we have seen. As such, each iustitia struggles with the other for domination in each individual's life. And this struggle within Luther and later Lutherans, Troeltsch said, caused an oscillation within Christians between the extremes of "joy", on the one hand, and patient endurance of the world, on the other.60 But was this Luther's position? It was not, I think. As we saw in the first chapter, both iustitias are the creation of God; they have one source. Both iustitias are the work of God in Creation. They are expressions of the righteousness of God for Luther. That iustitia civilis is distorted or vitiated by sin and thus is not to be equated or identified with the iustitia christi does not thereby mean that it should struggle against iustitia christi. They cannot struggle against one another because they are both of God. They are a unity and, as G. Törnvall has said, "It was not Luther's purpose to play off one righteousness (christi) against another (civilis), but to distinguish between two forms of righteousness. And

59 Ibid., p. 509.
60 Ibid., p. 510.
these two forms exist or endure together in suis finibus."61

I think that Troeltsch has taken Luther's identification of iustitia civilis as a part of creation pertaining to the Law of God and has placed it in direct opposition to iustitia christi which Luther identified with redemption and the Gospel. The result of this was Troeltsch interpreted Luther as playing the one righteousness off against the other. As we will see, Troeltsch's re-action to this in his own theological formulations amounted to an attempt to relate the two iustitias to each other by subordinating iustitia civilis beneath iustitia christi.

Secondly, it appears to me to be beyond doubt that according to Troeltsch man is the originator and source of both iustitia civilis and iustitia christi. We see this in Troeltsch's discussion of secular as well as religious ethics. Troeltsch confined his presentation of ethics of both types to this: the private and public individual striving to fulfill the fundamental moral ends which are then incorporated into a formal, a priori necessity.62 In his own ethics, Troeltsch has incorporated what he thought he perceived clearly in Luther's two forms of righteousness, namely, an ethic sub specie temporis, iustitia civilis, and an ethic sub specie aeternitatis, iustitia christi.63 In both cases it is man who is the author and mover.


63 Ibid., p. 155.
Man is capable of being the source for the iustitias for Troeltsch because of the rather minor role which he accorded to sin. This we will see more fully below when we deal with Troeltsch's own ethical formulations. For him man is the bearer of the office in his public morality as well as the pursuer of the pure will towards God in his personal morality.

"The Christian, as a member of public life, as bearer of an office deriving from the political and economic system of the Natural Law, has to follow the requirements of his office."64 This refers to the official ethic. The personal ethic of which Troeltsch speaks also has its source of righteousness in and of man himself. "It is not for nothing that religion,... teaches us that the pure will and devotion to an ideal world is sufficient for righteousness, and that life itself remains sinful - a mixture, that is to say, of nature and the divine life."65 In both areas the action of the individual man "must be that of always realizing ethical purposes as far as possible;"66 This position is not even close to that of Luther's. For Luther the righteousness of Christ is an alien righteousness imputed to man whose source is God; civil righteousness also is the essential work of God, even though it is a political, philosophical and legal righteousness. Neither righteousness has man as its source nor sole participant; neither form

64 Ibid. p. 150.
66 Ibid., p. 65.
is an external discipline belonging to man alone but to God.\textsuperscript{67} There is a hard and fast one-sidedness in Troeltsch's appraisal of the \textit{iustitias} in the sense that he regarded them as almost completely the work of man, which was due, in no small way, to his rigid structuring of the two areas of man's activities, personal and official.

In this connection we believe that Troeltsch also misunderstood Luther's affirmative stand with regard to civil action. For Luther the Christian can and occasionally must execute offenders, go to war, and be refreshed or have his conscience eased with the knowledge that even in these foul acts God himself is at work, participating fully with him. Troeltsch, due to his too rigid separation of Natural Law from the Law of Love and his misunderstanding of Luther's theme of the God-functioning, God-caused civil righteousness, makes Luther out to be a Christian pacifist.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{67} Op. cit., Törnvall, p. \textsuperscript{146}. For Luther \textit{iustitia civilis} is "theocentrically oriented. It is a creation of God just as much as the \textit{iustitia christiana}," Luther himself said, "Therefore God honors the sword so highly that He calls it His own ordinance, and will not have men say or imagine that they have invented it or instituted it. For the hand that wields this sword and slays with it is then no more man's hand, but God's, and it is not man, but God, who hangs, tortures, beheads, slays, and fights. All these are His works and His judgments." Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved, p. 36, Works of Martin Luther, vol. 5, Philadelphia Edition.

\textsuperscript{68} "Luther remained abhorred by the notions of revolution, self-determination, right of resistance, due to his understanding of Natural Law... Non-resistance is, therefore, not primarily a demand of the Gospel, but a requirement of Natural Law, since according to this theory no one is fit to judge his own affairs, and every power which permits resistance destroys its own being," Op. cit., Troeltsch, p. 530. Here the question is not whether Luther advised against revolt or not, but rather Troeltsch's appraisal that for Luther any positive civic action including the dangers of overzealousness was not possible simply because Troeltsch did not perceive the active God who not only instituted the orders of creation, as Troeltsch said, but who "hangs, tortures, beheads, slays and fights," as Luther said,
self-determination is possible and necessary in the civil arena, especially since God is directing and creating that self-determination. Only when one sees this God-functioning, God-caused iustitias in Luther can one counter Troeltsch's pacifistic description of Luther's theology.

Thirdly, because Troeltsch regarded the two iustitias as products of man, especially civil righteousness, there was a gigantic limitation imposed upon each by nature. There is a polarity in Troeltsch between nature, on the one hand, and what he calls morality, on the other. This morality will be explained below. Suffice it to say that morality can be understood as civil righteousness; and this morality is limited by nature or the natural order. Nature makes demands on the individual which are often in conflict with his best moral intentions. These demands tend to destroy what moral possibilities there are in the individual (again we must see man as the source of these moral possibilities) to such an extent that moral striving is often short-circuited. For this reason righteousness in the civil area, or iustitia civilis, is almost an impossibility for man, according to Troeltsch.69

(3) The third question which arises from a study of Troeltsch's appraisal of Luther's iustitias concepts is this:

68 (cont.) which is a far more active concept. The result is that Troeltsch is not able to establish what he calls Luther's submission to secular authority on the basis of iustitia civilis.

69 Cf. Troeltsch's conclusions about the possible moral action of man in his Christian Thought, pp. 63-67.
How did Troeltsch's misunderstanding of the *ius titia* concept in Luther provide some basis for his own peculiar ethical constructions? It must be pointed out that from this point on we will be commenting generally about Troeltsch's own ethical theories and attempting to relate them to his analysis of Luther wherever that is possible in order to compare the two.

In view of the foregoing, our first question might be whether or not there is to be found in Troeltsch such a thing as a Christian ethic. Troeltsch did distinguish between a religious and a secular ethic, but seldom of a Christian ethic.70 This religious ethic, he said, is the truly "objective ethic" in that only by it is the "supreme objective end of God and of a community of all the children of God" attained.71 Only by means of the religious ethic are the demands for purity of heart and love of all men met and fulfilled. This religious ethic is summed up in the Great Commandment of Matthew 22:37 "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God..." The religious ethic derives its existence from this demand. The goal of the religious ethic in meeting this demand is to sanctify "the entire person for God and in order to see God."72 The religious ethic is an end to be achieved as well as the action of religious men attempting to achieve it. The religious ethic is the goal of the historical process and all cultural changes.

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70 *Op. cit.*, Hügel's translation of Troeltsch in *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 155. The secular ethic is that ethic *sub specie temporis* and the religious ethic *sub specie aeternitatis*. Troeltsch seldom spoke of a Christian ethic *per se*.


It is a religiously "concrete and objective Content, End and Value in and for all action." In the meaning which Troeltsch gave to these words end and value we can see the fruition of German absolutist idealism. This end or value of the religious ethic is the givenness of every moral situation; it is the framework in which every activity of man occurs, as well as the goal which qualifies that activity. But how is this end to be related to Jesus? It is related to him in that he was an historical person, in that he demanded the degree of sanctification and purity which epitomize this objective end. Troeltsch said that Jesus "points" to this end in that he was a supremely holy and moral person, a totally religious person.

Apart from Jesus' pointing to these objective ends or values, his life reveals that he himself recognized them, that he strove to fulfill them, and did so as far as is humanly possible. Jesus perfectly seized the moral idea of the ethical good and formed that good in obedience to the element of necessity inherent in all ends. (That such moral objective ends or values do exist or appear in history Troeltsch never doubted; they are part of the given of history). All men are capable of knowing these ends, which "spring from the timeless nature of obligation or reason", and of incorporating them into their personal and public life. Jesus stands out in history for Troeltsch because in His life he appropriated these moral ends.

73 Ibid., p. 156.
75 Ibid., p. 45.
more completely than anyone up to that period; and in this appropriation he attained the end of ethics, which Troeltsch describes as the "free personality, which has its foundations in itself and possesses a certain unity of its own".\footnote{Ibid., p. 51.} This unity and freedom can only be deduced from the unity of these moral ends or values themselves.

It is in a pure will and devotion to the attainment or appropriation of these moral ends in one's life that Troeltsch says a man is righteous. Jesus, probably by a superhuman exertion of his will, achieved that righteousness. Ordinary mortals find it hard to accomplish this exertion because of the very real struggle within them between nature and divine life. This struggle within men is what Troeltsch calls sin.\footnote{Ibid., p. 97.} Jesus overcame this struggle within himself by a very definite exertion of will, an exertion of will the like of which the world had never seen before he was born or since his life. This is the relation of Jesus to these moral ends, namely, one of unique purity of will and action in total conformity to these ever-existing moral principles. Aiding Jesus at all points of his struggle was the "power of God", a phrase which Troeltsch never explains,\footnote{Op. cit., Hügel, p. 158.} although it would appear to be a power of which other men could also avail themselves.

On the basis of such a presentation of Jesus' person and ethic by Troeltsch, it is difficult not to think of Jesus merely

\begin{flushright}
76 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 51. \\
77 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 97. \\
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as **primus inter pares**, advocating that all men act righteously as he has done, namely, that they do what **lies** within their power to do (**facere quod in se est**), if they will remember his example, in order to attain to these moral ends. In other words, by eliminating the unique christological activity from Jesus' life, by making him the "relative" man who can help other men to lead ethical lives by his example, rather than the ultimate redeemer who imputes his own unique righteousness to men, Troeltsch has eliminated from his theology any formal theory of the righteousness of Christ, as Luther understood it. It is not the righteousness of Christ but the love of God which summons the purity of heart from man. Here it is neither a case of **justitia christi** as demand, nor as gift, nor as Christ-originating power providing the basis for an ethic (as it was for Luther and Schleiermacher), but the "earnest concentration upon, and devotion to, the object, for the sake of its interior necessary value."\(^79\) And Jesus appears not to have been that interior necessary value or end of action for Troeltsch. Christ is not the mover to ethical action. He can not possibly be because that mover is provided and found in the "intrinsic value of the free self-controlling personality and the free spiritual-ethical complex."\(^80\) Jesus possessed no unique righteousness which God imputes to men of faith as their justification. He merely possessed an extraordinary amount of will power which enabled Him to do what we should

\(^79\) Ibid., p. 154.

also try to do, namely, to realize the interior, necessary, moral values of life. Without any question I think that there can be no question that for Troeltsch man's actual righteousness had its source in man himself and not in any way in Christ. The historical Jesus and not the risen Christ appears to have been the only effective force in Troeltsch's theology. The historical Jesus, by his example, prompts men to realize what goals are of value for them, and starts them on their way to attain them. Once man attains these objective ends he is righteous; the righteousness of attained objective ends is his possession. We might add that it appears to us as if these ends or values are the only objective reality for Troeltsch and not living Jesus Christ who continues to cover man's sin with his unique righteousness.

It was the position which Troeltsch gave to sin in his theology that enabled him to avoid reference to the righteousness of Christ in his ethical assertions. Man is primarily the battlefield wherein the lower forces of his being (Nature) struggle with the higher (divine life). This struggle Troeltsch

81 It is not only that Jesus possessed no unique righteousness for Troeltsch, but that he was not even the center of history. The observations of Gabriel Vahanian on Troeltsch's christology are particularly interesting at this point. "That is to say, he would regard Jesus as a revelation of God, which lifts us up, well above our ordinary level. He would stress this image of Jesus and his testimony, particularly because it had been reinforced by the witness of several centuries. Only, one thing must be renounced--the belief that Jesus is the center of the world and the center of human history, for neither his uniqueness nor his significance consists of that."

The Death of God, George Braziller Publisher, New York, 1961, p. 47. It is also interesting that in this work Vahanian accepts a view of Luther's ethic, that of a dualism between private and official morality, which was also Troeltsch's.
called sin. This struggle hinders one from always attaining or realizing moral ends. Sin, or struggle, is overcome for Troeltsch by means of inner renewal. Troeltsch conceives of inner renewal as the inner, subjective cleansing out of man of the natural elements and their replacement by the divine elements. Even this cleansing is accomplished by an exertion of one's will, which is prompted by Christ's example, in and through the earnest pursuit of moral ends; by means of exertion man transcends nature. With such a conception of sin there is really no need for a "covering" or alien righteousness of Christ.

But at this point there is a curious factor in Troeltsch's thought which we have noticed. This interior, subjective religion provides a basis for natural ethics. In order to illustrate what this means we will have to move on to a consideration of iustitia civilis in Troeltsch.

That there exists in Troeltsch what Luther called iustitia civilis is unquestionable. For Troeltsch the ethics of society, of the political, philosophical, and economical areas, are forms of civil righteousness. This is the ethics of society which Troeltsch labels the "moral community". This is very similar to Luther's concept of iustitia civilis except


83 Cf. pp. 993 to 999 of The Social Teaching where Troeltsch summarizes the results of his study and obviously chooses to identify his own convictions with what he calls "spiritual religion."

84 Troeltsch, Christian Thought, p. 58.
for the fact that for Troeltsch man is the originator and creator of this ethic rather than God. Ethics, however, is a special word for Troeltsch and should be defined. Ethics is the combination of the morality of conscience plus moral goods or values, these elements being mutually inclusive. Troeltsch does not equate morals and ethics. Morals is the result of the activity of moral consciousness; ethics is the result of the activity of moral goods or values. Civil righteousness, then, on Troeltsch's terms, is this ethic.\textsuperscript{85} Even though the end of ethics is the attained and defended "free personality", this same end in turn qualifies the act of attaining \textit{jusititia civilis}. And in a sense the secular ethic, the civil ethic determines the religious ethic in Troeltsch. In both civil and religious ethics, since man is the source of both, reason must rule. Actually it is reason, rationality, which provides the basis for both religious and civil ethics. More specifically, it is the rational moral consciousness in all men which provides that basis,\textsuperscript{86} the same rational moral consciousness by means of which man is able to overcome the purely natural within himself, that is, sin.

At the same time that the rational man endeavors to overcome the purely natural, selfish drives within himself he must overcome the purely subjective in himself as much as possible. Only this subjectivity, which is characterized by the descriptive words sloth, selfishness and sensuality, and which refers

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 76-79.
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 60-61.
to the non-rational, non-object oriented personality in man, that personality which does not strive for the attainment of moral values, prohibits one from achieving "an earnest concentration upon, and devotion to, the object, for the sake of its interior necessary value". Such moral subjectivity, if unchecked, turns one into the common herd, which Troeltsch equates with the immoral factors which he thought he saw in society. In order to avoid this subjectivity and in order to be able to attain moral action, one must allow the "imperative 'ought' which is analogous to the attraction towards logical truth and correctness, and arises, like the latter, from the deeper spiritual levels of our being" to work its catalytic effects in one. Here it is obvious how this deeper spiritual nature of man, this interior religious nature, this non-subjective nature, forms the basis for the naturalistic ethic, as we said earlier. Here the individual must strive arduously to attain in his personal and public life.

88 Troeltsch, Christian Thought, p. 56.
89 Ibid., p. 51.
90 In his analysis of both secular and religious ethics, Troeltsch confines his understanding of ethics to this: the private and public individual striving to fulfill the fundamental moral ends, which ends are incorporated into a formal, objective, a priori necessity. Cf. pp. 152-156 of v. Hügel's translation in Philosophy of Religion. Such ends can be achieved, according to Troeltsch, if each individual and culture will use logic and understand its own processes and conditions of life. Cf. pp. 95-99 of Christian Thought.
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(a distinction Troeltsch seems to have carried over from his study of Luther), this open and objective attitude, so that he may be seized by the moral ideal which is inherent in creation.

Luther said that any civil righteousness, although men strive reasonably to attain it, is really given by God. This civil righteousness is riddled with sin (per se vitiosa) and yet redeemed by Christ and sustained by His Spirit. It belongs to God by means of his creation and redemption of it. Christ is the basis for both types of righteousness in that all things belong to Him in redemption.

The weakness of Troeltsch's discussion of civil righteousness is precisely that he did not develop a theology of iustitia christi to which he could relate his construction of iustitia civilis. Rationalistic ethics, naturalistic moral consciousness, stands more or less alone, dependent solely upon the religious propensities in men and the objective moral principles in creation to bring them into existence within society. Take away or deny man the possession of any religious propensities and objective moral principles, or at the least, impugn those which man possesses, which might have been the case for Troeltsch had he developed a more thorough-going theology of sin, and natural, rationalistic ethics becomes incapable of begetting the reasonable society or of transforming itself and society - as Troeltsch would have described it - into a religious and moral society.

This denial of the religious spirit in man was exactly what some expressions of early twentieth century German philosophy were maintaining. Naturally enough, Troeltsch decried
what he called ungodly, unreligious attacks upon man's religious and moral propensities. He decried the attempt of the German intellectuals to strive for a "religionless academic atmosphere". Such ungodly modern power states, which were arising, such unreasonable indifference to religion, which has replaced Christianity's love ethic, are signs, he said, of an unhealthy, non-Christian society. What Troeltsch was worried about was the removal of his idealistic basis for natural ethics, namely, the removal of the religious essence and value in life. Naturally enough, he saw atheism as the most dangerous challenger to his theology of a civil righteousness which is only adequately fortified and nourished by the religious propensity in all men. The weakness is to be found in Troeltsch's theology of *iustitia civilis* at this point, namely, that he had developed no way in which to relate his brand of *iustitia civilis* to a fallen, sinful world. In other words, Troeltsch's understanding of sin as the struggle within men between their two natures, a struggle which he thought man to be capable of overcoming by means of an inner spiritual renewal, was not what Luther regarded as sin. Luther's was a far more realistic understanding of sin in that it took into account man's position of not being able not to sin (*non posse non peccare*), of not being able to do what lay within his power to do (*non facere quod in se est*), as part and parcel of the human situation. Had

92 Ibid., p. 70.
93 Ibid., p. 531.
Troeltsch had a notion of sin less influenced by German idealism's rather optimistic attitude regarding human nature, his theology probably would have been less vulnerable to the attacks of atheism. What I mean is this. Troeltsch's ethic was dependent upon the principle of a religious spirit or propensity in all men. This spirit gave a content to man's ethical strivings; it lifted his moral sights out of himself, out of subjectivity, and pulled a man toward the deeper levels of his being. Take this religious spirit away from man, as the atheists attempted to do, and man's naturalistic ethics can never be fulfilled or completed. Take away from man the ability to qualify and perfect his ethical strivings, in other words, and from Troeltsch's position on iustitia civilis all is lost. But, understand from the outset, as Luther appears to have done, that man is incapable of transforming his ethical strivings, of transcending himself, of overcoming his sin, and man's ethic, his iustitia civilis cannot possibly ever be his own if it is to be understood as righteousness. If it is civil righteousness, then Christ's alien righteousness will have had to have renewed and transformed men's motivations; then man's iustitia civilis is only properly his own when it has been given to him as something which is not his at all, but Christ's (Cf. chapter one, pp. 22-30). Or, as Luther said,

"Christ is full of grace, life and salvation; the soul is full of sins, death and condemnation. Now let faith come between them, and it shall come to pass that sins, death and hell are Christ's, and grace, life and salvation are the soul's... For his righteousness is greater than the sins of all men, His life stronger than death, His salvation more invincible than hell."\footnote{Works of Martin Luther, Philadelphia Ed., pp. 320, 321.}
Conclusion

In conclusion, then, we would say that Troeltsch's development of a theology of civil righteousness was terribly vulnerable to attack for two reasons. The first reason was that he never developed a theology of the alien righteousness of Christ, as had Luther, which would have clarified and probably have altered his discussion of the necessity that man's subjective, egocentric desires be overcome in order for society to become reasonable, just, and religious. Without any such theology of *iustitia christi* there is never any way for man's despair at being unable to do just and reasonable acts in society to be transformed or overcome. This is the primary weakness in Troeltsch's theology of civil righteousness.

A second weakness and one which relates directly to the first is Troeltsch's inadequate theological development of a notion of sin. Troeltsch appears to have accepted the premise that man is essentially a good person and that his sinfulness is only somehow related to his relationship to God, which is imperfect, but which does not seriously affect man's social relationships. As a result, man is capable of perfecting his society and himself as a member of that society, by executing his reason and religious propensities. This is a *iustitia civilis* which bears little relationship to man's justification by God in spite of man's sin or to Christ's alien, covering righteousness which is at work in the actions of the justified man.
CHAPTER IV

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Part I

In the last chapter we saw that Troeltsch's appraisal of Luther's ethic was biased by what Troeltsch thought was a strict dualism in that ethic. We also saw how this misunderstanding, coupled with Troeltsch's own underdeveloped theology of Christ's righteousness and its relation to civil righteousness, left his own ethical formulations open to attack. It is now my purpose to discuss the work of possibly one of the most important theorists in theological ethics of this century, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in order to compare his work with the strengths and weaknesses of Schleiermacher and Troeltsch in the area of their interpretation of this problem of the two iustitias.

In order to get at Bonhoeffer's ideas of righteousness I think that we must first make an evaluation of his understanding of the world in which he lived, its values, claims and tendencies. In this evaluation we will see Bonhoeffer's own appraisal of the movement of history, especially since the days of Luther and the Reformation. We will note his comments upon the present condition of the world and what relationship it bears to that of the Reformation period. At the same time we will attempt to construct what Bonhoeffer thought the notion of iustitia civilis was for the Reformation, and what he considered it to be for his world.
We begin this discussion by noting an important premise in Bonhoeffer's thought, one that appears to have governed most of his statements and evaluations of the world. It was this: the world has been created by Jesus Christ, and has its basis of existence solely in him. The world is also redeemed by him, therefore, any discussion or comment about the world, its purpose or destiny, which does not at the same time speak about Christ is an empty abstraction. It is this premise which gives coherence and meaning to what would otherwise be disjointed or fragmented sections in his writings generally. This premise also serves as a key for our interpretation of Bonhoeffer's theology of righteousness, as we will see latter on in this study.

Let us begin our investigation of iustitia civilis in Bonhoeffer's thought by turning first to a discussion of sin, the one area of thought which we found strongly emphasized in Schleiermacher but curiously under-emphasized in Troeltsch's work. Turning our attention to the subject of the fall of Adam into sin, we find that Bonhoeffer described Adam's sin as the sin of pride or egocentricity. (In this regard, Bonhoeffer felt that man still tries to pry into secrets - especially those of his neighbor - that should not be revealed, save before God alone.) This fall occurred in men ages ago and occurs in men today. But this does not say enough.


There is a definite relationship between the sin of men in bygone ages and my sin today, according to Bonhoeffer. But this is not a biological relationship, that is, a relationship which is dependent upon a transference of sin through the sexual act. It is also not biological in the sense that all men are of the same species. Bonhoeffer distinguishes between biological relationships in this case and what he calls the notion of collective species. The difference between collective species and biological notion is one between a biological phenomenon and a sociological one. It is only as the one is related to the community of ones, (quite distinct from any social categories at this point), as one man's goal is community with others, that the responsibility for and judgment upon one man's actions can become the responsibility for and judgment upon the community action of men. What is essential in order to understand this theory is the notion of transference, although Bonhoeffer never states it as such. The closest he comes to it is in the use of the word Geschlechtssünde, that is, the sin of the race. By means of the use of this idea of transference Adam's sin and the judgment upon it becomes my sin and the judgment upon it, and I am like unto Adam and Adam was representing me and all humanity when he fell into sin. This collectiveness of mankind, plus the representation element which exists between Adam and all men, makes sin the all pervasive reality that it is.³ It

³ Bonhoeffer, Sanctorum Communio, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, München, 1954, pp. 73-76.
seems to me that the difficulty of this notion of collective species as a non-biological notion lies in the fact that the line between the sociological and the biological is really too fine to be drawn. Despite this deficiency, Bonhoeffer never allowed the reality of the fallen state of humanity to escape his thoughts. Again and again he refers to the presence of sin in every life, in all humanity, as that which links us to our fellowmen, to Adam, and to Christ.

Sin is present in the world, even though this world is the world which Christ has redeemed. Sin is present in the community of the church, since the Christian is part and parcel of the world, that is, he lives in the world. The Christian is related both to Adam as well as to Christ. As Bonhoeffer said, "the world of sin is the world of 'Adam', the old humanity; the world of Adam, however, is the world which Christ redeemed and made into a new humanity, into his church; but it is not as if Adam were totally overcome. On the contrary, it is that the Adam-humancity still survives in the Christ-humanity." This is the dialectic which Bonhoeffer borrowed from Luther and used so effectively and eloquently to describe the paradoxical elements within Christian theology.

