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THE ATONEMENT AS VIEWED BY  
AULEN AND SCHLEIERMACHER

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

THE ATONEMENT AS VIEWED BY  
AULEN AND SCHLEIERMACHER

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject

1. The Subject Defined.

The name given in Christian Theology to the work of Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners is the word ATONEMENT. This word was used only once in the King James version of the New Testament (Romans 5:11), and not at all in the Revised Version. In the latter version there is a more accurate translation of the Greek  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\chi\eta$ , ("a thorough change"), as RECONCILIATION. However, the term "atonement" is quite common in the sacrificial language of the Old Testament law. It is basically from the Hebrew term  $\text{כִּפֹּרֶת}$ , which means "to cover." The Old Testament uses it in the sense of propitiation or expiation, and it is in this latter sense that it has been applied to the work of Christ. Therefore, the work of Christ is looked upon as an expiatory offering, propitiating an offended Deity and reconciling Him and man. This definition of the key word in the subject reveals not only the scope but also the im-

portance of the atonement of Jesus Christ.

For a considerable length of time in the early church, Christ's sufferings were viewed as the price which was paid to Satan in order to rescue from his dominion the souls acquired by him by right of conquest. This view was held by Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Jerome, and other church fathers - but was controverted by Athanasius.

In the latter part of the eleventh century, Anselm taught that sin, being a debt, must be paid; and since no mere creature was able to discharge it, a substitute was found in Jesus Christ. As the incarnate Son of God, He offered a vicarious satisfaction to divine justice. This so-called juridical theory lays the necessity of atonement on the perfection of the divine nature and holds that it was a complete satisfaction to the claims arising from these perfections. Socinus dissented from this view, maintaining that Christ is a Savior because He announced and confirmed the way of salvation and showed it in His own person by His own example and resurrection.

There was strong opposition to Socinus by Grotius, who proclaimed the governmental theory of the atonement.

This theory was presented in his "De Jure Belli et Pacis" .

This theory stressed that God, as moral governor of the world must enforce precept and penalty, and that an example of suffering in Christ was necessary to a wicked world to show that sin cannot escape with impunity.<sup>1</sup>

This was based largely upon Stoicism and Roman legal principles.

Still another viewpoint is the mystical theory, held by Scotus Erigena, the Platonizing fathers, Osiander, Schleiermacher, and many others. According to this view, the reconciliation effected by Christ is due to the mysterious union of God and man by the incarnation rather than to His sacrificial death.

These viewpoints have been reworded and rephrased many times during the past centuries and are expressed today through three basic theories: (a) The Classic Idea, which is stressed in modern theology by Gustaf Aulen; (b) The Latin Idea, commonly referred to as the Objective Idea which found its basis in St. Augustine; and (c) The Subjective Idea, which finds its greatest resurgence in Friedrich Schleiermacher.

The objective comparative study of the Classic Idea and the Subjective Idea is then the heart of this study.

## 2. The Subject Justified.

The brief historical survey given in the preceding pages, concerning Christ's work of atonement, reveals the centrality of this subject in historical theology. Even the non-Christian would be able to observe the necessity of the atonement in the religion called Christianity. The atonement is the very heartbeat of all Christianity.

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1. Nelson Complete Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 462.

The Christian believer knows that apart from the atoning work of Christ, he is lost and without hope. Therefore, it is necessary to make clear these two opposite theological viewpoints of the atonement. It can be easily understood that the viewpoint held on this, the central support in Christianity, will determine the message and the work of the individual church.

It is observed that the atonement is the struggle between God and Satan for the dependent creature called man. Man was so created that it became essential that he be persuaded or invited to accept salvation. He cannot be forced.

Dr. Jacob Tanner points up this significance in the following quotation:

Speaking from a human point of view, God's problem was not only to provide a salvation for lost and condemned sinners, but one that had the initial persuasive power necessary to make man willing to be saved. It must be simple enough so even fools could make use of it, powerful enough to break the hold Satan and sin have on man, abundant enough to give hope to those who have lost all hope, enduring enough to more than meet the daily needs of life time, and creative enough to regenerate hearts dead in trespasses and love of sinning and renew and restore them unto daily sanctification. God's answer was the forgiveness of sin in the name of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

The forgiveness of sins imparts to man the cumulative benefits of the Savior's life, death, and victorious resurrection. The risen Savior Himself is present and at work in the words of forgiveness, the message of reconciliation.

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1. Tanner: Atonement and Forgiveness, p. 111.



The Holy Spirit declares Christ, makes Him so persuasive and so convincing that the sinner sees that the Savior died for his sins, that they are blotted out by the blood that was shed for him, and that he is forgiven and saved. He believes that Jesus Christ is his Savior and Lord. Saving faith has been born. "Man's personality has not only been preserved, but liberated. It can now function with a new freedom and a new fitness."<sup>1</sup>

This then is the work of God accomplished in Christ. This is the work of atonement. Therefore, a comparative study of two opposite, but historically concurrent viewpoints, is imperative and significant; so that by contrast their values may be discovered. The importance of such a study is due to the importance the atonement has for all mankind. For the 'atonement view' held by a preacher or teacher will immediately effect the progress of the true redemptive message; not only now but for eternity.

### 3. The Subject Delimited.

As before mentioned, there are presently three basic views of the atonement held by theologians of Christendom: (a) The Classic Idea; (b) The Latin Idea; and (c) The Subjective Idea. Even though a comparative study of all three is highly desirable, it was found necessary to limit

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1. Tanner: op. cit., p. 112.

this paper to two of the three - the Classic Idea and the Subjective Idea.

### B. The Sources of Study

As explained further in section I.C., the method employed demands the almost exclusive use of three primary sources: "Christus Victor" and "The Faith of the Christian Church" both by Gustaf Aulen, and "The Christian Faith" by Friedrich Schleiermacher. These two authors are the leaders of their respective movements and therefore the selection of these volumes on the part of the writer.

### C. The Method of Procedure

The writer has attempted to make this study as objective in nature as possible. It was essential for him to limit himself to the writings of Gustaf Aulen and Friedrich Schleiermacher. Extensive use of secondary sources, dealing with these two men and their position on the atonement, would have given a subjective view to this writer and weakened the objectivity of this paper. This has been purposely avoided in order to present the material as a simple but useful objective comparison.

This comparison is consummated in a chart which points up in simplicity the concepts of the atonement as propounded by these two outstanding theologians, Aulen and Schleiermacher. It will further be noted that beside the

Objective Summary, there is included a Subjective Summary. The latter will reflect the author's reaction to these two viewpoints as regards their strong and weak points.

CHAPTER II

AULEN'S CONCEPT OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT  
THE CLASSIC IDEA

## CHAPTER II

### AULEN'S CONCEPT OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT THE CLASSIC IDEA

#### A. Introduction

According to Dr. Aulen, the view which he is expressing is not something new at all but that which is true Christianity, even from its inception. He stresses the assumption that the Classic Idea is that set forth by the New Testament, by the early church, and also by Martin Luther at the time of the Reformation.

Dr. Aulen, who is one of the foremost theologians of the Swedish Church, has become well known in both Europe and America during the past twenty years. During these years the Classic Idea has received more and more acclaim as intensive searches have been made for a basis for union within the Protestant circles. A.G. Hebert suggests that the Classic view is the only hope for reunion of both Catholic and Protestant.<sup>1.</sup>

As one thinks of the supposed significance and power of this view, one begins to wonder - why has not his-

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1. Hebert: Preface of *Christus Victor* by Aulen, p. X. The optimism expressed here is quite refreshing: "...the true hope of Reunion; not in the victory of Catholic over Protestant, or of Protestant over Catholic, but in the return of both to the rock whence they were hewn. There can be no true Reunion on the basis either

torical Christianity felt the effect of this view before? To answer our question, Aulen states four 'causes of neglect.'<sup>1</sup> The first 'cause' he traces to the controversial theological background of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries wherein historians of dogma were either attacking or defending Protestantism's orthodoxy of the seventeenth century. The period of Enlightenment brought a renewed historical study of the satisfaction-theory of the atonement, which was described as a "relic of Judaism surviving in Christianity."<sup>2</sup> As a result, a theological battle was waged between the objective and the subjective views of the atonement. The determination of each side to uphold its own view clouded the issue and the classic view was lost beneath the pile of verbosity.

