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BE(COM)ING: HUMANKIND AS GIFT AND CALL *

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Fifty-eight years ago Max Scheler, one of the founders of modern philosophical anthropology, wrote: "Man is more of a problem to himself at the present time than ever before in all recorded history. ... the increasing multiplicity of the special sciences that deal with man, valuable as they are, tend to hide his nature more than they reveal it."[1] In 1944, some sixteen years later, Ernst Cassirer comments that even though "no former age was ever in such a favorable position with regard to the sources of our knowledge of human nature," we are still looking for a clue which will provide "real insight into the general character of human culture."[2] In his famous 1958 book, *Irrational Man*,[3] William Barrett looked to existentialism to recover the whole and integral, suffering and dying human being from the abstract image of humankind as logical operators dominant in modern philosophy. However, in a new book William Barrett concludes that the concrete human self was not in fact recovered in existentialism and laments its disappearance in modern thought. He talks of the *Death of the Soul*.[4] I would add: and Elimination of the Body.

The loss of the whole person in science and philosophy is particularly significant and appalling because it reflects the deep malaise of modern culture. In our global village we are all victims surrendering our humanity. Humanity is under siege. Commitment to the Promethean will-to-power and the Faustian will-to-control have seduced us into unlimited exploitation of nature, unlimited technological development and unlimited economic growth. Survival of our planet, humanity as a whole and of each of us as individuals is becoming the issue of our times. In the 1960's and especially the 1970's the environmental movement and the peace movement first raised the cry and called for a "moral commitment to survival."[5] The women's movement and liberation theology have increased our sensitivity to economic, racist and sexual victimization. We have been alerted to the male bias

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1 Scheler, *The Place of Man in Nature*, pp. 4, 6.

2 Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*, p. 40.

3 New York: Doubleday, 1958.

4 New York: Doubleday, 1986.

5 Richard Falk, *This Endangered Planet* (New York: Random House, 1971). See also among many others, Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), Barry Commoner, *Science and Survival* (New York: Viking, 1967), Samuel Mines, *The Last Days of Mankind: Ecological Survival or Extinction* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1971), Paul Ehrlich and Richard Harriman, *How To Be a Survivor: A Plan to Save Spaceship Earth* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1971), Robert Heilbroner, *Inquiry into the Human Prospect* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974), Theodore Roszak, *Person/Planet* (New York: Doubleday, 1978) Jonathan Schell, *The Fate of the Earth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982).

not only in culture but in science itself and a change is called for which can be compared to Copernicus shattering our geocentricity. Recently fear of radiation leaks and terrorist bombings are turning the survival mentality into an obsession for all of us.[6] The deepest need is the need to survive. Coping is the modern buzz-word. Even Christopher Lasch, famous for his indignant outcry against The Culture of Narcissism, now recognizes that the human self is an endangered species and makes an impassioned plea in his latest book for survival of The Minimal Self. Humanity, it seems clear, is still in search of self.[7] No wonder, that in a time in which we have never been more interested in the future, we face it with less hope.

In our present disenchantment a growing chorus of voices are calling for a reenvisioning of what it means to be human leading to a reenchantment with the world.[8] We need, it is said, a global commitment to look at our ways, admit mistakes and change. Although much has changed in our modern world, our dominant ways of looking at what it means to be human have not fundamentally changed in the modern period. We have become victims of the Cartesian-Kantian reduction of the human person to an intellect that registers sense-data and seeks through scientific reasoning and experimentation to subjugate an alien cosmos. "The rift between ourselves and the cosmos — between subject and object — is, then, one troubling legacy that the seventeenth century bequeathed to us."[9] Only new worldviews, it is said, can save our world from total collapse.[10]

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[6] Christopher Lasch documents "The Survival Mentality" in abundant detail in *The Minimal Self* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984), ch. 2.

[7] In 1933 Carl Jung published *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (New York: Hartcourt, Brace & Co.). In 1953 Rollo May wrote *Man's Search for Himself* (New York: Dell Publishing). In 1982 John Macquarrie entitled his anthropology, *In Search of Humanity* (London: SCM Press) and Marianne Micks wrote *Our Search of Identity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press). And in 1985 Wolfhart Pannenberg published his comprehensive anthropology under the title *Anthropology in Theological Perspective* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press).

[8] See Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981).

[9] Barrett, p. 11. Gregory Bateson calls this rift, "the strange dualistic epistemology characteristic of Occidental civilization" in his book, *Steps Toward an Ecology of the Mind* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1974).

[10] The number of voices calling for radical change is remarkable not only in number but especially in the diversity both of the angles of approach and in the suggested solutions. Some of the books which have caught my eye include Theodore Roszak, *Unfinished Animal* (New York: Harper & Row , 1975) and *Person/Planet*, Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave* (New York: William Morrow, 1980), Dorothy Dinnerstein, *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and the Human Malaise* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973) and *The Guide For the Perplexed* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), William Irwin Thomson, *At the Edge of History: Speculations on the Transformation of Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), Jeremy Rifkin, *Entropy: A New World View* (New York: Viking, 1980), David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), F. Capra, *The Turning Point: Science, Society and the Rising Culture* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), Matthew Fox, *Compassion and Original Blessing* (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1982), Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World*, Douglas Sloan, *Insight-Imagination: The Emancipation of Thought and the Modern World* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983).

In this essay I do not intend to add to the many impassioned and persuasive pleas for the need to change. Personally I am convinced that it is our underlying commitment to a Cartesian view of the human self as an isolated, presupposition-less, body-less, a-historical mind over against the to-be-mastered object which has brought our world to the brink of destruction. I take the need for a new worldview to be clear and urgent. In our quest for wisdom and survival, we do need what Matthew Fox calls a "new religious paradigm."[11] In this context, as a matter of global survival, we need the courage to risk a new visioning of what it means to be human which brings together in a fitting, unified way the many dimensions of being human. We need an "ecology of the spirit."[12] a revival of the "soul," and a recovery of the "body." It is that urgency which leads me to present my developing perspective even though I am well aware of its lacunae. In my view there are at least seven prime features of being human which deserve equal billing. Each of these to me appears indispensable, simultaneously and interdependently playing its role in the whole. It is true that existentially, according to stage of life and historical development, one or more features will usually stand out or require emphasis for a certain period. But even then tacit awareness of the other features is necessary to avoid distortion of the whole.