This is the same as Luther's reference to the Christian as the man who is *simul iustus et peccator*. Both natural man as well as the Christian man are sinners. This means that the natural community, where natural man participates, as well as the religious community, where the Christian man participates,

\[4\] Ibid., p. 72.
are disturbed by sin. "The form of natural community endures, but it is corrupt in its inmost kernel."5 "As with the direct religious community so is the direct social community lost. Between God and man, as between man and man, there appears a third force, sin."6 For Bonhoeffer's thought, especially concerning the world and the church, the one qualifying and limiting force was that of sin.

For Bonhoeffer, it is the nature of man as sinner which forces him to want to create his own righteousness. Man as a member of the Adam-humanity seeks to assuage his conscience by convincing himself that he has succeeded in creating some private virtue or fulfilling some public moral principle. In both cases man attempts to find the solution to his own struggles, to find the extenuating circumstances whereby he can judge himself innocent.7 Bonhoeffer has said that this is the attempt of man as sinner to find infinity, to find the absolute, to find security. Sinful man "declares himself to be good, he declares himself to be evil-and both are only the attempt, whether good or evil, to be secure:"8 At this point

5 Ibid., p. 73.
6 Ibid., p. 37.
7 Man, as sinner, "sees his fellow man as a thing and sees God as he who satisfies his religious needs, and now he seeks to set himself eternally in this world; he does not wish to die, he wishes to make himself right and to live forever." No Rusty Swords, Letters, Lectures and Notes 1928-1936 From the Collected Works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, vol. I, ed. and trans. Edwin Robertson, Collins, London, 1965, p. 66, hereafter cited as Works.
8 Ibid., p. 62.
Bonhoeffer has captured the insidious nature of sin, which is not only evident when man attempts to justify himself, but also when man acknowledges that evil and finds some security in such an admission. Sin, in other words, is evident not only in man's attempt to be good or right, but also in his admission of evil.

It must be stated quite emphatically that for Bonhoeffer there is no awareness of sin or understanding of it apart from the revelation of God. This means that man will not understand himself as man, that is, his potentialities and limitations, apart from his "reference to God, which only God himself provides."\footnote{Ibid., p. 66.} Bonhoeffer felt that man in and of himself, man relating himself to himself, strives to maintain a sense of equilibrium in a shaking world by means of his conscience, his moral obligation, and his reason. This man believes that he can maintain himself and his world if he can somehow make himself aware of all the possibilities open to him in any one moment of decision. Knowing these possibilities, and reflecting upon them, he feels that he cannot but make a right decision. For Bonhoeffer, this could be called man's responsibility to himself and to society, but it is not his authentic responsibility simply because in reflecting upon his possibilities and potentialities for that responsibility his existence is not authentic. This is so for Bonhoeffer because any act of reflection, any act where man surveys what possibilities lay before him in the ensuing moments of decision, is not an
act of authentic existence. Man is only involved in authentic existence when man stands before God and is called upon to act. At that moment man is aware of himself as a sinner; he knows that he has been judged by God, and that he has no possibility of escape. There is, therefore, no awareness of sin nor authentic existence apart from man's encounter with God. Sin, then, is man's unwillingness to acknowledge the decisive significance of this encounter with God and its shaping or forming character, as Bonhoeffer referred to it.

The question which must now be asked is this: what part does Bonhoeffer's understanding of sin play in his interpretation of iustitia civilis? The first point that we make in answer to this question is this. Ethics, as a discipline, could be defined as an investigation into the behavioral patterns of man, particularly in terms of man's relationship and responsibility to his fellow man. But ethics is not only the investigation into these behavioral patterns, it is also man behaving in certain ways to create those patterns. It is this second definition or aspect of ethics, this behaving man aspect, which Bonhoeffer said was distorted by sin. In order to describe what Bonhoeffer meant by this distortion by sin of behaving man's actions, we must look first at Bonhoeffer's

10 "man understands himself not in reflection on himself, but in the act of reference to God, i.e., only at the point where he really stands before God. Here the distinction is to be made between actus directus and actus reflexus; only in actus directus is there real self-understanding; in actus reflexus the immediacy is already interrupted and therefore there can no longer be self-understanding." Bonhoeffer, Works, p. 65.

11 We will examine this forming character of man's encounter with God in the second half of this chapter under the heading of the "Form of Christ".
understanding of man as a person. Bonhoeffer frequently discussed man as a person in juxtaposition to man as a personality. Personality, he said, is a partial quality, an abstract quality of man. It is not the man, nor does personality adequately express what man's entire being is. The term person, on the other hand, is not an abstract notion, but is the term which refers to the whole man himself. Man is a person. But this does not say enough about man, on the one hand, nor about person, on the other. The sentence, man is a person, implies that one is talking about the single, isolated person. But man is not a person in isolation as the one, but only in terms of his relationship to other men as persons. Man is only a person in relationship to other men. "The solitary individual exists only through an 'other'; the solitary is not the 'alone one'. In order for the solitary to be it is essential that the 'other be there'."¹² This means that for Bonhoeffer in order to understand man as person, one must understand how man is related to other men. One must understand, in other words, the role that relationship plays. Bonhoeffer said that when two people come into contact with each other a form of mutual responsibility arises, demands are made by the one upon the other. This making of demands is the source of social responsibility. I think another way of saying that one man demands something from another is to say that one man displays a need to another.

¹² Bonhoeffer, Sanctorum Communio, p. 29.
The next phase of this encounter of man to man, whereby a demand or need is made evident, is the response that both of these individuals make to each other. It is at this point that the effect of sin becomes evident in man's encounter with another man. What always happens, if both individuals are not in the process of coming into the form of Christ (to be discussed below), is that each man will attempt to assert his will, his I-self, upon the other. This happens because these men, if not participating in the form of Christ, are not related to God, and thus cannot encounter one another as I's encountering thou's, but only as I's encountering its. This is the self-seeking power of the presence of sin. There is always the concern of the I to know and understand fully the person of the thou. Because of sin, the thou does not remain a thou when encountered, but is made into the form of an object upon which the I can exert an influence. This means that every encounter between man and man is potentially destructive because of the reality of sin. To put this another way, we could say that every encounter between individuals, that is, every ethical situation, is potentially unethical. This is an important insight and one which makes Troeltsch's I-centered secular and religious ethic one which is fraught with all sorts of dangerous possibilities. (Cf. chapter three, pp. 109-113).

At this point we must ask the question, what place does ethics (here meaning not only the behavioral patterns but also

\[13\] Ibid., p. 33.
the value judgments placed upon them by society) have in Bonhoeffer's theology?

Ethics, said Bonhoeffer, is a thing of history, a child of this earth, a product of the ebb and flow of history, of the mutations and variations of value judgments placed upon behavioral patterns from one generation to the next. Because of this there is "a German, a French, an American ethic, for ethics is a matter of blood and of history."\(^{14}\) No one ethic is more ethical or less ethical, more immutable or less immutable, more meaningful or less meaningful than any other, because all are firmly fixed in the nexus of history,..."\(^{15}\) This means that all ethics are relative to the historical periods in which they evolve.

Bonhoeffer equates all ethical systems with what he calls "ways from man to God",\(^ {16}\) as penultimate things.\(^ {17}\) "Then there is the ethical, universally valid law and thus there is a way of man to God. I have my principles and thus I believe that I am secure sub specie aeternitatis,... Then will I again be a slave of my principles. I would give away the most precious good of human price, namely freedom."\(^ {18}\) Here it is quite


\(^{15}\) Ibid.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., p. 41.

\(^{17}\) Bonhoeffer, Ethics, pp. 84-92 "Concretely, two things are called penultimate in relation to the justification of the sinner by grace, namely, being man (Menschsein) and being good.

\(^{18}\) Bonhoeffer, Gesammelte Schriften, Band III, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, München, 1960, p. 52."
obvious that Bonhoeffer equates ethics with man's attempt to be or to appear to be good before one's fellow men, as well as good or righteous in the sight of God. The ethical man, for Bonhoeffer, is the man who is concerned with good and evil, with that which is ethical and unethical. Bonhoeffer calls this man the Pharisee. "He is the man to whom only the knowledge of good and evil has come to be of importance in his entire life;... The Pharisee is that extremely admirable man who subordinates his entire life to his knowledge of good and evil and is as severe a judge of himself as of his neighbor to the honor of God, whom he humbly thanks for this knowledge. For the Pharisee every moment of life becomes a situation of conflict in which he has to choose between good and evil."19 For Bonhoeffer the Pharisee can be found in the ranks of the secularists as well as the religionists.20

With regard to the second aspect of ethics as a penultimate thing, Bonhoeffer is actually referring to the limitation of the entire area of ethics as well as to its fulfillment by that which is ultimate. The ultimate is the moment when the individual man is justified before God. This is the ultimate moment when every preceding moment, that is, every ethical moment leading up to this moment, can only be regarded as penultimate. But the penultimate ethical moments only appear as penultimate in the face of the ultimate. In other words, prior

19 Bonhoeffer, Ethics, p. 151.

to the act of justification by God every ethical moment, or moment in which an ethical decision is made, appears to possess an ultimate character, in the sense that the good associated with the ethical decision is regarded as being in and of itself an ultimate good. But at the moment of justification every prior ethical action of man is seen as having been a preparation for this moment of justification. By saying that the penultimate ethical moments prepare the way for the ultimate moment of justification Bonhoeffer made it quite clear that the penultimate in no way determines the character of the ultimate. It is the ultimate which determines and validates the penultimate.

It is at this point that we reach a high-water mark in the consideration of Bonhoeffer's understanding of iustitia civilis/iustitia christi. There is, I think, no question but that ethics, as the behavioral patterns as well as the value judgments placed upon those patterns, must be identified with iustitia civilis. "Because Christianity speaks of the single way of God to man, from the merciful love of God for unrighteous men and sinners, and because ethics speaks of the way of man to God, of the encounter of the holy God with unholy man; because the Christian message speaks of grace and ethics speaks of righteousness."21 We must also identify what Bonhoeffer calls the ultimate moment of justification by God with iustitia christi. This means that iustitia christi is the ultimate moment of reality in a man's life which

21 Bonhoeffer, Works, pp. 40, 41.
guarantees the validity of and at the same time provides the limitations for \textit{justitia civilis} as a penultimate reality. What Bonhoeffer meant by the assertion that the ultimate moment of justification provides the validity for the penultimate moments of ethics as well as their limitations must now be explained.

Let us look first at what is meant by the assertion that the ultimate moment of justification provides validity for penultimate ethics. There is no question but that Bonhoeffer is at one with Luther with regard to the fact that God is the source and establisher of \textit{justitia civilis} (ethics). Bonhoeffer places \textit{justitia civilis} directly under the general heading of Law, that is, God's alien work for salvation, as opposed to Christ, God's proper work for salvation.\textsuperscript{22} Bonhoeffer agrees that the first use of the Law of God is for the ordering of the world, for the maintenance of peace in society, and, above all, for the production of the ethically good deed (righteousness). Here the Christian as well as the non-Christian can do no better then to heed the words of the Old Testament, especially the Decalogue, in order to understand that the Law of God is concerned with men's lives and actions, with ethics.\textsuperscript{23}

The purpose of the Law of God is to produce honest, God-fearing,

\textsuperscript{22} "The contents of the primus usus are the entire Decalogue with reference to the works which it requires and together with the threat and the promise which it comprises... The purpose of the primus usus is the establishment of the iustitia civilis, rationis or carnis." Bonhoeffer, \textit{Ethics}, pp. 274-276.

\textsuperscript{23} Op. cit. \textit{Ethics}, p. 276, "This statement about the Gospel, therefore, necessarily presupposes the proclamation of the Decalogue for the establishment of iustitia civilis."
righteous men and nations.\textsuperscript{24} It is for this purpose that God has created government (Obrigkeit), and has given to it his divine authority to punish and to reward. "This means that the whole of worldly life is subject to the decalogue so far as works are concerned. God desires \textit{iustitia civilis} of all men, including Christians."\textsuperscript{25} Worldly life is subject to the Decalogue by means of civil government, which is the vehicle for the execution of the Law, and executes its divine mandate by means of coercion or force.\textsuperscript{26} Thus far in Bonhoeffer's analysis of the role of \textit{iustitia civilis} as God-ordained for society there is a unanimity of thought with Luther.

Bonhoeffer continued by saying that not only must government ensure \textit{iustitia civilis} but that it is also incumbent upon the church to preach the Law of God in the service of the Gospel as well as to ensure along with government that men shall be peaceable, and ethical, if not Christian. This means that the church bears a direct responsibility to society in that it has been given not only the Gospel to proclaim but also the Law of God. Though the church must proclaim both \textit{iustitia civilis} and \textit{iustitia christi}, that is, both Law and Gospel, at all times, it is especially urgent that she proclaim both of these to society in times when government abdicates this responsibility.\textsuperscript{27} For the church there can be no proclamation

\begin{footnotes}
\item[26] \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 277, 278.
\item[27] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 282.
\end{footnotes}
of *iustitia christi* without the prior proclamation of *iustitia civilis*, for *iustitia christi* presupposes that *iustitia civilis* has been established in the world. "This statement about the Gospel, therefore, necessarily presupposes the proclamation of the Decalogue for the establishment of *iustitia civilis*."\(^{28}\)

At the same time, government must permit the church to exercise the responsibility to proclaim the Law and the Gospel to the world. If government does not do this, then it forfeits its divine mandate and reason for existence, and is therefore not government. It is at this point that the church must issue a protest against government; a protest which she must be permitted to make in order that society may be preserved and that government may function as government.\(^{29}\)

The church, as the body of Christ, as the community of those who have experienced *iustitia christi*, by its proclamation of both Law and Gospel validates *iustitia civilis*, according to Bonhoeffer.

For Bonhoeffer there is validity in *iustitia civilis* not only because God has created it, but also because God has redeemed the world in Christ. This proclamation of redemption is none other than the Gospel proclamation. The Gospel relates to the secular world, to the world of government, to *iustitia civilis*, in that its proclamation concerns how man belongs to God. But man and the world do not know that they belong to God until the church proclaims this to them. The world does not know that *iustitia civilis* is ordained by God,

\(^{28}\) Ibid., p. 276.

\(^{29}\) Bonhoeffer, *Works*, p. 188.
and commanded by him, until it is told so. This means that there can be no Gospel without the existence of iustitia civilis and no true iustitia civilis without the proclamation of the Gospel.

"In Christ God loved man and the world, and it is for that reason that there is also to be order among men and in the world. Man belongs to God in grace, and that is why he is to obey him in works. It is because there exists a congregation of God that there can and must exist also justice, peace and order... God desires the outward order not only because the Gospel exists but also in order that it may exist."30

There can be no question but that this understanding of iustitia civilis by Bonhoeffer is a restatement as well as an elaboration upon the position of the origin and validity of iustitia civilis as held by Luther. There are, however, a few minor changes of emphasis to be noted in Bonhoeffer's theology of iustitia civilis. The first change of emphasis to be noted is found in Bonhoeffer's assertion that God desires iustitia civilis of all men, including Christians. That God desires that Christians be ethical, is another way of putting this. Christians must be the first to hear and understand this which God desires of all men. Indeed, it could be said that the Christian would not be able to know of this desire of God unless he had fulfilled iustitia civilis by observing the first commandment which "means attendance at church, hearing of the sermon, hearing the Gospel, and a certain amount of reflection."31 Here we find Bonhoeffer discussing what he means by the Christian's observance of iustitia

31 Ibid., p. 279.
civilis in terms of what is normally thought of as the religious or faith-response of the Christian, namely, church attendance, listening to the sermon, and reflection upon one's religious life. These are interpreted by Bonhoeffer as ethical acts, acts which God desires and demands of every man. These acts are what Bonhoeffer calls actions of the worldly life, the secular life, in opposition to the monastic or withdrawn life. This is the life in which the Christian must participate because a Christian must observe the Decalogue. This means not only that the worldly or secular life of man, including the Christian's has been emancipated to the extent that it can now function knowing that God has ordained it, but there can now be no confusion about what constitutes the life of faith, the life of the man who has experienced iustitia christi. For Bonhoeffer this life of faith is not constituted by acts of outward piety, by acts which could be regarded as being ethical, acts of iustitia civilis, such as: church attendance, listening to the sermon, praying, and other acts of external piety.

There is a sharp distinction which Bonhoeffer makes here between these external acts of piety and the act of faith, which is really an extension of Luther's thought on the subject. For Bonhoeffer, one should not confuse these penultimate realities of iustitia civilis no matter how pious or religious they appear.

Indeed, it is the external aspect or value judgment placed upon any act which, for Bonhoeffer, immediately placed it in the category of an act of iustitia civilis. In this case the adjectives pious or religious are in the same category as
the adjectives good and ethical. This is not to say that there is no relationship between the moment of faith and the moment of external piety, between *iustitia christi* and *iustitia civilis*. The indication that they are related is given by Bonhoeffer in his understanding that all men including Christians must observe and participate in these actions of external piety, these ethical actions, in *iustitia civilis*, in order that there may be peace in the world. Peace is to be defined here as the condition which must exist in order that men may lead ethical, pious lives. As such, peace, like *iustitia civilis*, is a gift from God.

The second change of emphasis which we can find in Bonhoeffer's understanding of *iustitia civilis* follows from the first. It is that the Christian community, the church, must ensure that *iustitia civilis* is maintained in the world even though it be solely among its own members. It must do this for two reasons. The first is in order that peace and order may prevail in the world. In other words, the church sees to it that *iustitia civilis* is maintained for the sake of the world itself. The second reason is in order that the Gospel of Christ may be proclaimed to the world. Speaking about this role of the church in maintaining *iustitia civilis* Bonhoeffer said, "the congregation can never be content to cultivate its own internal life; for to do so would be to deny its Master. Even when it can maintain the *iustitia civilis* only among its own members, because its word is not received by the world, it still does this in the service of the world and of its own universal mission." The result of this is:

32 Ibid., p. 282.
that Christians might find themselves alone in their insistence upon the need for a better or more just society. The possibility also exists that the governments of the world will oppress the church for her outspoken insistence upon justice. Bonhoeffer said that it might also be the case that in the quest for iustitia civilis

"collaboration is possible and necessary between Christians and non-Christians in the clarification of certain questions of fact and in the furthering of certain concrete tasks. Because of these essentially different motivations, the results which ensue from this cooperation do not bear the character of a proclamation of the word of God but rather that of a responsible council or demand on the basis of human knowledge." 33

This is in the way of an elaboration upon Luther's understanding that God creates and preserves civil government and civil righteousness, as well as an intensification of the idea that the Christian not only performs acts of iustitia civilis himself, but that he must ensure, as far as he is able, a world in which others may live an ethical and just life.

It is at this point that Troeltsch's assertion that Luther's theology displayed an indifference toward worldly institutions and worldly ethics and was concerned solely with the religious framework of the individual Christian must

33 Ibid., pp. 283, 284. "The primary implication for secular institutions of the domination of Christ and of the Decalogue is not, therefore, the conversion of the statesman or the economist, nor yet the elimination of the harshness and unmercifulness of the state for the sake of a falsely interpreted christianization of the state and its transformation into a part of the Church. It is precisely in the dispensation of strict justice and in the administration of the sword, in maintaining the unmerciful character of the institutions of the state, that is to say, their genuine worldliness, that the dominion of Christ, i.e. the rule of mercy, is given its due." Ibid., pp. 293, 294. We will elaborate upon this theme in the second part of this chapter.
again be seen as a misunderstanding of Luther because of the existence of Bonhoeffer's conclusions, which themselves were drawn from Luther's theology.

In chapter one we noted how Luther set sin over against iustitia civilis in such a way as to show that although God has created and bestows iustitia civilis it is none-the-less negated and undermined by sin. We shall find this same theology in Bonhoeffer in terms of the limitation of iustitia civilis.

In order to understand what Bonhoeffer meant by the limitation of iustitia civilis, we refer back to his understanding of penultimate - ultimate reality. Iustitia civilis is demanded by God of all men and, at the same time, it makes man an arrogant Pharissee. Iustitia civilis is a product of the Law of God. Iustitia civilis is seen to be a penultimate reality from the point of view of the justified Christian who, at the moment of his justification, stands in the position of ultimate reality. It is only from this ultimate point of view or condition that iustitia civilis can be seen to have any limitations. It is only from the point of view of justification, the Gospel, that ethics or worldly morality appears as sin and hypocrisy. "For the Gospel, therefore, iustitia civilis is sin and hypocrisy."34

The primary limitation of iustitia civilis, therefore, is the moment of justification, the moment of iustitia christi. This relates to what we said earlier about Bonhoeffer's understanding that it is only from the point of view of the Gospel,

34 Ibid., p. 279.
of justification, that sin can be understood. Viewing justitia civilis, ethics, from the moment of justification, from justitia christi, human morality and justice take on the appearance of finite attempts by man to reach infinity and perfection. Apart from this ultimate moment of justification, however, these ethical attempts appear to have no limitations. Man can reach perfection if he will but strive earnestly enough, if he will do that which lay within his power. However, from the moment of justitia christi, man is regarded as being incapable of ever reaching infinity or perfection, because all his actions are now open to suspicion. Here, again, we must regard this analysis as an attack upon the assertions Troeltsch made with regard to the perfectability of ethical actions.

Even the ethical or pious deeds of men within the church are challenged by the moment of ultimacy. From the ultimate moment of justification Bonhoeffer said that even the church may be seen as

"a union of religiously inclined, interested men, strangely fond of displaying their religiosity in their form of 'church'. They belong today mostly to a level of society whose prominent characteristic might be regarded, not as a particularly lively spirituality or a special creative power, but at best as a certain comfort in their own right righteousness."35

The Christian is the man who, above all, should recognize that any assertion, however subtle, of one's own righteousness in the face of the ultimate moment of justification is a form of temptation and sin. When the Christian becomes the self-righteous braggart there is no awareness of any limit to one's own justitia civilis, and one takes refuge behind a false security,

35 Bonhoeffer, Works, p. 154.
a security which is a form of temptation. "Lastly there fol-
lows the complete hardening and obduracy of the heart in sin, in fearlessness and security before God, hypocritical piety (Acts 5:3 and 9)."36

The Christian might even delude himself into believing that there is such a thing as a Christian ethic, or at least a set of ethical principles which he can inaugurate. He is not aware that iustitia civilis, when viewed from the moment of iustitia christi, is a moment of non-freedom, non-creativity, in comparison with the moment of iustitia christi. Bonhoeffer did not believe that there is any form of Christian ethic which could be put into practice by Christians. A Christian ethic which would be based on the words or teachings of Jesus is a confusion of iustitia civilis with iustitia christi, of penultimate reality with that which is ultimate. Moments of iustitia civilis, ethical moments, are moments which are not totally free, nor totally creative.37 The moment of iustitia christi, on the other hand, is a moment which is totally free and totally creative. For this reason when one attempts to inaugurate a Christian ethic which is based, for example, on the Sermon of the Mount, one immediately places oneself within the framework of one set of ethical principles among a myriad of others, and, as such, there is nothing within those principles


37 This is so because most ethical principles or systems function on the basis of the motivation in all men for the attainment of happiness and the good life, a motivation which, although essential for their functioning, is none-the-less selfish and thereby contributes to the destruction of the freedom and creativity of the principle or system.
which would make them specifically Christian, but there is the element present which would inhibit freedom and creativity. This element is the security which accompanies every attempt to act on the basis of a principle or out of a system of ethics. Because one's action is made on the basis of a principle, in this case the Sermon on the Mount, the tendency is always present to renounce one's responsibility and to take refuge behind the principle.

Freedom and creativity in all ethical principles or systems can also be stultified or attenuated the moment a man attempts to relate a principle of moral behavior to a present problem. For Bonhoeffer this stultification occurs because the value of principles or systems lay only in the past, that is, these principles of action evolved out of many yesterdays of encounters, but they cannot be applied to my problem today because it is a new problem and demands a new and creative response.

"For the Christian there are no ethical principles by means of which he could perhaps civilize himself. Nor can yesterday ever be decisive for my moral action today. Rather must a direct relationship to God's will be ever sought afresh. I do not do something again today because it seemed to be good yesterday, but because the will of God points out this way to me today." 38

As one can see, the significant limitation which Bonhoeffer sees accompanying every act of justitia civilis is the loss of freedom and creativity. This is the limitation which accompanies every ethical action whether performed by the Christian or the non-Christian. What Bonhoeffer was concerned about was to see that the spontaneity of Christian action be maintained, that

38 Bonhoeffer, Works, p. 43.
a Christian can only fulfill the spirit of the Law by means of a spontaneous response to a situation. I think that this attempt by Bonhoeffer to maintain the spontaneous freedom of action by demanding that principles and laws of behavior be made secondary to the action is a valid one. Taking these limitations into consideration, as well as being careful not to confuse *iustitia civilis* with *iustitia christi*, Bonhoeffer concluded that there is no ethical action which could be discussed from a Christian point of view or which could be labelled specifically Christian. "Now it follows from all this that ethical problems of content can never be discussed in a Christian light; there is simply no possibility of erecting generally valid principles, because each moment, lived in God's sight, can bring an unexpected decision."\(^{39}\) It goes without saying that for Bonhoeffer there was no such thing as a Christian ethic which could be put into practice.

