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PARADISE UNDERSTOOD

NEW PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS ABOUT HEAVEN

EDITED BY

T. RYAN BYERLY

& ERIC J. SILVERMAN

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T. Ryan Byerly
and Eric J. Silverman

July, 2016

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Introduction

T. Ryan Byerly and Eric J. Silverman

The major theistic religious traditions of Rabbinic Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all agree that there will be a life after death for at least some human persons that will be of an immensely greater quality than the life led by these persons in the here-and-now. It will be a life in which these persons will be bodily resurrected and will attain a degree of closeness to God outstripping any closeness they achieved during earthly life. These traditions agree, we might say, that there is a heaven, or paradise.

But what more might reasonably be said about what life in such a paradise would be like? This is the central question with which this volume is concerned. More specifically, the chapters in this volume aim to systematically explore how the resources of philosophical reflection can enrich our reasonable conception of what life in such a paradise would, could, or will be like.

The authors of these chapters wrestle with questions about human and non-human life in paradise that span the spectrum of the major subfields of philosophical enquiry. They critically examine, for example, the following questions:

- Is there a basic conception about the nature of paradise which can provide guidance for philosophical theorizing about paradise? If so, what is this conception?
- What is reasonable to believe about which epistemic achievements would or could be attained in paradise? Could or would paradisiacal persons be infallible or omniscient, for example?
- Which virtues would be possessed and exercised by human persons in paradise, and could there be growth in paradise with respect to these virtues?
- What would be the emotional and volitional orientation of human persons in paradise toward evil and wrongdoing?

- What would be the social and relational dynamics of paradise? What other members of the paradisiacal community would there be, if any, besides human persons?
- How can bodily resurrection be secured for the human inhabitants of paradise? What implications does such a resurrection have for the ontology of persons, and for metaphysical theorizing more generally?
- What sort of free will could the human inhabitants of paradise possess, and how could they be safeguarded from employing this free will to do wrong?
- Is the kind of life that human persons would attain in paradise good, or desirable? Is it something for which it is reasonable to hope?

By employing both historical and contemporary philosophical resources, the authors of the chapters in this volume together make a pioneering contribution toward answering these and other pressing questions about life in paradise.

It is well known in the professional philosophical community that over the past several decades there has been an increasing number of attempts to pursue projects of the same basic kind as that pursued in this volume—namely, projects which aim to employ the resources of philosophical reflection to make progress in answering questions arising within theological traditions. Much of this work has been conducted under the guise of analytic philosophy of religion, philosophical theology, or analytic theology. Topics explored in this burgeoning area of research have included the nature and existence of God, the problem of evil, the rationality of religious belief, religion and morality, and—of special interest to the project of this volume—the afterlife.[1]

Notably, however, recent philosophical work on the traditionally more positive side of the afterlife as it is envisioned within theistic religious traditions has tended to focus on only a select, narrow range of topics. Three topics, in particular, have received considerable attention. First, a significant literature has emerged engaging with the so-called boredom objection to heaven. This objection, best known to contemporary philosophers through the work of Bernard Williams (1973), argues that the conception of paradise required by major theistic religious traditions is incoherent. An everlasting life could not be a supremely happy life, because such a life would inevitably become boring. Second, a growing literature is examining the question of how human persons could possess free will in paradise, given that, on the conception of paradise required by certain theistic religious traditions, these persons are supposed to be unable to do wrong in paradise.[2] The third topic is not exclusively

[1] For a more detailed introduction to this development, as well as critical engagement with its prospects, see Crisp and Rea (2009).

[2] See, for example, Sennett (1991), Pawl and Timpe (2009), and Cowan (2012).

concerned with the positive side of the afterlife, necessarily, but certainly is relevant for examining it. It is the topic of the resurrection, which remains a perennial topic of philosophical discussion.[3]

As already indicated, all three of these topics continue to garner attention from professional philosophers. Moreover, all three of them are addressed by chapters in this volume which offer novel approaches to them. For example, the chapters in this volume by Katherin Rogers, Eric Silverman, Jerry Walls, and Richard Swinburne all discuss the boredom objection, offering distinct responses to it. The chapter by Brian Boeninger and Robert Garcia presents a novel puzzle for the most popular contemporary solution to the worry expressed above concerning heavenly freedom, while the chapter by Richard Tamburro provides a detailed discussion of the mechanics whereby God might secure the impeccability of human persons in paradise without threatening their free will. And, the three chapters by Eric Yang and Stephen Davis, Christopher Brown, and Hud Hudson each defend distinct models of the resurrection.

Beyond advancing scholarly discussion of these three topics which have already received significant attention in the philosophical literature, the chapters in this volume also considerably expand the range of questions which have been considered by professional philosophers. The chapters by Jonathan Kvanvig and Ted Poston, for example, embark on uncharted territory concerning the epistemological dimension of paradise. Similarly, the chapters by Rachel Lu, Timothy Pawl and Kevin Timpe, Adam Pelser, and Ryan Byerly all revive interest in topics that received attention by medieval philosophers concerning the qualities of personality that would be possessed by human inhabitants of paradise. The chapters by Robert Audi and by Shawn Graves, Blake Hereth, and Tyler John each apply resources from contemporary social and political philosophy to distinct questions about the social dimensions of paradise. Together, the compilation of chapters assembled here provides a wide-ranging and detailed introduction to philosophically significant topics concerning life in paradise which is sure to serve as a platform for future research on these topics.

The seventeen chapters in this volume were obtained from three sources. During the fall of 2014, the editors invited contributions from seven established scholars with expertise in a diverse range of specializations: Robert Audi, Hud Hudson, Jonathan Kvanvig, Ted Poston, Katherin Rogers, Richard Swinburne, and Jerry Walls. We then added eight more chapters out of about forty that were submitted to a well-advertised competition with a review process that ran through the end of 2014. Lastly, the editors each contributed a chapter to the collection.

[3] For a recent edited collected devoted exclusively to this topic, see Gasser (2010).

Fourteen contributors to the volume participated in a conference workshop at Christopher Newport University in Newport News, VA, during a weekend in April 2015. Twelve papers were presented and four outstanding graduate students—Donald Bungum, Anne Jeffrey, Cameron Domenico Kirk-Giannini, and Daniel Padgett—offered comments on three papers each. After allowing time for post-conference revisions, the papers were gathered and sent out to all contributors to the volume in order to encourage a final round of revisions featuring further interaction between the papers.

Part I of the volume features chapters examining broad assumptions concerning the basic nature of heavenly existence. Eric Silverman's "Conceiving Heaven as a Dynamic Rather than Static Existence" investigates two broad ways an account of heaven can be structured: static and dynamic. The static view of the afterlife portrays heaven as a perfect or timeless unchanging existence. Such views have been common in popular culture going back at least to Mark Twain, but also appear to be held by influential theologians like John Hick. In contrast, dynamic views portray heaven as an active place of dynamic change, continuing progress, and growth. Silverman argues that there are numerous philosophical and religious reasons for preferring dynamic accounts of heaven. One important advantage is that dynamic views have resources to show why heaven could be interesting for all eternity. The nature of a dynamic eternal existence would allow that there could always be new things to learn and experience, especially the ongoing contemplation of the infinite God, resulting in the continual transformation of the blessed. Therefore, objections that an eternal existence would be painfully tedious are well met by dynamic views of heaven.

Katherin Rogers's "Anselmian Meditations on Heaven" offers a broad-ranging discussion of a paradigmatic Western view of heaven as presented by St. Anselm, the influential eleventh and twelfth century theologian who served as archbishop of Canterbury. Anselm's view of heaven as constituted by the ongoing contemplation of God by the blessed in the beatific vision is fairly wellknown. However, while Anselm is sometimes interpreted as offering a "static" account of heaven, which some claim would risk eternal tedium for its inhabitants, Rogers argues that the beatific vision is compatible with simultaneously enjoying other goods such as fellowship with other people and having one's own joy increased by the joy of others in a dynamic way. She also discusses Anselm's less well-known arguments concerning the age of the inhabitants of heaven, free will, and a proof for the existence of heaven. Roughly, Anselm argues that heaven must exist since being in an ideal loving relationship with God is the ultimate goal for which all rational creatures exist, and it is inevitable that at least some rational creatures attain their divinely intended end.

Part II consists of chapters by Ted Poston and Jonathan Kvanvig investigating questions concerning cognitive abilities and achievements in heaven. In

Ted Poston's "Will There Be Skeptics in Heaven?" he investigates the traditional view that a heavenly existence would entail radically improved cognitive abilities for the blessed and asks whether those abilities would be able to defeat classic arguments for global skepticism. Initially, it appears that arguments for global skepticism should work equally well in heaven. For if I cannot prove that I am not really just an isolated Boltzmann's brain floating in space during normal existence, it is difficult to see why the same argument should not raise doubts during heavenly existence. However, Poston argues that heavenly cognition would entail epistemic improvement and confidence that would undermine global skepticism through a second personal perspective type of knowledge, a non-propositional relational kind of knowledge consisting in part of the awareness of God. Therefore, it would be impossible to doubt God's existence in heaven since the blessed would know God within a relationship.

Jonathan Kvanvig's "The Cognitive Dimension of Heavenly Bliss" uses a different starting point from Poston's chapter. Kvanvig investigates possible interpretations of two famous traditional images of improved heavenly cognition: the Thomistic image of knowing God through the beatific vision and New Testament's promise that we will know God fully as we are fully known. What sorts of heavenly epistemic abilities do such images entail? Two interpretations of such images claim that heavenly existence must include human infallibility or even absolute omniscience. Yet Kvanvig rejects these views as incompatible with human finitude which continues into the heavenly existence. Even if the blessed become eternal reflections of the divine image, being such reflections is no reason for thinking that humans take on infinite traits associated with God. Instead, like Poston, Kvanvig posits that a second personal perspective relational kind of knowledge can fulfill the traditional images of improved intimate knowledge of God in heaven without blurring the distinction between finite created beings reflecting the image of the Creator and the Creator Himself.

Part III includes chapters by Rachel Lu and the team of Timothy Pawl and Kevin Timpe investigating the ongoing role that human moral virtues might play in heaven. Lu's "The Virtues in Heaven" begins by examining the views of Cicero and Augustine concerning whether the virtues will continue to exist and play an active role in heaven. For example, Cicero suggests there will be no courage in heaven since there will be no danger. Lu proceeds from examining Cicero's and Augustine's cursory remarks on the topic to examine the systematically developed views of Bonaventure and Aquinas. Aquinas claims that infused versions of the cardinal virtues of justice, fortitude, temperance, and prudence continue to operate in heaven. In contrast, Lu endorses and develops Bonaventure's view that only the virtue of love has an ongoing role for the blessed in paradise. She argues that virtues like justice, fortitude, temperance, and prudence are ordered to earthly ends rather than heavenly ends. Furthermore, even though the

theological virtues of faith and hope have heavenly ends, there is no further role for them in the heavenly experience as their ends will have already been fully realized.

In contrast to Lu's article, Timothy Pawl's and Kevin Timpe's "Paradise and Growing in Virtue" argues that there is good reason to believe that ongoing exercise and development of a broad range of virtues would occur in heaven. For example, the authors argue that while the inhabitants of heaven might possess a perfected disposition of temperance in that they would have no desire at all for intoxication, it would still be possible in heaven to discover more reasons that temperance is important and recognize more types of harm from intoxication, thereby increasing their motivation for temperance. Drawing upon the Augustinian and Thomist virtue traditions they argue that an advantage of their view is that it allows for an important sphere of free will while demonstrating how heaven would never be tedious. They also address a range of objections including the view that there are not sufficient free moral choices in heaven to allow for growth in virtue and the view that the heavenly moral character of the blessed would be incompatible with moral growth.

Part IV includes chapters from Adam Pelser and T. Ryan Byerly addressing how heavenly persons might respond to pains and evils of which they are aware. Pelser's "Heavenly Sadness: On the Value of Negative Emotions in Paradise" argues that despite widespread popular belief to the contrary there is good reason to believe that some painful emotions would occur in heaven. Furthermore, Pelser argues that is possible for an emotion to be painful but good in important ways and compatible with heavenly joy. For example, grief for any loved ones lost in hell would be a good and appropriate painful emotion. Similarly, mourning over our own earthly moral failings and lost opportunities might occur in heaven. Such emotions possess significant epistemic and moral value that would be lost if they could not be experienced in heaven. But, how are such negative emotions compatible with an existence of eternal happiness? Pelser argues that we should reconsider the common view that heavenly happiness consists in unending infinite hedonistic bliss. Instead, the good of heavenly happiness should be understood in a broader *eudaimonistic* way that emphasizes a fuller multifaceted eternal flourishing that is nonetheless compatible with some pain from valuable negative emotions.

T. Ryan Byerly's "Virtues of Repair in Paradise" focuses on virtues of repair, which are virtues that equip their possessors to respond well to wrongdoing. Byerly's aim is to argue that such virtues will be both possessed and exercised by the human inhabitants of paradise in worlds such as our own which contain wrongdoing. He focuses primarily on the virtue of forgivingness. After offering a novel approach to understanding this trait, he argues that theists should affirm that it will be possessed by inhabitants of paradise because its possession makes its possessor better as a person without requiring the presence of

wrongdoing in paradise, and because affirming that it is possessed offers the theist advantages for the task of theodicy. He argues, moreover, that forgivingness will be exercised in paradise in worlds such as our own, where it will be directed toward past wrongs, and perhaps also wrongs committed by persons in hell. One important lesson Byerly wishes to draw from this discussion is that excellent forgiveness, even in the here-and-now, is not a once-and-done affair, but a potentially eternally life-long project of concern for one's offender's moral growth.

Part V consists of two chapters addressing issues raised by social and political philosophy. The part opens with Shawn Graves, Blake Hereth, and Tyler John's "In Defense of Animal Universalism." The team of Graves, Hereth, and John claims that there are compelling arguments for the view that all non-human animals will be present in heaven. For example, they argue that due to God's perfect love, we should expect that He has perfect love toward animals; and if God loves animals perfectly, then He will bring them into heaven. Similarly, they argue that God is perfectly just and it would be unjust and arbitrary for God to exclude animals from heaven. Furthermore, they point out that at least some non-human animals, such as beloved pets, play an important role in human happiness and that if such animals are not present in heaven then some degree of human happiness would be lost. Finally, they address objections to animal universalism such as the claim that it is impossible for animals to survive their deaths and the claim that animals do not have the proper capacities for heavenly activities such as worshipping God.

Robert Audi's "Personhood, Embodiment, and Survival: Speculations on Life after (Biological) Death" addresses questions concerning the potential implications of materiality and personhood for the social dimension of a heavenly afterlife. For example, can we make philosophical sense of the notion that human persons not only survive physical death, but continue to exist in relationships with one another marked by communication, norms, creativity and love? Audi argues that one way to make sense of the afterlife is to speculate that non-embodied personal existence in the Cartesian tradition is a possibility. In such an existence, mental causation could explain the agency of non-embodied immaterial persons. Accordingly, non-embodied persons might enjoy communication and sociality through mental telepathy. Therefore, such persons would be able to communicate and reciprocate ongoing love. Furthermore, the ongoing joy of creativity would be possible for such persons and would be an important way to avoid eternal tedium.

Part VI contains three chapters in the volume on the topic of the resurrection. First, Eric Yang's and Stephen T. Davis's "Composition and the Will of God: Reconsidering Resurrection by Reassembly" seeks to revive what is perhaps the oldest model of the resurrection: resurrection by reassembly. In order to do so, the authors defend a divine will theory of composition, and

argue that if this theory is conjoined with the resurrection by reassembly view, the latter can escape some of the central arguments which have been offered against it. According to the divine will theory of composition, for some xs to compose a y, God must will that they do so. Applied to the resurrection, the parts which formerly composed the body of some human person, S, will only again compose the body of S, if God wills that they do so. Yang and Davis argue that their divine will theory of composition is motivated on grounds independent of its value for addressing the question of the mechanics of the resurrection. Yet, when conjoined with the resurrection by reassembly view, this theory can aid the reassembly theorist in avoiding objections to her view such as the classical problem of the cannibal.

The second chapter on the resurrection is Christopher Brown's "Some Advantages for a Thomistic Solution to the Problem of Personal Identity beyond Death." Brown argues that the metaphysics for human persons defended by Thomas Aquinas allows an account of the resurrection with significant advantages over accounts of the resurrection based upon alternative contemporary views about the metaphysics of human persons, such as compound substance dualism and physicalism. On Aquinas's view, human persons are normally and naturally individual substances composed of matter and soul, which are not themselves substances. During the interim state between death and resurrection, human persons are constituted by their souls alone, and at the resurrection, human persons are again substances composed of matter and soul. Brown argues that this Thomistic view is able to accommodate the doctrine of the resurrection without succumbing to problems facing rival models of the resurrection based upon contemporary theories of human nature. Of special interest are Brown's arguments against gappy existence and fission accounts of the resurrection available to physicalists. Gappy existence views, for their part, fail to accommodate the common Christian commitment to the communion of the saints during the interim period, while fission views threaten to imply either that human persons are resurrected prematurely, or that there is death in heaven when a second fission event occurs.

The third chapter concerning the resurrection is Hud Hudson's "The Resurrection and Hypertime." Hudson argues that a hypertime theory of the resurrection has significant advantages over rival contemporary materialist accounts of the resurrection. On the hypertime theory of the resurrection, the resurrection occurs not in the future, but in the hyperfuture. The hyperfuture is composed of distinct four-dimensional space-time blocks comparable to the four-dimensional space-time block which we often think of as our world. The space-time blocks of the hyperfuture are simply hyper-later than our own space-time block. In one or more of these hyperfuture blocks, or hyperinstants, persons are resurrected. Hudson argues that this account of the resurrection has two significant advantages over other materialist theories of the

resurrection. First, it remains metaphysically neutral concerning the many divisive metaphysical commitments that lead to various problems facing other accounts of the resurrection, such as their theories concerning the metaphysics of composition, temporal gaps, and fissioning. Second, it alone can accommodate data from contemporary science suggesting that our world will not last long enough for resurrected persons to live everlasting future lives.

Part VII contains two chapters concerning the topic of free will in heaven. First, Brian Boeninger's and Robert Garcia's "Resting on Your Laurels: Deserting Desert in Paradise?" presents a novel challenge for the most popular contemporary proposal for how it could be that human persons in heaven exercise significant free will while being unable to sin. According to this latter proposal, the free will that human persons exercise in heaven is derivative free will. That is, the acts performed by persons in paradise are free because they are anchored in free acts that occur prior to paradise. Boeninger and Garcia argue, however, that advocates of this view have yet to show that the kinds of freedom goods which we should expect to occur in paradise can be achieved, given the foregoing account of the nature of free will in paradise. For, the freedom goods that must be achieved in heaven are outweighingly valuable freedom goods. Yet, with some refinements, Boeninger and Garcia argue that the value of an anchored free act cannot exceed that of its anchoring acts. And, the anchoring acts for exercises of free will in heaven, they argue, are not clearly of outweighingly great value.

On the other side of this debate is Richard Tamburro's "The Possibility and Scope of Significant Heavenly Freedom." Tamburro offers a detailed account of how God could ensure that human persons in paradise are unable to sin while continuing to exercise significant freedom. Derivative freedom can be achieved, because the sort of divine intervention necessary to secure the impeccability of human persons in paradise is a foreseeable consequence of the free decision to accept salvation. For, when accepting salvation, one accepts with it one's need for divine assistance, and gives oneself over to divine aid in one's moral transformation in both the proximate and distant future. Moreover, free actions in paradise can be significant, because there are significant choices for paradisiacal persons to make about what kind of people they will become. For example, they may choose between whether to worship God more for God's metaphysical greatness in upholding the cosmos, or more for God's moral excellence.

The final part contains two contributions concerned with the overall goodness or desirability of life in paradise. First, Jerry Walls's "Hume, Happiness, Heaven and Home" argues that the reasons David Hume offered for meeting the prospect of his impending annihilation with serenity were not nearly as persuasive as Hume supposed. As Walls reads the scandal surrounding Hume's death, Hume thought that the prospect of annihilation was not likely to be significantly worse than its alternatives because, if God existed, then

given the evils of our world, God must be amoral. Thus, whatever afterlife God might have planned for human persons was not likely to be significantly better than the life we now know. Walls counters, however, that if God exists, then given that it is part of God-designed human nature to desire happiness, God cannot be amoral; God must either be wicked or must have plans for an afterlife which will be vastly more excellent than the life we now know. Moreover, Walls argues that God could secure an everlastingly excellent afterlife for human persons by, as Jonathan Edwards puts it, creating a paradise of love. On Walls's view, then, it is significantly more reasonable to hope for a God-designed afterlife than Hume believed.

Finally, Richard Swinburne's "Why the Life of Heaven is Supremely Worth Living" completes the volume. Swinburne argues that the conception of heaven found in the writings of the Patristic fathers of the Christian tradition describes a life that is the best kind of life for human beings to live forever. In order to defend this conclusion, Swinburne first enumerates all of those features that make life good to live: knowing important things, having appropriate desires and affections, performing significant actions, and enjoying loving relationships. He then shows that the conception of heaven advocated by Patristic authors is one in which all of these elements of a good life are deepened forever. Along the way, Swinburne also argues that, if God exists, then these elements of a good life are enhanced in the here-and-now. Thus, life, whether now or in heaven, is better if there is a God.

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Part I

The Basic Nature of Paradise

1

Conceiving Heaven as a Dynamic Rather than Static Existence

Eric J. Silverman

Across history and diverse religious traditions there have been varying portrayals of heaven, but one recurring assumption in both popular and academic literature is that various types of change—such as moral, aesthetic, epistemic, and/or relational progress—are no longer possible for the blessed in paradise. Against these conceptions I argue that posthumous moral, aesthetic, epistemic, and relational progress in paradise is compatible with traditional commitments within both Western religion and philosophy concerning the concept of heaven and, furthermore, that there are important advantages in conceiving heaven in this dynamic way.

Dynamic conceptions of paradise have at least the following advantages. First, dynamic views can explain how an eternal existence in paradise could be meaningful and engaging. Accordingly, they address a major concern about heaven raised by Bernard Williams (1973) and others; the fear that an eternal immortal existence would be unbearably tedious. One of the great-making features of heaven would be the ongoing possibility of pursuing and achieving good new moral, aesthetic, epistemic, and relational goals. Third, these views are more coherent with already existent assumptions about life and the afterlife across a variety of Western traditions than static views. Finally, such views can postulate an important continuity uniting both the earthly and heavenly modes of existence: the goal of life in both modes of existence could be to know, unite with, and enjoy God and other humans in ever more perfect ways. The combination of these advantages provides good prima facie reason for preferring dynamic views of paradise.

This thesis is relevant for several other chapters in this volume that presuppose a dynamic rather than static account of the heavenly existence. If there are no reasons for favoring dynamic views over static views, then their arguments—or at least important portions of them—are undermined. For

example, Ryan Byerly's argument (Chapter 8) that the inhabitants of heaven possess the virtue of forgivingness depicts the blessed as potentially resting from contemplating the sublime on occasion as well as growing in virtue. Yet, if heaven is a static existence that fact would entail that growing in virtue is conceptually impossible. Similarly, in Tim Pawl and Kevin Timpe's contribution to this volume (Chapter 6) "Growing in Virtue," heaven is depicted as a place of moral progress, where new moral insights are gained. Robert Audi (Chapter 10) portrays heaven as a place where deeper human forgiveness for and repentance of earthly vices may occur. Furthermore, he portrays the heavenly existence as one where creativity exists and is utilized. Richard Tamburro's discussion (Chapter 15) of the possibility of free will in heaven presupposes a dynamic view. After all, if heaven is static there are no new choices, and if there are no new choices then it is hardly sensible to ask whether there are free choices. The chapter in this volume which comes closest to offering a static view of the afterlife is Katherin Rogers's discussion concerning "Anselmian Meditations on Heaven" (Chapter 2) since Anselm's afterlife consists in the permanent ongoing activity of contemplating the beatific vision. However, she provides good reasons for resisting a strictly static interpretation of Anslem's heaven as participation in the beatific vision may not be incompatible with simultaneously engaging in other ongoing dynamic activities.

1.1. THE STATIC VIEW

What I will refer to as "static views" of heaven are: *conceptions of heaven that portray paradise as a place or state of existence where there is no further moral, aesthetic, epistemological, relational, and other change or progress for the inhabitants of heaven*. The blessed in heaven are as virtuous, happy, and wise as they will ever be. While there are also conceptions of heaven with limited particular static aspects—such as static moral character—that allow for other types of change, in a fully static account of heaven this principle of "no change or progress" in heaven applies not only to moral progress, happiness, and personal fulfillment, but also to epistemic, aesthetic, and even relational progress.[1]

[1] Most of my arguments focus specifically on whether progress from good to better is possible in paradise rather than change more generally. I take it as true by definition that change from better to worse is impossible in paradise. It is likely that change involving no increase or loss of value is possible in the afterlife, but most of my interest is in the possibility of whether progress—positive change representing an improvement in overall value—is possible in heaven. In demonstrating specifically that progress—positive change—is possible in paradise, there is an implicit proof that at least one type of general change is possible in paradise.

This static view has appeared overtly and implicitly in both academic and popular culture. One culturally important popular reference to a static view of heaven occurs in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. The young Huck is taught this unattractive static view of heaven during his conversations with the widow Miss Watson. He explains,

> All I wanted was to go somewheres; all I wanted was a change, I warn't particular. She [Miss Watson] said . . . she was going to live so as to go to the good place [heaven]. Well, I couldn't see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn't try for it . . . she went on and told me all about the good place. She said all a body would have to do there was go around all day long with a harp and sing, forever and ever. So I didn't think much of it. But I never said so. (Twain 1994: 2)

Some contemporary thinkers such as Bernard Williams (1973) agree with Huck Finn's intuition: whether or not they believe in the possibility of heaven they do not find the idea to be particularly attractive. Their conception of heaven brings to mind a blandly pleasant, but unchanging existence that would be boring, tedious, and unsatisfying. Like Huck they value having new places to explore, variety in life, and the personal engagement allowed by interesting changes; therefore, they are repulsed by the idea of engaging in the same monotonous activity for eternity. On Huck's conception of heaven, nothing ever changes, no new goals are reached, no new mysteries are ever resolved, personal growth, and dynamic interpersonal relationships are impossible. Unsurprisingly, Huck—like many in our culture—finds the static conception of heaven to be thoroughly unattractive and judges that there is no advantage in pursuing such an existence.

Another relatively recent reference to a static view of heaven in popular culture is found in the song "Heaven" by the Talking Heads. Its chorus explicitly depicts heaven as a place where nothing ever happens. In an interview with Lisa Miller, David Byrne—a lyricist for the Talking Heads—explains the song's inspiration:

> The traditional Christian imagery we get handed is that no one is ever doing anything. People are lying around on clouds listening to a kind of boring harp music. Even in more Eastern concepts of Enlightenment or Nirvana, in those concepts it's also a thing where nothing really matters. You become disengaged and time stands still. The goal seems to be to attain a state where nothing happens. (Miller 2010: 209)

Miller, a religion columnist for the *Washington Post* expands his point. "All of this seeing God and praising God may be wondrous, but it's static. It doesn't 'get' you anywhere. Christian theologians might argue that in heaven, ambition, competitiveness, drive—and time itself, in which such notions make sense—cease to exist" (Miller 2010: 230). Accordingly, like Byrne, many in contemporary culture seem to believe that heaven would be boring, static, and

pointless because nothing really happens. Without dynamic activity, change, and goals the heavenly existence would be unfulfilling and tedious.

Both Mark Twain's and David Byrne's depictions of heaven as an existence of static unchanging eternal worship, singing, or praise of God appear to come from an influential New Testament image of the afterlife. The *Book of Revelations* offers this depiction of heaven:

> And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say,
>
> "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *is* THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."
>
> And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever . . . (Rev. 4:8–11 NASB)

This passage, along with similar biblical images, seems to be a major cultural source of the image of heaven as static participation in the ongoing worship of God. A popular assumption shared by Twain and Byrne is that the blessed in heaven simply join a crowd of eternal worshippers while all other interests, activities, and relationships cease.

If static views of heaven were limited to popular culture it would be easy to dismiss them as crass metaphors for the afterlife that would never be endorsed by the sophisticated theologian or philosopher. Yet a static view of heaven appears to be held by the influential theologian John Hick. At a critical juncture in his explanation for the existence of evil—the soul-making theodicy—Hick argues that character building in earthly existence requires a dynamic existence in which goals, challenges, setbacks, pain, and suffering occur because paradise must not include such things. He claims:

> Perhaps most important of all, the capacity to love would never be developed, except in a very limited sense of the word, in a world in which there was no such thing as suffering . . . love perhaps expresses itself most fully in mutual giving and helping and sharing in times of difficulty. And it is hard to see how such love could ever be developed in human life, in this its deepest and most valuable form of mutual caring and sharing, except in an environment that has much in common with our own world. It is, in particular, difficult to see how it could ever grow to any extent in a paradise that excluded all suffering. For such love presupposes a 'real life' in which there are obstacles to be overcome, tasks to be performed, goals to be achieved, setbacks to be endured, problems to be solved, dangers to be met; and if the world did not contain the particular obstacles, difficulties, problems and dangers that it does contain, then it would have to contain others instead. (Hick 2010: 325–6)

Some of Hick's claims concerning paradise are uncontroversial. The concept of paradise surely excludes difficulties, suffering, and dangers. Yet his claims

are farther reaching and controversial than they may initially appear. Not only does he claim that paradise would exclude moral progress, but that any existence without suffering necessarily lacks a "real life," "tasks to be performed," "obstacles," or "goals to be achieved." In other words, paradise must be static, without tasks, goals, a real life, or changes of any kind.

For Hick, important types of moral progress cannot occur in heaven since the greater good of allowing superior types of moral progress in this world justifies the existence of evil. If such progress were possible in a paradise the current world's inclusion of evil could not be justified. Furthermore, in order to conceive of heaven as a place where moral progress does not occur, he goes so far as to claim that no goals or tasks of any kind at all would be possible in paradise—that it must not be a "real life"—thereby implying that not only moral progress, but also relational, epistemic, aesthetic, religious, and every other kind of progress is impossible.

Another static account of heaven is offered by the German theologian Ladislaus Boros. Boros's view of the afterlife involves humanity taking on a timeless and therefore changeless existence. As human life culminates in a final decision to embrace or reject God at death an individual enters a timeless and changeless state. He explains:

> The entire movement of our being appears thus to sweep towards a single point of identity. Only at this point where all the threads spun by the strivings of our existence are joined in one tight knot of being, only at this point that we are never allowed to reach except in death—never in life— . . . (Boros 1965: 29)

Part of what explains the permanence of heaven and hell for Boros is that these states represent a final choice expressing the deepest desires of a person's self. It is an ultimate, irrevocable decision through which a person enters her permanent unchanging state. David Brown explains the logic and metaphysics of Boros's view:

> Heaven . . . involves a totally different perspective on time. Man can there partake in God's timelessness, and so it is meaningless to speak of any temporal measure of change . . . All a man's life will be instantaneously and simultaneously present to him. So all the necessary [moral] correctives can be present to him in that same instant. (Brown 1985: 448)

According to such "temporally static" views of heaven, the eternal mode of existence in the afterlife involves a radically different experience of time. In heaven the blessed take on an eternal perspective in that they experience all of life in the eternal present. Accordingly, all their life is eternally and immediately present to them in a way that is incompatible with the temporal experience of sequential ordering. Since temporal sequential ordering is necessary for change, no change of any kind can occur in the timelessness of heaven. After death the blessed become changeless and static in their eternal bliss.

1.2. THE DYNAMIC VIEW OF PARADISE

The alternative to the static view of paradise is the dynamic view. Dynamic views of paradise are: *conceptions of heaven that depict paradise as a place or state of existence where moral, aesthetic, epistemological, relational, and other changes or progress takes place.*[2] Influential thinkers such as Lutheran theologian Henry Eyster Jacobs hold dynamic views of paradise:

> The eternal world is not one of simple attainment, without the prospect of progress. When the Children of God are said to 'rest from their labors,' it is the toil and trouble of this life that are referred to, and not the cessation of works of love or of constant progress in ever new enjoyments of Life Everlasting. . . . But the state into which man is then ushered is one of expectancy of still greater blessings. . . . With man's constantly expanding capacity to know and love and admire, there will be incessant revelations of what Christ, and of what God in Christ is; and with every new revelation, there will be the development within man of new capacities for knowing and loving and admiring. Thus, while the negative side of holiness, freedom from sin, is complete with his entrance into another world, its positive side, or the ever-increasing growth of capacities for new bestowals of grace, ever advances. (Jacobs 2011: 181–2)

Jacobs's view includes at least three dynamic elements in the afterlife. First, the afterlife is dynamic in terms of an ongoing change in the improving exercise of one's moral service centered in love due to "man's constantly expanding capacity to . . . love." Second, there is ongoing improvement in the quality of one's joy of paradise due to an "ever-increasing growth of capacities for new bestowals of grace." And finally, there is the acquisition of new knowledge from "man's constantly expanding capacity to know . . . incessant revelations of . . . what Christ . . . is." Thus, the afterlife is dynamic in multiple ways.

Similarly, Dante Alighieri's famous Thomistic account of paradise includes at least one very important dynamic element. While the central activity in heaven consists in the ongoing meditation upon the divine essence the blessed in heaven are continually changed through that meditation, which in turn allows continual new insights into the divine nature and new experiences of

[2] Someone might mistakenly think that some depiction of heaven might be neither static nor dynamic. For example, Paul Griffiths portrays heaven as a repetitive stasis, wherein the blessed continually repeat the same identical sequence of events as in a song perfectly performed and repeated. Yet, since the static and dynamic categories are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive, there is no third possible category. The puzzle posed by a view such as Griffiths's is which category to place it within. Should it be described as "static," since the individual continually experiences the same non-varied sequence of events, which never progresses beyond itself? Or should the view be categorized as "dynamic," since the individual experiences a progressive, yet repetitive and cyclical, sequence of the exact events eternally? I categorize Griffiths's view as dynamic in a minimalist sense. It is technically dynamic, but lacks the benefits of a more fully dynamic account since it includes serious limitations to its dynamic and progressive potential. See Griffiths (2014).

joy. Near the conclusion of Dante's journey into paradise, the poet offers this description of the dynamic and profound joy of heaven:

> Shorter henceforward will my language fall
> Of what I yet remember, than an infant's
> Who still his tongue doth moisten at the breast.
> Not because more than one unmingled semblance
> Was in the living light on which I looked,
> For it is always what it was before;
> But through the sight, that fortified itself
> In me by looking, one appearance only
> To me was ever changing as I changed. (Alighieri 1997: XXXIII).

Dante's account might initially appear to be static in that the sole ongoing activity in paradise is continual contemplation upon the divine nature. However, the account is actually dynamic in one very important way due to the transforming effects meditation upon the divine nature has on the blessed. The blessed are continually, eternally, dynamically, and profoundly changed through their ongoing meditation upon the divine essence. While the divine essence never changes, its appearance to the blessed is "ever changing" in a progressive way as they are continually transformed by their meditation. While external activity in heaven is static, the ongoing internal changes within the person make this existence dynamic.

1.3. TRADITIONAL COMMITMENTS CONCERNING HEAVEN

How can one adjudicate between the static and dynamic views of paradise? Obviously, an empirical study is impossible. An analytic a priori investigation would require a clear, previously agreed upon definition of paradise. However, concepts of paradise vary greatly enough between traditions and even within particular traditions that we cannot proceed by simply analyzing a lexical definition. Furthermore, there is significant risk of biasing the discussion if we simply stipulate a definition of paradise.

In order to argue for a dynamic view of paradise, I proceed by showing that the common central recurring features associated with paradise do not require a static existence and instead provide reason to expect that the heavenly existence would be dynamic. What are the central recurring features in depictions of paradise? First, paradise is universally depicted as an overwhelmingly good eternal existence. For example, we see this trait in Plato, the Jewish Torah, the New Testament, and the Koran. The view that the heavenly afterlife must be unqualifiedly good is so widely held to that it is virtually

uncontroversial. Common metaphors communicating the overwhelming goodness of paradise include: living alongside the Deity or deities (Plato *Apology* 41a1-c7 and Rev. 4), walking upon streets of gold in a beautiful bejeweled city (Rev. 21–22), communing with renowned heroes (Heb. 11 and Plato *Apology* 41a1-c7), the restoration of a peaceful pastoral existence free of conflict or danger (Koran 9:72, Is. 11, and Gen. 3), receiving an ongoing supernatural revelation uniting one with God (Aquinas ST q. I-II.1–5), etc. Furthermore, the overwhelming goodness of heaven is directly connected to the presence of the divine.

Despite the fact that heaven is universally depicted as overwhelmingly good it is not always clear whether various traditions claim that heaven is an absolutely perfect existence or the best of all possible existences. This issue is important because it offers an intuitive way to argue for a static view of heaven. Classical theists such as St Anselm have thought God's existence as a "perfect being" implies an unchanging immutability for God since any change could only be from perfection to imperfection.[3] Following a similar line of thinking some theologians seem to intuit—though it is rarely actually argued—that the heavenly existence must also be perfect, and if heaven is perfect then no change is possible without introducing some defect into perfection.[4]

According to such "statically perfect" views of heaven there would be nothing left to be done, no challenges left to face, no knowledge left to uncover, no good goals remaining to be achieved, no new experiences to enjoy. If such activities were not yet completed when humans enter heaven, then heaven must be less than fully perfect at least at its inception. While Anselm himself does not make this sort of argument, in the *Proslogion* he does speak of the goods of heaven and assure that all that is wanted is already there: "O those who enjoy this good: what will be theirs, and what will not be theirs! Truly they will have everything they want and nothing they do not want… whatever you love, whatever you long for, it is there" (1996: XXV). It is unclear whether this commits him to a static view of heaven, but a static view is certainly compatible with this type of thinking.[5]

However, there are reasons to doubt that heaven must be absolutely perfect. The fact that many traditions are simply silent on the matter gives some reason to doubt. Furthermore, the concept of an absolutely perfect existence that could not be improved in any way might not even be a coherent possibility for a human being. No matter how good an existence might be for a human, perhaps it could be always improved by the introduction of an

[3] See Anselm (1996), XXV.

[4] Since this sort of argument is rarely explicitly made, it is hard to find an example. Yet these seem to be the concerns grounding static accounts of heaven such as John Hick's.

[5] Katherin Rogers argues that Anselm's views do not constitute a static view of heaven. See Chapter 2, this volume.

additional good. Consider Anselm's claim that the addition of another beloved person in heaven doubles the lover's enjoyment of heaven.[6] If the claim is correct then regardless of how many friends with which one enjoys heaven, paradise might be better still if one more friend were added. And even if all of one's actual friends are present in heaven it is still possible that heaven might have been better if such a person had made more friends during earthly life who went on to share the joy of heaven. Therefore, there may be no such thing as an absolutely perfect heavenly existence for creatures since it might always be the case that heaven could be made even better by the addition of one more blessed friend.[7]

Furthermore, even if heaven is a perfect state or the best of all possible existences for a human, this fact would not necessarily imply that heavenly existence is static. Perhaps the best possible existence includes ongoing enjoyment involving a wide range of creative activities. Therefore, even if heaven is a perfect existence it would not necessarily follow that it would be a static existence. A perfect existence may be compatible with enjoying that existence in a wide variety of ways. Just as people in love typically engage in a wide variety of activities together as part of the ongoing enjoyment of their relationship without suggesting that such variety entails some flaw in their relationship, analogously it is possible that the blessed in heaven enjoy a perfect relationship with God by engaging in a wide variety of activities that are grounded in a relationship with God such as singing, dancing, silent meditation, creating new art dedicated to God, sharing new insights and religious experiences with one another, and so forth. Just as the best existence for a couple in love might be to engage in a wide variety of activities *in each other's presence*, what may distinguish a perfect existence in heaven might be that it is constituted by a wide variety of activities *in the presence of God*. Rather than indicate some flaw within such relationships, variety of activities in both human and divine relationships may indicate a desire to enjoy the many and varied thoroughly good facets of the relationship.

In addition to the great goodness of heaven rooted in the presence of the divine, other important claims about heaven assert that there are extreme limitations on what can enter paradise. Evil, vice, sadness, idolatry, pain, and the like, are all separated from paradise. Various traditions communicate these ideas: "And we shall remove from their breasts any hatred or sense of injury" (Koran 7:43), "They will not hear therein ill speech or commission of sin. But only the saying of 'Peace! Peace'" (Koran 56:25–26), "He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces" (Is. 25:8

[6] See Chapter 2, this volume.

[7] I do not claim that Anselm endorses the view that heaven could always be even better than it is in this way, but only that it is plausible that such a view follows from these other Anselmian commitments.

NASB), "Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed" (Col. 3:5 NASB), "They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat" (Rev. 7:16 NASB), and "There will no longer be any curse... they will see His face... there will no longer be *any* night... and they will reign forever and ever" (Rev. 22:3-5 NASB). Accordingly, along with the affirmation of the overwhelming goodness of paradise due to the presence of the divine two additional themes within concepts of paradise are that nothing morally evil can enter into paradise and that nothing sad, injurious, or painful can enter paradise. These features are among the most central recurring traits associated with depictions of paradise.

1.4. DYNAMIC VIEWS OF HEAVEN AND TRADITIONAL COMMITMENTS

How could an overwhelmingly good eternal existence in the presence of the divinity, which was completely free from evils, harms, or other bad making features occur in a dynamic existence including ongoing change and progress? What sorts of goods or events might constitute a plausible dynamic change during an overwhelmingly good state of affairs, which would not represent an evil state of affairs when unfulfilled?

Dynamic conceptions of paradise can be subdivided into three types: conceptions of paradise depicting it as an existence where changes *external* to the inhabitants of heaven occur, conceptions of heaven depicting it as an existence where changes *internal* to the inhabitants of heaven occur, and conceptions of heaven depicting it as an existence where both types of change occur. For example, consider the good of aesthetic beauty external to the inhabitants of heaven. If no beauty existed within a world, then that lack would constitute a bad state of affairs. Yet a world can possess an abundance of aesthetic goods and be overwhelmingly good without every possible aesthetic good existing. Everything existent in a possible world could be beautiful without every possible beautiful thing existing within that world. Consider a possible world with an abundance of aesthetic goods and nothing ugly, but in which Leonardo Da Vinci's *The Last Supper* has not yet been created. Such a world could be overwhelmingly good, free from all evil, and much better aesthetically than many possible worlds in which *The Last Supper* exists since the existence of an abundance of other aesthetic goods would outweigh the lack of any one particular painting. Yet such a world could be improved by the creation of *The Last Supper*. Therefore, a paradise world might be overwhelmingly good and completely free from evil, but dynamically improved by the introduction of additional finite goods.

Another type of good is that of close relationships with virtuous friends. Indeed, Aristotle calls such relationships the greatest of the external goods.[8] Interpersonal relationships in paradise would necessarily be improved as certain sorts of barriers are removed such as selfish desires and the challenge of limited time. Yet these changes do not imply that relationships suddenly become static. While these barriers to interpersonal relationships would be removed in paradise, relationships could still progress in many ways that are similar to virtuous earthly relationships, through shared time, experience, and ever increasing mutually shared intimate knowledge.

Most importantly, the eternal relationship with God could be dynamic. Even if we presuppose a view of God which would be the least compatible with a dynamic paradise—the view of classical theism that God is eternal, perfect, unchanging, and impassible—it would be possible for the blessed in heaven to have a dynamic relationship with an unchanging God. Most notably, humanity's relationship with the divine could improve over time as the limited human perspective was changed through increased experience and knowledge of God over time. Furthermore, it is possible that finite human moral and epistemic capacities could be expanded and developed in ways that would not represent an evil state of affairs when undeveloped.[9] All these changes would be internal to the individual.

Accordingly, one important goal for the blessed could be to make personal progress in expanding their finite nature to increase the ability to enjoy and understand God. Perhaps, through cooperative grace, time and shared effort with the divine, and service to others human finite abilities to know and enjoy God could be increased even in paradise. Therefore, in addition to pursuing additional finite moral, aesthetic, epistemic, and relational goods, the blessed might seek to increase the capacity to enjoy the infinite source of joy to which they are eternally united.

1.5. THE ADVANTAGES OF DYNAMIC VIEWS

So far we have outlined two families of views of paradise that are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive: static and dynamic accounts. Both views are coherent and are empirically untestable. However, there are important advantages to the dynamic view.

[8] See Aristotle (1999, 1169b).

[9] Imagine the difference between the speeds of an ideal perfected runner who is five feet tall and one who is six feet tall. Each runner might truly be perfect relative to his or her own distinct finite nature, but the taller runner would still be the faster of the two. Analogously, it may be possible to expand the finite aspects of human moral and epistemic capacities.

First, consider the superior explanatory power of dynamic views for demonstrating that an eternal existence can be fulfilling and meaningful. On such accounts paradise can be eternally meaningful because there is always more that can be known and experienced of the infinitely rich being of God. There is always more union with God to be experienced and there is always potential to expand our finite ideally functioning capacities for interacting with God. On accounts of paradise that include an ongoing relationship with God, since the afterlife includes at least one infinite good—God—there is an infinite amount of knowledge, experience of God, and enjoyment of union with God that remains to be gained. This principle is central to the account of the afterlife advocated by Dante.

Furthermore, since other humans in paradise are dynamically growing there is always more depth for developing relationships, knowledge of, and experiences with other finite but dynamically developing human beings. The great good of ongoing developing friendship with virtuous friends can continue. Finally, there might also be an infinite number of new finite goods, such as aesthetic and epistemic goods, to pursue in paradise. Ongoing, increasingly accurate, improving pursuit of these goods requires a dynamic existence. Therefore, even accounts of paradise that lack an infinite good to be pursued in God could be improved by dynamic characteristics. There is no reason to fear boredom, tedium, or meaninglessness in a dynamic paradise.

Accordingly, dynamic views of heaven are well positioned to respond to Bernard Williams's argument against the possibility of a meaningful eternity. He argues that an immortal existence would be ultimately meaningless and result in unbearable tedium. "Immortality, or a state without death, would be meaningless . . . immortality would be, where conceivable at all, intolerable . . . " (Williams 1973: 82). Williams uses an example from the playwright Karel Capek to illustrate his claim. According to Capek's *The Makropulos Affair* Elina Makropulus has lived over 300 years by using an elixir of life. Yet her unnaturally long life is deeply unsatisfying and results in extreme tedium. Williams explains, "Her unending life has come to a state of boredom, indifference, and coldness. Everything is joyless . . . " (Williams 1973: 82). His concern that it might be impossible to avoiding meaninglessness in an eternal existence is significant enough that the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* lists it as one of only two critical issues it engages concerning the concept of heaven.[10]

Williams argues that an utterly engaging ongoing activity would be the only plausible way to keep life meaningful enough to avoid misery and suicide in the long term. He argues that "Nothing less will do for eternity than something that makes boredom *unthinkable*. What could that be? Something that could

[10] See Talbott (2014).

be guaranteed at every moment to be utterly absorbing?" (Williams 1973: 87). While he avoids using the terminology of "hell," the concept of an eternal existence that was so empty, tedious, and joyless that one would consider complete self-destruction to be an attractive alternative might be well classified as a type of damnation.