In my efforts to form a vision of what it means to be human, I am led by two guiding concerns. First of all, I seek a perspective which will help us gain a sense of wholeness in the complexity of our multi-dimensional existence as individual identities, selves persisting and struggling for wholeness and meaning in community. I aspire to a vision of humankind which does justice to all of us as existentially alive, concrete human persons, emoting, cogitating, imagining, pulsating men and women, each with our own intricate network of relations and interconnections. And, secondly, I seek an heuristic vision of human existence that provides orientation and direction so that human life can break out and be lived in all its fullness. I yearn for a liberating vision which not only enhances human survival, but a view which promotes a social revolution extending the full dignities of personhood to all peoples regardless of race, sex, creed and lifestyle. In brief, I seek a view which frees the "transcendent powers of the personality from the dead hand of the culture's secular and religious orthodoxies."[13]

These two concerns are also, I believe, the criteria of adequacy for any anthropological model: what is the scope of its explanatory power to embrace appropriately all the experienced modes of being human; and what is its emancipatory potential for human growth, fulfillment and cosmic survival.

To achieve a sense of human wholeness while doing justice to human complexity, I want to apply what we have learned from Gestalt psychology about the part-whole relation.[14] A sense of the whole is required in order to make sense of the parts. A whole is an organized and integrated unity of

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11 Matthew Fox, *Original Blessing* (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1983), p. 9.

12 Roszak, *The Unfinished Animal*, p. 43.

13 *Ibid*., p. 6

14 For discussion of the whole-part relation, see Hendrik Hart, *Understanding Our World* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), pp. 211-221.

parts rather than a collection or aggregation of bits stitched together. It means that we do not follow in the train of modern empiricism and add part to part to part to arrive at a whole. Mind is not à la Hume an aggregate of sense impressions nor am I a mere sequence of acts or an empirical coincidence of qualities. The human person is an integrally organized and differentiated whole rather than a collection of parts or an aggregate of features. Consequently we do not arrive at a total view of being human by a process of adding together the various features of being human. It is the human structure as a whole which both integrates the constituent features and determines the functioning of its many parts, making the parts human parts. This means that a focus on any one feature will unavoidably have a certain conceptual one-sidedness and historical specificity which immediately invites expansion and correction, requiring both the complementation of knowledge about other relevant features in the total human gestalt and attention to the historical context.

At the same time, although the parts are dependent on the whole and can only be comprehended in terms of the whole, they also constitute the whole. There is no whole apart from the parts. "When focusing on a whole, we are subsidiarily aware of its parts."[15] Each part makes its own special and necessary contribution to the whole. Since all of the parts have their unique and irreducible place within the total pattern of coherence and unity, ignoring or playing down any one of the features distorts and obscures the whole as well as each of the constituent features. Thus, focusing on the unique character of various parts provides a series of windows into the character of the whole — provided our comprehension of the parts takes place in terms of a gestalt of the whole.

This understanding of the part-whole relation is of immediate reference to any attempt at delineating the nature of being human. Analytic, left hemispheric definitions with clear-cut concepts which grasp, isolate and restrict the essence of a thing by separating, excluding and reducing — endemic to modern science — need in our time to be balanced by holistic, right hemispheric, non-reductionist definitions which describe a complex of relations, connections, and interactions. It is this kind of imaginitive, intuitional, perspectival vision which seeks to orient, include and open up rather than confine and close down that I am interested in. Here are my tentative suggestions outlining seven fundamental features which need to be included in any holistic model of what it means to be human.

1. To Be Human is Be(com)ing-Related-in-the-World: Imago Mundi and Imago Dei

Our concern for doing justice to the concrete human self in its context and wholeness dictates that we begin by recognizing that our entire planetary ecosystem is a dynamic and highly integrated cosmic web of living and nonliving forms. Humanity is part of that cosmic whole, only exists in interdependence with all the other creatures of the world and can only come to an understanding of itself in terms of them. As embodied persons, complex

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15 Michael Polanyi, *Personal knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 57.

wholes made up of simpler chemical, organic, psychic sub-systems, we are fully embedded in the delicate and complex processes of nature. Consequently, any adequate description of humankind needs to embrace a solid sense of our interconnected community — our oneness — with all the earth's creatures and with God. Before we explore the differences between human beings and the rest of creation — the modern emphasis which has given rise to an anthropocentrism which sees the human being as the meaning of the world and has served to excuse human exploitation of the non-human world — we need to take the interconnectedness of all created beings — what Max Scheler called "the sympathy of all things" — much more seriously. By nature I am as a person totally, fully, and enduringly related to all of creation, to God, to other persons, and to myself. The monumental significance of this relational feature becomes even more apparent when, as we will notice later, broken connections, alienation and separation from God, ourselves, other people and creation is, in the language of religion, sin and evil.

But to do justice to this universal sympathy or "allurement"[16] of all things is easier said than done for we are still severely hampered by our modern habit, inaugurated by Descartes and Newton, of mechanistic, atomized and isolationist thinking. Instead of beginning with a holistic view stressing the fundamental interconnectedness and interdependence of all things, since the seventeenth century we have been saddled with the internal world of the subjective, a-historical, body-less, sex-less mind separate from the world of extended objects out there. The result is an image of the world as a plurality of machines, and an image of humanity as isolated intellects that objectively register sense-data and describe causal relations without subjective influence. Mastery, control and exploitation are the basic form of human engagement with the world. The whole person, living, dying, relating, struggling, feeling, thinking, promising, imagining, loving has disappeared.

Marx, Freud and Nietzsche, "the three masters of suspicion,"[17] have unmasked the splendid isolation of the Cartesian ego as an impossible, illusory abstraction and twentieth century developments in the theory of relativity and quantum theory have done much to disrupt the Newtonian view of absolute space and time. In fact, in the postmodern holism of physicist David Bohm there is an "implicate order" which is the comprehensive and underlying unity of everything which appears separate and unconnected.[18]

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16 Physicist Brian Swimme, close associate of Matthew Fox, describes the universal property by which all things in the cosmos stick together "allurement" and its activity "love." See *The Universe is a Green Dragon: A Cosmic Creation Story* (Sante Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1985). What Swimme refers to as allurement, I prefer to describe as the dynamic and living Word of God – the Word of Love – which calls creation into being and which holds creation together.

17 Paul Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations* (Evanston: Norhtwestern University Press, 1974), pp. 148–49.

18 David Bohm, *op.cit.* Bohm's insistence on an "implicate order" basically calls into question the modern idea in quantum mechanics that the universe is fundamentally and ultimately indeterminate. Bohm's cosmology would appear to be more in line with the Christian belief that creation possesses an ultimate ground of all order in the Word of the Creator God. See the theme issue of *Zygon* (Vol. 20, June, 1985) on "David Bohm's Implicate Order: Physics, Philosophy and Theology" and especially Ted Peter's essay, "David's Bohm, Postmodernism, and the Divine" (pp. 193–217).