We must now ask the question about the relationship of the Law of God, as the command to *iustitia civilis*, to ethics. The first thing that must be said is that for Bonhoeffer the Law of God and ethics must not be confused. The Law of God is, first of all, God's attempt to deal directly with men. It is what Bonhoeffer calls "the speech of God to men."\(^{40}\) But it is the speech of God to the whole man where he is in time and space. The command of God is "perfectly concrete" for man. "God's commandment, revealed in Jesus Christ, is

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\(^{40}\) Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, p. 245.
always concrete speech to somebody. It is never abstract speech about something or about somebody. There can never be any question or equivocation about the meaning of God's command. It is always clear, straightforward, and direct. An example of this would be the command to honor one's parents. This is more than a moral exhortation to be obedient to my parents in the sense that there are certain things that I must do, certain rules that I must follow, as well as certain things which I should not do. I honor my parents because I accept the authority which they have been given by God over me so that I might lead a full life. This command, then, is more than an ethical injunction because it is more than a prohibition. It is also permissive, and it is because of this permissiveness that the command of God differs from all ethical ordinances.

"I honour my parents, I am faithful in marriage, I respect the lives and property of others, not because at the frontiers of my life there is a threatening 'Thou Shalt Not', but because I accept as holy institutions of God these realities, parents, marriage, life and property, which confront me in the midst and in the fullness of life. It is only when the commandment no longer merely threatens me as a transgressor of the limits, it is only when it convinces and subdues me with its real contents, that it sets me free from the anxiety and the uncertainty of decision... The commandment of God is permission. It differs from all human laws in that it commands freedom."42

Ethics is related to commandment in that it provides the condition or situation in life in which man can function as a total man. It does this by establishing certain patterns,

41 Ibid., p. 246.
42 Ibid., pp. 247, 248.
certain limitations, certain duties, certain guidelines within which man can act. Ethics fences off a certain area of life in the hope that man will thereby be able to find what his duty is or what his response should be. But as such ethics is still prohibitive. The command of God, on the other hand, incorporates ethics within itself so that it establishes certain limits or areas of life in which man can act, and is at the same time greater than ethics because it compels man to act and at the same time permits man to act. The command of God not only stakes out the area in which man will act (the prohibitive element of the command, that is, ethics) but it creates the total situation in which man acts and finds meaning.

"In the last analysis the 'ethical' was concerned with staking out and defining a space in which man could share in the whole fulness of life, but the commandment is concerned with this 'sharing in life' itself in its concrete contents and in that liberty of man which these contents render possible in such 'sharing in life'. Thus it becomes clear that the commandment of God also comprises the 'ethical'."[43]

The net result of such a distinction between ethics and the command or Law of God by Bonhoeffer is the emphasis upon the freedom or permission which God grants to man to live a full life. Bonhoeffer gives the following example of what he means by this ability of God's commandment to give life to man:

"If I love my wife, if I accept marriage as an institution of God, then there comes an inner freedom and certainty of life and action in marriage; I no longer watch with suspicion every step that I take; I no longer call

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43 Ibid., p. 251.
in question every deed that I perform. The divine prohibition of adultery is then no longer the center around which all my thought and action in marriage revolves... The divine commandment has here become the permission to live in marriage in freedom and in certainty.\textsuperscript{44}

In comparison with the commandment of God which Bonhoeffer sees as essentially creative and freedom-giving, the ethical formulations of society remain prohibitive and noncreative.\textsuperscript{45}

This means that what man ought to do in order to live, to be free, is not to find out what the ethical values of his society are, what his society prohibits and permits, which is ethics, but what God commands of him. If man does this, according to Bonhoeffer, he will find that what God commands is that he believe in Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ is what God commands.\textsuperscript{46} In order to understand how Bonhoeffer relates the commandment of God to faith in Jesus Christ we must make an analysis of Bonhoeffer's understanding of \textit{justitium christi}.

\textbf{Part II}

We begin the discussion about \textit{justitium christi} in Bonhoeffer's works by concentrating our attention upon the theme of Christ as ultimate reality. For Bonhoeffer's theology of

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., p. 251.

\textsuperscript{45} Ethics and the "ethical phenomenon", as Bonhoeffer called the moment an ethical injunction or judgment is made, exists only for the moment when the unity and fellowship among men breaks down. Ethics is a means whereby community may again function after it has been disrupted. As such, ethics is a prohibitive factor in human life rather than a permissive one.

\textsuperscript{46} Bonhoeffer, \textit{Ethics}, pp. 292, 293.
justitia christi it was imperative that the historical Jesus of Nazareth, who he was and what he did, conceived as a unity, be seen as the starting point. There was no question in Bonhoeffer's mind about the reality of the existence of the historical Jesus, but this acknowledgment of Jesus' existence as an historical figure is of little use to men until it is coupled with the affirmation that he is still alive. "To know of Jesus does not mean to believe in him; merely believing that he once lived is of course no use. Faith is dependent not on dead letters, but on the living Lord, who beyond all doubt stands before us and commands us in the Bible and its stories."47 The historical Jesus may not be disposed of, however. One cannot discuss the risen Christ or the Lord who confronts men today without, at the same time, discussing the historical Jesus. The historical Jesus becomes important, then, as the grounding device, the touchstone, for any discussion about the risen Christ. The risen Christ is none other than the risen historical Jesus. Bonhoeffer never sacrificed the historical Jesus at the expense of emphasizing the risen Christ.

For Bonhoeffer Jesus Christ was the suffering Son of God, born of a human mother, who suffered temptations and despair and finally died on the cross. In this humble and suffering life one can see man in all his weakness and powerlessness; in Jesus one finds a man who was alienated from God48 and from

47 Bonhoeffer, Works, p. 146.
48 Ibid., p. 147.
his own people. For Bonhoeffer this is where any discussion about the risen Jesus Christ must begin. These are the facts in the historical life of Jesus which become the touchstone for any discussion about the risen Christ.

This is so because the church proclaims that in this suffering and powerless figure there is mysteriously revealed the Word of God. But what is the Word of God? Bonhoeffer answers the the Word of God is a man; it is not a principle or an idea, or a pattern, but the man Jesus Christ. The Word of God is completely identified with a human being. The reason why the Word of God identified itself with a man remains a secret which only God understands.49

The humanity of the Word does provide a point of identification and recognition for men. The suffering, the lostness, and the death of this man permit me to see in him an equal with myself. Because Jesus was so human it is possible for me to regard him as a brother human being. For Bonhoeffer this point of identification with Christ, this rapport, which is based on common experiences, must be made by all men if they are to begin to understand who Jesus is. This is the reason why the historical Jesus and his actions are essential in any proclamation of the Gospel for Bonhoeffer. Without the historical Jesus the Word of God stands in danger of being interpreted as an idea, a principle, or a pattern.

Having said this about the humanity of the Word of God, we must now address ourselves to the problem of the efficacy of the life and death of this man Jesus. The problem of

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49 Ibid., p. 146.
efficacy centers around the question, how is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ able to relate itself to me? This question is obviously one about the effectiveness of Christ's redemption, the effectiveness of his righteousness, for men living in different historical periods.

The first response which Bonhoeffer made to this question was that the man Jesus was a genuine transcendent person. In the man Jesus there was the totally transcendent God. This must have been the case in order that Jesus Christ could provide an answer to the riddles of life. The answer to man's problems must come from outside his existence in order for the answer to be a valid one. "Only what comes from 'outside' can show man the way to his reality, his existence." But genuine transcendence is incomprehensible to man until that which is transcendent enters his sphere of existence. This leads Bonhoeffer to say that it is only in the weakness and utter suffering of Christ, in his total humanity, that one can find the transcendent God. Here Bonhoeffer, like Luther before him, attempted to make the transcendence of God relevant solely in terms of the suffering and the death of the man Jesus. The transcendence of God can only be seen in the suffering of Christ, but it is the transcendence of God in Christ which qualifies that suffering. For Bonhoeffer one can not go beyond this point; one can not discuss the transcendence of God without at the same moment discussing the suffering and

death of Jesus Christ. There is no transcendent God apart from the man Jesus hanging on a cross.

The second point that Bonhoeffer made regarding the efficacy of Christ's death concerned itself with Christ's vicarious representation of humanity. Bonhoeffer said that Christ's death on the cross was effective because he represented all humanity. It is only because Christ represented man on the cross that the community of his spirit, the church, is able to exist. His representation of man makes possible the new life of an individual at the moment of justification. For Bonhoeffer Christ's representation of man is the basic life principle of the new humanity in Christ. "Therefore the principle of representation is the basis for the community of God in and through Christ. It is not 'solidarity', since that is not possible between Christ and man, but representation which is the life principle of the new humanity."52 This notion of vicarious representation is as close as Bonhoeffer comes to an understanding of the objective efficacy of Christ's life and death. It is really in harmony with Schleiermacher's notions of Christ as man's ransom and his high priest. For Bonhoeffer this life and death were able to vicariously represent all humanity because Jesus was true God and true man. In other words, I think that this notion of vicarious representation is an attempt on Bonhoeffer's part to make concrete what the Incarnation doctrine means. Christ is able to

represent humanity because he is both God and Man and this representation is vicariously effective for that same reason.

But I do not think that this idea of representation creates what one might call an objective efficacy for Christ's death. Bonhoeffer never discussed Christ's death strictly in terms of its objective efficacy, but only in terms of the effect or impact that that death has upon each individual. The fact, however, that Bonhoeffer emphasized the need for the historicity of Jesus might indicate that he could not totally avoid the problem of Christ's objective valid death. I think that the omission from his theological writings of any analysis of this objective validity of Christ's life and death tends to weaken considerably what Bonhoeffer said about the validity of Christ as Christus pro me. I would not go so far as to deny completely that Bonhoeffer did not consider the objective validity of Christ's life and death essential for his Christology, but it appears to me to have been a notion which he did not formally espouse. The most that we can say is that his discussion about the representation by Christ pertains to the discussion about the efficacy of Christ's death in that it is through Christ's representation of all humanity that one's

"fellow-man is also rescued from the world of things, to which he of course continues to belong qua entity, and drawn into the social sphere of persons. Only through Christ does my neighbor confront me as making some form of absolute claim on me from a position outside my own existence. Only here is reality sheer first-hand decision. Without Christ my very neighbor is no more than my possibility of self-assertion through 'sustaining his claim'. (Griesbach)."53

53 Bonhoeffer, Act and Being, p. 139.
This representation by Christ is part and parcel of his efficacy for man in that Christ stands at the very center of human existence. But this does not mean that he stands at the center of our personality, our thought and our feelings, but rather that he stands, as Bonhoeffer put it, at the boundary of human existence which is between Law and fulfilment.

"In the fallen world the center is however immediately the boundary. Man stands between Law and fulfilment. He possesses the Law, but he cannot fulfill it. Now Christ stands there where man fails in the face of the Law. Christ as the Center means that he is the fulfillment of the Law. Thus is he the boundary and the judge of man, as well as the beginning of man's new existence, its center. Christ as the center of human existence means that he is the judge and the justification of man."54

This discussion about Christ's representation of man, or Christ as the center of human existence bears no relationship to any discussion about Christ as the highpoint of all religions or the theory of Christ's absolutism within liberal-rationalistic theology.55 All questions about the objective validity of Christ's life and death which avoid the subjective appropriation by the believer who is able to identify himself with Christ because Christ first identified himself with men are false because they seek to find the unhidden God in Jesus, to find Christ without the need for faith. For Bonhoeffer Jesus can only be Christ for me at the moment when I trust in him. "Christ is Christ not as Christ for himself, but rather in his relationship to me. His Christ-being is his for-me-being."56

54 Bonhoeffer, Gesammelte Schriften, Band III, p. 195.
55 Ibid., p. 196.
56 Ibid., p. 182.
In other words, there can be no objective efficacy of Christ in and of himself, but only an efficacy in that he is related to me, as one who stands in my place in the tension zone between the command which the Law of God makes upon me and its fulfilment, as one who is the complete unity of act and being.  

I think that Bonhoeffer's theology displays a weakness at this point which is just as one-sided as the one which he was attempting to correct. He was trying to restore the efficacy of Christ's life and death in terms of what might be called the identifiable-ness of that life and death for men. He was trying to restore this subjective side in order to show that the objectivity of Christ's life and death should not be thought of mechanistically but rather existentially, but by this effort he under-emphasized what I regard as the legitimate and necessary objective factor of Christ's life and death. This brings the discussion of the efficacy of Christ to the point where we must discuss Bonhoeffer's understanding of the moment of a man's justification, the moment of iustitia christi, in order that we might understand this efficacy of Christ more fully.

We will discuss the moment of justification or iustitia christi in an attempt to relate the aforementioned ideas. The following three headings will be used: A. Jesus, the Word of God, as the Last Word; B. The Formation of Jesus in his Church; C. Christ's Righteousness is the New Being.

57 Ibid., Cf. also his treatment of Christ as the unity of act and Being, Act and Being, pp. 155-184.
A. Jesus, the Word of God, as the Last Word. From Bonhoeffer's point of view, man is not able to understand himself from himself. He is not able to grasp his total existence by relating that existence to himself alone. The reason for this is that existence poses too many questions to man for which he cannot in and of himself provide the answers. But this limitation of man to provide the solutions to his problems cannot be seen from the point of view of man examining himself or man in self-examination. This is so because "man has in himself essentially no limits, he is infinite in himself." Man is only aware of his limitations in the face of God, in relationship to God. "Theology cannot think of man except in reference to his limitations, but these limitations bear the name of God. If the question of man is really to be posed seriously, it can only be posed where man is before God." When man stands before God man experiences authentic existence. This authentic existence is both a terrifying and a liberating experience. It is terrifying in that man realizes that he stands utterly alone and forsaken. He searches for some refuge, some escape, from the awful judgment of God. He seeks refuge in his own righteous actions, in some extenuating circumstance, that is, he seeks refuge in himself. But even at the moment when he offers his excuses to himself, he begins to feel guilty; he feels the world rising up against him, his view of Christ becomes obscured, his conscience is terrified.

58 Bonhoeffer, Works, p. 60.

59 Ibid.
Although man desires at this moment "to make himself right and to live forever", he knows that he cannot bear up under the excruciatingly painful judgment of God. It is at this moment that man's iustitia civilis must be regarded as sin and hypocrisy. Iustitia civilis is now face to face with the ultimate Word of God in its aspect of judgment, and iustitia civilis thereby becomes a penultimate reality. This moment is the moment of justification. This is the moment when the "dark pit of human life, inwardly and outwardly bared, sinking ever more hopelessly and inescapably in the abyss, is torn open by main force, and the word of God breaks in."60 This is the moment when the word of God comes to man as law, as judgment, and as terror.

But the word of God not only terrifies man, it also has the power to liberate him. Man stands before God and knows that he is guilty of not having fulfilled the Law of God. He knows that he must die a convicted man. But he does not die; God does not kill him. The Word of God is not a principle of justice which must be executed at all costs. If this were the case, then man would die. Rather the Word of God is a man; a man who was also utterly forsaken and desperate, a man whose life of charity and acts of mercy could not save him from death, but whose death and resurrection, whose righteousness, can now save all men. The moment of justification, the moment when man does not die but is able to live, is the moment when he hears the Word of God offering him forgiveness. For

60 Bonhoeffer, Ethics, p. 79.
Bonhoeffer, the moment of justification, of *iustitia christi*, is the moment when God forgives man. Bonhoeffer thought that this forgiveness could only be experienced in the moments of darkest doubt and despair, the moments when life holds no meaning for man, the moments when *iustitia civilis* is unable to keep a man alive. Forgiveness can only be experienced when one has become like Christ himself, that is, forsaken before God.

"In the very place where we have fallen away from God, where we have become dead and unreceptive to him, in our guilt, God's goodness searches us out, and he reveals himself to us again as the eternal promise of God, in Jesus Christ, which far surpasses all guilt and all life. Only the man who in the darkness of guilt, of unfaithfulness, of enmity towards God, has felt himself touched by the love which never ceases, which forgives everything, and which points beyond all misery to the world of God, only such a man really knows what God's goodness means."

The result of this moment of justification, this moment of *iustitia christi*, is that man is now aware that he has been set free. He has been set free from any worry or perplexity about his inability to fulfill God's law. He is aware, possibly for the first time, that God loves him and does not desire that he should die but that he should live. He is free in that he is aware that there is a definite future ahead of him which is pregnant with possibilities in which he may act.

He is only now aware that the ethical actions, the *iustitia civilis*, of his past life were preparations for this moment. This ultimate moment in which the last Word of God has been


addressed to man has made these moments of *iustitia civilis* penultimate moments. This justifying moment is the moment when man stands alone before God and hears God's word addressed to him, both as judgment, to which man responds in terror, as well as forgiveness, to which man responds in freedom.

This understanding of *iustitia christi* as the moment when the Word of God is addressed to man in desperation and loneliness is much more akin to the understanding that Luther and Schleiermacher had than it is to that of Troeltsch. For both Luther and Schleiermacher *iustitia civilis* was neither totally obliterated by *iustitia christi*, nor was it confused with *iustitia christi* and thereby glorified or elevated to a position of grandeur. For Troeltsch there was this confusion of *iustitia civilis* with *iustitia christi* to the extent that *iustitia civilis* was assigned the same function as that of *iustitia christi*, namely, to produce faith.

**B. The Formation of Jesus in his Church.** I do not think that it is sufficient to examine *iustitia christi* in Bonhoeffer from the point of view of the moment of justification alone. If we were to leave our own investigations at that point we would not understand the way in which the Word of God as Jesus Christ encounters a man, we would not understand how Christ's vicarious representation becomes effective in the life of the believer. Jesus Christ as the Word of God is intimately connected with his Church, his body on earth, to the extent that *iustitia christi* can not be understood apart from the Church.

It is Jesus Christ, the risen Lord, who influences men, who stamps himself upon them, in such a way that a man is able
to be conformed to his likeness. This conformation or formation, as Bonhoeffer calls it, is the risen Christ bestowing his righteousness upon men. Men do not attain to the form of Christ by striving to be like him, by living according to any Christian principles of behavior. Men do not attain to this formation of Christ's righteousness by attempting to be pious or good, by creating a civil righteousness. As Bonhoeffer said, "It is not a question of applying directly to the world the teaching of Christ or what are referred to as Christian principles, so that the world might be formed in accordance with these." Indeed, for Bonhoeffer, the conformation of a man to Christ does not take place by any effort on man's part, by any striving to form oneself according to Christ. Any attempt by man to be ethical, to be religious, to be pious, is really nothing more than iustitia civilis. But iustitia christi must not be confused with iustitia civilis. The righteousness of Christ, whereby man is formed to the likeness of Christ, is given to man as a gift. Bonhoeffer here is keeping the distinction which Luther made between iustitia christi and iustitia civilis well in view. He clearly understands that any effort on man's part to be conformed to Christ by means of ethical striving, piety, or religion, is still iustitia civilis.

Conformation to Christ occurs at the moment when man ceases to strive to be someone, when man abandons himself to

63 Ibid., p. 18.
64 Ibid.
Christ's judgment, when man allows himself to be sentenced to death by God. "To be formed in the likeness of the crucified--this means being a man sentenced by God... But in surrendering himself to God's judgment upon him and against him he is himself just in the eyes of God." 65 Conformation begins at the moment of justification. 66 Conformation to Christ begins the moment when man dies to himself in order that Christ's alien righteousness might begin to form man to himself. It is the alien righteousness of Christ which is the forming power in man's life, and nothing which man possesses in and of himself. This alien righteousness of Christ which forms man to itself does not make man God, however, but a true man. "And again, man is not transformed into a form which is alien to him, the form of God, but into his own form, the form which is essentially proper to him. Man becomes man because God became man. But man does not become God." 67 For Bonhoeffer, as for Luther, this quote means that man is only a true man,

65 Ibid., p. 19.

66 It is here that I think John Godsey's excellent study of Bonhoeffer's theology overlooks two important understandings. In the first place, he does not connect the formation of man to Christ with justification. Secondly, he said that Bonhoeffer pointed out that "the form which takes form in man is neither the form of God, which would be alien to man,..." John D. Godsey, The Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1960, p. 205. If he had noted the connection between formation and justification (on the basis of judgment by God and forgiveness, which are common to both formation and justification), then he would have understood that the form which comes to man and works in him is an alien form, in that it is Christ's work and not man's which is effective. "Yet my life is justified solely by that which is the property of Christ and never by that which has become my own property." D. Bonhoeffer, Ethics, p. 81.

67 Bonhoeffer, Ethics, p. 20.
(man's proper form), when he allows Christ and his righteousness to transform him. Christ comes to man and bestows on him his righteousness, in return for which Christ takes man's righteousness, justitia civilis, as well as sinful man into himself. This is precisely that exchange between man and Christ which we noted above in Luther. Bonhoeffer is obviously at one with Luther in this emphasis.

It is at this point that I believe that Bonhoeffer extends Luther's understanding of justitia christi by incorporating it into his own theology of the church. For Bonhoeffer, when this formation of Christ's righteousness in a man occurs, there the church is present. The righteousness of Christ, for Bonhoeffer, is the gift of Jesus Christ himself as a powerful force working within a man. Whenever and wherever this formation by Christ occurs that is the church. Bonhoeffer states that what the New Testament calls the Body of Christ, in other words, the church, can also be called the formation by Christ in a man. The church, as the Body of Christ, therefore, is the community of justified men, the community of Jesus Christ himself, "who has taken form among men." Here we see again the association Bonhoeffer made between justification and formation to Christ. For Bonhoeffer the church was conceived not as an institution, "but in terms of persons."

68 Cf. chapter one, pp. 31, 32.
69 Bonhoeffer, Ethics, p. 20.
70 Bonhoeffer, Act and Being, p. 111.
community of those who have experienced justification, those who have been judged and forgiven, and as such the church itself, since it cannot be separated from justified individuals, is itself judged and forgiven, "sentenced and awakened to new life." It is apparent that the basis for the consistency which unquestionably exists in Bonhoeffer's thought between *justitia christi* and the church of Christ is to be found in his understanding of justification.

C. Christ's Righteousness is the New Being. This section will address itself to the following question. Is there a difference between the ethical actions which the justified man performs in society and those performed by the unjustified man? There are really two questions here. The first is the question of whether or not the motivations for actions between Christians and non-Christians are capable of being perceived? The second question asks what relationship exists between *justitia christi* and that which is called Good?

With regard to the first question, Bonhoeffer affirmed that the motivation for any action always remains hidden within the individual. Indeed it is doubtful whether there is one motivation for any one action. It is more likely that there are complexities of motivation which determine an act. This complexity, coupled with the structure of everyday existence which is dynamic rather than static, makes the perceptibility of a motivation for action an impossibility. From a theological point of view the motivations for action which

are based on faith are totally imperceptible. This is so because faith itself is a hidden reality. It is a reality which cannot be demonstrated or proven. The man who is being formed to Christ in faith is seldom if ever able to demonstrate his motivation. But for Bonhoeffer it is not only the motivation which is non-demonstrable and non-perceptible, it is also the action of the man of faith itself which is not distinguishable from the action of the non-Christian. "The new man lives in the world like any other man. Often there is little to distinguish him from the rest. Nor does he attach importance to distinguishing himself, but only to distinguishing Christ for the sake of his brethren. Transfigured though he is in the form of the Risen One, here he bears only the sign of the cross and the judgment."72 This means that whatever action the man being formed to Christ might perform in society, and whatever motivation that action might have, it remains indistinguishable from the actions and motivations of those not being formed to Christ. In other words, every ethical action, regardless of whether it is performed by Christians or non-Christians, must always be regarded as iustitia civilis because of the hidden and imperceptible character of faith, which is an imperceptible motivator.

I agree with Bonhoeffer on this important point because I think that it places all the emphasis upon God as the only person who is capable of knowing what any man's motivations for action are. As a result this position also under-emphasizes

72 Ibid., pp. 19, 20.
the judgment which men are often tempted to place upon what they regard as a questionable or suspect action, what they might call an un-Christain action. In other words, I think that Bonhoeffer's position undermines potential pharisaism, especially within the Christian community.