However, the plausibility of some of Williams's requirements for a bearable eternity is hardly self-evident. For example, why must existence be "guaranteed at every moment to be utterly absorbing?" Why would an existence that was only utterly absorbing at most moments rather than at every moment be intolerable? Most humans fare well enough during regular earthly lifespans despite occasional boredom. Similarly, why wouldn't a merely "absorbing" existence be bearable, why must it be *utterly* absorbing? After all, most humans never attempt suicide during lifestyles that are merely "absorbing" or interesting during normal lifespans.

Perhaps Williams's point is that the nature of eternity dramatically multiplies the negative effects of normal tedium somehow, that if we experience five minutes of tedium in the afterlife it will be more like experiencing five years of tedium in ordinary life. If that is his point, it is difficult to verify whether the claim is correct. Why would humans in an eternal state be more vulnerable to the effects of tedium rather than less? It is certainly plausible that an increase in patience and improved perspective on the insignificance of occasional tedium in light of the largeness and great goodness of heavenly eternity would make humans less vulnerable to the negative effects of tedium. In any case, without further argumentation Williams appears to beg the question by asserting that a bearable eternal existence requires an utterly absorbing activity at every moment.

Even if we accept Williams's claim that a bearable eternity requires something guaranteed at every moment to be utterly absorbing, dynamic views of heaven have an excellent candidate for meeting this demand. The quest for ever increasing enjoyment of union with and knowledge of the infinite loving God is the best possible candidate for a continually meaningful eternity that would be completely immune to boredom. As an infinitely long goal the length of interest it can hold is eternal. As a goal involving an infinitely rich, infinitely interesting relationship it is a goal with an utterly absorbing object. It would be as utterly absorbing as finite human nature allows anything to be continually absorbing.

Unlike a static view of the afterlife positing a similar ultimate good in a perfected relationship with God, the good of an ongoing relationship with God in a dynamic heaven is not merely the ongoing enjoyment of union with and contemplation of the Deity. Additionally, dynamic views of the afterlife allow that one's relationship with God can be eternally improving and changing on the basis of the previous experience of union with God and new knowledge of God. Furthermore, the transformed self would not only have new insights into

God, but would also have new insights into the self's state at previous points in eternity, much as adults can have new insights concerning their younger selves. Williams's claim that eternity would require an activity that was utterly absorbing at every moment to avoid extreme tedium is more intuitive if one stipulates that eternity is fundamentally static and unchanging. For if the sole static activity of eternity is less than utterly absorbing, there is no hope of change or improvement of any kind. Thus, even a vaguely pleasant eternal but static unchanging activity can appear potentially repulsive as we saw in Mark Twain's and David Byrne's accounts of a pleasant, but unattractive static eternity. It is no surprise that all three of these thinkers are religious skeptics, as their views of the goods of paradise implicitly portray heavenly goods as inferior to earthly goods in that earthly goods do not inevitably result in unbearable tedium and boredom.

A third advantage of dynamic views of heaven is that they cohere better with a wider range of beliefs about and metaphors for paradise across a wide range of traditions. While the New Testament's imagery of eternal worship of God in heaven may appear to indicate a static view of the afterlife, this image is outweighed by competing imagery both within the Christian tradition and beyond it. For example, within the Platonic tradition Socrates speaks of looking forward to an afterlife where he expects ongoing improving relationships with and knowledge gained through conversations with heroes such as Odysseus, martyrs such as Palamedes and Ajax, and writers such as Hesiod and Homer. He expects to be able to share his own experiences, learn of their experiences, and pursue knowledge in much the same style of dynamic dialogue he pursued in earthly life.[11]

Similarly, the Koran's images of Jannah depict the afterlife as a return to an idyllic existence in an active and dynamic garden of good pleasures with activities such as eating, as well as the ongoing development of relationships with family and other residents of heaven.[12] Such an existence is restful and pleasant, but is dynamic since human relationships continue to progress. Or consider the New Testament metaphors for the afterlife which portray the afterlife as an active city (Rev. 22), a wedding banquet (Matt. 22), a place of blessed ongoing uncursed work and responsibilities (Matt. 25). Even when such images are not interpreted literally it is hard to see how they are compatible with a static view of paradise. Accordingly, the New Testament image of heaven is not a timeless, unchanging, or immaterial existence. Instead, it portrays paradise as a glorified physical bodily existence (1 Cor. 15) where the evils, frustrations, and destructive tendencies in this world are removed (Rev. 22:3). One potential way to reconcile the tension between the seemingly static image of heaven as eternal worship with the many dynamic

[11] Plato (2002), *Apology*, 41.

[12] See Koran 9:72 and Koran 13:23–24.

images of paradise would be to portray all heavenly activities as an expression of eternal worship through which union with God is experienced.

Furthermore, a dynamic account of heaven would cohere well for the large sub-group of theists who endorse any account of purgatory or ongoing chance of moral progress in a non-paradise state in the afterlife. While it is well known that purgatory is an official view of the one billion member Catholic Church (2012: 1030), similar views are also held by many Muslims and Protestants, and may even appear in Plato (*Republic* 614a-621b). Some sects of Islam teach that after death, during the state of Barzakh between death and the resurrection of judgement, this temporary state offers a possibility of refinement before the ultimate judgment. Notable Protestants endorsing some concept or possibility of purgatory include C. S. Lewis (2015), Rob Bell (2010), and Jerry Walls (2012). A dynamic account of heaven would cohere well with such "purgatory" views as they already portray the afterlife as a place or state that allows for dynamic moral progress and activity. Just as purgatory is a dynamic existence that allows increasing moral progress through the removal of imperfections in one's character, moral progress in paradise is possible through the growing of already refined but finite moral capacities. It might seem that entry into "heaven" could end such a moral journey, but even if moral progress is no longer possible surely there are an infinite number of new ways to live out morally perfected character, which require an ongoing dynamic existence.

A final advantage of dynamic views of the afterlife is they allow for greater commonalities in theories concerning human nature, life, well-being, and happiness or human fulfillment, across both the earthly and heavenly existence, entailing greater theoretical simplicity. For example, in both modes of existence the primary goal of human life might be portrayed as seeking fulfillment in ever more intimate ongoing union with God. Thus, we would expect the next life to be dynamic and similar to the earthly existence in this way. Our expectations concerning the chief end of humanity in both types of existence could be based on the tenants of the Westminster Confession.[13] The ultimate goal for humanity in both worlds could be to seek to glorify God and enjoy Him forever in increasingly more intimate and perfected ways as we continue to increase our capacities for enjoying Him.

In contrast, postulating a static human existence in paradise entails unnecessary theoretical complexities since the nature of humanity and life in paradise would be more dissimilar to earthly existence than on dynamic theories. For every additional difference between the earthly and heavenly existence static views must explain how and why humans enter this static state of existence, its implications for motivation, human nature, well-being, etc. For example, static

[13] See Kelly, Rollinson, and Marsh (1986, Q1).

views of paradise based on the claim that humans take on an unchanging timeless existence after death must take pains to explain how it is even possible for humans to enter a radically different non-temporal existence despite every appearance that humans are necessarily temporal beings.

1.6. CONCLUSION

We have discussed a variety of portrayals of heaven with special attention to the distinction between static and dynamic accounts of paradise. While we have seen that both views are found in contemporary philosophy, theology, and popular culture I have argued that dynamic views of the afterlife have a number of important advantages. Dynamic views have superior resources to explain why eternity would be meaningful and engaging. Furthermore, they have excellent resources to address Bernard Williams's concern that eternity would be tedious and empty. Dynamic views also offer better coherence with a wide variety of theological and philosophical commitments than static accounts of heaven. Finally, dynamic views are theoretically simpler than static views. The overall combination of these advantages provides good prima facie reason for preferring dynamic views of paradise over static views.

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2

Anselmian Meditations on Heaven

Katherin A. Rogers

When my eldest daughter was about five she saw a show about ostrich racing. She subsequently expressed the thought that if she couldn't ride ostriches in heaven, she didn't care to go. Armed with a Ph.D. in Philosophy, I responded that maybe she could ride ostriches in heaven, but if it turned out she couldn't, then she'd be able to do even better things. And that seemed to be good enough for her. Indeed, it's the best I could do, because the traditional Christian doctrine regarding heaven is mysterious. This is not due to a lack of curiosity or acumen on the part of Christian intellectuals, it is just the Gospel Truth! While it may be possible, as we shall see, to mount a sort of proof for the existence of eternal beatitude, it may be too ambitious to attempt much exactness regarding what that beatitude will entail. Within the Christian tradition, our most obvious source for heaven is Scripture, and we are told that eye has not seen and ear has not heard what God has ready for those who love Him (1 Cor. 2:9). The references to pearly gates and glassy seas (Rev. 21:21; 15:2) are likely a desperate metaphorical attempt to describe the indescribable. We are assured that we will be resurrected and hence ultimately embodied in heaven. Indeed, we will have the numerically same body that we have now. But, in explaining how this might be, Paul offers the analogy of the grain of wheat and the full-grown stalk, suggesting that the resurrected body may be more different from my body now than my body now is from when I was an embryo (1 Cor. 15:35–38).[1]

[1] The thought that the redeemed will be embodied may tempt some to try to discuss the nature of heaven or of the redeemed within the confines of contemporary science, but this strikes me as misguided. At least within the Christian tradition the glimpses we get of the hereafter are through revelation, and revelation itself, along with God, the Incarnation, and the objectivity of the moral order, are not entities or principles we find as subject matter of any of the sciences. And presumably the heavenly city is established by God, Who does not need to limit his activities to what might be describable within the sciences. Of course revelation, God, heaven, and so on are *consistent with* science, in that there is no contradiction between accepting the deliverances of

One could hardly fault the embryo for failing to have a clear and well-developed understanding of what life as an adult entails. So I do not propose to attempt a description of heaven. But I find, when confronted with difficult philosophical and theological questions, that consulting the work of St Anselm of Canterbury is almost certain to yield fruitful results. And sure enough, Anselm has some useful things to say about heaven, and other points he makes are relevant to some contemporary questions about heaven, and provide impetus for further investigation. In this chapter I will sometimes discuss the historical Anselm and sometimes discuss how a contemporary follower, the Anselmian, might use Anselm's ideas to go beyond what Anselm himself has to say.

First I will review a very neat little proof that Anselm gives for there being a heaven, then I will discuss his (very general!) notions of what heaven may be like. I make use of several Anselmian theses in addressing the related problem of the personal identity of the wayfarer making the transition to beatitude. I suggest an Anselmian approach to the question of whether the blessed will change in heaven, and then address his explicit answer to the issue of whether or not the blessed are free in heaven. The approach Anselm takes to heavenly freedom requires the concept of "tracing," a theory that has been criticized recently, including in the present volume, thus I devote a little time to defending the tracing thesis. I conclude by asking how Anselm's views might reflect on two interesting questions he does not pursue: "Should we believe in purgatory?" and "How old will we be in heaven?"

2.1. THE PROOF OF HEAVEN

Anselm's "proof" for the existence of heaven comes toward the end of his first philosophical work, the *Monologion*. He has already demonstrated, through reason alone, that God—the necessarily good God of classical theism—exists and is a Trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit. Then he asks his reader to accept a couple of closely related principles which are plausible, given what he has already established: First, the rational creature, including and especially the human being, is made to love God and, second, that means that being in the condition of a loving relationship with God is what constitutes perfect happiness for the rational creature. But then, in a God-made universe, it is just impossible that no rational creature should achieve the end for which it was made. Some rational creature will enjoy this situation of perfect happiness.[2]

the sciences within the sphere of the present physical universe as it goes about its usual business and accepting that these deliverances don't capture everything that's worth talking about.

[2] Anselm makes this assumption, without stating it as clearly as he might.

And we know that this situation must be everlasting. How do we know this? Well, the perfectly happy rational creature cannot be perfectly happy unless he correctly believes that this happiness will never end. If he believes it will end he must live in fear of that awful day, and if he does not believe it will end, but in fact it *will* end, then he is sadly deluded. He might be happy in some subjective sense, but *medieval* happiness is not just a feeling, it is a feeling plus an objective condition, which includes that the feeling is not based on delusion. Q.E.D. There is a heaven.[3]

Anselm follows his "proof" for heaven with a brief argument that, for those who do not love God, divine justice demands that there also be a hell.[4] And then he notes that it follows that every human soul must be immortal.[5] This is an interesting move in that the arrow of the argument, at least in classical and medieval thought, often runs the other way, *first* showing that the soul is immortal, and *then* concluding that there is (or may be) a heaven and a hell. Sadly, Anselm died before he got the chance to write his proposed treatise on the soul. It is likely that he would have followed Augustine in arguing that the soul is, by its very nature, immortal. (Though he focuses on the soul in the "proof" for heaven, Anselm certainly believed in the resurrection of the body.[6]) But as it stands, Anselm's argument for the immortality of the soul is based on his "proofs" for heaven and hell, which are in turn derived from his arguments for the existence of God and his claims about the telos of the rational creature, a telos that *must* be realized in a God-made universe.[7]

2.2. THE BEATIFIC VISION VERSUS MORE MUNDANE PLEASURES?

But what will heaven be *like*? Jerry Walls (2002), in his book *Heaven*, writes that,

> Two basically different accounts of heaven have recurred down the ages,…On one end of the spectrum is the theocentric view of heaven. In its most extreme version, heaven is a timeless experience of contemplating the infinitely fascinating reality of God in all of his aspects. Eternal joy on this account consists entirely of the beatific vision, requiring no dimension of human fellowship to be complete.

[3] See Anselm (*Monologian*: 68–70). The premises in this argument echo Augustine and Boethius, so I do not claim that Anselm is the inventor of the argument.

[4] See Anselm (*Monologian*: 71). Why does God not just extinguish the irredeemably rebellious person? That would be unjust, since it would simply constitute a return to the prenatal nothingness, rather than the appropriate punishment.

[5] See Anselm (*Monologian*: 72).

[6] See Anselm (*Cur Deus Homo*: 2.3).

[7] Jerry L. Walls (2002) follows a somewhat similar path in his *Heaven*. He writes, "any meaningful account of God's goodness implies some notion of heaven" (33).

> On the other end of the spectrum is the anthropocentric view of heaven. There the emphasis is upon being reunited with family and friends. In its most fully developed version, heaven is essentially like this life, without, of course, the evil and suffering that mar our present happiness. Heaven thus construed would include poetry, pianos, puppies, poppies, and sex, all at their best (7).[8]

At first glance, one might place St Anselm on the extreme theocentric end of the spectrum. And yes, it is the beatific vision that is the proper telos of the rational creature. But the quote above suggests a rather limited view of what the beatific vision entails, and the proposal of the two different species of heaven may be, from an Anselmian perspective, a false dichotomy, for several reasons. (It would be a mistake to place Anselm's heaven half way along the spectrum, since it very clearly consists in the beatific vision. The point is that the beatific vision may include all those other goods.)

First, according to Anselm, human (and angelic) fellowship is an integral part of the beatific vision. (We have powerful scriptural warrant that there will not be sex in heaven, so set that aside as being off the deep end of that extreme of the spectrum.) In the *Proslogion* he writes,

> But surely if someone else whom you loved in every respect as yourself possessed that same blessedness, your joy would be doubled for you would rejoice as much for him as for yourself. If, then, two or three or many more possessed it you would rejoice just as much for each one as for yourself, if you loved each one as yourself. Therefore in that perfect and pure love of the countless holy angels and holy men where no one will love another less than himself, each will rejoice for every other as for himself. (1998c: 25)

One might wonder whether, in Anselm's universe, the fellowship is *necessary* to one's enjoyment of heaven, or merely *enhances* one's enjoyment. Anselm does not mount any argument on the question, and presumably he assumes the community of saints following Scripture.[9] But the question of the necessary versus merely beneficial role of community in heaven does admit of an answer. Anselm has it that God inevitably does the best. Thus there is a sort of "necessity" in whatever God does; a "necessity" which Anselm is careful to insist does not decrease the divine freedom one whit, for reasons that will become clear below.[10] According to the best evidence, God has constructed heaven so that we *will* enjoy the fellowship of the rest of the saints and angels. It follows that this *must* be the way in which perfect goodness acts to secure the perfect happiness of the saints and angels. A heaven consisting of God and the

[8] He is following McDannell and Lang (1990) and seems to agree.

[9] In discussing community in heaven, Swinburne, in Chapter 17, this volume, observes that "[the Book of] *Revelation* never pictures solitary worshippers."

[10] *Cur deus homo* 2.10. See also Rogers (2008: ch. 10).

individual is not an option. On the Anselmian understanding, the fellowship with other rational creatures is a necessary feature of the beatific vision.

Nor is it right to suppose that immersion in the beatific vision would necessarily cut you off from the other goods of this created world.[11] The beatific vision is the vision of God. So the question of what heaven is like can be rephrased as, "What is *God* like?" In the *Monologion* Anselm attempts to show that God, as the rational source of all in the created world, must beget an expression of Himself, not really other than Himself, the Word or Son. This Word contains the original patterns of all that God creates. So all that exists in creation exists—in good Platonic "form"—in dependence upon this Word, which is God.[12] Thus, in beholding God, we certainly enjoy Him as Creator. In speaking of the beatific vision in the *Proslogion* Anselm writes,

> For if particular goods are enjoyable, consider carefully how enjoyable is that good which *contains* [my italics] the joyfulness of all goods;…If wisdom in the knowledge of things that have been brought into being is lovable, how lovable is the Wisdom that has brought all things into being out of nothing? Finally, if there are many delights in delightful things, of what kind and how great is the delight in Him who made these same delightful things? (1998c: 24)

Does this mean that, while the beatific vision may include the perfect form of dogness in the mind of God, it won't include my dog, Nero? Well, consider another of Anselm's contributions to philosophy. I have argued that Anselm holds that God is eternal and time is isotemporal.[13] He is probably the first to clearly embrace isotemporalism (sometimes referred to as "four-dimensionalism" or "eternalism"), the view that all times, what we call past, present, and future, are equally real. What is past, or present, or future is relative to a perceiver at a given time. And, since God is eternal, all times are equally present to God. In beholding God as Creator, perhaps (this is very tentative, but, perhaps) we can be joined to and enjoy His creation as He Himself sees it, in a vision in which nothing is finally lost, since, in an isotemporal universe, time is not the destroyer it is usually taken to be.

Furthermore, Anselm has some tantalizing things to say about the "new heaven and new earth" of Revelation 21:1 in *Cur deus homo*.

> We believe that the present physical mass of the universe is to be changed anew into something better.…Moreover, lower nature, being itself changed at the bringing of higher nature [rational creatures] to perfection, would, so to speak, rejoice in its own way. No, indeed: every created thing would be happy, each in its own way joining in eternal rejoicing in its Creator and in itself and in their mutual

[11] Some of the following is not from Anselm's own ruminations on heaven, but it is drawn from Anselm's view of things. The discussion of the recreated earth is directly from Anselm's text, however.

[12] See Anselm (*Monologian*: 9–14, 29–31).

[13] See Rogers (2008: 176–84).

> relation to one another, upon this final fulfilment of itself, so glorious and so amazing. (1998a: 1:18)

Anselm, probably wisely, does not say any more about the universe recreated, but clearly he takes it that heaven, while it is union with God, does not mean alienation from God's work. He does not propose to explain just what creation might look like, or how it might be experienced, from the perspective of one enjoying the beatific vision in union with God. It is probably safe to say this: God presumably enjoys His creation infinitely more than we can, so when we are in companionship with Him He can help us enjoy it more than we can imagine.[14]

2.3. PERSONAL IDENTITY AND THE TEDIUM OF HEAVEN

But here is a question that has come up recently—the medievalist suspects it is born of the malaise that is post-modernity—Won't heaven be boring? Recently Brian Ribeiro has expanded upon a dilemma earlier proposed by Bernard Williams.[15] Either the human individual arriving at those pearly gates remains the same person he was before death, in which case he will find heaven deadly dull, or, in order to enjoy heaven, he will have to be so transformed as to no longer be the same person.[16] Ribeiro is working from that same—I believe, false—dichotomy that heaven either shares important goods with this earthly life *or* consists in the beatific vision of God.[17] But even if Ribeiro would allow

[14] Rachel Lu points out that it is Bonaventure rather than Aquinas who proposes an "inclusivist" view of the pleasures of the heavenly life. See Lu (Chapter 5, this volume). Bonaventure, I take it, hews closer to the earlier tradition of Augustinian Neoplatonism than does Aquinas, and Anselm is a prominent figure in that tradition.

[15] See Ribeiro (2011) and Williams (1973).

[16] Several chapters in the present volume concern the problem of how to make sense of the thought that the human person dies and is ultimately resurrected as an embodied being. See Brown (Chapter 12, this volume) and Yang and Davis (Chapter 11, this volume). Anselm is, I argue, a theist idealist. See Rogers (1997a). Everything is made by God by His thinking, so it's all mind stuff. There is no matter in the Aristotelian sense, or the Lockean sense, or the atomist's sense (little ultimate "bits"). Your body is just what God thinks it to be, which I believe allows for a great deal of leeway regarding how to understand bodily survival and resurrection. Moreover, the problem of the "interim" condition—what happens to the body after death, but before the resurrection—seems to be generated by the assumption that the passage of time "on the other side" is just the same as the passage of time here. But that seems to suppose a sort of absolute and universal series of temporal moments. Perhaps we should just reject that supposition. And having rejected it, we may fairly throw up our hands and say that we just don't know how things will work between death and resurrection.

[17] It should be noted that in Ribeiro's article God comes up hardly at all, and one has the impression that God is not a person with whom Ribeiro is acquainted, which is something of a handicap if one proposes to talk about the traditional, Christian heaven.

the thought that the beatific vision may involve, in addition to intimacy with God, and *through* this intimacy, an even more intense enjoyment of the goods of creation than our present life allows, he would probably argue that the dilemma holds. And that is because, as Ribeiro notes, and as Anselm would be the first to insist, in order to be capable of the beatific vision (with rare exceptions) one really does have to change. One has to move past one's purely earthly projects and desire union with God more than anything else. And one has to abandon one's vices. The Anselmian way to put it, following the Augustinian privative theory of evil, would be to say that one has to "fill in the gaps" in one's character, leaving behind one's failings and weaknesses and disordered desires, and allowing the "holes" to be filled with love—for God, one's fellows, and one's self—love so strong that it can't fail.

Ribeiro holds that a change so significant would mean that, whoever that was that made it into heaven, it would not be the same individual that had lived life on earth. He writes,

> One needn't have itchy anxieties about personal identity to see my worries here. The proposal under consideration is that, first, I will be stripped of all my unheavenly propensities…And already I don't know if that's me anymore. To say that the new unlustful, unangry guy is the 'real me' underneath that coating of sin seems a real travesty…. [And in that the sanctified person will have new projects and new faculties through which to pursue those projects] I hesitate to admit I can even conceive what's on offer here. To the extent I think I can conceive it, I don't think it's a proposal for preserving *my* personhood….Being who *I* am, there's no hope that this proposal preserves *me*. (Ribeiro 2011: 57–8)[18]

Ribeiro seems to be saying that he is to be identified so closely with his trivial pursuits (trivial compared to God) and with his vices, that if he were to turn his attention to God and if he were to radically improve his character, he, Ribeiro would cease to exist.[19] The first—perhaps unchristian—thought that the Christian might have is that, if Ribeiro is right about who he is, then he probably doesn't have to worry about the tedium of heaven, since he's not going. The portrait he paints of one who can't even *conceive of* giving up purely earthly interests (in their purely earthly manifestation), nor of abandoning his vices, is exactly the traditional picture of someone who is choosing to separate himself from God, aka damnation.

[18] Prima facie this seems a poor analysis of personal identity in general. Chances are that Ribeiro, at eight years of age, did not have the same interests and vices that he has now. But we do not say that eight-year-old Ribeiro blinked out of being, and someone new blinked in. Ribeiro holds that the "change" into heaven occurs instantaneously, and so poses more of an identity problem than simply growing up. More on this question in the section on purgatory.

[19] This is not quite a fair characterization, since Ribeiro seems to think that the improvements in the saved person are not something that involves that person's own choices, but is just something imposed from the outside. That seems a serious mischaracterization of the process as most Christians would envision it.

Happily, the Anselmian has three proposals about personal identity that suggest that Ribeiro is wrong about what constitutes himself. First, if the Augustinian privative theory is correct, then one's failings, including the disordered attachment to the lesser over the greater, are essentially a falling short of what one ought to be. The question of personal identity is enormously difficult, but I think we can say at least this; it seems implausible that an individual would be constituted by what is *lacking* from him. People can and do overcome their vices. It seems bizarre to suggest that if the lustful and angry person is able to move beyond his shortcomings, he just blinks out of being.

A second point addresses the question, "What is a person?" From an isotemporalist perspective the human person is seen as a sort of "ribbon" beginning (I would say) at conception and, on the Christian view, going on forever into the future. All the times of the person's life exist equally along the ribbon. A Christian criticism sometimes leveled at this thesis is that, even though someone is converted and saved, their past is never really gone. In the eyes of God, who sees all times as present, the bad old self exists as part of the whole continuum. I do not see this as a problem. For one thing, the bad years are overwhelmed by the infinity of the saved years. But also, it seems to me well that the saved sinner should allow that the sinful past is a part of who they are.[20] And that gets us back to personal identity. Suppose that Ribeiro is right that in order to be *him* he must have the interests and vices he has now. On isotemporalism the condition of the human person at different times along the ribbon of his life may be very different, but none of the properties which he had at any time is simply obliterated. In the hope that Ribeiro is mistaken about his future, the whole of Ribeiro, that is, Ribeiro from God's perspective, may be an infinitely sanctified ribbon, streaming out of his lustful and angry origins.[21] The bottom line is that the sorts of changes which make one fit to be a citizen of heaven need not destroy one's personal identity.

Thomas DePietro suggests a third way in which an Anselmian approach might mitigate the personal identity issue.[22] Anselm holds that being just

[20] Adam Pelser suggests that it will be important for the redeemed to remember their sinful, earthly past. See Pelser (Chapter 7, this volume). My ribbon view accords well with that thesis. Pelser allows that the redeemed may feel a sadness for that past. I am not sure that that follows. The redeemed "part" of the ribbon may not experience something like suffering in remembering the past condition, though the actual suffering never ceases to exist "earlier" in the ribbon. Pelser also defends the view that the redeemed may experience sadness at the fate of the damned. The question of whether or not those in heaven know about or think about or feel for the damned is one which, to my knowledge, Anselm does not address in his philosophical work.

[21] That the ribbon is a cohesive whole will require some explanation, which is just a way of saying that the isotemporalist is confronted with the problem of personal identity like anyone else. My point is that, on isotemporalism, a particular "time slice" of a person might lack certain interests and traits without that entailing that the person, considered as the whole person, lacks those interests and traits.

[22] In conversation.

involves a second order desire (that is, a desire *about* what to desire) to pursue only the appropriate first order (basic or immediate) desires.[23] One might be angry and lustful at the first order, without identifying with and embracing those desires at the second order. And so the thought that one's more "true" self is not angry and lustful is consistent with one's often being angry and lustful. On the Anselmian account of "nested" desires, abandoning the vices manifested at the first order might truly be an uncovering of one's more fundamental self.

The Anselmian, then, has offered three reasons to believe that someone who is presently vicious may yet, remaining the same person, be transformed into someone who can enjoy the beatific vision. However, if Ribiero's analysis of his identity is correct and entails that he is committed, and will remain committed, at the level of second order desires, to being an angry and lustful person—he chooses to permanently embrace and identify with those vicious desires—then the sad fact is that he fits the description of one who is not likely to reach that golden shore. But note that this does not, as Ribiero would have it, demonstrate a theoretical difficulty with the Christian conception of heaven.

2.4. CHANGE AND FREEDOM

This discussion of personal identity and transformation leads nicely into the issue of Purgatory, but it is better to understand the Anselmian position on freedom first. And to set the stage for that discussion, it is well to address a point that several authors in the present volume have raised. Will the blessed—once happily ensconced in heaven—*change*?[24] The suggestion has been made that if heaven is "merely" the beatific vision then it will be "static." The term "static" has negative connotations, suggesting an unwholesome, frozen, stillness in time. Those who use it tend to argue that the citizens of the heavenly city must be able to change. Wouldn't eternity be—as Ribiero and Williams have suggested—dreadfully boring if one were not to change?

Again, if heaven is union with God it might be well to look first at the nature of God. Anselm's God, the God of classical theism, is immutable. Is He bored with Himself and His immutable life? Traditionally the answer has been a resounding "No!" The Christian God is a dynamic Trinity. Far from being "static" His very nature is to be an act; an eternal, immutable, act of mutual love within the Persons of the Trinity and love for His creation. So immutability, at least for God, and within the tradition of classical theism, does not

[23] Anselm here prefigures Harry Frankfurt's views on what it takes to be a personal agent. See Rogers (2008: 60–2).

[24] See in this volume, Silverman (Chapter 1) and Swinburne (Chapter 17).

entail a "static" existence. If heaven is the beatific vision, then perhaps one participates in the infinite life of God without that involving change.

Anselm himself does not discuss the question of change, per se, but perhaps there is a bit more to be said from an Anselmian perspective. As Timothy Pawl and Kevin Timpe note in their "Paradise and Growing in Virtue" in this volume (Chapter 6), there is a tradition within the more Neoplatonic thinkers of the Christian tradition that the citizens in heaven will continue to grow toward God. Scotus Eriugena has it that heaven consists in our coming closer and closer to God and—this being the Neoplatonic way—the closer we get, the further away we finite creatures realize we are from the infinity that is God. It is as if we were simultaneously moving in opposite directions. Dynamic indeed!

Anselm does not describe heaven this way—he does not really describe heaven at all—but there are traces of that Neoplatonic dynamism in his work. In *Proslogion* 16 he writes of his attempt to understand God:

> My understanding is not able [to attain] to that [light]. It shines too much and [my understanding] does not grasp it nor does the eye of my soul allow itself to be turned towards it for too long. It is dazzled by its splendor, overcome by its fullness, overwhelmed by its immensity, confused by its extent. O supreme and inaccessible light; O whole and blessed truth, how far You are from me who am so close to You! How distant You are from my sight while I am so present to Your sight! You are wholly present everywhere and I do not see You. In You I move and in You I have my being and I cannot come near to You. You are within me and around me and I do not have any experience of You. (1998c: 16)

One might suppose Anselm is referring here only to our limitations in our present earthly life, but he had concluded *Proslogion* 14 with the words, "What purity, what simplicity, what certitude and splendor is there [in God—my brackets]! Truly it is more than can be understood by any creature." And Chapter 15 argues that God, by definition, must be something *greater* than can be thought. I have argued elsewhere (Rogers 1997b) that Anselm is an inheritor of the Neoplatonic tradition. These chapters from the *Proslogion* reflect that tradition's insistence on a God who is simultaneously immanent and transcendent. To worship such a God is to tread the three-fold path spelled out by the Pseudo-Dionysius—affirmativa, negativa, and superlativa—simultaneously. And there is no reason to suppose that this dynamic relationship that the finite creature has to God ends at the borders of this earthly existence. Anselm, then, may well have embraced the thought that heaven consists in our growing every closer to God. Do we *change*? The good Neoplatonist responds, yes and no. We grow, but through an unchanging process towards an immutable goal.

And now we can turn to the question of whether or not the blessed will be *free* in heaven? And that, of course, depends on what you mean by "free." For

Anselm, the core of free choice is aseity, one's choice is from oneself, *a se*. God, in that He exists absolutely from Himself, inevitably wills the best, and yet *freely* wills with perfect aseity.[25] Created rational agents, human beings and angels, exist in total dependence on God. Indeed, everything that has any ontological status at all is kept in being from moment to moment by God. How could a *created* agent choose anything *a se*?

Anselm answers that God, in order to allow the created agent to participate in his own creation, and hence be a closer image of God, has so ordered the created agent's motivational structure that created agents have libertarian free choice. We can confront genuinely open, morally significant, options such that it is up to us whether we choose well or ill. This is Anselm's version of a free will theodicy. The great good of allowing the created agent to help in building his own character demands that God leave the agent free to choose well or ill. And the tremendous metaphysical value of created agents being self-creators is worth the price in moral evil.[26]

As Anselm describes our free choice, we can be torn, simultaneously desiring some inappropriate good as a basic, first order desire, and also desiring, as a second order desire, to pursue only those desires which we believe to be proper. We are mistaken in thinking that the inappropriate good will make us happy, and Anselm holds that this ignorance is a necessary feature of the motivational structure. If, before we ever chose, we could glimpse the misery to which wicked choices lead and the happiness to which proper choices lead, it would be literally impossible that we could choose badly, and that would shut down the open options, and the aseity. (Interestingly, Ribeiro says that if his desires and interests were instantly transformed into heavenly desires and interests, he would cease to be the same person. Anselm's claim is that, if any of us *right now*, were to catch a glimpse of that heavenly glory, we literally wouldn't be able to "tear ourselves away" as it were.) God incorporates the ignorance so that we can debate between morally significant options and then choose in such a way that it is absolutely up to us which way we go. In Anselm's universe, God causes all that *exists*, but He does not determine all that *happens*.

By setting things up so that we choose with aseity God allows us to contribute something from ourselves to our own creation. Though note that all we contribute is just the clinging to the proper desire or abandoning it. It isn't much. And, of course, God's grace plays a necessary role. Though Anselm ascribes to the created free agent great metaphysical value, the agent should exercise an appropriate humility. His contribution to his own creation is quite

[25] See Rogers (2008: ch. 10).

[26] I attempt to make the historical case for Anselm's analysis of free will in *Anselm on Freedom*. More recently I have developed his analysis further and brought it into dialogue with the contemporary free will debate; see Rogers (2015).

small—just the clinging to the good given by God, or failing to do so. Nonetheless, in the universe of classical theism the thought that the creature has any independence at all, or any real say in how the universe shall go, is shocking and radical. Augustine and Aquinas heartily oppose the view, insisting that God is the cause of all that exists *and* all that happens.

The point of the libertarian free choice for the created agent, according to Anselm, is that it allows him to contribute to his own creation by building his own character. Individual choices are important insofar as they help to construct the kind of person one is. So the "Tracing Thesis" is central to Anselm's thinking about free will. Anselm, like many contemporary libertarians, denies that open options are necessary for every created free and responsible act of will. A choice that is determined by one's character may be free if one has produced one's character one's self through past *a se* choices which did involve open options.

The blessed in heaven cannot choose wrongly. They no longer confront morally significant choices. Their wills are in union with God's. In one sense of "freedom" they are *more* free than when they were subject to the sort of ignorance and weakness that made choosing wrongly a viable option. But they are in heaven because they chose the good *on their own*. When they had the option, they chose to pursue the proper desires, when they could have failed to do so. The blessed are free in that their wills are no longer subject to ignorance and weakness, and they are free in that it is up to themselves that their wills are as they are. The damned are free, but only in the latter sense.

Brian P. Boeninger and Robert K. Garcia, in their contribution to this volume (Chapter 14), criticize this picture of freedom in heaven, especially as it depends upon the tracing thesis. A lengthy response would require a separate chapter, but here let me quickly sketch the outlines of how an Anselmian answer might go. Beoninger and Garcia choose to focus on the "freedom good" of praiseworthiness—it is being free that allows for the good of being praiseworthy. They speculate that for heaven to be the ideal life as advertised the blessed will engage in mighty deeds for which they are praiseworthy.

Already the Anselmian is skeptical. On the Anselmian view, the blessed are praiseworthy in that, by their earthly choices, they have contributed to their character in such a way that they have become the sort of people who can enjoy the beatific vision. So the "freedom good" that the Anselmian ascribes to the heavenly condition is just the self-created character which makes the agent fit for heaven. The blessed can be praised for who they are, without having to continually engage in mighty deeds. (And—at least on the Anselmian picture—perhaps there is something a little suspect in requiring to be *praised* for the very little that the created agent contributed to his own creation. It is God who should be praised, and the blessed should perhaps just be thrilled to experience perfect joy with God as the reward for clinging to Him when they might have let go.)

But could mundane (pre-heavenly) choices be significant enough to ground the freedom good experienced in heaven? (Boeninger and Garcia list a series of freedom goods, but the Anselmian takes it that these are ultimately all related to the fundamental good of self-creation.) The Anselmian says "Yes." Boeninger and Garcia do not challenge the time-honored view, going back at least to Aristotle, that our choices do in fact construct our characters. If the issue is the sort of character you have created for yourself, then presumably the various choices you make, big and small, are enough to produce a character which is ultimately bound for glory, or not. Richard Tamburro, in his chapter for this volume, gives an example of a single choice which, arguably, might make all the difference in the world to how one's future goes; that is the choice regarding whether or not to put oneself "in submission to God." Anselm takes it that Satan's one choice has damned him forever. It may be simply an empirical question what sorts of choices construct what characters for which people, but it seems a pretty standard view in the Christian tradition that in this life one can succeed in forming one's character for good or ill to the point where one's destiny is fixed. At that point one would not face any transforming, morally significant open options, and such options would serve no purpose. The point was to build character and the character has been built.

Boeninger and Garcia hold that this tracing thesis—you can be free and praiseworthy although you can no longer choose badly, since you yourself produced your character by your earlier choices—faces several problems. First, they argue that mere tracing is not enough to ground "anchoring." They write, "We propose to use the term anchoring to refer to those conditions, whatever they might be, that are sufficient for a traced action to manifest freedom goods." They hold that the defender of the thesis that the character-determined acts in heaven can be free because they are traced back to pre-heavenly free acts has not shown "that the former can be *anchored* in the latter." Again, the Anselmian is concerned not so much with actions—heavenly or pre-heavenly—but with character—either under construction or completed. The (minimal?) praiseworthiness of the blessed is due to their self-formed characters, and if the blessed engage in excellent heavenly actions these will flow inevitably from their characters. They *are* the blessed, after all. Isn't that anchoring enough?

But is there an inherent problem with the tracing thesis itself? The Anselmian says that the agent is responsible for the character-determined choice because the agent is responsible for his character since he himself constructed it by earlier, non-determined, *a se* choices. As Boeninger and Garcia point out, there seems to be an epistemic problem here.[27] Chances are the agent did not know, when he made those earlier, character-forming choices, that he was

[27] To my knowledge this epistemic problem was first raised by Vargas (2005).

indeed forming his character. But if one is ignorant of the consequences of one's actions, can one be responsible for them and their consequences?

Elsewhere (Rogers 2015: ch. 9), I have attempted a full answer to this problem. Reviewing it would take us too far afield, but the core of the argument is this: some ignorance concerning our actions is exculpatory and some is not. For example, suppose that one of the consequences of the robber's committing the robbery is that he gets caught and sent to prison. He can hardly argue that being ignorant of the fact that he'd get caught should excuse him from responsibility for the robbery. The principled distinction between exculpatory and non-exculpatory ignorance focuses on whether or not the ignorance concerns the *content* of the agent's intention. Ignorance is exculpatory when the agent is innocently ignorant concerning some aspect of what he is intending to do or the consequences he is intending to bring about.

If I hand you a bottle marked "aspirin," intending to help you relieve your headache, but unbeknownst to me, your enemy has replaced the aspirin in the bottle with poison, my innocent ignorance of that fact excuses me of any responsibility for your subsequent death, since the ignorance was about an important element in the content of my intention. I intended to help, innocently not knowing I would hurt. But with the tracing issue, the ignorance is not about the content of the agent's intention. The agent may not be aware that he is making a choice at all, much less that he is making a character-forming choice, but he is not off the hook, since his responsibility is derived from what it is he intends. This is merely a gesture at how to respond to the epistemic problem with tracing, but I hope it is enough to suggest that an answer is possible. In that the tracing thesis is so central to Christian thought it would be a shame to give it up too easily.

On the Anselmian account, the blessed cannot sin, and so much the better for them. But what about making other sorts of choices? Several of the chapters in this volume suggest that the citizens of heaven will continue to make important, perhaps self-forming, choices, even if those choices are not between good and evil.[28] I have allowed above that Anselm and his adherents may be sympathetic to the thought that the blessed "grow" in that they come closer and closer to God's infinity. But does this entail that they will engage in the making of choices in a way that is similar to choosing here and now? Anselm, as I have argued, certainly does not believe that open options are necessary for the "freedom" of the blessed. They are perfectly happy and their wills are completely in accord with God's, and God simply wills what is best. So there is no question of choosing between a lesser and a greater good: If the saint must "choose" he inevitably pursues the greater good. Is there an advantage to positing that the saint may choose between different, equally

[28] See in this volume, Pawl and Timpe (Chapter 6), Silverman (Chapter 1), Swinburne (Chapter 17), and Tamburro (Chapter 15).

valuable goods? But then the "choice" is more of a coin toss and it is difficult to see why one should want to go on tossing forever.

Could it be that the act of choosing is a pleasure in itself, such that if one were not making choices something would be lacking? Speaking for myself, I do not usually enjoy having to make choices, at least choices with any significance.[29] The phenomenology of choosing often involves anxiety. But perhaps that is a function of the earthly condition in which one must choose in ignorance and always fear that one ought to have opted for the road not taken. Or perhaps it is just a fundamental difference between people that some enjoy choosing and some do not. And so—very tentatively and not wishing to stray too far from our Anselmian foundation—perhaps we might say this: God's will for the saint—and hence the saint's will for himself—is tailored to how each individual may best enjoy union with God. Some of the authors in this volume express the thought that heaven ought to include or consist in engaging in activities like amassing scientific knowledge or appreciating art, and (the suggestion seems to be) in a way not radically dissimilar to how one goes about this business here and now. My impression is that Anselm himself holds that such activities will be left behind. But maybe those who want to be busy and always making choices can be busy and make choices, and those whose enjoyment of God would be diluted by being busy and making choices will enjoy Him and His creation without engaging in those activities. When Christ visits Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38–42) he does not tell Martha to stop busying herself about the household affairs that are important to her. He simply says that Mary, sitting and listening, has chosen the better part. (And having chosen—past tense—presumably she doesn't need to keep on choosing.)

2.5. TWO LAST ISSUES: PURGATORY AND THE AGE OF THE BLESSED

So back to Purgatory. Anselm doesn't talk about Purgatory. In his day, it wasn't a settled doctrine of the Catholic Church.[30] But we can say a little about how the doctrine fits with his other views. The Catholic view is that if you find

[29] I grant that part of the fun of going out to eat involves studying the menu, but the ultimate choice is a coin toss sort of choice.

[30] Had it been, he would certainly have accepted it, since he took the teachings of the divinely inspired community of the Church to supersede whatever any particular individual's reason might lead them to conclude—and chances are he would have written a treatise on the necessary reasons for believing in Purgatory. He does say something that is perhaps a glancing reference to Purgatory. In *De Concordia*, speaking of final beatitude, he writes, "Just as there is no injustice in the good angels, so no one with any injustice shall be grouped with them. It is not my present

yourself in Purgatory you are bound for glory, so Anselm would insist you cannot choose badly anymore. But sin has left some "weak spots" in your soul that need to be strengthened, and that involves some suffering on your part. Anselm certainly holds that Christ has paid the price for our sins, but he does think that we need to embrace Christ as our savior, by freely—that is *a se*—clinging to the necessary and unmerited grace God gives.[31] So Anselm does insist upon some input from the human side of the salvation equation. And, in explaining why God goes through the bizarre rigmarole of incarnation, instead of just going "Poof! You're saved!," he uses the imagery of the "soiled" pearl that needs to be cleaned before it is fit to be held (1998a: 1.19). So the thought that, in Purgatory, we can each, as individuals, share a little in Christ's payment for sin, would probably appeal to him. And recently the doctrine of Purgatory has been used to good effect to mitigate the personal identity problem of the transition into heaven.[32] Anselm would not say that we need Purgatory to reach the point where we can't sin. A little concrete information about heaven and hell is enough to achieve that. But it does not follow that our characters don't or shouldn't go through a process of change to fit them for heaven.[33] Anselm doesn't discuss it, but there is nothing in Anselm's views that would conflict with Purgatory.

A final question arises in the context of an Anselmian meditation on heaven. How old will we be in heaven? One standard answer is that we will be of a sort of idealized age. So, for example, in the Medieval poem, *The Pearl*, a father who is grieving at the death of his child beholds her in heaven as a mature and queenly figure, far wiser than the bereaved father. It is a beautiful poem, and a beautiful thought, but there is a catch from the Anselmian perspective. I mentioned above that according to Anselm—and views in this family are common among Christian philosophers—at least part of the point of our journey through this vale of tears is that, by making morally significant choices we can form our characters and help to create ourselves. The person who dies as a small child presumably does not get the chance to engage in this self-creative activity since *a se* choice requires the reasoned weighing of first and second order desires. If this self-creation is really as important as Anselm takes it to be, then it seems a poor fit to suppose that all the citizens of heaven

purpose to show how people become free of all injustice. However, we do know that this is possible for a Christian by holy pursuits and the grace of God (1998d: 3.4)."

[31] See Rogers (2008: ch. 7).

[32] See Walls (2002: 51–62) and Brown (1985).

[33] The Catholic teaching is that not everyone needs to experience Purgatory. Ribeiro (2011: 62) seems to think that this point undermines the value of Purgatory in preserving personal identity, but he doesn't explain why. If some are already "there" when it comes to being fit for the beatific vision, then they don't need to undergo the more significant changes which the rest of us will require.

are of the same idealized age, and capable of enjoying God in a roughly equal or equivalent way.

Jerry Walls addresses this difficulty by supposing—as a consequence of the goodness of God—that those who die as infants and small children will grow up in a sort of alternate universe where they will have the opportunity to make morally significant choices and ultimately go to heaven or hell (2002: 88–91). I am not comfortable with this suggestion. There is absolutely no warrant in Church teaching or tradition, or in Scripture, for this supposition. One might, as both Walls and Anselm do, attempt to mount a philosophical argument in favor of belief in heaven. But on the more specific question of what life will be like there, I would suppose that Scripture and the teaching and tradition of the Church are the best evidence we have. Thus their silence, it seems to me, tells against Walls' thesis.

And also, the thought that the dead child grows up elsewhere does not fit well with our natural reaction to the death of a child. Walls' proposal makes it sound like the dead child has just moved to Ohio, but that is not at all how it *feels*. I don't know how much evidential weight to accord our reactive attitude, but standardly in philosophy we don't want to do excessive violence to our feelings.[34]

Here is what feels right to me: When someone below the age of reason dies, they achieve whatever beatitude is possible for someone who has lived as long as they have, and who had no hand in self-creation. The toddler, the infant, the embryo, are glorified, but glorified as the "inexperienced" human being they were when they died. (Neither "small" nor "young" seems the right word here, since I do not suppose that size or literal age are that telling in heaven.) The death of a child *is* a tragedy in the sense that that child—like the severely mentally handicapped human being—misses the opportunity to contribute to his own creation through moral choices. Heaven will be populated by human beings with wildly differing capacities for enjoying the presence of God. Does that mean God is unfair? Well, I think God knows each of us perfectly in our radical individuality and He could care less about ensuring an equal distribution of some quantifiable happiness to each of us. But how all this actually works out on the other side I don't have a clue. I return to my original thesis regarding the "hiddenness" of heaven: We really have very little to go on regarding what life in heaven will be like. Those who now consider it important that they should ride ostriches within the diamond walls of the Heavenly Jerusalem should feel free to suppose that they may be able to do so. And if it

[34] So, for example, it seems to me that the claim that all that happens is caused by God and is for the best must be rejected because I find it impossible to believe that Auschwitz was caused by God and impossible to believe that we don't need to try to interfere with evil, since whatever actually happens is for the best. I take it that this sort of arguing, where you start from a non-negotiable gut feeling involving reactive attitudes, is quite common in philosophy. The problem is adjudicating when different guts deliver different attitudes.

should turn out that the blessed do not ride ostriches, undoubtedly that will be because they are engaged in even more satisfying experiences.