What is abundantly clear in our ecologically conscious era is the need to replace the "imperial self of yesteryear"[19] committed to the conquest of nature with what I will call the "caring self" committed to loving cultivation. We need to be eco-centered rather than anthropocentric. Rather than being "lords and possessors of nature" (Descartes), we are fundamentally in a position of mutuality and interdependence with nature. We are of the earth, creatures among creatures. No mode of action or any way of being in the world is strange to humanity. All the ways of being in the world are ways of being in which humanity participates and shares. Stressing the interdependence of humankind with all other created beings rather than antithesis to the rest of creation is the first requirement of a comprehensive anthropology. The way is then open for a friendly, stewardly and compassionate posture to plants, animals and all of nature rather than a distanced, controlling, and possessive stance. Beginning with the interconnectedness of all creatures, the way is open to describe human uniqueness without anthropocentrism, as a difference without superiority. And connection with God as an intrinsic constituent of being human emerges on the horizon as an intriguing possibility.

Theologically it is of interest to note that the Old Testament scriptures also emphasize the interdependence between humanity and the rest of creation. Yahweh God formed *ha-adam* (the earth-creature) from *ha-adama* (the earth).[20] Animals as well as humans are *nephesh* (living souls). And to both animals and humans, plants are given as food.[21] It is only in this context of interdependence that humans are called to the special task of caring for and "bringing into service" the rest of creation.[22]

The care-taking role to which humankind was called by God points to the special uniqueness of being human. Along with being *imago mundi*, we are also *imago Dei*. According to Genesis, all other creatures were created after their kind. But human beings were created after God's kind. In fashioning the earth creature God made co-partners, co-creators in a covenant of love and blessing for the nurturing of creation. By nature humanity has a special gift and calling to direct creation to its goal and destiny. To be human is to be open beyond creation to the origin, order and destiny of existence.[23]

This "openness to the world" which describes the uniqueness of being human for many modern scholars is attributed by Scheler to the presence in human beings of "spirit" as a center of action. To talk of human beings as "spirit" in this way seems most appropriate since the very term spirit and the ancient terms *ruach*, *pneuma*, *spiritus* and *prana* all connote drive, power, and energy. Talking of human beings as spirit-creatures leads me to my second fundamental feature.

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19 Christopher Lasch, *The Minimal Self*, p. 16.

20 See Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), pp. 78–80.

21 Gen. 1: 30.

22 For the translation of *kabash* in Gen. 1: 28 as "bring into service," I am Indebted to John Stek of Calvin Theological Seminary.

23 Henk Hart, *op.cit.*, p. 279.

2. To Be Human is Be(com)ing a Bodyspirit/Spiritbody

Although humanity exists in basic continuity with all plants, animals and things, human beings are unique in that they function on the physio-chemical, organic, affective, and other levels in specifically human ways in keeping with their holistic structure as persons. This uniqueness, however, although we all experience it, has proved resistant to our best efforts of analysis. It is clear that dualistic efforts to locate human uniqueness in an immortal, rational-moral soul over against a finite physical body are clearly inadequate in view of the experienced psycho-somatic unity of the human person. When my body imbibes too much alcohol, I become drunk. When I am afraid, my heart beats faster. The Dutch anthropologist F.J.J. Buytendijk has even demonstrated that although autonomous processes such as breathing, sleeping and metabolizing are not consciously and intentionally performed, they are definitely the activities of personal selves and reflect in their individual variation the characteristic features of the personalities of the agents.[24]

For these reasons, among others, I also believe that Gilbert Ryle was right to reject the idea of a "ghost in the machine," a mind-substance hidden behind the body. But just as the idea of an isolated, mind-substance runs counter to our ordinary experience, to call "I" merely a shifting "index-word" or "selfhood" an obsolete idea (Gregory Bateson) runs counter to our ordinary experience of ourselves as persisting identities despite and throughout all changes. Somehow, mysterious as it is, the notion of self seems unavoidable even if it is directly given and experienced in human bodiliness. This inner self is not hidden away, but it is the "continuing presence which I myself am, the inescapable centre,"[25] the inalienable self which provides the continuity through all change and development. (That does not mean that the human self is a-historical and immune to change. As we will need to emphasize, the human self is a self-in-process.) Not having this sense of continuity through the passage of time is at the heart of psychosis. It is this inner self which we experience as agent of action, center of choice, reference and intention.[26]

This inner self, as center of the human person, can be called spirit. As spirit, the self is able to examine itself, take distance from all its modes of being, from its will, its passion, its reason, its health. It is as spirit that the self is responsible for all its modes of being and for all its acts of being. And it is as spirit, that the self is able to know itself and be one with all its modes of

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24 F.J.J. Buytendijk, *Prolegomena to an Anthropological Physiology* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1974). See also Vernon Reynolds, *The Biology of Human Action* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman & Co., 1976) and Melvin Konner, *The Tangled Wing. Biological Constraints on the Human Spirit* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982).

25 C.A. Van Peursen, *Body, Soul and Spirit* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 159.

26 In this connection the emergence of the Self Psychology of Heinz Kohut *et al.* in which the self as structure and process is the center of the therapeutic context as a correction to traditional psychoanalytic preoccupation with id and ego is significant. See Heinz Kohut, *The Restoration of Self* (New York: International Universities Press, 1977). And Daniel Stern has published *The Interpersonal World of the Infant* (New York: Basic Books, 1985) in which sense of self is the central theme of a theory which seeks a new synthesis beyond psychoanalysis and developmental psychology.

being. It is the inner self, as agent of action and choice, that is responsible. Often this self has been identified with the rational will, the conscious ego or reason that is required to keep the passions in check. That is a serious mistake. Thinking does not think: I think. The rational ego does not exist as an isolated entity, it is rather the self functioning rationally. The modes of selfhood are many and varied. Thus although we may talk of the rational self as ego, we also have to talk of the physical self, the emotional self, the expressive self, the formative self, etc. In fact, these different selves do not exist. There is the core human self, functioning rationally, energetically, emotionally, expressively, formatively, unconsciously, etc. When we attempt to establish the core of our selfhood in any one of these modes of being human, we are fragmenting our inner coherence, declaring some modes more human and others less human. If we are to retain a sense of wholeness, it is essential that the self not congeal, crystallize or fixate around any particular mode of expression of the self. (As we will need to note later, the very fact that who we are is at the same time a calling who we are to become means that we can fragment ourselves, fail to live out and realize our wholeness.)

Although we ought not to identify the self with its functionings, it is equally mistaken to treat the self as if its exists without its bodily functionings. In the mystery of humanness the inner self is itself and becomes itself in its active functioning. Without thinking, feeling and all the other modes of functional life, I do not exist. It seems as dangerous and mistaken to emphasize too much the distinction between ways of functioning and the inner self as it is to claim that talk of the inner self is simply a convention lacking reality.