This leads us to a consideration of the second question, namely, that of the relationship between justitia christi and the Good. Bonhoeffer noted that since the time of the Reformation the question about the relationship of the good man to Christ has been neglected. Protestant theologians, he said, discussed the good man either in terms of his being a Pharisee, that is, the man whose justitia civilis was a sham, or else as the man who had been formed already to Christ and whose goodness was found in terms of his good works performed on the basis of his faith. Bonhoeffer said that in either of these two cases the question of the conversion of the good man to Jesus remained unanswered.73

Bonhoeffer begins to answer this question about the relationship between justitia christi and the Good in terms of a definition of Goodness itself. There can be no abstract concept of Good, but only a Good which is seen in relationship to life itself. A concept of Good which does not relate to life or take the life process into account is a meaningless concept. For Bonhoeffer the Good is only to be found at the point where a man's life is related to the limitation of life, namely, to death. This is a concept of Good which is directly related

73 Ibid., pp. 181-184.
to the life process in that it is related to the boundary or limitation of life, in this case death, which gives it meaning. The Good is that which is related to the life process, and that which is related to the life process is directly related to Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{74} By way of example, Bonhoeffer would say that the man whose life is made real by his awareness of the impending limitation to life which death poses, is relating himself directly to Jesus Christ. This man is the good man not merely because society evaluates him thus, but because he is directly related to Jesus Christ. In the case that the man is unaware of his relationship to Jesus Christ, Bonhoeffer would have said that this is a case of unconscious Christianity, or better, unconscious Christ-likeness. It is indeed unfortunate that Bonhoeffer never pursued on paper his answers to the question about the relationship between \textit{iustitia christi} and the Good. The most that can be said at this point about his position is that \textit{iustitia christi} does not destroy the Good but, because the Good is related directly to Jesus Christ, clarifies it and brings it to fulfilment.

But the Good is not only fulfilled it is also at the same time judged in its relationship to Jesus. This is so because there exists a tension between what we have already discussed in terms of the ultimate and penultimate moments in life. The relationship between \textit{iustitia christi} and the Good is the same as that between the ultimate and penultimate, namely, a

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., pp. 187-189.
dialectical one in which there is unity only in tension.\textsuperscript{75} In the case of the discussion between the ultimate and penultimate, if the penultimate were to be destroyed by the ultimate moment of justification, then the penultimate would be in no way a preparation for the ultimate. It would not then be penultimate at all. The penultimate must be a preparation for the ultimate. At the same time, dialectically speaking, there can be no preparation for that which is ultimate. As such, when the ultimate comes it judges anything that was before it. But this judgment of the penultimate by the ultimate occurs solely for the purpose of preserving the penultimate. This means that the Good, in this case the penultimate, must exist in order to prepare the world for the moment of \textit{iustitia christi}, but that the moment \textit{iustitia christi} arrives the Good is seen as having been no good at all in comparison with the ultimate moment.

I think that this is a valid theological explanation of the penultimate role which the Law and \textit{iustitia civilis} play. I think that something very much like Bonhoeffer's discussion was in Paul's mind when he wrote in Galatians 3:23, 24, "Now before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith." Here one finds the same dialectical tension that

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\textsuperscript{75} Cf. Bonhoeffer's discussion of the tension which exists between the ultimate (\textit{iustitia christi}) and the penultimate (the Good (\textit{iustitia civilis})) in his \textit{Ethics}, pp. 85-100.
\end{center}
one finds in Bonhoeffer's discussion of the ultimate and the penultimate.

This brings us to the point where we must discuss the possible meaning which this dialectical relationship between _iustitia civilis_ and _iustitia christi_ held for Bonhoeffer's theology. We will discuss this dialectical relationship under the following three headings: A. The Validity of Ethical Systems as Preparation for Christ, B. The Validity of Government as a Preserver of Justice, and C. The Validity of the Secular as the Arena for _iustitia christi_.

A. The Validity of Ethical Systems as Preparation for Christ. Bonhoeffer said that the ethical action always relates to a definite time and a definite place in human existence. Societies also attached to the ethical moment certain value judgments in terms of what one's obligation or duty should or should not be at the moment when a decision is made. Because of these factors Bonhoeffer said that the ethical moments in life have a definite value. Their value does not lie in the fact that they conform to a general principle of 'should' or 'ought', that is, to some universal ethical principle which would then become an end in itself, but the value of ethical moments is to be found in the fact that they provide a relative boundary within which individuals may lead a full and natural life.76

"Ethics and ethicists do not wish to represent goodness as such, that is to say as an end to itself, but, precisely by speaking strictly from the standpoint of

76 Bonhoeffer, _Ethics_, pp. 232, 233.
the 'ethical', from the standpoint that the peripheral event of 'shall' and 'should', they wish to help people to learn to share in life, to share in life within the limits of the obligation of 'shall' and 'should', and not hold themselves aloof from the processes of life as spectators, critics and judges;"77

There is a repudiation at this point I think of Troeltsch's definition of ethics according to Bonhoeffer's understanding of ethics. Troeltsch thought of ethics as an inclusive combination of morality of conscience plus moral values (Cf. chapter three). Bonhoeffer denies that there can exist such moral values which are universally valid. Although he would agree with Troeltsch that the goal of ethics is the attainment of the "free personality", he would not subscribe to Troeltsch's conclusion that this goal is attained by means of reason alone. Ethics ought not deaden the activities of men, but should provide the framework within which men may act freely and imaginatively. "This limitation does not mean that the ethical loses any of its significance, but it is precisely from this that it derives its warrant, its weight;"78 Bonhoeffer makes it quite clear that when he talks about the ethical he is not talking about a universally valid principle which can be applied at all times and in all places, hence what is really an attack upon Troeltsch's position, but rather to the relative judgment or evaluation which is placed upon actions at a particular time and place by society. This means that justitia civilis itself is not a universally valid righteousness, as we said in Part I, but is only to be found at certain times in certain concrete situations. Bonhoeffer, denying Troeltsch's contention, said that the ethical "is not essentially a formal

77 Ibid., pp. 236, 237.
78 Ibid., p. 238, 239.
rational principle but a concrete relation between the giver and the receiver of commands;". This means, then, that *iustitia civilis* is created when a relationship is established between God, who commands righteousness, and man, who receives the command to be righteous. But how can these ethical systems, *iustitia civilis*, be a preparation for Christ?

God commands man to be righteous, to be ethical, to be free and creative in his actions in society. But because of man's sin, his egocentricity, he is incapable of being righteous, of being what God commands that he be. In this case ethics is the preparation for Christ because the command that man be righteous in every situation creates the necessity for Christ, the fulfiller of all righteousness. The validity of ethical systems as a preparation for Christ lies in the fact that they have been commanded by God in order that man might be free and creative in his actions, as Troeltsch rightly perceived. But because of sin man is incapable of fulfilling this command and therefore incapable of being free, something which Troeltsch failed to perceive. Bonhoeffer is careful to emphasize that although man prohibits *iustitia civilis* from doing for him what it was created to do, God does not destroy it. If this were the case, if God would destroy *iustitia civilis* because man is incapable of fulfilling the ethical, then God would be destroying his own Law, his own command. Here we see that Bonhoeffer parallels Luther's thought in two ways.

79 Ibid., p. 240.
First, like Luther, he affirms that God has created *iustitia civilis* by means of the fiat of his command. Secondly, he affirmed, with Luther, that although *iustitia civilis* is vitiated by sin, it remains a true righteousness which God commands. The question must now be raised, namely, how does God command *iustitia civilis*? This question leads us on to the second aspect in the dialectical relationship between *iustitia civilis* and *iustitia christi* in Bonhoeffer's theology.

B. The Validity of Government as a Preserver of Justice. Bonhoeffer assumed that the world was created by God and that this creation relates directly to Jesus Christ. The way in which the created world is related to Christ is by means of divine mandates. A divine mandate is a command by God in which a task is imposed upon creation. For Bonhoeffer there were four divine mandates in history: labor, marriage, government, and the church. These mandates, as Bonhoeffer calls them, are what Luther called the Orders of Creation. Bonhoeffer said that he chose the word mandate rather than order because mandate "refers more clearly to a divinely imposed task rather than to a determination of being." Although Bonhoeffer relates the created world to Christ by means of the word mandate, and Luther by means of the word order, there is a distinct similarity between the thought of these two men, as we shall see.

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80 Cf. chapter one, pp. 5-7.
81 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, p. 73.
82 Ibid.
For Bonhoeffer the divine mandate of government is not creative, but rather preservative. That is, government does not create life or values, but preserves those lives and values which have already been established by means of the other mandates of labor and marriage. The mandate of government protects and preserves justice in society. It preserves justice for the sake of Jesus Christ, and this is what gives the mandate of government its validity. This means that for Bonhoeffer any righteousness which man is able to produce because of the existence of these four mandates, is one which derives directly from Christ himself. This relates directly to Luther's understanding that _iustitia civilis_ was directly related to Jesus Christ because he had redeemed the orders of creation. Bonhoeffer's point here is also in agreement with that which Schleiermacher made regarding the fact that there is only one good work in society, namely, the one which Christ makes good. For Luther, for Schleiermacher, and here for Bonhoeffer, the goodness or righteousness of any action which is performed under any of the four mandates of creation is a righteousness which must be seen to be based upon a relation-

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83 Ibid., pp. 75, 76.

84 Here it should be noted that Bonhoeffer felt that the theological phrase which Luther and theologians after him used, orders of creation, should be changed to orders of preservation because orders of creation imply that certain establishments or orders in the world possess a quality or validity for existence apart from any reference to Christ. The phrase orders of preservation, on the other hand, implies that God preserves these sin-ridden orders "in grace and anger, in view of the revelation in Christ." Works, p. 180.

85 Cf. the discussion about the relationship of _iustitia civilis_ to Christ on pp. 12-17 of chapter one.
ship to Christ, and not merely upon an autonomous principle of reason, as Troeltsch maintained. For Bonhoeffer the existence of world history, the existence of nations; the existence of government, is possible only because of the sustaining power of Christ and his righteousness and not because of the reasonableness of human nature. Government is an order of preservation in society because God wishes to preserve society by means of government and the other mandates, because Christ had redeemed them.

Bonhoeffer reaffirmed Luther's position that government serves Christ directly "by establishing and maintaining an outward justice by means of the sword which is given to it, and to it alone, in deputyship for God." This means that government, in maintaining peace and justice in society, provides the opportunity for men to serve Jesus Christ in their various vocations. The form of government which does not maintain justice and peace in society destroys itself when it refuses to allow the agencies which promote life and freedom such as public education and the church to exist. An example of this is a totalitarian form of government. If government is to fulfill its divine mandate, it must allow these agencies to perform their functions. Bonhoeffer said that a particular

86 Cf. Schleiermacher's and Troeltsch's positions, as described on pages 66-72 of chapter two, and pages 110-113 of chapter three. When one compares these positions, one is able to conclude that there was a basic agreement between Luther, Schleiermacher and Bonhoeffer and that Troeltsch was in no way in agreement because of his insistence upon the autonomous and rationalistically oriented structure of the Good and secular ethics.

87 Bonhoeffer, Ethics, pp. 304-306.
form of government which inhibits education and terrorizes
the church negates itself. "The state which endangers the
Christian proclamation negates itself... A state which in-
cludes within itself a terrorized church has lost its most
faithful servant."88

With reference to the dialectical relationship of iustitia
christi to iustitia civilis, we would say that in a situation
where a particular form of government interferes with or re-
fuses to permit the church to proclaim its message, what it
is in reality doing is forbidding the proclamation of the
ultimate Word of God, iustitia christi, as judgment and for-
giveness, to maintain and fulfill iustitia civilis. In the
case where government becomes totalitarian and forbids the
church to proclaim the Word of God, Bonhoeffer said that the
church has three areas of action open to it.

The church might first challenge the actions of the state
on the grounds of their legitimacy, or second, it might try to
help the victims of this totalitarian state, or third, it
might enter into direct conflict with the state. If the
church is driven to this third choice of action, it does so
on behalf of the Word of God which has created government and
redeemed it, in other words, the church enters into direct
conflict with the totalitarian state on behalf of the state
itself. It proclaims iustitia christi in order that iustitia
civilis might be maintained. "But even this third action of
the church, which on occasion leads to conflict with the exist-

88 Bonhoeffer, Works, p. 225.
The state, is only the paradoxical expression of its ultimate recognition of the state; indeed, the church itself knows itself and to preserve it.⁸⁹ Government, as one of the producers and preservers of *iustitia civilis*, and as one of the mandates whereby God preserves his world for Jesus Christ, finds its validity for existence when it acts justly by securing order and peace in the world. But at this point one might get the impression that what Bonhoeffer is discussing here is a truncated Word of God, which commands that government protect and maintain society in order that the church might proclaim a *iustitia christi* which is somehow apart from or separated from the historical sphere of government's existence. But this implication would be a false one for Bonhoeffer, because the Word of God is related to only one area, the historical, or sometimes called the secular world. For Bonhoeffer the dialectical relationship between *iustitia civilis* and *iustitia christi* occurs only within the area of the secular. This leads us to discuss the third aspect of the relationship between *iustitia civilis* and *iustitia christi*.

C. The Validity of the Secular as the Arena for *Iustitia Christi*. For Bonhoeffer men, nations, government, and the God of the Old and the New Testaments and his communities, exist and take their meaning from history, from the secular. To the question of what the increasing secularity of the twentieth century world means for Christianity, Bonhoeffer gave this answer. There is no real need for the church to

posit a religious premise for men in order that they may experience Christ. To demand that a man become religious before he can experience Christ or come to faith in Christ, is to absolutize religion, which is really an absolutizing of iustitia civilis. To demand that a man must become religious before he can experience faith in Christ is another way of saying that a man must first perform a form of iustitia civilis before he can experience and understand iustitia christi. It is really to demand work's righteousness as the precondition for faith. Bonhoeffer felt that those people who regret the loss of the religious world view from society lay themselves open to two dangers. From Bonhoeffer's point of view, the first and possibly the greatest danger is that these people tend to confuse religion with faith in Christ. These two must not be confused. Religion is iustitia civilis. Faith in Christ is the moment of iustitia christi. Religion is the product or result of man's striving to be something, and faith in Christ is the product of the action of God upon man. Religion and Christianity have been associated with each other in the past to the extent that Bonhoeffer could say that religion has been the outer garment for Christianity.\textsuperscript{90}

I think that this distinction which Bonhoeffer made between religion or iustitia civilis, on the one hand, and faith in Christ or iustitia christi, on the other, is at heart one between faith and works. But Bonhoeffer overemphasized the point that the religious feeling or religious attitude within a

\textsuperscript{90} D. Bonhoeffer, \textit{Letters and Papers from Prison}, p. 91.
person is not necessary for that person to experience faith in Christ, in order to clarify his understanding that religious or pious actions are *iustitia civilis*, that is, works, and are not necessary for faith. In this overemphasis, which I believe to be a just but misleading one, he did not give an equal emphasis to the point that what one might call religious or pious acts, religion, are a valid and necessary result of faith. Of course many contemporary commentors on Bonhoeffer have blown what was, I believe, a corrective overemphasis in Bonhoeffer out of all proportion until many are led to conclude, and I think that it is a false conclusion, that for Bonhoeffer all religious acts, all spiritual attitudes of men were regarded as suspect. What Bonhoeffer wanted clearly understood was the order in which these acts occur, namely, as results of faith in Christ and not as necessary or essential for faith. To deny that Bonhoeffer would have permitted what one might guardedly call religious acts, is really denying that he permitted good works as the result of faith, which is nonsense. Bonhoeffer, we must remember, read the Bible daily, he prayed daily, he tried to interpret Christ to his cellmates and prison guards daily. This was a religious man performing acts of *iustitia civilis*.

The second danger for Bonhoeffer was that these people tend not only to confuse religion and faith in Christ, but that they made the further assumption that Christ is effective only in the religious areas of life and not in the secular areas. What they have done is to separate totally from one another what Bonhoeffer believed to have been the true
constituents of the Corpus Christianum, namely, the Corpus Christi and the world. There are many Christians today whose thinking about the relation of Christ to the world is based upon this total separation, and who relate iustitía christi solely to the Corpus Christi and iustitía civilis solely to the world. For Bonhoeffer those who make this separation are caught in an endless dilemma, the resolution of which occurs in either of two ways.

Either the Corpus Christi and its accompanying righteousness are emphasized in such a way that the world and its righteousness (the penultimate) are destroyed. The two iustitías are seen as being mutually exclusive. "Everything in human behavior is sin and denial." The world must perish and the Christian bears no responsibility for the world. This resolution Bonhoeffer designates by the term radicalism. The other solution witnesses an emphasis upon the separation of the two iustitías in such a way that iustitía christi really bears no relationship as judgment to the world. As a result, the world and its righteousness (the penultimate) remain unchallenged by God's Law. This the position of compromise. In either case the result is a dilemma situation.

The solution to this dilemma is found when one maintains the validity of the secular world and its form of righteousness as the arena in which God confronts man with the righteousness of Christ. This means that the growing secularity of

91 Bonhoeffer, Ethics, p. 31.
92 Ibid., pp. 84-91.
the world, its everydayness, should not be regarded as indicators either that Christ is not present in the world confronting men with his righteousness, or that this secularity poses an ultimate barrier to Christ. Bonhoeffer said that it was usually the religious attitude and the demand that a man become religious before he can encounter Christ which was a far greater barrier than the barrier of the secularity of this age.

This brings us to the point where we must discuss exactly how Bonhoeffer understood the secular world as the valid arena in which iustitia christi operates. The question is, how can iustitia christi meet iustitia civilis in a purely secular world?

Bonhoeffer set about to answer this question by qualifying what the functions of the Church in society are. The righteousness of Christ encounters the world and iustitia civilis by means of the church, through the community of men who are being formed into Christ's righteousness. The church, although pervaded in its members by sin, is none the less being completed and fulfilled by means of Christ's righteousness, which is taking form within them. Although pervaded by sin, the church lacks nothing, it possesses everything, it is righteous in spe, (ep elpidi), in hope. The church is the new humanity in the world, the leaven which leavens the whole world. But in order for the world to experience this righteousness of Christ by means of the church, in order that the church be the church, it is imperative that she remain in the world. The

93 Bonhoeffer, Sanctorum Communio, p. 94.
The church could easily decide to withdraw from the world into the seclusion of prayer, fasting, and religious observances. But she must not, if she is to remain the church. The church, which is men being formed in the righteousness of Christ, "is not a religious community of worshippers of Christ but is Christ himself, who has taken form among men." The church is concerned only with the form of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, and not with any "religious functions of man". In that the church is concerned with the form of Christ, which condemns and forgives men, she must suffer in the world. Only in weakness and suffering is the church able to serve Christ, to take form in him. Christ's impartation of righteousness is found where his church not only preaches and teaches the Word of God, but where she suffers and dies for the world. Christ is not a figure in some remote, esoteric, morality play, or religious drama, but he is our brother-man, who suffered and died for us, and is even now suffering and dying as his community, the church, suffers and dies. For Bonhoeffer, Jesus Christ was "not a piece of displaced religious territory, or a piece of the religious warehouse which was selling at a reduced value, but a brotherly Lord of this modern world."95

For Bonhoeffer this means that the church must accept and respect the secularization of the world. It must not try to impose or create a religious need in men of the world or try to reduce or destroy their secularity in order to proclaim Christ. The church is the community of the cross, the communio sanctorum, the suffering and dying-again Lord in this world.

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94 Bonhoeffer, Ethics, pp. 20-25.
Therefore, what gives validity to the secular world as the arena for iustitia christi is the fact that Christ lived and died in this world for men, and that he continues to do so today through his body, the church, which must also suffer and die. The Christian who is to proclaim iustitia christi to the world must remain bound to the earth, which is his mother, as God is his father, in order to experience the deep needs and desires, the joys and sorrows of this earth. It is then that he will meet men and their needs. It is then that he will suffer and die for men. Only by remaining in the world, by suffering and dying in the world, can the Christian be a true brother in Christ to those who suffer and die.

The Christian, as the church, is able to take upon himself the sorrow, suffering, and joy of his fellow man because he has experienced the judgment, the forsakenness, the loneliness, and the forgiveness of God in his own life. The Christian whose life is being formed in Christ's righteousness has a new dimension added to it, namely, the dimension of freedom. It is because of this freedom that the Christian is able to participate fully in the "suffering of God in the life of the world". It is in terms of freedom that we can understand how iustitia civilis, which is vitiated by sin, is fulfilled by iustitia christi. Iustitia civilis, commanded by God, is unable to fulfill itself in the actions of men. It has been fulfilled, and God's command that I be righteous has been met, by Christ for me. The need of my neighbor, which I have been

96 Bonhoeffer, Letters, p. 123.
commanded by God to fulfill, which is a command from the very depths of iustitia civilis in the created world, but which can not in and of itself find fulfilment, "was met once and for all in Christ".97 We see, then, that for Bonhoeffer iustitia christi fulfills iustitia civilis by taking it seriously, by allowing it to remain a command of God which I am expected to meet, that is, by allowing iustitia civilis to do what God intended it to do, that is, to prepare the world for Christ.

What we find in these three aspects of the problem of the dialectical relationship between iustitia civilis and iustitia christi for Bonhoeffer is this. First, Bonhoeffer has maintained the unity between iustitia civilis and iustitia christi which we found in Luther's theology. As such, he has also maintained the unity between the doctrine of creation and that of redemption. Secondly, Bonhoeffer believed that the problem of the relationship between iustitia civilis and iustitia christi could only be answered in terms of Christ. What this says is that creation can only be understood in terms of redemption.

Let us look for a moment at these two evaluations of Bonhoeffer's theology of the iustitias in order to draw some points of comparison between him and Luther, Schleiermacher, and Troeltsch.

In the chapter on Luther we noted that the relationship between iustitia civilis and iustitia christi was the basic one between Law and Gospel, between creation and redemption.98 Indeed, it was this direct relationship between the iustitias

97 Bonhoeffer, Act and Being, p. 87.
98 Cf. especially pp. 20-29 of chapter one.
and Law and Gospel which made it very difficult for Luther not to link *iustitia civilis*, as Law, with justification by works, and *iustitia christi*, as Gospel, with justification by faith. A way out of the problems which are created when one interprets Luther's affirmations about the *iustitias* strictly in terms of justification by works and justification by faith was already noted in chapter one.\(^99\) For Bonhoeffer, also, there was a direct relationship between the *iustitias* and Law and Gospel, although he made no strict identification between *iustitia civilis* and work's righteousness and *iustitia christi* and justification by faith as we have already noted. In that *iustitia civilis* has been commanded by God and is part and parcel of God's Law it is the essence of creation theology. For the same reason *iustitia christi* is the essence of redemption theology, but for Bonhoeffer these two theological doctrines, creation and redemption, are in no way autonomous. Law and Gospel are themselves not autonomous. If they were, then the theological position which Bonhoeffer called the compromise position would prevail. Creation and redemption have an essential unity in Jesus Christ.

In the case of Schleiermacher's position, there was also a relationship which existed between the *iustitias* and creation and redemption theology. In the second chapter we showed how there was what one might call a casual relationship between the doctrine of original righteousness and sin, and between the doctrine of sin and redemption.\(^100\) The point of

\(^{99}\) Cf. page 19, ftn. 36 of chapter one.

\(^{100}\) Cf. chapter two, pp. 40-45.
contrast between Schleiermacher and Bonhoeffer is not to be found in the identification of *iustitia civilis* with creation and *iustitia christi* with redemption, but rather in the role that Christ plays as the unifying factor between creation and redemption. For Schleiermacher creation and redemption could never be unified on the basis of Christ's life and death, because Christ never totally identified himself as the redeemer with the created world of men. For Bonhoeffer this identification by Christ with the created world is essential if a linkage between creation and redemption is to be maintained. This means that from Bonhoeffer's point of view Schleiermacher's theology of the *iustitias* did not maintain this unity and therefore, each *iustitia* remained an autonomous reality. On the basis of Bonhoeffer's discussion of the radical/compromise solutions, which we have noted, Schleiermacher's theology of the *iustitias* was one of compromise.

In the case of Troeltsch we noted how he confused Law and Gospel in his analysis of Luther. Troeltsch also completely severed *iustitia civilis* from *iustitia christi* on the basis of his belief that two principles or two Laws were in operation, namely, the Law of Nature and the Law of Love. In addition to this separation of the *iustitias* must be added the fact that Troeltsch thought that the only way to avoid a dualism in the *iustitias*, to avoid playing off the one righteousness against the other, as he thought Luther had done, was not to find the solution in Christ, but in man. Man, for Troeltsch,

\[101 \text{Cf. chapter three.}\]
became the bridge between the **iustitias**, between the Law of Nature and Law of Love, between creation and redemption. Christ, for Troeltsch, encouraged and stimulated man, by the example which he set in his own life, to bridge the gap all by himself. Man must effect the resolution. As such, Troeltsch destroyed the tension between creation and redemption, a tension which Bonhoeffer believed must exist because God's Word is both Law as well as Gospel. Because Troeltsch eliminated the tension, by reinterpreting the Law not in terms of God's command, but in terms of man's potentiality, he not only destroyed the validity of creation and the created world (what Bonhoeffer calls the secular), the world in which man is redeemed from death, but, as a result, he saw redemption as a process which man employs within himself in order to transform the world into a religious, non-secular, paradiasical Kingdom of God on earth. When it becomes impossible for the Christian to transform the created world into this religious paradise, when, in other words, the secularists and atheists become too numerous for society's own good, then Troeltsch, whose theology did not relate Christ to the created world (**iustitia christi** to **iustitia civilis** as judgment and forgiveness) as Law and Gospel, is forced to conclude that the world is lost to Christ and helplessly incapable of ever being related to him. Troeltsch's ethic was what Bonhoeffer would call the radical solution to the problem of the relation between the ultimate and the penultimate, between Creation and Redemption.102 It was an ethic

102 Cf. p. 166 of this chapter.
whose evaluation of the iustitias, by its absolute dualism and lack of reference to Christ as the unifying element between the two, could lead only to frustration and hopelessness in regard to the world.