The second 'cause' was the confusion, by well-meaning theologians, of the classic idea of the atonement with the Latin or objective view. This was due to similar terminology which in the one case or the other has lost its

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of the Catholicism which delights to represent itself as the ideal religious system, or of the old Protestantism with its rigidity and its negation, or of the newer humanising, modernist Protestantism. Reunion is to come by the rediscovery of the old evangelical and catholic faith by all sections of Christendom in common; thus will come the escape from the perversions and narrowings of Christianity, of which all sections of Christendom have been guilty, to the gospel of God's redemption, and to the richness of a Catholicism which is truly evangelical.

1. Aulen: Christus Victor, pp. 23-29.
2. Ibid., p. 24.

original connotation.

In the third place, we find that both the conservative orthodox theologian as well as the 'liberal' theologian tended to discredit the dramatic or classic view of the atonement. According to Dr. Aulen, it was regarded as being able to contribute only images and symbolical expressions and not a clearly-worked-out theological scheme. It was, therefore, regarded as mythological and irrational.

The fourth 'cause' is laid at the door of those who could not accept the dualism of the dramatic view. "If dualism is eliminated, it is impossible to go on thinking of the existence of powers hostile to God, and the basis of the classic view has been dissolved away."<sup>1</sup> The idealistic theology from the time of the Enlightenment to the nineteenth century had no place for a dualistic element in Christianity in spite of a recognized dualistic element in primitive Christianity. This was, of course, treated as an accidental and non-essential phenomenon. However, Dr. Aulen believes it to be an integral and necessary element found in early Christianity and it is impossible to eliminate it without destroying the main emphasis of Christianity.

These four 'causes of neglect' have challenged

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1. Aulen: op. cit., p. 27.

theologians to analyze carefully the Classic Idea and give it a hearing. The following five point procedure is, therefore, necessary in this analysis: (1) Aulen's theological position in general; (2) The Idea of Sin; (3) The Christ and Incarnation; (4) The Idea of Salvation; and (5) The Concept of God.

## B. Basis for Classic Idea

### 1. The Theological Position.

To understand Aulen's thinking it is essential to know his theological position or starting point. Knowledge of this will enable one to grasp the proclaimed significance of the atonement idea he suggests. This is the concept which has been labeled - The Classic Idea.

Dr. Aulen has built his theology upon the "divine love of God" which makes possible the redemption of man. The central point is the act of reconciliation and the victory of the self-sacrificing, divine love. With this act of God in Christ at the center of God's activity with man, Dr. Aulen observes the expression of the act itself as the expression of divine love; then he reveals that it is this "...divine love that re-establishes the broken fellowship between God and man through that act of forgiveness that creates faith."<sup>1</sup> The background for this viewpoint or

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1. Aulen: The Faith of the Christian Church, p. 208.



position is his analysis of sin, or that evil which opposes the realization of fellowship between God and man. He states further that this act of redemption is at the same time an act of judgment and creation. The "work of atonement is accomplished by God Himself in Christ, yet at the same time the passive form also is used: God is reconciled with the world."<sup>1.</sup> The alternation is not accidental; He is reconciled only because He Himself reconciles the world with Himself and Himself with the world.

To hold such a position three safe-guards are necessary relative to the continuity of God's operation in history: (a) the dualistic outlook; (b) the divine warfare against the evil that holds mankind in bondage; and (c) the triumph of Christ - "Christus Victor!" However, this position necessitates a discontinuity of the legal order. There is no satisfaction of God's justice, for the relation of man to God is viewed in the light not of merit and justice but of grace.<sup>2.</sup>

## 2. The Idea of Sin.

It is imperative also to observe Aulen's concept of sin; for this will reflect by contrast, the meaning of 'victory' in the Classic Idea.

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1. Aulen: Christus Victor, p.163.  
2. Ibid., p. 163.

"Sin is a concept which cannot be used except in a religious sense. The significance of the knowledge of sin can be known only as divine revelation illuminates the fact of sin."<sup>1.</sup> Fellowship with God is broken by sin or unbelief. "If in faith man is ruled by the loving will of God, the essence of sin consists in that man is not dominated by God, but by something separated from him."<sup>2.</sup> This power Aulen has termed the "ego." "The essence of sin is negatively unbelief and positively egocentricity."<sup>3.</sup> The result is a change in the general definition of sin. Sin is no longer isolated deeds or something imperfect but a perverse direction of the will, which implies a deviation from the essential destiny God gave to man.

It is clear from the above definition of the nature of sin, that Christian faith knows of no division of man into a lower and sensuous part which is the seat of sin, and a higher and spiritual part which would lie outside the area of sin. When man is designated a sinner, it is a religious judgment which has reference to man as a whole.

Individual and specific acts of sin are not isolated and unrelated to each other but are rooted in the inclination of man's will and this will exists in observ-

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1. Aulen: The Faith of the Christian Church, p. 259.
2. Ibid., pp. 259-260.
3. Ibid., p. 260.

able human interrelationships. The idea of original sin, contrasted by Aulen with the atomistic conceptions of sin, is a total view not only of the individual man, but also of the human race.<sup>1.</sup> The universality of this sin, which embraces the will of all mankind, appears, according to Aulen, as the solidary interrelationship of demonic power which encircles and enslaves all mankind.<sup>1.</sup> This interrelationship, as viewed by Aulen, has the character of both "inevitability and volitional activity." This can be more easily understood as sin of condition and sin of act. A knowledge of the relationship between these two is, therefore, essential in understanding Aulen's position.

Aulen says that the Christian's consciousness of sin is a realization on his part of that which separates him from the divine will and that which brings him under the judgment of God. This implies an immediate consciousness of his guilt or an awareness of his unworthiness before God. Guilt, however, is not here dependent on a connection between individual sinfulness and the solidary interrelationship of sin. If such was the case, this re-

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1. Ibid., p. 270, Footnote by translator. Definition of terms used: (1) The atomistic conception of sin includes two parts; (a) Individual acts of sin which are independent and unrelated, (b) Individual sinners are independent and unrelated; and (2) The solidary interrelationship of sin states; (a) Individual acts of sin are interdependent and interrelated; (b) Individual sinners are interdependent and interrelated. Eric H. Wahlstrom and G. Everett Arden have translated the author's expression "syndens overindividuela sammanhang" as "the solidary

relationship would lead to a casuistic and relative conception of sin which is foreign to Christian faith. It is evident, therefore, that guilt cannot be rationally motivated.<sup>1.</sup>

Since the religious conception of sin refers to man as a whole, and since the judgment of God is unconditional, it follows that from a religious point of view there can be no degrees of guilt, but different relations of men to the divine and gracious will. As a result, the hardening of the heart is the definite rejection of the divine will. This hardening is revealed by the lack of guilt consciousness. The possibility of degrees of guilt is realized only when humanistic judgments are based on empirical and psychological premises. Degrees of guilt can be established, then, when the evaluation is dependent not only on the character of individual acts but also on the environmental conditions. This relativistic conception loses its validity when it passes over into the religious sphere.<sup>2.</sup>

### 3. The Idea of Salvation.

Dr. Aulen states that the classic idea cannot rightly be called only a doctrine of salvation. The idea describes a work of salvation, a drama of salvation; but

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interrelationship of sin," and "syndens överindividuela makt" as "the demonic power of sin."

1. Ibid., pp. 279-280.

2. Ibid., p. 280.

this salvation is at the same time more encompassing than the term "salvation" as generally used.

General usage of the term "salvation," according to the Winston College Dictionary, means - "the setting free of the soul from sin and death; redemption. That which brings redemption or deliverance from sin and death." It is noticed even by definition that the term "salvation" is limited to only the experience of man. To Aulen, salvation is a work wherein God reconciles the world to Himself and is at the same time reconciled. The background for such a view is dualistic in nature.<sup>1.</sup> God is pictured as in Christ carrying through a victorious conflict against powers of evil which are hostile to His will. According to Aulen:

This constitutes atonement, because the drama is a cosmic drama, and the victory over the hostile powers brings to pass a new relation; a relation of reconciliation, between God and the world; and, still more, because in a measure the hostile powers are regarded as in the service of the Will of God the Judge of all, and the executants of His judgment. Seen from this side, the triumph over the opposing forces is regarded as a reconciling of God Himself; He is reconciled by the very act in which He reconciles the world to Himself.<sup>2.</sup>

It is further noticed that this so-called complete view of salvation from beginning to end is a work of God Himself, a continuous divine work. It sets forth not just a

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1. Aulen: Christus Victor, pp. 20-21.
2. Ibid., p. 21.

change in man but a complete change in the situation, a change in the relation between God and the world, and a change also in God's own attitude. It is thoroughly objective in that the atonement is not regarded as affecting men primarily as individuals, but is set forth as a drama of the world's salvation.<sup>1.</sup> Salvation, therefore, includes the whole of creation and not man alone.