It is in this dilemma of wanting to avoid any dualism, but at the same time convinced that being human is more than functional bodiliness, that I suggest that we are helped by utilizing two kinds of descriptions, which could be called "foundational" and "directional." Thus, when we desire to refer to human persons from the viewpoint of their differentiated, multi-functional, positioned existence, we can talk of "body." I am totally body. When we want to refer to human persons from the viewpoint of their unified, intentional, centered, directional, open existence, we can talk of "spirit." I am totally spirit. Each description covers the whole person, but they do so from differing perspectives. Looking at the human person as body is to look so to speak from the outside-in; looking at the human person as spirit is to look so to speak from the inside-out. In this way we avoid the dualism of etherealizing the spirit and debasing the body without in materialist or mechanistic fashion reducing the person to a preprogrammed robot or to a product, a hapless victim of subconscious urges or the socio-economic process. I am not a spirit that has a body. Nor am I a body with an appended spirit. A human being is a bodyspirit, or, if you prefer, a spiritbody.

3. To Be Human is Be(com)ing Co-Human: The Weself

Communality, mutuality, neighborliness, intersubjectivity are constitutive of the very nature of each human person. Being with (Heidegger), being available (Marcel), being open to (rather than simply being alongside or beside) is part and parcel of being human. To be fully person, as Tillich puts it, is to be

fully communal. At the same time, to be fully communal is to be fully personal. An individual person is always an "I" of the "We." Individuation — the Iself — and communality — the weself — are not fundamentally opposed. They are the two sides, so to speak, of the differentiated unity of humanity. Doing injustice to either side distorts the other and destroys the whole. There is no lone self. Every self is a "connective self".

To be locked in myself, out of inner contact with others — loneliness — is against the human grain. At the same time, to be intimate with others requires openness and intimacy with self (identity). Identity and mutuality belong together, mutually complementing and affirming each other. When one member of humanity suffers, all suffer. By virtue of my membership in the human community, I bear some responsibility for all.

In other words, in distinction from any form of individualism in which communal responsibility and social contracts is finally a matter of individual choice, neighborly love is not a choice. It is an inherent dimension of being human. And when we call to mind the all-important holding, seeing and caring of parental figures for the development of the baby's sense of self, it is tempting to see the We of humanity as more basic than the I. However, the first stage of a baby's life even if experienced as symbiotic does not cancel out the reality of two individuals. Nevertheless it certainly is clear that we come to our sense of self-identity (our I-ness) as we recognize the I-ness of others.

Achieving a deeper understanding of the mutual reciprocity of these two sides would, I suggest, greatly benefit us. We would no longer need to continue to play love of self over against love of others. In this long tradition[27] in which eros as selfish love is pitted against agape as self-less love, there are only two possibilities: self-denial for the good of society or self-satisfaction at the expense of society. However, in the We/I structure of humanity, in loving others I am loving myself. In caring for self, I am caring for others. The more I develop a robust, grounded sense of self, the more I am able to relate to others not as threats to self or amplifiers of self but as co-selves in community. Identity as presence-to-self and intimacy as presence-with another is a dialectic dance intrinsic to being co-human. Selfishness is not too much love for self, but too little. That is why I demand and steal from others instead of a mutual sharing and caring which enlarges us all. Commitment to others in this view is not the curtailment of my freedom, but the avenue of my freedom.

4. To Be Human is Be(com)ing Male and Female: Human Bi-Unity

Any discussion of the weself needs to account for the fact that we are human together, as men and women. Humanity is a male/female community of reciprocity, mutuality and co-creation. There are not kinds of human beings but humankind is twofold being: male and female. Men and women belong together: men cannot be defined without reference to women, nor can women be defined without reference to men. There is a natural and mutual

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[27] Anders Nygren's *Agape and Eros* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953) is still the classic presentation of this position.

orientation between men and women, both fully and independently human, and it is in that mutual relationship of belonging that humankind exists. The "who am I?" question receives as one of it's most fundamental answers: "I'm a man." "I'm a woman."

However, for all its importance, the complementarity of male and female has yet to be satisfactorily worked out in our views of being human. There has been an age-old propensity to establish one side of the male/female duality as good and superior and the other as evil and inferior.[28] Philosophically, the West has been dominated by sex-unity and sex-polarity theories which first took definite form in the work of Plato and Aristotle.[29] Plato's body-soul dualism with its devaluation of the body established the sex-unity ("unisex") theory since the soul, as the true nature of the human person, was neither male nor female. Aristotle first articulated a sex-polarity theory by claiming a fundamental superiority for man, based on the lack of heat in the female which meant that she was unable, in distinction from the male, "to concoct" seed from her blood. Through the institutionalization of Aristotle's views at the founding of the University of Paris (women were refused admission!) and the tremendous influence of thinkers as different as Thomas Aquinas and Sigmund Freud, sex-polarity views have been dominant in society into the twentieth century. It is true that since modern philosophy as it developed focused on the formal structure of rationality (with the exception of some extreme misogynists such as Schopenhauer), it has operated largely until the twentieth century as if sexual difference was fundamentally inconsequential to human identity. "Anatomical differences are nothing," for Descartes, "but a matter of accidental implements of the body."[30] At the same time, since it was widely believed that women were inferior to men in their abiltity to reason — rationality generally considered "the male principle" — women were still often discriminated against, albeit in more hidden and subtle forms.

We are presently undergoing a "gathering impulse to break loose from our existing gender arrangements."[31] But even here the traditional approaches persist: Some want to dismiss the matter of sexual differences as only biological[32] and devalue the body,[33] while others insist on male superiority[34] or female superiority.[35] At the same time, sex complementarity views are becoming common in which women are urged to nourish their

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28 See Margaret Mead, *Male and Female* (New York: Mentor, 1955).

29 Prudence Allen has recently traced in comprehensive detail the development of these theories from 750 BC to 1250 AD in *The Concept of Woman* (Montreal: Eden Press, 1985).

30 Karl Stern, *The Flight From Women* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965), p. 14. Stern judges that in Cartesian rationalism we encounter "a pure *masculinization of thought*" (p. 104).

31 Dorothy Dinnerstein, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

32 As, for example, Simone de Beauvoir in the classic *The Second Sex* (New York: Knopf, 1953).

33 As does Shulamith Firestone in *The Dialectic of Sex* (New York: Bantham, 1971).

34 Stephen Goldberg relates male superiority to the hormone testosterone in *The New Inevitability of Patriarchy* (New York: Macmillan, 1953).