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Part II

The Epistemology of Paradise

3

Will there be Skeptics in Heaven?

Ted Poston

> All I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.
>
> (1 Cor. 13:12)

I begin with a puzzle that arises from reflection on two things that are not normally put together: the nature of Christian hope and global skepticism. Christian hope is focused on a renewed and redeemed creation in which persons will live as God intended: perfectly free, virtuous, and together focused on adoration of God's goodness. The puzzle relates to the fact that if arguments for global skepticism work now on earth then they work equally as well in heaven. On the orthodox Christian view of heaven we will not gain any special power in virtue of which skeptical possibilities are meaningless or incoherent. There will always be the logical possibility that one's experience of resurrection and divine presence is delusive.[1] And yet Christian hope is entirely incompatible with radical skepticism. My goal is to present the puzzle and then propose a resolution. I begin by discussing the nature of the Christian conception of heaven and then I develop an argument for global skepticism. I continue to fill out the puzzle before finally turning to examine a resolution of the puzzle.

3.1. THE PUZZLE

Christianity is not a skeptical religion. In addition to affirming that we have ordinary knowledge, the Christian tradition attests that creatures like us can

[1] See, for example, a remark by John Hick, who writes: "It must . . . remain a logical possibility that one's continuous sense of the divine presence, and of joyful interaction with God, is delusory. For in *any* situation, earthy or heavenly, however unambiguous its character, it remains theoretically possible that we are being deluded" (Hick 2005: 179).

know there is a God. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says "The pure in heart will see God" (Matthew 5:8). The apostle Paul claims "Even though our knowledge is now partial and incomplete, there will be a time in which 'I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely (1 Cor. 13:12).'" Jesus tells us that if we hold fast to his teaching then we will know the truth and it will set us free (John 8:31–2). It is a prayer of the early church that the Lord would "fulfill the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be best for us, granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Prayer of St. Chrysostom).

There is little within Christianity to support the thought found in Buddhism and Hinduism that the world is an illusion and that the human predicament is one of radically failed knowledge. Rather, at the heart of Christianity is the claim that we suffer from broken relationships. We are alienated from God, from other people, and from creation. This estrangement affects every aspect of human existence. Christians proclaim that Jesus saves us by restoring us to meaningful relationships with God, others, and creation. But restoration will always be a work in progress and will only be fully realized in the final chapter of history. Christians look forward to this day when our partial knowledge will be made complete in the presence of God in a redeemed creation. It is a crucial element of the Christian story that this complete knowledge is *embodied knowledge*. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a *bodily* resurrection. Heaven, the place of God's rule, is the redeemed physical creation.[2] We are not Platonic souls to be separated from decaying material bodies and then stare eternally at the forms. Rather, we are fallen human creatures that will be redeemed human creatures living in renewed communities on a restored earth. We now live under a vale of tears, but the veil will be removed and we will see things as God intends them to be. The first part of the puzzle arises from the Christian commitment that complete embodied knowledge is possible, indeed it is part of the Christian hope.

The second part of the puzzle arises from global skepticism. There are many kinds of skeptical positions, but I want to focus on a form of global skepticism which denies that embodied knowledge is possible. The first thing to note about global skepticism is that it is not a contingent thesis. Skepticism claims that the limitations imposed upon creatures like us are such that the truth-makers of our beliefs can't be present to consciousness in a way that satisfies the demands for knowledge. Global skepticism isn't a local predicament that can be effectively remedied by a change in location. Our epistemic predicament is, as the global skeptic sees it, unlike our inability to see distant billboards which can be alleviated by moving closer. Skepticism, in its most powerful form, claims that we cannot achieve embodied knowledge. As the

[2] See Wright (2008).

skeptic sees it, our beliefs are based on signs, and signs, by their nature, can be misleading; hence the kind of assurance knowledge requires cannot be achieved by creatures like us.

To sharpen the puzzle let us put on the table a particular global skeptical argument. One of my favorite skeptical hypotheses is known as "a Boltzmann Brain." Given what we know about the nature of the universe, it is a priori quite unlikely that we would have a state of low entropy like this, a state in which there are galaxies, stars, planets, persons, animals, and so on. A much more likely scenario is that a chance fluctuation of matter results in an isolated state of low entropy in which there is an isolated brain floating in space. This brain realizes conscious states and, we may suppose, formed with language and memories in place. The conscious subject of the Boltzmann brain—Brainy—is in a state phenomenologically indistinguishable from a normal embodied state of subjects like us. Brainy appears to be listening to a philosophy talk, thinking about the implications of Christianity and skepticism. The Boltzmann Brain is a evil demon hypothesis for those who like physics rather than theology.

The Boltzmann brain hypothesis generates the following skeptical argument.

1. Necessarily, if S knows that (e.g.) S has hands then S knows that S is not a Boltzmann brain.
2. Necessarily, S does not know that S is not a Boltzmann brain.

So,

3. Necessarily, S does not know that (e.g.) S has hands.

The proposition that *S has hands* is a paradigm proposition about embodied knowledge. If the argument succeeds for that paradigm then it undermines any embodied knowledge. We would not know that we live on earth, that we interact with other people, that we care for orphans and widows in distress, and so on. Moreover, the state of low entropy that results in a Boltzmann brain could make it seem as if one has entered heaven. That is, it is logically possible that Brainy is in a series of mental states that are phenomenologically indistinguishable from the states of redeemed persons in heaven.

So the second element of our puzzle arises from global skepticism which gives us some reason to think that embodied knowledge is not possible. The global skeptic correctly highlights that the epistemic difference between a redeemed person's phenomenal states in heaven and Brainy's phenomenal states is not a matter that is distinguishable purely on the basis of those states. The global skeptic takes this correct observation further by arguing that knowledge requires the ability to distinguish a good case from a bad case purely on the basis of one's phenomenological states.

We don't yet have a proper puzzle unless we have reason to think that both parts of the puzzle are true. This is especially pressing in the case of global skepticism. Immanuel Kant famously wrote,

> It remains a scandal to philosophy, and to human reason in general, that we should have to accept the existence of things outside us (from which after all we derive the whole material for our knowledge, even for that of our inner sense) merely on trust, and have no satisfactory proof with which to counter any opponent who chooses to doubt it.

Kant here contrasts *proofs*, which deliver knowledge, from *trust*, which evidently doesn't deliver knowledge. Yet we might reply to Kant with G. E. Moore that "I can know things that I cannot prove." And so in Moorean fashion we may well deny that there's any genuine puzzle because embodied knowledge is possible. We know that we are not a Boltzmann brain because we know that we have hands and it follows from that knowledge that we are not like Brainy.

I am sympathetic to the Moorean response. Our knowledge is not restricted to self-evident propositions and what can be deduced from such propositions. Knowledge is fallible. I know that I have hands even though the basis for this knowledge is compatible with my not having hands. If Brainy were actual then the basis for my knowledge would be much the same as the basis Brainy has. But Brainy isn't actual and I'm not in a low state of entropy like Brainy is.

Yet even granting fallibilism, our puzzle does not completely dissipate. First, consider people who are actually skeptics. These folks think that knowledge requires strict standards that can't be met. The predicament of skeptics will not be remedied by a change in location. Heaven will do nothing for actual skeptics in terms of improving their epistemic position. Imagine a redeemed David Hume teaching epistemology in the new Jerusalem. Even God can't reason Hume out of his skepticism. That's odd. Suppose God miraculously changes Hume's disposition so that he now rejoices in the presence of God. That's a significant change for Hume, but is it an improvement in Hume's epistemic position? Does he now know something that would answer his former skeptical doubts?

Second, fallibilism is often linked to views on which it is easy to lose knowledge. David Lewis (1996) thinks that knowledge is elusive. As soon as we start thinking about skeptical hypotheses we lose knowledge. It'd be odd to do epistemology in heaven and quickly lose knowledge that there's a God, that there are other people, that you have hands, and so on. Contextualists conjoin fallibilism with the claim that "knowledge" is a contextual term and that it can be used to express many different knowledge relations. Some knowledge relations are such that we stand in that relation to the target proposition but other knowledge relations are such that we don't stand in that relation. Epistemology seminars in heaven would have the result that we can no longer truly say that we know that there is a God, that there are other people, or that

we have hands. Subject sensitive invariantism has its own story to tell about fallible knowledge. But it too generates the result that if a subject's interests change in various ways knowledge can be lost in heaven.

Finally, moderate invariantists are prone to distinguish ordinary fallible knowledge from Cartesian knowledge and deny that we can have the latter even though we have the former. C. S Peirce introduces fallibilism as the claim that "We can never be absolutely sure of anything.... Fallibilism is the doctrine that our knowledge is never absolute but always swims, as it were, in a continuum of uncertainty and of indeterminacy." A nice feature of Pierce's view is that embodied knowledge is possible even if our epistemic position is not completely pure. On moderate invariantism, a heavenly subject would speak the truth to say things like "I know there's a God and that there are other people but I'm not certain of these things." Even on moderate invariantism, the logical possibility of a Boltzmann brain shows us that complete assurance that we are in heaven is not possible.

Given the Christian hope that we shall one day know completely as we are known completely, I find it puzzling that heavenly subjects may either lose knowledge or yet not have perfect knowledge. Paul, in 1 Cor. 13 writes,

> We know, in part;... but, with perfection, the partial is abolished... For at the moment all that we see are puzzling reflections in a mirror; then [with perfection, we see], face to face. I know in part, for now; but then I'll know completely, through and through, even as I'm completely known.

Paul speaks of epistemic improvement. Our knowledge is now incomplete, partial, like a puzzling reflection; but our knowledge will be made complete, full, like seeing a person face to face. How should we understand this epistemic improvement that not only *improves* our knowledge but makes it *complete*? It cannot be a matter of achieving Cartesian certainty. That isn't possible. And it would be inaccurate to say that we shouldn't take this as a literal epistemic improvement, but rather just achieving psychological certainty. I contend that we need to recover the thought that the epistemic improvement Paul speaks of is an epistemic ideal. The challenge therefore has three parts: first, this perfect knowledge is not Cartesian knowledge; second, we do not now have this knowledge; and third, we shall have perfect knowledge in heaven. The view I offer meets these three conditions.

The view I offer takes a kind of non-propositional knowledge as an exemplar of perfect knowledge. To anticipate this view let us consider the following analogy. Suppose shortly after returning to Shire from their adventures, Frodo and Samwise enroll in an epistemology seminar. They read about the Boltzmann Brain hypothesis, and over a pint of the Old Gaffer's best ale and some Southfarthing pipe-weed Frodo turns to Samwise and says that "I can't be assured of your friendship because for all I know I might be a Boltzmann Brain." The thought Frodo expresses strikes me as completely wrongheaded,

and not entirely for the fact that there are false implicatures at play. Frodo ought to be assured of Samwise's friendship. It's not as if his epistemic position with respect to Samwise is less than perfect. While Frodo lacks Cartesian knowledge, Frodo is in a perfect epistemic position regarding Sam's friendship. To think that Frodo ought to be anything less than completely assured of Sam's friendship is to think something false and immoral. I contend that Frodo's perfect knowledge of Sam's friendship is similar to the complete assurance the redeemed have in heaven. They have perfect assurance that there is a God, that there are other people, and that they have hands. Anything less than perfect assurance seems to not properly take into consideration the strength of the redeemed person's epistemic position. And yet global skepticism gives us reason to think that perfect assurance is impossible.

Following Chisholm's work on comparative and non-comparative appearances, we can distinguish between two senses of perfect knowledge: the comparative and non-comparative sense. The comparative sense holds that perfect knowledge is knowledge we have such that we don't have better knowledge; the uncomparative sense holds that perfect knowledge meets some standard, S, that is independently taken to characterize perfect knowledge. Global skepticism gives us Cartesian standards for perfect knowledge. I think we should instead hold up second-person experience, particularly the experience of perfect friendship, as a model for perfect knowledge. It's compatible with my view that there may be multiple exemplars for perfect knowledge; in mathematics, Cartesian standards are apt and yet in relationships a different exemplar is appropriate.

3.2. THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF LOVE

In this section I develop the idea that an exemplar for perfect knowledge is found in the epistemology of love. N. T. Wright, the eminent New Testament scholar, claims that "Jesus calls his followers to a new mode of *knowing*" (2008: 239). He speculates that the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love are ways of *knowing*. In his magisterial two volume work on Paul, he reads Paul as inaugurating an "epistemological revolution" which he describes as the epistemology of love (2013: 1354–407). Paul writes in 1 Cor. 8:1–3:

> We know that 'We all have knowledge.' [But] knowledge puffs you up, [while] love builds you up. If anybody thinks they know something, they don't yet know in the way they ought to know. But if anybody loves God, they are known by him.

In Gal 4:8 Paul explains what it is to know God. He writes,

> However, at that stage you didn't know God, and so you were enslaved to beings that, in their proper nature, are not gods. But now that you've come to know

> God—or, better, to be known *by* God—how can you turn back again to that weak and poverty stricken line-up of elements that you want to serve all over again?

Wright thinks that these passages, along with 1 Cor. 13, are at the heart of Paul's "revision of the epistemological order" (2013: 1361). Wright explains that we ordinarily think of human knowledge as detached from the things known. Humans acquire knowledge of things—the desk, the computer, the tree over there. Knowledge of God, however, is not knowledge of a detached thing. Knowledge of God is knowledge of a person. Moreover, knowledge of God is based on God's initiative. In contrast to knowledge of other persons, God must first reveal himself to be known. Wright says,

> Instead of humans acquiring knowledge of a variety of things within the whole cosmos, gods included, there is one God who takes the initiative. God's knowing creates the context for human knowing; and the result is not a knowledge such as one might have of a detached object (a tree, say, or a distant star). The result, to say it again, is love. (2013: 1361)

Wright contends that we see this transformation in Paul's famous love passage.

> Love never fails. But prophecies will be abolished; tongues will stop; and knowledge, too, be done away with. We know, you see, in part; we prophesy in part; but, with perfection, the partial is abolished . . . For at the moment all that we see are puzzling reflections in a mirror; then [with perfection, we see], face to face. I know in part, for now; but then I'll know completely, through and through, even as I'm completely known. So, now, faith, hope, and love remain, . . . and, of them, love is the greatest. (1 Cor. 13:8–13)

N. T. Wright's remarks on the epistemology of love are suggestive but lack the sophistication of a trained epistemologist. In the following I develop the epistemology of love through Eleonore Stump's recent work on second-personal experience. Stump has given us much valuable work on the nature and importance of second-person experience.[3] I want to use her ideas to develop the Pauline idea that in heaven we have perfect assurance. Stump's model of second-person knowledge (*knowledge de te*) illustrates N. T. Wright's intriguing but undeveloped remarks about an epistemology of love.

Stump picks up on the virtue of love through Aquinas. She explains that "For Aquinas, the best things and the worst things for human beings are a function of relations of love among persons, so that for Aquinas love is at the heart of what we care about" (2010: 21). In love, specifically the relation between beloved friends, there is a disclosure of another person. Love, therefore, is a way of knowing. This disclosure, made possible by love, is second-person experience. It is a revelation of personal presence. It is the kind of

[3] See Stump (2010, 2012, 2013).

presence that is absent when we say "He was at the table with us but never present since he had his face glued to his IPhone." Or, "I worked with him for years and he was always in the office but never really there. We finally connected with each other one day over lunch." It is suggestive that second-person experience requires love.

On Stump's view our knowledge of persons does not completely fit into the model of propositional knowledge. In the biblical story of Joseph and his brothers' journey to Egypt (Gen. 42), when Joseph sees his brothers in a crowd he knows them at once. Stump contends that Joseph's knowledge of his brothers is not reducible to propositional knowledge. To be sure, there are elements of propositional knowledge; for when Joseph sees his brothers and knows them at once, he knows that his brothers are in the market. But Joseph's knowledge of persons is a special kind of irreducible knowledge (2010: 53–6).

One test for propositional knowledge is transference by testimony.[4] If S knows that p then S can transmit this knowledge by testimony. But knowledge of persons can't be transferred by testimony. Frodo knows Samwise. But Frodo may tell Elrond about Samwise it doesn't follow that Elrond knows Samwise. Knowledge of persons, therefore, fails a standard test for propositional knowledge.

Stump refers to this kind of second-person knowledge as Franciscan knowledge, contrasting it with what she calls "Dominican knowledge." The former takes the paradigm of knowledge as the kind of knowledge disclosed in second-person experience (and which is found in narrative knowledge). The latter takes as the paradigm the kind of knowledge gained by reasoned argument. Dominican knowledge is, in her view, short-sighted because "there are things we can know that are philosophically significant but that are difficult or impossible to know and express apart from stories" (2010: 40). By stories we can come to know intimate details of real and fictional people. We can know what it is like to face grave evil without ourselves having faced it. As Stump sees it, stories are a means to second-person experience. Even so, it may be that the narrative knowledge is not exhausted by second-person knowledge together with propositional knowledge.

Stump defends the non-propositional nature of *knowledge de te* by a thought experiment inspired by Frank Jackson's (1982) famous thought experiment about Mary. In Jackson's story Mary is a renowned neuroscientist who specializes in color perception. Yet she is raised and confined to a black and white room. Mary knows every fact there is to know about color perception that can be gleaned from reading a book. Yet when Mary steps outside her monochromatic room and sees a bright red London bus for the first time she learns something new, she learns *what it's like to see red*.

[4] See Poston (forthcoming).

Stump tells the story of Mary who is deprived of any interaction with another person (2010: 52). Yet she reads all the books about inter-personal interaction on the assumption that the material contains only third-person accounts. This rules out Mary acquiring second-person experience through literature. She knows all the science of inter-personal interaction. She knows about mirror neurons and dyadic shared attention, but only in this third-person way. Mary knows every fact about second-person experience that can be expressed in third person propositional terms. Then, for the first time, Mary meets her mother who deeply cares for her. Stump writes,

> When Mary is first united with her mother, it seems indisputable that Mary will know things she did not know before, even if she knew everything about her mother that could be made available to her in non-narrative propositional form, including her mother's psychological states. Although Mary knew that her mother loved her before she met her, when she is united with her mother, Mary will learn what it is like to be loved. And this will be new for her, even if in her isolated state she had as complete a scientific description as possible of what a human being feels like when she senses that she is loved by someone else. Furthermore, it is clear that this is only the beginning. Mary will also come to know what it is like to be touched by someone else, to be surprised by someone else, to ascertain someone else's mood, to detect affect in the melody of someone else's voice, to match thought for thought in conversation, and so on. These will be things she learns, even if before she had access to excellent books on human psychology and communication. (2010: 52)

Stump here points to the phenomenon of personal connection. As the character Amy explains in *Gone Girl* personal connection is the goal of every relationship. She says, "I go on dates with men who are nice and good-looking and smart-perfect-on-paper men who make me feel like I'm in a foreign land, trying to explain myself, trying to make myself known. Because isn't that the point of every relationship: to be known by someone else, to be understood? He *gets* me. She *gets* me. Isn't that the simple magic phrase?" We might take this lead and change Stump's revised Mary case to a case of missed connection between mother and child that is made well when they each *get* the other. In this new found love, they both know each other and are known by each other.

In Stump's Mary case we see the special nature of *knowledge de te*. This knowledge cannot be fully expressed by propositional knowledge even though it involves propositional knowledge. It would be ridiculous to suggest that while Mary learns for the first time that she is loved by her mother, she does not know that her mother is real. And yet it would be equally absurd to say that Mary's knowledge of her mother's love is fully captured by a string of propositions she might read in an encyclopedia.

Knowledge of persons provides a new model of perfect assurance. In the analogy involving Sam and Frodo, the assurance that Frodo has of Sam's

friendship is perfect assurance. Frodo has perfect knowledge of Sam's friendship. Their friendship—in particular the awareness of mutual love—discloses personal presence. This experience of personal presence can provide perfect assurance of another. Now, it may be that there are epistemic hindrances to second-person experience which are not simply a matter of distance. We all suffer from lack of true virtue and this infirmity creates epistemic obstacles to perfect love. Any perception of greed or pride in another provides a genuine epistemic obstacle to the kind of personal revelation in *knowledge de te*. But note well that this skeptical problem to knowledge of persons is a local problem. We can have second-person knowledge in part, indeed in some special case we can have this knowledge in full. Heaven is the community of the redeemed and so there will not be evidence of human vice. Rather in the community of the virtuous we will experience for the first time true fellowship.

There may also exist epistemic hindrances to knowledge of God. In addition to concerns about God's moral character—concerns that are entirely misplaced if one is an Anselmian about the nature of God—the explanatory tradition of naturalism stemming from Darwin, Freud, and Marx poses intellectual obstacles to any second-person experience of God. This is salient for Stump's account since she allows for the possibility of second-person experience through literature. We can have second-person experience with a fictional person. Thus, if one has doubts that there is a God then one may think that second-person experience of God is an experience with a fictional character. The Scriptures are great literature and if one is so moved by the arguments against theism one may well think that experience of the divine is like second-person experience of Tom Wingo in the southern novel *The Prince of Tides*.

Stump thinks that second-person experience of God—particularly through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—is epistemically perfect. She writes,

> In the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God is present to a person of faith with maximal second-personal presence, surpassing even the presence possible between two human persons united in mutual love. It is a union that makes the two of them one without merging one into the other or in any other way depriving the human person of his own mind and self. (2013)

Stump's stress on the epistemic perfection of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, though, conflicts with Paul's thought in 1 Cor. 13 that we now know in part. My view is that we have glimpses of maximal second-personal presence with God, but that complete second-personal presence awaits future consummation. Furthermore, in the here and now we need Dominican knowledge to properly situate second-person experience in the context that includes both reason and argument *and* the kind of personal presence that is a key element to the Christian community. In my view these are both mutually supporting but that is a story for another occasion.

3.3. CONCLUSION

I've argued that we can recover the thought that in heaven we shall have perfect assurance, assurance that there is a God, that there are other people, that we have hands, and that we are not a Boltzmann brain. But the nature of this assurance arises from love. Only if we develop the virtue of love will we be in a position to have full, complete assurance.

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4

The Cognitive Dimension of Heavenly Bliss

Jonathan L. Kvanvig

When thinking about the epistemology of heavenly bliss, two thoughts come immediately to mind: the Thomistic idea of the beatific vision and St Paul's claims in I Corinthians 13 that though we now see obscurely in a mirror, though we now only know in part, then we shall see face to face and we shall know even as we are known. Here I will explore these two ideas, asking about the epistemic dimension of such an experience and beginning with an argument that both of them point toward a position which is hard to stomach: that in heaven, we'll be infallible and perhaps even all-knowing. Once this position and the grounds for it are in clear focus, I'll argue that it is a mistake and that a different account is available.

I will argue that a better understanding of both the language and motivations for talk of the beatific vision as well as the Pauline understanding, set in the context of emphasizing the centrality and significance of love in Christian life and thought, is found in terms of a different kind of awareness than the sort that threatens to require infallibilism and omniscience. Instead, we should think of such language in terms of knowledge of persons and the related idea of second-person awareness, a topic relatively new to the epistemological landscape.

I will begin with some background on the Biblical passage in question and the language of the beatific vision. After seeing how unpromising an explanation we find when we try to understand things in terms of the kind of knowledge appropriate for theological understanding, we will be in a position to appreciate the attractions of a second-person account of the matter.

4.1. THE THREAT OF INFALLIBILITY AND OMNISCIENCE

4.1.1. Aquinas and the Beatific Vision

The Catechism of the Catholic Church identifies the beatific vision in paragraph 1028:

> Because of his transcendence, God cannot be seen as he is, unless he himself opens up his mystery to man's immediate contemplation and gives him the capacity for it. The Church calls this contemplation of God in his heavenly glory "the beatific vision"…

Earlier, in the Apostolic Constitution issued in 1336, Pope Benedict XII wrote that in this Vision, we

> see the divine essence with an intuitive vision, and even face to face, without the mediation of any creature by way of object of vision; rather the divine essence immediately manifests itself to them, plainly, clearly and openly, and in this vision they enjoy the divine essence.…
>
> Such a vision and enjoyment of the divine essence do away with the acts of faith and hope in these souls, inasmuch as faith and hope are properly theological virtues. And after such intuitive and face-to-face vision and enjoyment has or will have begun for these souls, the same vision and enjoyment has continued and will continue without any interruption and without end until the last Judgment and from then on forever.

Here we find the central elements of the idea of the beatific vision. It involves a kind of knowledge or awareness that is intuitive and immediate, involving a kind of experience that is both contemplative and face to face. It is possible because of God's self-disclosure and some heightened capacity made available to the redeemed. The vision is beyond faith and hope, though the explanation of this claim is a bit terse: it is beyond these because they are properly theological virtues. We find in Aquinas, however, a more careful explanation: the vision in question is beyond faith because faith implies some imperfection in the understanding, and the vision is beyond hope because it involves a perfection of the understanding, whereupon the object of hope has been realized in immediate knowledge of the divine nature characterizable using the language of vision.

Finally, this vision is compatible with, and helps to impart, the full blessedness of heaven to the redeemed. Aquinas remarks that "Man is not perfectly happy, so long as something remains for him to desire and seek" (STh I-II), and since the blessedness of heaven involves both God's love for us and us for him, the vision must be broad enough and deep enough to remove all need for further desiring, striving, or seeking.

The beatific vision is thus characterized in terms of a distinction between mediate and immediate awareness, and the kind of knowing involved in such (since it could not be a perfection of the understanding if it involved a mental apprehension less impressive than knowledge). This distinction, central to foundationalism, thus suggests an account of the cognitive element involved in the blessedness of heaven that focuses on the idea that non-foundational knowledge (or belief) during one's earthly life will come to be known or believed foundationally, and with an enhancement in scope.

Such a mutation might seem perplexing to some, in the way it would be perplexing to be told that the theorems of arithmetic would become axioms of arithmetic in heaven. But we needn't be obtuse here. The foundational status of a proposition depends on the mental abilities or faculties of the individual in question. Those with fully functioning eyes can have propositions about the visible world count as foundational (or the seeming-correlate of such). Moreover, if we had enhanced cognitive powers, things would be foundational for us that are not now so. So there is no need for perplexity at the thought of some things being foundationally known in heaven that can only be non-foundationally known, if known at all, here.

A bit more troubling, however, is the identification of foundationalism with Classical Foundationalism common in the history of philosophy, and almost certainly the version of foundationalism held by Aquinas and others endorsing the idea of the beatific vision. In such a case, we would be understanding the beatific vision in terms of knowledge that is immediate because infallible. And more troubling still is the requirement for blessedness, that the vision in question is incompatible with something remaining to be desired or sought. If so, it looks like the idea of intuitive immediacy in the beatific vision gets one perhaps all the way to something like omniscience. For if the knowledge in question is theological knowledge, a full understanding of the divine nature would involve a revelation of everything about him, and such a full revelation seems to require that there be nothing left to learn. Curiosity not only kills the cat but also the blessedness of the beatific vision, it would seem.

As we will see, such troubling conclusions seem to apply to the language of St Paul as well.

4.1.2. St Paul and I Corinthians 13

St Paul tell us that we will no longer see through a glass darkly, but rather face to face, and we will no longer know only in part, but will "know as we are known." Such language signals an enhancement both in terms of quality and scope of knowledge. If we really will know as we are known, one might conclude from this that we will be infallible, since God's knowledge of us is of that sort. Moreover, the contrast is not merely one of quality, but also of

scope: we will no longer know only in part. So the enhancement makes our knowledge not only infallible but also in the neighborhood of omniscience. For nothing about us is hidden from God, and if his self-disclosure at the consummation makes our knowledge of him like the knowledge he currently has of us, then there will be nothing about God hidden from us. As before, that conclusion appears to imply omniscience, since there is no truth that a full understanding of God's nature would not reveal: for any true proposition *p*, God has the property of being responsible for the truth of *p*. So a full knowledge of God's nature will result in full omniscience.

4.1.3. Is the Threat Worrisome?

I have indicated that I find these implications troubling, but perhaps some won't. Why should it matter if the cognitive dimension of heavenly bliss involves infallibility and omniscience? Why not simply take the arguments to reveal an unexpected aspect of such bliss, to be embraced and celebrated?

It is not that these implications cannot be tolerated, but they seem too strong. I have no decisive argument for this conclusion, so will resort to something more akin to simply explaining my perspective on the matter. Especially, any approach to this issue that claims we will be omniscient in heaven is beyond belief. Some revel in the blurring of lines between mere humans and the divine, but my own sensibilities ask for a theology that respects the difference rather than blurs it. We may be images of God, but the image isn't the reality, and the omni-properties are some of the central features of divinity which shouldn't be confused with their reflections in creatures bearing such an image. It is central Christian doctrine that through the work of Christ we become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), but there are theological grounds for resisting the idea that deification or divination involves coming to share all of the aspects of the divine nature. The metaphysical attributes of transcendence and aseity, for example, cannot be possessed by us, nor can the eternality of God reside in a being that comes into existence. Moreover, central to a Christian understanding of exemplary moral character is the humility of Christ and the post-resurrection glorified body that nonetheless retains the marks of crucifixion. On this conception of partaking of the divine nature, we by grace come to display the divine moral character, including the central features of divine love that the Son shares with the Father, but we retain the marks of being creatures in the process. We thus should want to think of a desire for omniscience and other omni-properties not as a holy desire to be realized in the beatific vision but rather as a feature of our prideful condition, flowing from the kind of illegitimate desire for self-exaltation described in the doctrine of Fall. And we should thus think of any understanding of blessedness in heaven that makes omniscience or infallibility

a pre-condition for such blessedness as an understanding that confuses partaking of the divine nature with a stronger doctrine according to which we become gods in some more substantial and ontological sense, coming to share divine properties that a more circumspect assessment shuns. So, even if it is metaphysically possible for God to make us omniscient or infallible, there is some reason to question any account that makes these features a requirement for blessedness in heaven.

4.2. RESISTING THE THREAT

One might agree with the above reservations but remain attracted to the general lines of the account above, and thus be motivated to resist the reasoning used above to get to the conclusion that omniscience and infallibility are implicated in the account. One might begin by embracing the foundationalism involved but resisting the Classical Foundationalism in question. One might note, first, that the Pauline passage doesn't directly involve any commitment to foundationalism, and one might insist that if the description of the beatific vision does involve such a commitment, it isn't a commitment to Classical Foundationalism even if those giving the descriptions would have been assuming that position. On behalf of this distancing of foundationalism from Classical Foundationalism, we should remember that fallibilism about knowledge wasn't an unheard of position in the ancient world, having been first clearly formulated and defended by Philo of Larissa (159/8–84/3 BC), the last known head of Plato's academy during its skeptical phase, best-known as the teacher of Cicero.[1] So there can't be any argument that we must interpret the mediate/immediate distinction in infallibilist terms on the basis of some claim to the effect that a fallible interpretation was without precedent or impossible to conceive at the time in question.

Even if we resist this way of generating the requirement of infallibility, however, the threat still remains if we accept the other part of the argument, the part attributing omniscience in the afterlife. For if a person is omniscient, all of the beliefs in question will be indefeasible, and if you know that all of your beliefs cannot be defeated by any information you do not possess, and you also know that all of your beliefs are true, you have sufficient information to guarantee that anything you believe is true. That is, you will have information in your possession sufficient to guarantee the truth of what you believe.

It is worth noting, however, that this conclusion is not as much of a threat as it might initially seem, for it gives only a cheap imitation of real infallibilism

[1] For details about Philo's epistemology, see Brittain (2001).

and if there is a threat to this picture of the cognitive dimension of blessedness in heaven, it will require the real thing. Some remarks about infallibilism will help us appreciate this point.

4.2.1. Cheap and Substantive Infallibilisms

What is it to be infallible? The notion in question is clearly a modal one, and a natural starting point is with the ordinary language platitude "if you know you can't be wrong." Such a remark can be trivialized by exploiting a scope distinction while embracing the factivity of knowledge: it is a necessary truth that if you know *p*, then you aren't mistaken about whether *p*. But even if we characterize such a trivialization as uncharitable, it needs charitable refinement in order for the claim to be useful for our discussion. For without treating it as fallout from the factivity of knowledge, the claim looks straightforwardly false. Not even the poster child for infallibilist epistemology–Descartes–thought that infallibility requires an incapacity for being wrong. Descartes granted the possibility of the will outrunning the understanding, so even about matters regarding which we can have infallible knowledge, false opinions are easily within reach.

To avoid this objection, we must parse the platitude more carefully, and here David Lewis offers some help. He remarks,

> It seems as if knowledge must be by definition infallible. If you claim that *S* knows that *p*, and yet you grant that *S* cannot eliminate a certain possibility in which *not-p*, it certainly seems as if you have granted that *S* does not after all know that *p*. To speak of fallible knowledge, of knowledge despite uneliminated possibilities of error, just sounds contradictory. Lewis (1996: 549)

Lewis's view, however, remains murky, because of its reliance on the language of "ruling out." A natural interpretation of this phrase is in terms of knowledge itself: one can rule out a possibility when and only when one has information available that is adequate for knowing that the possibility in question isn't actual. Fans of epistemic closure principles, including the weaker transmission principle that competent deduction is always suitable for extending one's knowledge, should object: merely endorsing a closure principle shouldn't turn a fallibilist into an infallibilist.

The lesson here is that we need a more careful account of ruling out than the one used above. A natural understanding here is in terms of the quality of one's evidence for what one knows: to know *p* on the basis of evidence *e* requires that *e* is sufficiently fine-grained in its implications so that it singles out *p* from all its competitors. What would it take for *e* to have this property? It requires that *e* entail *p*, for otherwise it will leave open some $\sim p$ possibilities.

So a quite intuitive way to explain infallibilism is to say that it involves evidence that entails truth.

Such a characterization of infallibilism, however, should be rejected. It doesn't capture the heart of view since, I will argue, it leaves open the possibility of Cheap Infallibilism.

One obvious example of Cheap Infallibilism arises from a disjunctive account of the contents of perception. One might hold that one is in a different perceptual state when one is actually seeing an elephant from the state one is in when no elephant is present, even though one's perceptual state is indiscriminable by reflection from the former state (for representative literature on this view, see Byrne and Logue (2009)). If we include the contents of experience in the body of evidence available, then this disjunctive approach is a version of Cheap Infallibilism, since the body of evidence in question could not obtain without the belief in question being true.

Why shouldn't this cheapness be tolerated? I will say more later about what an Infallibilism worthy of the name should look like, but here a brief remark is in order. When we think about real infallibilism, it brings to mind something that, if we have it, it is all that is needed to avoid the challenge of skepticism. Note that Disjunctivism, even if true about perception, doesn't solve the skeptical challenge, since it involves the admission that it is indiscriminable from the perceiver's standpoint which of two different perceptual states obtain. My point here isn't that there is no good reply to the skeptical challenge in question, but rather that the infallibilism involved in Disjunctivism doesn't by itself eliminate the issue. That's what makes it a cheap imitation of the real thing, not the sort of accomplishment Descartes and other infallibilists wanted, one which by itself would silence any skeptic who embraced the account.

Another example of Cheap Infallibilism arises from the Williamsonian identification of knowledge and evidence (Williamson 2000). If one's evidence is exactly what one knows, then one's evidence entails anything known to be true.

As with the case of Disjunctivism, this infallibilism is cheap because no self-respecting skeptic would allow that such an infallibilism is enough to solve the skeptical challenge. I won't here try to say exactly what it takes to solve the skeptical challenge, but will only contrast the infallibilisms above with another that doesn't have this feature. The Cartesian project in the *Meditations*, if successfully carried out, would provide such a solution, and even the most recalcitrant skeptic should grant his point: that is why all of the controversy concerns whether the project can be successfully carried out.

To reinforce this claim about cheapness, it is worth noting that we can construct a theory of fallible evidence which nonetheless generates a version of Cheap Infallibilism about knowledge. Let e be adequate, basic (but fallible) evidence for p. Then build an epistemic logic that includes the following Deduction Theorem: if there is an adequate epistemic connection from e to

p (in a given context), then there is an adequate epistemic connection from no premises whatsoever for the conditional $e \rightarrow p$ (relative to that same context). Then adopt a theory of total evidence on which the total evidence includes all theorems according to the logic in question. One's body of evidence would then include both *e* and $e \rightarrow p$ in any context in which *e* provides adequate epistemic support for *p*, generating a Cheap Infallibilism built on a theory designed explicitly to be fallibilistic.

Of course, such a theory would be one on which one's evidence can entail the supported proposition in question even though that proposition is false, but if one can easily adjust the theory to claim that any evidence that can impart knowledge has to be true as well. In such a case, concerning justification, the theory involves an evidence base that entails whatever that base justifies, and concerning knowledge, the theory involves an evidence base that both entails what it justifies and guarantees the truth of what is believed. All the while being an infallibilism not worthy of the name.

4.2.2. Control as the Basis of Infallibilism

The approaches discussed so far try to explain the difference between fallibilism and infallibilism in terms of the notion of evidence itself or in terms of some degree of justification or epistemic chance that will rely on the notion of evidence or some surrogate for it, such as a reason for belief. Because of the difficulties noted above, it is unclear how to draw the needed distinction, and in the face of this issue, an alternative is to conclude that we shouldn't expect to find an adequate account of infallibility solely in terms of evidence and what it entails.

The Cartesian project is useful for pointing us in the right direction when looking for an infallibilism worthy of the term. Instead of thinking about a body of evidence that is truth-entailing, we might think instead of the degree to which we have control over cognitive matters. Fallibilists recognize that we need not only good cognitive equipment in order to achieve our intellectual goals, but we also need a cooperative environment. Such a stance involves an admission that getting to the truth, coming to know, is not something over which we have total control. In the context of the Cartesian project, this limitation is merely apparent. If we attend carefully to the distinction Descartes emphasizes between the understanding and the will, the Cartesian idea is that it really is up to us whether we are mistaken. For if we limit our opinions to the products of the understanding, not letting the will interfere, we have the opportunity of control over error so long as it is completely up to us whether to believe in accord with the understanding. The idea, then, is that infallibilism isn't so much a claim about truth-entailing evidence as it is about locus of

control and whether there is any need for a cooperative environment in the story about when we succeed in discovering the truth and when we don't.

Though these brief remarks need elaboration and clarification in order to yield a full account of the distinction between fallibilism and infallibilism, they give us enough background to return to the issue of whether the Pauline passage or the language concerning the Beatific Vision support the idea that we will be either infallible or all-knowing in heaven, whether in general or about some specific subject matter. In both cases, we have enough information to reject such requirements.

First, in the case of the language of the Beatific Vision, it is clear that the explanation of the enhanced vision is not something within our control, but rather a function of God's self-disclosure. As a result, it is best conceived in the same way as fallibilists characterize the need for a cooperative environment: we are simply not completely in charge. Moreover, when Paul remarks that we shall know as we are known, it is uncharitable to interpret this remark as imputing some God-like intellectual ability to us, one requiring either omniscience or infallibility. Instead, we must leave room for useful hyperbole, especially when it is clarified in the same passage by a distinction between direct and indirect seeing. The barriers to comprehension that we currently experience will no longer be present, so we will know directly, face to face, and that directness is of the same kind as God's own knowledge of us, which is never indirect.

4.2.3. The Threat of Omniscience

If the threat of infallibilism can be resisted in the above way, we can also see how to resist the threat of omniscience. As just noted, in the Pauline passage, we can allow hyperbole to play a role in Biblical language as it does in ordinary thought and talk. A bit more troubling, however, is the language of the treatise, where precision is at a premium. So when St Thomas requires of the beatific vision that it leaves us with nothing to desire or seek, it is not plausible to treat the remark as mere exaggeration.[2]

Even so, there are a number of ways to get past the idea that mere idle curiosity about something unknown would be sufficient to undermine the beatitude of the vision. On any account of the value of knowledge, there are more important truths to know and less important truths to know, and the possibility that curiosity about something can be idle curiosity shows that it is possible to have extensive enough knowledge of something that we are left

[2] Thanks to Cameron Domenico Kirk-Giannini for this point in his comments on an earlier version of this chapter, and for other helpful remarks as well.

with no desire to seek or strive for something more, even though there are things about which we might by idly curious. Exactly how to draw the distinctions needed is a task that remains, but we can acknowledge the necessity of the task while at the same time noting that we have sufficient information at present to conclude that the threat of a commitment to omniscience in Aquinas's description has been disarmed.

So resistance can succeed, but even if we aren't required to posit infallibility and omniscience in order to sustain the approach in question, there is still something troubling about it. For this account holds that the difference between the cognitive condition on earth and that of heaven is fundamentally theoretical: there we will know more comprehensively and directly, whereas here our theological knowledge is indirect and full of gaps. Even if the enhancements don't take us all the way to omniscience and infallibility, such a theoretical construal is nonetheless unsatisfying. Here the language of knowing face to face is instructively different from the language of knowing directly what we now know only indirectly. Our usual metatheory on the latter distinction relies on the language of foundationalism: it is one thing to know by testimony that your car is blue, it is another thing to know by seeing that your car is blue. One is direct and immediate, the other indirect and mediated. But the language of knowing face to face needn't be understood in terms of this foundationalism-inspired distinction and the kind of propositional knowledge upon which the distinction operates, and it is noteworthy that the approach in view concerning the cognitive element of blessedness in heaven focuses on the language of directness and immediacy, not on the language of knowing face to face. To see what happens when we focus more on the latter language is the topic of the next section.

4.3. KINDS OF AWARENESS

It is well known that not all knowledge is propositional and also well-known that the dominant question in the history of epistemology is whether the skeptic's attack on the idea that propositional knowledge is possible can be answered. Because the history of epistemology is dominated by conversations with the skeptic, it is not surprising to find only occasional glances in the direction of other kinds of knowledge. But there are such acknowledgments: *de dicto* attitudes are contrasted *de re* attitudes, and knowledge by description is contrasted with knowledge by acquaintance. More recently, it has been argued that knowledge *de se* is different from knowledge *de re* or *de dicto*, leading to interesting discussions of the relationships between these three kinds of attitudes and knowledge.

Even more recently, Eleonore Stump and others have suggested that there is a unique, second-person kind of awareness.[3] In keeping with the standard Latin terminology above, we might call it *de te* awareness, and the kind of knowledge it produces *de te* knowledge. Such knowledge is present in our normal awareness of other persons[4] and in the more specialized phenomenon of joint attention, where two persons are both aware of each other and a third thing, and also aware that the attention to the third thing is a shared attention.[5]

The study of second-person awareness and joint attention is a fascinating area of research in its own right, and useful in our context as well in virtue of providing an alternative model for the texts under discussion. In the context of the Pauline passage and the language of the beatific vision, such awareness provides resources for an understanding of the claims in question that does not impel us toward the problematic ideas of infallibility and omniscience.

It is easy to see how such a second-person perspective provides a useful rubric for understanding the Pauline passage. The metaphor of seeing through a glass darkly is contrasted with knowing face to face, a quintessentially second-person event. The second contrast—between knowing in part and knowing as we are known—is also usefully interpreted in this way. Though many of us have partial second-person awareness and experiences of God, our experience of God is typically partial in comparison with our experience of those closest to us. If we leave some room for hyperbole as a literary device, we don't need to think of knowing as we are known as signaling anything stronger than that our occasional second-person experiences of the divine nature will give way to second-person awareness involving divine self-disclosure that lifts back the features of divine hiddenness that characterize much of our earthly lives.

This understanding of the Pauline language leads straightforwardly to the language of the beatific vision, since characterizations of it emphasize God's self-disclosure as well. In this way, we get a straightforward understanding of these claims about the cognitive dimension of the blessedness of the afterlife while avoiding the difficulties encountered by the more theoretical and propositional approach discussed earlier.

There are, however, two concerns to note. The first is that there are hints in the passages under discussion of something that takes us beyond even second-person awareness. The Catechism says that the beatific vision requires God's self-disclosure, but it also implicates the giving of a new capacity, a capacity for seeing God as he is in immediate contemplation.

Moreover, Aquinas's remarks about the beatific vision seem to require cognitive enhancement as well. The vision is beyond faith because faith

[3] See, for example, Darwall (2009) and Stump (2010).

[4] For useful discussion, see Reddy (2008) and Goldman (2008).

[5] Excellent sources for the exploration of this phenomenon and attempts to understand it both in philosophy and in the sciences are Eilan et al. (2005) and Seeman (2012).

requires an imperfection of understanding, and the vision is beatific because the immediacy of it imparts full happiness or blessedness, which can only happen so long as nothing remains "for him to desire or seek."

So the second-person account of the cognitive dimension of heaven must face the question of enhancement, both of powers of the intellect and range of knowledge that results. This issue can easily take us on a path that rejoins the prior discussion, for talk of elimination of imperfection in the understanding is difficult to interpret in terms other than those involving propositional knowledge.

This problem meshes easily with a second issue, one that arises when we begin to try to think more carefully about what second-person awareness involves. Eleonore Stump has done considerable work on this issue, and her position is that second-person awareness involves non-propositional knowledge that can be communicated, if at all, only through narratives and stories. If second-person awareness generates knowledge that is not propositional, however, it is hard to see how it could impart the kind of blessedness that leaves nothing left to desire or seek, for one thing that might remain to be sought is propositional knowledge itself, or to put it more succinctly, one might still desire a more complete theology. In short, whereas the first approach pursued above seemed too theoretical—too propositional—the worry here is that the second-person approach isn't propositional enough since it may not be propositional at all. It would be nice if the second-person approach could be developed in a way that didn't force the pendulum to such an extreme rejection of the propositional view.

Moreover, there is something a little too inexplicable about the idea that *de te* awareness gives a "something we know not what" as an interpretation of the cognitive element of the blessedness of heaven. Yet, if we accept Stump's non-propositional characterization of second-person awareness, it appears we can have little to say about the Pauline passage and the beatific vision other than the path of the *via negativa*, saying only that the cognitive element isn't propositional (and hence not theological).

In the end, of course, mysteries are going to remain no matter what progress we make on these issues, but I think we can avoid having to resort to pure mystery here, and in a way that allows the *de te* approach to address the aspect of blessedness Aquinas points to, which seems to require some element of propositional knowledge. For Stump's defense of the non-propositional nature of second-person awareness needs further articulation, and once given, a bit more optimism about avoiding stark appeals to mystery is possible.

Stump begins by arguing for the plausible idea that second-person awareness cannot be reduced to propositional awareness, and then pursues the suggestion that the vehicle of narrative is the only way we have of conveying what is contained in second-person awareness. We are not here concerned with this second element of her view, but only the first. For even if the first

point is granted, it doesn't follow that there is any unique sort of second-person awareness, no unique *de te* attitudes to be found. For it is generally granted that *de re* and *de se* attitudes cannot be reduced to propositional awareness either. So the uniqueness claim needs to show that irreducibility to other attitudes besides *de dicto* ones.