#### 4. The Christ and Incarnation.

There is an inseparable connection between the Incarnation and the Atonement. The warfare and triumph of Christ is God's own warfare and triumph. "It is God who in Christ reconciles the world to Himself. The Incarnation is the necessary presupposition of the atonement, and the atonement the completion of the Incarnation."<sup>2.</sup>

The Incarnation does not here mean that Christ is an intermediary being (separation Christology), a so-called half-god; nor does it idealistically mean that he is "the ideal man" or "human prototype."; nor does it identify Christ with God - viewing Him as a theophany. "The Incarnation in Christ is something given in and through the advent of Christ, but also something which is perfected in His completed work. The confession of Christ is based, therefore, on the finished work in Christ."<sup>3.</sup>

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 22. 2. Ibid., p. 167.

3. Aulen: The Faith of the Christian Church, p. 210.

Faith perceives the incarnation of the divine and loving will and the redemptive work of this divine will as an indivisible whole. If the incarnation is emphasized at the expense of the work of Christ, the result would be a tendency toward a naturalistic interpretation of Christianity. In like manner, an overemphasis on the atonement would overshadow the divine love that prompted the work of reconciliation and redemption. As Aulen so ably expresses it:

In the work of Christ faith encounters the inscrutable miracle of divine love. Since faith meets Christ as the incarnation of divine love, it comprehends the mystery of His person in the eternal and divine will and in nothing else. He is, in other words, begotten of the Father from eternity.<sup>1</sup>

Faith perceives that the mystery of both His person and His origin is of the Holy Spirit. This is actually the religious meaning and content of the idea concerning the conception of Jesus without a human father. This does not mean that Christ's true manhood receives not a proper emphasis; for Christ is set forth as the Man in whom God reveals His essence and carries out His work of deliverance and atonement. The Divine all-mightiness is the only power able to accomplish what Christ did, to overcome sin, death, and the curse. The tremendous power of God is present in the despised Man Christ!<sup>2</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 221.  
2. Ibid., p. 210.

## 5. The Concept of God.

God is always referred to as the "Holy One." The connotation of such a title suggests that His person bears the imprint of holiness. That which is holy is sacred and set apart from that which is this-worldly and relative. This implies primarily that there is a definite line of demarcation between the divine and the human. God is God and Man is Man. The divine is something other than the human and must not be confused with "humanity at its highest." Aulen points up further, that holiness is the foundation on which the whole conception of God rests. Every statement about God, whether in reverence to His love, power, righteousness, and so on, ceases to be an affirmation about God when it is not projected against the background of His holiness. Only when holiness colors the concept of love is it understood that herein divine love is being dealt with.<sup>1.</sup>

The idea of this holy God, which is essential for upholding the classic idea of the atonement, reveals

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1. Aulen: Ibid., pp. 120-122, Aulen's concept of holiness asserts the purely religious character of the idea of God (in contrast to moralism and ethicalism), the majesty of God (in contrast to eudaemonism), his unfathomableness (in contrast to rationalism), and it repudiates all attempts to identify the divine and the human (in contrast to mysticism).



the tension of the dualistic view. First, God is shown on the stage of history in direct conflict with evil, while at the same time, God is shown as the sovereign and ruler over all.

Secondly, God's atonement is shown as victory over the powers that hold man in bondage; while at the same time these same "powers are in a measure executants of His own judgment on sin."<sup>1</sup> This dualistic view, of course, reaches its climax in the tension between divine love and divine wrath. This tension, however, in the final analysis, is dissipated when divine love prevails over the wrath, blessing prevails over the curse, by way of divine self-oblation and sacrifice. The work of Christ in the redemption of man reveals how much the atonement costs God.

Sensing in some degree what it costs God, the phrase, "God is Love," becomes more meaningful to the religiously minded person. There is observed a love that destroys a system wherein legalism and rationalism would incorporate the relationship between God and man. This divine love is not called forth by anything outside itself. Its character is defined by the Cross. Although the divine love is most easily perceived in the Cross, it appears there at

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1. Aulen: Christus Victor, p. 170.

the same time as most incomprehensible.

Dr. Aulen goes further on this theme by saying that divine love itself is the sovereign power in creation for God's power cannot be separated from His love. With this in mind it is not God's "omnipotence" this is observed as the cause of the divine will and its action but the sovereignty of God's love. Therefore, God's "unchangeableness" is not an abstract passivity but an expression of love's sovereign steadfastness. God's omnipresence is not deistic transcendence or pantheistic immanence, but the sovereignty of love in relation to space. God's omniscience is not abstract foreknowledge, but love's sovereign and penetrating eye to which everything is crystal clear. Even as the sovereignty of God is characterized by love,<sup>1.</sup> so also is the love of God characterized by sovereignty.

### C. Summary and Conclusion

The classic or dramatic view regards the atonement as the outcome of the conflict between Christ and the evil powers which hold men in bondage. Because of Christ's triumph, mankind is delivered from its captors - this is the atonement. It is for this reason that Aulen's position has often been called the "victory motif."

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1. Aulen: Faith of the Christian Church, p. 143.

For purposes of analysis, the Classic Idea can be broken down into two main divisions: the redemption motif, and the two-fold aspect of the reconciliation. The redemption motif states that man is in the grip of hostile powers such as sin, death, Satan, and the wrath of God by which he is kept captive. These powers are, at the same time, executants of God's will, i.e., man is in the hand of these powers as a punishment for sin. In other words, because man has sinned, God has placed him under these powers. However, at this point God comes to man to deliver him from his captors. The initiative is with God - from God to man. In His Son Jesus Christ, God overcomes the hostile powers which hold man in bondage. Therefore, the incarnation and the redemption belong indissolubly together. The work of redemption is accomplished by the Logos through the instrumentality of His humanity. Man's redemption comes through the continuous work of God Himself which is revealed in His deliverance of man from the hostile powers. This is the atonement wherein God reconciles the world unto Himself and salvation is, therefore, the atonement. The redemptive work of Christ has a significant dual aspect in that while God reconciles the world unto Himself, He is also reconciled.

The second division includes the active and passive aspects of reconciliation. The active aspect reveals God reconciling the world unto Himself. Aulen

assumes that in the economy of God, the one who sins comes under the captivity of Satan or the powers of evil. However, in Christ, God delivers mankind from this bondage by force, thereby reconciling the world unto Himself. The passive aspect reveals God reconciling Himself. Since anyone who is under Satan's dominion is under the wrath of God, God's wrath, as a result, becomes one of the hostile powers confronting man. However, as man is delivered from the bondage of Satan, he is also delivered from the realm where he is the object of divine wrath, i.e., he is delivered from the judgment of God and God is reconciled.

In conclusion, it can be said that the classic idea or the dramatic view reveals a complete change in relationships as a result of God's redemptive work. There is a change in the relationship between God and the world and there is a change in God's own attitude - He is said to be reconciled.

CHAPTER III

SCHLEIERMACHER'S CONCEPT OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT  
THE SUBJECTIVE IDEA

### CHAPTER III

#### SCHLEIERMACHER'S CONCEPT OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT THE SUBJECTIVE IDEA

##### A. Introduction

It has been said that "a great man condemns the world to the task of explaining him." Such a statement can be borne out as true when ascribed to Friedrich Schleiermacher. It is with little fear of contradiction that it can be said that he has influenced the thinking in theological circles from the nineteenth century and almost to the present day. His writings have placed him at the center of a theological stage where he is opposed in one way or another by Emil Brunner, Albrecht Ritschl, Karl Barth and others.

Friedrich Daniel Ernest Schleiermacher may rightly be described as the father of modern scientific theology. Schleiermacher's significance in the history of modern philosophical thought lies along two main lines, theology and the theory of knowledge, even though he did influential work in other branches of philosophy such as ethics and aesthetics. In his theory of knowledge his achievement was the development of a type of empirical realism. This revealed the influence of the psychological and logical contributions of Kant.

In theology, however, "...his importance lies in his original development and derivation of theology from subjective religious experience,"<sup>1</sup> in contrast to traditional formulations based upon metaphysical arguments and supernatural revelation.