Conclusion

Bonhoeffer's theology of the iustitias was not radical, in that for him iustitia christi does not destroy iustitia civilis. Redemption as the ultimate Word of God does not annihilate Creation, as the penultimate, but, because both iustitias are moments of God's Word which are related to Christ, iustitia christi allows iustitia civilis to function. By allowing iustitia civilis to function in the world God creates the need for Christ and his righteousness, who in turn fulfils iustitia civilis. Nor was Bonhoeffer's solution the compromise one. For him creation, the penultimate, iustitia civilis, stands in judgment by Christ. Creation is directly and vitally related to redemption, iustitia civilis to iustitia christi, in judgment and forgiveness. The mandates of this world are only temporary, penultimate, realities which will soon be fulfilled by the coming age. As such, Bonhoeffer's solution is dialectical.

Bonhoeffer's solution being dialectical rather than the radical one of Troeltsch or the compromise one of Schleiermacher, there were fewer inherent possibilities of its becoming obsolete or frustrated when confronted by the historical realities of life in the twentieth century. Bonhoeffer never denied the
function which *iustitía civilis* has got to perform in order for peace and justice to prevail in society. The radical position of Troeltsch would deny this function.

Actually, I think that Bonhoeffer went further than Luther in affirming the validity of ethics, especially the ethics of good men or men of faith in society. I think that he had a positive and appreciative understanding of the necessity of civil actions, especially those of Christians, in order that society not merely be preserved from destruction, which was Luther's point but that it should grow in human understanding and peace. This positive affirmation of the need for *iustitía civilis* in order that human society grow in understanding lay behind every statement and action that Bonhoeffer made as one of the leading spirits behind the church's struggle to achieve ecumenicity.

Bonhoeffer, in his struggles, tried to avoid both a confusion of the two *iustitías* as well as a separation of them. He was well aware that man's efforts at ecumenicity would not succeed unless Christ caused them to succeed. He did not equate or confuse man's efforts (*iustitía civilis*) with Christ's efforts (*iustitía christi*). But, at the same time, one could not totally separate what the man of faith strives to create for his society as a result of his motivation by Christ (*iustitía civilis*) from Christ's covering, forgiving, freedom-creating righteousness (*iustitía christi*). His theology of the *iustitías* was neither a radical nor a compromise theology. He related them dialectically to each other by relating them to the Word of God in Jesus Christ as Law and Gospel. The *iustitías*
assume a proper relationship to each other and to the world only when they are related at every moment to Christ. Bonhoeffer would go even further and say that there can be no *justitias* without Christ. As such, Bonhoeffer more closely approximated Luther's interpretation of the *justitias* than did either Schleiermacher or Troeltsch.
CHAPTER V

Helmut Thielicke

We have made an investigation of the concept of the iustitias in the writings of Luther, Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, and Bonhoeffer in order to see the various ways in which they treated it. In this study we have noted Luther's dialectical interpretation, Schleiermacher's compromise position (using Bonhoeffer's term here), and Bonhoeffer's attempt to be dialectical in his interpretation.

Let us now turn to an examination of Professor Thielicke's interpretation of iustitia civilis/iustitia christi in order to see what relationship there might be in his work on this subject to Luther, Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, and Bonhoeffer.

Professor Thielicke has interpreted Luther's discussion concerning the motivation of all actions or works in a strictly antithetical way. What we mean is this. Thielicke interprets Luther in such a way that the source of motivation for any action permits only two possibilities, belief in God or unbelief. He said that for Luther there were only these two alternative motivations, either a man did something out of faith in God or out of unbelief.¹ Thielicke admits that such a position regarding motivation was a reaction by Luther to Roman synergistic or work-righteousness theology, especially

¹ "The I itself is characterized either in that it believes or that it does not believe." H. Thielicke, Theologische Ethik, Bank I, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 1958, pp. 96, 97.
that which was present in the work of St. Thomas, and as such was an extreme position, but he does not in any way challenge it. Rather, he goes on to say that this sharp antithesis which Luther stated in so many various ways between motivation by faith or unbelief, as we have already shown, forms the decisive demarcation line between naturalistic ethics (philosophical ethics) and Christian ethics.

Thielicke accepts this strict either/or interpretation of Luther because he also accepts Luther's notion that it is not the good works which make the person, but the person who does either good or evil works. The work a man does, either for good or evil, is, as for Luther, an automatic expression of that man. For Thielicke, as for Luther, there is no autonomous worth present in any action which can be separated from the man who performs the action. There is no hierarchical system of values for actions in themselves apart from the persons who perform them.

This means that as for Luther so for Thielicke what is of utmost importance for the discipline of Christian ethics is not so much the goodness or badness of the actions or behavior, although Christian ethics must not dismiss this area from its study, but the motivation of the person, that which forces the man to do what he does. In other words, Christian ethics investigates the man to see whether his motivation has been that of faith in Christ or unbelief. We

2 Thielicke said that Luther borrowed this idea of work automatically expressing the man from the Roman sanctification ideal (romische Heiligungsideal). Ibid.
must not pursue the question about the capacity of human motivations for investigation and the validity of such investigations, which is really the question of the validity of Christian ethics as a discipline as distinct from secular or philosophical ethical studies, a study which would divert us from our primary subject. For Thielicke there is no point in discussing the goodness or badness of actions in terms of some autonomous ideal of good. Such a study, which is occasionally pursued by philosophical ethics, usually presupposes that good works, or works which approximate the ideal good, make the man who performs them good. Such a study divorces the motivation of man from the resulting action. For Thielicke it is not possible to separate man's motivation from his action in any inquiry because they are so intimately related in actuality.

This leads Thielicke to conclude that if there is a good man, then his goodness is not the result of his approximation to an ideal of goodness, but the result of his justification by God in Christ. This eliminates the possibility that there may be a good man performing good works apart from the reality of justification. "Even the most earnest human ethics can not escape this verdict." We remember at this point what Bonhoeffer said about Luther's depreciation of the subject of the good man who turns to Christ. Is this not the same depreciation which Thielicke conveys? I think that it is. For

\[3 \text{Ibid. Thielicke subscribes to Luther's view that any works performed by persons who "stand outside justification, although they are materially correct, are blasphemous and stand under an anti-Godly prognosis.} \]
Thielicke there just is no good man in the sense of his having a good motivation apart from a relationship of faith with Jesus Christ, regardless of the value judgment which society places upon his actions.

Thielicke clarifies the relationship which exists between justification and its product, good works, by using Luther’s discussion. For Luther, he says, the will of the justified man is good by necessity. A justified man, like a good tree, can not but produce good works, good fruits.

"We retain especially the expression 'sponte' which describes successfully the direct connection between justification and works. Perhaps this term gains yet a higher degree of pregnancy when Luther unites the notion of spontaneity with that of promptitude, as in his definition of will. The will is defined, in distinction from Scholasticism, not as a part of man in comparison to other parts (sensuality, reason, etc.) but as an expression for the total movement of the total person."  

Here Thielicke borrows from Luther to clarify his understanding of this relationship which is one of direct spontaneity. The justified man will, as a result of this event, automatically do that which is good. But here the word good is not to be confused with a philosophical good or social good, both of which would be relative to time and place, but means the perfect goodness of God and of man who is in perfect relation to God.

Thielicke points out that this automatic production of good works is not to be understood in a temporal way, that is, in such a way that the moment of God’s justification of man is one moment in time and man’s production of good works is

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4 Ibid., p. 100.
another moment. This, according to Thielicke, splits God's righteousness, His Grace, into what God does for man (justification) and what man does for his God and his fellow man (good works). 5 One must take care not to split God's righteousness into two moments or into two elements. One must take care not to ascribe one moment to God and one moment to man in terms of righteousness.6 As such, good works are not to be "conceived simply as products of the renewed subjectivity" in man, that is, as products of a change in man's heart, a heart now full of a new dynamism for good, but as products of God's own righteousness actively working upon passive man.7 This is an important understanding of Luther which Thielicke has made. None of the other theologians whom we have surveyed have re-issued, as it were, this understanding which we saw Luther to have had.

We have seen thus far the rather straightforward reinterpretation of Luther's theology of good works which Thielicke incorporates within his own ethical formulations. Good works, no matter by whom they are performed, are causally related to justification and the righteousness of Christ. Therefore, we must pursue this reappraisal of Luther's theology, which we have seen developing in Thielicke's appraisal of good works.

5 Cf. chapter one, pp. 22-24 where we delineated between iustitia christi and iustitia propria in Luther to show that even iustitia propria is not a righteousness created or produced by man but is Christ's righteousness at work in man.

6 Thielicke, op. cit. pp. 102-105.

7 Ibid., p. 103.
into the area of the righteousness of Christ and then civil righteousness, which will bring us back to the point at which we started, namely, a discussion on good works.

For Thielicke if one is to pursue a study of Luther's understanding of the righteousness of Christ and recapture his meaning one must work very carefully through the specific terms which Luther used to express his meaning. One term which Thielicke expounds is that of *iustitia imputativa*, or the imputed righteousness of God in Christ. For Thielicke this is the point of departure for an understanding of Luther's conception of the righteousness of Christ. What is this *iustitia imputativa*, this imputed righteousness?

First, it is the very righteousness of God Himself, the very grace of God. *Iustitia imputativa* is the loving mercy of God who accepts a man into fellowship with Him. He accepts a man by means of imputing or ascribing to man that righteousness which was Christ's. God creates a loveliness in man, a righteousness in man, which man does not in and of himself possess because of Sin, in order to love man. For Thielicke this is the reference which he makes to the relationship between the image of God and man, but it also applies directly to what he says about *iustitia imputativa*, as we shall see. 

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8 Thielicke quotes from Luther's definition of divine love: "Amor Dei non invenit, sed creat suum diligibile, Amor hominis fit a suo diligibili". Ibid., p. 287.

9 This is also indirect reference which Thielicke makes to the relationship between the image of God and man, but it also applies directly to what he says about *iustitia imputativa*, as we shall see. Ibid., pp. 284, 285.
Secondly, that righteousness which is imputed to man is the image of Christ, which is the perfect relationship between Jesus Christ, as Son, and God, as Father. Thielicke does not interpret the image of God either in Christ or in man in an ontic way, that is, as a static habitus or condition which is deposited in man and can be observed apart from man's relationship to God.¹⁰ To interpret the imago dei in man ontically is to view man as an isolated character, as a self-sustaining I, apart from any reference to God.¹¹ Rather he treats the imago dei in an active, relational way. The imago dei in man is the relationship of perfect obedience to God in love which characterized man before the Fall. This relationship of perfect obedience to God in love was destroyed by man's arrogant attempts to play God. We pause to observe that this perfect obedience is what is called original righteousness by Schleiermacher.¹² We remember Schleiermacher's reference to original righteousness in terms of its having been the original condition of man's absolute dependence upon God. This condition of dependence upon God is not an ontic description of a capacity in man for dependence, but a relational description which Schleiermacher employed to show how it is impossible for man to have a continuous God-consciousness, to have the

¹⁰ Thielicke said that Luther's understanding of the imago dei was not ontic but active, relational. Ibid., pp. 282, 283.

¹¹ This relational in opposition to an ontic interpretation plays a major role in Thielicke's other interpretations of Luther's theology as we shall see. Cf. particularly pages 326-341 of Thielicke's Theologische Ethik, Band I.

¹² Cf. chapter two, pp. 38-46.
capacity to be absolutely dependent upon God.\textsuperscript{13} For Thielicke, the only person who possessed this image of God in an ontic way (Thielicke uses the phrases ontic quality and ontic condition), as a proprium in whom it has continued to reside undisturbed, was Jesus Christ. From Jesus man must learn what the \textit{imago dei}, as perfect filial obedience, is. Perceiving this in Jesus, man will understand what it is all about to be a man.\textsuperscript{14} But we will return to this point later on. Thielicke's comments on the \textit{imago dei} relate to his understanding of the \textit{iustitia imputativa} because the righteousness which is imputed to man is the righteousness of Christ's relation to God, the righteousness of Christ's \textit{imago dei}. The relationship between \textit{iustitia christi} and \textit{imago dei} is really one of an equation for Thielicke. Christ's righteousness is his perfect \textit{imago dei} as an \textit{alienum} become \textit{propium}, i.e., a personal attribute,\textsuperscript{15} and it is because of the perfectness of it, in terms of what Christ did in his life and death, that God imputes it to the man who has faith.

Thirdly, this righteousness of Christ which is imputed to man is a righteousness foreign to man. Here Thielicke describes the righteousness of Christ, as did Luther, in terms

\begin{center}
\textbf{\textsuperscript{13}} I think that Schleiermacher's analysis of original righteousness must be understood, to use Professor Thielicke's distinction between ontic and relational, in a relational way.
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\textbf{\textsuperscript{15}} Ibid., pp. 323, 324, where Thielicke asserts that the \textit{imago dei} in man consists of participation in the alien righteousness of Christ.
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of its alien character. The righteousness of God is alien (alienum) to man in that it remains transcendent, outside of man, extrinsic to man rather than becoming a part of man (proprium), intrinsic in man. This righteousness remains an alienum even when the man of faith appropriates it for himself, as we will see. For Thielicke this alienum or iustitia aliena acts as a guard against the ontic interpretation of imputed righteousness as a proprium in man. Therefore, he emphasizes this alien nature of the righteousness of God.

Fourthly, the imputed righteousness of Christ becomes man's own righteousness, his proper righteousness, when man relates himself to God in faith. Thielicke, therefore, discusses the proper righteousness, iustitia propria, in man and distinguishes between proper righteousness as habitus and as relationship.

Here, then, we have the four major factors involved in Thielicke's understanding of iustitia christi. We must now investigate each one carefully and at the same time attempt to relate Thielicke's presentation to that of Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, and Bonhoeffer.

1. Iustitia christi as iustitia imputativa. The righteousness of Christ or God is not a substance or quantity which God passes along to man (gratia infusa). It has nothing whatever to do with man in his fallen condition simply because man is in no way a thing of beauty or a glorious fellow, and

16 Ibid., pp. 294-295.
17 Ibid., p. 301.
this righteousness is God's own glory, his own holiness. As glory and holiness, this iustitia is a quality of God, but not in terms of its being a substance. This righteousness is "on the one hand the righteousness of God himself (subjective genitive), a quality of God,".17 As such, righteousness is to be identified with God himself. Righteousness is not, however, a quality which can be examined apart from an examination of God. The danger of understanding this righteousness merely as a quality or attribute of God, which leads to a destruction of the personal character of righteousness, can only be overcome when one examines God's righteousness in its relational nature rather than in its ontic nature. One can guard against making the righteousness of God into a quality only when one desists from an examination of God himself (ontically), as pure being (to use Bonhoeffer's phrase), and examines God in his relationship, as pure act, to man (relationally).

To say that the righteousness of God must be understood in a relational way prepares the ground for the next phase of meaning of the imputed righteousness, namely, that righteousness is God's relationship of love and mercy towards man. Thielicke uses phrases such as: "to see the unfathomable mercy of God",18 "that God 'is who he is', i.e., that he was faithful, is faithful and will be faithful,"19 and "the Father who finds us",20 which give us the indication that he conceives

18 Ibid., p. 405.
19 Ibid., p. 372.
of God's righteousness in an active, powerful way. And so he does. (This is not to be confused with the active righteousness (justitia activa) which is a distinction pertaining to man as we shall see.)

God's righteousness is God himself acting righteously or justly or even faithfully. But this action of God is not action in a vacuum or in a general way. It is not righteous action which is pantheistic in its media of expression. The righteous action of God is not without its specifically historical reference point, its unique expression. That reference point and unique expression is found in Jesus Christ.

2. For Thielicke there can be no righteousness of God which is not a righteousness of Christ because Jesus Christ alone retained the image of God as a proprium, an ontic possession. 21 "The New Testament expresses this in ample expressions: Christ is the true image of the invisible God (II Cor. 4:4, Col. 1:15). 22 Jesus Christ, the true possessor of the image of God, by his perfect obedience to the will of God, (which is what the image of God means), has restored this divine image to man. 23 This means that when a man permits himself to be conformed to Christ, by participation in Christ's likeness, he reflects (we shall see later what Thielicke means by reflection) Christ's image and is thereby forgiven by God. This forgiveness by God because of God's

21 Thielicke, Theologische Ethik, Band I, p. 294.
22 Ibid., p. 295.
23 Ibid.
action, this change within God's own disposition, is what Thielicke regards as God imputing his own righteousness, Christ's righteousness, to man in an active way.

For Thielicke God's forgiveness of and mercy toward the trusting man because of Christ's life and death is this imputed righteousness. The change occurs in God. The righteousness which God judges is his own action in Christ. The basic action whereby God imputes righteousness to man is that of his overcoming of his wrath by means of his love. "We contend therefore for the basic Lutheran interest in a sharp distinction between Law and Gospel. The reason for this is first to preserve the miracle in the Gospel by means of which God overcomes himself, and the love of God saves us from the threat of his holiness."24 This change in God occurred by means of Jesus Christ for us.25 This means that one can not understand the imputed righteousness of God apart from the life and death of Jesus. God's righteousness is identical with the work of Christ because God chose to make the identification.26


25 Ibid., p. 151. "God emptied himself out totally in Christ. He held nothing back."

26 Ibid., also, "Anybody who nevertheless insists that it is anthropomorphic is simply missing the point of what happens to us in Jesus Christ. For it becomes completely clear, or better, here it actually happens, here it becomes an 'event', that God enters into our history, that he gives himself up to the temptation and the suffering of human existence and takes his stand at our side in full solidarity when he subjects himself with us to his judgment and descends into every depth into which we are dragged. How else can one understand the Cross of Calvary except that here God's holiness is in conflict with his grace:" Thielicke, Between Heaven and Earth, trans. by John Doberstein, Harper and Row, New York, Evanston, and London, 1965, p. 5.
Here there is a direct relationship to Bonhoeffer, who also felt that the identification between Christ and God was so complete as to make any discussion about God's righteousness which did not at every point make reference to the historical and risen Christ a meaningless one. We might also note that Thiелicke's reference to God's love overcoming his wrath was found in modified form in Schleiermacher, and not at all in Troeltsch, or Bonhoeffer, although it was basic to Luther's theology of redemption. The reason for this absence of such an understanding, according to Thiелicke's understanding, is that some theologians tend to think about God in an ontic way rather than in terms of his being a person, and that this more or less precludes the possibility of a change of heart in God.

This total identification of Christ with God's righteousness means, first, that there is a conflict between Law and Gospel which is not reducible either by the assumption of God's Law into his Gospel or vice versa. Secondly it means that there can be no understanding of God's righteousness apart from an understanding of the way in which God's righteous wrath annihilated Jesus and in turn was overcome. Let us look further at these two points.

There is, for Thiелicke, a tension which exists between the demand of God (Aufgabe) for righteousness, which man is commanded to fulfill, and God's gift (Gabe) of having performed and fulfilled his own demand of righteousness. The

27 Ibid., pp. 310-315.
theologian must be able to distinguish between the two. Failure to do so leads to confusion of Law and Gospel which has two dangerous results. The Gospel is thought to be either the "mightily bestowed divine help which assists us to a better fulfillment of the Law (as in the case of Wilhelm Herrmann), or an authority which forgives us for having failed to fulfill the norm." In either case, the Gospel becomes the servant of the Law of God and the tension, which must be maintained between the two if the Gospel is to retain its miracle value, is dissolved. The Law of God must remain demand even in the face of man's inability to fulfill it because of his sinfulness. If the Law loses this element of insistent demand, then the Gospel loses its absolutely unthinkable miracle value. The tension can never be resolved by means of any form of correlation.

This unresolved tension between Law and Gospel provides the clue for an understanding of the life and death of Jesus for Thielicke's theology in the sense that it is the overcoming of God's wrathful holiness by his own suffering love which expresses this tension and demonstrates its irreducible

28 Ibid., p. 189.

29 Ibid., p. 190.

30 Ibid., p. 210, where Thielicke, as did Luther, sees no possible resolution of the tension between Law and Gospel, and thus he arrives at the point of view in which the conflict between them occurs every day in the life of the Christian as a real event, a real struggle, and not as a teleological occurrence in his consciousness, as Thielicke sees in Barth. Ibid., pp. 203-209.
character. The two movements which occurred at the moment of Christ's death were, first, the wrath of God annihilated his love, and, secondly, the love of God overcame his wrath. God's wrath killed his son, Jesus, who submitted to the humiliation and defeat because he was made sin, without being a sinner. Jesus' identification with man's condition in sin and his death as a result of this identification is what Thielicke calls God's accommodation with himself, the accommodation of his love with his wrath. In this accommodation in Christ's death, Jesus himself is not only the one who is humbled, as the object of the humiliation, but also the one who does the humbling, as the subject of humiliation. As such, Christ's transcendence over the act of accommodation is preserved. This means that the wrath of God (Law) annihilated Jesus because of Jesus' identification with man, but the love of God (Gospel) overcame this wrath in Jesus' resurrection because of Jesus' identification with God.

Further, it is this accommodation, as Thielicke calls it, accomplished by Jesus, which becomes the basis for the righteousness of God which is imputed to man. God imputes

\[\text{31 Thielicke Theologische Ethik, Band II, pp. 198, 199. Here Thielicke maintains the necessary distinction between Jesus having been made sin but not a sinner, as Paul asserted in II Cor. 5:21.}\]

\[\text{32 Ibid. Here another expression of the tension between Law and Gospel as Thielicke expresses it.}\]
his own righteousness because a change occurred within him-
self, within his own heart, a change which God himself occa-
sioned. Absent is the essential human connection between
Sin and death. Death does not swallow him up, but the in-
ocent one gives himself up - vicariously - to this cor-
relation for those engulfed in sin and death. Dying, he
takes upon himself the guilt of others and permits himself
to be struck down. He is struck down for others.\textsuperscript{33} But
this accommodation was not one in which God surrendered
himself to humanity for the sake of humanity. This would
place an element of demand or necessity of God. This
would force this accommodation into the mold of necessity,
that is a necessary accommodation because of man's condi-
tion of sin. It would destroy the absolute freedom of God's
accommodation, the miraculous nature of God's love. This
accommodation was one in which God surrendered himself for
the sake of Jesus Christ, that is, for the sake of himself.
In addition to the nature of the accommodation itself,
which was purely divine, there must be added the nature of
the sacrificing and sacrificed man Jesus Christ, who was
simultaneously divine and human. This simultaneity of
natures guards against any theory of accommodation in terms
of man's need or God's humanity alone. A defense of this
type, however, is not complete until one considers the resur-
rection. "The resurrection allows this transcendent moment

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p. 199.
to be brought to light, not only because at this moment the accommodation of humility ceases, but also, and for this reason especially, because at this moment there occurs an abrupt change in the direction of this accommodation. Now Christ accommodates his own ones to himself and causes them to participate in his victory over death and his resurrection life. The resurrection of Jesus is the only vantage point from which the victory of God's love over his wrath can be observed. Without the resurrection the effectiveness of Christ's righteousness would be shattered. The crucifixion could only then be God's coming down to man's sinful level, his identification with man's weakness, but it could not be the means whereby man could become the righteousness of God.

It should be noted that with this emphasis upon the unity of the crucifixion and resurrection, in terms of God's accommodation with himself, Thielicke places himself in total agreement with Luther and Bonhoeffer, both of whom affirmed the need for a unity of these two moments. Thielicke has also established the necessary basis for the next factor of iustitia christi which is that of the alien character of this righteousness of Christ.

3. **Iustitia christi** as iustitia aliena. We remember at this point that Luther stressed the fact that iustitia christi always remains a foreign or alien righteousness to man in that he is never the source or producer of it. It

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34 Ibid.
always comes to man from outside him and never from within.\textsuperscript{35} Let us now look at what Thielicke says about the alien character of Christ's righteousness.

The first thing to be noted is that he identifies the alienum of the \textit{imago dei} totally with Christ. "This character of the \textit{imago dei} as an alienum is accurately expressed as a \textit{proprium}, as a true ontic possession, as an attribute in the strict sense, in that it is assigned uniquely and solely to Jesus Christ."\textsuperscript{36} This assigning occurred when God poured himself out completely into Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{37} This alien image of God in the historically unique person of Jesus Christ is the starting point for an understanding of the alien character of \textit{iustitiae christi}. We hasten to add that this image of God was not alien or foreign to Jesus in the sense that it did not originate in him. The reason why it is not foreign to Jesus but is to man is to be found in Jesus' possession of a divine nature of perfect obedience which no other human possesses. This difference is expressed by Thielicke when he says that Christ is not man's example (\textit{Vorbild}) of righteousness, which leads to many misunderstandings of Christ's righteousness in terms of its repeatability through man's imitation of Jesus' loving actions and words (which would be to understand Christ's righteousness as a \textit{proprium} or ontic possession in man), but rather

\textsuperscript{35} Cf. pp. 20-23 of chapter one, and p. 59 of chapter two.