Moreover, one should not characterize the failure of the reducibility claim with the further claim that an attitude is non-propositional in character. Here the relationship between *de re* and *de dicto* is usefully illustrative. If, like me, you think there are Russellian propositions, propositions with individuals as constituents, then you can't get irreducibility simply by noting that it is one thing to believe that the tallest spy is a spy and another to believe of Henry, who is the tallest spy, that Henry is a spy. The second is *de re* and the first *de dicto*, of course, but both can be propositional attitudes in spite of that difference. The difference, in this case, might be only the difference between a general proposition and a singular one (a Russellian proposition). Moreover, irreducibility can't be gotten from such examples by appeal to a scope confusion either: if I believe that the tallest spy is a spy, the tallest spy has the property of being believed by me to be a spy.[6] If the only evidence for irreducibility relied on the distinction between general and singular propositions, we could grant that neither attitude reduces to the other without granting that either attitude is non-propositional in character.

Of course, the spy example is only one piece of evidence used to argue for irreducibility, and perhaps others examples are better for implying something non-propositional here. Other examples arise from failure of substitutivity for co-referential terms in intentional contexts. If there are singular Russellian propositions, then the proposition that Cicero is Tully is the very same proposition as that Tully is Tully, but believing that Cicero is Tully is different from believing that Tully is Tully.

Notice, however, the example doesn't involve anything about *de re* and *de dicto*: both beliefs, claimed to be distinct, have precisely the same propositional content. The data in question are thus not grounds directly for the irreducibility claim but rather for a version of Fregeanism that claims that we need to think of belief as a three-place relation between a person, a proposition, and a mode of presentation rather than as a two-place relation between a person and a proposition. If we agree with this conclusion, what does it tell us about the difference between *de dicto* and *de re*? If one is latitudinarian enough about *de re* attitudes, the answer is "nothing at all," since it leaves this version of Fregeanism free to identify the domain of the *de re* with that of *de dicto* attitudes involving singular propositions. If one wishes to be more restrictive, however, insisting on some special connection to an object before allowing the

[6] There is a complication here about what to do if there isn't a tallest spy, but I won't go into that matter here.

presence of a *de re* attitude, we can still take *de dicto* attitudes to be fundamental and define *de re* attitudes in terms of *de dicto* (together with whatever special connection is required for the former).

In either case, it is either misleading or a mistake to say that *de re* awareness is non-propositional and can't be communicated by propositional claims. If some special connection is required to the object, for example, one can communicate the propositional content of the attitude and then remark on the need for a special connection. Of course, one can't, by doing so, impart the *de re* attitude itself, but who would have thought otherwise?

Just so, in the case of *de te* awareness, if it is explicable in terms of *de re* awareness, where the object of awareness is either a person or something identified as personal, similar remarks apply. Perhaps *de te* awareness involves an attitude that has a singular proposition as content, together with a special mode of presentation that is distinctively second-personal. Then the information presented might well be conveyed by narrative, but not uniquely so, it would seem: one could communicate the propositional content and then explain the particular kind of mode of presentation involved.

Of course, if one has had no experience of the sort in question, so one had no idea what a personal mode of presentation would be like, then this communicative effort would fail. Stump uses an analogical extension of Frank Jackson's Mary argument to argue for the uniqueness of *de te* attitudes. Jackson's original Mary example concerned the experience of seeing colors for the first time, but Stump's Mary learns language and everything else she knows from expository prose. She has never met another person, and when released into the world, meets her mother who loves her dearly. Mary already knew that her mother loved her dearly, but her face-to-face contact with her mother teaches her something new: what it is like to be loved by her mother.

It is important to note that Mary's impoverished condition in the learning environment could not have been solved by adding narrative literature to her curriculum. Reading narratives about personal engagement simply can't replace the experience itself. That requires a *de te* experience itself and perhaps a (*de re* or *de se*) awareness of its felt qualitative character. As before, however, the additional element added doesn't eliminate propositional content but supplements it with a special kind of mode of presentation. For Fregeans who grant the existence of singular propositions, the differences between *de re, de te, de se*, and *de dicto* come down to types of modes of presentation.[7]

This standpoint gives us the resources needed to embrace the *de te* approach to the passages under discussion without having to supplement this approach.

[7] All this without noting that even within the domain of the *de dicto* modes of presentation individuate beliefs with the same propositional contents both when the propositions are singular and when they are general: that is the general lesson of issues about reference and their extension to natural kind terms via twin-earth examples.

The point of this discussion is that when talking of second-person awareness, we can resist claims about such awareness being fundamentally non-propositional, involving a kind of content that can't be conveyed discursively but only through narrative or some other literary form. Instead, what we should note is that there is no substitute for the experience itself, and so no form of communication can take the place of the experience or awareness, when the attitude in question goes beyond the *de dicto*. This point remains true, whether the form of communication is propositional or narrational. In addition, the inklings of needed enhancement of our abilities remains, for it is central to the account of the beatific vision that it depends on God's self-disclosure. Such self-disclosure might also be described accurately in terms of an enhancement of our capacities, even if it is most accurately described in terms of God's self-disclosure. We can thus embrace the idea of a needed enhancement without also resorting to the language of pure mystery in characterizing what the needed enhancement involves.

4.4. CONCLUSION

This conclusion is comforting in the context of a *de te* approach to the language of Paul and the Thomistic idea of a beatific vision. We are not faced with the problem of claiming that the kind of content for experience that such language points to is non-propositional, and we are not required to claim that the sort of connection to the Divine that is involved is different from anything we've ever experienced before. First, it is not different because it is personal, and second, for those who have had glimpses of the divine in terms of special religious experiences, there has already been a taste of such in this life. Moreover, this approach leaves the mystery intact as well, since there should be no way to communicate fully the content of an experience we've never had, especially one depending so centrally on divine self-disclosure. We will know as we are known, in the sense that our knowledge will all be second-personal, as is God's knowledge of us now, and we will know immediately and directly, since all second-personal knowledge has this characteristic.

Even so, this approach is not without some philosophical bite to it. The first bite concerns the Thomistic account of the blessedness of the beatific vision, which involves there being nothing left to desire or seek. My central concern over such language is the threat that it will lead to a conception on which we are all in an eternally changeless state, rather than something more personal involving process and change. If the beatific vision truly does leave us without anything further to desire or seek, that claim needs to be handled with care to avoid a conception of the afterlife that denies the possibility of change or activity of any sort in the afterlife. I don't think such careful handling is

impossible, but the task is one best left for another time and place, resting the current inquiry on the conclusion that the language of *de te* awareness provides a better model of the cognitive condition involved in eternal bliss than that of a more *de dicto* approach.

A second problem afflicts the Fregean position more generally. For this focus on modes of presentation makes them primary from an epistemological and cognitive point of view: it is modes of presentation that drive cognition, especially inferences, and it is modes of presentation that guide behavior, to the extent that it is guided by cognitive content. These points lead quickly to the view that modes of presentation have to be given semantic content. Needless to say, developing a theory of this content is a project yet to be carried out, and modes of presentation remain creatures of philosophical mystery, even if we are forced to posit them.

In our context, though, a *de te* approach has pleasing features. In addition to those mentioned above, it has the additional feature of helping to explain the deep attraction most of us have for this aspect of the afterlife. Any felt attraction for God will make enormously attractive a future experience of significant second-personal interaction. It is an attraction we know quite well in this life: there are some people that you just have to meet—for example, those who have fallen in love with your children, those you have heard wonderful things about, and so on. How much more the idea of meeting God face to face.

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Part III

Virtue in Paradise

5

The Virtues in Heaven

Rachel Lu

In the fourteenth book of *De Trinitate*, St Augustine quotes a passage from Cicero's *Hortensius*, in which the great orator reflects on the future that may await him if, as ancient legends suggest, great thinkers are permitted to dwell postmortem in the isles of the blessed, where the wisdom-loving soul may rest forever in contented contemplation.

> What need would there be of eloquence, when there were no trials; or even of the virtues themselves? For we would not need courage, when we were faced with no toil or danger; nor justice where there was no one else's property to desire; nor temperance, to control lusts that would not exist; nor should we even need prudence when we were faced with no choices of good or bad. We should be happy, therefore, by means of just one thing: the understanding of nature and knowledge, which is the only thing for which even the life of the gods is to be praised. (*De Trinitate* 14.3.12, translation mine)

One has to smile a bit at Cicero's longing for a life in which *eloquence* was no longer needed. More important than this, however, is the difficult philosophical question he raises. Are the *virtues,* like political acumen, unique to this lifetime? Will they be happily obsolete in the world to come, when hardships and sorrows have ceased? Does their value extend beyond their usefulness in weathering the trials of an imperfect existence?

Following Aristotle, Cicero supposes that the virtues will be unneeded in the afterlife. For these thinkers, cardinal virtues are *political* virtues; their function is to enable the virtuous person to manage his affairs, both socially and domestically. In this life, the cardinal virtues are indispensable for human thriving. If, however, we could fashion a world in which there was no threat to the integrity of self, household or society, the Aristotelian cardinal virtues would no longer be needed. Like weapons in a world without war, they would become superfluous, and the soul could rest content in enjoyment of the good.

Augustine in general admires Cicero's discussion of the philosophical life. Nevertheless, he disagrees with this conclusion. He is happy to follow the great Roman orator in his suggestion that in the world to come

> good souls are simply happy with awareness and knowledge. That is to say, they are happy in the contemplation of nature, and within nature there is nothing better or more lovable than that nature which created and established all other natures. (*De Trinitate* 14.3.12, translation mine)

In Augustine's conception, however, the virtues should be understood more broadly. Justice, for example, is "being subject to that nature (which created and established all others)"; as such, it certainly does not vanish in the next life. For Augustine, justice reaches the peak of its perfection when nothing hinders the soul from subjecting itself, in the fullest and most voluntary way, to God. In a similar way he speculates that:

> Perhaps then the other three virtues too will continue in that happy state. Prudence will now be without any danger of mistakes, courage without any annoyance of evils to be tolerated, and moderation without any recalcitrant lusts to control. Prudence will mean not putting any good above or on a level with God; courage will mean cleaving to him with absolute constancy; temperance will mean taking pleasure in no guilty failing. What justice does now in assisting the needy, prudence in taking precautions against pitfalls, courage in enduring trials, temperance in curbing depraved pleasures—there will be none of this where there is simply nothing evil. And so these activities of the virtues which are necessary for this mortal life, like faith to which they should all be related, will be reckoned as things of the past. (De Trinitate 14.3.12, translation mine)

Augustine's view is offered only briefly, and somewhat tentatively, since it is but a small part of his larger project of explaining the Holy Trinity. Still, even these brief remarks provide the beginnings of a provocative view of the virtues. Insofar as the cardinal virtues are definitely connected to the trials of this lifetime, they do indeed lapse into a state of passivity once mortal existence has passed. The relevant dispositions remain, but without giving rise to actions. However, the cardinal virtues are more than just regulatory powers, and in a broader sense their scope may indeed reach beyond the temporal cares of this lifetime. Although they are no longer needed for the sake of avoiding temptation or weathering danger, these virtues may find a different and more elevated application in the world to come.

Brief as it is, this passage from *De Trinitate* is regularly cited by later medieval thinkers who offer a more sustained treatment of the issue of virtue in heaven.[1]

[1] This is not to imply that Augustine was the first to treat this topic, which had been debated extensively by the Platonists through the preceding centuries. However, Augustine's text can truly be said to be a "kernel" for medieval thought, since it was the historical text most often referenced by the philosophers of the high Middle Ages in their treatment of heavenly virtue.

Let us then consider the views of St Thomas Aquinas and St Bonaventure on this subject. The views of these two philosophers are illuminating both in their similarities and in their dissimilarities. Both agree that humans find their final fulfillment in heaven, where the soul can be united with God. Both agree about *which* virtues will remain in the heavenly realm, and each sustains Augustine's view that the cardinal virtues are among those that will survive death. But there are substantial and intriguing differences in their accounts of *why* and *in what way* the cardinal virtues will remain in heaven.

Aquinas' view, which I will detail first, extends Augustine's position in a very natural way, and in so doing offers a sophisticated and carefully developed explanation of the role of the virtues. But, as I will show, there are some appealing features of Bonaventure's position that the Thomist view cannot easily integrate, and in the end Bonaventure opens the path to a thought-provoking counterpoint to Aquinas' view. For both philosophers, their discussion of the cardinal virtues also opens a window into their thinking about the nature of heaven, and what human life there might be like.

5.1. THE THOMISTIC VIEW

Why *wouldn't* the cardinal virtues remain in heaven? We might begin with Cicero's position, which, as a seemingly faithful extension of an Aristotelian conception of virtue, deserves a more complete response.

Aquinas addresses the issue by drawing a distinction between *acquired* and *infused* virtues. Acquired virtues are developed through habituation and training, as Aristotle's account in *Nicomachean Ethics* (1103a–5a) explains. In rough outline, the virtuous Aristotelian is a person who has learned to identify correctly the place of different goods within a rational life. The temperate person understands the appropriate place of the sensual pleasures in the well-lived life, and he indulges in them in just the right ways, as reason demands. The courageous person can perceive when it is necessary to stand in the fact of danger. Just people do their part to give each his due. Each virtue requires us to recognize what reason demands, and train ourselves to act accordingly. But their objects are temporal, hence Cicero's claim that the cardinal virtues remain active only in the presence of their temporal, earthly objects.

Aquinas agrees with Cicero in this, and accordingly, holds that the acquired virtues will not remain in the life to come. Because the acquired cardinal virtues are from the beginning ordered to exclusively earthly ends, they cannot survive physical death. In the *Disputed Questions on the Virtues,* he explains that

> the *acquired* civic virtues, which the philosophers discuss, are ordered only to perfecting human beings in civic life, not to perfecting them as ordered towards the winning of heavenly glory. That is why the philosophers held that this type of virtue does not remain after this life, as Augustine tells us was true of Cicero…on the other hand, the cardinal virtues as given by grace and *infused…* perfect us in the present life for being ordered towards heavenly glory. (*Disputed Questions on the Virtues (DQV)*, Q. 5, a. 4)

By positing two different sorts of cardinal virtue, Aquinas is able to endorse both Cicero's point and Augustine's. Acquired virtues fall into disuse in the absence of earthly objects, but infused virtues have a more exalted object that will be found only in the life to come. Thus, infused and acquired virtues are distinct both in their origin and also, as Aquinas here argues, in their scope. Unlike acquired virtue, which draws on resources already in the soul, infused virtue is poured into the soul through a special act of grace (*DQV*, Q. 1, a. 10). But in addition to its supernatural origin, infused virtue also has a supernatural end, and the actions that follow from it direct the agent toward her supernatural end.

Despite their supernatural orientation, infused virtues can still respond to earthly goods. The supernaturally virtuous person should live rationally in this life as well, and the infused virtues can help with this. Thus, these virtues are *contingently* concerned with natural goods so long as the virtuous agent's circumstances require this, even though they are ultimately oriented towards the supernatural.

How exactly does this work? Aquinas explains through a more general discussion of events that naturally occur in an "ordered series" (*DQV*, Q. 5, a. 4). Sometimes a particular skill or disposition can appropriately be applied to an activity or endeavor that involves multiple stages. Thus to borrow Aristotle's example (cited by Aquinas), a master builder will begin a project by laying a foundation, and will continue through a series of other stages—putting in main supports, adding a roof, and then finishing other details such as cutting windows and adding insulation. Each stage of construction involves different procedures and has a different specific end in view. But all contribute to the final end of the project, namely, the completed building. Importantly, all the phases of the project will be under the supervision of the master builder; all are within his area of professional competence. Thus, his skill in building makes possible the management of each part of the ordered series of changes, all directed at one final end.

Aquinas thinks that something similar is possible in the case of a virtue. He explains:

> But where the upper limit (*ultimum*) of the virtue differs in kind, but is still contained under the same series of changes, so that it reaches from one to

> another, then there will be a different kind of activity, but the virtue is the same throughout. For example, courageous activities are ordered to one upper limit before the battle, to another during it, and to yet another when victory is secured. Hence, the actions of approaching the battle, standing one's ground courageously during it, and rejoicing at winning a victory are different; the courage, though, is the same. (*DQV*, Q. 5, a. 4.)

Depending on conditions, the level and type of activity that can be expected of the virtuous agent will vary. So, for example, a prudent parent may reasonably demand obedience from a young child, even in situations in which the child fails to understand the reasoning behind the instructions. As the child matures, however, the virtuous parent will gradually modify her expectations to allow the child more responsibility and freedom. Her character may remain equally virtuous throughout the process, but precisely because she does possess prudence, she is able to adjust her behavior in order to facilitate the child's moral development.

The upper limit of a virtue can also change more rapidly with changing external circumstances, as in Thomas' example of the brave soldier, who will be called to do different things before, during, and after a battle. At each stage, virtue demands a different activity, but the regulating virtue (courage) itself remains the same.

As human beings progress through earthly life, death, and post-mortem existence, their virtues will manifest themselves differently, representing another ordered series of changes. Just as the soldier progresses through battle, virtuous human beings progress though life (and death), at each stage doing what virtue demands. Like the master builder, the virtuous person directs his attention toward the immediate task at hand, which in earthly life may be avoiding erroneous decisions, regulating pleasures, facing pain and hardship, and so forth. In heaven, the same virtues will be redirected toward seeing God, desiring God, holding fast to God and submitting ourselves entirely to his guardianship.

Aquinas summarizes his position as follows:

> The cardinal virtues concern things that contribute to the end, but not in the sense that their ultimate end is found *in* them, in the way that the ultimate end of a ship is sailing. Rather, it is *through* the things that contribute to the end that the cardinal virtues are ordered to the ultimate end. For example, grace-given temperateness does not have as its final end moderating the sensual desires for things we touch, but it does this for the sake of the blessedness of heaven.
>
> (*DQV*, Q. 5, a. 4.)

So, the infused cardinal virtues do regulate the agent's dispositions with respect to created goods, but only as an intermediate step along the road to the final end of blessedness in heaven.

5.2. PROBLEMS IN THE THOMISTIC VIEW

Aquinas makes clear that the cardinal virtues will remain active in heaven, but unfortunately, he never explains in much detail what the "characteristic activities" of the cardinal virtues will be in that sphere. He does, however, quote Augustine with approval, implying that the characteristic activities of the virtues in heaven will be directed immediately towards God. Insofar as this is Aquinas' view, it might seem to raise certain problems with other aspects of his thought. For one thing, how is it possible for the virtues of temperance or courage to be directed immediately toward God when, as Aquinas has explained elsewhere, they are located in the sensory powers? Also, if the cardinal virtues find their proper end in God directly, how are they ultimately different from the theological virtues?

The question of sensory powers is important, because Aquinas regards the sensory powers as suited only to the comprehension of created goods. They are not capable of perceiving the Divine. "These effects," he explains, "are not equal to the power of their causes" (*Summa Contra Gentiles*, 1.3). But if two of the cardinal virtues are located in the sensory powers, and the sensory powers cannot perceive God, then how is it possible for the cardinal virtues to be directed immediately toward God? Aquinas addresses this in reply to an objection, explaining that

> The virtues in question (that is, courage and temperance) exist in aggression and sensual desire in that they flow through them, but their origins and predispositions are in the reason and will; this is because the principal action of moral virtue is choice, which is an action of the rational desire. But the choice in question is applied by means of temperateness and courage so that it finally reaches the emotions of the aggression and sensual desire. (*DQV*, Q. 5, a. 4)

So Aquinas supports Aristotle's point that courage and temperance can, in *this* life, be found in the sensory powers. Nonetheless, he distinguishes between the origins of these virtues, and the medium through which they manifest themselves in this earthly life. Perhaps surprisingly, he ends up claiming that, like the created goods that are their primary area of concern here below, the sensory powers are not *necessary* to the existence of these virtues; their connection to the sensory powers is more contingent. In heaven, the same virtues can manifest themselves in a different, non-sensory form.

This solution may feel like a bit of a fudge. Looking back to his discussion of temperance and courage in the *Summa Theologiae*, there seems to be certain tensions in Aquinas' view. For example, his statements that courage "is primarily about the fear of difficult things" (*ST* II-II, Q. 123, a. 3) and that "temperance is about pleasures of touch" (*ST* II-II, Q. 143, a. 1) would seem to imply a view more like Cicero's, wherein the virtues must have material objects in order to be actively exercised. Why doesn't Aquinas mention at

that point that the connection to the sensory powers (and their proper objects) is merely contingent?

When we consider the distinction between the cardinal and theological virtues, the problems only intensify. Theological virtues are by their nature directed towards God, but *not* located in the sensory powers. The question becomes: why do we need cardinal virtues to extend beyond the sensory when the theological virtues already provide us with a set of God-oriented, non-sensory virtues?

The puzzle can perhaps best be illustrated using a particular pair of virtues, such as courage and hope. Augustine has declared (with Aquinas' approval) that courage in heaven will mean "cleaving to God with absolute constancy." But earlier in the same work, Aquinas has already told us that hope will find its object (and thus cease to be needed) when the saints in heaven "hold fast to God's help" (*ST* II-II, Q. 143, a. 1). These sound like remarkably similar goals. And yet, how could two different virtues aim at the same final end? Wouldn't this make them, in some sense, the same virtue? How can it be that the virtue most constantly focused on God actually *disappears* once God is reached, while the virtue that was formerly focused on temporal things remains? This seems a strange arrangement.

To understand what's going on here, it will be helpful to turn briefly to the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. Here Aquinas discusses the means by which humans can know God in this earthly lifetime, given the epistemic limitations intrinsic to moral life. His remarks on the limitations of human reason may help illuminate his discussion of the virtues.

Aquinas suggests that there are two senses in which human beings can *believe in* God. Through observation of the natural world, they can come to know conclusively that God exists (though this would be a fairly limited, philosophical conception of God, more along the lines of Aristotle's First Mover.) Then, through the virtue of faith, people can become familiar with other truths about God that are beyond what the human senses could actually perceive.

Aquinas holds that it is not possible for human beings to know God directly in this lifetime. That is because human knowledge, in his view, originates in sensory perception. As explained above, the sensory powers are inherently unable to grasp the divine nature, and for this reason, any understanding mortal human beings have of God must proceed along two imperfect lines. One is through the proofs of sensory perception, which qualify as real knowledge, but fall well short of grasping God's true nature. The other is through faith. The person of faith will potentially be able to say quite a lot about God's nature (including many things that are not per se knowable), but he will need to accept these truths through faith, without real knowledge of the truth of what he says.

Turning back to our pairings of cardinal and theological virtues, we can see a similar sort of bifurcation. A person's approach to God is mediated. On the one hand it passes through created goods that reflect the divine image even while falling far short of its greatness. On the other, it is mediated through virtues specifically intended to direct the soul toward God before the soul can experience the divine presence. The first of these methods of approach gives rise to the cardinal virtues. The second gives rise to the theological.

In a way, we might think of these as the "positive" and "negative" paths to God. One occupies itself in the here and now with the created goods that present themselves in earthly life, with the ultimate goal of turning that same capacity toward God in the world to come, where the soul will not be subject to earthly limitations. Thus, courage trains the soul to cling fast to what is good, even in the face of trials and temptations. The tenacity that is developed through this "conditioning" will prepare the soul to cling fast to God, the greatest good, in the hereafter. Here the soul clings to God, not because there are further hardships to be endured, but rather because this secure attachment is most conducive to the person's thriving. Meanwhile, the theological virtues take God as their direct object even in this lifetime. But this means they must "work blind" in a sense, accepting that for the course of the present lifetime, their object is inherently out of reach. The hopeful person learns to trust in God despite the uncertainties that come with a fallen world and a fallible existence. Coping with God's absence is, in a sense, the primary function of a theological virtue like hope, and this is why Aquinas holds that the saints cannot hope in God, since their end is already attained (*ST* II-II, q.18, a.2).

Courage and hope both find their fulfillment in clinging steadfastly to God. They certainly have much in common; both represent an excellence of the spirited part of the soul, and both come to the same final resting place. But they create two different arcs that mirror one another, ultimately coming together at the same point. Hope as a "virtue of absence" dissipates in heaven when it is no longer necessary for the soul to cope with the absence of God. Courage, as the positive virtue, comes to its perfect end when its ability to cling fast to the good is applied directly to God, the most perfect possible object.

All virtues are ultimately ordered by charity, and in this sense the cardinal virtues are certainly subordinate and lesser virtues, even in their perfected state. Still, the cardinal virtues will eventually be able to enjoy God, not only in a mediated way through the help of the higher virtues, but directly. Even those virtues that originally concerned themselves with created goods eventually come to a supernatural fulfillment, so that the blessed in heaven can immerse themselves entirely in God's love.

5.3. THE BONAVENTUREAN VIEW

For Bonaventure, as for Aquinas, the Beatific Vision is the most complete final end for all human beings. There is significant disagreement between them, however, on the nature of the cardinal virtues. Aquinas, as we've just seen, argues that the infused cardinal virtues are ultimately directed toward God as their final end. Bonaventure, by contrast, holds that the cardinal virtues must always and only be directed toward created goods. This, for him, is simply definitive of cardinal virtue as such.

Like Aquinas, Bonaventure draws a distinction between a person's natural end and the more complete, supernatural end that is finally found in God. Like Aquinas, he thinks that a person needs to be properly disposed with respect to the created world, most especially because this is a prerequisite for being properly disposed toward God. In the third book of his *Commentaries on Lombard's Sentences*, Bonaventure offers the following explanation:

> But the powers of the soul are divided into two parts, with two areas of concern. These are directed towards the lower and the higher ends, towards the created good and uncreated good, and towards an end and that which is ordered towards an end. Therefore, when it is said that the soul is adequately formed and reformed through the (theological) virtues, this is true with respect to the higher good. But it doesn't follow from this that the cardinal virtues are superfluous, because they shape and restore the soul with respect to a created good, and to that which is ordered to the final end. (*Commentary on Lombard's Sentences*, Quaracci edition, 3.33.1.1 ad.3, translation mine)

Both Aquinas and Bonaventure, then, believe that the soul shares in a natural and a supernatural order, and must be rightly disposed with respect to each. The supernatural is the final end, and the natural is only "that which is ordered to the final end." Complete goodness is found in God alone.

Examining the premises Bonaventure has given us so far, we can see that 1) the natural order contains only lesser goods, which are ultimately ordered to a more final end, and 2) the cardinal virtues are necessarily ordered toward this lesser, subsidiary order. Thinking back to the logic of Cicero, then, would it be right to conclude that on this view, the cardinal virtues are needed only in this lifetime, and are not to be found among the saints?

In his discussion of the cardinal virtues in heaven, Bonaventure divides the infused virtues into three different kinds. The first type of virtue carries over from the earthly realm into the heavenly, but is supplemented, so that whatever of the virtue was possessed on earth will be perfected in heaven. Although Aquinas does not classify the virtues in precisely this same way, it seems reasonable to suppose that he would put the cardinal virtues in this first category. For Bonaventure, however, charity alone falls into this category.

The second type of virtue is *not* found in heaven, but only because the relevant earthly disposition is incompatible with its perfect fulfillment. Faith and hope are the two virtues that fit into this category, because, as discussed above, their earthly dispositions are ordered specifically toward people who lack the ability to see or know God. The soul that is able to see and hold fast to God will not need faith or hope, and so these virtues will vanish upon reaching their fulfillment, in much the same way that medicine loses its potency when health is achieved.[2]

The third type of virtue does remain in heaven, but it remains, as on earth, not a fulfilled final end in itself, but rather a *disposition* toward its end. The cardinal virtues fit into this third category. In Bonaventure's view, they will continue through eternity to order the saints rightly toward created beings (or "self and neighbor" as he prefers to say) while these, in turn, will continue to point ultimately toward God, the final end.

> For the ultimate end of those highest virtues is the highest good, which is the God that is seen, loved and held [by the virtuous soul.] And just as there are these three acts, so the soul is endowed with three powers. However, none of these acts is an act of cardinal virtue, because the cardinal virtues were never elevated to have God as their object; otherwise they would change into theological virtues and cease to be cardinal virtues. However, with respect to these glorious acts the cardinal virtues will be just like dispositions. Just as on earth it is possible to do things, not through the virtues themselves, but because we are *disposed* through the virtues to do them, so it will be in heaven. And from this all of our good activities will be strong and just, prudent and chaste, just as justice precludes wickedness, prudence excludes all error, courage all pain and temperance all repugnant lusts, according to what Augustine said and the Master mentioned in the Sentences. And so it is clear that the cardinal virtues will remain in heaven, in a more excellent mode than on earth. (*Commentary* 3.33.1.6)

Bonaventure's account enjoys the advantage of being conceptually neater than Aquinas', insofar as it draws a clearer distinction between the cardinal and theological virtues. (This is also one respect in which Bonaventure's account seems to differ from Augustine's, despite his implication in the passage that he is in agreement with Augustine.) The distinction between the cardinal and theological virtues on earth holds also in the heavenly realm, such that it is not

[2] It may seem strange that achieving a perfected state could involve *losing* two virtues. Really, of course, nothing significant is lost by the redeemed soul, because faith and hope simply cease to *be* virtues for the person who has attained their proper object. It would be wrong to conclude, however, that faith and hope are merely instrumental and that the attendant dispositions simply lose all relevance once beatitude is attained, in something like the way that skill at marksmanship loses its relevance once the war is won. The belief of faith gives way to the certitude of seeing, and the perseverance of hope finds its completion in the successful attainment of its goal, but the meritorious dispositions that are attendant on these virtues contribute to the completeness of the virtue of charity. Aquinas discusses this in *DQV,* Article 4, and Bonaventure addresses the question in *Commentary,* 3.33.1.1.

necessary to speculate on how the virtues might fit into an ordered series. Each sort of virtue has its own distinct subject matter, which is particularly advantageous given that both Aquinas and Bonaventure mainly discuss the cardinal virtues throughout their ethical writings as virtues that are ordered towards earthly goods.

On the other hand, this view has some curious features of its own. Why, if a person has reached her final end, should she still need dispositions that *lead to* that end? Wouldn't these become superfluous for someone already resting securely in the enjoyment of God's truth, beauty and love? Going back to Aquinas' analogy, it almost seems that Bonaventure has agreed that the cardinal virtues are like the ship that transports the virtuous to the heavenly kingdom. On his account, though, the blessed must drag their ships with them throughout eternity, even though the destination has been reached.

One solution that might initially look promising here is the "inclusivist" approach to the final end. This sort of solution, perhaps most commonly discussed in an Aristotelian context, designates a final end, but allows that smaller amounts of goodness might still be *added* to that end even when the highest good has already been achieved.[3] So, for example, even granted that union with God is the *single* best thing a person could enjoy, might not there still be some further goods that could be accumulated *in addition to* this good? Would the Beatific Vision be made even better if it were supplemented by a delicious Pinot Noir or a relaxing walk on the beach?

If Bonaventure could answer this question in the affirmative, his position would become readily understandable, because the goods attained through the perfected heavenly cardinal virtues could then be understood as an unnecessary, but still genuinely good, addition to the bliss attained in the Beatific Vision. If being in a right relationship with God were worth one thousand units of happiness, being rightly ordered towards other people might count for considerably less (a few dozen, say.) Still, the cardinal virtues might be worth having even if their overall contribution to heavenly bliss is comparatively meager.

However, it seems unlikely that Bonaventure would consider this sort of solution. The inclusivist view would give created goods a kind of independent status apart from the final end, whereas Bonaventure, throughout his discussion of the cardinal virtues, repeats again and again that they are directed at "the things that point towards the end." He further specifies that the cardinal virtues are unable, in themselves, to make us happy or fulfilled; their value is in leading the soul back to its final end in God, not in making the Beatific Vision just a tiny bit sweeter.

[3] For a more detailed discussion of inclusivism in Aristotle as considered in the context of medieval philosophy, see Bradley (1997: 377–90).

Bonaventure views the cardinal virtues as fixed, stable dispositions that never reach a point of complete fulfillment, but that continue to form a non-eliminable part of the saints' heavenly life. In order to be rightly ordered toward God, the saints must remain consistently ordered toward created goods, just as they do on earth.

Why is this a necessary in order to maintain a properly saintly character? For Aquinas, as we have seen, the cardinal virtues are equipped to regulate the agent's responses to earthly goods, but they do this only insofar as circumstances require it; in heavenly existence they will direct themselves toward God, their true and proper object. Bonaventure, by contrast, wants the cardinal virtues to remain ordered toward created goods even if there are no created goods at hand, and he regards this orientation as an important part of the perfected human state.

Bonaventure's view is initially puzzling, but it might make sense if a right ordering toward created goods were simply constitutive of what it is to be rightly ordered toward God. Consider, as an analogy, the musical training of a great composer. In his early years, such a person will probably receive instruction in the fundamentals of musical theory. He will write simple four-part chorales, work through exercises in counterpoint, and learn to identify different chord progressions. As his skills develop, the "rules" that he learned in his early days will eventually become internalized to the point where he no longer needs to think about them. He will even come to understand where it is appropriate to break them. Although the counterpoint exercises are left behind, their effect on the composer's sensibilities is more lasting.

Something similar may apply to the dispositions of the saints with respect to created goods. In particular, the developmental theme seems appropriate for expressing what Bonaventure probably has in mind here. Throughout his mystical writings, Bonaventure returns again and again to a model wherein the human soul progresses from the appreciation of natural beauties, to the contemplation of his own soul, to a final exalted state in which the soul's gaze comes to rest directly on divine things. Each stage contributes something significant to the person's development and prepares it for the next stage. Early in the *Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum*, Bonaventure writes,

> In relation to our position in creation, the universe itself is a ladder by which we can ascend into God. Some created things are vestiges, others images; some are material, others spiritual; some are temporal, others everlasting; some are outside us, others within us. In order to contemplate the First Principle, who is spiritual, eternal and above us, we must pass through his vestiges, which are material, temporal and outside us. (Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum*, ch. 1, part 2)

The ladder analogy, while clearly establishing the developmental character of the ascent to God, may also be problematic in some respects. A ladder, after all, is a mere instrument. For a person who has no intention of ever coming

down, there doesn't seem to be any harm in kicking the ladder away once it has served its purpose. This "ladder" may be less instrumental, however, and in other passages Bonaventure makes clear that the various stages of human development each leave their permanent mark on the soul. Just a few paragraphs down from the passage quoted above, he explains that

> Our mind has three principal perceptual orientations. The first is toward exterior material objects and is the basis for its being designated as animal or sensual. The second orientation is within itself and into itself and is the basis for its being designated as spirit. The third is above itself and is the basis for its being designated as mind. By all of these we should dispose ourselves to ascend into God so as to love him with our whole mind, with our whole heart and with our whole soul. (Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum*, ch. 1, part 4)

Now the composer analogy seems more apt. There are different parts of the human soul that require development and training in order for the person to be capable of appreciating the divine goodness in its fullness. At the summit of the ascent, these dispositions will all be relevant to the appreciation of the ultimate good, even if they are not simultaneously being exercised with respect to discrete objects.[4]

Thus, the saints' appreciation of the divine goodness extends beyond God himself to a full valuing of everything that is. This means that they retain their disposition to value other goods appropriately, whether or not that disposition is actively exercised. Whether or not Pinot Noir is drunk in heaven, saints should still be the sort of people who could appreciate it.

5.4. CONCLUSION

Why does it matter how cardinal virtues will function in heaven? The discussion of the function of the virtues helps us to reflect on the extent to which this-worldly attachments and dispositions carry over into the lives of saints.

The Thomistic and Bonaventurean views mirror differences in the level of completeness that each philosopher wishes to attach to the natural human *telos*. Aquinas envisions a more definite separation between the natural and supernatural ends, and accordingly, the cardinal virtues in Aquinas' heaven have definitely discontinued their earthly function in view of the ultimate goal. Augustine, though his discussion of the issue was quite brief, seems to have had something similar in mind; his description of the heavenly cardinal virtues

[4] Fleshing out the details of this gradual progression is a significant project in its own right, for which Bonaventure's later, mystical writings prove more useful in many respects than his work in the *Commentary*. Zachary Hayes (1999) provides a good overview of the subject.

presumes that they will take God as their direct and immediate object. For Bonaventure, the line between earthly and heavenly fulfillment is less sharp. He is far less inclined to see earthly happiness as an end in itself, and by the same token, he is more eager to integrate earthly goods into the final fulfilled state, at least to the extent that the saints retain their receptiveness to them.

Along with their differing attitudes toward earthly goods, Bonaventure and Aquinas have different conceptions of natural reason. Aquinas consistently shows more confidence than his Franciscan counterpart in the potential of unaided human capabilities.[5] He is prepared to grant that natural reason can accomplish much even without revelation or the Sacraments, that the senses have considerable purchase on reality (and indeed are our primary means for coming to know it), and that the natural virtues, even in their acquired form, can be developed to a significant degree. Bonaventure, by contrast, is much less sanguine about the potential of any human endeavor that is not assisted by grace.[6] True wisdom comes only from God.[7] Absent an act of submission to faith, intellectual endeavors decay into vanity and confusion, and efforts toward virtue tend to be swallowed up in pride and lust. True understanding comes through the light of grace, and can be received by the soul that is ordered toward God.[8]

Given his deep mistrust of natural reason and natural goodness, it might seem surprising that it is Bonaventure, not Aquinas, who gives human relationships and created goods a more prominent and robust place in heaven. But, on further consideration, this may not be so strange. For Aquinas, the dividing line between the heavenly and earthly spheres is fairly distinct. For Bonaventure, the contrast is less sharp. Thus it turns out that, for Aquinas, creation-ordered virtues must undergo a significant transformation in moving from this life to the next. They can serve as a kind of "training virtue" for the superior dispositions that will be attained in the life to come, but in themselves they are superfluous, at least for the genuinely fulfilled person. For Bonaventure, no such radical transformation is necessary. The heavenly and earthly goods run together to a much greater degree, and so the cardinal virtues can themselves be early-developing components of the perfected human nature. It is perhaps not surprising that Bonaventure often illustrates the progression of

[5] This point is discussed extensively in Gilson (1994: 200–50).

[6] This is one of the main themes of his *Reductio Artium in Theologiam*, and indeed, this conviction permeates many of his works, both mystical and philosophical. For a particularly illuminating discussion of Bonaventure's views on natural reason, see Gilson (1965: 79–106).

[7] For a more detailed discussion of Bonaventure's conception of wisdom and its radical dependence on God, see Cullen (2006: 23–38). Ralph MacInerny (1976) touches on some ways in which Aquinas' thought might have been relevantly different from Bonaventure's with respect to these issues.

[8] Although this theory is not much developed in the *Commentary,* it later matures into a theory of illumination which is presented in full in *De Scientia Christi*, probably written around 1256. Ignatius Brady (1976) discusses the importance and influence of this theory.

the rightly-ordered soul through analogies to the growth of plants, which start as seeds and gradually extend upwards towards the sun. Bonaventure sees moral progression as a kind of *unfolding*, and although the process does have stages, they are less discrete than on the Thomist analysis.

The divergence between these two accounts is intriguing in yet another way. For the medieval philosophers of the high Middle Ages, one of the most challenging ethical puzzles lay in the juxtaposing supernatural virtues (faith, hope, and charity) on the natural, Aristotelian virtues without doing too much violence to the descriptive plausibility of the Aristotelian account. Aquinas and Bonaventure, despite significant areas of agreement, seem to want to approach this problem in fundamentally different ways. Aquinas ultimately draws these two aspects of human nature together and focuses them on a single end. Bonaventure, by contrast, seems to like the odd juxtaposition of natural on supernatural, and accordingly, he wishes to continue it in perpetuity. Although he does not say that the natural virtues will be *exercised* in heaven, it is important to him that the saints will continue to have natural virtues, which will remain creation-oriented through eternity.

Most significantly, this discussion is relevant to the question of what life in heaven will actually be like. Will saints be fixated entirely on the Beatific Vision, singing endlessly our *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus?* Or will we remain aware of fellow saints and loved ones, and of natural goods more generally? Will the joy of paradise be more strictly removed from what we can now understand? Or will we continue to enjoy pleasures that are at least analogous to earthly delights of fostering friendships and appreciating the glory and diversity of creation? The Thomistic view will lead us more towards the former view in which heaven is quite distinct from our present experience. By contrast, the Bonaventurean view lends itself better to a more inclusivist view, which might give our imaginations more space for considering how this-worldly pleasures might be integrated into a complete heavenly life.

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6

Paradise and Growing in Virtue

Timothy Pawl and Kevin Timpe

The present volume is devoted to philosophical reflection on the nature of paradise. Our contribution to this larger project is an extension of previous work that we've done on the nature of human agency and virtue in heaven. Here, we'd like to focus on three things. First, we will discuss in greater detail what it is we mean by "growth in virtue." Second, we will answer a number of objections to that understanding of growth in virtue. Third, we will show two benefits of this understanding of growth in virtue. Along the way, we'll also draw a number of comparisons between our understanding of the nature of heavenly character and some of the other chapters in the present volume.

6.1. WHAT "GROWTH IN VIRTUE" MEANS

In a series of papers published in *Faith and Philosophy* (Pawl and Timpe 2009, 2013), we have presented a view about heavenly freedom.[1] At the heart of our view is the claim that the redeemed are free (on a libertarian conception of freedom) and yet are unable to sin given their perfected moral natures.[2] Here we will focus on what we've previously called (Pawl and Timpe 2013: 197) a "non-load bearing" assertion of our initial article, namely the claim that, in heaven, the redeemed can grow in virtue. This claim of ours makes our view an instance of what Eric Silverman calls, in his contribution to this volume, a

[1] A similar view can be found in Richard Tamburro's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 15).

[2] The freedom of the redeemed who are nevertheless not able to make certain choices "traces" back to previous free choices that formed their characters and thus ruled out certain possibilities of action. Such tracing should be understood primarily in the terms of an agent's moral character and her reasons, and not primarily in terms of causal determinism. For the sort of view we have in mind here, see (Timpe 2013: particularly ch. 2).

dynamic view of heaven.[3] And while we still think that this aspect of our view isn't needed for our primary goal in defending an incompatibilist account of heavenly freedom (see Pawl and Timpe 2013), we think that it can actually bear more of a load than it needs to in those earlier papers. Before we load it up, though, we ought to lay it out.

We have a traditional conception of virtue in mind. We are happy to follow Aquinas (who in turn is following Augustine) in defining virtue as "a good quality of the mind, by which we live righteously, of which no one can make bad use."[4] We put no great weight on this particular definition, though. Any definition that places central focus on the fact that virtues are dispositions of individuals by means of which they act well is sufficient for our purposes.

By "growing in virtue," we do not mean gaining new virtues. Rather, we mean, as we said in our initial article (2009: 418), that the redeemed "cling ever tighter to the [virtuous] mean," and we continued that

> [I]f we think about clinging to the good rather than clinging to the mean, we can say that through the everlasting years that the blessed spend with God, they are never-endingly coming closer to Him, who is Goodness itself, ever clinging more tenaciously to Him. (2009: 418)

In this sense of growth in virtue, the only sense we have in mind, the redeemed in paradise are forever growing in their desire for union with their beloved. They are continually going "Further Up and Further In," as C. S. Lewis presents paradise in the final book of his Chronicles of Narnia.

As an example, consider the virtue of temperance.[5] One can be stably disposed to partaking in pleasure with neither excess nor deficiency, but rather in accordance with the rationally-informed mean between those two character

[3] Silverman (Chapter 1, this volume) describes dynamic views of heaven as those which "depict it as a place or state of existence where moral, aesthetic, relational, epistemological, and other progress takes place." He contrasts such views with static views of heaven, which are "conceptions of heaven that depict it as a place or state of existence that is incompatible with further moral, aesthetic, relational, epistemological, and other changes or progress for the inhabitants of heaven."

Later in his essay, Silverman differentiates three sub-species of dynamic views: "conceptions of paradise depicting it as an existence where changes *external* to the inhabitants of heaven occur, conceptions of heaven depicting it as an existence where changes *internal* to the inhabitants of heaven occur, and conceptions of heaven depicting it as an existence where both types of change occur." Our view involves at least *internal* change, since it involves the growth in virtue.

[4] Aquinas provides this definition in ST I–II q.55 a.4 obj.1. There he follows Augustine in *De Libero Arbitrio ii,* 19. We've omitted the last clause, "which God works in us, without us," since, as St. Thomas says, when this phrase is omitted, the definition applies to both infused and acquired virtues, while with the phrase it only applies to infused virtues.

[5] The example assumes that the redeemed will keep the cardinal virtues in heaven. For a discussion of this assumption within the context of medieval philosophy, see Rachel Lu's chapter elsewhere in this volume (Chapter 5). Nothing of significance hangs on our using this particular example; this assumption is expendable insofar as we could just as easily have chosen another virtue that clearly does remain in heaven, such as charity.

faults. Such a person is temperate. But we know that sometimes people lose their temperance by means of contrary actions. There is a sense in which someone is perfected in temperance when she is so stable in her disposition as to avoid the excess and deficiency of partaking in pleasure to such an extent that she cannot but choose moderately. Once one has reached such a state (we need not claim here that someone *can* reach such a state in this life, though we don't see why one *couldn't* reach such a state), it is sensible to say that her control over her concupiscible appetite is perfected.

But even in that dispositional state of perfected temperance, it seems to us that such a person can still grow in temperance, in a certain way. Consider the daughter of temperance known as sobriety. Someone may well be solidly on the mean of sobriety such that she feels no pull at all towards intoxication. She may, in fact, be repulsed by the very idea. Suppose she is perfected in her sobriety, in the sense in which she couldn't bring herself to choose intoxication. Even in her state, though, she can gain new insights and new desires such that she feels her desire to remain sober even more forcefully, indeed, such that she more forcefully desires to remain sober. For instance, she may have kids and realize that were she to become intoxicated in their presence it would be harmful to them. Or she may note that her desire to be a good parent is antithetical to habitual drunkenness. In such a state, while she might have already been perfected in sobriety—in the sense mentioned above—she may still think to herself, truthfully, "I thought I couldn't desire sobriety any more than I already did; but now I see another reason, one I didn't perceive previously, which strengthens my conviction and desire to remain sober." Such a person has grown in virtue, in the sense we mean the phrase in this chapter, since she has come to cling more tenaciously to the mean of temperance. In our view, the more insights one gains into the circumstances relevant to a virtue, the more a person can come to appreciate those insights and take them as further reasons to desire what she desires, even if she already desires it to such a degree that she couldn't have chosen against it.[6] We think this sort of thing can be true of the blessed in heaven, provided they are continually coming to new insights concerning God.

We took this sort of growth to be a good thing, but not morally incumbent. As Kant might have said, the redeemed have only an imperfect duty to grow in virtue, in our sense of the phrase. But then, there is a sort of free choice the blessed in heaven can make that has moral relevance: they can choose whether to act in ways that habituate themselves more in one virtue over another, or to choose to do something else, say, pray for their living relatives. Such choices

[6] In her contribution to this volume, Rachel Lu writes that "the upper limit of a virtue can also change" (Chapter 5), a phrase that might also capture the idea that we're trying to express here if the change she mentions is always taken to be an increase.

are, on our view, free, undetermined by their character, under their control, and forming of their moral characters.