The life of this controversial figure in theology is ably summed up by Otto Braun:

Schleiermacher was a moral and pedagogic genius. Through his efforts after reform he influenced and advanced his age in the most various spheres more deeply than other thinkers - he was a philosopher in the great sense of the word, as being a man who did not suffer the world to rest at the point where he found it, but who, in striving after the ideal brought it nearer to the ideal of his own creation. His life was guided by ideas, by ideas which he did not obtain from thought and speculation, but which developed themselves before his enquiring eye from the fulness of the world of appearance. Schleiermacher is by no means so consistent a theorist as was Fichte: but he far surpasses him in his delicate penetration of the content of experience with thought and understanding. Thus his philosophy was the more stimulating in its effects, in that it gave form and shape to ideas of permanent worth. Schleiermacher himself did very much to realize his ideal, and to unite idea and actuality in a truly human bond. It was not a school that he founded, but an epoch. He is a great man, for he cannot be replaced. From his writings and deeds there confronts us radiant a pure and complete humanity. In him a cheerful gentleness was combined with active manliness, and both united to form a harmony of the inner man that issued in a selfless devotion to the highest aims. Schleiermacher's greatest work was his own life.<sup>2</sup>

Thus you observe the overpowering influence of Schleiermacher

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1. Richard B. Brandt: The Philosophy of Schleiermacher, p. 1.
2. Otto Braun: Einleitung, p. 99.

upon Otto Braun and others who acclaim the tremendousness of his theological stature. It would be exceedingly interesting to trace the influence of this man up through present-day theology. However, this task, though desirable, lies outside the scope of this paper.

## B. The Subjective Idea

### 1. Theological Position:

More than twenty years after Schleiermacher had issued his "Addresses" of 1821, he published his "Christian Faith" or "Dogmatic." It has been stated that one could no more understand present-day systematic thought without this book - its faults equally with its virtues - than one could understand modern biology without Darwin.

He chose as his point of departure in dogmatic thought, the soul's experience of spiritual life within the Christian Church. This led to his inquiry into the prevailing conditions so as to explain the occurrence of the experience. For Schleiermacher the consciousness of man, within Christianity as without, includes a communal element. It is a consciousness in which he knows himself one with others. This emphasis on the corporate nature of the Christian life is one of his best contributions.

In contrast to traditional orthodoxy and to rationalism, both of which set out from objective general principles and use the deductive method, his personal aim



is to make clear the contents of the pious Christian soul; it is, therefore, subjective in nature. It can be said that his method is basically introspection and not listening to God. He states this quite clearly in the earlier "Soliloquies": "As often as I turn my gaze inward upon my inmost self, I am at once within the domain of eternity."<sup>1</sup> The believer's experience thus becomes something positively given while the theologian's task is to decipher any doctrinal importance in it. Therefore, Schleiermacher's "Dogmatic" is in essence an historical study of the Christian life as experienced since the time of Christ. The task of history by definition would be the giving of an orderly and articulate view of the doctrines received in a specific Church at a specific time. However, Hugh Ross Mackintosh states that:

the "Dogmatic" is supremely interested not in what has been believed, or even in what is believed now, but in what ought to be believed by those to whom God has spoken in Revelation. As a normative discipline it brings a certain standard of truth to bear upon the preaching or the confessions of the Church, and, in the light of this standard - the Word of God - it puts past and present alike on trial.<sup>2</sup>

Schleiermacher reveals that experiences are recognized to have three aspects - feeling, knowing, and doing. Of these three, religious piety belongs to the

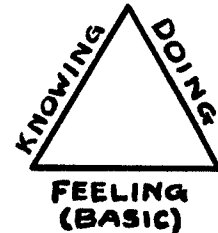
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1. Hugh Ross Mackintosh: Types of Modern Theology, pp. 61-62.
2. Ibid., p. 62.

feeling aspect but is not absolutely excluded from the other two.<sup>1.</sup> The specific feeling he emphasizes is the feeling of absolute dependence.<sup>2.</sup> It is here that religion has its hearth and home and in such feeling it essentially lives and has its being. Knowing and doing have their own place, but it is that of secondary effect. Feelings such as sorrow, joy, or trust in God have and keep their religious character quite apart from any knowledge or action that may come to be attached to them.

The feeling of unconditional or absolute dependence is, as he puts it,

"...the self-identical essence of piety," and the consciousness of be-



ing absolutely dependent is precisely the same thing as the consciousness of being in relation to God.<sup>3.</sup> The question naturally comes - how does he conceive of the origin of this feeling? Schleiermacher would argue that in every moment of consciousness it is possible to distinguish between two elements or factors: a sense of freedom and a sense of constraint, or self-determination and of being determined by things around us. Our human life is an alternating and continuous succession of these two kinds of

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1. Friedrich Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, p. 8.
2. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
3. Ibid., pp. 8-11.

feeling. Man finds that he is never completely subject to his environment, neither is he completely master of it. Yet a region or zone or experience does exist in which he has the sense of being dependent and nothing else. That region is religion.

In this region man is face to face, not with this or that finite object, but with the universal causal reality named "God".<sup>1</sup> The term "God" does not refer to any special reality within the cosmos nor does it refer to the cosmos as a whole, but to the dominant power behind all phenomena. It is this power that imparts to them reality, unity, and meaning. Man cannot have a personal relationship with God because this would detract from man's absolute dependence. Commenting on the feeling of absolute dependence, he writes:

In the first instance, God signifies for us simply that which is the co-determinate in this feeling and to which we trace our being in such a state; and any further content of the idea must be evolved out of this fundamental import.<sup>2</sup>

It is important at this point to relate this doctrine of feeling to Christianity for he did claim himself to be a true Christian. His definition illustrates his position quite well:

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, p. 17.
2. Ibid., p. 17.

Christianity is a monotheistic faith, belonging to the teleological type of religion, and is essentially distinguished from other such faiths by the fact that in it everything has relation to the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that the word "teleological" broadly means ethical. Schleiermacher does place Christ at the center as the Savior but not in the sense that He is God Incarnate.

Christ, as Savior, has made redemption possible which means that man is able to pass from an evil condition to a better condition. It is the escape from "an obstruction or arrest of the vitality of the higher self-consciousness." This position will be developed more fully ~~in the next four sections: the Idea of Sin, Salvation, Christ and Incarnation, and the Concept of God.~~

It is interesting to note that unlike most German Protestant theologians of his time, he constantly refused to permit the difference between Lutheran and Reformed to exert any influence on the handling of the theological system. His "Dogmatic" proceeded on the assumption that no adequate ground could be given for the continued separation of these two branches of the Evangelical Church. He held that the different types of doctrine they represent in no sense flow from different types of Christian

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, p. 52.

feeling, nor are they accompanied by really divergent forms of moral teaching or practice.

## 2. The Idea of Sin.

Schleiermacher's doctrine of sin is not developed on the basis of Scripture but through introspection. He does not frame his doctrine of redemption on the basis of a doctrine of sin intellectually conceived or scripturally revealed. Rather he makes inseparable throughout, his idea of sin-consciousness and the consciousness of redemption as part of an universal God-consciousness. God-consciousness can be defined as the feeling of absolute dependence. Sin itself is an incompleteness of the religious self-consciousness or God-consciousness.<sup>1.</sup>

In his doctrine of sin he finds man to be a religious animal. Man was an animal whose condition was originally perfect.<sup>2.</sup> It was perfect in the sense that it possessed all that was necessary for perfect religious development. The inner pull to God-consciousness is inseparably a part of man's human nature. This pull has found its expression down through history as religion of one kind or another. Schleiermacher postulates that this God-consciousness has the possibility in man to grow or develop

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 259-260,277.
2. Ibid., pp. 244-246.

to full God-consciousness.<sup>1.</sup> This reached its highest manifestation in the man Jesus Christ. An "immediate consciousness of the Deity as He is found in ourself and in the world," is the ultimate of religion, and this religion is given in the nature of man.