\textsuperscript{36} Thielicke, \textit{Theologische Ethik}, I, p. 294.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 151.
that Christ is the original image (Urbild) of the righteousness of God. For Thielicke, to think of Christ's righteousness as example (Vorbild) rather than as original image (Urbild) destroys the unique and alien factors of that righteous life.\(^{38}\) In other words, Thielicke preserves the alien factor of Christ's righteousness to man by his insistence upon the nature and function of Jesus as the possessor of this righteousness within himself in an ontic way.

The second point which we must notice is that the moment when a man has faith in God's promise of forgiveness, the moment when this righteousness of God is imputed to man (the moment of justification), is the moment when this alien righteousness of Christ reveals its true alien nature, it is the moment when the fact of its alien-ness provides the reason for man's justification. Thielicke, going back to Luther's thought, admits that man's act of faith in God can be regarded as a work, a work commanded by God, a work which cannot be separated from other works which man performs. But the fact that man performs what God demands is not the justifying importance of the work of faith. What is decisively significant is not that man performs it but that man opens himself and grabs hold of him who alone is able to justify. Man grabs hold of the alien righteousness

\(^{38}\)Ibid., pp. 309-315. Here Thielicke says that Schleiermacher, although using the term Urbild, was too much influenced by Hegelian philosophy in his understanding of how man approximates the image of Christ to himself. As a result, Thielicke thinks that when Schleiermacher used the term Urbild he was thinking in terms of an example (Vorbild) which could be imitated.
of Christ which alone can justify a man by means of its alien-
ness. "Then there is no question but that faith in its
quality as a work does not justify, but that it only grasps
him who, as its object, alone is able to justify. Non...
justificat (sc. fides) ut opus... Therefore faith can
occasionally be warned not to believe in itself, not to be
introverted and seek after the experience; it must cling to
its object."39

What can we say then about the alien character of this
righteousness? We say two things. First, the alien char-
acter of Christ's righteousness permits one to discuss it
in terms of God's gift to man. Secondly, this alien char-
acter of righteousness forces one to emphasize the passive
role of man in relationship to God. Let us look at these
two points.

First, there is no question but that Thielicke frequently
contrasts Law and Gospel, justification and good works, and
philosophical and theological ethics in terms of demand
(Aufgabe) and gift (Gabe). A few passages will suffice to
illustrate this. "We must determine the relation between
gift and demand, between justification and the acts which
ensue, for the benefit of our further work."40 "In phil-
osophical ethics the ethical acts are determined by demand
and in evangelical ethics by the gift."41 "Only thus is

39 Ibid., p. 307.
40 Ibid., p. 89.
41 Ibid., p. 88.
one able to understand the challenge of Paul, 'You ought to consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord' (Rom. 6:11). The imperative does not refer to the dying because we have no control over that since Jesus Christ has already died for us and we only receive the gift of his dying and are drawn into it. The gift in each of these cases refers to the death of Jesus Christ on behalf of all men, as this last quotation indicates. This death is the basis for God's act of imputing his righteousness to men who will believe that this death was God's way of fulfilling his own demand. The gift of righteousness for men is in Jesus' death and resurrection and, as such, this gift is given apart from any desire or initiative or prompting from men. That is, the reason for the gift of this alien righteousness is foreign to man, not, however, the effect of the giving of the gift.

Here Thielicke stands firmly with Luther in the understanding that the imputing of this alien righteousness as a gift was accomplished by God in total freedom. He did not have to forgive men of their sin, no man forced the issue upon him. He chose to forgive man. This is the unfathomable mystery of God's free gift of himself in Christ. The mystery is that God has transformed his own heart. This self-transformation in God is the free gift which encounters

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42 Ibid., p. 114.
man in the figure of Christ. This is the free gift which must be distinguished from God's demand, his Law, in such a way as to keep the emphasis upon the gift and its reception distinct from that upon the demand. Only when God's righteousness in Christ is preserved as an alien and unconditional gift, as it was in Luther's, Schleiermacher's and Bonhoeffer's theology, can faith be distinguished from works, can God's righteousness be distinguished from man's righteousness. Only when the aspect of gift is maintained can one begin to understand what Thielicke means by *justitia activa*, man's active righteousness, as we shall see.

Secondly, when one emphasizes the strictly alien character of this *justitia christi* one must immediately emphasize the corresponding passivity of man in relation to God.

43 Thielicke carefully examines the dangers when either the Law (Imperative) or the Gospel (Indicative) are overemphasized to the exclusion of the other. The Law is emphasized to the exclusion of the Gospel when God's gift of forgiveness is regarded as the means to the end of the fulfillment of the Law. Hence the Law becomes primary. The Gospel is emphasized to the exclusion of the Law when the alien gift of God's love is seen as residing or being imprinted in man as a quality due to Christ's indwelling Spirit. Hence the Gospel becomes primary. In either case, Thielicke said, the result of such an over-emphasis of the one to the exclusion of the other leads to an autonomy of man from the alien righteousness of God. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-187.

44 Cf. pp. 43, 44 of chapter four where we noted the same emphasis upon the alien character of Christ's righteousness in Bonhoeffer's theology of the conformation of man to Christ.
We must recall what we said earlier about Thielicke's understanding that the *iustitia christi* never becomes an ontic quality in man, that it remains an extrinsic *proprium* of Christ himself. As a result of viewing this *iustitia* always as a reality which, as a *proprium*, as extrinsic to man, one sees man as a passive creature and God as the active creator of righteousness. Man never possesses this *iustitia christi* in himself as an ontic quality but only in relation to God. Thielicke says that for man the *iustitia christi* is never a *iustitia in se* but a *iustitia quoad Deum*45

This presupposes a passivity in man's relationship to God, a total dependence upon God rather than any independence. But this passivity must be clarified. It might better be called dependence upon God rather than independence on man's part for the fact of forgiveness of sin. This is exactly what Schleiermacher had in mind with his use of the word dependence. Passivity connotes a Stoic resignation on man's part, a lack of concern for God's command and Jesus' proclamation of forgiveness and is therefore not as accurate in meaning as the word dependence. What we have in mind is not that man is unconcerned about God's law and its demand that he be righteous. If this were the case, then Thielicke's expressions about man's active, relational

45 *Ibid.*, p. 287. The connection at this point to Bonhoeffer is to be found in that what Thielicke refers to as Christ's alien righteousness working through passive man is, in Bonhoeffer's terminology, Christ taking form in man (see chapter four, pp. 40-43).
position to God would be robbed of their meaning. The passivity or the dependence of the Christian who has been justified is the passivity involved in his concern for himself, not in his concern for God. We must explain this.

Thielicke moves his argument on what we call passivity along two lines. One line of argument is that man at the moment of his incorporation by God into iustitia christi loses all anxiety about his own condition, and actively seeks to mortify himself, to mortify his self-reliance, his independence. Thielicke says that this active abandonment of one’s self is really the pre-condition of faith, although faith creates this abandonment.46 Uncertainty about one’s salvation is the direct result of the absence of self-despair.47 One despairs of self (actively destroys one’s independence or self-reliance) and becomes certain that one is lost, one relinquishes one’s own hope of becoming righteous, one mortifies the self, as a result of iustitia christi given to one. This is the passive relation of a man to himself.

Thielicke points out that such self-resignation and self-mortification, such passivity of a man to himself, is not resignation and abandonment to nothingness. If this were the case, then this passivity would be Stoic resignation, it would be the resignation of the nihilist, it would not be Christian resignation. In other words, the Christian’s

46 Ibid., pp. 524-526.
47 Ibid.
passivity is not characterized by hopelessness, it is not the passivity of self in an active-less sense. To borrow Kierkegaard's words, it is not despair unto death in which there is no further movement.

The second line of Thielicke's argument continues by saying that the passivity or dependence of the Christian man is one which is grounded in the iustitia christi; it is a passivity, a mortificatio sui, which is grounded in hope. Man resigns himself, becomes passive to himself, but he actively hopes in Christ.

"This co-ordination of mortificatio sui and faith is nothing other than the co-ordination of the cross and resurrection of Christ. In both (mortification and faith) there is a dying and rising with Christ (Rom. 6:4,8; Col. 2:12; I Pet. 3:21). Because I am 'in him', mortification is therefore not to be described existentially as failure, despair, anxiety, and bondage to nothingness, but it is a fulfillment of the death of Christ, a crucifixion of my own flesh and its hopes, a crucifixion, however, which refers to the promise of the 'resurrection on the third day'."48

It is this hope, this future, which makes this passivity or dependence absolutely different from Stoic resignation or nihilistic despair. This means that in the passivity of the Christian there is activity, in his resignation and abandonment of self there is a "flight away from self toward the vast possibilities of God. Faith has rest only in the object of its flight and it has unrest in the cause of its flight, namely, in the subject of faith."49

48 Ibid., p. 525.
49 Ibid., p. 526.
In these words Thielicke describes the passivity of men of faith to himself and his activity toward God.

There is a line of connection which can be seen to exist between Thielicke and Schleiermacher at this point. The line exists between the two men concerning this dependence or passivity. Schleiermacher described this passivity by use of the terms susceptibility, and feeling of dependence. In both cases what Schleiermacher meant was that the self is determined from a source outside itself. Faith in Christ, for Schleiermacher, is the awareness or consciousness by the self that an impression or form of power has come from outside itself, from Christ himself, which determines his relationship to himself and to others. The more one sets Christ before him the more he is aware of his own sin and desires either death or forgiveness. This is the same as saying that confronted by Christ one either resigns oneself ultimately or one flees oneself and seeks refuge in the forgiveness of Christ. The understanding that dependence, that is, finding one's source of motivation outside oneself, is of the very essence of Christianity is common to both Thielicke and Schleiermacher.

This similarity of thought between Thielicke and Schleiermacher is also apparent when we point out that for Schleiermacher, as for Thielicke, there is a passivity as well as an

50 Cf. chapter two.

activity present at the moment of justification. For Schleiermacher Christ exerts a powerful and influential activity upon men and at such times as these when the influence occurs "man can be conceived only as passive."\footnote{52} For Schleiermacher, even when the justified man acts it is "an activity conditioned and evoked by Christ... deriving it entirely from the influence of Christ producing faith in man's living susceptibility."\footnote{53} This susceptibility is nothing more than the receptivity in man to Christ. It is not in any way a product of man's conscience or will which is the basis or reason for faith. If it were then susceptibility would be a form of meritorious work.\footnote{54} This susceptibility of which Schleiermacher talked is equal to the flight of man to God in Thielicke's discussion. Both men presuppose a dissatisfaction of man with himself at the moment of justification. Both presuppose that the alien righteousness of Christ forces men either to accept it passively and then respond actively to the gift or to reject the gift outright.\footnote{55}

4. Imputed righteousness as man's own righteousness (\emph{iustitia activa}). The foregoing considerations have brought our discussion to the point where we must examine more fully what we have already referred to as man's active response to the gift of Christ's alien righteousness.

\footnote{52}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 500.}
\footnote{53}{\textit{Ibid.}}
\footnote{54}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 504.}
\footnote{55}{\textit{Ibid.}}
We remember what we said in the first chapter about Luther's understanding that it is the indwelling Christ and his righteousness which works through a man's actions in society, and that this is a man's *iustitia activa*. We noticed there, that this indwelling Christ sets up a continuous conflict within men which results in their despair of and flight from self and a search for certainty in Christ (Cf. chapter one, pp. 21-25). It is also this indwelling Christ whose righteousness becomes the concrete righteousness in the actions of the Christian. The final point which we made in our earlier discussion of Luther's understanding of righteousness was that *iustitia activa* is no other righteousness save Christ's alone. Let us now compare these conclusions with Thielicke's understanding of *iustitia activa*.

We begin by calling attention once again to the emphasis which Thielicke places upon the relational description of alien righteousness as opposed to an ontic one. This emphasis plays a significant role in his analysis of a man's active righteousness. We observed that Thielicke said that man never possesses the righteousness of God as an ontic *proprium* or characteristic because of his fallen, sinful condition. God's righteousness in Christ can only be man's active righteousness, therefore, when man relates himself to

56 "First, the Decalogue presupposes the fall of man and it has a place therefore in the history of salvation... It is man in revolt, man after the fall into sin who is addressed here." Thielicke, *op. cit.*, pp. 709, 710.
Christ by faith, by fleeing himself and clinging to the promise of Christ. This means that man's active righteousness is nothing other than Christ's righteousness at work in him. It also means that this working of Christ's righteousness is never an automatic, non-stop process, a constant quantity of righteousness in man, but a momentary, God-related, reality.\textsuperscript{57} Thielicke takes great pains to avoid the conclusion that even when man performs a truly righteously oriented or motivated work in society it is not his own action but a reflex action of Christ. Thielicke uses the word reflexion to help to establish his position that the righteousness of Christ and men's active righteousness are not two separate acts but one act of God.\textsuperscript{58}

He says that man's appropriation of \textit{iustitia christi} can be understood by using the analogy of a man who is a mirror and has been placed before God. This analogy has two meanings.

The first is that only as man as mirror stands before God can he reflect God's righteousness. The placing of man in such a position as to be able to reflect God's righteousness is accomplished by God himself at the moment of justification. This emphasis upon the need for man to be placed before God in order to reflect God de-emphasizes the automatic, non-stop, continuum aspects of righteousness in man.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., p. 43.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., pp. 102-107.
The second meaning which Thielicke attempts to convey by the mirror analogy is that the righteousness in man's life is never his own possession, but always God's. Trying to maintain the unity of Christ's righteousness and man's active righteousness, as well as to safeguard the alien character of Christ's righteousness, he says that man's righteousness, as loving deeds, is not the result of his reaction, or subjective response, to God's love. This would not preserve the alien character of God's righteousness because although the cause of man's deeds would be God it would be man himself as acting subject who would be performing the deed. Thielicke says that even at the moment when man performs a loving deed it is not man who is acting, but Christ acting through him. Even when engaged in a loving deed in society man remains passive to the loving activity of Christ in him. This position, he says, safeguards the alien character of Christ's effective righteousness. It also maintains the dynamic initiative of God's love which works through man, as well as safeguarding the righteousness of God from being divided into the two separate acts of God's imputed righteousness and man's own righteousness. "The 'automatism' to which we have referred, in which good works are produced automatically, is not a process within the subjectivity of man which runs its course over a period of time and which possibly could be traced psychologically, and in which God's love would be the

59 Ibid., pp. 103, 104, "The Apology expresses this all where it says that what God loves in us is his mercy itself as an objectum amabile."
cause and my responsive love and works would be the effect. We must really insist that our love is perceivable only as the reverse side of God's love."\textsuperscript{60}

We must now ask the question, what constitutes a work of love or a work in which God is at work in us? This question arises out of the foregoing analysis and with it we inquire of Thielicke \textsuperscript{60} that there are any constituents or perceivable factors in the works of man which could be used to qualify them as works of love. The answer which Thielicke would give to this question has already been given. There is nothing in a particular work, no quality or essential element, which would make it a work of love. To look for the loving quality or character of a work inside the work itself and apart from the man who performs it, is to look in the wrong place. This would be the same as trying to find some ontic quality in each work which the man performs rather than to look at the motive of the man who performs it.

Thielicke realized that once an action has been performed, once it has become an objective work, regardless who performs it, it "enters into a field of values which is comprehensible from totally different motives from those Christian motives."\textsuperscript{61} This means that if there is such a thing as a specifically Christian motivation for action or a love-motivated action, it will not be evident on the level of the concrete action.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., p. 105.

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., p. 17.
itself, but is to be found exclusively in the motivation of the action.62 But who can see and understand this deep level of man's motivation? Who knows what is in a man's heart and what ought to be there? Certainly men are not capable of such insights. Thielicke says that only Jesus himself can do this.

Since it is the motivation that distinguishes a work of love from a work of deceit or hatred, it is vital that the relationship, whatever it might be between motivation and concrete action, be established. Thielicke does this by saying that the "basis of Christian ethics consists primarily in that the action is genuine (echt) which means that its inner side and outer side agree (cf. the esothen (inside) and exothen (outside) of Matt. 23:25)."63

This inner side in Thielicke's terminology is not to be confused with disposition (Gesinnungsethik) ethics, such as was found in Kant. Thielicke distinguishes his motivation ethic from a disposition ethic.64 The difference between his motivation ethics and disposition ethics is to be found in his understanding that dispositional ethics are purely immanent, egoistic, and eudaemonistic, denying any trans-

62 Ibid., pp. 20, 21.
63 Ibid., pp. 22.
64 Ibid., p. 25. It should be noted here that Thielicke, in distinguishing between motivational and dispositional ethics, is drawing a distinction which many other Lutheran theologians have failed to draw. Cf. as example, Werner Elert's, The Christian Ethos, trans. C. J. Schindler, Fortress Press, Phila. 1957, pp. 64, 65.
cendent motivations, any revelatory basis for ethics, whereas motivation ethics is Christ himself at work through man.

I think that this distinction between motivation and disposition is one which is not spelled out clearly enough by Thielicke, especially in the light of the distinction which we saw earlier, namely, that *justitia civilis* is not the product of a changed subjectivity, a renewed inner drive in man, but rather the alien presence of Christ working through a man. In this case, I think that the distinction which Thielicke is trying to make here is a valid one. The difficulty lies in his choice of words, I think. The word motivation still conveys the meaning of a renewed subjectivity or inner drive and is not distinct enough from the word disposition. Disposition is something which man can control in that he is able to control his desires and impulses.

In dispositional ethics Thielicke thinks that man is the moral subject who, as ruler over himself, sets himself a law and then proceeds to fulfill it. He finds this type of dispositional ethic especially present in late idealistic philosophy and work of Fichte.

This egocentric dispositional ethic of which Thielicke speaks, which understands the command of God as something which can be fulfilled by man simply because God commands it ('you can, because you ought'), we have already encountered in the work of Ernst Troeltsch. We recall how Troeltsch

65 Ibid., p. 25.
distinguished between a religious and a secular ethic. The religious ethic for him was summed up in the Great Commandment of Matthew 22:37. The goal of the religious ethic, and it is interesting to notice Troeltsch's use of this word goal in the light of Kant's and later Idealism's preference for that same word, as Thielicke indicates, is to meet and fulfill this Great Commandment. For Troeltsch the religious ethic can definitely be achieved because man can fulfill this command. Man can fulfill this demand because Jesus reveals to man how to accomplish it. What we find in Troeltsch is exactly what Thielicke calls the dispositional ethics of late Idealism.

In opposing such dispositional ethical systems, Thielicke, borrowing from Luther, says that man can not control his disposition to the extent that he could lose God. "In other words, the disposition of 'fearing and loving God' is not under my control in the sense of an attitude which I could grasp and practice. It is not under my control simply because this is not something which concerns a disposition but in the strict sense, a totally new existence."67

But the question remains, what is it that constitutes a work of love? For Thielicke the answer, since it must reside in the motivation of the work rather than in the concrete work itself, is that every work performed in faith in Christ (man being placed before God in despair in himself and hope in Christ's righteous forgiveness) is a work of love,

66 Cf. my analysis of Troeltsch's understanding of religious ethics in chapter three, especially pp.108-113.
67 Thielicke, op. cit., p. 27.
and every work performed out of unbelief is not a work of love. Good works, works of love, arise spontaneously, automatically, out of the man who has been declared righteous. This means that a man's faith or trust in Christ's alien righteousness is the constituting reality for a work of love.

Thielicke is saying then that there is a difference in men's motivations to action, the difference of being motivated by the new obedience of faith in Christ, in which a man finds nothing good in himself but all goodness in Christ, or motivated by some ideal value, or goal (as in the case of Troeltsch), which one believes oneself capable of fulfilling. The motivational orientation is either one of self-rejection (faith) or self-assertion (unbelief), and this motivational difference confirms man either in relationship to Christ's alien righteousness or in himself and his own righteousness. Thielicke says that man is master either to God or to the mammon upon which he bestows a God-like power. "Yes; we always belong to a lord, and are always borne upon a wave which may be in the ocean of God or the ocean of the Evil One."68 This is an either/or situation regarding a man's motivation. There is no middle ground of motivation. Either a man is motivated by God or he is not.69

68 Thielicke, Between God and Satan, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1958, p. 58.
69 "This means: Just as we can not define man except that we recognize him in his relation to God, so we understand him to be someone who is either for God or against relation to God, so we understand him to be some one who is either for God or against God, who is either a child of God or a slave of power,..." Ibid., p. 151.
This means for Thielicke that if a man is not trusting or relating himself to Christ's alien righteousness, if he has not made the exchange, which Luther described, whereby everything that Christ is is his and all that he is is Christ's, then he automatically claims the moral and religious righteousness of his life, *justitia civilis*, as his own ontic possession, instead of giving the credit for it to Christ. Then it becomes easy for this man to invest his own little creations, as well as himself, with a power or capacity for good or for evil. It is this non-Christ-judged and non-Christ-forgiven man who becomes concerned with the nature of his works and efforts, especially as to whether or not they are good, just or moral. This happens because this man has ceased to look at Christ and turns his gaze instead upon himself, (this is what Bonhoeffer referred to as man's treatment of penultimate reality as if it were ultimate (cf. chapter four)), and, looking at himself, he becomes anxious and desperate. This looking at oneself, rather than to Christ, this making one's *justitia civilis* into an ultimate ontic possession, occurs in Christians as well as in non-Christians.

It is at this point that we can see that although Thielicke has said that the motivation of a person is difficult to perceive and to be qualified as good or just, the action corresponding to each motivation is capable of being thus judged or evaluated. For this reason the resulting concrete actions of men are occasionally fairly accurate indicators of a man's motivation, especially since Thielicke's position is that the works of a person are directly and
integrally related to that person. But the only accurate judgment or evaluation which can be placed upon these actions can not be determined by a natural ethic or a system of autonomous values which a society develops, but only by the Law of God revealed in Jesus. If society devises a value scale or system by which it evaluates actions, and all societies do this, then the system is one which stands outside of justification (one not related to the ultimate moment, to use Bonhoeffer’s phrase) and is based upon some material, egocentric value system (penultimate values).

To give an example of what I think Thielicke has in mind when he refers to material-based, egocentric, values which a society creates and uses to evaluate and judge actions, I cite one of the two of the secular values which have for so long dominated American society. There is the positive value which is attached to any individual endeavor whether it be the "acquisition of property, the achievement of social status, the access to political power" which is regarded as "morally right if the objective sought is in fact attained."70 There is also the value which assumes that if a person does something for a religious or pious reason, as in the case of the conscientious objector to military service on the basis of some religious principles, or the case of the parents whose religious principles forbade the doctors from administering blood transfusions to their critically injured child, the action is assumed to be a good or humane one.

70 I am indebted to William Stringfellow for this example of a secular, social value. Cf. his article, "The Great Society as a Myth", in the Autumn 1966, (vol. 5) issue of Dialog, a Journal of Theology, Minneapolis, Minnesota, p. 253.
Thielicke says that whatever the value system might be, especially the values of all natural ethical systems, if it devises a value for actions which "stands outside justification then these values are blasphemous and stand under the anti-Godly sign that 'everything that is not of faith is Sin', even though they are materially correct." But it is not only the value system of a natural ethic which is blasphemous. There are Christian ethical values which have been instigated and encouraged by the Church at certain periods in her history. Thielicke, like Bonhoeffer before him, repudiates all Christian ethical systems. Thielicke’s reasons for his repudiation, which are very much the same as those of Bonhoeffer, of Christian ethical systems are the following.

First, whenever a saying or teaching of Jesus or some value or virtue which has been evolved from the experience of some saint, is made into a principle of action, there is a timelessness, an eternal validity, associated with the principle. And this timelessness destroys the personal relationship between the person administering the principle and the person ministered to and, more important, this timeless principle destroys the personal relationship possibilities between the man administering the principle and Jesus Christ. In other words, to principle-ize love is to divorce it from Jesus, who loved, and man, who needs love, and to make it into a timeless, non-personal affair.

71 Thielicke, Theologische Ethik, Band I, p. 97.
The second reason why Thielicke repudiates all ethical systems is that these systems assume that there are indisputable areas or zones of civil righteousness to which all actions can be related or compared. Such systems assume that there is a just and an unjust war, a good conscience and an evil conscience. Such systems assume that the line of movement from the principle or norm to the individual circumstances is straightforward, unambiguous, and easy one to make because the principle and the individual circumstances lie on the same plane of meaning. Such principles or norms do not take into account the fallen character of this age. They do not consider the possibility that there are no indisputable areas or zones of civil righteousness, and that all areas of life are corrupted and evil, that all decisions in life (as Bonhoeffer said) are only made between a lesser evil and a greater evil and not between a good and an evil. Such principles of action fail to perceive that in this aeon the opposite of the upset or disturbed conscience in men is not a good conscience but is a forgiven and reconciled conscience. In other words, for Thielicke ethical systems or norms, including Christian ones, because they fail to take seriously the sinful, fallen condition of man and his world, presume

72 Ibid., pp. 676, 677.

73 "On this basis, the unrest of conscience arises not because of real sin, in the face of which we could have no good conscience, but the unrest of conscience arises because of the failure to fix one's hope totally and exclusively on Jesus Christ as Lord. Therefore the opposite of a restless conscience is not the good conscience but the trusting conscience, the conscience reconciled to God." Ibid., pp. 515, 516.
that man can attain to perfect righteousness, perfect iustitia civilis. These systems of good, when they are implemented, lead men only to despair, to the unsettled conscience, to a replacement of God by these values or norms.