35 Ashley Montagu holds to *The Natural Superiority of Woman* (New York: Macmillan, 1953) because of the female chromosomal structure.

animus (masculine principle) and men to nourish their anima (feminine principle),[36] while some promote an androgynous view.[37]

The importance of biological difference for the behavior of men and women is once again attracting much attention because recent studies of gender differences show consistently that boys are more aggressive than girls and because of observed differences between male and female brains.[38] In the last twenty years we have learned about the importance of the process of fetal androgenization which begins eight weeks after conception. Without the influence of androgen, not only would no male genitalia develop, but all brains would be female. The degree of masculinization of sex-organs, the brain and socio/sexual proclivities appears to be directly proportionate to the amount and strength of androgen circulating at the critical period. Further, the sensitivity and amount of androgen seems predetermined by the genetic make-up of father and perhaps mother. In any case androgen secretions at about eight weeks alter the nervous system permanently.

Even though the crucial dynamics of biological sex is becoming clearer, human sexual differentiation as male and female is much more than a matter of biology. At our present state of knowledge we need to talk not only of biological sex (including chromosomal configuration, gonadal sex, sex organs and hormonal, neurological sex), but also of *gender identity* as the basic emotionally grounded core sense of being male and female, and *gender role* as the public, social expression of gender identity; all three integrated in the whole person as sexual being.[39] Our most fundamental sense of being male and female — core gender identity — develops in the psycho-social interaction with our parents in interaction with our biological sex. This socialization process shapes central aspects of our inner selves. In our society men have been socialized to be separate and independent doers; women have been socialized to be connected and dependent nurturers.[40] And at the same time, we are socialized to express our gender identity in gender-related roles: women are nurses, teachers, clerks; men are doctors, professors, managers.

Because the crucial processes of socialization in developing sexual identity have taken place in a global context where women have for centuries been treated as second-class citizens, there is every reason to suspect that the

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36 Carl Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (New York: Meridian, 1956).

37 See June Singer's *Androgyny* (New York: Anchor Books, 1977).

38 For a summary discussion of these matters see Melvin Konner, *op.cit.*, ch. 6. See Eleanor Maccoby and Carol Jacklin, *The Psychology of Sex Differences* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974). One of the most comprehensive discussions of sex differentiation of brain and behavior is "Sexual Dimorphism" edited by Frederick Naftolin and Eleanore Butz in *Science* 211(1981), 1263–1324.

39 See John Money and Patricia Tucker, *Sexual Signatures* (Toronto: Little, Brown & Co., 1975), Laurel Holliday, *The Violent Sex* (Guerneville, Ca.: Bluestocking Books, 1978), and Johanna Krout Tabin, *On the Way to Self* (New York: Columbia Universities Press, 1985), ch. 3, "The Formation of Gender Identity."

40 Lillian Rubin, *Intimate Strangers* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983). Among the host of important works are Karen Horney, *Feminine Psychology* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967), Judith M. Bardwick, *Psychology of Women: A Study of Bio-Cultural Conflicts* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch* (St Albans: Granada Publishing, 1971), Irene Claremont de Castillejo, *Knowing Women* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

division into masculine and feminine roles has more to do with fear of women and oppression of women than any intrinsic masculine or feminine qualities. In fact, I suggest that it is high time that we give up the stereotypical idea that there are "feminine traits" such as intuition, care, cooperation, synthesis, passivity, internality, fragility, tenderness, and "masculine traits" such as logic, duty, mastery, analysis, activity, externality, strength, firmness. Why not consider all of these traits "human traits" which both males and females appropriately may and ought to manifest.

To me there is no doubt that much of modern industrial society, epistemology and science overevaluates the "competitive, analytical, hierarchical, fragmented, external and artificial." In response we need to affirm the "holistic, collective, intuitive, and cooperative, emotional, nurturing, democratic, integrated, internal and natural."[41] The question is whether it is helpful to label the first grouping as "male" and the second group as "female." Such terminology suggests that these characteristics are respectively intrinsic to being male and being female. Jungians may be quick to reply that all men and women have both a masculine and feminine principle. That may be true, but even for Carl Jung, the masculine rational principle predominates in men and the feminine intuitive in women. What about the men who feel predominantly at home in the "female characteristics" and the women who feel predominantly at home in the "male characteristics"? Talking of universal, human traits would certainly be less confusing. It is true that men have developed patriarchal systems of oppression which have marginalized women as well as many important human virtues. But the fundamental problem is not their male sex, but that they were (or are) misguided, fearful, alienated men who have denied parts of themselves. In any case, even though we are far from understanding the meaning of human sexuality, male and female, any new vision of what it means to be human cannot continue to bracket, downplay or ignore its intrinsic significance in the communal experience of being a human self. We need to develop, I believe, a sex-complementarity theory which stresses the equality and unity between the sexes even as it honors the differences.

5. Being Human is Be-coming Human: Being-Toward, In-formation

Since who we are as persons is not once for all given, ready made and static, any anthropological model must be developmental to the core. Human life is dynamic, in process, to be accomplished in its stages from birth to death and beyond death. What and who we are is filled-out — fulfilled — as life moves on. My self as an intentional, self-organizing, responding presence is always in-formation; a being-toward on a course, continually enacting myself anew in a timed course of stages and callings.

In the last fifty years we have learned an immense amount about various aspects of human development. Post-Freudian psychoanalysis has contributed much to our knowledge of the development of the ego as regulative

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[41] See Angela Miles, "Introduction" in *Feminism in Canada* ed. Miles and Geraldine Finn (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1982), p. 13.

principle.[42] Insight into human intellectual development owes much to the Constructivist-developmental theories of Jean Piaget,[43] extended to moral development by Lawrence Kohlberg and to faith development by James Fowler.[44] Behaviorist learning theories (B.F. Skinner, Albert Bandura) have taught us the importance of environmental reinforcement. Maturational theories (Arnold Gesell) have helped us focus on the sequential unfolding of organic processes based on our genetic codes. But we do not yet have a single theory that enables us to encompass satisfactorily all the aspects of development in their interrelation and coherence as dimensions of an integral whole.

In my view, such a comprehensive vision is only possible when we begin from a gestalt of the whole person (developing multi-modally) rather than focusing on the development of various modes of relating (with attempts to achieve the whole cumulatively through an additive process). For, strictly speaking, it is not cognition that develops, or organs, language, morality, or faith. It is the human person as a whole self that develops in successive life-stages, cognitively, organically, lingually, morally, and faithfully. If we see human development in this way as fundamentally development of the self as active agent, center of coherence, affect and intention rather than as the sequential and additive development of various capacities, we have a holistic vision which provides a sense of integration and coherence even as we are able to trace developmental changes in the various modal processes which are always simultaneously present.