In this context, we draw a connection between our view and the eastern tradition of deification (or *theosis*). As Vladimir Kharlamov (2006a, 2006b) has argued, a predominant (but certainly not the only) aspect of deification for the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists of the second century was moral transformation. We also draw a connection between growth in virtue and Gregory of Nyssa's doctrine of *epektasis*, which holds that since the difference between God and creature is infinite, the creature can constantly and eternally grow in likeness to the divine without ever reaching the same status as the exemplar (i.e., God Himself).[7] Gregory says, for instance, in his commentary on the Song of Songs:

> It [i.e., the Divine Nature] draws human nature to participate in itself, it always surpasses that which participates in it to the same degree, in conformity with its superabundance of goodness. For the soul is always becoming better than itself on account of its participation in the transcendent. It does not stop growing, but the Good that is participated remains in unaltered degree as it is, since the being that ever more and more participates in it discovers that it is always surpassed to the same extant.
>
> We see, then, that the Bride is being led by the Word through the ascents of virtue up to the heights, just as if she were climbing stairs.…The result is that it seems to her that desire increases in proportion to her progress toward that Light which eternally shines out and at the same time that her ascent is just beginning, on account of the transcendence of the good things, which are always beyond her.…
>
> For to one who has risen up in this manner there will never be wanting an up-rising without end; nor for one who runs to the Lord will opportunity for the divine race be used up. (Norris 2013: 171)

Here we see that the saint's desire for God (i.e., the Good that is participated in) perpetually increases as the lover ever progresses closer to the beloved.

For some in the Eastern tradition the idea of deification was even stronger than just the continual growth in virtue toward moral perfection that we have in mind. Maximus the Confessor, for instance, held that "we can attain equality with Christ, become *isochristoi*" (Louth 1996: 24).[8] Nothing in our understanding of deification requires this strong sense of equality, though we think it's important to note that such a stronger connection exists in the history of the Church than we are arguing for. For our purposes here, we need only consider the claim that in continuing to grow in virtue we are

[7] For some helpful resources on *epektasis*, see Blowers (1992), Ferguson (1973), and Robb-Dover (2008).

[8] As Vishnevskaya (2006: esp. 139–42) makes clear in this context, a central aspect of this divinization is moral transformation.

becoming more and more like the perfected human nature that was united to the Second Person of the Trinity in the Incarnation.[9]

In this chapter we do not want to argue for the truth of the claim that the redeemed can grow in such a way. Instead, we want to consider a few objections to such growth that others have voiced to our view, and we want to consider some benefits of the possibility of such growth. Consider first the objections.

6.2. OBJECTIONS TO OUR VIEW OF GROWTH IN VIRTUE

Steven Cowan (2011: 430–1) takes issue with growth in virtue as part of our larger defense of heavenly freedom. And while we think that our brief discussion of growing in virtue was primarily a helpful image and not a part of the philosophical theory we put forward, we also think that it is not as problematic as Cowan makes it out to be. Cowan argues that our view of growth in heaven will not be sufficient for showing that the redeemed have morally relevant choices that they can make in heaven. For, he argues, the redeemed will all strongly desire to be as close to God as possible, and will see performing the supererogatory actions that would result in growth in virtue as the means to such closeness. In fact, he claims, such growth might be obligatory in heaven, and so such actions wouldn't even count as supererogatory. Either (a) such actions are obligatory, and so the redeemed have to do them, in which case there is no relevant freedom there; or (b) the actions are strongly desirable by the redeemed, so much so that the redeemed cannot refrain from choosing them, and thus there's no relevant freedom on this disjunct either. So the growth in virtue we discuss, he claims, is insufficient for securing morally relevant freedom.

Note that Cowan's objection is not that there cannot be such growth in freedom, but rather that such growth doesn't do something we said it might. As such, his objection is not germane to our stated goals in the present chapter, since we are not arguing for the utility of such growth. But because we later go on to present one benefit of our view being that it does allow for such growth and morally relevant choices, we will consider this objection, too.

In response to Cowan's objection, we deny that the actions that produce growth in virtue of the sort we are arguing for are obligatory. Cowan (2011: 431) provides no evidence for the claim that the actions are obligatory; the

[9] For more on the traditional teaching concerning Christ's human nature, see Pawl (2016: esp. ch. 1, section IV).

strongest he asserts is that they *might* be. Are the actions such that the redeemed are unable morally to refrain from them? We do not see that they are. Suppose there are other things that the redeemed can view as choice-worthy in heaven, such as praying for their loved ones still on earth. Then why couldn't the redeemed choose to refrain from chasing growth for a bit to pray? Also, suppose God, in his infinite goodness, is desirable in a multitude of different manners. For every type of goodness, perhaps union with God can be pursued via that avenue. If this is the case, then the redeemed can seek new vistas of relation to God in accordance with their dispositions and desires. But notice that nothing so far demands that the pursuit of God along every one of these avenues involves a growth in virtue. One might simply, for example, be finding another legitimate expression of a present virtue that one has not yet explored. If we find ourselves picturing the redeemed as akin to contestants on the television show The Biggest Loser, arduously working at all times for and weighing all things against their one goal, we're viewing heaven wrong. But the mere allowance of the possibility of growth in virtue does not entail the Biggest Loser view of heaven. Auxiliary assumptions are required, which we believe would be the culprit in viewing the blessed as mere maximizers.

Gregory of Nyssa might have foreseen a similar objection. He writes, immediately after the quotation we provided earlier, the following:

> What step upward toward perfection is shown us in these words? No longer to focus attention on making an effort to attain the things that attract but to take one's own desire as a guide toward what is better. For he says, "*Come for yourself* —not out of grief or compulsion but for yourself, not shown the way by compulsion but with your own thoughts lending strength to your desire for the good." For virtue has no master. It is voluntary and free of all compulsion. (Norris 2013: 173)

Here Gregory, too, claims that the perpetual growth in virtue he foresees is voluntary, free, and not of compulsion for those who seek it.[10]

A second objection goes as follows: a person can't be in heaven *and* grow in virtue. For growing in virtue requires the lack of some perfection the person could have. But on the traditional view of the beatific vision, one which we share, the redeemed lack no perfections. They are, as their Father in heaven is,

[10] Our view also has an affinity with aspects of Mark Spencer's view in an unpublished paper presented at a conference we hosted. There, Spencer writes that "heaven can be likened to a liturgy, with all the bodily and spiritual acts that implies, but not that it is one repeated liturgy; rather, following Gregory of Nyssa, heaven can be both liturgical and an eternally-deepening experience (but unlike the view of Nyssa and some other Greek Fathers, my view is Thomistic in that it involves the beatific vision, that is, genuinely seeing the divine essence, albeit, unlike on Aquinas' view, in an ever-increasing but never-comprehensive manner)". This idea of "ever-deepening experience," both because of ever-increasing experience of God and ever-increasing transformation into his likeness, is related to what we're suggesting here. For more from Spencer on this and related topics, see Spencer (2016).

perfect. Thus, there is an inconsistency in holding both the traditional view of heaven and the claim that the redeemed grow in heaven.

In reply to this objection, note that if it were true, it would contradict traditional Christian thought. For, on the traditional Christian view, Christ had the beatific vision throughout the course of his earthly ministry.[11] Aquinas, for instance, claims explicitly that Christ had the beatific vision from the moment of conception onward (ST. III. Q.34 a.4 resp). The *Catholic Encyclopedia* article on the topic (Maas 1910) claims that

> Petavius (De Incarnatione, I, xii, c. 4) maintains that there is no controversy among theologians, or even among Christians, as to the fact that the soul of Jesus Christ was endowed with the beatific vision from the beginning of its existence.

Suppose this traditional view to be true. Then, when conjoined with the plain reading (which is not to say uncontested reading) of Luke 2:52, where we see the claim that Christ grew in wisdom (a virtue) and stature, we find that the objection here provides an objection not only to our view of heavenly growth in virtue, but also the traditional incarnational teaching! We take this as reason to believe that the beatific vision does not require the lack of growth in virtue.[12]

A second response here is to deny that growing in virtue requires the lack of some perfection the person could have. We grant this to be true when "growing in virtue" means gaining virtues one does not have, since then one is gaining a perfection in gaining the virtue. But we deny that it is true when "growing in virtue" is meant as we mean it here, as growing in desire for the mean, or for God. In addition to growing in virtue by increasing the virtues that one possesses, one can also grow in virtue by having the virtues that one already has more fully. Consider, for instance, the virtue of charity. Suppose that Beatrice loves God as fully as she is capable given her understanding of the richness that is the Divine Goodness. As Beatrice comes to know God more fully, she can also come to love Him more fully given that she now knows aspects of goodness about God that she previously didn't.

A third objection to our account of growth in virtue is as follows: if our account of growth in virtue is correct, then one saint could overtake another in heaven, at least as far as virtue is concerned. If that were true, then the

[11] For more discussion of the knowledge Christ had by means of his human soul, see Pawl (2014b: 234–6, 2014a: 158–9)

[12] We should note, though that Aquinas did not think that Christ grew in virtue. He writes in his commentary on the Gospel of John (Aquinas 1980: ch. 1, lecture 14), "About this we read, 'And Jesus increased in grace and wisdom' (Luke 2:52); not that he acquired a power and wisdom that he previously lacked, for in this respect he was perfect from the instant of his conception, but because his power and wisdom were becoming known to men: 'Indeed, you are a hidden God'" (Is 45:15). One rejoinder to our response, then, would be to side with Aquinas that Christ did not, in fact, grow in wisdom while on earth, at least not in the typical sense of growing. But then, we, too, believe that he did not grow in virtue in such a sense, as we now go on to say.

overtaken saint would feel a negative emotion at the shrinking taillights of the overtaker. But such a negative emotion is incompatible with the nature of heaven. So our view must be wrong.

We begin our reply to this objection by pointing out that it is traditionally accepted that there are discrepancies in the levels of heavenly bliss felt by the redeemed. Think of Dante, and what the blessed say to him when he asks the lowest blessed if they are envious of the apostles, who are like mountains. They laugh at Dante. And Beatrice responds to Dante as follows:

> Illustrious being in whose chronicle
> is written our celestial court's largesse,
> let hope, I pray, be sounded at this height.
> How often you personified that grace
> when Jesus gave His chosen three more light!
> (Alighieri 2003: Paradiso XXV 29–33)

In other words, if discrepancy between levels of bliss can lead to negative emotions, as this objection claims, then it does on the traditional doctrine of heaven as well. But then it would be not just our view, but the traditional view, that has problems. We think the traditional view does not have this problem, for Dantean reasons. So we think that our view does not either.

We would additionally like to point out that continual increase from staggered starting points does not entail that one trajectory would overtake another. It is possible for two individuals to both increase infinitely along a trajectory without the one overtaking the other, just as two curves can infinitely approach a single asymptote without one line ever intersecting the other. So it is false that infinite growth in virtue entails that one saint would overtake another in heaven.

Suppose, though, that one saint did overtake another in heaven. Suppose that Stanley overtakes Blanche in desire for love of God. And suppose that, somehow, Blanche learns of this. (Overtaking in desire is not like overtaking in a car; there are streetcars named Desire, but desire has no taillights.) What would Blanche's response be? We do not think it would be a negative emotion. For the blessed in heaven all love one another selflessly, without envy or strife. Think of someone you love selflessly without envy or strife. Make one up if you have to. And now suppose that that person received a good that you, too, want. You know you will get it eventually. You know that her getting it does not negatively affect your getting it. You know that her getting it is good for her and desired by God. Why would any of this cause a negative emotion?

Additional objections to our view appear in a recent article in *Faith and Philosophy* by Christopher Brown (2015).[13] Brown provides thoughtful and

[13] Brown's article is a nuanced discussion of multiple aspects of our account. We can't discuss each of his careful arguments here.

careful objections to various aspects of our project, including our claim that the redeemed can grow in virtue in heaven. Here, given the scope of our current project, we will only discuss his objection to such growth in heaven. According to this objection (Brown 2015: 68), "there are good reasons for thinking the redeemed in heaven do not have the ability to grow ever closer to God in heaven," contrary to what our view involves. Brown gives three reasons for thinking the redeemed cannot grow closer to God. He advocates that our view

(i) "would minimize the importance of the choices a person S makes during S's pre-heavenly existence, *at least where those choices have an effect on the degree to which S is happy in heaven*" (68);

(ii) "is incompatible with one important traditional Christian account of the relation between one's moral character and beatitude" (70); and

(iii) is incompatible with "St. Thomas's view that a saint's closeness to God in heaven is a function of the extent to which she participates in God in the beatific vision, i.e., she enjoys essential beatitude, and the essential beatitude of a saint in heaven is invariable, immutable, and timeless" (73–4).

We here will offer a response to each of these three objections.

First, with respect to (i), we reject the implication Brown sees in the first reason. To say that there is opportunity to grow in perfection (in the sense we have in mind) in heaven need no more undermine the importance of working to perfect our moral character in this life than does the existence of purgatory. Here's a general principle that would underwrite Brown's worry here: for any period of time t1 such that it is before t2, the opportunity to improve one's character in t2 minimizes the importance of improving one's character in t1. But not only does purgatory show that this principle is false, so does the possibility that we will have until May 2017 to improve our characters before physical death; that doesn't minimize the importance that the present Lenten season affords us for the same. Brown employs an argument similar to the third objection we consider above (he refers to "outpacing" rather than "overtaking" in his article). The same things we said with respect to that argument will apply here for Brown's argument, too.

Consider Brown's second argument. It goes as follows, citing Ludwig Ott (1960: 474–9) and St. Thomas Aquinas (ST I q.62 a.9) for evidence:

> One's closeness to God in heaven is directly proportioned to one's merit. But one cannot merit any longer in heaven. And so one cannot grow closer to God in heaven.

In response to this argument, we concede that our view sits poorly with the premises of this argument. It might well be, in the end, inconsistent with the thought of Ott and Aquinas. Note, though, that our view is, or is very similar

to, the thought of Gregory of Nyssa, and he was never condemned for it. Moreover, looking at the history of the doctrines in question, the teachings against gaining or losing merit in heaven were provided as a safeguard for the doctrine that neither conversion of the damned nor lapsing of the redeemed is possible in the afterlife. Our view does not require such conversion or lapsing. Moreover, on our view, the *initial placement* of the redeemed is proportional to their merit. Supposing a growth in merit is possible, we can affirm that beatitude continues to track merit forevermore.

Consider a potential disjunctive response to the above. Either the growth we envision for the redeemed involves their accruing merit or it does not. If it does involve their accruing merit, then we can say that the first premise of this argument (closeness is proportionate to merit) is true and remains true throughout the meriting of the redeemed. Concerning the second premise, we could say that we have maintained that which the theologians wanted to safeguard in their claim that the time of meriting ends. The time of meriting or losing *salvation* ends, but the time of growing in merit, in the limited sense we have in mind, which the theologians were not discussing, continues. Suppose, on the other disjunct, that the growth of the redeemed does not involve an accruing of merit. Then we can affirm the second premise. Concerning the first, we can say that the teaching is that the initial placement of the redeemed is due to merit. The later stages of closeness to God are not due to merit (if this growth is not due to accruing merit, as this disjunct says), but then the texts that Ott cites in defense of Brown's first premise are silent concerning this possibility for future states.

Brown's third reason why the saints cannot grow in closeness to God in heaven is that such growth would be growth in the beatific vision, at least according to St. Thomas. Now the beatific vision, and one's participating in God through it, is the essential beatitude of the redeemed. Other adornments, say, the gifts of the resurrected body, are truly good things, but they are accidental to the beatific vision. They are, in Aquinas's words, accidental beatitude. For Aquinas, essential beatitude is immutable, invariable, and timeless, says Brown. And so the essential beatitude of the saints must be as well. But then the saints can't get closer to God in the beatific vision, contrary to our view.

In response, we must deny the premise of the argument that states that essential beatitude is invariable, immutable, and timeless. What reason does Brown give for thinking that the essential beatitude, and so the beatific vision, and so the closeness of the blessed to God, is invariable, immutable, and timeless? He notes that Aquinas quotes scripture (1 John 3:2) saying "When He shall appear, we shall be like to Him because we shall see Him as He is." Brown provides the argument as going like this (2015: 73–4): we shall be like him; but he is timeless and absolutely immutable. And so our beatific vision shall be as well.

In response to this evidence for the premise we reject in the argument, we find it weak. God's nature is also immaterial and simple, but we won't be like him in those respects. Why think we will be like him in the other respects cited here? And why not think we could become ever more like him? We don't see good reason to affirm the contested premise, and so we do not take this third and final reason from Brown to be adequate to defeat our view. As for the way in which we will be like him, we could claim that the similitude is due to sharing in the beatific vision, or being morally perfect, or loving as selflessly as we are able, or being partakers in his glory or divinity (hearkening back here to our earlier discussion of *theosis*).

6.3. TWO BENEFITS FOR OUR VIEW OF GROWTH IN VIRTUE

We have now responded to objections to our account of the growth of virtue in heaven. Even though growth in heaven was not a central aspect of our earlier account and defense of heavenly freedom, we think that it is not as problematic as others have taken it to be. But beyond merely thinking that growth in virtue in heaven does not have these objections that others have raised, we think that our account of growth in virtue has at least two benefits that count in its favor. The first of these is that we can give an account of the non-boringness of heaven. One objection sometimes raised against the possibility of a post-mortem paradisiacal state is that it will eventually become boring, or dull.[14] After a certain number of years, wouldn't the redeemed have already experienced everything there is to offer, and thus be stuck in never-ending tedium, reminiscent of Bill Murray's character halfway through the movie *Groundhog Day*?

This objection has traction only insofar as one thinks that the joys of heaven are static, set out from the start like an excellent but finite video game. However, if the redeemed in heaven are forever Going Further Up and Further In, and if they are forever seeing new insights into God's nature, and forever growing in their desire for union with God, then it is false that at any time a human person in paradise will have experienced all that there is to experience. There is always more to experience, more to know of God (or perhaps better, more extensive ways to know him), and further descriptions under which to desire union with him, since God's nature, as Gregory pointed out more than a thousand years ago, is infinitely greater than our own.

[14] The classic paper here is Williams (1973). For worthwhile engagement with Williams' paper, see Fischer and Mitchell-Yellin (2014), Kagan (2012: ch. 11), Ribeiro (2011), and Bortolotti and Nagasawa (2009).

As a second benefit, mentioned earlier in discussion of Cowan's objection, we can provide, in line with our previous work on heavenly freedom, a way for the redeemed to have morally relevant freedom in heaven. Or, better, yet another way. We already think that the freedom to pray for people is morally relevant, and that the redeemed have that. But we can also add that since one way to grow morally is to hold fast to the virtuous mean more tenaciously, and that the redeemed can grow in this way through their freely chosen actions, the redeemed have morally relevant freedom in this respect, too.

6.4. CONCLUSION

To conclude, we have presented what we mean by "growth in virtue." It is not the attainment of more and different virtues. It is not coming to be more centered on the mean of a virtue one already possesses in some weak sense. Growth in virtue, as we meant it in 2009 and as we mean it here, is increase in the strength with which one clings to the mean, to goodness, to God. That sort of growth in paradise is something we find in figures central to the Christian tradition and, in particular, in the great Cappadocian Fathers. We next considered objections to the sort of virtuous paradisiacal growth we have in mind, arguing that they fail to show that growth in paradise is impossible. Finally, we presented two benefits for such a view of growth: it answers the age-old charge of the eventual staleness of heaven, and it provides another venue concerning which the redeemed in heaven can have relevantly moral decisions to make.

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Part IV

Paradise and Responding to Evil

7

Heavenly Sadness

On the Value of Negative Emotions in Paradise

Adam C. Pelser

> *"[E]ven if there were pains in heaven, all who understand would desire them."*
>
> – C. S. Lewis[1]

According to a popular view of heaven, the experience of those who abide in heaven will be characterized by perfect, eternal joy—call this the doctrine of heavenly joy. This doctrine faces two primary objections. The first is that such a "perfect" eternal life would seem to be perfectly boring. This objection has been the subject of a good deal of recent philosophical reflection and I will not address it further here.[2] By contrast, the second objection to the doctrine of heavenly joy, which is the focus of this chapter, has received very little philosophical attention in recent years. The most common version of the objection goes something like this: if universalism is false and at least some people are excluded from heaven, especially if those excluded from heaven continue to exist forever in hell, the joy of those who abide in heaven will be rendered less than perfect by the experience of "negative" emotions, such as sorrow, grief, compassion, or pity for "the lost"—call this the negative emotions objection. As formulated by C. S. Lewis, the "objection is that no charitable man could himself be blessed in heaven while he knew that even one human soul was still in Hell; and if so, are we more merciful than God?" (1996: 128–9). The negative emotions objection thus can be put in the form of a dilemma: given the painful reality of hell, those who abide in heaven

[1] *The Problem of Pain* by C. S. Lewis © copyright CSW Lewis Pte ltd 1940 (used with permission).

[2] See, for example, Williams (1993); Wisnewski (2005); Walls (2002); and Fischer and Mitchell-Yellin (2014).

(perhaps including God) either feel negative emotions or they don't; if they do, then their joy is imperfect; if they don't, then they are not perfectly loving or, worse, they are cruel and heartless.

In this chapter I propose to answer the negative emotions objection by drawing on the resources of a cognitive, perceptual account of emotions to explain how it is that perfect, eternal joy can be compatible with the experience of some negative emotions. I shall argue that the inhabitants of heaven plausibly will experience certain negative emotions, such as a kind of sadness or sorrow and somberness, without such experiences detracting from or undermining their perfect, eternal joy. While these reflections will suggest that we should reject a certain popular understanding of the doctrine of heavenly joy, they will reveal that a more nuanced and psychologically realistic version of the doctrine does not fall to the negative emotions objection.

Before proceeding to the argument, it is important to consider the extent to which the negative emotions objection depends on the existence of hell. It might be thought that if universalism is true, the negative emotions objection to the doctrine of heavenly joy can't even get off the ground. After all, if universalism is true, no one suffers for eternity in hell and one might wonder what else the inhabitants of heaven could have to feel negatively about. There nevertheless seems to be a variation of the negative emotions objection that applies even to a universalistic doctrine of heavenly joy. Assuming a plausible degree of psychological continuity between the afterlife and the life before, it seems that even memories of prior moral failings or traumatic experiences could mar the eternal joy of humans in heaven. [3] The worry is not that if those in heaven lack negative emotions they are unloving, but rather that if they lack such emotions they are implausibly psychologically disconnected from or insufficiently sensitive to their histories.[4] Moreover, even memories of evils suffered by others plausibly could be cause for negative emotions in heaven. Someone who was not a victim of the Holocaust, for example, might remember that horrific evil with sadness. Here, the worry would be that without negative emotions, those in heaven are insufficiently sensitive to or problematically forgetful of the badness of such past evils. These versions of the objection apply equally to universalistic and non-universalistic doctrines of eternal joy. Yet, since the negative emotions objection traditionally has been motivated by concerns about the relationship between those in heaven and those in hell, I will assume throughout that universalism is false. The solution

[3] Adams (1999) discusses the significance of postmortem remembrance of ante-mortem suffering.

[4] Against such versions of the negative emotions argument, Miroslav Volf argues that non-remembrance of past wrongs is "compatible with a plausible account of human salvation, of human identity, and of moral responsibility" (2006: 210). He argues further that eternal remembrance of past wrongs seems incompatible with perfect heavenly joy. I offer a reply to Volf in Section 7.3.

I offer is compatible with a variety of notions of hell, however, so I will not commit to any particular view here. Moreover, even if universalism were true, the view defended here would still explain how it is that the residents of heaven could experience perfect, eternal joy, despite having unpleasant memories of suffering and other negative ante-mortem realities.

7.1. THE EPISTEMIC AND MORAL VALUE OF AFFECTIVELY NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

According to an axiological realist perceptual account of emotions, such as those recently defended by Robert Roberts (2003, 2013) and Linda Zagzebski (2004, 2012), emotions are cognitive states that involve perception-like presentations of their objects to the mind; that is, emotions are essentially a kind of "seeing as" or, to use Roberts' preferred term, a "construal" of their objects. More specifically, emotions are *evaluative* perceptions in the sense that emotions present their objects to us as good or bad in some particular (thick) way.[5] Emotions thus have propositional content and emotion types can be distinguished according to their characteristic propositions.[6] In fear, for example, the subject sees or construes the object of her emotion as a threat to something (someone) about which (whom) she cares; in anger, the subject construes the object of her anger as an offender, guilty of committing an injustice; in admiration, the subject construes the object of her admiration as being excellent in an important sort of way; and so on. It is not as though we experience these emotions and then infer from the fact that we are having such and such an emotion that the object must have the relevant evaluative property (though this does happen); rather, in ordinary emotional experience, the objects of our emotions really *appear* or *seem* to us to have the evaluative property in view. That is not to say that we always judge that things are as they appear in our emotional perceptions. The "knowing phobic" might recoil in fear at the presence of a garter snake, seeing the snake as a serious threat through his fear even while judging (indeed *knowing*) that the snake is harmless. Likewise, even the moral skeptic who denies the existence of true injustices might unwittingly construe an act as unjust through her emotion of anger.

[5] The perceptual accounts of emotions under consideration here are informed by axiological realism. It is important to distinguish such accounts from non-realist perceptual accounts of emotions, such as that developed and defended by Jesse Prinz (2004, 2007).

[6] Roberts (2003) refers to the generic propositional content characteristic of the paradigmatic emotion types as their "defining propositions."

There are two important features of emotional experience on this perceptual account of emotions that are directly relevant to the nature and extent of emotional experience in heaven. First, as Roberts, Zagzebski, and I have argued,[7] emotions, like sense perceptions, can get their objects right or wrong and when they get their objects right they can ground epistemic goods such as justification, knowledge, acquaintance, and appreciative understanding. Second, although paradigmatic emotion types do have their own characteristic *feels*, emotions are not to be identified with feelings. The way an emotion feels—which can be positive or negative, pleasurable or painful—is often referred to as its affect. As Roberts (2013: 48–9) argues, affect is crucial to the perceptual function and epistemic significance of the emotions. In the remainder of this section, I will briefly discuss the epistemic and affective dimensions of emotional experience and then consider their relevance to the negative emotions objection.

Emotions, as evaluative perceptions, enable direct epistemic contact with various kinds of value, including moral, aesthetic, epistemic, and religious value. Just as we learn about the physical world by experiencing it through sense perception, we learn about the value in the world by experiencing it through emotional perception. Emotions thus can provide justification for evaluative beliefs, both those formed on the basis of emotional experience and those formed on other bases (e.g., testimony) that are then confirmed by emotional experience. For instance, a person raised in a racist culture might be overcome with compassion at the sight of a mistreated member of another race and thereby come to believe (for the first time) and be justified in believing on the basis of her compassion that the victim of racism is a person of worth who deserves to be treated with respect. Alternatively, a person who already knows that men and women have equal worth might gain new justification for his belief that sexism is unjust when he sees an overt act of sexism through the eyes of anger. Through his anger, he can come to know (and, hence, justifiedly believe) experientially what he perhaps only knew by way of testimony before. Emotions also can deepen our appreciative understanding of the value and value-laden objects in the world by granting us direct acquaintance with various kinds of value. In addition to gaining justification for their beliefs in the wrongness of racism and sexism, for example, our previous subjects might deepen their understanding and their appreciation of the wrongness of racism and sexism through their emotional perceptual experiences. Of course, emotions can and do get things wrong. Nevertheless, when our emotions are working correctly, they can be an important source of epistemic contact with the world.[8]

[7] See Pelser (2014).

[8] For further development and defense of the ideas in this paragraph see Pelser (2014) and Roberts (2013: chs 3–4).

Insofar as they are cognitive states with propositional content, emotions resemble sense perceptions. Yet, insofar as emotions are characteristically pleasurable or painful, they are less like visual perception and more like gustatory or olfactory perception. When we taste and smell things, our sensations are often, though perhaps not always, tinged with a kind of sensory pleasure or pain (e.g., we experience some things as delicious and others as putrid and the experiences are respectively pleasurable and painful). Of course, some sights are more pleasant than others, but it does not seem to be the visual perceptions themselves that are pleasant or painful, as opposed to the emotions the sights elicit. Unlike visual perception, and more like gustatory and olfactory perception, emotions are characteristically pleasurable or painful. One essential difference between emotional perception and gustatory and olfactory perception, however, is that the pains and pleasures most central to emotional experience are non-physical (i.e., non-sensory). Emotions are often accompanied by physical changes and sensations in the body, but the bodily expressions or concomitants of emotions are not sufficient to explain the pleasurableness or painfulness of emotions. In his discussion of emotional affect, Roberts is careful to distinguish the meaning-full feel of emotions from the physiological sensations that typically accompany emotions. He writes,

> I don't think the bodily sensations are pleasant or unpleasant enough to explain the intense positive affect of emotions like joy over the healthy birth of one's baby or the intense negative affect of grief over a child's death. On the present account, emotional pleasures and pains are a matter of the *meaning* ("positive" or "negative") that a situation has for the emotional subject, not the sensations of his body (though those sensations do contribute something to the overall feel of the emotion). And that meaning is a function of the synthesizing, constructing, qualifying of factual perception in terms of concern.…Affect makes the construal feel like an emotion and like the particular *type* of emotion that it is (e.g., fear) and the *particular* emotion that it is (e.g., fear for this dear child as he treads too close to the wall's edge).…Affect is crucial to the epistemic value and role of emotions, because it is the way that the distinctively evaluative aspect of the perception is registered so as to become perceptually available to the subject. (2013: 48–9)

Indeed, it is through the pleasurable or painful effect of emotions that the particular goodness or badness of the emotion's object is perceived. It is precisely through the pain of grief that the disvalue of the loss of a loved one is experienced. Likewise, it is through the pleasurable feel of gratitude that the goodness of a benefactor's generosity is experienced. Of course, it is possible to experience emotions without their characteristic effect. A person might experience the emotions of fear or anger without *feeling* afraid or angry, perhaps because overcome by the feeling of another emotion (e.g., grief), or because of a concurrent experience of a lack of feeling, such as in severe cases of depression. The fact that we sometimes have emotions without feeling them (i.e., without experiencing their characteristic effect) is evinced by the fact that

psychological counselors can help people to realize that they are experiencing emotions of which they were previously unaware. Roberts observes that unfelt emotions function epistemically like third-person perceptions—if we are made aware of them, they can give us new reason to believe that the world is as the perceiver reports.[9] Unless and until we experience the effect of the emotions, however, we will not enjoy the kind of direct epistemic contact with the world described above.

It follows from this perceptual analysis of emotions that affectively negative emotions are epistemically valuable. Insofar as there is legitimate badness in the world, affectively negative or painful emotions enable us to perceive, know, and appreciatively understand that badness in all its variety and particularity. Here, it is important to distinguish affectively negative emotions from emotions that might be thought of as negative in a moral sense (i.e., "bad"). Emotions such as envy, schadenfreude, and vicious anger are negatively evaluable in that they are, arguably, immoral or vicious to feel. Notice, however, that while it seems right to classify envy as both a morally and affectively negative emotion (an emotion that it is bad to feel and that feels bad), anger is often and schadenfreude is always, by definition, pleasurable. So, not all morally negative emotions are affectively negative. That is, not all bad emotions are painful.

Conversely, not all painful emotions are (morally) bad. As we have seen, affectively negative (painful) emotions can be epistemically valuable. But can they also be morally valuable? Here it is helpful to consider the grounds of emotional effect. Roberts (2003) argues that emotions are not merely construals, but rather "concern-based construals" since every emotion is a perception or construal of some situational object as impinging on a concern of the subject. The affect of an emotion stems from the concern on which the emotion is based in the following way: roughly, if the emotion is a construal of the object as bearing positively on the concern, then it is pleasurable; if the emotion is a construal of the object as impinging negatively on the concern, then it is painful. This requires some qualification, though, since some painful emotions, such as anger, can be partly pleasurable and some pleasurable emotions can be tinged with pain. In anger, which is grounded in a concern for justice, one sees an offender as culpable for an offense—an injustice. The emotional perception of the injustice is painful because it is a construal of an offense against something or someone for which/whom one cares. Yet, anger also can feel partly pleasurable since the angry person takes on the perceptual perspective of the moral judge; so, the angry person characteristically feels morally superior to the perceived offender and for many this is a pleasurable feeling. Despite the partially negative affect characteristic of anger, anger can

[9] Another, and perhaps a closer, parallel might be drawn with unnoticed first-personal sensory perceptions.

be a morally valuable emotion because it can motivate its bearer to oppose injustices and fight for justice.

Guilt, by contrast with anger, is a more purely painful emotion. No one enjoys feeling guilty. Yet, guilt, like anger, can be morally valuable. When a subject feels guilty, she perceives herself as culpable for a moral offense. If she is indeed culpable for a moral offense, guilt can help her to acknowledge and appreciate the seriousness of her moral offense. Although guilt sometimes can be paralyzing, it also can motivate efforts at moral improvement. Guilt is affectively negative precisely because it is grounded in a concern not to commit moral offenses (a person who has no such concern cannot feel guilty). So, guilt can motivate efforts at moral improvement when the subject, recognizing that she is culpable for a moral offense and being concerned not to commit moral offenses, forms the desire to avoid committing such moral offenses in the future. A reliable guilt-disposition also can play a morally valuable role in counterfactual moral reasoning—"If I were to do X, would I feel guilty about it? If so, then I should avoid doing X." The virtuous person's reasoning here would not be to avoid doing X because she wants to avoid the negative feeling of guilt; rather, she trusts her counterfactual or imagined guilt as a reliable guide to the wrongness of X and chooses to avoid doing X because she sees (or sees that she would see) the wrongness of doing X through the eyes of her counterfactual guilt. Compassion is another emotion that is affectively negative—people sometimes describe their compassion by saying that their "heart hurts" for those who are suffering—but that can be epistemically and morally valuable. Compassion, at its best, can help people to notice and appreciate the badness of undeserved suffering and motivate people to work toward the alleviation of such suffering.

Having distinguished morally negative from affectively negative emotions and having seen how the latter can be both epistemically and morally valuable, let us now consider the relevance of these insights for the negative emotions objection. The negative emotions objection involves the assumption that at least some of the emotions those in heaven might feel toward those excluded from heaven are affectively negative or painful and thus would, if experienced, impede the eternal joy and happiness of their bearers. Yet, on the evaluative perception account of emotions sketched above, emotions enable direct acquaintance with the value or disvalue of their objects and thus enable knowledge and appreciative understanding of those aspects of reality. There is no reason to think that emotions will cease to play this important epistemic role in heaven. Given a plausible degree of psychological-epistemic continuity between the afterlife and the life before (the inhabitants of heaven are still the same people they were in this life), we should expect that emotional experience of God's divine perfections and of the heavenly perfections of resurrected humans will be partly constitutive of the state of eternal joy Christians have traditionally associated with heaven—it is *joy* after

all! Indeed, paradisal enjoyment of God and his creation will include such positive emotions as joy, adoration, awe, and love (if indeed there is an emotion of love).[10]

Of course, the flip side of this coin is that insofar as any negative realities exist to be perceived, known, or understood (including, perhaps, past evils) the residents of heaven will experience, know, and understand them by way of affectively negative emotions. While it certainly is possible to know about a bad state of affairs and even to know that it is bad without experiencing any negative emotions toward it, the experience of negative emotions can enhance such knowledge by directly acquainting the subject with the badness of the state of affairs. The knowledge those in heaven have of the suffering of those outside heaven (or of past evils) thus would seem to be epistemically diminished if uninformed by affectively negative emotional acquaintance. Moreover, knowledge is not the only epistemic good at stake. In the absence of affectively negative emotional perception of the badness of the suffering of those in hell, the ability of the inhabitants of heaven to appreciatively understand the badness of such suffering also would be compromised.

An important objection might be raised here in light of recent work by Glen Pettigrove and Koji Tanaka (2013), which suggests that while past emotional experience is necessary for the formation of certain evaluative concepts, continued emotional experience need not be necessary for the continued possession of such "historically affective concepts."[11] To use Pettigrove and Tanaka's main example, while the formation of the concepts of justice and injustice seems to require the experience of anger, once a person has acquired sufficiently robust concepts of justice and injustice, continued experience of anger does not provide much, if any, epistemic value and what epistemic value it does continue to provide is outweighed by the moral disvalue of experiencing anger. In reply, it is important to note that while continued experience of anger might not be necessary for informing our corresponding evaluative concepts and there might be moral reasons to prefer a life without anger, continued experience of measured (virtuous) anger nevertheless seems epistemically valuable insofar as it enables direct perceptual acquaintance with injustice. Likewise, for those in heaven, continued affectively negative emotional perceptions of the badness of hell would seem to be epistemically valuable, over and above the value of informing their concepts of suffering and the badness of hell. In fact, it seems to me that in heaven the badness of hell will strike the inhabitants of heaven in an even more direct perceptual way than it does in this life because their emotional vision will be perfected.

[10] On the connection between love and emotions, see Roberts (2003: 284–97); see also Roberts (2012).

[11] I am grateful to Ryan West for suggesting this possible objection.

I suspect that many people's ante-mortem perceptions of the badness of hell, like their perceptions of the goodness of God, are probably too "tame."

If it were only the epistemic value of negative heavenly emotions at stake, then perhaps many would be persuaded by the claim that the epistemic value of experiencing such emotions in heaven is simply outweighed by the moral or psychological disvalue of experiencing such emotions in heaven. I, for one, do not find this claim persuasive. It seems to me that the epistemic value of experiential awareness of the badness of hell and of past evils is not outweighed by the emotional-psychological bliss characteristic of those who never experience affectively negative emotions. Accounts of heaven that would eliminate the negative emotional awareness of the badness of hell for the sake of maintaining uninterrupted emotional bliss seem to make heaven out to be an elaborate version of Nozick's (2013: 42–5) famed experience machine in which the inhabitants sacrifice connectedness to reality on the altar of pleasurable experiences. That does not seem like a heaven worth hoping for.

Yet it is not only the epistemic value of negative heavenly emotions that is at stake, but also their moral value. Even if the epistemic value of negative heavenly emotions might plausibly be thought to be outweighed by the psychological disvalue of having such emotions, it is much less plausible that the moral value of being a loving person who is virtuously sensitive to the negative realities in the world (past or present) could be so easily outweighed. As C. S. Lewis suggests in the passage quoted in the introduction above, painful emotional awareness of the badness of the suffering of those in hell seems to be a manifestation of love, a virtue we should expect to be possessed and constantly manifested by the inhabitants of heaven.

So far we have seen that affectively negative or painful emotions can be both epistemically and morally valuable. Moreover, there is no reason to think that they will cease to be valuable in these ways in heaven. Without yet explaining how the experience of such negative emotions can be consistent with the experience of perfect heavenly joy, the foregoing considerations problematize attempts to reply to the negative emotions objection by denying that the inhabitants of heaven will experience negative emotions. I turn now to a detailed critique of a few such attempts.

7.2. ON DENYING NEGATIVE HEAVENLY EMOTIONS: A CRITIQUE OF AQUINAS, LEWIS, AND WRIGHT

In this section I shall consider the details of Aquinas's reply to the negative emotions objection, as well as the replies of C. S. Lewis and N. T. Wright, all of which involve denying that the inhabitants of heaven will experience negative

emotions, and I shall explain why I do not find their replies satisfactory. In light of the considerations explained in Section 7.1 concerning the moral and epistemic value of negative emotions (and, by extension, the moral and epistemic disvalue of failing to have negative emotions), it is not enough simply to deny that the inhabitants of heaven will have such emotions. One must also explain how it is that the inhabitants of heaven can still achieve the epistemic goods at stake (or explain why such goods are not worth having in heaven) and how it is that the inhabitants of heaven can still possess and manifest the relevant moral virtues.

To his credit, Aquinas does not deny that the inhabitants of heaven will have knowledge of the inhabitants of hell. On the contrary, he explicitly argues that the "blessed" will have knowledge of the sufferings of the "damned," both because that knowledge is intrinsically valuable and because such knowledge of suffering will enable those in heaven to delight more fully in their perfected state and deepen their gratitude to God for it (*ST*, Suppl. IIIae, Q 94, a 1). He explains, "Wherefore in order that the happiness of the saints may be more delightful to them and that they may render more copious thanks to God for it, they are allowed to see perfectly the sufferings of the damned" (*ST* Suppl. IIIae, Q 94, a 2). So, on Aquinas' view, heavenly knowledge of the suffering of the "damned" is both epistemically and morally valuable.

Nor does Aquinas deny that the suffering of those in hell is bad in some sense. Rather, he argues that those in heaven will see the badness of hell in light of the goodness of God's justice in punishing unrepentant sinners and in delivering those in heaven from the punishment, thereby occasioning in them the positive emotion of joy—"the saints will rejoice in the punishment of the wicked, by considering therein the order of Divine justice and their own deliverance, which will fill them with joy. And thus the Divine justice and their own deliverance will be the direct cause of the joy of the blessed: while the punishment of the damned will cause it indirectly" (*ST* Suppl. IIIae, Q 94, a 3).

While Aquinas does not explicitly consider all negative emotions (e.g., sadness) that those in heaven might be thought to feel toward those in hell, he does consider the negative emotion of compassion. He rejects the possibility that "the blessed" in heaven will feel pity or compassion for "the damned" in hell, in part because compassion is an affectively negative emotion. He writes, "Whoever pities another shares somewhat in his unhappiness. But the blessed cannot share in any unhappiness. Therefore they do not pity the afflictions of the damned" (*ST* Suppl. IIIae, Q 94, a 2). Moreover, he argues that "In the blessed there will be no passion in the lower powers except as a result of the reason's choice" (*ST* Suppl. IIIae, Q 94, a 2). He then explains that "mercy or compassion comes of the reason's choice when a person wishes another's evil to be dispelled: wherefore in those things which, in accordance with reason, we do not wish to be dispelled, we have no such compassion" (*ST* Suppl. IIIae, Q 94, a 2).

I agree with Aquinas that the inhabitants of heaven will not experience the emotion of compassion (or pity) for those in hell, not because of the first reason he offers (viz., that compassion is an affectively negative emotion), but rather because, in keeping with the second reason he offers, compassion involves construing the suffering of the sufferer as undeserved (i.e., as an evil that ought to be rectified). Compassion thus naturally gives rise to a desire in the compassionate subject to do what she can to eliminate the suffering. Of course, since the suffering of those in hell (in whatever physical or spiritual form that takes) is deserved and God's punishment of them is perfectly just, the inhabitants of heaven, having perfect emotional perception, will not see the suffering of those in hell as undeserved and will not desire to end their suffering. Were the inhabitants of heaven to experience compassion and form the consequent desire that the suffering of those in hell be removed from them, not only would they be misconstruing the suffering of those in hell, they would also be desiring something contrary to the will of God.

I also agree with Aquinas's suggestion that "the blessed" will be able to see the suffering of those in hell through positive emotions insofar as their suffering is a good manifestation of God's justice and a reminder of God's mercy and grace shown to those who have received his forgiveness and salvation. But, contra Aquinas, I contend that in heaven people will be able to "see" and will at least occasionally attend to the badness of hell from all (veridical) angles, not just the positive ones. In fact, I do not think that knowledge of the suffering of those in hell will be able to increase heavenly gratitude as Aquinas suggests unless such knowledge is informed by affectively negative emotional perception. Insofar as the knowledge of suffering Aquinas describes is disconnected from any emotional awareness or appreciation of the badness of the suffering experienced by the inhabitants of hell, it seems a cold, merely propositional assent. Such emotionless knowledge seems far less capable of increasing the delight and gratitude of those in heaven for their blessed condition than corresponding emotional knowledge. In short, non-emotional (or wholly painless) knowledge of suffering cannot do much, if anything, to increase emotional appreciation of contrasting blessedness.[12] Thus, knowledge of the badness of hell will not be complete, nor will it be able to enhance delighted appreciation of salvation, nor will it manifest a fully virtuous love, unless it is informed by affectively negative emotions. Since Aquinas is correct that compassion is not an appropriate heavenly emotion, there must be some other negative heavenly emotions capable of fulfilling these important epistemic and moral roles. As intimated above, I take it that sadness and

[12] This point about the spiritual-epistemic value of negative emotions seems to inform (albeit implicitly) certain Christian liturgical practices, such as the use of darkness and somber music in Good Friday services to elicit somber appreciation of the badness of Jesus' crucifixion in preparation for the joyful celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter. More on this in Section 7.3.

somberness are promising candidates. Before considering the possibility of these negative heavenly emotions, however, let us examine a couple more influential attempts to respond to the negative emotions objection.

Like Aquinas, C. S. Lewis denies that those in heaven will experience painful emotions toward those in hell, but he does so for reasons other than those offered by Aquinas. In an unfortunately brief and underdeveloped discussion, Lewis suggests that the negative emotions objection might rest on a false assumption about the temporal nature of hell. He writes, "At the back of this objection lies a mental picture of heaven and hell co-existing in unilinear time as the histories of England and America co-exist: so that at each moment the blessed could say, 'The miseries of hell are *now* going on'" (1996: 129, emphasis in original). As evidence against this assumption, Lewis argues that Jesus' teachings on hell emphasize the finality of hell, as opposed to its duration. He explains, "That the lost soul is eternally fixed in its diabolical attitude we cannot doubt: but whether this eternal fixity implies endless duration—or duration at all—we cannot say" (129). So, Lewis appears to think that the negative emotions objection is only compelling if heaven and hell exist simultaneously throughout eternity, but it is not clear why those in heaven will have no negative emotions toward the suffering of those in hell just because that suffering is not presently ongoing. Unfortunately, Lewis does not provide any more by way of explanation.

One problem with Lewis' reply to the negative emotions objection is that it relies on a controversial claim about the temporality of hell that is in tension with the biblical characterization of hell as "eternal [αιωνιον] punishment" (Matthew 25:46). More importantly, regardless of temporal duration, the misery (and finality) of hell is a significantly negative aspect of reality that seems to demand the appreciative emotional awareness and attention of those in heaven, for the epistemic and moral reasons discussed above. The fact that a significantly negative event happened in the past is no reason not to appreciate its negative significance well into the future. In fact, the more significant the event, the more it seems worth remembering with and through accurate emotional perceptions.

As a case in point, every year, one week after the celebration of Pesach (the Passover), the nation of Israel observes Yom Hasho'a, a Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and Heroism. All places of entertainment close for the day and at 10:00 a.m. sirens sound throughout the country for one minute and everyone is expected to stand in silence. People will even stop driving on major highways, get out of their cars and stand in silent, somber remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust and the heroism displayed by those who resisted the Nazis. Surely one reason for such somber remembrance of the Holocaust is that it might help to prevent such a tragedy from occurring again in the future. This obviously has no analogue for heavenly remembrance of the miseries of hell since heaven will be eternally free from all evil. Yet, another important

reason for communal remembrance of the Holocaust is that it enhances recognition and appreciation of the inherent value of the victims and of the horrific nature of the evil inflicted on them by the Nazis. The inhabitants of heaven would seem to have similar reason to sadly and somberly reflect on the badness of hell. Even if the suffering of those in hell is, unlike the Holocaust, perfectly just (because chosen or deserved) and, hence, indirectly desirable, it nevertheless is a tragedy that any human should conclude her existence by suffering the miseries of hell. It is also a significant personal loss for those in heaven who knew and loved those who end up in hell.