This means then that ethical systems (iustitia civilis) which are set up in society apart from any reference or relationship to Christ and his righteousness (iustitia christi) always run the danger of creating false security, false hopes, and even apathy in man. These systems, which are not related to the proclamation of the miracle of the gift of Christ's covering righteousness, are able only to convict man, to make man despair of himself, to do what the Law of God does, but they are never capable of lifting man up, of creating hope in his life, or promising him victory over himself.

Thielicke would challenge Troeltsch's theory that ethics (as the result of the activity among men or moral values) can help man to attain to free personality because of the two reasons we have just mentioned. Troeltsch's position displays what Bonhoeffer and Thielicke both see as a disregard for the fallen condition of creation. In this case Troeltsch's understanding of ethics is more than an evaluation of man's actions, it is a motivator to action. According to Thielicke, any motivator to action which is not related to the gift of alien righteousness (iustitia christi) is really not capable of motivating man to overcome himself, of helping him arrive at what Troeltsch calls free personality.

We must now ask these two questions of Thielicke. What purpose, if any, does iustitia civilis serve in this fallen
world? What relationship does it have to Christ's righteousness? With these questions we hope to arrive at a point where we can more clearly see Thielicke's relationship to Luther and the others.

Thielicke's answer to the first question involves one immediately in a discussion of the world and the orders of the created world. Thielicke accepts the Reformation position that this world exists between the Fall and Judgment. "The Biblical-Reformation teaching of the world does not see it as a cosmos of hierarchical values, as it is with those involved in Natural Law speculations. Rather than being the bearer of a form of created order, the world is understood as the aeon between the Fall into Sin and Judgment." 74

This world is the fallen world; it is totally characterized and defined by the Fall. And this world is fallen because man is fallen and man is the world. The world does not stand over against man. Man is the world. 75 For this reason man's attempt to remain apart from the world is merely man's attempt to remain apart from himself. At his birth man becomes the world.

The man who does not accept Christ's righteousness as a gift in faith remains both existentially as well as essentially 76

74 Ibid., p. 699.
75 Ibid.
76 Thielicke distinguishes between the man who is both existentially as well as essentially oriented and motivated by the world (the non-Christian) and he who is only existentially oriented to the world but essentially motivated by Christ (the Christian). Ibid., pp. 702-703.
identified and motivated by this fallen world. He is able only to know *iustitiae civilis*, i.e., his own value judgments and principles. But he does not know their source or their purpose in his life. He assumes that he exercises this *iustitiae civilis* in order to protect himself, to preserve himself from the alien world. To use Thielicke's phrase, this man does not know the giver of the gift of *iustitiae christi* and therefore he can not appreciate the giver or the gift of *iustitiae christi* which motivates *iustitiae civilis*. For this fallen man there is no transformation of his *iustitiae civilis* by *iustitiae christi*. He does not know that *iustitiae christi* is intended by God as the escape for his world oriented and motivated righteousness, an orientation and motivation which lead one only to despair and death. He does not know that his un-transformed *iustitiae civilis* can not give him freedom and joy. He does not know that only in the Judgment and forgiveness which Christ's righteousness brings is there freedom and joy.77

This can be stated in a positive and a negative way. From the positive point of view *iustitiae civilis* serves as a safeguard for society against the assaults of criminals to protect the world from the criminal, and all men are potential criminals, God has instituted the orders or structures

77 Ibid., P. 704, "Only in the shadow of this forgiveness is there freedom and joy. In all other cases there is only the tragic struggle."
within creation which preserve the world. They preserve the
world from destroying itself.\footnote{Thielicke agrees with Bonhoeffer that these orders are orders of preservation rather than of creation in the sense that the former implies God's activity to preserve and the latter implies God's static sanctioning of the structures of society (Cf. chapter four, p. 171 fn. 83). Thielicke says that one cannot speak about the divine orders of creation, but must, rather, speak about the orders of "divine patience", which is exactly the same meaning which Bonhoeffer had in mind. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 707.} They protect men from de-
stroying each other. These orders are the state, law, eco-
omic order, which God in his divine patience has instituted
for his fallen creation to preserve it for the day of judg-
ment. These structures are relatively free within society
from one another so that they may bear and influence upon each
other and thus help preserve society. These orders all have
a negative function to perform in society because they are
the expressions of God's Law which is adapted to the fallen
world. Each of these orders provides the basis upon which
man can effectively work out some degree of civil righteous-
ness for himself. Within these orders in society man attempts
to ease or placate his conscience which has become unsettled
by some crisis situation. Man's conscience flees to the
relative security and safety of moral and cultic righteous-
ness (\textit{justitia civilis}).\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 508.} The orders within creation per-
mit man this escape, for by his escape into his own civil
righteousness he finds some security and is able to live
within society as a reasonable, law-abiding citizen who
contributes to the good of society.
It should be noted that this position corresponds exactly to the position of Luther on the forms of civil righteousness and their purposes which we have already noted (Cf. chapter one, pp. 3 and 4). For both theologians there is this positive role which *iustitia civilis* possesses in order to save man from himself until the judgment.

The orders of preservation not only permit men to protect themselves from the destructive forces in the world but they provide the framework of worldliness wherein both Christians and non-Christians must operate. The Christian, the justified man who is *simul iustus et peccator*, is the person who uses this worldliness in a positive way. He is the one who, like Christ, loves this world, this aeon, because he knows that its time is running out, that it stands between creation and judgment, that it is preserved because Christ loves and preserves it. The Christian is the man whose love works through these orders to love his neighbor as Christ loved him. "There is a love for the world which is drawn along the lines of Jesus' attitude to the world." It is inside these orders that Christians perform their acts of love and charity, their *iustitia civilis* which is nothing other than Christ acting through them (*iustitia christi*). The unregenerate perform acts of civil righteousness which, although commanded by God,

80 Thielicke, *Theologische Ethik*, Band II/1, pp. 43, 44. Here Thielicke accepts Bonhoeffer's thesis about the relationship of the Christian to the world (Cf. chapter four, pp. 167-168.

81 Ibid., p. 48.

82 Ibid.
are performed not out of love for God, but out of hatred for him. This iustitia civilis is performed for the wrong reasons, because of the wrong motivations, and it suffers from the limitations of those who perform it. What the wrong motivation and these limitations are must now be explained.

We have said that there is a positive aspect to the iustitia civilis which is performed by Christians. In other words, for Thielicke, there is a positive side to iustitia civilis which is created as a result of faith in Christ and Christ working through redeemed man. But there is a negative aspect of iustitia civilis which is created only by non-justified man because of a problem of identification. This negative aspect arises out of the unrest of men's consciences, out of their terrified consciences, and the false refuge which the orders of the world and its corresponding righteousness provide.

Leaning heavily on Luther's theology of conscience, Thielicke confronts the problem of human conscience. He first says that the conscience is that point of man's ego which discourses with its other part. Conscience is the I addressing itself. Conscience means that there is in a man a continuous alternation between that part of man's ego which accuses man of his perversity and inhumanity to others, (this is conscience as the cor accusator of man) and that part which defends man's actions and motivations, (this is conscience as the cor defensor).\(^{83}\) For the unredeemed man

this tension produces a flight from God, even a hatred of God, because there is no excuse which is acceptable to God. In his hatred for God the unredeemed man performs works of civil righteousness for their own sake, as a means of placating his tormented conscience which will not desist its assaults. The unredeemed man then performs *iustitia civilis* not because he loves creation as a result of the creator, but because he loves creation for its own sake as a result of his hatred for God. The unredeemed man is commanded by God's Law to perform *iustitia civilis* and he responds. But he responds in the wrong way because of his wrong motivation, his hatred of God and God's Law.

It is at this point that Thielicke says that unredeemed man faces a crisis in his character, the crisis of hatred and disbelief in God which eventuates in his destruction of himself and others.

"The fact is that we do face a crisis in the whole concept of 'character'. In the long run, subjective respectability and even the sincerest willingness to 'do what is right and fear no man' is not enough, if one moves in the framework of a worldview which has emptied the image of man and removed the ultimate foundations. Once a man ceases to recognize the infinite value of the human soul--and this he cannot do once the relationship to God is extinguished and thus man's character indelebilis, which God has stamped with eternity, is smashed--then all he can recognize is that man is something to be used."  

84 Thielicke asserts that one can only know and understand creation when one first experiences and knows the creator and not vice versa. This is due primarily to his denial of general revelation.

85 Thielicke, *op. cit.*, p. 49, "There is, however, another love for the world which stems out of hatred of God. Here the world is loved for its own sake and does not spring out of God's love for the world."

This means that the iustitia civilis of the improperly motivated, unredeemed man is not at all comparable to the iustitia civilis of the Christian through whom Christ is at work as an alien power. This then means that the iustitia civilis of the unredeemed man is really a delusion in the sense that although he thinks that he is properly loving creation and his fellow man he is really devouring creation and other men in his hungry quest for righteousness.

For Thielicke a man's motivation is extremely important; it is decisive. If a man is motivated by Christ (if Christ is at work in him), then every work in society is a true iustitia civilis. If a man is not motivated by Christ (if his ego is solely determinative in his actions), then every action in society is and remains essentially evil and demonic.

Thielicke continually describes what we might call the either/or character of motivations. At one point he says that Luther was quite correct in his emphasis that man is ridden like a horse either by God or Satan. At another point he says:

"Yes; we always belong to a lord, and are always borne upon a wave which may be in the ocean of God or the ocean of the Evil One. Indeed it often happens that even 'natural man' feels this fact for a moment, although he does not know whence the fact comes or whither it is tending."88

How does the Christian overcome having his motivations transformed by the devil? He does it only by the help of Christ, who stands beside him as a brother who suffers with

87 Thielicke, Theologische Ethik, Band I, p. 96, ftn. 3.
88 Thielicke, Between God and Satan, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1958, p. 58.
him. He overcomes the domonic temptation, which perverts his will (motivation), only by the power of Christ's righteousness. "Christ not only marches on our right hand against death and devil; but he upholds us, too, from his height, because he is the Lord. The knowledge that we are sheltered by his power gives us that peace which the world cannot give or take away from us."89 This is the power of the alien iustitia christi at work in the life of the man who allows it to work for him. This is the iustitia christi which makes the iustitia civilis of that man at all times valid and just, regardless of the appearance the action might have to society (we will explore this appearance to society of the civil action of the justified man under the heading of the implications of Thielicke's position).

If this is the way the redeemed man has his perverse motivations transformed, how does the unredeemed man, accomplish it? Thielicke says that apart from a relationship to Christ and his righteousness he can not have his motivations transformed from evil to righteous. Eventually he yields to the wiles of the devil: worry, suspicion, naked power and doubt. The rejection of Christ's covering righteousness as forgiveness leads this man toward despair, toward nihilism, toward death. Thielicke says that both existentialism and humanism, when they spurned the alien righteousness of God in their analysis of ethics and emphasized man's unique righteous decisions instead, found themselves on the

89 Ibid., p. 76.
road to nothingness and despair from which they would permit no turning back no help from outside man. 90 Again and again Thielicke says that without Christ's active, powerful righteousness to set him free and to cover his sin man is destined for eventual meaninglessness, which in turn will lead to his destruction of others and of himself.

"The fact is that in all areas of the modern world and in every ideological climate we find the same phenomenon of the type of man who listens to Mozart from five to six o'clock, as Heydrich did in Prague, or risks danger to save the life of a kitten and then signs his name to a death sentence of a bloody assize. 91

Here again we see the strict alternative which Thielicke assumes for a man's motivation being either from Christ or apart from Christ. For Thielicke only the Christ-motivated man can find meaning and fulfillment in the fallen world, amid the chaotic and ambivalent orders whereby God contains and preserves his creation. Only the Christ-motivated man is able to survive the destructive forces in creation which assail all men.

The Ethical Implication of Thielicke's Theology of the iustitias

The first implication which must be drawn from our analysis of Thielicke is that there are two vantage posts or observation points from which to view the motivations and actions of man. The first vantage point is that before God (coram deo), the second vantage point is that before men

90 Thielicke, Theologische Ethik, Band I, pp. 639-649.
91 Thielicke, Nihilism, p. 83.
(coram hominibus). It matters greatly from which point of view man's motivations and actions are viewed. Thielicke gives us this example to illustrate his point. He says that if we look at men as they stand before God we see that all men are equal. All men are sinners together and all men are righteous together. All men are at this moment, from this point of view, equal in terms of their quality as moral beings. And yet when men are viewed from man's vantage point, from this side of eternity, men are unequal. They are unequal because of historical contingency, that is, because some were born as slaves and others were born as free men, some were born into wealth and others into poverty.

This means that when one discusses moral characteristics of men and their actions such as are used in moral theories one must take care to observe that one is discussing these characteristics (such as the moral principle of suum cuique) from man's vantage point and not from the position before God. (This difference of observation positions is what Bonhoeffer called the penultimate and the ultimate. The penultimate is coram hominibus and the ultimate is coram deo.) Accordingly, from man's point of view some of men's motivations are morally good while others are immoral. From man's observation point some men are righteous and others unrighteous. From God's observation point, however, all men are evil and their actions are unrighteous.92

92 Thielicke, Theologische Ethik, Band I, pp. 684, 685.
This distinction is noted because the primary implication it bears in Thielicke's ethical analyses is that the Christian, the redeemed man, sees his actions and his motivations, as well as the actions and motivations of other men, from the position before God, whereas the unredeemed man regards actions and motivations solely from the position before man. It is the vantage point of the redeemed man - the before-God position (Bonhoeffer's ultimate moment) - which alone for Thielicke is able to provide the three necessary conditions which must exist for there to be any valid ethical action. Thielicke's position that man can only be understood in his relationship to God (coram deo) provides the guarantee that man will be free to relate himself (the first necessary condition for all ethical action), that he will be able to relate himself as an I to a Thou (the second necessary condition), and that he will be able to relate himself to the world (the third necessary condition). However, the unredeemed man distorts each of these three areas which validate human ethical action. He does so because his relationship to himself is unqualified and unconditional surrender to self because he refuses to relate himself to himself by means of Christ's judgment upon his self-centeredness. He distorts the second relationship of his I to a Thou by regarding the Thou as an object to be used

94 Ibid., pp. 20-22.
95 Ibid., pp. 22-25.
and abused. He distorts the third relationship of himself to the world by being not merely in the world but conditioned and motivated by the ideals, principles and powers of the world. The distortion of each of these areas reveals itself most clearly in the concrete acts, in the *iustitia civilis*, of this unredeemed man.

The second implication of such an analysis by Thielicke shows us that for him there are really two types or forms of motivation for *iustitia civilis* present in the world. There are two types of motivation for men and, naturally enough, there are two types of actions. The one type is the *iustitia civilis* which is nothing but the *iustitia christi* thrusting itself into society by means of the actions of the redeemed, Christ-judged and Christ-forgiven new man. The other type of *iustitia civilis* is that which is performed by the unredeemed man as a result of his egocentric desire to be regarded as righteous by society.

But this evaluation of two types of motivation for *iustitia civilis* is only possible from the vantage point of the man who stands before God. From the other vantage point, that is, before men, there appears to be only one type of *iustitia civilis*. From this point of view the ethical action of man at its worst is ignoble, unvirtuous and impure. It is never seen in terms of its evilness or demonic character. From natural man's point of view actions are classified according to their immediate success or failure in attaining their desired ends. In other words, natural man does not look upon the motivation as essential, but the outcome of an action.
There is, then, the point of view from which man's *iustitia civilis* is viewed. This, in turn, leads to the conclusion that there are two differently motivated forms of *iustitia civilis* in the world. Here Thielicke is very much at one with Luther and Bonhoeffer. But what of Thielicke's relationship to Schleiermacher and Troeltsch at this point? In relationship to Schleiermacher there are two major areas of agreement. The first is that concerning the basically unrighteous character of any man who is not in a relationship of faith in Christ (see chapter two, pp. 50 and 51). For both Schleiermacher and Thielicke man is only righteous at the moments of his faith relationship to Christ. We remember hearing Schleiermacher say that the fruitful germ of all good works is a man's reception into living fellowship with Christ, and how it is incorrect to discuss the goodness of works apart from a discussion of man's regenerate will.96 For Schleiermacher we also noticed that there was a distinction between what Christian faith regards as good works and that which the world regards as good works.97 I think, in other words, that Thielicke and Schleiermacher are in agreement concerning the two types or forms of *iustitia civilis*.

In relationship to Troeltsch we must remember that Troeltsch's analysis of Luther's theology of the *iustitias* resulted in what Troeltsch called a personal (religious) and public (secular) ethical formulation. Troeltsch's conclusions

96 See chapter two, pp. 66-67.

97 See chapter two, p. 67.
might appear to allow us to emphasize the agreement between him and Thielicke. This would be the case if Thielicke had interpreted Luther in terms of a private and public ethic. But he did not. There is for Thielicke only one sphere of man's activity, as we have seen, namely, the world. In other words, for Thielicke, man has only one ethic, a public one. The man of faith does not usually behave differently in society from the way he behaves in his home. At least he has no theological grounds for doing so. What differentiates the Christian from the non-Christian is not the action but the motivation for the action. (We will see this point in Thielicke momentarily.) Therefore, there is no possible way that we can identify Troeltsch's analysis with Thielicke's. From Thielicke's point of view there is little if any way to distinguish between an ethical action performed by a Christian from one performed by a non-Christian, although there is a difference. What one can and must emphasize, however, is the difference which does exist, and is even more indiscernible than the differences between actions, between the motivations of men of faith and those of non-believers.

With regard to the relationship between Bonhoeffer and Thielicke, there can be no question but that Bonhoeffer anticipated Thielicke's discussion of the motivational differences by his prior analysis of the relationship between the

\[98\] Cf. Thielicke's discussion of Troeltsch's dualistic misinterpretation of Luther's ethic, *Theologische Ethik*, Band I, pp. 592, 593.
penultimate and ultimate moments of motivation. (see chapter four, pp.155 -167) Bonhoeffer has also anticipated Thielicke's distinction between the iustitia civilis of natural man and the man of faith in his discussion of the inability of natural man to allow iustitia civilis to do for him what God intended it to do, namely, to make man perfectly righteous and in his discussion of the point that there is only one good work, the one which Christ makes good, the work performed by the man of faith. (on these two issues see chapter four, pp.161-169)

Let us turn now to the ethical implications of Thielicke's theological assertion that it is the motivation of men (iustitia christi in the case of Christians and egoism in the case of the non-redeemed) which is to be the primary distinction in any Christian ethical study. We have noted that Thielicke understands the difficulty in attempting to perceive what anyone's motivations might be. This is a difficulty because of fallen nature of this age; a fallen nature which has pervaded every area of existence, including the area of man's motivation. This has a double meaning. On the one hand, it means that motivations are concealed and exceedingly difficult to expose to scrutiny. On the other hand it means that the righteousness of all motivations is to be disputed. Just as Thielicke says that there exists no ontically righteous action, in like manner there is no ontically righteous motivation because of the sinful condition of
men. Every motivation is always less than righteous by its very nature. This means that the action that appears to be the most moral or just is less than absolutely righteous. "Behavior is de facto a compromise between the divine requirement and what is permitted by the form of this world, by the autonomy of its orders, and by the numerous conflicts of duty."99 The other way of saying that an action is less than absolutely righteous is to say that it is a compromise.

Compromise refers to the re-adjustment which occurs in all areas of life, particularly the area of morals, when men become aware that the goal of their action either can not be attained, in which case a lesser goal is proposed in place of the greater, or that goal can be attained only by a non-direct, circuitous set of actions.100 Compromise is a word which describes, most of the ethical actions of all men, including Christians. As Thielicke points out, most decisions which men make in life are really compromise decisions.101

Yet this compromise character of life should not lead one to conclude that the compromise situation in life is an ethically neutral one or that the compromise solution to problems should be condoned.102 Each compromise situation

99 Thielicke, Theologische Ethik, Band II/I, p. 80.

100 Ibid., pp. 56-73. It must be noted that this idea of compromise does not at this point bear relation to Bonhoeffer's use of the term.

101 The examples he cites extend all the way from the compromise involved in the production of a motor car to the creation of a work of art. Compromise is especially evident in the sphere of politics, where the tension between Right and Might, between human freedom and public order, is frequently apparent. Ibid., pp. 65-79.

102 Ibid., p. 70.
is the result of desired results being weighed with the appropriate means for their attainment. Therefore each compromise solution is the result of a decision by those involved. The reason for this compromise decision is the fact that existence in our world stands between judgment and redemption. Because of this position between judgment and redemption adjustments must be made, adjustments which are concessions to human nature.

And the people of this world must enter into relationships and make decisions which involve compromises and concessions, and are encouraged, by their awareness that God continues to preserve the structures of this world, to enter into these relationships energetically and not half-heartedly. And it is just in this whole-hearted endeavor that man is dramatically involved in production of justitia civilis. But he is also involved in sin at this moment of endeavor. 103

It is at this point that the first difference between the motivation of the Christian and the non-Christian should be noted. The Christian is aware of the limitations of his whole-hearted endeavor. So is the non-Christian. But this realization is based on two different factors. The Christian comes to the awareness of the limitation by means of hearing God's Word as Law proclaimed as demand made upon him. His response is "I ought, but I can not." He knows he can not, not because he does not endeavor earnestly enough, but because of his fallen, sinful creaturely existence. The non-

103 Ibid., p. 84.
Christian comes to an awareness of his limitations because his plans are frustrated and he often becomes desperate. But he is not aware of the reason for this frustration, nor for his desperation. He thinks that "the world", interpreted as a non-personal force rather than as other persons; or, possibly, other persons are the reasons for his frustrated plans. He never arrives at the consideration that he himself is the primary reason. Or if he does become aware that he is the reason for his defeated dreams and goals, he does not know in what way or for what reason he is the reason for his own lack of fulfilment.

This awareness by the Christian of his failure to attain *iustitia civilis*, as demanded by God, does not lead him to despair and renunciation of the world, as it does in the case of the non-Christian. The Christian is aware that even though his actions are failures in the light of God's demand, and that he can never justify his actions on the grounds that they are just (*iustus*), for they never are, he is aware, that Christ alone makes them just. "Christ conquers and overcomes the *skema* of the world, in whose area compromise is necessary. I do not justify the compromise, Christ justifies it. I am dealing with an enemy with whom I am unable to cope."

This awareness is not possible for the non-Christian and, as a consequence, his motivations are qualified or influenced by the lack of such an awareness. This is exactly

104 Ibid., pp. 84, 85.
what Bonhoeffer meant when he said that for those who have not experienced the ultimate moment of Christ's alien and covering righteousness the moments of their own penultimate righteousness takes on an ultimate character. They make the penultimate into an ultimate, into something which it properly is not. As a result of this some aspect of justitiae civilis is absolutized or made into a timeless principle; he may make the pattern of ethical compromise into a law; he may sanction whatever ethical practice is in favour at the moment; he may seek to inaugurate some religiously oriented political philosophy; he may seek to maintain the principle, to save it at all costs, at the cost of truthfulness and honesty, in order that he might find security.

The motivation of the Christian and of the non-Christian, therefore, affects directly the concrete action which each performs. In the case of the Christian in politics, his motivation by true justice, by justitiae christi, allows him to see that although the political lie is usually expedient, lying can not be absolutized. The non-Christian, on the other hand, bearing no relationship to Christ's righteousness, is unable to understand that lying in any form is a perversion and he thus makes lying a virtue. In such a case what distinguishes the action of the Christ-centered man from

\[105\] Ibid., pp. 122-145 wherein Thielicke discusses such issues involved in telling a "white lie" (Notluege) as the deceitful appeal to truthfulness (as in the case of the Gestapo in Germany), the diplomatic lie, and the expedient lie.

\[106\] Ibid., p. 161.
him who is not is to be found in what the Christian is not permitted to do rather than to be found in what he does.

But the essential and characteristic difference between the actions of the Christ-centered man and the non-Christ-centered man is the freedom which the Christian possesses and the other does not. This freedom for action, which often becomes a kind of Christian abandon (Unbefangenheit), a Christian joie de vivre, is based on the forgiveness of sin and is man's proper righteousness. Whatever this man-in-Christ does is made righteous by Christ regardless of whether or not it conforms to a pattern or principle of goodness or justice. He performs a task in spite of its contradiction and ambivalence because he is receptive to Christ and Christ works (righteously) through him, through the contradiction, the compromise, and the riddle of existence, to overcome the dilemma. This is the Christian seeing the conflict and the contradiction in what he is commanded to do but doing the job regardless, not trusting in himself to make it right but in Christ's active iustitia which will make it right.

Here we must conclude that for Thielicke iustitia christi is, like God's revelation of himself of which it is an aspect, hidden in the actions of the man of faith. Iustitia christi is hidden under the form of man's righteousness (iustitia civilis). For this reason iustitia civilis can not be destroyed. Although it is a perverted expression of

107 Ibid., p. 52.
108 Ibid., p. 326.
man's egocentricity or, to borrow from Luther, a beggar's cloak compared to the righteousness of Christ, God works through this poor second, this perverted righteousness.109 As Thielicke says, borrowing from Luther, God works through all men, not merely through Christians. He works through all the orders of preservation. He maintains them in patient love. This was also Luther's thought, as we saw, that God continues to preserve *justitia civilis* (See chapter one, pp. 5, 6).