Attention to the self as agent-in-process is, in fact, the direction in which both psychoanalysis and developmental psychology are moving. Since in Freud's instinct theory a baby was "all id" and no ego, early psychoanalysis focused on physiological regulation of drives and was unable to account for the intentional agency of every newborn infant. Consequently Melanie Klien condensed Freud's theories about the ego into the first year of life and Rene Spitz talks of the very early existence of ego -nuclei which are later fused into ego.[45] The British object relations theorists also insist that human social relatedness is present from birth and believe "that the human infant is a unitary dynamic whole with ego-potential as its essential quality right from the start."[46] And there is presently the emergence of Self Psychology as a theory which sees the "Self" (as distinct from the ego) as the central developmental principle.[47] Moreover, two important recent books have been published which employ the "self" as a higher order organizing principle on the way to a comprehensive theory of development. Working out Piaget's constructivist-developmental approach, Robert Kegan develops a metapsy-

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42 See Jane Loevinger, *Ego Development* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1976).

43 Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (New York: Free Press, 1932).

44 Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981) and James Fowler, *Stages of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981).

45 Rene Spitz, *The First Year of Life* (New York: International Universities Press, 1965).

46 Harry Guntrip, *Psychoanalytic Theory, Therapy and the Self* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 92.

47 Heinz Kohut, *The Analysis of the Self* (New York: International Universities Press, 1971) and *The Restoration of the Self* (New York: International Universities Press, 1977).

chology of *The Evolving Self*.[48] And infant psychiatrist, Daniel Stern seeks a new synthesis between psychoanalysis and developmental psychology by proposing that "new senses of the self serve as organizing principles of development."[49]

The emerging emphasis on the developing self as active agent is most promising. The changing, developmental nature of human existence combined with the vast meaning-actualizing ability of human persons has often led theorists to deny the perduring be-ing of the human self. Human be-ing, it is said, is an illusion: there is only human be-coming. My doing, it is said, is my being, and my doing continually changes.[50] At best, we should, suggests Alvin Toffler, talk of "serial-selves." But to deny "a continuous, durable, internal structure"[51] to the human self is, I believe a serious mistake. It is true that the *sense* of self develops: but don't we assume from the beginning the presence of a personal agent (a self) that is developing its sense of self? The development of the self is no doubt a process, but it is an active process in which an individual self experiences in ever deepening, diverse and expanded ways the coherence and integrality which he/she already is by virtue of being human. It is also true that I form myself continually and appear only in my enactments, but I know that I was prior to these formations and that I will be antecedent to my acts. And it is only from the viewpoint of the perduring self that I can make sense of my previous experience and look forward to future experience. Without a persisting sense of self there would seem to be no basis for enduring commitments and deep intimacy: "You can't hold me [the present self!] to a promise I [an earlier self] made last year." Again, the necessity of assuming a human self as agent seems clear when we consider that activity as such does not mark the uniqueness of being human. Rather, as Wolfhart Pannenberg concludes after a long discussion of the matter: "*Human* activity presupposes the identity of human beings as subjects."[52]

However undifferentiated and undeveloped a newborn baby may be, its self is present and active, emerging in a way appropriate to the first stages of life. There is, in fact, a growing body of evidence that the fetus not only sees, hears and tastes, but is able to remember and to intentionally react to mother's sleep patterns and emotional moods.[53] Recent studies of early stages of life are beginning to demonstrate with more clarity that already in the first months of life a child experiences an emerging sense of self. At age two to three months infants exhibit self-agency, self-coherence, self-affectivity and self-history. This fourfold sense of self — what Daniel Stern refers to as the

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48 Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.

49 Daniel Stern, *The Interpersonal World of the Infant* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), p. 19.

50 Thus, despite his focus on the self, Robert Kegan still sees the self as a human construction: "This book is about human being as an activity. It is not about the doing which a human does; it is about the doing which a human is" (*op.cit.*, p. 8). And even Daniel Stern seems to see "the self" as a human construction, even though his theory, in my view, is only plausible when the existence of personal agency (not only its potential) is assumed from the beginning.

51 Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Bantam Books, 1970), p. 319.

52 Pannenberg, *op.cit.*, p. 61.

53 See Thomas Verny, *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child* (Toronto: Collins, 1981).

"core sense of self" — is not a "cognitive construct" but an "experiential integration."[54]

At this point, it is clear to me that we need to say both: A human person *be-comes* and a human person *is*. I am in my becoming, and I become in my being. Both are equally and fully true, and both need to be affirmed simultaneously. To suggest symbolically the two sides in their union, I have adopted the practice of writing "be(com)ing." To say that I remain the same person throughout the journey of life is not to say that myself has remained unchanged. To say that my identity has changed is not to say that I do not remain the same. Both are true, both express something of the mystery of being human.

6. Be(com)ing Human is Suffering Alienation and Experiencing Reunion

No comprehensive anthropological vision can ignore or minimize the human experience of disintegration, disconnection and alienation and the need for transformation and reunion. The pernicious and pervasive reality of evil in our day — violence, oppression, despair, exploitation, injustice, inequality, disease — has put the lie to the eighteenth and nineteenth century myth of human progress which taught the gradual but steady elimination of evil. "The pot of human evil seems to be bottomless, an infinite witch's brew sending off poisonous vapors in every generation and always threatening to boil over in universal catastrophe."[55]

Nevertheless, there is still little agreement about the nature of human evil — or about its remedy. Some focus only on human responsibility and guilt for evil, while others see evil as fundamentally a fate that befalls us. Some seek the cause in the inward psyche, while others point at unjust social structures; some see it in the failure of reason to control the bodily passions, while others see it in the repression of these very passions. But such polarities seem unable to do justice to the phenomena of evil. While humankind is certainly responsible for evil and therefore guilty, it is at the same time true that evil is an anterior power "always-already-there ... for which, nevertheless, *I* am responsible."[56] Moreover, as we have already emphasized, to be fully personal is to be fully social and to be fully social is to fully personal. Self and society belong together, reciprocally influencing each other for good or ill.[57] And the idea of a "pure," innately good reason is as illusory and mistaken as the idea that bodily passions and impulses are patently base and evil. Believing in such dualistic tensions between an eternal, pure, agapic soul and a finite, passionate, erotic body have become increasingly implausible as we learn more about the psychosomatic unity of the human person.

However, even when the fundamental unity of the human person is affirmed and embraced, human brokenness is still often explained in terms of

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54 Daniel Stern, *op.cit.*, pp. 69–123.

55 Langdon Gilkey, *Message and Existence* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), p. 115.

56 Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 259.