Sin is the incompleteness of this religious self-consciousness. However, this religious self-consciousness is never found perfected in any human being. It is always found in relation to or combined with the sensuous consciousness. A non-Christian is one who is subject to this lower consciousness which keeps him from a life dominated by the religious self-consciousness. The natural result for man is a sense of dissatisfaction or pain toward this God-consciousness.<sup>2.</sup> It is more than just a failure on man's part to correspond with his environment; it is a failure to yield to this God-consciousness within him. The trouble is internal and not external. As Schleiermacher clearly states: "The spirit's demand is always the same, the spirit itself, wherever it is less able to work effectively, appears as a baffled and defeated force, and the subject, therefore, as in a state of sin."<sup>3.</sup>

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1. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Reden* (Oman's Trans.), p. 72. Wherefore humanity and religion are closely and indissolubly united. A longing for love, ever satisfied and ever again renewed, forthwith becomes religion. Each man embraces most warmly the person in whom he believes combines all he lacks of a complete manhood. Similarly
2. Schleiermacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 271-272.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

He finds that man is free - free to sin, and this fact makes him responsible for the sin he does.<sup>1.</sup> However, there seems to be a limitation to this freedom for man is unable to overcome sin.. When the God-consciousness becomes supreme in his life it means that he has turned to God and entered into communion with Him. This he attributes not to his own activity, but as the act of God. It is a redemption which comes about by the will of God.<sup>2.</sup>

This redemption proceeds from Jesus Christ and is due to His activity. It is a work of grace which leads to a consciousness of sin. In the state of grace the God-consciousness is gradually diminished as it infills man. Therefore, the doctrine of sin is and always must be determined by the doctrine of grace.<sup>3.</sup>

Schleiermacher insists that to deal properly with sin as a state of man it must always be considered from the standpoint of the personal consciousness. He identifies sin with the consciousness of sin. It exists in all stages of human development and expresses itself as a strife between lower and higher impulses, between the flesh and the spirit. From the beginning man has consciously experienced this

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1 the pious feelings are most holy that express for him existence in the whole of humanity as blessedness in attaining or of need in coming short.

1. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, p. 426.

2. Ibid., p. 426.

3. Ibid., pp. 262-264.

struggle between different powers in his nature, and this consciousness constitutes sin. This sin-consciousness is realized through the contrast between the state of man in which God-consciousness appears and his original, undeveloped sensuous state. Therefore, sin is due to the lack of conformity between the will-power and the judgment.<sup>1.</sup>

It must, however, be remembered that to Schleiermacher, sin must not be regarded as unavoidable. It represents a confusion and hurt in our nature. This reveals in man his need for redemption and it is in relation to redemption that sin is or can be considered. The consciousness of sin is not due to the power or influence of God's law but due to the manifestation of perfectly developed God-consciousness in Jesus Christ. However, even though it is through ones own personal acts that he comes to a personal consciousness of sin, the final ground for it is not in the personal consciousness, but in the race.<sup>2.</sup> This, then, develops into Schleiermacher's discussion of hereditary sin.

He means by hereditary sin a state of sinfulness existent in a man prior to any act of sin. This state of sin is negative in that it consists in an ability to bring the whole nature under the influence of religious feeling. This inability does not amount to incapacity - for that

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1. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, pp.271-273.
2. Ibid., pp. 289-291.



would nullify the work of redemption altogether. Man's nature, therefore, is always capable of good, but is marred by an inability to bring this capacity to fruition. This inability comes from a source outside one's own activities.<sup>1</sup> Guilt becomes the reaction from the acts of sin and not from the natural sinfulness of mankind. This guilt is not wholly individual but the community has its share in it also. So this self-consciousness is always a race-consciousness, and every act of sin is at once caused by others and causes others in its turn. The consciousness of sin is a race-consciousness. However, humanity never loses wholly its God-consciousness nor ceases from striving for it. It can be said therefore that Schleiermacher accepts the doctrine of universal sinfulness but not that of total depravity.

Individual or actual sin is not separated from universal sin-consciousness, even though the guilt is individualized.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. The Idea of Salvation.

It is quite obvious that apart from the redemptive work of Christ, there would be no salvation as the Christian religion uses the term. Salvation, when applied to man, implies that man is saved from something and to

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1. Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, pp. 282-283.  
2. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

something. It is also necessary to have an active agent who makes this salvation possible. This active agent is God, who works in and through Christ's complete God-consciousness. It is this perfect and original God-consciousness that gives to the person of Christ His peculiar worth. Entire redemption would be realized by man if he could attain to this same complete God-consciousness. Man is capable of such attainment because of his original perfection. It is but the restoration of a condition which was forfeited through sin.<sup>1.</sup>

Man can realize redemption by participating in the God-consciousness of Christ, and it is the work of Christ to communicate it. The redemptive work of Christ is through an act of self-communication, and may be studied either objectively from the point of view of His activity or subjectively from the point of view of the receptivity of the redeemed. This provides first of all, his doctrine of redemption and reconciliation; and secondly, his doctrine of the Christian communion or the Christian life.

The consciousness of redemption and reconciliation is made possible through religious fellowship with Christ. Christ's personal perfection gives to the fellowship with Him power to awaken faith. For the believer, it constitutes a state of grace in which all his activities become the ac-

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1. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, pp. 425-430.

tivities of Christ in him. As he works upon one, he contemplates the picture of His life as revealed in Scripture and this arouses him to a conscious sense of need and thereby leads him to accept the gift of God-consciousness which He is ready to give. Even as the personality of the Redeemer Himself is due to the creative act of God wherein God Himself is present in Christ and is the source of His activities, so also the impartation to man's nature of the activity of the Redeemer renews his being and creates within him a new personality.<sup>1.</sup> For Schleiermacher, this means that though a renewed soul may be conscious of sin and imperfection, these are regarded as alien to his true nature and belong to his external relations.<sup>2.</sup> This condition is one of redemption. He describes it as involving an actual liberation from sin, and a cancelling or abolishing of the sinful nature or state.

This work, however, is not accomplished apart from humanity as a whole, for redemption is world-wide. God-consciousness is propagated as men come into spiritual contact with the communion in which it operates. This communion is the Church which was established by Christ. It is in and through the Church that men have experienced the redeeming power of Christ. The resultant new life has its origin in Christ.<sup>3.</sup>

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1. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith., p. 432.  
2. Ibid., p. 431.      3. Ibid., p. 367.

Reconciliation is the taking up of the believer into the peculiar condition of blessedness which Christ Himself enjoys. This implies a change in attitude towards the world and sin. This blessedness consists in freedom from and power over the evils of the flesh. Each conflict with evil stirs up within man the higher powers of his God-consciousness, which in turn makes possible greater God-consciousness. Sin becomes a necessity in making redemption possible. Therefore, for the believer, communion with Christ implies a new power over sin and evil. The old Adam is put away; sin is forgiven, and punishment is no longer feared. The attainment of such forgiveness does not mean that evil is no longer experienced but that evil is no longer looked upon as the punishment of sin.

To Schleiermacher, the sufferings of Christ are not really essential to His work as Savior, though they play their part in it. Their function is to reveal Christ's complete devotion to the needs of men and to the work of the Kingdom of God. Christ was to reveal the perfection of His blessedness through His endurance of the extreme consequences of His resistance to evil. It is obvious that Schleiermacher's conception of reconciliation is truly his own and conditioned by his subjective view of the work of redemption through Christ.<sup>1.</sup>

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1. Cf. Ritschl, A.; Justification and Reconciliation, p. 474. Ritschl criticizes his position with the following: "What

#### 4. The Christ and Incarnation.

Whether we prefer to call Christ the Redeemer, or to regard Him as the one in Whom the creation of human nature, which up to this point had existed only in a provisional state, was perfected, each of these points of view means only that we ascribe to Him a peculiar activity, and that in connection with a peculiar spiritual content of His activity.<sup>1</sup>

With these words Schleiermacher opens his first division on the person and work of Christ. In any study of Christian theology one is always anxious to see the author's teaching or doctrine of the person of Christ. On this, everything the author may propound is dependent. It is also by this doctrine that the whole is judged. It is, therefore, important to observe carefully this section.

He distinguishes between Jesus Christ and ordinary men, not by any psychological analysis of His person, but by

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he calls reconciliation is reconciliation with evil; what he calls redemption ought in reason to have been called reconciliation with God. For the uplifting of the God-consciousness as a free act of the believer means, teleologically considered, that directing of the will towards the divine and whereby the sin which had previously prevailed is repressed. If, now, this operation of Christ be called redemption, it is not the primary but the secondary element of the process that is brought into prominence. But if in consideration of the chief matter this operation of Christ must be called reconciliation with God, then that abolition of the general consciousness of guilt which is included in this might suitably have been called redemption if it was to be brought into prominence as a characteristic feature. For the removal of actual sin is to be counted on only in a relative measure, even when the general direction of the will seeks the Divine end: on the other hand, with it the reversal of the judgment regarding evil, and therefore redemption from its pressure as the prevailing mode of feeling, must not merely be connected with a will so directed, but also

1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, p. 374.

indicating the control which He has over religious feeling and by the part which He plays in mediating to man the sense of God. Christ is the source of a new spiritual life of communion with God, which is experienced by Christ Himself. This is then imparted to those who enter into fellowship with Him. He is, therefore, an ideal person as well as a historical individual.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian's consciousness of grace is fellowship with God in Christ. In this idea, there are two factors involved - Christ's activity and man's receptivity. Therefore, man's consciousness of grace reveals to him certain conclusions concerning the nature of Christ, and also a certain relation, as mediated by Christ, between grace and the state of sin in the human soul. Grace-consciousness becomes the source of his doctrine of Christ's person as well as Christ's redemptive work.