The question which Bonhoeffer raised concerning the possibility that Christ and his righteousness is also at work in the actions of the non-Christian, the non-justified man, is one which we must again raise. We saw earlier in this chapter that this question seemed to have been skirted by Thielicke's analysis. Having come this far we notice that it has now been given an indirect answer. Thielicke's answer on the basis of our analysis, would have to be that the non-Christian, the non-justified man is disturbed and overcome by his lack of justice (righteousness) and the lack of justice and goodness in the world. In his desperation to find security he thereby closes out the possibility of turning to the alien righteousness of Christ as his only means of support and, thereby, he finds a false security.

Conclusion

We have attempted to expound the essential features of Thielicke's theology of the two justitias. We have noted how closely he frequently parallels Luther's justitia theology. This parallelism results in a thoroughgoing realism with regard to the world and its ethical situations as well as a realism regarding the possibilities for successful ethical action on the part of man. This parallelism prohibits Thielicke from becoming desperate and disconsolate about the ultimate outcome of ethical action, as we found in Troeltsch's desperation at the growing autonomous and secularistic areas of life. This parallelism with Luther also prohibits Thielicke from becoming a utopian optimist regarding the capacity of man for justice (iustus).

There can be no question but that his thought about the justitias bears a great affinity to that of Bonhoeffer, especially in the areas of the God-created orders of preservation, the limited value of justitia civilis, and its need for fulfillment by justitia christi.

But what are the implications for theology, and especially for the area of Christian ethics, of this analysis of the theory of the justitias? What are our conclusions about the various parallelisms and differences which we have found in the thought of Luther, Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, Bonhoeffer and Thielicke? We must now make some general evaluations, and attempt to see what relationships this study might have to contemporary Christian ethical studies.
CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

In this thesis I have attempted to analyse the interpretations which five theologians have given to the concept of *iustitia christi* and *iustitia civilis*. In the centuries which have elapsed between Luther and Thielicke it is important to realize that, although many theological issues have come and gone, this concept is still discussed and still provides one of the bases for Christian ethical investigations. Although we have noted various differences of interpretation of this concept, there have also been areas of general agreement. Let us now clarify these differences and agreements in order that we can place some evaluative conclusions upon the study as a whole.

In our discussion of Luther's understanding of civil righteousness we observed that he linked this aspect of righteousness closely to the theme of works righteousness because he viewed this righteousness as a direct product of God's law. By the same token, he linked Christ's righteousness with justification because he equated it with the Gospel. Although Luther acknowledged the God-created and God-sustained role of *iustitia civilis* as a true righteousness, he nevertheless regarded it as an inferior form of righteousness when compared to Christ's perfect righteousness. *Iustitia civilis*, as an aspect of fallen creation, stands in need of fulfilment. Because *iustitia civilis* stands in this need Luther linked it with *iustitia christi*, as its fulfilment. Every human act of
justitia civilis which is not the result of faith in Christ's alien, covering righteousness is a sinful righteousness.

Here, in Luther, the foundation was established, which would later be elaborated upon, whereby there could be an identification made between justitia civilis and Christian faith which actualizes itself in society. For Luther there were not two separate justitias which had nothing whatever to do with each other, but, rather, two differently motivated righteous acts in society. All actions of men are performed within society. When these actions conform to a principle of human justice or law, they are said to be righteous. This is an act of civil righteousness which has two possible sources of motivation. If this act of civil righteousness is motivated by a desire to gain society's approbation, by a desire to be regarded by society as a good or a just person, then the motivation of that act is never able to overcome the destructive elements within itself. This is the act of civil righteousness which is incapable of overcoming or transforming the sinful egoism and pride which motivated it. This sin-motivated civil act, although it gains the approbation of society as a just act, is nevertheless destructive. It is destructive to the self and to society. Even so, said Luther, whatever justice or goodness there is in that act, whatever exists within that act of civil righteousness which is worthy of society's approbation, is nothing other than God rewarding and blessing what he has commanded, namely, that man be just in society.

On the other hand, if an act of civil righteousness is performed which is prompted or motivated by a man's acceptance
of Christ's righteousness, then that act of *iustitia civilis* is qualitatively different from the one which was not motivated by Christ. It is a different civil righteousness because Christ's gift of alien righteousness is accepted by the believer at the moment of justification that Christ can now operate powerfully through or by means of the Christian. Only in this way can the sin which is operative in man's actions as a corrupting influence be overcome. Only by means of *iustitia christi* can a man's *iustitia civilis* be an selfishly motivated righteousness. This means that only *iustitia christi* at work in the justified man is able to qualify the acts of *iustitia civilis* which he does.

I interpret this to mean that for Luther all men may act justly (*iustitia civilis*) in society, but that only the Christian's act of justice is qualified by the righteousness of Christ. Both the non-Christian and the Christian may act justly, that is, they may fulfill the civil law, but only the Christian's just act is an act motivated by Christ's justice, which is love. To put it another way we might say that the least that is expected of both Christians and non-Christians is social justice. The most that is expected is love. Both Christians and non-Christians are able, in and of themselves, to fulfill the first expectation, but only Christians can fulfill the second one because only Christians allow Christ's righteousness to flow through them into society.

In order not to distort Luther's position we must add that God demands love from all men, but that only the justified man, the Christian, is able to fulfill that demand because he accepts the imputation of Christ's righteousness as a gift,
which then works powerfully in the life of that Christian as a result of the fulfilled demand.

We saw that in order to protect *iustitia christi* from being confused with *iustitia civilis* Luther emphasized the alien character of *iustitia christi*. Luther maintained that this righteousness, even when effective in the life of the Christian, is and remains totally alien to man. It is never man's possession; he can never lay claim to it.

I interpret this alien character of *iustitia christi*, which Luther constantly affirmed, to be the essential power of it. If man could lay claim to this *iustitia christi*, then he would proceed to bring it into himself and to make it his private possession. Then his boast of righteousness would still be in and of himself and the dilemma of his sinful condition would still have found no solution. If this happened *iustitia christi* would lose it saving power, namely, its externality to man's sinful condition and its strict identification with God.

When we turned to the thought of Schleiermacher on this subject we noted an agreement between him and Luther despite Schleiermacher's philosophically couched ideas. We found that he, too, thought of righteousness as a necessary original condition of man which was disrupted by man's sinfulness. As such, Schleiermacher opposed original righteousness of sin and concluded that original righteousness could never be an actual condition or possession of man in this life because of sin. The only person who possessed this original righteousness, which we concluded was Schleiermacher's word for alien right-
eousness because no other human possessed it, was Jesus Christ. This original righteousness could be found in Christ's peculiar dignity, that total obedience to God, that perfect unity of will with the Father.

We noted a difference between Luther and Schleiermacher at the point of their interpretation of the meaning of Christ's ransoming death, which Luther interpreted in terms of a change in God himself, a loving and merciful overcoming of his wrath, and which Schleiermacher interpreted forensically as God's wrath exhausting its full measure on Jesus. Even though there was this difference in their interpretations of God's righteous action in Christ there was an agreement concerning the powerful way in which Christ influences men who accept what he has done for them as their High Priest, pascal lamb, and King. For Schleiermacher there was no other way for God to regard a man as righteous apart from that man's trust in what Christ had done for him.

Schleiermacher reached the same conclusion that Luther had regarding the situation of the man who accepts Christ's alien righteousness. That conclusion was that that man experiences a new life. This new life issues in good works. For both Luther and Schleiermacher there was only one good work, namely, the one performed as a result of faith in Christ. Both Luther and Schleiermacher believed that this was the only true good work. What society regards as a good work, as *justitia civilis*, may or may not be the work of a man of faith. Society is unable to perceive a man's motivation, and it is the motivation which qualifies the work as good or evil there is a double standard for the evaluation of a good work.
society's and God's standard. But there is only one good work for both Luther and Schleiermacher.

In our discussion of Troeltsch we noticed the essential difference between him and Luther to have lain in Troeltsch's interpretation of justitia civilis as the righteous work which a man performs in public life and justitia christi as the work which he performs in private life. The public and private moral dualism Troeltsch wrongly attributed to Luther. As a result of this dualism which Troeltsch thought he perceived in Luther, Troeltsch himself propounded a Christian ethic which was itself dualistic.

Troeltsch also differed from Luther, as well as Schleiermacher, in that he credited man for whatever righteousness existed in an action. For him there was no theology of an alien justitia christi either explicitly stated or implied; man was the creator of all righteous actions by means of his reason and divine inspiration. This complete misunderstanding of Luther's theology of the justitias led to a very unstable and ill-founded theology of ethics for Troeltsch. All that twentieth century man had to do was to assert his sinful, God-denying, secular, post-Christian self, and Troeltsch with his religious-rational ethic, which did not take man's sin or Christ's righteousness seriously into account, began to display signs of desperation and futility. There was no way that Troeltsch had theologically at hand to overcome the sin which Luther thought to be present in every act of justitia civilis simply because Troeltsch did not attribute whatever righteousness there might have been in an
act of civil righteousness to God, as Luther and Schleiermacher had done, but rather to an inspired human reason. Troeltsch's theology precluded the forensic notion of an active and risen Christ who, by his going to the Father as man's intercessor, continues to obtain for sinful man God's imputation of a covering righteousness. This theology also precluded the notion of the gracious, unmerited, overcoming of God's wrath by his love and his righteous total acceptance of sinful man, and, as a result, Troeltsch conceived of Christian moral action as a special, distinctly religious act which could be discerned because of its reasonable and religious qualities. He conceived of Christian ethics as *justitia christi*, but this was not the *justitia christi* which Luther elaborated. In other words, he conceived of Christian action in society not as a *justitia civilis* motivated by Christ and basically indistinguishable from *justitia civilis* of non-Christians since the distinguishing factor lay in the motivation rather than the overt act itself, but as a religious and distinctly discernable righteousness. It is apparent that Troeltsch confused *justitia christi* with *justitia civilis*, neither of which were comprehended as Luther or Schleiermacher comprehended them.

When we turned to Bonhoeffer, we first found a profound awareness of the pervasive character of man's sin. Every act that man performs, both Christian and non-Christian alike, is characterized by sin, by the Adam-humanity. As such, Bonhoeffer helped to restore to Lutheran theological ethics the emphasis upon man's sinful nature. This must be seen, I think, as a return to an emphasis which Luther had made. Bonhoeffer thought,
moreover, that only the man who experienced God's revelation knows himself to be a sinner. This notion was the premise upon which Bonhoeffer could build his concept of \textit{iustitia christi}. It meant for him that only the man who refers himself to God's revelation in Christ knows who he is, what his potentialities are, and what possibilities lay before him. Only the man who stands before God or is confronted by God experiences what Bonhoeffer called authentic existence. Only this man knows that his civil righteousness is distorted by sin. Only this man knows that every ethical situation is potentially unethical. This man, who is encountered by God, experiences what Bonhoeffer called the ultimate moment of \textit{iustitia christi}.

Bonhoeffer regarded all ethical moments, all forms of \textit{iustitia civilis}, as God-created and God-preserved penultimate moments. A very important point in our analysis was reached when we observed that Bonhoeffer equated \textit{iustitia civilis} with ethics. Both of these are penultimate when viewed from the ultimate moment of God's revelation of his own alien \textit{iustitia christi}. I think that Bonhoeffer was very close to Luther at this point, despite the fact that Luther never explicitly equated \textit{iustitia civilis} with ethics. Luther did regard \textit{iustitia civilis}, although it was God-created, as impious and perverse when confronted and compared with Christ's righteousness. I think that it is rather smooth progression in thought when one moves from Luther's position on \textit{iustitia civilis} to Bonhoeffer's equation of \textit{iustitia civilis} with all ethical moments.
As Luther tried to preserve the valid task which *iustitia civilis* has to perform in society, so one found Bonhoeffer attempting the same thing. Luther said that *iustitia civilis* must be fulfilled by *iustitia christi*; we found Bonhoeffer saying that the penultimate moment of *iustitia civilis* is fulfilled and at the same time destroyed by the ultimate moment of *iustitia christi*. Luther placed *iustitia civilis* under the heading of Law and so did Bonhoeffer.

But Bonhoeffer expanded on Luther's ideas, too. He established the validity of *iustitia civilis* not only on the basis of God's Law which created it, as Luther emphasized, but also on the basis of the Gospel of Christ who redeemed or fulfilled it. As a result of this more positive appraisal of *iustitia civilis*, there can be a greater intensity and urgency to Bonhoeffer's emphasis upon the point that God demands *iustitia civilis*, of all men, including Christians. But Bonhoeffer never confused *iustitia civilis* as demanded by God with *iustitia christi* as God's gift. He never confused good works with justification, the penultimate with the ultimate. Outward acts of piety or charity, acts of *iustitia civilis* are not the primary constituents of the Christian life. *Iustitia civilis* does not justify a man before God. The acceptance by a man of Christ's righteousness alone justifies a man.

The emphasis which we noted that Bonhoeffer placed upon sin qualified what he said about the actions of the justified man. The sin of man always stultifies and deadens his efforts to put his faith in God to work in society in acts of *iustitia civilis*. This stultification can be seen when Christians try
to act on a principle, or a program, or a command of God, such as the Sermon on the Mount, which they interpret rather literally. Bonhoeffer rejected such attempts on the basis of their lack of freedom.

What he emphasized as an alternative to such Christian programs was a spontaneous motivation of Christians which issues in spontaneous, creative acts of civil righteousness. For Bonhoeffer, as for Luther, the difference in the quality of the act of *justitia civilis* as performed by the Christian as over against the non-Christian lay in the motivation rather than in the characteristics of the act itself. The motivation of faith makes any act a just act regardless of its external or visible characteristics. Here Luther's rather extreme example of the justness of the Christian executioner's act of chopping off an offender's head makes its point. The true justness or righteousness of the act resides in its motivation rather than in its external qualities of justice, which Luther knew in such a case as this to be open to question.

Bonhoeffer, then, we found to be very closely allied to Luther's interpretation of the *justitias*, in addition to which he provided a number of new viewpoints and conclusions which were not found in Luther.

In the case of Thielicke we observed that he accepted Luther's understanding that the man of faith is motivated to perform the good work while the unbeliever is not so motivated and is not able, therefore, to perform the good work. Only the man motivated by faith in Christ can perform the good work. For Thielicke, as for Luther, there are only two types of
human beings, namely, those who believe in Christ and those who do not. He accepts Luther's position that good works arise of necessity as a result of a man's justification. It is apparent that Thielicke distinguishes between what society regards as a good work and what God regards as good.

This means that Thielicke agrees with Luther's conclusion that the only righteousness in a civil action is God's righteousness which is effective in it. Thielicke said that there are not two types of civil righteousness but only one. This, again, was a conclusion which we reached in our first chapter.

I think that there is no question but that Thielicke's understanding of iustitia civilis comes very close to Bonhoeffer's although we could not say that Thielicke identified iustitia civilis with all ethical moments as did Bonhoeffer.

Thielicke emphasized the point that one must not think of iustitia civilis as man's work which was due to a renewed desire on man's part to be righteous. Iustitia civilis is really not man's work at all but Christ's. This emphasis guards against crediting man with righteousness or goodness as an ontic possession. Iustitia civilis is really the social expression of Christ's alien righteousness at work in man, Christ's righteousness which God imputes to men of faith.

We noted how Thielicke supported Luther's idea that God imputes this righteousness to men of faith because a change has occurred within God himself. His love overcame his wrath at the death and resurrection of Jesus. The death of Jesus is the basis for the imputation of Christ's righteousness to men of faith and the resurrection guarantees that this imputation
is effective. In this way Thielicke unites Jesus' death and resurrection and relates them to the righteousness of Christ. By re-emphasizing Luther's idea of the absolute alien quality as well as the absolute freedom of this gift of Christ's righteousness, Thielicke sharply contrasts jjustitia christi with works righteousness and thereby associates jjustitia christi very closely with the moment of justification. As such, there is an affinity between Bonhoeffer and Thielicke.

Thielicke continually emphasized the dependent role which man plays in the receiving of this alien gift of righteousness. As a result of man's reception of Christ's righteousness, he begins actively to relinquish his hope of becoming righteous, which would be a position of independence of God for him. This position displays a profound understanding of the frustration and despair which accompany shattered moral goals and ethical ideals. Man's proper or active righteousness, according to Thielicke, and one which overcomes the self-despair of frustrated moral ambitions, is Christ actively at work in man. This is what Bonhoeffer called Christ forming men to himself. He works in them and this is their actual righteous action. Thus, the Christian ought not to take credit for any civil righteousness which he has displayed because it was Christ working through him.

Having reviewed the major conclusions which were drawn in each chapter, I would now like to evaluate some of these conclusions in view of what I think their possible implications for Christian ethics might be today.
The first notion which I have investigated in these five men and which I consider to be of first rate importance for Christian ethical analyses today is that of the alien righteousness of Christ. Luther took great pains to explain that he believed that there is more to the ethical actions of man than meets the eye. He was referring to what we today call motivation. That there is a difference between the types of motivation which prompt us to action only states half of the issue. There are two fundamental or basic motivations, according to Luther, the motivation of the faith-less and that of the man of faith.

What this difference in motivation amounted to for Luther was this. The faith-less man precludes that source of motivation (justitia christi) from his actions which, if he had faith in Christ, would begin to overcome the self-interest, the egocentricity, which is always present in man's moments of motivation. This is what we saw Luther to have thought. Now the question to which Luther never addressed himself, for a number of reasons, but a question which Schleiermacher perceived to be extremely important for Christian ethical analysis, was this. Exactly how does this alien righteousness of Christ go about overcoming the egocentricity and self-interest, the sin, which is present in men? I think that this is one of the more important questions to which Christian ethics must address itself.

Schleiermacher said that one must first posit a living and reigning Christ in order to begin to answer the question. One must first trust in the reality of and power of Christ.
The next step is to be aware that there are impulses or influences which he is sending to man; he is interceding constantly before God for men. These actions of intercession by Christ, coupled with his earthly life and death, constitute his alien righteousness by which he influences men.

But this was not a complete answer because it failed to portray an historical Jesus who had identified himself completely with men, as well as a risen Christ who was not remote. Both the historical Jesus and the risen Christ of Schleiermacher's theology were remote from men's experience and, as a result, what he said about the influence of Christ upon a believer's will, intellect, and emotion, somehow seemed remote also. Schleiermacher's Christ was as remote and metaphysical as T. de Chardin's cosmic Christ. As a result, when Schleiermacher discussed the *justitia civilis* of Christians in terms of Christ's perfection or righteousness at work in them, influencing them, one is still not certain what sort of influence he had in mind terms of the action which will ensue. One is not certain exactly what shape or structure the response of the Christian who allows Christ to work through him will take. Will it be qualitatively different from the acts of non-Christians? Undoubtedly it will. In the first place the Christian ethical action will be based on more than just reason. As such, this action is a more complete one than that of the non-Christian. It will be based on the influence of Christ. But how will the action appear? What will it look like? Schleiermacher struggled with this question and concluded that it would not appear to be any
different from the civil righteousness of the non-Christian. But the qualitative difference between the two actions does not reside in the external act but in the motivation.

I think that this conclusion which Schleiermacher and Luther reached about the difference between the *iustitia civilis* of Christians and non-Christians was either not understood by Troeltsch or else understood and rejected. Troeltsch's solution to this problem appears to have been the following. Civil ethical actions which are performed by Christians are different from those performed by non-Christians in that they display a closer approximation to the objective end or moral goal of the religious ethic. This approximation is visible in terms of the reasonableness, the religious piety, and the obedience of Christians. Here the emphasis was not upon the motivation but upon the civil action itself. The emphasis was not upon the influence or motivation which the risen Christ makes upon a man, but upon the moral and religious calibre of the act. To borrow from Professor Thielicke, we would say that for Troeltsch the action made the man righteous rather than vice versa. I think that there are those today who would agree with Troeltsch that there is a visible, discernible difference between the civil actions of Christians and non-Christians.

Bonhoeffer's solution to this problem, as we have seen, was to emphasize the motivational difference between the *iustitia civilis* of Christians and non-Christians. For one thing, the Christian has experienced the ultimate moment of justification, the moment when Christ's alien righteousness destroyed and fulfilled his own personal righteousness. For
this reason alone the Christian must take seriously his world, his Lord's world, and its righteousness. He must ensure the peace and freedom of his world by means of law and order. If he does this then he will ensure that the laws of his country are equitable, humane, and conform to God's Law. He will see to it that offenders of civil law will not go unpunished. But, unlike Troeltsch, Bonhoeffer said that he will do all this not in order to be different from non-Christians, not in order that society could approximate the objective moral ends because Christ was working through him, compelling him to act justly and to ensure that others have the opportunity to do the same.

Thielicke's position on this problem of the difference between the *justitia civilis* of Christians and non-Christians paralleled Bonhoeffer's. His particular contribution is to be found in his insistence that when the man of faith is justified by Christ the ensuing action is really not the work of the believer but the work of Christ. Thus when Luther said that the Christian's action in society, his *justitia civilis*, might be to hang a convicted murderer, or when Schleiermacher expressed the fact that the best magistrate would be a Christian magistrate because he understood the justice which was administered to him (*justitia christi*), Thielicke would add that if these actions were performed by men who have accepted Christ's alien righteousness then it is really Christ himself who is hanging the murderer and hearing the evidence as magistrate. In Thielicke we found this insistence upon the non-visible, non-quantitative character of a Christian's
proper righteousness, as well as the insistence that this proper righteousness was nothing other than Christ's living, alien, righteous-creating presence.

I think that this study has shown that Christian ethical studies must always take care not to confuse acts of Christian civil righteousness with iustitia christi, as Troeltsch obviously did and which led only to futility and despair at the increasing secularity of the age which he equated with a disappearance of Christian righteousness. When one properly distinguishes between iustitia civilis and iustitia christi one of the results will be that one is not so much concerned about the decreasing number of externally religious or pious actions in society as one is with the possible decrease in justice, that is, a concern for civil righteousness. One is not so much concerned with a lack of pious or religious actions in society as with a lack of just actions.

I also think that Thielicke's understanding that Christians never possess iustitia christi as a proprium but only as an alienum helps to offset the understanding that a man can be righteous in and of himself apart from his relationship of faith in Christ. Without this understanding of man's righteousness as a relational alienum as opposed to an ontic proprium, Christian ethical studies might come to the conclusion that the Christian is constantly and uniformly righteous to the same degree in and of himself.

Thielicke's observation that it is not the action which determines what the man is, but the man who determines the
character of the action should act as a warning to all Christian ethical theorists to take care not to propose or infer that that which makes a person righteous in society is his performance of a righteous act. He is only able to perform a righteous act if he is righteous. This means that conformity to a principle or law of righteousness does not make the man just or righteous. This places the primary emphasis not upon what a man does but why he does it. The emphasis again returns to Thielicke's point that it is the motivation which makes an act righteous and not some ontic quality or character of righteousness either in the actor or the act. Confrontation with Christ, in judgment and forgiveness, to use Bonhoeffer's phrase, which permits Christ to actively work through the person, is really the basic difference between what the world understands as civil righteousness and what Christian theology understands by it.

I think that without any question the first implication which this distinction between the *iustitias* has for contemporary ethical studies is that Christian ethical theory distinguishes between how the world regards *iustitia civilis* and how God regards it; what society thinks constitutes *iustitia civilis* and what Christian theology thinks constitutes it. To disregard this distinction is to fail to acknowledge that man stands before God as well as before his fellow man. This is not to say that Lutheran ethical theory from 1840 to the present has repudiated the understanding that acts of civil righteousness ought to conform to the laws and principles which society has agreed upon. We found the opposite of this
in this study. The position of Schleiermacher, Bonhoeffer, and Thielicke was that this conformity to these Laws by Christians and non-Christians forms the basis from which society judges an action as being either righteous or unrighteous, but that this conformity, although God-ordained, is not what makes these actions righteous. What makes them righteous is Christ's active righteousness at work in men transforming the destructive, sinful elements within those actions.

The second implication of this study for contemporary ethical studies follows from the first, namely, that the non-Christian, the faithless man, precludes Christ's participation in his actions and, as a result, he can not perform an act in which the destructive and limiting forces, which are at work in the actions of all men, can be overcome and transformed.

With the exception of Troeltsch, we found that Luther, Schleiermacher, Bonhoeffer, and Thielicke did not establish a dualistic understanding of justitia civilis, that is, an understanding in which there were two discernibly different types or kinds of civil righteousness, one type performed by Christians and the other type by non-Christians. This was Troeltsch's point of view. Rather these others believed that the difference of quality between various acts of civil righteousness was to be found in the motivation, not in the shape which the external act takes. There is no act which one could say is a Christian action. This distinction can not be made on the basis of our analysis. What one can say is that only God knows why a man does what he does. This is the conclusion one
reaches when one distinguishes between the motivation for an action and the action itself, when one distinguishes between justitia christi actively at work through men of faith becoming their justitia civilis and the justitia civilis of non-believers.
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