For these reasons I am unconvinced by Lewis's temporal duration reply to the negative emotions objection. There are, however, other resources in Lewis's discussion of hell that some have found more promising. For example, in his discussion of the temporal duration of hell argument, Lewis suggests that we are mistaken if we try to understand the existence of those in hell as a continuation of human life, since "hell was not made for men" (1996: 129). Here, he alludes back to a claim he makes earlier in response to another objection to the doctrine of hell: "to enter hell, is to be banished from humanity. What is cast (or casts itself) into hell is not a man: it is 'remains'. …to have been a man—to be an ex-man or 'damned ghost'—would presumably mean to consist of a will utterly centered in its self and passions utterly uncontrolled by the will" (128). Although Lewis does not explicitly cite the sub-human nature of the inhabitants of hell as a reason why it would not be proper to feel negative emotions toward them, N. T. Wright develops just such an argument, writing:

> When humans give their heartfelt allegiance to and worship that which is not God, they progressively cease to reflect the image of God.…My suggestion is that it is possible for human beings so to continue down this road, so to refuse all whisperings of good news, all glimmers of the true light, all promptings to turn and go the other way, all signposts of the love of God, that after death they become at last, by their own effective choice, beings that once were human but now are not, creatures that have ceased to bear the divine image at all. With the death of that body in which they inhabited God's good world, in which the flickering flame of goodness had not been completely snuffed out, they pass simultaneously not only beyond hope but also beyond pity. There is no concentration camp in the beautiful countryside, no torture chamber in the palace of delight. Those creatures that still exist in an ex-human state, no longer reflecting their maker in any meaningful sense, can no longer excite in themselves or others the natural sympathy some feel even for the hardened criminal. (2008: 182–3)

What if those in hell have a sub-human (or, ex-human) ontological status, as suggested by Lewis and Wright? Would that render negative emotions toward their experience of hell unfitting? I do not think so. Even if Lewis and Wright are correct that the inhabitants of hell will have literally lost their humanity, their enduring, eternal suffering might still be cause for heavenly sadness and

somberness insofar as the suffering of even non-human creatures is a fitting object of these negative emotions. Moreover, sad, somber reflection would seem to be an appropriate and fitting recognition of the disvalue of the fact that someone once human, once a bearer of the image of God, had undergone such a radical deformation. We rightly lament those in this life who "throw their lives away" by making self-destructive choices and we rightly lament those in this life who treat others or themselves in degrading and dehumanizing ways. How much more should we lament those who, on Lewis's and Wright's view, literally dehumanize themselves? On a Christian worldview, there is no worse fate that a person can suffer than spiritual death (cf. Matthew 10:28). The fact that anyone, however responsible for his own fate, should lose his humanity for all eternity is a fate too tragic to be ignored, made light of, or forgotten.

Thus, while Aquinas, Lewis, Wright, and others (see, e.g., Kreeft [1982], 127) have suggested that the right way to respond to the negative emotions objection is to reject the possibility of negative emotions in heaven and then explain why that doesn't render the inhabitants of heaven problematically ignorant or unloving, I suggest that a better way to respond is to admit the possibility of a limited range of negative heavenly emotions and then explain why the presence of such emotions does not necessarily undermine or compromise perfect, eternal, heavenly joy.

7.3. RECONCILING NEGATIVE HEAVENLY EMOTIONS WITH PERFECT HEAVENLY JOY

What, then, are the affectively negative emotions that it might be possible—indeed, epistemically and morally valuable—to experience without undermining perfect, eternal joy? Some affectively negative emotions seem obviously incompatible with the experience of perfect heavenly joy. Examples of such joy-incompatible negative emotions plausibly include despair, terror, panic, intense grief, envy, hatred, and abject boredom, among others.[13] In addition to the fact that many of these emotions would be morally bad to experience in heaven, they also have a kind of totalizing impact on our experience of the world. It does not seem possible to experience full, complete, perfect joy while experiencing even part of the world in one of these affectively negative ways. Yet, might there be other negative emotions that are epistemically and morally valuable in the ways described above, but that are also compatible with the

[13] The fact that boredom can be an emotion, and a particularly painful one, reveals a point of overlap between the boredom objection to the doctrine of heavenly joy and the negative emotions objection.

experience of perfect joy? As I have already indicated, I suggest that there is a kind of sadness, short of overwhelming grief, and an emotion of somberness that might fit the bill.[14] In order to see how the experience of these emotions can be compatible with perfect heavenly joy, it is important to understand their conceptual structure or "grammar."

In his treatment of the emotion of sadness, Roberts argues that although sadness is sometimes taken to be a kind of generic "downness" characteristic of several negative emotions, it nevertheless is a distinct emotion type with a characteristic propositional content or structure of its own. According to Roberts, the "defining proposition" of sadness is something along these lines: "*X, whose continued existence or presence or availability is important, is no longer existent, present, or available*" (2003: 234). Sadness is, in other words, a perception of the loss of something or someone that (who) is valuable and important. Roberts points out that people do not typically experience sadness in response to a loss that is merely temporary or still recoverable (such as a basketball team's being down by six points with two minutes remaining); rather, sadness is a perception or construal of something important having been lost in a relatively permanent or irrevocable way (2003: 235).

So, at least on those accounts of hell that take hell to be the final, eternal habitation of the "lost" (whether voluntarily chosen or divinely imposed), it is not difficult to imagine why someone in heaven with knowledge of the suffering of those in hell might experience sadness over the eternal loss of the possibility of relationship with them, especially if those suffering in hell include people to whom the heavenly inhabitant had been closely attached this side of death. How could a mother not be saddened by the irrevocable loss of her precious son, or a husband not be saddened by the irrevocable separation from his beloved wife, especially in light of the knowledge that the beloved is suffering away from the presence of the good and loving God for all eternity? Indeed, it would seem heartless not to be saddened by the suffering and permanent loss of joy experienced by even the stranger in hell. How much more does it seem unloving (or viciously forgetful) to fail to perceive through the eyes of sadness the loss and suffering of one dearly beloved? As Roberts notes, "sadness upon the loss of something is one of the chief indices of attachment; if you lose something and feel no sadness about it, chances are good you didn't care much for it" (2003: 234). Sadness therefore seems to be both morally and epistemically valuable, even for those in heaven. Morally, the experience of sadness is valuable as an expression of love. These reflections also seem to fit even those views of hell according to which the inhabitants of hell have opportunities to repent and be reconciled to God, since even the

[14] There might be other affectively negative emotions that are compatible with the experience of perfect heavenly joy, but for the sake of space I will focus only on sadness and somberness here.

present, but impermanent loss of a loved one is cause for sadness. Indeed, Jesus's weeping over the death of his friend Lazarus was not inappropriate, but rather it revealed the depths of Jesus's love for Lazarus and his appreciation of the badness of Lazarus's death (even in the light of Jesus's foreknowledge of Lazarus's impending resurrection). Epistemically, sadness is valuable as an accurate perception of the value of persons and the disvalue of the loss of persons and of those persons' loss of relationship with God. Of course, while it is not hard to imagine those in heaven having good reason for sadness, it is perhaps more difficult to see how such sadness could be compatible with perfect, eternal joy. Before addressing this worry, let us consider another potential negative heavenly emotion—somberness.

Somberness is perhaps more commonly thought of as a mood than as an emotion. Somberness is closely related to gloominess and melancholy, which are moods that, unlike emotions, do not take objects and tend to persist longer than emotions.[15] Nevertheless, I suggest that there is an emotion of somberness, even if that term can also be used to describe a mood. The emotion of somberness involves the construal of an object or situation as serious and not to be made light of. Moreover, in somberness, in contrast to its near relative, solemnity, the seriousness of the object is tied up with some disvaluable feature of the thing. Somberness is not fitting for weddings, but for funerals; not for college graduations, but for murder trials. We might, therefore, say that somberness is a construal of its object as gravely serious.[16] Somberness is a negative emotion insofar as its bearer is struck by the weight of the disvalue of the situational object of the emotion, whether that disvalue be simply threatened or already realized.

As with sadness, it is not difficult to imagine the emotion of somberness being a warranted and fitting emotion for those in heaven to feel toward those in hell. There is, after all, nothing more gravely serious than an eternal existence defined by spiritual death. Even setting the question of hell aside, it would seem appropriate for those in heaven to experience an emotion of somberness when remembering negative ante-mortem realities such as genocides, plagues, persecutions, personal traumas, and even the crucifixion of Jesus. Whether the object is the present suffering of those in hell or the past, ante-mortem suffering of oneself or others, somberness seems both an epistemically and morally valuable emotion. It is epistemically valuable insofar as it is an accurate perception of the serious disvalue of suffering that can ground appreciative understanding of the negative significance of the suffering. It is morally valuable insofar as it is expressive of a virtuous seriousness and lack of vicious flippancy toward suffering and insofar as it is grounded in a concern for the value of human beings (here, the moral value of somberness resembles

[15] Cf. Roberts's (2003: 64) discussion of the distinction between emotions and moods.
[16] The connotation of death carried by the term "gravely" seems apt here.

that of anger, which derives its moral value from the concern for justice in which it is based). Once again, however, it might seem difficult to reconcile the experience of somberness over suffering with the experience of perfect, eternal joy. Miroslav Volf poignantly expresses this worry with respect to remembering past wrongs in heaven: "Remembering horrendous evils and experiencing joy, especially joy in one another, are irreconcilable. A world to come that keeps alive the memory of all wrongdoings suffered—and not just of horrendous evils—would not be a place of uplifted radiant face but one of eyes downcast in shame, not a place of delight in one another but a place enveloped in the mist of profound sadness" (2006: 213).

I recognize that the strategy I am proposing for replying to the negative emotions objection is doomed to fail if heavenly joy is essentially characterized by unending and uninterrupted affectively positive emotional experiences. And, as intimated above, there is good reason to believe that perfect heavenly joy will be the affectively positive emotion of joy. Jonathan Edwards recognizes this fact and observes that "according to the Scripture representation of the heavenly state, the religion of heaven consists chiefly in holy and mighty love and joy, and the expression of these [affections] in most fervent and exalted praises. So that the religion of the saints in heaven, consists in the same things with that religion of the saints on earth, which is spoken of in our text, viz., love, and 'joy unspeakable and full of glory'" (2012: 23). Moreover, as Jerry Walls explains, citing Revelation 21:4, "One of the most emotionally appealing promises about heaven is that God will wipe every tear from the eyes of the redeemed" (2002: 131).

Can we, then, in light of these observations, reconcile perfect heavenly joy with the experience of negative emotions? I think so. But we must reject the characterization of the doctrine of heavenly joy according to which perfect joy is essentially characterized by unending and uninterrupted affectively positive emotional experiences. I propose a more nuanced and psychologically realistic doctrine of heavenly joy according to which perfect joy (happiness) is not a state of perpetual elated or affectively positive emotions, but is rather a state of settled pleasure in the understanding, activities, and loving relationships proper to heavenly existence—a state more closely akin to Aristotelian *eudaimonia* than to the kind of ignorant bliss or emotional aloofness that is sometimes thought to characterize life in heaven.

In considering the nature of *eudaimonia*, Aristotle argued that it is possible to suffer some pain and need without such suffering detracting from one's overall flourishing and happiness (*Nicomachean Ethics* I.10 and X.8). Although Aristotle was not thinking of heavenly bliss, but rather of a flourishing human life this side of death, his observations suggest that ideal human happiness or flourishing need not depend on a constant state of affectively positive emotional bliss. If a person is truly virtuous, argues Aristotle, she can flourish and be happy in the deep *eudaimonia* sense,

even in spite of some setbacks and misfortunes that might give rise to negative emotions. Of course, in a perfect heavenly society in which God rules as King and all the inhabitants obey the law of God by loving God and one another perfectly, most of the negative emotions we have reason to experience in this life will have no place. In the absence of unforgiven sin, there will be no guilt or shame;[17] in the unveiled experience of God's perfect love, there will be no more loneliness or self-hatred; in the final culmination of God's victory over sin and death, there will be no temptation to despair; in the absence of all physical and spiritual need, there will be no anxiety; and in the unmediated presence of the perfectly loving and infinitely beautiful triune God, there will be great and abiding joy.

Yet, if the account of emotions offered above is correct, even in heaven there will still be reason for a kind of sadness and somberness. But these affectively negative emotions need not detract from or diminish the perfect joy of heaven. In fact, the sadness and somberness I have in mind might actually enhance heavenly joy, understood as a kind of ultimate human flourishing. Consider, for example, the way in which many Christians observe Good Friday by somberly, indeed sadly, remembering the sacrificial death of Jesus on a Roman cross. Such sad, somber reflection on the crucifixion of Christ is valuable for many reasons. For one thing, observing Good Friday in this way helps to remind Christians of the immense price God paid to save them from their sins. It is impossible fully to appreciate the depths of God's love for humanity without appreciating the negative significance of the price He paid in order to reconcile fallen humanity to himself. Scripture attests that it is only by suffering and dying that Christ was able to be raised from the dead, thereby defeating sin and death once and for all and guaranteeing the resurrection to eternal life of all who place their faith in him (cf. 1 Corinthians 15). Moreover, the affectively negative observance of Good Friday serves to enhance the joyfulness of the celebration of Easter. Having lamented the cross, Christians can rejoice more fully in the resurrection.

In addition to enhancing Christians' emotions of joy and gratitude in response to their salvation and reconciled relationship with God, the affectively negative remembrance of the crucifixion seems to contribute to the overall wellbeing of Christians in that it is both morally and epistemically

[17] Here, I am sympathetic with Volf's (2006) view that the inhabitants of heaven likely will forget (in the culmination of a process of full forgiveness and reconciliation) many of the wrongs done to them and the wrongs they committed against others, thus freeing them from joy-cancelling guilt and shame, but I think some eternal memory of past sin plausibly is needed for eternal appreciation of the profundity of God's gracious forgiveness and redemption. I, therefore, remain open to the possibility of a kind of retrospective contrition for sins committed in this life, though I think the inhabitants of heaven will no longer identify fully with the former self who committed such sins, thereby minimizing, even if not entirely eliminating, the negative affect of their contrition.

valuable. Such sad, somber remembrance is epistemically valuable insofar as it is important for maintaining a deep, appreciative understanding of the significance of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. It is morally valuable in that it helps Christians to develop, maintain, and manifest virtuous attitudes and emotions such as proper gratitude for salvation, a humble sense of the undeserved nature of God's gracious forgiveness of their sins, and reciprocal love for Jesus. Whatever perfect heavenly joy amounts to, it must be consistent with the full wellbeing of human creatures. So, if the epistemic and moral value of affectively negative emotions is partly constitutive of the full wellbeing of human creatures, perfect heavenly joy must be compatible with experiencing those negative emotions.

The examples considered above of the Jewish observance of Yom Hasho'a and the Christian observance of Good Friday help lend psychological plausibility to this compatibility claim. For, it does not seem that the affectively negative emotional experiences at the heart of these observances must detract from an ideally joyful life. The Christian who experiences God's loving presence with her and who hopes in the resurrection can experience a deep and abiding joy, even amidst sad and somber reflection on the crucifixion of Christ. Indeed, Scripture attests that it is possible to experience a deep and abiding joy even amidst the most severe trials and tribulations of this life (cf. James 1:2). If a joy that is "inexpressible and filled with glory" is possible in this life (1 Peter 1:8), still so full of pain and suffering, how much more will a deep and abiding joy be possible in heaven where those who are saved will live forever free from the many and varied trials and tribulations of this life? Just as Christian joy need not be diminished by sad and somber reflection on the crucifixion of Christ in this life, the stable, enduring state of perfect heavenly joy will not be diminished by moments of sadness and somberness toward negative realities, especially when one views and understands those negative realities in the light of God's perfect goodness. Indeed, far from being simply an analogy, it seems plausible that the inhabitants of heaven will continue to observe Good Friday with a kind of contemplative sadness and somberness, as a reminder of the cost Jesus paid for their salvation.

At this point it might be objected that the overwhelmingly positive affect of heavenly emotions will simply cancel out or render unfelt the negative affect of any sadness or somberness. And it might be suggested that such unfelt sadness or somberness would be sufficient to achieve the moral and epistemic goods under consideration here. The problem with this suggestion, however, is that, as explained in Section 7.1, unfelt emotions are, epistemically speaking, largely inaccessible and inert. Moreover, unfelt sadness does not seem capable of expressing the kind of virtuous, loving sensitivity to the badness of hell and past evils that plausibly will characterize the inhabitants of heaven. Part of feeling and expressing love toward those who suffer, whether their suffering be

past or present, is being pained by their suffering. Indeed, God himself expresses his love for humanity through his sorrow over human suffering and through sharing our pain. In his *Lament for a Son*, Nicholas Wolterstorff reflects on this aspect of God's character:

> For a long time I knew that God is not the impassive, unresponsive, unchanging being portrayed by the classical theologians. I knew of the pathos of God. I knew of God's response of delight and of his response of displeasure. But strangely, his suffering I never saw before.
>
> God is not only the God of the sufferers but the God who suffers. The pain and fallenness of humanity have entered his heart. Through the prism of my tears I have seen a suffering God.
>
> It is said of God that no one can behold his face and live. I always thought this meant that no one could see his splendor and live. A friend said perhaps it meant that no one could see his sorrow and live. Or perhaps his sorrow is splendor. (1987: 81)

If painful sorrow is compatible with God's perfectly good existence and divine joy, then surely it must be compatible with eternal human joy.[18] Therefore, while it seems likely that the positive affect of heavenly joy will simply overwhelm negative feelings of sadness or somberness for much of the heavenly life, it also seems that we have good reason to believe that some sadness and somberness will occasionally be felt in heaven.

How, then, should we understand John's description of his vision of the new heaven and the new earth in which God "will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4)? This passage, together with Paul's accounts of the resurrection of believers in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4, as well as other eschatological passages of Scripture, reveal that the resurrected inhabitants of heaven will no longer be subject to disease and death, they will have no unfulfilled needs, they will forever live in perfect harmony with God's will, never again separating themselves from God's love through sin, and they will forever enjoy living in peace and love with God, their Creator. This truly is cause for abundant joy! I take it that such a life free from the significant pain and anguish of this life, and especially from such great evils as religious persecution, terrorism, genocide, murder, rape, torture, hunger, and disease, is what John envisioned. He was, after all, writing to the first-century Christians in the Roman world who were undergoing a great and violent persecution. It was not the affective pain of sad and somber reflection on the crucifixion of Christ, or on the eternal fate of

[18] While I do not have space here to argue against the doctrine of divine impassibility and my thesis about heavenly sadness does not depend on a rejection of that doctrine, I take it that the view of emotions presented here lends support to the view that God valuably experiences a wide range of positive and negative emotions.

those who turn away from God's offer of salvation, from which these Christians longed to be saved. Rather, they longed to be saved from the horrifically evil and violent persecution they were enduring. In heaven, no such evil, or fear of such evil will exist—as Wright explains in his discussion of the sea imagery in Revelation 21:1, "in the new creation there will be no more sea, no more chaos, no place from which monsters might again emerge" (2011: 190). And God himself, in a beautifully intimate act of divine comfort and love, will wipe away every tear; but he won't wipe away emotional memories of past evils or negative emotional appreciation of the painful reality of hell. Far from diminishing perfect heavenly joy, to be united with and comforted by God in heavenly sadness seems likely to contribute to the perfection of heavenly joy.

7.4. CONCLUSION

At the end of his discussion of the negative emotions objection, Wright qualifies his reply in the following way:

> I am well aware that I have now wandered into territory that no one can claim to have mapped. Jesus, Christians believe, has been to hell and back, but to say that is to stand gaping into the darkness, not to write a travel brochure for future visitors. The last thing I want is for anyone to suppose that I (or anyone else) know very much about all this. Nor do I want anyone to suppose I enjoy speculating in this manner. But I find myself driven, by the New Testament and the sober realities of this world, to this kind of a resolution to one of the darkest theological mysteries. I should be glad to be proved wrong but not at the cost of the fundamental claims that this world is the good creation of the one true God and that he will at the end bring about that judgment at which the whole creation will rejoice. (2008: 183)

Although I find Wright's reply to the negative emotions objection unsatisfying, I echo his concerns about speculating on such a weighty matter as this. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it is important to challenge the popular view of heaven according to which the negative realities of hell and ante-mortem suffering are either viewed in a wholly positive light, forgotten, or simply ignored by the inhabitants of heaven. For many, this popular view of heaven seems at best psychologically implausible and at worst cold and heartless. In response to this worry, my goal has been to sketch a psychologically plausible view of heaven, according to which a limited range of (occasional) negative emotions is compatible with the experience of perfect heavenly joy and might actually enhance it. At the very least, I hope to have shown that those who deny the possibility of negative emotions in heaven have more work to do in defending the doctrine of heavenly joy against the negative emotions objection.

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8

Virtues of Repair in Paradise

T. Ryan Byerly

It has already been observed in one contribution to this volume that reflection upon the excellent quality of life in paradise can easily generate philosophical conundrums when it comes to determining which virtuous traits of character will be possessed and exercised by paradisiacal inhabitants.[1] For example, on the one hand, it would seem that courage is an admirable quality of character suitable for or even required of paradisiacal inhabitants if they are to live the most excellent sort of life. Yet, on the other hand, it would appear that paradise is unfit for exercise of courage, as the proper exercise of courage requires danger, and danger is out of place where the almighty God sovereignly and intimately dwells with his people, the very hairs of whose heads are all numbered by him.

This chapter continues reflection upon this theme, but with a focus on what would seem to be a particularly challenging category of virtues—what I will call virtues of repair. These are virtues that equip their possessors to respond excellently to moral wrongdoing. Candidates would include the virtues of forgivingness and contrition. Where forgivingness enables its possessor to respond excellently to wrongs done to her or, more controversially, to victims to whom she is appropriately related, contrition enables its possessor to respond excellently to wrongs done by her or, more controversially, by perpetrators to whom she is appropriately related. The question with which I will be wrestling is whether such virtues of repair have any place in paradise as traditionally conceived in theistic religious traditions. I will argue that there is significant reason to favor a positive answer. More specifically, there is significant reason to believe that any worlds such as our own in which the human inhabitants of paradise are victims of wrongs or are appropriately related to victims and are perpetrators of wrongs or are appropriately related

[1] See Lu (Chapter 5, this volume).

to perpetrators of wrongs are also worlds in which these inhabitants will possess and exercise virtues of repair throughout their heavenly tenure.

While I believe my arguments have application to all virtues of repair, my focus in the following pages will be on the virtue of forgivingness. I begin, accordingly, in section 8.1 with some further comments about the nature of this trait. Then, in Section 8.2, I offer a fuller presentation of the conundrum I am supposing arises regarding the possession and exercise of forgivingness in paradise. I argue in this same section that, at least in worlds such as ours, inhabitants of paradise can expect to *possess* forgivingness. In Section 8.3, I turn to the question of whether forgivingness will be *exercised* in paradise. I consider a variety of proposals for how and why forgivingness might be exercised in paradise, and ultimately conclude that it will indeed be exercised routinely, despite the absence of wrongdoing in paradise. My hope is that this treatment of forgivingness in paradise will not only illuminate the nature of life in paradise, but will also illuminate the nature of forgiveness and forgivingness in the here-and-now.

8.1. THE NATURE OF FORGIVINGNESS

The character trait of forgivingness, as it is commonly called, is typically understood in terms of forgiveness.[2] The person who possesses forgivingness is disposed to forgive with excellence—forgiving appropriate objects of forgiveness, in excellent ways, and for excellent reasons. Thus, philosophers have sought to illuminate the trait of forgivingness by attending to the nature of forgiveness, and by considering what makes instances of forgiveness excellent.

There has been quite a lot of discussion of the nature and norms of forgiveness in recent philosophical work with characteristically widespread disagreement. I cannot hope to do justice to all of this work here. But, I will offer some modest and tentative proposals for how to understand excellent forgiveness, and so forgivingness, which are in keeping with a leading contemporary approach to the topic.

Following McNaughton and Garrard (2014), we can divide contemporary philosophical accounts of forgiveness into two broad types: those which fit the *clean-slate* model and those which fit the *good will* model. On the clean-slate model, when a paradigm instance of forgiveness is offered and accepted, the result is, as far as possible, restoration of the relationship between the offender and the victim. Forgiveness aims, so far as possible, at a return to the *status quo ante*—a wiping clean of the moral slate. Views fitting this model

[2] This has been so following the *locus classicus* of contemporary discussions of forgivingness in Roberts (1995).

characteristically propose that forgiveness involves some combination of "the cessation of any demand for punishment, reconciliation with the offender and…his readmission or re-certification as a worthy member of the moral community" (252). As such, views of this sort characteristically propose that one norm governing forgiveness is that it not be unconditional. The wrongdoer must make some kind of reparation in order for forgiveness of the clean-slate kind to be properly offered. It is morally problematic to wipe the moral slate clean if there has not been a relevant moral change in the offender.[3]

By contrast, the good will conception focuses on transformation in the victim. It proposes that forgiveness is to be understood as a transformation in the victim away from feelings of ill will toward the offender. When human persons are wronged, they naturally respond with a panoply of negative feelings and attitudes toward their offenders. Some of the feelings and attitudes involve willing ill—willing bad to the offender for its own sake. This may be the case with feelings of hatred, vengefulness, disdain, or scorn. By saying that such feelings or emotions involve ill *will* the advocate of the good will conception needn't be understood as claiming that these feelings or attitudes are entirely volitional or that they even literally involve willing. They may be only indirectly volitional or even involuntary, and they may involve a weaker attitude than willing, such as hoping or wishing that a bad for its own sake will befall the perpetrator as a result of the wrong done. More exactly, then, what is required for "ill will" of the sort in view here is some kind of positive orientation toward bads for their own sake befalling a perpetrator as a result of his offense. It is such a positive orientation that is overcome when one forgives.

Notably, there may be other negative feelings or attitudes that do not involve willing ill. For example, a kind of outrage over the wrong done, even a demand for apology or reparation or punishment, needn't manifest ill will. For, if a bad is willed to the offender here, it needn't be willed for its own sake. As such, it is more common for advocates of the good will conception of forgiveness to propose that unconditional forgiveness is acceptable or even laudable. Because one can overcome ill will toward an offender without wiping her moral slate clean, advocates of the good will conception can maintain that forgiveness where there has not been a relevant moral change in the offender is not morally problematic. That, of course, is not to propose that unconditional forgiveness is a moral requirement. Indeed, forgiveness, much less unconditional forgiveness is typically regarded as supererogatory by advocates of the good will conception of forgiveness.[4] At most, an advocate of the good will

[3] One very clear example of the clean-slate model is Swinburne (1989).

[4] For a defense of the view that forgiveness is *never* morally required, see Galmund (2010). I don't mean to endorse this strong view here, but only to point to it to illustrate the pervasiveness of the view that forgiveness is at least typically not morally required.

conception might maintain that there is an imperfect duty to forgive; that one is required to forgive some of one's offenders given sufficient opportunity, but that one is not required to forgive any particular offender.

I do not think we have to choose between the clean-slate conception and the good will conception. Each conception may answer perfectly well to a wide variety of our talk of forgiveness, and each may identify a practice with a value deserving of our theorizing. There may be more than one valuable variety of forgiveness, in other words.[5] Yet, for reasons I will discuss in Section 8.3, my focus in this chapter will be on the good will conception of forgiveness rather than the clean-slate conception. So, my question will be whether the disposition to display excellent good will forgiveness will be possessed and exercised by the inhabitants of paradise. But before turning to defend an answer to this question, I wish to propose three refinements of the preceding outline of good will forgiveness.

First, I propose that forgiveness needn't require a *transition* in the forgiver. More specifically, it needn't require that the forgiver once possessed feelings of ill will toward the offender. To see this, simply suppose a person was to acquire the disposition to refrain from bearing ill will toward her wrongdoers. Perhaps at times past, when still acquiring this disposition, the person sometimes struggled to refrain from bearing ill will, and so did experience a transition in instances of forgiveness. Yet, now she has so strengthened her tendency to withhold ill will that when confronted with a wrong, she is able to withhold ill will without first bearing ill will. It would be a mistake, I think, to propose that one who possessed the disposition to refrain from ill will and exercised it in this way could not have forgiven her offender. And, indeed, this refinement has been anticipated by others.[6]

Second, I wish to propose, as some others have, that in order for the good will conception of forgiveness to be worthy of its name, forgiveness must involve not only cessation of ill will but the cultivation of good will.[7] The trick here is to say exactly what kind of good will is required. To this end, I propose the following novel account of the good will constitutive of forgiveness. When S forgives R for offense O, S wills that O leads to a good for R. This account nicely parallels the account of the ill will that is overcome in forgiveness, and fits with our experience of the most excellent instances of forgiveness. As we

[5] For similar affirmations concerning varieties of humility, faith, and trust, see Byerly (2014), Kvanvig (2016), and Simpson (2012).

[6] See, for example, McNaughton and Garrard (2014: fn 13).

[7] As it happens, there are some writers whose views of forgiveness would otherwise fit the good will model but who do not develop an account of such a positive element in forgiveness. It might be more accurate to call their views *non-ill-will* views rather than good will views. See, for example, Richards (1988) and Roberts (1995). Yet, recent authors have voiced discontent with these views precisely because they lack such a positive element, and have made proposals about how to understand this positive element. See, for example, Szigeti (2014).

saw above, the ill will that one overcomes in forgiveness is willing that some bad come to the offender for its own sake because of the offense. The person who forgives overcomes such ill will and replaces it with good will: she wills that some good come to the offender as a result of her offense. The good needn't be an outweighing good or even a justifying good—one that makes up for or would justify the permission of the offense. In some cases, the forgiver may not even have a specific good in mind that she wills to come to the offender. What is required is only that she be positively oriented toward the offense contributing to a good for the offender. By way of illustration, in many cases the good that is willed to the offender will be a good of recognizing his offense for what it was, learning from it, cultivating habits that will avoid future similar offenses, and so on. In this way, the practitioner of the most excellent sort of forgiveness exhibits concern for the moral repair of her wrongdoer.

One might wonder whether it is going too far to require this kind of good will for a person's change of heart to count as an instance of forgiveness. Certainly we appear to apply the language of forgiveness to cases which fall short of this requirement.[8] I answer this concern in common with other writers on the topic who are happy to distinguish between paradigm cases of forgiveness and other genuine cases of forgiveness that resemble without exactly duplicating the paradigm (e.g., Griswold 2007). In paradigm instances of forgiveness, the forgiver will not only overcome ill will, but will also will that the offense be for a good to her offender. Persons who overcome willing ill to their offenders on account of the offense can still be appropriately described as having forgiven the offense, though their forgiveness only resembles and does not exactly duplicate the paradigm. As Griswold (2010) puts it, when cases of forgiveness do not duplicate the paradigm of forgiveness because they lack certain elements of that paradigm, we would still wish that those elements were included—or at least that they will be in the future if this is possible. This idea that there are more and less ideal instances of forgiveness, corresponding to how well they approximate the paradigm of forgiveness, is the third refinement I wish to propose (or, rather, accept, since it has been proposed by others).

I conclude by briefly commenting that exhibiting good will in addition to overcoming ill will is not the only way in which an instance of forgiveness can more closely approximate paradigm forgiveness. For, as commented at the outset of this section, forgiveness can be practised toward more or less

[8] One interesting case to consider is a case where the offender dies committing the wrong, and there is no afterlife. Here the victim presumably cannot will that a good comes to the offender as a result of the wrong and so the most excellent sort of forgiveness cannot be extended. I think this is the correct result. For, we must remember that forgiveness aims at repair, and in such a case forgiveness is precluded from completing this work. So, its most excellent form cannot be manifested.

appropriate objects, for better or worse reasons, and in better or worse ways. Thus, I propose that when a person S exhibits forgiveness of the most excellent kind toward person R for offense O, S refrains from willing that R experience ill for its own sake on account of O, and S wills that R experience a good as a result of O, where R and O are appropriate objects of S's forgiveness, where S's forgiveness is offered for excellent reasons, and where S's forgiveness is offered in an excellent way. In the discussion below, particularly in Section 8.3, I will have more to say about these latter requirements of excellent forgiveness. For now, I simply conclude that forgivingness, as a virtue, will be the disposition to display excellent forgiveness so understood.

8.2. POSSESSING FORGIVINGNESS IN PARADISE

We can now state the philosophical conundrum of paradisiacal forgivingness in more detail. The conundrum arises because there is significant reason both to affirm that forgivingness will be possessed and exercised in paradise and to deny that forgivingness will be possessed or exercised in paradise. On the one hand, the conception of the best kind of life for human persons as the life in which those persons acquire and exercise all the virtues over the course of a complete life is quite attractive. This conception of the good life for human persons extends back at least to Aristotle and has exerted considerable influence on the ethical reflection of Christians, Jews, and Muslims over the centuries. Moreover, it has surely also been a central thesis about life in paradise as it is traditionally conceived that the human inhabitants of paradise live the best kind of life for human beings. Their life is often described as happy, blissful, beatific, and the like. They are said to be of excellent moral quality—impeccable, even.[9] Thus, it would appear to follow that they must possess and exercise all the virtues throughout their tenure in paradise. And, since forgivingness is a virtue, the human inhabitants of paradise will possess and exercise it throughout their tenure.

On the other hand, however, there is pressure to conclude that forgivingness has no place in paradise. For, forgivingness is properly exercised only toward wrongdoing. And, as we have just seen, there will be no wrongdoing in paradise, as all persons in paradise will be impeccable. As such, there is reason to think that forgivingness would never be exercised by the human inhabitants of paradise. And, if it will never be exercised, one wonders what the point would be in possessing it at all. Possessing it wouldn't enable its possessor to

[9] The impeccability of the human inhabitants of paradise is discussed further in three contributions to this volume: Boeninger and Garcia (Chapter 14); Pawl and Timpe (Chapter 6); Tamburro (Chapter 15).

navigate the world any better than not possessing it. Moreover, without opportunity to exercise forgivingness, one worries that this disposition itself would naturally atrophy. Thus, just as some have concluded is true of other virtues such as faith and hope, there is considerable pressure to conclude that forgivingness is a virtue that is only fit to be possessed and exercised this side of paradise.[10]

What shall we say in response to this conundrum? I will begin a response to the conundrum in this section by arguing that theists should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will *possess* forgivingness. In the next section, I argue that theists should also affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will *exercise* forgivingness. My concern in each case will primarily be with worlds such as our own in which the human inhabitants of paradise either have themselves been victims of wrongdoing or have been appropriately related to victims of wrongdoing to have standing to forgive. However, I will also briefly comment in this section on whether the human inhabitants of paradise might possess forgivingness in worlds that differ from our own in this respect, suggesting that they indeed will.

I will offer two arguments for the conclusion that theists should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness in worlds such as our own. The first argument claims that it is part of the nature of paradise that its human inhabitants possess all of what I will call *personal virtues* that are not *badly entangled*, provided they can possess these virtues. Yet, forgivingness is a personal virtue that can be possessed in worlds such as our own, and it is not badly entangled. Thus, in worlds such as our own, the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness.

In order to defend this first argument it is necessary to clarify the concepts of *personal virtues* and *badly entangled virtues*. By a *personal virtue*, I simply mean a feature of character that makes its possessor better as a person, other things being equal. It is a feature of character which is such that, for any person who does not possess it, if she were to gain it and otherwise remain exactly as she is (whether this is possible or not), she would be better as a person. A personal virtue is *badly entangled* if it is such that in order for the human inhabitants of paradise to possess it, it must be either that some other good-making feature is lacking in paradise or some other bad-making feature is possessed in paradise. A personal virtue might be badly entangled, for example, if it is such that in order for a human inhabitant of paradise to possess it, she would also have to possess some other bad-making quality of character, or one of her paradisiacal compatriots would have to.

Given the foregoing accounts of personal virtue and badly entangled personal virtue, I can now offer a more thorough defense of this first argument

[10] Aquinas is a clear example of one who denied that faith and hope would continue to be possessed in paradise. See the discussion of this view in Lu (Chapter 5).

that theists should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness. Start with the first premise, the claim that the human inhabitants of paradise possess all personal virtues that are not badly entangled, provided they can. This premise is supported by the motivations which favor the claim about the nature of paradise already discussed in the conundrum above: that human persons in paradise will live the most excellent kind of life for human persons. For, given that personal virtues make one better as a person, a person who possesses all of those personal virtues that are not badly entangled will be better as a person, and so achieve a better quality of life on the whole, than one who does not, and she will do this without posing any danger to the quality of life of her fellow human inhabitants of paradise.

Notably, however, the claim that the human inhabitants of paradise possess all not badly entangled personal virtues is potentially a weaker commitment about the nature of paradise than the commitment affirmed in the conundrum above that the human inhabitants of paradise live the most excellent kind of life for human persons. For, depending upon how one individuates kinds of lives, this latter claim might be understood to imply that all human inhabitants of paradise live the very best life they possibly can. After all, if the very best life a human person can possibly live is a distinct *kind* of life, then this will be the uniquely most excellent kind of life for human persons. Yet, if the human inhabitants of paradise are all to live the best life they possibly can, this will imply that there can be no variation in the quality of excellence between the life of one human inhabitant of paradise and another. However, both the claim that all human inhabitants of paradise live the best life they can, and the claim that there is no variation between the quality of the life lived by one human inhabitant of paradise and another, have been denied by recent authors, including Timothy Pawl and Kevin Timpe (Chapter 6) in this volume.

Retreating to the weaker claim that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess all not badly entangled personal virtues provides an attractive way to respect the motivations favoring the potentially stronger claim about the nature of paradise above while avoiding these potentially problematic consequences. For, one who maintains that all members of paradise possess all not badly entangled personal virtues can still maintain that there is variation between the human inhabitants of paradise concerning the degree to which they possess the not badly entangled personal virtues, and that not all human inhabitants of paradise possess these to the maximum degree. In fact, roughly this model for respecting the motivations favoring the stronger claim above about the nature of paradise is affirmed by Pawl and Timpe in Chapter 6 in this volume.

There is a second attractive feature about the claim about the nature of human persons in paradise affirmed here, namely, that it does not conflict with the motivations that tend to lead certain authors to deny that some virtues will be possessed by the human inhabitants of paradise. For, those

authors who deny that certain virtues are possessed by the human inhabitants of paradise tend to deny this on the basis that these virtues are either not personal virtues or that they are badly entangled virtues. This, for example, seems to be the reasoning of some in the Thomistic tradition who deny that faith or hope will be possessed in paradise. On the one hand, these virtues may not be personal virtues: they don't make their possessors better as persons, but only better as sojourners journeying to their homeland of paradise. Or, on the other, while they make their possessors better as persons, other things being equal, other things are not equal in paradise. For, these virtues are badly entangled. For example, faith might be badly entangled with the absence of the beatific vision. The claim that all not badly entangled virtues will be possessed by paradisiacal inhabitants does not conflict with this important motivation for denying that some virtues will be possessed by the human inhabitants of paradise.

Accordingly, while the stronger claim that the human inhabitants of paradise will live the best life they possibly can could be employed to defend the claim that forgivingness will be possessed in paradise, the weaker claim employed here is even more attractive. And, as I will now argue, it can also be employed to defend the conclusion that forgivingness will be possessed in paradise.

Move, then, to the second premise—the claim that forgivingness is a personal virtue that can be possessed in paradise, and that is not badly entangled. We can see that forgivingness is a personal virtue by attending to simple, imaginative thought experiment. If we were to compare two supreme beings each of whom possessed all virtues other than forgivingness, but only one of whom also possessed forgivingness, I submit we would be inclined to regard the one that possessed forgivingness as a better person. And this is so regardless of whether the beings in question ever have opportunity to exercise forgivingness. The being that possesses forgivingness is intrinsically better as a person than the being that does not possess forgivingness. For, being disposed to refrain from ill will and disposed to cultivate good will toward one's offenders, for excellent reasons and in excellent ways, is simply a better way for a person to be than to not be, other things being equal.

Nor is forgivingness a personal virtue that is badly entangled. It is not a virtue which is such that, in order for it to be possessed by a human inhabitant of paradise, or even by all human inhabitants of paradise, it must be that paradise either lacks some other good-making feature or possesses some other bad-making feature. The best candidate for a feature with which forgivingness might be badly entangled is the bad-making feature of possessing wrong actions. In other words, the most plausible story about how it might be that forgivingness is badly entangled is that, in order for forgivingness to be possessed by human inhabitants of paradise, there must be wrong actions in

paradise. This is in fact exactly the motivation offered in the conundrum above for denying that forgivingness will be possessed by inhabitants of paradise. Yet, as I will now argue, there are several plausible ways in which forgivingness could be possessed by the human inhabitants of paradise without this requiring that there are wrong actions in paradise. Accordingly, it will be plausible that the second premise above will be true: forgivingness is a personal virtue which can be possessed in paradise and which is not badly entangled.

A first way of defending the conclusion that forgivingness can be possessed without requiring wrongdoing in paradise appeals to my arguments in the next section that human persons in paradise will *exercise* forgivingness without there being wrong actions in paradise. For, notably, these arguments, if successful, will also support the claim that, in worlds such as our own, human persons in paradise will routinely behave in the ways characteristic of the person who possesses forgivingness, without this requiring that there be wrong actions in paradise. Yet, if one routinely behaves in the ways characteristic of the person who possesses a virtue, one will either thereby cultivate or maintain that virtue. That is, either one already possessed it and one reinforces, deepens, strengthens, and refines it through exercise, or one did not already possess it but through practice one comes to possess it. Either way, if the human inhabitants of paradise routinely act in ways characteristic of the possessor of forgivingness despite the absence of wrongdoing in paradise as I will argue, then their possession of forgivingness in paradise is possible without this requiring wrong actions in paradise.

A second way the human inhabitants of paradise might possess forgivingness is by routinely practicing indiscriminately willing that all kinds of things that others do be for good to them. If I practice indiscriminately willing that things that others do be for good to them, then I may thereby cultivate or maintain a disposition in myself to will that a wrong a person does to me or to victims to whom I am appropriately related be for a good to her. For, after all, my practice of willing that what others do be for good to them was not based on discriminating whether the acts done were wrongs or rights or supererogatory acts or whatever; it was only based on the fact that they were acts done by others. Willing indiscriminately that the acts of others be for goods to them is an admirable practice for paradisiacal persons, plausibly an expression of love, as is forgiveness. So, it would be perfectly appropriate for human persons in paradise to cultivate or maintain forgivingness by practising such acts. And their doing so does not require the presence of wrong acts in paradise. In fact, their doing so does not require that there be wrong acts *outside* of paradise, either. Thus, this second way of arguing that forgivingness could be possessed in paradise may furnish a way for forgivingness to be possessed in paradise in worlds that differ from our own in that the human inhabitants of paradise, in these worlds, have neither been victims of wrongdoing nor appropriately

related to victims of wrongdoing to have standing to forgive. It may provide a way, in fact, for the human inhabitants of paradise to possess forgivingness in worlds which contain no wrongdoing at all.

Notably, both of these first two approaches to explaining how it could be possible for persons to cultivate or maintain forgivingness in paradise without there being wrongdoing in paradise can accommodate a restriction some may wish to place on the account of forgivingness sketched in the previous section (cf. Walls 2011). The restriction is that the willings or refrainings toward which the person who possesses forgivingness is disposed be *free* willings or refrainings of a libertarian sort—most saliently, that they either are not causally determined or that they are only causally determined by previous willings or refrainings of the agent that were themselves not causally determined.[11] The reason the previous two proposals can accommodate such a restriction is that, on the first proposal, it could be that it is on account of free acts of forgiveness that the persons in question cultivate or maintain forgivingness; and, likewise, on the second proposal, it could be that forgivingness is cultivated or maintained by free acts of indiscriminate good will. The free acts of forgiveness or indiscriminate good will may themselves not be causally determined or they may be causally determined only by previous free acts that were not causally determined.[12]

A third proposal for how forgivingness might be possessed in paradise without there being any wrongdoing in paradise is more difficult to reconcile with the foregoing libertarian restriction, though such reconciliation may still be achievable. On this approach, forgivingness would be directly infused by God into human persons in paradise in much the way that, on the traditional Thomistic picture, the theological virtues are infused. Efforts aimed at refining this third approach so as to accommodate the libertarian restriction will end up making this third approach bear a significant resemblance to the other two approaches. One might propose, for example, that the infusion of forgivingness is a divine response to freely chosen acts of indiscriminate good will, which are not (*pace* the second approach) sufficient on their own to secure forgivingness. Or, one might propose that forgivingness is divinely infused in response to freely offered prayer for its infusion. Alternatively, one could adopt this approach without attempting to reconcile it with the libertarian restriction. Again, all three of these variations of this third proposal could also be employed to show that forgivingness can be possessed in paradise in worlds that differ dramatically from our own in that the human inhabitants of

[11] For more on this division between two sorts of free acts—sometimes called "derivatively free" and "non-derivatively free" acts, see Kane (1996).

[12] The idea that persons in the afterlife might act freely out of a settled character that was formed through previous free decisions has been much discussed in literature concerning both free will and heaven, free will and hell, and free will and purgatory. Two chapters in this volume engage with some of this literature: Pawl and Timpe (Chapter 6) and Boeninger and Garcia (Chapter 14).

paradise have neither been victims of wrongdoing nor appropriately related to victims of wrongdoing to have standing to forgive. Indeed, they could be employed to show how the inhabitants of paradise in worlds containing no wrongdoing at all might possess forgivingness.

There are, then, quite a variety of ways in which one might maintain that forgivingness can be possessed by the human inhabitants of paradise without this requiring that there be wrong actions in paradise. Forgivingness is therefore not badly entangled with wrong actions. Since entanglement with wrong actions is the best candidate for explaining how forgivingness might be a badly entangled personal virtue, it is plausible that forgivingness is not a badly entangled personal virtue. And thus, since it is a not-badly-entangled personal virtue that can be possessed by human inhabitants of paradise in worlds such as our own, this first argument will lead us to conclude that it is plausible that forgivingness will be possessed by the human inhabitants of paradise. Indeed, we have even seen above some reason for thinking that forgivingness will be possessed by the human inhabitants of paradise in all possible worlds.