Christ's peculiar dignity is emphasized by naming Him the archetypal man - the perfect prototype of a humanity which was new and which represented the highest possi-

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must admit of being firmly held. If thus it seems permissible to correct in this fashion Schleiermacher's unfamiliar use of language, in order to make his meaning more intelligible, that meaning amounts to the following: that Christ having in the abiding powerfulness of His God-consciousness given the Being of God in Him to be plainly seen, elicits the like direction of the consciousness towards God in the individuals who surrender themselves to Him."

1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 378-379.

bility of spiritual life under the human form. The uniqueness of His person consists in the fact that He possessed a perfect and unbroken sense of union with God, while He also realized to the full the destiny of man in His character of sinless perfection. Christ was the second Adam -<sup>1.</sup> truly human like the first Adam. However, He differed from him in that He remained sinless and perfect in obedience. From this, He infers the presence in Christ of an inward principle transcending the powers, not only of man as he is, but of man as he was first made.

This transcendent dignity of Christ is explained by a peculiar presence of God in Christ. He was in Christ properly and fully in respect that in Him the higher religious consciousness was absolutely pure and dominant. One can speak of a unique presence of God in Christ in that Christ alone truly mediates all being of God in the world and all revelation of God through the world. Christ bears in Himself the whole creation in which religious consciousness has been sustained and developed. He was the perfectly religious man and the only source of true religion; and through living faith in Him man may also become perfectly religious.

That which is extraordinary in the person of

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1. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, pp.367-369.

Christ can be traced to His origin. For mankind, life is realized in the conjunction of two sets of forces. One of these is heredity and social environment and the other is a divine power that works in all men but at a varying degree of effectiveness. However, in Jesus the influence of heredity entirely disappeared; thus human nature was lifted up in Him to the degree of ideal perfection. This state of perfection kept Him from the evil influences of natural heredity and therefore God could indwell Him fully.<sup>1.</sup>

To Schleiermacher, the perfection of Christ does not necessarily suppose that Jesus should have been conceived in the womb of the Virgin apart from the natural process of generation. To him, the birth of Christ was due to a creative act of God carried out in the same act which made possible the creation of man and that which made possible the regeneration of those who are of the Kingdom of God.<sup>2.</sup>

Christ possesses the same human nature as all men, but He differs from men in possessing also a God-consciousness which constitutes a personal existence of God in Him. His human nature becomes a perfect organ for the indwelling and expression of the divine. His human nature comes from the divine, and therefore it can be said of Him,

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 362-363.
2. Ibid., pp. 404-406.



"In the Redeemer God became man." In other words, he has in Christ a human nature completely filled with the consciousness of God. As a result all His activity is divine activity.<sup>1.</sup>

In the union of the divine and the human natures in Christ, the divine alone is active and the human alone is passive. During this union of the two, every activity is common to both. He and His work are common to both natures and constitute a unity.<sup>2.</sup>

#### 5. The Concept of God.

It is observed that in Schleiermacher's theology, God becomes a distinct unknowable who is limited by the extent to which God-consciousness is effective in man. Man knows God only as related to Himself and to the universe. Of God Himself, man does not possess any objective knowledge. Even if such immediate knowledge of God were possible, it would not be relevant as not springing directly from the religious feeling.

In order to understand the concept of God referred to above, it is necessary to observe his starting point.

Schleiermacher states:

There are three accepted ways of arriving at the divine attributes - the way of removal of limits, the way of

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 385-386.
2. Ibid., pp. 398-409.

negation or denial, and the way of causality. Now it is self-evident that these are by no means homogeneous or coordinate. For in the first two a something apart from God must be posited as an attribute; and this, after it has been freed from all limitations, is ascribed to Him, or else its negation is ascribed to Him; while on the other hand causality stands in the closest connection with the feeling of absolute dependence itself.<sup>1</sup>

This divine causality as the sum total of the natural order is expressed in the phrase, "the divine omnipotence." This puts all finite beings under the divine causality. The divine causality as opposed to the finite and natural is expressed in the phrase, the divine eternity.<sup>2</sup> Man's own consciousness of these relationships is strictly within the world as a whole, and so his consciousness of the divine causation is of that which only finds its expression within the totality of nature. Nature is, in other words, the tangible expression of God. However, there is no necessity for the identification of the two, which would become pantheism. Man's relation to the world is at once one of relative freedom and of relative dependence. He states that since man and the world are absolutely dependent on God, he has in Christ a causality which is both infinite and eternal.<sup>3</sup> To him, God as transcendent is beyond knowledge; however, the fact of His transcendence seems to be regarded as a

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, p. 197.
2. Ibid., p. 201.
3. Ibid., p. 203.

legitimate inference from our consciousness of dependence. Even in dealing with the Divine's attributes, Schleiermacher goes so far as to say:

All attributes which we ascribe to God denote nothing separate in God, but only something separate in the manner in which we refer our feeling of dependence to Him.<sup>1</sup>

God is subject not to man's knowledge but only to his feeling. However, absolute causality, which is the only attribute man can ascribe to God on the ground of feeling, does give him something more than is involved in feeling itself. It refers the world to God as a totality, and finds in Him its immediate cause. It implies an act or state of creation from eternity, and makes His power ultimately responsible for all that is.<sup>2</sup> This power, though, is interpreted in such a way as to make it like unto a force in nature. Schleiermacher is more concerned to have God truly present to the feeling than to be able to frame exact ideas concerning His personality. Therefore, Schleiermacher states in his "Reden" that:

for the enjoyment of communion with God, to attain the highest stage of devotion, and to interpret our own religious feelings to others, there lies on us an almost inevitable necessity of forming a personal conception of the Divine Being.<sup>3</sup>

Doctrine is but a shadow of religious emotions.

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1. Schleiermacher: Glaubenslehre, i, 50.
2. Schleiermacher : The Christian Faith. pp. 201-203.
3. Schleiermacher: Reden, (Oman's Trans.), p. 116.

Due to the widespread use of certain terminology concerning God, Schleiermacher deals with only the terms that seem pertinent to him and views them from his standpoint of religious consciousness. The four attributes that express the general relationship between God and the world are: God as eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. Of the first, Schleiermacher says that man understands God to be an eternal now, a measureless moment of history. This attribute involves the idea of divine changelessness, which makes Him incapable of growth or of non-existence. This divine causality which itself is outside of time, conditions all that is temporal and time itself.<sup>1.</sup> Schleiermacher understands God's omnipresence to be His absolutely unspatial causality which constitutes all that is in space along with space itself. More simply it means that there is no here or there and no above or below for God. To God, space is a form of being and not as it is to man - a specific place. Schleiermacher's standpoint of religious consciousness is clearly realized by his statement that there are no differences in degree of His presence though there may be differences in man's apprehension of Him.<sup>2.</sup>

The third attribute he deals with is God as the Almighty. This implies that the totality of nature, in-

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 203-206.
2. Ibid., pp. 206-211.

cluding space and time, is grounded in the infinite causality of God. This causality of God, as manifested in our sense of dependence, is perfectly expressed in the totality of being and that which happens is the natural result. There is no distinction between God's will and His power. Omnipotence may be described as energy everywhere in action and equal to all possible things. This does not mean that He can do everything, but that He can do anything He pleases. God has placed certain limitations upon Himself as revealed in the granting of freedom to man.<sup>1.</sup>

God is omniscient or all-knowing, which is the absolute spirituality of the divine omnipotence. God knows every individual in relation to the whole of which he is a part, and the whole in relation to every individual which it contains. Man should not use terms which express the human activity in the field of knowledge and make them attributes of God, i.e. memory, experience, contemplation, etc., for they would depict God as He is not.<sup>2.</sup> Schleiermacher adds certain other attributes of lesser significance which are developed in some degree from God-consciousness in man. There are three: unity, infinity and simplicity.<sup>3.</sup> For further explanation concerning these three refer to the footnote reference.

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1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 211-219.
2. Ibid., pp. 219-228.
3. Ibid., pp. 228-232.