57 For a discussion of the self/society dilemma, see my "Self or Society: Is There a Choice?", in *Your Better Self: Christianity, Psychology, and Self-Esteem*, ed. Craig Ellison (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983).

the relation of the human mind, self or spirit to the body. Thus, Max Scheler opposes the spirit to the vital impulses and Helmuth Plessner locates the source of human alienation in the opposition of soul and body.[58] Now it is no doubt true that we often experience tension between our inner selves and our bodies. We may try to escape our "bodies" by living in our "heads," or, we indulge the body to escape or tune out the mind. Even aside from the highly questionable legitimacy of a higher soul/lower body distinction, the soul/body difference appears to be a poor choice for the primary locus of evil. We can be broken internally, experiencing a sharp division in our inmost self, or we may experience tension between our conscious self and our subconscious inner self. Sometimes it is true that our internal division reveals itself as hostility between the inner self and the body. But it is just as likely that we can feel alienated internally, even and often especially when we experience strong identification with the body. We can experience the goodness of bodily pleasures as meeting the needs of the self in opposition to our ego-mind or super-ego which tells us: "It feels too good, it must be wrong." The fact that the spirit can take, so to speak, the side of the body as well as be at odds with the body points to a deeper source of brokenness than body-self disparity.

Thus, it is not surprising that the fundamental rupture has been located, as in Marxism, between a person and a person's acts or products. But this suggestion too seems mistaken. We do, of dourse, distinguish between doer and doings, between actor and acts. And we all know that we can feel alienated from our own activities and products. But we also know that we can feel very connected with, very much in our acts and products and nevertheless experience alienation.

The fact that we can experience brokenness irregardless of whether we feel connected or disconnected with our bodies, our acts, or our products, including our institutions, suggests that the fault we experience is deep in our core, expressing itself in a countless variety of ways and forms. The same conclusion suggests itself when we realize that individually and communally we are often wayward, accomplices of evil, inspite of peerless logic, generous impulses and the best of intentions. We experience an alienation in the heart of our being, a rift between me and myself. For that reason Wolfhart Pannenberg concludes that the break is to be viewed "as a conflict between basic factors in the structure of human existence, as an expression of a tension between the centralized organization of human beings and their exocentricity."[59] In its very core, the self is divided: egocentricity versus exocentricity. In exocentricity we are present to the other; in egocentricity we place ourselves over against the other. This tension, according to Pannenberg, becomes a radical evil when the "presence to the other becomes a means by which the ego can dominate the other and assert itself by way of this dominion."[60]

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58 See discussion in Pannenberg, *op.cit.*, p. 80ff.
59 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
60 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

No one who is open to the misery and brokenness in the world and to his/her own brokenness will take issue with the reality of egocentric domination in much of human life. At the same time, Pannenberg's conclusion raises a host of questions. If *egocentricity* is constitutive to being human, are we not in the final analysis concluding that human finitude is itself the root cause of evil? Doesn't this make evil a necessary dimension of our nature as finite creatures? Is the "divided" self to be seen as a necessary, structural given of creation? Do not such views assume a fundamental "deficiency" in human nature from the beginning, that is, in principle, which makes it impossible for us to affirm wholeheartedly the goodness of creaturely being? Is evil, no matter how radical it may be, to be considered as primordial as goodness? Is evil an unavoidable, inevitable feature of creaturely existence rather than a surd in a good creation? If creation is fundamentally flawed from the beginning, how can humanity be held fully reponsible for evil? If evil is as necessary to life as oxygen, does it ultimately make any sense to talk of human freedom and responsibility in respect to evil? If evil is a normal constituent of human existence, rather than a perverse condition, are we not legitimitizing the very evils we are called to fight? And if there is a primordial crack in the foundations of human existence, is there any hope for transformation, any hope for final liberation from evil? These are important and crucial questions — the more so, since Pannenberg's views articulate with care and refinement central convictions of much of contemporary thought.[61]

This series of questions points to a number of concerns which do not appear to receive adequate attention in any view which reads evil back into the creation structure. Is there not something counter-intuitive about affirming that what we are necessarily by nature (egocentric) is what we ought not to be? Moreover, the conviction that non-attachment to self (exocentricity) is the solution to the problem of the self has for me that same contradictory ring.[62] If being human means connection and attachment to self, others, creation, and God, non-attachment seems as undesirable as ultimately impossible if we are to remain fully and genuinely human.

Regarding evil as the inevitable and unavoidable result of a fundamental flaw in creation also runs counter to our experience of responsibility, blame and guilt for sin and evil. We hold ourselves and others responsible when evil is perpetrated, presumably on the presumption that we were free not to do evil. Thus, although we do experience evil as a "general condition from

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[61] Thus, for example, evil is a necessary, if base, part of human existence for the evolutionary dialectics of much liberation theology (see Juan Luis Segundo, *Evolution and Guilt*, Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1974), Jungian thought (see John Sanford, *Evil. The Shadow Side of Reality*, New York: Crossroad, 1982) as well as process thought (see David Griffin, *God Power, and Evil: Process Theodicy*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976).

[62] Pannenberg, as we have noted, deals with the contradictions involved by making the tension between egocentricity and exocentricity the *ontic* nature of humanness. Simultaneously exocentricity both validates and invalidates egocentricity. "But even if human beings are in this sense sinners *by nature*, this does not mean that their nature as human beings is sinful" (p. 107). The cardinal question is whether such a *coincidentia oppositorum* is able to do full justice to creaturely goodness, human freedom and responsibility. See Brian Walsh, "A Critical Review of Pannenberg's *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*" in *Christian Scholar's Review* XV (1986), 247–259.

which we all suffer," we need to correlate this with our "universal experience of an awareness of guilt and responsibility."[63]

To conclude that evil has an intrinsic place in creation not only minimizes human responsibility, but ironically denies the existence of genuine evil as that which ought not to be. Such views seem unable to do justice to evil as demonic, anti-creational, and life-destroying. I suggest that we all know in our hearts that evil — although its presence is irrefutable — has no place in a good creation. "However *radical* evil may be, it cannot be as *primordial* as goodness."[64] We are left with the deeply enigmatic character of evil: non-necessary but omni-present. This situation also seems to emphasize that there is no rational solution to the "problem of evil"[65]: deliverance, forgiveness, redemptive resolution is the only answer!

The contingent, non-necessary but omni-present character of evil has been expressed in the Christian tradition in terms of a good creation which breaks its relation with its Creator in the sin of Adam and Eve. Evil is estrangement from God, self, neighbor and creation, disfigurement of a primordially good creation. Deliverance is seen as the gracious redemption from evil, the restoration to communion with God, self and creation. In contrast to extremes which conceive humanity to be basically good or basically evil, the human predicament is rather more complicated. We were made good and designed for love. At the same time, we perniciously cling to evil, are unwilling and unable to do the good, and need to receive in the Spirit of God deliverance from self, a transforming which re-connects us with God, self, neighbor and the rest of creation.