Move now to a second argument for the conclusion that theists should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness. This argument aims to show that theists should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness because affirming this is to their strategic advantage. The reason it is strategically advantageous for theists to affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness is that, by affirming this, it is possible for the theist to strengthen her theodicy for moral evils. For, if the theist affirms that the human inhabitants of paradise possess forgivingness, she can argue that their possession of this forgivingness provides a contributing reason for God to permit the moral evils of our world. That is, whatever other reason God has to permit the moral evils of our world, the theist can argue that God has *additional* reason to permit them if she affirms that the human inhabitants of paradise possess forgivingness.[13]

To see how a theist who affirms that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness can argue that God has additional reasons to permit the moral evils of our world, consider the following three theses, all of which are defensible given this affirmation. First, for each moral evil in our world, that evil is freely forgiven by at least one person who ultimately inhabits paradise. One might worry here that if some moral evils are not committed against paradisiacal inhabitants, then these moral evils won't be appropriate objects of forgiveness, and so it can't be that they are forgiven by at least one person who ultimately inhabits paradise. Yet, in response, we should observe that all moral evils are committed against persons who are, or will be, loved by someone if

[13] The proposal here requires that God can permit evils for multiple reasons. For a defense of a stronger view that God does all that God does for all the good reasons there are to do it, see Pruss (2013).

not everyone in paradise. And those who love victims are arguably appropriately positioned to offer forgiveness to those who wronged these victims. Thus, it is plausible that all moral evils are appropriate objects of forgiveness for some, if not all, persons who will ultimately inhabit paradise. Thus, if the theist maintains that all inhabitants of paradise possess forgivingness, it will not be implausible for her to maintain that each moral evil is forgiven by at least one inhabitant of paradise, if not by them all.

The second thesis is that all cases in which a moral evil is forgiven by a person who ultimately inhabits paradise, that person's forgiving that evil contributes to her acquiring, maintaining, strengthening, or refining the virtue of forgivingness. This thesis is defensible because this is simply how character formation works. When a person freely performs the acts characteristic of a virtue, her doing so tends to contribute to either her acquisition, maintenance, strengthening, or refining of that virtue. If she ultimately possesses that virtue, then her freely exhibiting behaviors characteristic of that virtue will have contributed to her formation of that virtue.

The third and final thesis is that virtue which is acquired, maintained, strengthened or refined through free actions characteristic of that virtue on the part of its possessor is more valuable than virtue that is acquired, maintained, strengthened or refined in some other way. This thesis is an expansion of the basic value intuition central to the well-known soul-building theodicy of John Hick (2001). According to Hick, virtue that is acquired via free acts characteristic of that virtue on the part of its possessor is more valuable than virtue acquired in some other way. Here I am simply proposing to expand this basic value intuition to cases of virtue maintenance, strengthening, and refinement.

Given these three defensible theses, the theist who affirms that the human inhabitants of paradise possess forgivingness can argue that God has additional reason for permitting the moral evils of our world that God would not have if the human inhabitants of paradise did not possess forgivingness. For, each of these moral evils, or a comparable moral evil, was necessary for one or more of these paradisiacal inhabitants to acquire, maintain, strengthen, or refine her forgivingness through her own free acts characteristic of forgivingness—that is, her acts of forgiveness. Yet, the forgivingness acquired, maintained, strengthened, or refined through these free acts is a great good. So, in addition to whatever other reasons God had for permitting this moral evil, God will have had the additional reason that permitting it or a comparable evil was necessary for achieving the great good of these paradisiacal inhabitants possessing forgivingness that was acquired, maintained, strengthened, or refined through their own free actions of forgiveness.

Moreover, the more paradisiacal inhabitants the theist maintains possess forgivingness, the better is the advantage she has with respect to providing additional reasons for God to have permitted the moral evils of our world. For, increasing the number of paradisiacal inhabitants who possess forgivingness

increases the number of candidates who can have acquired, maintained, strengthened, or refined their forgivingness through freely forgiving evils of our world. And, the more persons there are who have acquired, maintained, strengthened, or refined their forgivingness by forgiving an evil, the greater additional reason God has for permitting this evil, over and above whatever reason God had independent of the possession of forgivingness on the part of paradisiacal inhabitants.

There are, then, two arguments for the conclusion that theists should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness. First, they should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise will possess forgivingness because forgivingness is a personal virtue they can possess that is not badly entangled. Second, they should affirm that the human inhabitants of paradise possess forgivingness because, by doing so, they can strengthen their theodicy for the moral evils of our world.

8.3. EXERCISING FORGIVINGNESS IN PARADISE

What, though, of the *exercise* of forgivingness in paradise? I believe the answer to this question turns on whether there are appropriate occasions for forgiving in paradise. If there are appropriate occasions for forgiving in paradise, then persons in paradise will exercise their forgivingness; if there are not appropriate occasions for forgiving in paradise, then persons in paradise will not exercise forgivingness. This is not to assume that every inhabitant of paradise will of necessity exercise forgivingness at every appropriate occasion. Exercising forgivingness is and remains supererogatory or at most an imperfect duty. It is just that, *given sufficient opportunity*, those living the best kind of life for human beings will often exhibit forgivingness. Accordingly, I will in this section evaluate three proposals for how there could be appropriate occasions for forgiving in paradise. In all three cases, the occasion is provided despite there not being any wrongs committed in paradise.

On the first proposal, actions in paradise that fall short of moral ideals, despite not being wrongs, furnish appropriate opportunities for forgiving. A person in paradise fails to perform a supererogatory action, say. Perhaps, for example, a human inhabitant of paradise takes a rest from contemplating the sublime. She realizes that in doing so she has fallen short of the ideal, not displaying as perfect perseverance as she might have, and so she is aware of an occasion in which she can appropriately forgive herself. Having acquired the disposition of forgivingness, she refrains from willing ill to herself for its own sake on account of her imperfect perseverance, and instead wills that this imperfect display of perseverance be to her for a good—say, that remembering it next time she contemplates will motivate her to display greater perseverance.

Odd as it may at first glance seem, one might argue that this proposal is somewhat in keeping with what has sometimes been maintained about the exercise of other virtues in heaven. The central thought is that quite a number of the virtues, including the cardinal virtues, will not cease to exist in heaven but they will be transformed, and transformed in such a way as to be directed toward different objects than those toward which they were typically directed in earthly life. The transformation, it will be claimed, yields an even greater version of the virtue than that which was possessed on earth.[14]

This first proposal raises a number of important questions. One question, relevant also for other proposals to be discussed below, is the question of whether it is possible for human inhabitants of paradise to possess and display less than fully ideal virtue, such as the imperfect perseverance referenced in the example above. Put differently, the question is whether it is possible for human inhabitants in paradise to *grow* in virtue.[15] Here I believe the answer is positive. Briefly, this is because fully ideal virtue requires that one be in full control of oneself. But full control of oneself is something only available to the omnipotent God, who by virtue of possessing all powers, possesses complete power over himself.[16] Finite, non-omnipotent persons, by contrast, will at best eternally asymptotically approach full self-control. They will eternally expand the range of circumstances in which they are able to exercise virtue via control of themselves. This needn't imply any danger of serious moral stumble or threat to their impeccability. It is just that their impeccability will always be ensured in part through divine providence—through God's so orchestrating circumstances that they do not face situations in which their lack of complete self-control will lead to serious moral danger.[17] Nor does the fact that there are possible circumstances in which their dispositions would not lead to the most morally desirable sorts of outcomes show that the inhabitants of paradise do not possess virtue, as some have emphasized in response to the situationist challenge to virtue ethics.[18] Rather, the inhabitants of paradise do possess virtue, though not fully idealized virtue, and they will forever more closely approximate the latter. I do not, then, think that this first proposal is sunk by the fact that it requires the possibility of less than ideal displays of virtue in paradise.

Nonetheless, neither do I think this first approach offers an attractive account of how forgivingness of the good will sort might be exercised in paradise. The central concern I have with this proposal is the following. By

[14] See the fuller discussion of this strategy in Lu (Chapter 5).

[15] This question is the topic of another chapter in this volume: Pawl and Timpe (Chapter 6).

[16] For further discussion of divine power and control and how this *secures* both divine freedom and impeccability, see Byerly (forthcoming).

[17] The somewhat neglected topic of the role of divine providence in securing the impeccability of the redeemed is addressed in another contribution to this volume: Tamburro (Chapter 15).

[18] See, for example, Sosa (2009).

contrast with the way in which this transformation idea is applied to other virtues such as courage or temperance, it appears that when applied to forgivingness what we get is not an enhanced or glorified version of forgivingness, but a weakened or diluted version of it. The test of forgivingness isn't whether its possessor can will good rather than ill to those who fall *just short* of the ideal, but whether one can will good rather than ill to those who fall *miserably* short—to those who commit the most heinous of wrongs. As Jesus might put it, "even the pagans exhibit *that* sort of forgiveness"—a sort that is directed toward failures to perform supererogatory acts. Indeed, this may explain why one of the few points of convergence amongst those working on forgiveness today is that forgiveness must be directed toward wrongs. Forgivingness of the good will sort cannot be transformed into a trait concerned only with acts that fall just short of the moral ideal.

The foregoing arguably marks a significant contrast between good will forgivingness and clean-slate forgivingness—especially in its more extreme varieties. According to these more extreme versions of clean-slate forgivingness, the possessor of forgivingness is disposed to display acts of forgiveness that require full reconciliation with the offender and full reinstatement of the offender to her status quo ante the offense. Such acts of forgiveness, as we saw in section 8.1 above, are appropriate only when there has been an adequate moral change in the offender. But, as such, such acts are easily seen as simply acts of justice: of giving what is due to those to whom it is due. But, then, the idea that forgivingness of the clean-slate variety might be transformed in paradise and redirected toward non-wrongs is not as problematic as the idea that this might be the case for good will forgivingness. Clean-slate forgivingness is a manifestation of the more general disposition of justice, and can be exercised toward failures to perform supererogatory acts just as well as toward wrongs, supposing there has been an appropriate moral change in the doers of these deeds. The fact that clean slate forgivingness can be transformed in this way is one reason I have chosen to focus on good will forgivingness in this chapter, as I am especially interested in those virtues that enable their possessors to respond excellently *to wrongdoing*. Finding the transformation proposal unsatisfying for good will forgivingness, I turn to two further proposals for how good will forgivingness might be exercised in paradise.

A second and more promising proposal for how there might be appropriate occasions for exercising forgivingness in paradise is that the inhabitants of paradise exercise this disposition toward wrongs committed by persons in hell. On many contemporary models of hell, persons in hell are offered opportunities to be reconciled with God and to enter the paradisiacal community.[19] At least some of them reject these opportunities, thereby committing genuine

[19] For a review of some leading examples of this kind of model of hell, see Walls (2009).

wrongs. Human inhabitants of paradise are appropriately positioned to forgive these wrongs—to refrain from willing bads to the perpetrators for their own sake because of the wrongs and to instead will goods to come to the perpetrators from these wrongs. For example, the inhabitants of paradise might will that the refusal of reconciliation will lead to a further future opportunity for reconciliation, including an opportunity to be reconciled for the wrong constituted by the previous refusal. Thus, the wrongdoings of persons in hell furnish opportunities for forgiveness in heaven, despite there being no wrongs done in heaven.

There are several ways one might object to this second proposal. First, one might argue that it is not true that human inhabitants of paradise are appropriately positioned to forgive hellish perpetrators. For, it would seem that the one who is, at least most immediately, wronged by the refusal of divine overtures toward reconciliation, is God himself rather than other paradisiacal inhabitants. Yet, some have maintained that only those who are the victims of wrongs are appropriately positioned to forgive wrongs.[20] In other words, as we saw in Section 8.1, for forgiveness to be excellent forgiveness, it must be directed toward appropriate objects; but, the appropriate people to whom to offer forgiveness are only those who have wronged you. So, human inhabitants of paradise cannot appropriately offer forgiveness to hellish resisters of divine reconciliation.

I don't myself find this objection persuasive for three reasons. First, it is not clear that human inhabitants of paradise are not wronged by hellish perpetrators. For, by refusing divine offers of reconciliation, the hellish perpetrator denies the paradisiacal community an additional member. Moreover, if the hellish perpetrator wrongs God, he wrongs someone that human inhabitants of paradise love. And, by wronging the beloved, one arguably wrongs the lover. Thus, hellish perpetrators may very well wrong human inhabitants of paradise. Second, it has actually been quite a point of contention in the literature on forgiveness whether only the victim of a wrong can forgive that wrong. Linda Radzick (2010) notes quite straightforwardly, for instance, that "people who are neither direct nor indirect victims of a wrong frequently feel moral anger over injustice. The choice to foreswear or overcome such moral anger is subject to most of the same sorts of considerations as victims' choices to forgive" (66). To use the terminology employed here, even the bystander has a choice to make concerning whether she wills good or ill to perpetrators of wrongs, and how she responds can reflect more or less valuable character traits. Human inhabitants of paradise might make precisely such a choice to will good rather than ill to hellish wrongdoers, thereby exercising forgivingness. Finally, even if one grants that excellent forgiveness or paradigm forgiveness requires that the forgiver be a victim, and one grants that human

[20] See, for example, Griswold (2007).

inhabitants of paradise are not victims of wrongs committed in hell, one may argue that human inhabitants of paradise offer to hellish perpetrators a kind of forgiveness that, while not perfectly duplicating ideal or paradigm forgiveness, is still valuable. Indeed, it has been a point of emphasis in recent work on forgiveness, especially amongst feminist thinkers, to emphasize the value of practising non-ideal forms of forgiveness.[21]

My own concern with this second proposal is not with whether it could underpin legitimate and continued opportunities for inhabitants of paradise to exercise forgivingness, but simply with the fact that it could only accomplish this in worlds in which not all human persons go to paradise. If there were a world, for example, in which human persons committed wrongs during earthly life, but all repented, sought, and received reconciliation with God and were granted eternal communion with God in paradise, the present proposal could not account for how such persons could continually exercise forgivingness in paradise. So, I turn to a final, third proposal which can.

On the third and final proposal, inhabitants of paradise exercise forgivingness toward wrongs committed during earthly life. Persons in paradise routinely reflect upon and deepen their understanding of wrongs committed during earthly life, especially wrongs which were done by them, to them, or to others to whom they are appropriately related so as to be in a position to forgive. Possessing forgivingness, they are disposed to respond to these wrongs by refraining from ill will toward their perpetrators and by cultivating and maintaining good will—willing that the wrongs done be for goods to their perpetrators. Routinely the inhabitants of paradise will exercise this disposition and thereby forgive the wrongs in question.

Objections to this third proposal will argue that it is not appropriate for persons in paradise to forgive earthly wrongs. The most persuasive way to argue for this, I think, is to argue that at a certain point, whether prior to entry into paradise or afterward, persons who go to paradise will have already forgiven all the earthly wrongs they were in a position to forgive and so they cannot forgive them again in the future.[22] Once the wrongs have been forgiven, there is no more forgiving to do.

[21] See, for example, Gheaus (2010) and MacLachlan (2009).

[22] Another, in my view less persuasive, objection would be that it would be bad for persons in paradise to consider these wrongs, perhaps because it would be psychologically painful or because it would distract from communion with God, which is more important. See, for example, Volf (2006). In response to the concern about psychological pain, it is important to emphasize three facts. First, forgiveness of all past wrongs is not mandatory. Second, wrongdoers who are inhabitants of paradise will have made reparation for their past wrongs, making it psychologically easier for their victims to forgive. And, third, a paradisiacal person's recollection of a past wrong will be a recollection of it *within* the larger story of the cosmos to which it contributes (on this point, see Rogers's discussion (Chapter 2, this volume) of her awareness of the whole of her dog's life in paradise). In response to the concern about distraction from communion with God, I direct the reader to literature defending an inclusive account of the summum bonum, where it

Objections of this type can take various forms. Some will permit that persons in paradise will forgive earthly wrongs for some period of their tenure. The period, however, will only be long enough for them to have forgiven at most all of these wrongs once. While this period could be lengthy, it will not last for the person's entire tenure in paradise.

Another form the objection might take is for its proponent to argue that all human exercises of forgivingness will take place prior to paradise. Some have argued, for example, that any human wrongdoers who have not made adequate reparations to their human victims by the time of their deaths must make such reparation after their deaths but before entry into paradise if they are to enter paradise.[23] The idea here is that so long as such reparation is not made, a wrong is committed. And wrongs cannot be permitted in paradise. Similarly, one might argue that the perpetrators and victims of earthly wrongs must be reconciled to one another prior to entry into paradise. For, so long as they remain unreconciled, a wrong is perpetuated, and wrongs cannot be permitted in paradise. Reconciliation, however, requires forgiveness. So, all earthly wrongs will be forgiven by those who go to paradise prior to entry into paradise.

Whatever form this objection takes, I think it is unpersuasive. This is because it is false that once a wrong has been forgiven, there is no longer any more work of forgiveness to complete toward it and its perpetrator.[24] Indeed, quite the opposite. The excellent forgiver is continually forgiving her perpetrator, continually refraining from ill will on account of the wrong done and willing good to come to the perpetrator as a result of the wrong. Moreover, she continually works toward perfecting her forgiveness by refining its objects, forgiving in more excellent ways and for more excellent reasons. Szigeti (2014) has recently confirmed this idea with the following example:

> Imagine a victim of [a war criminal] who finds it in her to forgive him. As the inclination to forgive the offender solidifies, it not only causes lasting changes in the victim's behavior towards the offender, it also becomes easier and easier to refocus the crime and its perpetrator from the perspective of forgiveness…. when the victim remembers, say, the scenes from the war or the prisoner camps, etc., and sets these memories against the present image of the repentant offender she can re-experience the moving feeling of forgiveness again and again. (222)

includes both communion with God and with others in communion with God—for example, Bradley (1997). Finally, I direct the reader to the more extended treatment of the compatibility of painful emotions and heavenly happiness in Pelser's contribution to this volume (Chapter 7).

[23] Cf. Himma (2010). Note that Himma proposes that, in addition to or instead of reparation, the wrongdoer might undergo punishment.

[24] I think there are other ways to respond to the objection, as well. For instance, I do not share the view that if reparation is not made, a wrong is perpetuated. Rather, I think that if reparation is not made *when there is an opportunity for it* then a wrong is perpetuated. Thus, I think reparation could be made in paradise. Similarly, I do not think that if reconciliation has not occurred a wrong takes place.

I propose that this practice of forgiving "again and again" will be exhibited in paradise. It is rather uncontroversial that in paradise persons will continually grow in their understanding of the glory and goodness and love of God. But, at the same time, this will deepen their appreciation of the gravity and ugliness of human wrongdoing. As they continually better appreciate the gravity and ugliness of human wrongdoing, they are better positioned to rightly understand that which they are forgiving. And so their forgiveness is refined, because it is directed more accurately toward the *right object*. Moreover, inhabitants of paradise may march toward improvement with respect to the *way* in which they forgive. Where forgiveness was once a struggle, it may become second-nature, and increasingly become part of how they understand their identity. Likewise, persons in paradise may continuously improve the *reasons* for which they forgive. They will learn to forgive for all the good reasons there are to do so. An impressive range of such reasons has been identified in the literature, including reasons pertaining to prudential value and intrinsic value.[25] And, similarly, they will expand the range of goods they will to accrue to and continue for wrongdoers as a result of their wrongs.

This last element is especially pertinent when it comes to forgiving wrongdoers who themselves become members of the paradisiacal community. For, as we have already seen, the victim who forgives her wrongdoer in an excellent way takes an interest, even a responsibility, in her wrongdoer's moral repair and growth. Forgiveness, when offered and received, as it would commonly be amongst inhabitants of paradise, is productive of a relationship aimed at moral growth. The goods of such a relationship in earthly life are profound, but in paradise they are endless. And so those who possess forgivingness in paradise can continually will that such relational goods come to their wrongdoer as a result of his wrongdoing, thereby continually exercising forgivingness. And all this despite the absence of wrongdoing in paradise.

The conclusion is that there will be ample opportunity for exercising forgivingness in paradise in any world such as our own in which those who go to paradise either themselves suffer wrongs or are appropriately related to others who suffer wrongs. In any such world, forgivingness will not only be possessed in paradise; it will be exercised, and that in perpetuity.

8.4. CONCLUSION

This paper has argued that, despite the absence of wrongdoing in paradise, paradise will be filled with forgivingness and exercises of it. I would propose

[25] On the prudential value of forgiveness, see especially Ingram (2013).

that similar arguments could be offered to show that the same is also true of other virtues of repair, such as contrition. These arguments teach us something interesting about what life in paradise might be like. But they also teach us something about the nature of virtues of repair in the here-and-now. One important lesson that has emerged from the present discussion, for example, is that excellent forgiveness is not a once-and-done affair. The excellent forgiver embarks on a committed moral journey with her offender wherein she continually displays forgiveness. The object, reasons, and ways in which she forgives are continually refined. For those bound for paradise, such forgivingness will accompany them forever.

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Part V

The Social and Political Philosophy of Paradise

9

In Defense of Animal Universalism

Shawn Graves, Blake Hereth, and Tyler M. John

In folk theology, it is sometimes claimed that non-human animals will join humans in heaven for eternity. Others claim that animals could not possibly join humans in heaven,[1] for they lack souls and are therefore incapable of surviving their deaths. The status of animal eschatology in academic theology is not significantly different. Some, like John Wesley, have implied that animals will be ushered into heaven at some future time and remain there for eternity.[2] Others, like St Thomas Aquinas, have argued that animals are not made of the right metaphysical stuff such that they can get to heaven.[3] A few contemporary philosophers have argued that animals will enter heaven as compensation for their suffering on earth, and another has argued that heaven, by nature, is no place for animals.

We think that there is good reason to believe that all animals shall be ushered into heaven and remain there for eternity.[4] We therefore defend *Animal Universalism*:

Animal Universalism: All sentient animals will be brought into heaven and remain there for eternity.

By "all sentient animals" we mean all animals who have ever existed or will exist who have the capacity for subjective experience while lacking the capacity

[1] Here and elsewhere, "animals" refers exclusively to non-human animals. We are aware that the common use of the word "animals" to refer only to non-human animals has arisen in large part due to human prejudice, and that it can be and has been used to demean and diminish non-human animals. Here, we cautiously use the word merely as a convenient shorthand.

[2] Wesley (1872).

[3] He writes, "Man is incorruptible in part, namely, in his rational soul, but not as a whole because the composite is dissolved by death. Animals and plants and all mixed bodies are incorruptible neither in whole nor in part. In the final state of incorruption, therefore, men and the elements and the heavenly bodies will fittingly remain, but not other animals or plants or mixed bodies" (*Compendium*, 170).

[4] Our thesis therefore entails, but is stronger than, animal *survivalism* (the thesis that animals survive death) and animal *immortality* (the thesis that animals never permanently cease to exist).

for propositional agency (or the capacity to act on judgments about reasons).[5] We focus on propositional agency as our exclusion criterion because we believe such agency is necessary for the moral responsibility and autonomy that many Christian philosophers believe excludes some humans from heaven.[6] By "heaven," we mean the location or state of being described in traditional Christian theism as being constitutive of a good afterlife.

Jerry Walls distinguishes between theocentric and anthropocentric models of heaven, the latter of which "would include poetry, pianos, puppies, poppies, and sex, all at their best" (2002: 7). While we are not committed to a view of heaven where poetry, pianos, poppies, and sex exist, we are committed to a view of heaven in which puppies and indeed all animals exist (though it is not clear that this commits us to an "anthropocentric" model of heaven). We mention this merely to show that our view does not contradict any settled orthodox Christian view on the nature of heaven.[7] For as Walls says, "Given the variety of views along this spectrum, it is not easy to identify *the* orthodox or traditional view of heaven" (7).[8]

We argue that Animal Universalism is the natural outflow of divine love and justice. It is an axiom of contemporary Western Christian theology that God[9] is perfectly loving and just.[10] If this is true, we argue, then Animal Universalism is also true.

[5] See Sebo (2015). We leave it open whether non-sentient animals will enter Heaven. In addition, we leave it open whether it is non-human organisms, minds, souls, or other entities that are brought into Heaven.

[6] As Sebo (2015) argues, "if you punch me in the face on the grounds that you think that I deserve to be punched, then it is at least plausible that you deserve praise or blame for your behavior…. In contrast, if my dog bites my arm because he experiences my arm as to-be-bitten, then it is not plausible that he deserves praise or blame for his behavior." Jerry Walls (2002) discusses at length the fact that "infants and children lack the cognitive and moral maturity" for free will and moral responsibility (88–9).

[7] This is not to say that our arguments are neutral with respect to which classical orthodox model is true. Our arguments may well imply certain orthodox models of Heaven are false. However, our arguments do not entail any obviously unorthodox model of Heaven.

[8] Cf. Dougherty (2014: 158–62). Dougherty contends that theological figureheads from all three branches of historical Christian orthodoxy (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant) support a view consistent with the thesis that animals can survive death. Indeed, Dougherty argues that passages from these theological figures render animal survivalism more probable than not. Plausibly, since orthodoxy does not entail that surviving animals are damned or at some point cease to exist, it is consistent with historical orthodoxy that animals (even all of them) remain in Heaven for eternity. Thus, if animal survivalism is consistent with historical Christian orthodoxy, so plausibly is animal universalism.

[9] Some of our authors object to the use of "God," as they regard it as problematically masculine. However, we could not achieve consensus on an alternate term, so we refer to the divine as the default "God" throughout this chapter.

[10] On God's perfect love, see 1 John 4; Lewis (1962: 39); Morris (1991: 177–9, 183); Talbott (2007: 279–81); Walls (2002: 67, 81–6); and Walls (2007: 287). On God's perfect justice, see: Deuteronomy 32:4; Rowe (1986: 244–5); Stump (1985); and Wolterstorff (2008: 323–41). For both, see Aquinas. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book 1, chs 91–3; Idziak (2007: 298–9); *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, 9–10; and Wierenga (1989: 203).

We begin by arguing that God acts in accordance with moral principles regarding beings with direct moral status, and then offer reasons to believe that animals have direct moral status. Several, but not all, of our remaining arguments depend on God's acting morally appropriately toward animals. Next, we argue that the divine nature entails Animal Universalism.

Our first arguments are *Arguments from Divine Love*. One argument has as its central premises that (1) God perfectly loves animals and that (2) perfect love always aims to promote the flourishing of the beloved. We defend these claims, and argue that they entail that God aims to maximize the well-being of each individual animal when doing so does not harm other individual creatures or violate creaturely freedom. God can only accomplish this aim by guaranteeing Animal Universalism.

Our second divine love argument follows Thomas Talbott's argument for human universalism (but does not inherit its difficulties): namely, that the redeemed cannot be supremely happy if they know that any of their loved ones are eternally lost. Those who have robust relationships with animals care about the well-being of these animals, and would be adversely affected by the knowledge that particular animals have permanently lost their lives. More significantly, the permanent loss of any individual animal would be a great relational loss to God. We argue that if God can prevent the loss of these relationships without sacrificing anything of comparable or greater moral importance, then God will be compelled by perfect love to do so. Since God *can* do so, God will guarantee Animal Universalism.

Next are *Arguments from Divine Justice*, which proceed as follows. Some philosophers of religion have argued that it would be unjust for God to provide humans with unequal opportunities for salvation. As Walls says, "God would not give some persons many opportunities to repent and receive [God's] grace while giving others only minimal opportunities, or even none at all" (2002: 67).[11] According to such arguments, no individual should be deprived of an opportunity for salvation on arbitrary grounds such as time of birth, geographical location, intellectual abilities, sex, or race. We draw on the relevant work on equality found in the animal ethics literature to argue that a plausible criterion of justice further requires that no individual be deprived of an opportunity for salvation on account of that individual's species membership. If humans are offered opportunities to enter and remain within heaven, it is unjust or objectionably arbitrary for God to fail to extend animals the same offer. Thus, God's perfect justice compels God to offer an opportunity for eternal salvation to all animals, which we argue no animal will reject. We then offer an additional argument from justice which further supports Animal Universalism. Finally, we respond to various objections to Animal Universalism.

[11] See also Walls (2002: 81–6).

9.1. DIVINE DUTIES TO ANIMALS

We defend the following claims: (1) that God acts in accordance with moral laws regarding those creatures that have direct moral status and (2) that sentient animals have direct moral status. While these claims will strengthen our arguments, few of our arguments will critically depend on God's acting morally appropriately toward animals. Even if God does not act in accordance with moral laws regarding animals, God's perfect love and justice compels God to save all animals.

An argument for (1) is as follows. Christians and other theists frequently make evaluative moral claims about God and God's actions. These claims often appear in worship contexts. For example, we claim that God is good and that everything that God does is good. But to make these claims is, minimally, to claim that what God does is morally appropriate, or is in accordance with some moral principles. It is to claim that God does things that a morally good agent would do were that agent in the same relevant circumstances. If it's true that God does not act in accordance with moral laws, then that's because either (a) God is acting in violation of those moral laws, and so fails to be good, or (b) there is no moral standard with which God's actions can be judged as morally good or not morally good, and so God fails to be good. So, if God is good, then, minimally, God's acts are the subject of moral predicates, and are therefore open to determinations about whether they are in accordance with moral laws. Given the standard assumption that God is good, it follows that God acts in accordance with moral laws.[12]

So, God acts in accordance with moral laws. That God acts in accordance with moral laws regarding individuals with direct moral status follows just from God's acting in accordance with moral laws and the nature of moral status. When we claim that *S* has direct moral status, what we mean is that *S* or *S*'s interests matter morally *for their own sake*.[13] So, if *S* has moral status, *S* has some property such that *S* can be benefited and/or harmed *simpliciter*. In light of this, there are moral laws regarding *S*—minimally, laws requiring agents to benefit *S* and/or prohibiting agents from harming *S*. Given that God acts in

[12] As Thomas Morris (1991) argues, this is true even if God is not the subject of moral obligations. He writes, "Because of [God's] distinctive nature, God does not share our ontological status. Specifically, [God] does not share our relation to moral principles—that of being bound by some of these principles as duties. Nevertheless, God acts perfectly in accordance with those principles which would express duties for a moral agent in his relevant circumstances. And [God] does so necessarily" (60–1). Similarly, some divine command theorists claim that God is not the subject of moral obligations. To have a coherent account of divine goodness they, too, should adopt Morris's account. See Alston (1990); Duns Scotus in Cross (1999: 93–4); and William of Ockham in Adams (1986).

[13] Similarly, Jaworska and Tannenbaum (2013) say: "An entity has moral status if and only if it or its interests morally matter to some degree for the entity's own sake, such that it can be wronged."

accordance with moral laws, it then follows that God acts in accordance with moral laws regarding individuals with direct moral status. That's just what (1) claims, so (1) is true.

In defense of claim (2), the claim that sentient animals have direct moral status, we argue that there is no morally relevant property that all sentient humans possess that is not possessed by all sentient animals. If all sentient humans have direct moral status, it follows that all sentient animals have direct moral status. In the philosophical tradition, it has long been thought that only humans have moral status on account of their having the cognitive capacity for rationality, language, or self-awareness (or a combination thereof). But this criterion of moral status is over- and under-inclusive, for some animals possess rationality, language, or self-awareness (like other primates and dolphins), and some humans do not possess these capacities (like infants and some people with profound intellectual disabilities). If we want all and only sentient humans to have moral status (and so no non-human animals) it seems that we cannot capture this by appealing to specific human capacities.

In fact, no matter what property we choose (love, relationality, opposable thumbs, etc.), there are some animals who have that property and there are some sentient humans who lack that property. The only property that all and only humans seem to have in common is their membership in the biological category *homo sapiens*, and there is no good reason to think that a mere biological category could be of moral relevance to moral status.[14] If we want to say, as many do, that all sentient humans have moral status, we should appeal to a property that all sentient humans share, and one which is plausibly of moral significance. We believe that the most plausible such candidate is *sentience*. This is because your sentience appears to be necessary and sufficient for things to matter to you. If you are not sentient, you are not a subject, and it is also plausible to suppose that you do not have interests. If you are sentient, then you can at least experience affective states like happiness and suffering. For these reasons, we believe that sentience is necessary and sufficient for moral status.[15]

[14] Accepting the view that a mere biological category is morally relevant to moral status comes with some significant problems. For a good overview of these problems, see Jaworska and Tannenbaum (2013).

[15] Some philosophers have argued that all or most animals do not have moral status on account of their not being persons, or not being potential persons, or not having the natural capacity for personhood. Arguing against all of these (and other) views would be an extremely ambitious project for an entire chapter, let alone one small part of this chapter. So, due to space limitations, we cannot discuss them here. Readers interested in these views should consult the (vast) literature on the Problem of Non-Paradigm Humans. For further reading, see Singer (1975); McMahan (2002, 2005); DeGrazia (1992, 2002, 2014). See also Kagan (2016). For a Kantian case for the moral status of animals, see Korsgaard (2011). For a contractarian case see Rowlands (2009).

In reply, some may claim that moral status supervenes on a decidedly theological property, namely "made in the image of God." According to this view, humans have moral status because they are made in the image of God and animals do not have moral status because they are not made in the image of God.

This view is problematic. In order to succeed it must make one of two assumptions: either there is some morally relevant property or properties that "made in the image of God" supervenes upon which make it the case that all and only humans have moral status apart from God's mere say-so, or there is no such morally relevant property or properties and all and only humans have moral status merely on account of God's saying so. The former assumption seems false, in light of our argument that there is no morally relevant property that is possessed by all and only humans. On the other hand, the latter assumption seems to make having moral status an objectionably arbitrary matter. We assume that this view is false.[16]

But suppose this argument fails. Even so, it is extremely plausible to think that sentient animals have direct moral status. Sentient animals are subjects that can experience happiness and suffering in much the same way that sentient humans do. Since we think that happiness and suffering have value and disvalue for humans, there is strong reason to think they have value and disvalue for animals. Moreover, the unjustified imposition of pain and suffering upon animals seems clearly morally wrong. For example, it seems clearly morally wrong to kick a dog or mutilate a raccoon for no good reason. Plausibly, this is so because the action harms or wrongs the animal in question without adequate justification. But if this is true, then sentient animals must have direct moral status.

If we accept that both (1) God acts in accordance with moral laws regarding those creatures that have direct moral status, and (2) animals have direct moral status, it follows that God acts in accordance with moral laws regarding animals—laws requiring benefits to them and/or prohibiting harms against them. While few of our other arguments rely upon this conclusion, it will further support our thesis.

9.2. ARGUMENTS FROM DIVINE LOVE

Christians often claim that God is *perfectly loving*. Indeed, many Christians claim that love is God's most *fundamental attribute*. This latter, stronger claim

[16] The charge of arbitrariness here mirrors the charge commonly pressed against divine command theories. See, e.g., Idziak (2007: 298); Zagzebski (2005: 356–7); Baggett and Walls (2011: 207–16); Louise (2009); and Sinnott-Armstrong (2009).

is a plausible way of understanding the Christian scriptures and tradition, but the prior, weaker claim is *clearly* supported by the Christian tradition. In our arguments from divine love, we assume that the majority of Christians in the faith tradition have been correct in claiming that God's love is perfect.

One of the primary motivations for the claim that God is perfectly loving in the Christian faith tradition is Anselmian perfect being theology.[17] Anselmians claim that God is by definition that being than which nothing greater can be conceived. As Thomas Morris (1989: 70) claims, "God is thought of as necessarily exemplifying a maximally compossible collection of great-making properties, properties that, roughly, it is intrinsically better to have than to lack." If any property *p* would make a divine being greater when that divine being possesses *p*, that divine being must necessarily possess *p*. If, for example, *being maximally powerful* is a great-making property, then divine beings are necessarily maximally powerful, for that maximal power makes that divine being greater than they would be if they were not maximally powerful. Following this theological tradition, many claim that *being maximally* or *perfectly loving* is a great-making property. Thus, any divine being is by definition *maximally* or *perfectly loving*, for if that being were not maximally or perfectly loving they would not have maximal great-making properties, and therefore would not be deserving of the honorific title "God." This is one argument for God's perfect love, and having the Anselmian foundation for perfect divine love in the background will be useful for our analysis of the nature of perfect love.[18]

Here is another argument for God's perfect love. It seems very clear that Christians want to insist that God is worthy of our worship and our total, unreserved, wholehearted commitment. As Peterson et al. put it:

> In developing our conception of God, it would be foolish to overlook the fact that, above all, God is a being who is the object of worship. God's "worshipability"…is of primary religious importance, so that a conception of God that is lacking at this point is unacceptable regardless of other merits it may possess. Whatever else may be true of God, it must at least be said that God is worthy of worship. (2003: 60)[19]

There is good reason to think that Christians who want to maintain this view would also want to say that God is perfectly loving. After all, a being that is loving, but not *perfectly* loving, may be worthy of commendation, admiration,

[17] Anselm, while not *explicitly* endorsing perfect love, claims that "all the ways of the Lord are mercy" and that God's mercy is "abundant" and flows from God's "supreme goodness." He also claims that God is perfectly just, "for it is better to be just than unjust." See *Proslogion*, chs 5, 9, and 11.

[18] It is worth pointing out that Christian Anselmians and non-Anselmians alike point to the Christian scriptures to support the claim that God is perfectly loving. Some examples include 1 John 4:7–8,16–21; Ps 136:26; and Deut. 7:9.

[19] Peterson et al., *Reason and Religious Belief*, 60.

and respect, but it is not worthy of unconstrained, unbridled worship and radical, thoroughgoing commitment. Given that God is worthy of worship, it is quite reasonable to affirm that God is perfectly loving.[20]

In order to see what God's perfect love implies about how God is or behaves, we must first understand the nature of perfect love. Philosophers throughout the Christian tradition have characterized love in general and divine love in particular in various ways, but their different characterizations share commonalities. Consider the following characterizations of love put forward by Christian theologians.

> The proof of love is in the works. Where love exists, it works great things. But when it ceases to act, it ceases to exist. (attributed to St. Gregory the Great)
>
> I give you a new commandment: love one another: not as people who pretend to love in order to corrupt one another, nor indeed as people love one another genuinely but in a human way…They share with each other the love with which he leads them to the end that will bring them fulfilment and the true satisfaction of their real desires. For when God is all in all, there is no desire that is unfulfilled. (Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John* Tract 65:1)
>
> An act of love always tends towards two things; to the good that one wills, and to the person for whom one wills it: since to love a person is to wish that person good. (Saint Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1 Q20 A1)
>
> To tell someone to love his neighbor is, among other things, to tell him to care about his neighbor's welfare, and to give that neighbor's welfare a fairly significant place in his system of priorities. The commandment implies, then, behavior which results, or can reasonably be expected to result, in improvements in the welfare of others. (Howard-Snyder 1999: 391)
>
> God could be said to…love individual human persons in particular only if God were *good to* each and every human person God created…. At a minimum, God's *goodness* to human individuals would require that God guarantee each a life that was a great good to him/her on the whole. (Adams 1999: 31)
>
> To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic/empathetic response to others (including God), to promote overall well-being. (Oord 2010: 15)
>
> Necessarily, God loves a person *S* (with a perfect form of love) at a time *t* only if God's intention at *t* and every moment subsequent to *t* is to do everything within his power to promote the best interest of *S*. (Talbott 2013: 25)

All of these characterizations share in common the idea that love is focused on making the beloved better-off. While we may mean many different things when we claim to love something or someone, a concept of love that is central to Christian theology implies that to love someone is, minimally, to pursue

[20] It's worth noting that, plausibly, Anselmian perfect-being theology is derivable from this initial postulate that God is worthy of our worship. On this point, see Peterson et al. (2003: 60–1).

their good or well-being. Therefore, for God to love an individual, God must pursue that individual's good or well-being.[21]

Perfect love, by contrast, is love that cannot be improved upon. If God is perfectly loving, then God's disposition must be fully and maximally loving, and there must be nothing in God that is not loving. Thus, many have interpreted God's perfect love to be "maximally extended and equally intense" (Talbott 2013: 302).[22] On the traditional, anthropocentric understanding of this claim, this means that merely every individual human being is loved by God to an equal and maximal degree. However, if God's love is truly perfect, we should expect God's love to seek the maximal well-being of all of God's creatures.

In defense of this claim, consider again the two bases offered in this section for God's perfect love, namely, an Anselmian conception of God and God's being worthy of worship. Both claim that God's love is *maximal* and cannot be in any way improved upon. This also falls out of the very nature of *perfection*, which is to be free of any flaws or unsurpassable. Now consider two all-powerful beings, Jack and Jill. Jill loves all sentient individuals. She cares deeply for their sakes, and is perfectly benevolent toward sentient individuals both human and non-human, doing whatever she can to make them better-off. On the other hand, Jack loves only humans. He cares deeply for their sakes, and is perfectly benevolent toward humans, doing whatever he can to make them better-off. However, Jack does not care at all about what happens to animals. He is utterly indifferent to them. Jack never responds to their calls for help, and does not care if they are made worse-off, even though he could easily benefit them without sacrificing anything at all. When we reflect on Jill and Jack, we find that one is more loving than the other. Jill's love appears to be an improvement upon Jack's love; Jill has a *better* love than Jack. What this tells us is that perfect love is *universal*. Perfect love is omni-sympathetic, sympathizing with and aiding any individual who has a "sake" that matters to them—any individual who can be subjectively better or worse-off. Far from being perfectly loving, Jack's indifference toward animal welfare appears strongly perverse. This is evidence that animal suffering is an appropriate object of care and consideration—in a word, love. Since God's character—far from being perverse—is perfectly loving, God loves animals, desiring to promote their well-being.

So far, this is compatible with an understanding of divine love whereby God loves animals, but only modestly. But consider another pair of all-powerful beings, Jeremy and Jemima. Jeremy cares about others. Jeremy wants to benefit

[21] What we say here does not commit us to what Bennett Helm (2013) calls "the robust concern view of love." We take no stand here on whether that view is true.

[22] See also Jeff Jordan's (2012) originating article in which he argues against this view.

others and prevent their suffering. However, Jeremy's love is of a *satisficing* sort. That is, Jeremy only cares about getting others to a certain welfare threshold. As long as others are not suffering, Jeremy is indifferent toward their wants and desires. Jeremy does not make others flourish, even though he could easily do so without sacrificing anything at all. Jeremy merely wants to ensure that others are not badly off. Jemima also cares about others, wanting to benefit them and prevent their suffering. However, unlike Jeremy, Jemima's love is of a *maximizing* sort. She is concerned about more than whether others suffer. She desires and sees to it that others flourish. When others are well-off, Jemima desires that they be better-off still, and further promotes their flourishing. When we reflect on Jeremy and Jemima, we find that one is more loving than the other. Jemima's love is an improvement upon Jeremy's love; she has a *better* love than he. What this tells us is that perfect love is *maximizing*. Perfect love is never satisfied with what is good, but is always aimed at what is best. If God's love is perfect, then God wants the best for each creature whom God loves. God's perfect love is universal and maximizing; therefore God desires and aims to promote the maximal well-being of each individual creature.

From this discussion of perfect love, we can see that God's perfect love entails Animal Universalism. We have argued that God's love is universal and is maximizing, and therefore that God desires that every individual creature be maximally well-off. For an individual to be maximally well-off, that individual must have as long and as high-quality a life as possible. Of course, the longest and highest-quality of life an individual can live is a life that includes a never-ending tenure in heaven.[23] So, God desires that every individual creature live a life that includes a never-ending tenure in heaven. Compared to an everlasting, maximally good life, a life that ends in permanent death is not very good at all. Death marks the end of all of our projects, our relationships, and our happiness, and being alive is a prerequisite for having *any* well-being. God's perfect love implies that God does not desire that any creature suffer permanent death, and will keep all animals in God's company forever.

One might object, arguing that this seems to imply a *stronger* form of universalism than we are seeking to defend here: namely, that all animals *including humans* will inherit heaven.[24] But Animal Universalism does not all by itself entail soteriological universalism for humanity. We have argued that God aims to maximize the well-being of each individual creature. Many Christians accept the claim that God *desires* that all humans be saved (which seems supported by 1 Tim. 2:1-4, 2 Pet. 3:9, and Ezk. 18:23), but nonetheless claim that it is not a defect

[23] We are aware of the worries some philosophers have raised about the alleged "tedium of immortality." We do not think that immortality will be tedious for any individual, much less for animals, many of whom likely lack the advanced, future- and past-oriented cognitive capacities required for overall life boredom. Of course, we cannot fully address these worries in this chapter.

[24] For a brief discussion of whether this also motivates "plant universalism," see footnote 40.

in God's love for God to allow some humans to be excluded from heaven in light of their free choice not to enter heaven or because of their sinfulness. If human free will or human sinfulness can do the work that some claim it can do, showing that it is not a strike against God's love for God to dismiss some humans from heaven, then our arguments do not entail human universalism.[25]

On the other hand, animals are *innocent*. No animals (that we know of) have a capacity for propositional moral agency. They cannot rationally reflect on what actions they will perform and therefore cannot be held morally responsible for causing harms. Some political theorists, like Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka (2011: 116–17), have argued that animals do have *some* capacity for moral agency—they can cooperate according to the terms of certain games in their own societies and in trans-species civil societies like ours. Whether that is true or not, it is unlikely that this kind of moral agency is sufficiently robust to ground blameworthiness. Animals are capable of following certain perceptual norms, but are not capable of reflecting on and making judgments about these norms, deciding what kinds of persons they want to be and intentionally cultivating certain virtues. They are therefore no more blameworthy from the moral point of view for their non-cooperation than uncooperative infants who will not eat their food.[26]

One might argue that their limited capacity for moral agency may nonetheless exclude certain animals from heaven. If animals are incapable of cooperating with the rules of heavenly society, they cannot take part in heavenly life. But there are good replies available to this objection. Surely, just as God can and will help many unruly and otherwise uncooperative humans to become suitable citizens of heaven, God can and will help animals to live a peaceful and otherwise cooperative life in heavenly society. Moreover, few contemporary theologians think that profoundly intellectually disabled humans or human infants will be dismissed from heaven because they were uncooperative in this life, so there is no reason to think that animals with similar intellectual abilities will be.[27]

The case of profoundly intellectually disabled humans and young human children also informs what we should say about the capacity for animals to

[25] Due to space constraints, we will not attempt to argue for the antecedent here. But it is worth noting that this objection would almost surely come from those who are inclined against soteriological universalism for humanity, and it seems clear that they would argue forcefully for the antecedent. Of course, this does not show that the antecedent is true; rather, this is merely a comment on the nature of the dialectical exchange.

[26] Should it turn out that some animals do have robust, propositional moral agency, these animals may be subject to further requirements in order to enter and remain in Heaven (plausibly, these would be whatever requirements typical human moral agents must meet). In such a case, our arguments here (insofar as they depend on the assumption that animals are not robust moral agents) would establish something slightly weaker than Animal Universalism (e.g., non-primate animal universalism).

[27] For a reply to an objection along this line from Swinburne, see *The Nature of Heaven Objection* in Section 9.4 of this chapter.

freely reject life in heaven. Many people believe that those who die with limited rational capacities are automatic candidates for a life in heaven.[28] If this is correct, then we should also think the same thing about animals, who all have similarly limited rational capacities.

However, moving from limited rational capacities to guaranteed entry into heaven might be too quick. Disability scholars frequently argue that we must respect the agency of people with disabilities by using a model of shared agency through which surrogates take the preferences, desires, and goals of people with disabilities and empower these people to make fully-informed decisions that align with their subjective interests.[29] Thus, where the preferences and values of those with limited intellectual abilities can be elicited, we have good reason to respect those preferences and values.

We are sympathetic with the claims of disability scholars that there is little if any reason to be uniquely paternalistic toward humans with disabilities and animals, but this does not cause problems for our thesis. For no animals—with the possible exceptions of some non-human primates and cetaceans—have the capacities for becoming sufficiently competent with the concepts of life and death, existence and nonexistence, or heaven to be able to make informed choices about their eternal fates. Moreover, most animals lack even the most basic capacities of practical reason necessary to make autonomous decisions. It is therefore not possible for God to give animals autonomy to make their own decisions about whether to enter heaven. More appropriately, God should take into account whether and to what degree animals will value their rich future heavenly lives if they are brought into heaven, and should take their preferences into consideration when constructing the heavenly city. When it comes to matters of existence and nonexistence, however, animals are simply incapable of making an autonomous decision that God is required to respect.[30]

From all of this, it follows that God will be compelled by perfect love to usher all animals into heaven. In addition to this, consider a second argument from divine love for Animal Universalism.