It is these main attributes that, according to Schleiermacher, man uses to build up his conception of God. As it has been noticed, the above-mentioned attributes are revealed in God's relation to the world in general; but he develops another relationship, that of God's relation to sin and His redemptive activity. The divine attributes which relate to the consciousness of sin are holiness and justice. The divine attributes which relate to redemption are love and wisdom. These two divisions or types of relationship, namely sin versus grace, exist not apart from one another. These, therefore, come within the sphere of the absolute causality of God. Schleiermacher qualifies this when he says:

So far as sin and grace are antitheses in our self-consciousness, God cannot be thought of as the author of sin in the same sense in which He is author of redemption. But so far as we have no consciousness of grace apart from the consciousness of sin, we must also assert, that to us the being (or state) of sin is ordained with and in subordination to the grace of God.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, God is the author of sin only in the sense that it is included in the scheme of grace. Sin in each one is gradually made to disappear through grace.

The divine attributes are regarded as modes of the divine causality. Schleiermacher has determined that the attributes of holiness and righteousness arise as contrasts from sin and evil. God's holiness is that activity

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1. Schleiermacher: Glaubenslehre, p. 80.

of conscience in all mankind which brings to the conscious mind a realized need for redemption. In other words, God's holiness is reflected by the conscience in man.<sup>1.</sup> So also is God's attribute of righteousness which reveals to the sinner's conscience the connection between sin and evil. Evil is known to be evil through the experience of punishment. Therefore, divine righteousness is the divine causality apprehended as producing the sense of punishment as deserved.<sup>2.</sup>

Further divine attributes are dealt with in his explication of the consciousness of grace. There are two attributes which Schleiermacher relates to redemption as such, God's love and His wisdom. It is through the first that redemption brings us a consciousness of the nature of God. Even though God does reveal Himself apart from redemption it is realized in man as fear. It becomes love only through Christian redemption. It is in Christ that the love of God is manifested and through Christ that the love of man for God is awakened. Schleiermacher's concept of love would make it the regulative principle of God's action in regard to men, and in a lesser degree of all His action. And this love of God has its supreme manifestation in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. In relation to sin of men,

. . . . .

1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 341-345.
2. Ibid., pp. 345-353.

love becomes grace and fulfills its main end in Salvation.<sup>1.</sup>

The second attribute which is related to redemption is that of divine wisdom. "The divine wisdom is the principle which orders and determines the world for the divine self-imparting which is evidenced in redemption."<sup>2.</sup>

This special relationship which is required to justify our positing the divine wisdom as an attribute distinct from the divine omniscience, is found in the connection of wisdom with the divine love. It remains true, however, that the divine omniscience indicates in God precisely the same love as the divine wisdom does, except that the timeless relation involved naturally has for man a two-fold aspect, wisdom being the word that looks forward, omniscience the word that looks backward. God's wisdom man sees by observing the world as God's perfect self-communication, which becomes to our consciousness an increasingly perfect manifestation of His almighty love. From this standpoint the world is a whole in which means and end are not so much isolated but a unity embracing each other. To the Christian the vital key to this wisdom is the redemption as revealed in Christ; and all things in the universe become the redeeming and renewing revelation of God. All things reveal God's divine purposes.<sup>3.</sup>

. . . . .

1. Schleiermacher: The Christian Faith, pp. 727-732.
2. Ibid., pp. 732-737.
3. Ibid., pp. 736-737.



### C. Summary and Conclusion

To Schleiermacher, Christ is the creator of the specifically Christian consciousness, and the ground for its maintenance. He expresses in Himself the absolutely perfect relation to God, because God indwelt fully in Him. Schleiermacher's whole approach to Christ and to the work of Christ among men, is through this Christian consciousness and not from the standpoint of any philosophical system. To Schleiermacher, experience is the whole thing, and all he needed to do was to interpret not only the experience but also the person who was its source and ground. It is observed that the need for redemption and the consciousness of sin becomes the basis for his interpretation. Society becomes the arena wherein Christ creates grace and redemption which become the means toward a new life. Christ is therefore the direct agent for this new life. This is made possible in the sinless perfection of His nature, which enables Him to communicate a similar nature to the consciousness of men.

On the basis of the above, it can be said that Christ is archetypal. This means that He not only originates but also perpetuates a "type" which is the desirable goal of every man. Even though this perfection may never be realized by an individual or the society as a whole, nevertheless, it remains in Himself a constant moral cause. Christ's person is not only transcendent but also immanent and a means for

its propagation. Christ becomes for the Christian the revealer or interpreter not only of God but also of the universe. Christ's power and divinity manifested itself through His moral character and in the perfection of His consciousness of God. These things become the special significance of Christ which express and condition His redeeming activity.

Man's relationship with his interpreter, Christ, makes possible what Schleiermacher refers to as the sense of dependence. This is the general religious feeling of dependence upon God which is presupposed in Christian experience. This relationship makes possible the sense of sin in man, which is the feeling of alienation from God, or of inability to enjoy a constant feeling of right relation to God. This relationship further makes possible the sense of grace. The sense of grace is the feeling of reconciliation to God or of capacity to enjoy a constant feeling of right relation to God resting on the redemptive work of Christ. It is due to Schleiermacher's emphasis on the above three experiences of man that his theology is called a religion of feeling.

To Schleiermacher, redemption is the deliverance of man out of an evil condition. This condition is conceived as one of bondage from which Christ leads him through increased God-consciousness. His doctrine of sin is quite impressive in that it is at once individual as well as racial; as he states, "...in each the work of all, and in

all the work of each." The generations are linked together by sinful solidarity. Sin is stored or funded in humanity and kept in circulation by social influence.

To him doctrines about God are no more than descriptions of man's own feelings. They indicate something specific, not in God but in man. The undivided unity of God may appear as holiness, wisdom, love, etc., but these are but distinguishable shades or modifications in man's God-consciousness or awareness of God. God as disclosed in Christ is God as He truly is. For Schleiermacher, God is the reality that corresponds objectively to the feeling of unqualified dependence, the source from which man and all things derive existence. God is best thought of as the absolute causality of all things. All the attributes of God have their separate expressions stemming from the power of God, except the attribute of love. God's holiness, righteousness, and mercy report themselves to man through our sense of sin while love and wisdom come to be known through man's sense of redeeming grace. Yet to ascribe personality to this power or eternal causality would be, to him, to reduce God to the level of finitude.

Schleiermacher's concept of the atonement does not posit any activity on the part of God toward man, but a reconciliation which is the result of a process that takes place in man, such as conversion. The work of Christ is not thought of as the work of God for man's salvation but for

man He is the perfect Example, the Ideal Man, or the Head of the race. Christ effects a new relationship between God and man in that God now sees man in a new light. It is then activity on the side of mankind toward God rather than the orthodox view which emphasizes God's activity toward and in behalf of man.

CHAPTER IV

A DIAGRAMMATIC COMPARISON  
-OBJECTIVE SUMMARY-

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-OBJECTIVE SUMMARY-

A. Introduction

The studies made on Aulen and Schleiermacher were not meant to be completely comprehensive in nature. They were, however, meant to give a sufficient understanding of their atonement concept so that the reader may receive a workable knowledge of the views these two theologians have expressed.

To fulfill the purpose of this paper, it was found necessary to prepare two conclusions, one objective and the other subjective. The first, as explained below, attempts to present the objective summary; while the second, which follows in chapter five, will express some of the observed weaknesses as well as some of the strong points of each.

In order to meet the need of the student in theology, it was found advisable to construct the objective summary in diagrammatic form. This places before the reader both views at a glance. The diagram is divided into the four main headings of our study: The Idea of Sin, The Idea of Salvation, The Christ and Incarnation, and The Concept of God.

The relationship, between the Classic Idea over

against the Subjective Idea, is revealed in the key questions used under each of the main headings mentioned above. The result is a diagrammatic view of these two important concepts of the atonement, which reveals not only their similarities but also their differences. The column, at the right of the answers under each man, attempts to reduce the view to its simplest form. The word or phrase used finds its intended purpose when they are used as mental hooks for remembering these two views, which are so vital in modern Christian theology. (i.e. Aulen's idea of sin is POWER over against Schleiermacher's view of sin as being INFIRMITY and ENMITY. Cf. diagram.)