7. Be(com)ing Human is to Be Gifted/Called by God to Love

A comprehensive description of what it means to be human needs finally to address not only the fundamental discrepancy between what we have become (inclined to all manner of evil) and that for which we are made and destined (lovers of God, self, and creation), but also to grapple with the fundamental human situation of free dependence or dependent freedom. We are free to situate ourselves, yet at the same time, we are being-situated. We can fully honor both features, I believe, if we grasp the fundamental gift/call structure of human life. Life is one hundred percent a gift received; at the same time, it is one hundred percent a call to respond. The two belong

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63 Gilkey, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

64 Paul Ricoeur, *op.cit.*, p. 156. The tremendous difficulties we face in developing an adequate view of evil are well illustrated by the fact that Ricoeur himself, despite his clear intentions to the contrary, works with a view of human "fault" in *Fallible Man* (Chicago: Henry, 1965) which itself comes very close to reading sin and evil into the fundamental human structure. See the Master's thesis of Henry Venema, *Philosophical Anthropology, and the Problem of Evil: An Interpretative Analysis of Paul Ricoeur's Philosophy of Will* (Toronto: Institute for Christian Studies, 1986).

65 See Paul Ricoeur's recent trenchant critique of all attempts at rational theodicies ("Evil: a Challenge to Philosophy and Theology" in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 53[December, 1985], 635–650) and Johan van der Hoeven's fascinating, in-depth discussion with Ricoeur ("The Problem of Evil – Crucible for the Authenticity and Modesty of Philosophizing: In Discussion with Paul Ricoeur" in the *South African Journal of Philosophy* 5[1986], 44–52).

together as two sides of the same coin. Humanity receives its being in its becoming, and realizes its becoming in its being. The human self is simultaneously a gift we are and a calling we become. Thus the title of this paper: Be(com)ing: Humankind as Gift and Call.

To be human is to be gifted/called by God to become co-partners with God in the cosmic ministry of care and healing. The concept of the image of God with which humanity is created (i.e. gifted) and for which humanity is created (i.e. called) gives human life both an identity and a direction. This double-edged gift/call idea of the image of God is important. Whereas much traditional Christian teaching focused on the image as something received and lost, contemporary theologians focus on the image as goal and destination. Talk of image as simultaneously gift and call allows us to do justice to the principal emphasis in the received tradition that we were created in the image of God as well as to the more contemporary emphasis that we are called to become the image of God.

Much of modern theology assumes that an original goodness is irreconcilable with an emphasis on historicity and becoming. I do not accept that assumption. If — and that is my understanding — to be created in the image of God means to be without fault in basic structure, fundamentally sound, rather than complete, arrived and fulfilled, we can talk without contradiction of a good image of God in the beginning which in history moves to completion and fulfillment (aside from any fall from grace or loss of image). In this view, integral to being an image of God is continued development in becoming that image. At the same time, becoming an image is possible because we are the image. In other words, the human task of becoming is not merely a human call or a human achievement, but becoming authentically human is both dependent on following in the direction given by God in principle (i.e. from the beginning) and is a gift received in the becoming.

The emphasis on gift and call enables us to do justice to the process of human self-realization and self-fulfillment without in Enlightenment fashion considering this a process of self-positing and self-creation by human powers alone. Human be(com)ing is both gifted by God and realized by humankind. This is the reality that Martin Buber affirms: "'I have been surrendered' and know at the same time 'it depends on me' ... I must take it upon myself to live both in one, and lived both are one."[66] Instead of the Cartesian "I think: therefore, I am," or the versions of John MacMurray, "I do: therefore, I am,"[67] or Martin Heidegger, "I am thrown: therefore, I am" (*Geworfenheit*)[68], the truth is rather, "I am loved: therefore, I am."

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66 Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Scribner's 1970), p. 144. Merleau Ponty in a similar vein talks of "an antimony of grace," a "turning" where the "real self ... accedes to being constituted out of community with Being" (*Signs*, tran. Richard Mcleary [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964], p. 64). Karl Jaspers gives voice to the same paradox: "*He comes to himself like a gift* ... I am responsible for myself because I will myself in the certainty of this original self-being – and yet I am only given to myself because this self-willing needs something more" (*Philosophy* Vol VII, trans. E.B. Ashton [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970], p. 42).

67 John MacMurray, *The Self as Agent* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 84.

68 Martin Heidegger, *Being and time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 174.

Our fulfilled identities are gifts of God's love because, even as humanly initiated and realized, they are responses to God's intentional call to life and blessing, inspired and informed by the Spirit of Life. Human activity is the means of self-formation, but the direction and plan of the formation is from the Source, Order and Destiny of life. Intrinsic to imaging God is our human, God-like freedom to fill-full creation by directing it in God's Spirit in the way of love and shalom. "I am loved: therefore, I am" declares that we are both made for love and called to be lovers. Humankind is gifted and called to be co-partners with God in the ministry of love and justice. Imaging God involves the shaping and orchestrating of all our talents, all of our resources, all of our private and public life, all of our work and play, according to God's design for love.

The gift/call structure of human existence also means that even though we existentially find ourselves at war with ourselves, unable to fulfill our aspirations and achieve wholeness, we are by nature open to receive what we cannot attain by ourselves. The creative love of God that gifted us with life is also able to re-create us to new life in a way which re-establishes and re-calls us to our human responsibility as co-partners with God. The openness to the gift of God's redeeming love is thus not external to human nature or an addendum, but is an intrinsic possibility because it is for love that we were gifted and designed as creatures in the first place. Being open to God allows us to be open to ourselves (we can accept ourselves in our brokenness), to others (we can reach our, caring and sharing with others) and to all of creation (we can experience our interconnection with all forms of life).

Let me end with a short paragraph circumscription which seeks to capture all seven features in my developing programmatic vision of what it means to be human. Humankind is be(com)ing a love-community, male and female, of personal selves, totally, fully and enduringly related to God, themselves, neighbors and all other creatures, called to become centered persons active on their own behalf who care for creation, nurturing it, in loving co-partnership with God and neighbor in the way of love and shalom. Disconnection and isolation from God, ourselves, other people and creation is sin and evil. Be(com)ing a whole person is experiencing (re)connection with and centering in self (identity), realizing my (re)connection with others (intimacy), realizing my (re)connection with the rest of creation (solidarity), and realizing by root, ground, source, deliverance and healing in the love and grace of God (faith).