B. Diagrammatic Comparison.

AULEN - THE CLASSIC IDEA

IDEA OF SIN	What is Original Sin?	The universality of sin, embracing the will of all mankind.
	What is Actual Sin?	External manifestation of Original Sin.
	What has Sin done to man?	I has enslaved man, placing man in bondage.
	What problem does this situation raise?	How will man be released and restored to Divine fellowship?
	What about guilt?	Consciousness of sin equals guilt. A sense of unworthiness before God.
IDEA OF SALVATION	The initiative in salvation?	From God to Man. God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.
	Whom does man confront?	His enemies (Sin, Satan, Death) -NOT God.
	Whom does Christ confront?	Man's enemies - NOT situation create by man's sin.
	Significance of Christ's death?	His death defeats man's enemies, releases man, & restores him to God.
	Why Did Christ do it? -MOTIVE-	Love.
	Why did Christ do it? -END-	That man may be restored to fellowship with God.
	What is desired action from man?	Faith in Christ and His victorious work.
	What is man's experience?	Freedom in Christ to serve God.
CHRIST & INCARNATION	Who is Jesus Christ?	The righteousness of God manifest in power. Redeemer.
	What is significance of the virgin Birth?	Origin is of Holy Spirit. Atonement is completed Incarnation.
CONCEPT OF GOD	What is meant by "Living God"?	He works redemptively in history to establish release for man.
	What are the attributes of God?	Basically Holiness. Love is the expression of this characteristic.

POWER MOTIF



CLASSIC IDEA		SCHLEIERMACHER - THE SUBJECTIVE IDEA			
sin, embracing and.	SIN AS POWER	Incompleteness of religious self-consciousness. Subject to lower consc.	INFIRMITY & ENMITY		
on of Original Sin.		Subordination of God-consciousness.			
placing man in bondage.		Sin has alienated man from God. Hostility between man and God.			
used and re- lationship?		How to change the mind and attitude of man?			
equals guilt. before God.		The feeling of being separated from God.			
l in Christ re- to Himself.	SALVATION = REDEMPTION CHRIS'S TRIUMPH OVER ENEMIES	From Man to God. Man growing in God-consciousness.	SALVATION = RECONCILIATION MAN'S NEW ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD		
an, Death)		Himself. NOT God.			
situation created		Man. NOT situation created by man's sin.			
s enemies, re- es him to God.		His death is supreme revelation of the love of God; changing man's mind.			
		Love.			
ored to fellow-		That man may receive God-conscious- ness & fellowship. (A new attitude)			
his victorious work.		Repentance-Break with past condition. Faith-Appropriation of C.blessedness.			
serve God.		God-consciousness and blessedness.			
God manifest		PARADOXICAL UNION OF GODHEAD & MANHOOD		Ideal Man - who has perfect God- consciousness.	IDEAL MAN COMPLETE GOD-CON- SCIOUSNESS
rit. Atonement tion.				Christ's virgin birth unnecessary. He was born thru natural procreation.	
y in history to man.	PERSONAL	Realized only in our feeling of Ab- solute Dependence. Beyond knowledge.	IMPERSONAL		
Love is the characteristic.		The attributes we attribute to God are symbols revealing our experience with God.			
MOTIF		STATE OF MIND MOTIF			

CHAPTER V

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS  
-SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION-

## CHAPTER V

### A CRITICAL ANALYSIS -SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION-

#### A. Introduction

As alluded to in the introduction of chapter four, this chapter attempts to evaluate the two views - the Classic Idea and the Subjective Idea. In the process of evaluation it is quite natural that the expressed weak points as well as the strong points are determined by this writer's own convictions. It is for this reason that this chapter has been titled the 'Subjective Summary and Conclusion.'

Aulen and Schleiermacher are evaluated separately for the convenience of the reader. The conclusion attempts to synthesize the two views and thereby reveal their relative atonement value as a combined or 'dual view.'

#### B. The Classic Idea - Aulen

Aulen has made a distinctive contribution to theology in his "Christus Victor." It has given to us a three-fold division of the historic theories of the atonement, the Classic or Dramatic, the Latin or Objective, and the Subjective. He has brought forcibly to our attention the New Testament emphasis on the atonement as the work of God; and the death of Christ as a victory.

As almost every crusader for a particular view, Aulen has selected materials which favor his own view and thereby he overemphasizes sin as power at the expense of sin as guilt. In the work of redemption, Christ triumphs over evil powers, but at the same time He may be said to go in under the divine wrath bearing the burden of punishment. Here it is found that the conflict is within the divine Being itself, therefore, God's love overcomes His wrath. Thus, in delivering man from His own judgment and law, God transcends the order of justice.

This raises a difficulty in that when Christ faces God's wrath, which is God's reaction to man's guilt, He is facing, not a hostile world power, but God. Even though Aulen recognizes this difficulty, he does not do justice to the issues involved when it is treated within the framework of this viewpoint. For it is obvious that when man faces the wrath of God, he is outside the evil powers pattern.

As referred to above, guilt is belittled in man. Guilt is not a power holding man captive, but a charge against man. However, guilt cannot be overcome. The only way to deal with guilt is to meet its claims - this Aulen attempts to do, thereby breaking his pattern. (Cf. "Christus Victor," pp. 51, 73, 131, 134, 135, 138) These passages seem to say that the way God's love overcame His wrath was by meeting its claims. Is this not satisfying the charge

made against man?

The writer feels that Aulen's position is open to attack as making God deal unethically. If man is justly in the hands of Satan because of his sins, then to say that Christ's conquest of the powers of evil constitutes the atonement, is like saying that the prisoner's sentence is met - if one can bind the jailor and set the prisoner free.

If this position is possible several questions would come to mind. Is not this man, who is in jail, still guilty and deserving of punishment? Is it not immoral to deliver this man as long as his guilt is not expiated? Has he any Scriptural right to say that God transcends the order of justice? It is much closer to the Biblical truth to say that the tyrants are overcome when Christ expiates guilt; and that the sufferings of Christ are the cost to God of redeeming man from the situation into which his sins have brought him. May the reader evaluate for himself and see if these things are not true.

#### C. The Subjective Idea - Schleiermacher

Schleiermacher has contributed two important things to Christian theology. These are his insistence on Christ in us and his insistence on the need of repentance and faith. However, outside of these two things, the theology of Schleiermacher has been an irritating "thorn in the flesh" to the truly Christian theologian.

Schleiermacher has done less than justice to the Scriptural view of atonement for he has made room for only a subjective view of reconciliation. It must be remembered that even though man is converted and makes a fresh beginning it does not settle the guilt question. He is still guilty of the sins committed. To disregard guilt as being objective is to violate the scriptural view of the nature of guilt. To disregard guilt as objective is to make God's forgiveness unethical and to do violence to New Testament revelation. (Cf. 2 Cor. 3:21; Rom. 5:11; 3:25,26) Schleiermacher has not done justice to the cross as the basis for forgiveness.

He would say that the life and death of Christ are the means by which God brings about repentance and faith. Good and well, but by this he means that man has now received the mind of Christ; and it is on the basis of the presence of this mind in man that God justifies him. However, this view robs the believer of the basis for the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins. The assurance wherein he knows that God in Christ has dealt completely with all the believer's sin.

Schleiermacher fails to do justice to the New Testament view of the sufferings and death of Christ. He attempts to exhaust the meaning of the sufferings of Christ by claiming that they were what came to Him in the line of His calling. This view does injustice to the New Testament view revealed when Christ speaks of His death as being the

"blood of the covenant," when Paul says, "He made Him to be sin for us," when the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "...a death having taken place for the redemption of transgressions," and Peter writes, "He bare our sins in His body on the tree." Can it not be seen that this goes beyond the line of one's calling?

In the last place, Schleiermacher fails to do justice to the Scriptural view of sin and its consequences. To him sin is basically a state of mind, consciousness of sin, consciousness of guilt, and consciousness of meriting punishment. When the state of mind has changed then sin, guilt, and punishment have vanished. This, however, is contrary to the mind of Scripture, where sins are something objective - debts.

#### D. Summary and Conclusion

It should be carefully noted that neither the Classic Idea nor the Subjective Idea does, by itself, full justice to the Scriptural view of the atonement. This has been noted in the previous two sections of this chapter. It is equally important to note that even when combined, the resultant view does not do justice to the Scriptural view of the atonement.

It is observed that the 'dual view,' Classic Idea and Subjective Idea together, would fail to do justice to the objectiveness of man's guilt. They, therefore, fail

to deal completely with the situation created by man's sin, his rebellion, and his transgression.

It can also be observed that both Aulen and Schleiermacher have something positive to contribute toward the Scriptural view of the atonement. As a 'dual view' they emphasize that through the preaching of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit leads men to trust in Christ as Savior. That whom He justifies God also regenerates, thus implementing the forgiven sinner for life with Himself and thus releasing him from the tyranny of the evil powers.



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