In several places, Thomas Talbott wonders how the Blessed can experience joy in heaven if friends and loved ones are in hell. He claims that they can't. As he writes:

> I could never be happy, for example, knowing that my daughter is suffering or in a miserable condition—unless, of course, I could somehow believe that all will be well for her in the end. But if I cannot believe this, if I were to believe instead

[28] According to Walls (2002), "it is striking that there is a broad consensus today that all who die in infancy are saved."

[29] See, for example, Donaldson and Kymlicka (2011: 103–8).

[30] Against this, some have raised the possibility that God will enable animals to understand the facts relevant to their decision and become capable of practical reasoning. We argue that this view fails in our discussion of *The Agency Objection* in Section 9.4.

> that she had been lost to me forever…my own happiness could never be complete. (n.d.)[31]

Given that the Christian tradition has historically claimed that in heaven each citizen's joy is complete—there is no suffering and no tears—Talbott argues that for God to make good on God's promises God would have to save *all* humans.[32] All of us have such deeply intertwined interests; God could not even save *one* human, Talbott claims, without saving *all* humans.

Talbott's claims are understandably quite contentious and, while powerful, there may be reason to be skeptical of them. For one, it is by no means clear that all humans have such powerfully intertwined interests that God could not save even one human without saving them all. For example, it seems clear that there may be some severely neglected orphans or people with attachment disorders that could be perfectly happy without God bringing anyone else to heaven along with them. Moreover, it seems perfectly clear that God could bring certain remote tribes into heaven—people groups that never made meaningful contact with outsiders—without bringing everyone else in the world into heaven. It may be reasonable to suppose that such people would not experience compromised joy in heaven if some people outside of their tribe were damned or annihilated altogether.

Of course, this kind of a response is unlikely to satisfy the conservative Christian theist, who will surely want to see a defense of a more traditional exclusivist view of heaven. But perhaps there are responses available to conservative theists that undermine Talbott's argument. William Lane Craig (1991), for one, argues that it may not be immoral for God to deceive the Blessed, shielding them from the knowledge that those they love are damned. Furthermore, if the lost freely choose not to enter heaven and if God respects human freedom, it may just be that it is all-things-considered best if God does what is otherwise unfortunate and keeps the ultimate fate of the lost from the Blessed.

These are just examples of approaches that conservative Christian theists might take to resolve the problems Talbott has proposed. We take no stand here on whether those approaches ultimately succeed. It seems fairly clear that God's love for the Blessed and desire that they flourish maximally gives God a reason to rescue the lost and usher them into heaven, but it is arguable that God has overriding reasons not to rescue them (e.g., human freedom or sinfulness), and thus that it is, all things considered, most reasonable for

[31] See also Talbott (1990). Perhaps it's worth noting that Stephen T. Davis regards this universalist argument to be one of the five best arguments for universalism he can think of. He writes: "*How can the Blessed be joyous if friends and loved ones are in hell?* I do not know an adequate answer to this question" (2011: 105).

[32] For a defense of the view that negative emotions are compatible with eternal existence in Heaven, see Pelser (2017).

God to allow some humans to be damned or annihilated. The parallel case for Animal Universalism from relational love, however, is much less easily avoided.

Just as in Talbott's case for human universalism from relational love, those who have relationships with particular animals care about the wellbeing of these animals, and would be adversely affected by the knowledge that they have permanently lost their lives. Thus, those humans in heaven who had meaningful relationships with animals during their mortal lives could not flourish maximally while knowing that their animal companions had been lost forever. Each of these animals, in turn, would flourish maximally only if they were able to live in heaven with their non-human families, and with those other animals that they had relationships with prior to their deaths. Humans in heaven would be better-off if all of their animal companions lived alongside them, flourishing maximally, and would therefore be better-off if all of their animal companions' non-human friends and families were ushered into heaven—along with *their* respective friends and families, and so on—for eternity as well. Finally, as we argued earlier, each individual animal matters to God. God loves each individual animal, and the loss of these animals would be a great relational loss to God, who looks after each animal and desires their well-being and their companionship.

This profound web of interconnectivity—of God and humans to their animal friends and these animal friends to their own friends, and so forth—gives God strong reason to welcome all animals into heaven. Doing so would satisfy God's desires and would further promote the wellbeing of each human in heaven.[33] Unlike in the human case, however, God could have no overriding reasons not to include each animal in heaven. As we have argued, animals cannot refuse heaven on the basis of their free choice, and they cannot be refused entry on account of their sinfulness. Where animals are concerned, God's choice is simple. God can easily prevent the loss of meaningful relationships without sacrificing anything of moral importance, and God will therefore be compelled by perfect love to do so. It follows that God will ensure the universal salvation of all animals.

9.3. ARGUMENTS FROM DIVINE JUSTICE

Many Christians and classical theists claim that God is perfectly just. They may accept this claim on Anselmian grounds or on the basis of biblical passages such as Deuteronomy 32:4, which states that "all of [God's] ways

[33] C. S. Lewis seems to endorse a similar argument in Lewis (1962: 140).

are just."[34] This seems to imply, minimally, that God never acts in ways that are unjust. The claim that God is perfectly just is also plausibly entailed if, as we have argued, God has moral obligations and never fails to act upon these obligations. For among these obligations are, plausibly, duties of justice, or fairness. We argue that it would be unjust for God to provide human beings with the opportunity to enter heaven while withholding the same opportunity from animals. Because God never acts unjustly, it follows that God will offer animals the opportunity to enter heaven.[35] This furnishes strong support for Animal Universalism.

Our basic argument from justice concerns *moral arbitrariness* with respect to an opportunity to enter heaven. Suppose that two human beings, Antonio and Amanda, differ only with respect to their eternal fates and their sexes: Amanda is female and her eternal fate is bad; Antonio is male and his eternal fate is good. Suppose also that this is the direct result of God's decision to extend a certain opportunity to Antonio but not to Amanda, and God did this in order to preserve males but not females. This would be an injustice since there is no morally important difference between Antonio and Amanda.[36] Similarly, it would be unjust (for example) for a specified ethnicity, birthplace, or intellectual ability to be required for entrance into heaven, because such properties are altogether morally irrelevant. Where properties are morally irrelevant, it is unjust to use those properties as criteria for whether or which individuals come to suffer significant harm. If God condemns all South Americans to eternal suffering or nonexistence on account of their birthplace, then God treats South Americans unjustly.

Similarly, it would be unjust to deprive someone of an equal opportunity to enter and remain within heaven on account of their *species*.[37] To see why, consider an alien race identical with human beings except with respect to where they originated: Mars, not Earth. These Martians share human subjective awareness, sentience, and other psycho-physical features.[38] They, too,

[34] See also: Psalm 9:7–8 and 36:6, Isaiah 30:18 and 61:8, Job 34:12, and 2 Chronicles 19:7.

[35] Jerry Walls endorses the view that God would give animals an equal opportunity to enter Heaven. See Walls (2002: 85).

[36] One might object that God is under no obligation to extend to anyone the opportunity to enter and remain within Heaven, and so there is no injustice done in this case if God withholds opportunity for salvation from Amanda on the basis of sex alone. In brief, one might reply by arguing that even if God is not obligated to offer anyone an opportunity for salvation, perfect love compels God to offer such opportunities anyway (as an act of supererogation) while perfect justice compels God to offer non-arbitrarily distributed opportunities.

[37] The argument succeeds even if God does not provide animals with an *equal* opportunity. It remains a requirement of justice that God not deprive animals of an opportunity *altogether*, which entails that God will give them some genuine opportunity. Moreover, as we argue in this section and Section 9.4, animals will not reject this opportunity.

[38] It might be objected that direct moral status is fixed by personhood and that only certain species (e.g., humans) or cognitive classes (e.g., agents) have personhood. As argued previously, however, sentience is sufficient for direct moral status. Thus, in the context of general moral

would be harmed by death (including everlasting death) and everlasting existence in a bad state.[39] Plausibly, in such a case, it would be wrong to exclude Martians from the possibility of heaven merely on account of their species. But then it would be similarly wrong to do the same to animals.[40]

Consider a similar argument made by Jeff McMahan (2002), which begins with a discussion of a hypothetical experiment:

> If it is possible to insert a single human gene into an animal zygote, it should be possible to insert two or more. We can imagine a spectrum of possibilities. At one end of the spectrum, there is a transgenic animal—say, a chimpanzee—with a single human gene…. Next in the spectrum there is a transgenic chimpanzee with two human genes. And so on, with each animal farther along in the spectrum having one more human gene than the animal before it. Since the overlap between the human and the chimpanzee genomes is high, it may be well beyond the middle range of the imagined spectrum before one reaches individuals that are phenotypically chimerical: individuals that are half-human, half-chimpanzee, with bizarre blends of human and chimpanzee characteristics. At the far end of the spectrum is an individual grown from a chimpanzee zygote from which all of the chimpanzee genes but one have been removed and replaced by human genes. This would, presumably, be a human being with a single chimpanzee gene. (213)

McMahan then inquires,

> Is there a point along this spectrum at which the individuals cease to be chimpanzees and become human beings? Is there, in other words, a point at which there is an individual with just enough human genetic material to count as a member of our species? And, if so, is it only at that point that there begin to be individuals with special moral status—for example, individuals whose lives are sacred and inviolable? (213)

He concludes that the answer is "no":

> I suspect that the chimeras near the middle of the spectrum would be neither human beings nor chimpanzees. On either side of these would be individuals whose species membership would be genuinely indeterminate. But these issues, though interesting, need not detain us here. The important point is that it would be absurd to suppose that the moral status of any individual in the spectrum

consideration, discriminating between sentient groups on account of species is objectionably arbitrary. See Section 9.1, "Divine Duties to Animals."

[39] This should not be interpreted as a tautology. By "bad state," we simply mean a state the features of which would suffice to make existence in that state bad for their otherwise identical human counterparts.

[40] What of non-sentient entities like plants? Plausibly, all non-sentient entities lack direct moral status and are therefore not proper recipients of direct concerns of justice, such as intrinsic moral consideration. It is also noteworthy that plants do not have a "sake" that matters to them, and therefore are not proper objects of divine love. While the flourishing of animals matters to those animals themselves, and thus matters to an omni-sympathetic God, the flourishing of plants matters to no one except for, possibly, third-party observers that like plants.

> would be determined by how many, or what proportion, of its genes were human or were taken from a human being. (213)

Here, it appears that mere membership in a species is insufficient to ground any special moral status. Let us stipulate that an animal with *n* number of human genetic characteristics is human, and that an animal with *n*-minus-1 number of human genetic characteristics is non-human.

Consider now two of the animals in the genetic line-up: Cigar, who has *n* number of human genetic characteristics, and Nocigar, who has *n*-minus-1 number of human genetic characteristics. Per stipulation, Cigar is human and Nocigar is non-human. Let us also suppose—following those who hold that mere species membership is both necessary and sufficient for special moral status—that Cigar has the necessary kind of moral status which obligates God to provide an opportunity for Cigar to enter and remain within heaven, and that Nocigar lacks that moral status and, with it, any hope of obligating God to provide Nocigar with the same opportunity. What should be clear is that the difference between Cigar and Nocigar is far too small to justify such vastly different treatments. As Ted Sider remarks, "[T]here will be someone who just barely made it, and someone else who just barely missed out. This is impossible, given the proportionality of justice" (2002: 60). He continues:

> What I am calling the proportionality of justice prohibits *very* unequal treatment of persons who are *very* similar in relevant respects. Whatever one thinks generally about the nature of justice, its proportionality should be acknowledged. (59)

Cigar and Nocigar differ with respect to only one genetic characteristic. A basic requirement of justice is that individuals who are radically and relevantly similar not be treated as if they were radically and relevantly different, and thus Cigar and Nocigar should not receive *intensely* different treatments with respect to their eternal destinies.[41] Such a conclusion justifies the more general principle that membership in a species cannot alone justify a special kind of moral status (or moral status simpliciter) because, if it did, it would justify vastly different treatments for individuals like Cigar and Nocigar, which is unjust.[42] We look now to further support for the claim that mere species does not grant special moral status.

[41] This is true even if it is compatible with the demands of justice to treat them *somewhat* differently.

[42] Sider's argument arguably supports a broader universalism than we defend here. Nevertheless, our arguments do not entail broader universalism. For criticism of Sider's arguments as they apply to broader universalism, see, for example, Dougherty and Poston (2008). See also Corabi (2011), which develops an account on which mortal sins are a non-arbitrary basis for cutoffs in a binary afterlife. Corabi's account is significant since it would, were it correct, provide grounds to deny a broader universalism while affirming Animal Universalism, since it might be that some human beings but no animals commit mortal sins.

Mark Rowlands (1997) has offered a contractarian account of how animals come to have direct moral status in virtue of which there are duties of justice concerning animals.[43] He begins by explaining Rawls's claim about properties which are bracketed behind the veil of ignorance:

> [I]f a property is *undeserved* in the sense that its possessor has done nothing to merit its possession, then its possessor is not morally entitled to whatever benefits accrue from that possession. Possession of the property is a morally arbitrary matter, and, therefore, cannot be used to determine the moral entitlements of its possessor. (238–9)

Examples of such properties include ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, and one's economic status at birth. It applies also, Rowlands claims, to properties like rationality: a property which animals often lack and, because they lack it (or because they lack it to a sufficient degree), they also lack direct moral status:

> However, rationality seems to be an undeserved property if any property is. A person plays no role in deciding whether or not she is going to be rational; she either is or she is not. The decision is not hers, but nature's. Therefore, according to the terms of the intuitive equality argument, it is a morally arbitrary property, and one is not morally entitled to its possession. Therefore, also, one is not morally entitled to whatever benefits accrue from its possession. (242)

That humans are rational (or that humans are rational *in a certain way* or *to a certain degree*) is an undeserved property. If God denies animals a chance to enter and remain within heaven on the grounds that they lack rationality (or lack it as humans have it), then God discriminates on unjust grounds. Such a decision is comparable to a case where God permits a human person of average intelligence to enter heaven but does not so permit a human person of below-average intelligence on grounds of the intelligence differential. We would condemn such a decision, but then we should condemn the criterion which, if used consistently, would permit the injustice.

We can extend this argument to other properties. One's species is, like one's intelligence, a matter not under one's control.[44] Having intelligence is, to use Rowland's phrase, not a decision of ours, but of nature's. We do nothing to merit our intelligence or the species which bestows it, but then any benefits which accrue from our intelligence or our species, like any benefits which accrue from our ethnicity or sex, are undeserved and arbitrary. Therefore, to deny animals entrance to heaven on account of their species would be to deny

[43] See also Rowlands (2009: 118–75).

[44] Should scientific progress introduce the possibility of changing one's species, it would nevertheless be true that one could not determine one's *initial* species. Everything is something or other from the moment of its existence, and the possibility of actually choosing one's species at a given time is therefore impossible without also being a particular species at that given time.

them an opportunity on the basis of a morally arbitrary property. Any criterion which grounds denial of opportunities to others on morally arbitrary grounds is unjust.

The justice argument for Animal Universalism, however, need not depend on a contractarian understanding of fairness. It is sufficient to show that animals have the minimal outfitting necessary to experience various possible afterlives, since it is hard to see how more than that can matter to motivate an obligatory equal opportunity to have (basic) access to heaven.

Because animals are sentient, they are capable of being made better-off or worse-off by their eternal state.[45] That is, things would go better for animals if they lived in a good, eternal state than if they did not do so. This is because animals are, to use Regan's terminology, "subjects-of-a-life." Speaking of the children of Willowbrook, who endured horrific experimentation justified on the grounds that they were (like animals) sufficiently unintelligent, Regan (2014) writes:

> [A]s important as these differences are, they should not obscure the similarities. For, like us, these children were the subjects-of-a-life, *their* life, a life that was experientially better or worse for the child whose life it was.... True, they lacked the ability to read and to make moral choices; nevertheless, what was done to these children—both what they experienced and what they were deprived of—mattered to them as the individuals they were, just as surely as what is done to us, when we are harmed, matters to us. (101)

We need not join Regan in supposing that being a subject-of-a-life entails rights, but we should concede that this fact about animal psychology commits us to the view that animal afterlives ought to receive moral consideration comparable to what human afterlives receive. The explanation why is simple enough: being eternally dead and being eternally badly off are unfavorable outcomes for both humans and animals. As Peter Singer (1986) points out,

> There *are* important differences between humans and other animals, and these differences must give rise to *some* differences, in the rights that each has. Recognizing this obvious fact, however, is no barrier to the case for extending the basic principle of equality to non-human animals.... Many feminists hold that women have the right to an abortion on request. It does not follow that since these same people are campaigning for equality between men and women they must support the right of men to have abortions too. Since a man cannot have an abortion, it is meaningless to talk of his right to have one. Since a pig can't vote, it is meaningless to talk of its right to vote. (217)

[45] It might be objected that sentience alone is inadequate outfitting to enjoy the goods of Heaven. Walls (2002) claims that Heaven, if it is the Beatific Vision only, would not be the sort of good that mere sentient beings could appreciate. Richard Swinburne appears to endorse a view of Heaven wherein the inhabitants of Heaven are those who go about the business of Heaven, the business being such that it requires moral agency. See Swinburne (1989: 190, 195). We consider these objections in Section 9.4, *The Nature of Heaven*.

The passage is instructive. Animals, like human beings, can take pleasure in heaven. They can also be harmed by eternal death and by eternal existence in a bad state. Whereas differences may exist between humans and animals, here there is commonality. This is true even if human beings have an enhanced capacity to benefit or be harmed by the possible afterlife states.

Denying opportunities to others is not always unjust, because they might be denied the opportunity on morally non-arbitrary grounds. Consider a prospective college student, Kay, who applied to Yale but was rejected as a direct result of there being better-qualified applicants and limited space for incoming students. Here the basis of Kay's rejection is non-arbitrary, and thus the fact that she lacks a particular opportunity is the result of applying non-arbitrary criteria. Conversely, if Kay were rejected on account of being (for example) transgender or Native American, such a rejection would be entirely arbitrary and consequently unjust. That animals are not members of our species is entirely morally irrelevant here. What matters is that they can suffer and that their lives will be better or worse depending on their eternal state.

At this point, it might be useful to summarize our *basic argument from justice*. There is no morally relevant property that distinguishes animals from human beings with respect to whether it is good to have an opportunity to enter and remain within heaven. But if there is no morally relevant property that distinguishes animals from human beings with respect to whether it is good to have an opportunity to enter and remain within heaven, then if human beings are offered an opportunity to enter and remain within heaven, then it is a requirement of justice that animals be given an opportunity to enter and remain within heaven. Human beings are offered an opportunity to enter and remain within heaven. Therefore, it is a requirement of justice that animals be given an opportunity to enter and remain within heaven.

The argument offers strong support for Animal Universalism. If the argument is sound, then each individual animal will be offered an opportunity to enter and remain in heaven. Because each individual animal *likes* to be in heaven, and because none of them have the intellectual ability to reflect rationally on the nature of heaven and decide that they do not want to be there, if God presents each animal with an opportunity to enter and remain within the bounds of the heavenly city, they will certainly do so. Moreover, when parents who have children without the intellectual ability to reflect on their own good must make a choice on behalf of their children, they have a pro tanto obligation to choose the option that favors the child's maximal well-being. Similarly, if God must make soteriological decisions on behalf of animals because they lack the ability to reflect on their own good, God, being perfectly loving and just, will infallibly opt for their entrance into heaven.

This argument does not exhaust considerations from justice which favor Animal Universalism. While we will not explicate and defend every relevant argument from justice, we offer one more which further supports Animal Universalism.

The Right to Avoid Harm.[46] Animals are harmed when their basic creaturely desires are frustrated, setback, or defeated.[47] Starvation, disease, injury, fear, stress, anxiety, isolation, and boredom count as just some of the ways their basic creaturely desires are frustrated, setback, or defeated. Animals aim to avoid harm by seeking shelter, fleeing attackers, avoiding dangerous natural conditions, and the like. Just as it would be a violation of an animal's right to avoid harm to deny that animal the opportunity to flee from attackers or seek shelter from a lightning storm, so also it would be wrong to deny an animal the opportunity to avoid eternal nonexistence or an eternally bad existence. Quite clearly, both eternal nonexistence and entering into an eternally bad state mark the end of any possibility for future desire satisfaction, and counts as the ultimate and final frustration of the animal's basic desires. These are serious harms indeed.

Offering them such an opportunity, while not requiring one to *secure* a safe outcome, would nevertheless require one to "open the gates" to heaven to make room for the possibility that the animal will walk through it. An animal's chance to exercise some measure of control over her wellbeing, therefore, depends (at least with respect to its *eternal* state)[48] on her opportunity to enter heaven. For this possibility to be realized, it must be the case that God grants to animals the opportunity to enter and remain within heaven.[49] As before, it remains implausible that animals would reject such an opportunity. All animals will, therefore, be offered an opportunity to enter and remain within heaven, will not reject that opportunity, and will therefore remain within heaven forever.

9.4. OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

While animals have not received much sustained attention in theological and philosophical literature on soteriology and heaven, a few arguments have been raised against God's inclusion of animals in heaven. We consider them here.

[46] Here we have in mind what Tom Beauchamp (2011) calls *rights to nonmaleficent treatment*.

[47] The particular details regarding the nature of any animal's basic desires depend upon the contingent psychology of the particular animal, e.g., how well-developed, robust, and sophisticated the mind of the individual animal happens to be.

[48] Animals often have pre-afterlife opportunities to exercise some control over their wellbeing.

[49] Due to the cognitive limitations of most animals, it is implausible to think that they might somehow on their own gain awareness of the opportunity to enter Heaven, or that they even have the cognitive capacity to assent to an opportunity to enter Heaven. Consider a shepherd who desires to give his flock the chance to appreciate a greener valley but, due to the cognitive limitations of the flock, cannot convey to them the nature of the greener valley. In such a case, it appears the best and perhaps only way to give the flock an opportunity to enter the valley is by taking them there and permitting them to decide whether to stay.

The Survival Objection. Some lay theologians have argued that animals will not enter heaven because they cannot survive their deaths. This is said to be on account of their not having souls. Our response is twofold. First, the extensive psychological and biological similarity between humans and animals,[50] as well as the details of our species' own evolutionary origins, does not support such a stark metaphysical divide between humans and animals.[51] Second, if God is required (morally or due to God's own nature) to bring animals into heaven, God cannot satisfy this requirement or avoid its normative force simply by programming animals to go out of existence at their biological deaths.[52] Such an act would be wrong or irrational insomuch as it constitutes God's effectively sabotaging God's own moral pursuits or undermining God's own nature.[53]

The Nature of Heaven Objection. Further, more sophisticated arguments are considered by Richard Swinburne and Jerry Walls. Swinburne (1989) argues that some human beings will not enter (or, if they enter for a time, will not eternally remain within) heaven since they will not be about the business of heaven, which includes worshiping God and interceding for the saints.

> Since the happiness of Heaven can only be had by those who desire to pursue the occupations of Heaven, the life of Heaven can only be enjoyed by saints. For they alone would have the right desires. If there is a place where those and only those who live that life are located (as I am assuming for simplicity of exposition) what is crucial about being in Heaven is not being in that place but living in circumstances where the ideal desires which I have described achieve their fulfilment in the ways I have described. (190)

In the same vein, Eleonore Stump (1985) explains the predicament of those who are damned to hell:

> It seems reasonable to suppose and it is traditional Christian doctrine, that God always wills the good for its own sake. So to will in accordance with God's will, a man must also will the good for its own sake. The assumption behind [certain objections to hell] is that anyone who has once had a taste of hell would

[50] As suggested in the context of the main argument from justice in Section 9.3.

[51] See also the arguments for animal souls in Dougherty (2014: 155–66).

[52] Swinburne (1989: 196) considers the possibility that human babies who die in infancy will be annihilated since they are not properly retrofitted for Heaven. A similar possibility arises with animals—perhaps animals are annihilated due to their being improperly retrofitted for Heaven. However, what goes for indirect divine action like biological programming for mortality also extends to *direct* divine action like annihilation. Moreover, such an objection simply asserts that our defense of Animal Universalism fails without giving any reasons for thinking it fails.

[53] Michael Murray (2008: 122–9) explicitly follows Keith Ward (1982: 201–2) in claiming that God's goodness would be undermined if animals harmed during their earthly lives were not compensated with eternal existence in the divine presence. If this is true, it offers further evidence against the *Survival Objection* (though only partial, since it might be empirically true that not all animals were harmed in their earthly lives, and therefore divine goodness does not require ushering *those* animals into Heaven forever).

> henceforth do whatever he had to do to avoid hell. But then such a person would be willing the good not for its own sake but for the sake of avoiding hell. Such a person's will would thus not be in conformity with God's will, and so it would not be possible for God to bring it about that such a person participate in the union with God which is essential to life in heaven. (402)

Central to this view is a picture in which moral agents whose wills are oriented toward the good belong in a place uniquely suited to their natures. Because the business of Swinburne's heaven requires propositional agency, which presumably at least some animals lack, Swinburne's argument indirectly criticizes Animal Universalism. Similarly, Walls (2002) considers but does not endorse the view that heaven might be nothing more than an eternal beatific vision, thereby excluding individuals who are not propositional agents, and so excluding at least animals.[54]

However, recent claims in disability scholarship imply that excluding animals and people with intellectual disabilities on account of their not being propositional agents is at odds with God's perfect justice. Disability rights activists frequently argue that it is unjust to construct society so that it excludes certain people from full participation only on account of their lacking certain capabilities.[55] For example, it is unjust to intentionally install staircases on public buildings instead of installing ramps if some members of society rely on wheelchairs for their mobility. Similarly, if God were to intentionally construct, structure, or otherwise arrange heavenly society so that it excludes humans and animals who lack the capability to reflect on moral propositions, God would thereby unilaterally bring about a paradigmatically unjust and disablist society.

Furthermore, philosophers of children's rights and disability rights frequently argue that it is a requirement of justice to aid others in social development so that they are not disadvantaged when they enter civil society.[56] This implies that a perfectly just God would aid animals, children, and people with intellectual disabilities so that they can participate in the heavenly community inasmuch as is possible given their intellectual capacities. While we do not have the space to explore these claims further, we think they are precisely right. Surely an infinitely resourceful, perfectly just and perfectly loving God would not construct a fundamentally unjust, disablist society and fail to aid those God loves in fitting in entering into the life of the community. Surely God can find a way to recognize a whole world of creaturely difference in God's own society.[57]

[54] He writes, "If heaven is the beatific vision exclusively, then there may be no meaningful place for animals in heaven" (91).

[55] See, e.g., Donaldson and Kymlicka (2011: 103–22); Wasserman (1998); Calder (2010); and Fraser (2007).

[56] See, e.g., Eekelaar (1986).

[57] A related objection is that children and individuals with intellectual disabilities might be sent to Limbo (or someplace distinct from Heaven) on the grounds that they cannot adequately

Moreover, because (as we have argued) God loves animals and wants them to flourish, it would be strictly irrational for God to design heaven so that its nature requires God to annihilate animals.[58] God's perfect love will compel God to design heaven for the maximal inclusion and flourishing of animals.

The Agency Objection. A further objection may be derived from the following. Perhaps God will reincarnate cognitively underdeveloped individuals and, in Swinburne's words, "allow them there the choice of destiny of which they were deprived on this earth" (1989: 195). Trent Dougherty (2014) contends that something like this will occur in the case of animals, though nowhere does he mention reincarnation.[59] The presumed divinely intended effects, however, would be the same, since animals would have their cognitive abilities enhanced to the extent that God would, to use Swinburne's words, "allow them there the choice of destiny." In Dougherty's own words:

> [A]nimals…will not only be resurrected at the eschaton, but will be deified in much the same way that humans will be. That they will become, in the language of *Narnia*, "talking animals." Language is the characteristic mark of high intelligence. So I am suggesting that they will become full-fledged persons (rational substances) who can look back on their lives—both pre- and post-personal—and form attitudes about what has happened to them and how they fit into God's plan. If God is just and loving, and if they are rational and of good will, then they will accept, though with no loss of the sense of the gravity of their suffering, that they were an important part of something infinitely valuable, and that in addition to being justly, lavishly rewarded for it, they will embrace their role in creation. In this embrace, evil is defeated. (2014: 3)

At first glance, such a proposal seems friendly to Animal Universalism. Further inspection, however, suggests otherwise. If the cognitive abilities of animals are enhanced to the extent Dougherty argues they will be, then some animals may be able to choose *against* an everlasting life in heaven.[60] Such a possibility would undercut Animal Universalism, since we could not

appreciate certain heavenly goods. But this objection falls prey to our arguments against the divine construction of a disablist society. Moreover, it implies that the friends and family of those with profound intellectual disabilities, as well as people with animal companions, will not be reunited with those that they love in heaven. This is problematic for the reasons cited in our argument from relational love in Section 9.2. See also our response to *The Two Heavens Objection* in this section.

[58] Another possibility is that animals are sent to hell. Swinburne (1989: 196–7) raises this possibility for human infants who died in infancy but rejects it on the grounds that it would be unjust for God to send human babies to hell. The same seems equally true of animals, who would (like human infants) suffer there through no fault of their own. This would be both terribly unjust and profoundly unloving.

[59] Dougherty's purpose is distinct from Swinburne's since Dougherty intends to develop a theodicy for the problem of animal pain, whereas Swinburne is merely aiming to cover certain objections to his account of Heaven.

[60] Dougherty nowhere indicates that they *will* make this choice.

confidently affirm that *all* animals will enter heaven and remain there everlastingly. All we could do is hope for the best.[61]

We offer two replies to this objection. First, whatever we might say about the permissibility of radical cognitive enhancement simpliciter, the claim that God will cognitively enhance some individual animal who will then go on to reject salvation conflicts with a very weak and extremely plausible moral principle:[62]

> MP: It is pro tanto wrong to intentionally and radically alter an individual's decision-making capacity if: (1) that individual does not understand or consent to the alteration; (2) the alteration goes against that individual's best interest; and (3) the alteration does not better satisfy the interests of any other individuals.[63]

MP is highly plausible. Any plausible explanation of the general wrongness of deceptive manipulation, or of drugging a person so that they will have sex with you, will appeal to either this principle or an even stronger version of this principle.[64] It is very plausible that *any* act that causes someone harm (thereby violating condition (2) of MP) without their consent and without benefiting others (thereby also violating conditions (1) and (3)) is pro tanto wrong. However, if God intentionally and radically alters any animal's decision-making capacity (as is required for the cognitive enhancement proposed by Swinburne and Dougherty) in a way that causes them to reject heaven, doing so will conflict with each of the three conditions specified by MP.[65]

[61] Dougherty argues that animals will be cognitively enhanced for the purposes of defeating evil, and he does not appear to suggest that animals are enhanced to allow them to exercise choice over the nature of their afterlives. However, as indicated in the main text, the sort of cognitive enhancement Dougherty envisions carries with it the worry that animals equipped with full-fledged personhood will choose badly, thereby misusing their newfound enhanced agency, and this possibility is enough to raise worries for Animal Universalism.

[62] Even more plausibly, and importantly, an act of cognitive enhancement that violates the conditions in MP is not only pro tanto wrong, but also *unloving*. This is important because that is all we need for an effective response against the cognitive enhancement objection. Since God is perfectly loving, God will not act in ways that are unloving. Consequently, since cognitive enhancements that violate the conditions in MP are unloving, and God's cognitively enhancing animals would violate those conditions, God will not cognitively enhance animals as proposed in the objection.

[63] As Matthew Hanser notes, "if it is pro tanto wrong to φ, this is because acts of that type possess some 'wrong-making' feature—some feature that constitutes, or gives rise to, a special sort of moral reason against φing" (2014: 139).

[64] For example, one might think that it is generally wrong to deceptively manipulate a person even when that deceptive manipulation doesn't go against that person's best interest (and so condition (2) of MP isn't satisfied), and this is so simply because conditions (1) and (3) of MP are satisfied. In such cases, an objectionable paternalism is on display.

[65] One possible position on divine foreknowledge, open theism, complicates this argument. For, according to open theism, God does not know what decisions libertarian-free agents will make. Thus, God does not know whether cognitively enhanced animals with libertarian freedom will choose for or against Heaven, and cannot know *ex ante* whether cognitively enhancing a

It is clear that any radical animal cognitive enhancement meets condition (1), since no animal has the intellectual ability to understand the nature of radical cognitive enhancement or its consequences for her life and therefore cannot consent to it.

Because heaven is uniquely good for animals, it follows that if an animal permanently rejects heaven, that animal acts against their own best interest. Therefore, if God radically cognitively enhances some animals such that they will then choose against heaven, this goes against their best interests. Thus, any act that cognitively enhances an animal and thereby makes it the case that they choose against heaven meets condition (2).

Let's now consider condition (3). For an act of animal cognitive enhancement to avoid (3), that act must satisfy some number of individuals' interests, where these individuals' interests in that enhancement are stronger (individually or in aggregate) than the enhanced animal's interest in not missing out in heaven. But as argued in Section 9.2, God and other inhabitants of heaven have their interests *frustrated* if particular animals miss out on heaven, rather than having their interests satisfied. God loves each animal and desires that the animal flourish, as does (at least for many animals) each animal's companions and family. For any given animal, therefore, others' interests are satisfied if that animal enters heaven, and others' interests are frustrated if that animal fails to enter heaven. No act of radical cognitive enhancement that causes an animal to choose against heaven satisfies the interests of any other individuals. It follows that no such act *better* satisfies the interests of some number of individuals than failing to perform that act satisfies the animal's own interest in eternal life. That's identical to condition (3). Swinburne's cognitive enhancement account of animal salvation runs afoul of MP. If there are some animals who will reject heaven if they are cognitively enhanced, it would be wrong for God to enhance these animals. And so we have good reason for rejecting the cognitive enhancement objection to Animal Universalism.

This concludes our first reply to the cognitive enhancement objection. Here is our second reply. Swinburne's (and Dougherty's) invoked account of enhanced agency seems implausible. According to Swinburne (1989: 195), it is important to enhance the cognitive capacities of animals and allow them to

given animal violates condition (2).Therefore, God must employ a model of risk and uncertainty to decide what to do. On such a model, cognitively enhancing animals could be permissible only if the expected value of respecting their newly acquired enhanced autonomy outweighed the actual disvalue of violating conditions (1) and (3) along with the immense expected disvalue of allowing animals the possibility of choosing against Heaven. It is not at all clear that it does outweigh such actual and expected disvalue. Moreover, if our second reply to the *Agency Objection* succeeds, then cognitively enhancing animals does not respect their autonomy. Cognitively enhancing these animals could therefore not outweigh the (actual and expected) disvalue associated with cognitively enhancing a given animal. We conclude that there is no good reason to think that open theism undermines our reply.

make decisions about their eternal fates so that they can be made the authors of their own destinies. In this way, animal salvation is decided not merely on account of what improves each animal's welfare, but on account of each animal's individual considered judgment. They therefore seem to operate with an account of enhancement similar to the "mental prosthesis" account of trusteeship devised by Leslie Francis and Anita Silvers:

> [A]s a prosthetic arm or leg executes some of the functions of a missing fleshly limb without being confused with or supplanting the usual fleshly limb, so, we propose, a trustee's reasoning and communicating can execute part or all of a subject's own thinking processes without substituting the trustee's ideas as if it were the subject's own. (2009: 485)

In these terms, then, the cognitively enhanced animal functions as a trustee, or mental prosthesis, for her previous pre-enhanced self. As Francis and Silvers point out, however, any such cognitive enhancement requires some "standard of authenticity." If an individual's judgments and values after cognitive enhancement are radically disconnected from the values and judgments of that individual prior to enhancement, it cannot rightly be said that that individual has been decisionally empowered or that she has had her autonomy advanced, and she cannot rightly be said to be the ultimate author of her later values and judgments.

If, for example, a scientist were to unilaterally cognitively enhance Donald Trump (a process not involving Trump's own rational agency and deliberation) and after the enhancement Trump wanted nothing more than to concoct a genius plan to resolve the world refugee crisis whilst opening up the US border to all immigrants, a value utterly disconnected from his prior values and judgments, Trump cannot rightly be said to have authentically decided to open the US border. Rather, it is more plausible to suppose that the scientist who enhanced Trump is the author of this decision, and Trump's autonomy has been imposed upon.[66] Similarly, the ideas and deliberative process of a radically cognitively enhanced individual cannot truly be said to be authored by that individual "except where the subject is the sole inspiration for the conceptualization the trustee advances" (Silvers and Francis 2009: 493).

Further, as Jeff McMahan and David Wasserman argue, an individual's *mere* inspiration of some decision is not sufficient to establish that individual's agency over or authorship of that decision (Wasserman and McMahan 2012: 331). To use McMahan and Wasserman's analogy, "a suit, however closely fitted, is made by the tailor, not the wearer. Even if the wearer indicates where the fit is too tight or loose, her role is far too passive to make her a co-creator" (331). In order for mental prosthesis or radical cognitive enhancement to truly

[66] We thank David Wasserman for this example, which was proposed to one author in conversation.

make an individual animal an author or co-creator of decisions about her eternal destiny, that animal must first have the requisite ability to see herself as a temporally extended being and engage in simple practical reasoning. She must have certain values and judgments about reasons that can be extended and improved upon through the process of cognitive enhancement if she is to be the ultimate origin of her later values, rather than being the subject of a kind of imposition or manipulation. Thus, for most animals—those without any capacity for propositional agency—using radical cognitive enhancement to promote authentic judgments is not a genuine possibility. Judgments made by radically cognitively enhanced animals would be no more (and perhaps less) authentic than the judgments of a sympathetic third-party observer. Given this, it makes most sense for a perfectly loving and just God to do what is in each animal's best interests rather than giving them a counterfeit form of agency which could ultimately cause them harm by resulting in their non-existence or continued existence in an eternally bad state.

The Two Heavens Objection. As a final reply, one might object that the arguments from divine justice and divine love only entail that God will guarantee that all animals live in a perfectly good, eternal state. This does not entail that these animals must inhabit *heaven*, which might be reserved for human, propositional agents alone. God might simply place all animals, infants, and profoundly intellectually disabled people in a separate heaven far, far away.[67]

But such an arrangement would be incompatible with God's perfect justice and love. First, as argued in reply to the *Nature of Heaven Objection*, perfect justice is incompatible with systematically excluding individuals from society merely on account of their lacking certain capabilities. This is true even if the two heavens (or three or four, etc.) are "separate but equal," such that individuals in each heaven will live a supremely good life. Just as it would be unjust for God to set up two heavens for white people and people of color, or men and women, or cisgender and non-cisgender people, it would be unjust for God to set up two heavens, one for propositional agents and one for those lacking propositional agency. It's hard to see how such a segregationist heavenly arrangement could constitute the ultimate and final restoration of the created order.

Second, as argued in our second argument from divine love, many humans with different talents and capabilities, children, and animals share rich and meaningful relationships that add value to their lives. Dividing the citizens of heaven without extremely compelling reason would surely be unloving, as it would end meaningful relationships between citizens of different heavens and would prevent the citizens of each heaven from forming new, meaningful

[67] Swinburne (1989: 196) raises this possibility for human infants who died in infancy.

relationships. In some, but not all, ways this sort of arrangement bears a striking resemblance to the imposition of the Berlin Wall, effectively separating family members, friends, and neighbors from one another.

We conclude, therefore, that the *Survival Objection*, the *Nature of Heaven Objection*, the *Agency Objection*, and the *Two Heavens Objection* fail to defeat our case for Animal Universalism.

9.5. CONCLUSION

We have defended Animal Universalism, the thesis that all sentient animals will be brought to heaven and remain there for eternity. We began by motivating the views that animals have direct moral status and that God has duties to beings with direct moral status. We continued with *Arguments from Divine Love*, according to which God loves each individual animal perfectly, and therefore maximizes each individual animal's well-being. Because God would fail to maximize each individual animal's well-being if any animal failed to be in heaven for all eternity, Animal Universalism follows.

We then provided *Arguments from Divine Justice*. These arguments show that God ought not to withhold opportunities from animals on any morally arbitrary grounds, including degree of intelligence or species. We then showed how animals possess all that is necessary to reap the benefits of heaven (or of some possible afterlife): sentience. Thus, animals have all they need to qualify for the basic demand of justice to have an equal opportunity to enter and remain within heaven. Furthermore, animals will not decline such an opportunity, which entails that they will be ushered into heaven and remain there forevermore. As this is true of all animals, Animal Universalism follows. We then offered another argument from justice which also supports Animal Universalism.

Far more could be said in defense of Animal Universalism. Our case motivates the two central defensive pillars for Animal Universalism: love and justice. The nature of divine perfect love and divine perfect justice strongly supports Animal Universalism.

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10

Personhood, Embodiment, and Survival

Speculations on Life after (Biological) Death

Robert Audi

In everyday thinking, human beings are regarded as persons, and they are the only kind of person generally conceived under that term. But are human beings *necessarily* persons? There may have been a time when this was generally believed, but now bioethics has brought into prominence the vegetative plight of patients artificially kept alive after brain death and such anomalies as anencephalic birth. Moreover, if, as is common, God is conceived as a kind of person, then clearly personhood does not entail humanity. Given this, despite the popularity of conceptions of afterlife that represent our surviving bodily death as occurring in some kind of human form, survival of a person need not be conceived as the continuing life of a human being. On a Cartesian view, it is not so conceived. Persons are fundamentally mental, and it is as mental substances, not as human beings in the usual sense, that they can survive bodily death. What about souls? Souls may or may not be conceived as equivalent to persons, but my concern will not be with souls except insofar as this equivalence is plausible. I propose to speculate on survival of biological death for persons understood in such a way that you, an intended reader of this, and I may be properly considered essentially persons. I do this independently of specific theological commitments, but I also write with the Bible, and especially the New Testament, in mind as expressing important conceptions of afterlife that, so far as possible and allowing much interpretive latitude, should be made intelligible by an account of the forms afterlife might take.

In part for this reason, I do not speculate on how human beings might survive indefinitely in this universe or enjoy the kinds of benefits portrayed in "transhumanism."[1] A further concern that limits the scope of my speculations

[1] For a critical study of transhumanism, see Mosser (MS).

is the aim of portraying an afterlife consistent with persistence of personal identity through the transition from this life to afterlife. This presumably requires that there be no temporal gap between the two lives, but detailing the full requirements for preservation of personal identity is not possible here.

10.1. EMBODIMENT

Human beings presumably must be embodied; I shall in any case assume this.[2] But what about persons? There is debate about this, but I here assume the possibility that God is both a person and not embodied.[3] I thus do not take embodiment as essential to personhood or indeed as a necessary precursor to non-embodied existence. It is not clear, however, what constitutes a body of a person.

What it is to have a body (as one's own) is a difficult question that, in my view, deserves more attention from philosophers than they have given it. I want to begin with the special case of God, on the perhaps controversial assumption that the idea of divine embodiment is intelligible. I would stress, however, that God could choose any candidate for divine embodiment compatible with retaining the divine attributes. It might even be possible for a person's embodiment to involve a kind of non-physical matter, or to occur in a universe not physically reachable from ours in which non-physical matter exists, though I will not here pursue just what that would mean. My assumption here is that matter is something of which concrete entities can be composed in a way that makes possible certain relations, such as spatial relations between them and part-whole relations within them. This does not entail physicality if that implies spatiotemporal location in this ("our") universe, conceived as a realm in which any point is in principle reachable by a path from any other.

I also assume that none of the attributes essential for God's *omnicompetence*—omniscience, omnipotence, and perfect goodness—either depends on, or is incompatible with, physical embodiment. Embodiment understood in relation to our universe imposes no crucial limitation on the divine nature; for instance, it is not implied that all divine powers operate through God's body nor that any particular body is necessary for persistence of divine identity

[2] This is not to say that they are wholly physical. Many hold that they are, however, even apart from accepting the identity theory (on which mental properties are identical with physical properties), which is not entailed by the embodiment requirement. For a defense of the view that we are biological entities see Bailey (2015).

[3] This assumption is both philosophically defensible and seems most adequate to major scriptures, at least for Biblical religion; but the possibility is all I need to assume here.

(assuming God is in time). I am not taking 'embodiment' in the Cartesian sense that goes with possession of a substantival mind, but in a neutral way, entailing only that the being in question has some kind of body, whether or not this provides for what Descartes conceived as embodiment.

One way to describe embodiment for persons is to say that persons *animate* their bodies. This is roughly to say that when persons are alive and have a body, it too is (at least normally) alive, or perhaps we should say *enlivened,* in virtue of being theirs—enlivened in a sense to be clarified shortly and neutral with respect to Cartesianism and other major views of the mind-body relation. A constraint on personal embodiment, then, is this: the embodied person must animate the embodying matter, even if not every part of it.[4] In this light, perhaps the best candidate, certainly one candidate, for a body to fill the role of divine embodiment globally—at least for those who feel a philosophical need to conceive God as at once personal and embodied—is the physical universe, broadly understood.[5] On the view in question, God would animate the world: it would be, in the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins, "charged with the grandeur of God." This conception of the divine nature does not, of course, imply that the physical universe is identical with heaven, nor even that heaven is in it, though any theology on which the physical universe is God's body would either place heaven within that universe—in which being in heaven would be a way of living within God—or explain how God is related to heaven and to any inhabitants it might have.

At least three points important for the notion of something's being a person's body are essential for this chapter and also help to explain why, if God is physically embodied at all, then the entire physical universe should be included as constituting at least part of God's body. The first is agential, the second epistemological, and the third phenomenological.[6]

First, God can move (or alter in any way possible for the entity in question) any part of the universe at will, as we can move our limbs *at will*: roughly, without the mediation of any other action, such as, for us, an instrumentally, as opposed to temporally, prior movement of special muscles that in turn control our limbs. We can move these but normally it is only *by* moving the relevant limb at will. The idea is this: God can effect at will (as a basic act) any

[4] Strictly, animation by *a* person whose body it is, since two or more persons can share a body (a possibility that, to my knowledge, is yet to be exploited by lawyers defending their clients). This is not a kind of "spirit possession" but is more like a body's housing two brains that are each connected with the rest of the body in direct potentially competing ways, as opposed to, say, confinement to controlling it at non-overlapping times.

[5] The view in question is not pantheism, since God is not identical with the universe, nor even panentheism, since embodiment need not be understood as entailing that God is 'in' all things. For discussion of the world as God's body, see Wainwright (1974). Also pertinent to the question of divine embodiment is the broadly naturalist view of Johnston (2010).

[6] In the discussion of what it is to have a body I draw heavily on some passages in my *Rationality and Religious Commitment* (2011).

change that it is logically possible for the physical universe to undergo.[7] Call this *complete direct control*.

Second, God has (or can have) non-inferential knowledge of the position of every part of the universe, as we often have such knowledge of the position of our limbs. God need neither employ any method of finding this out nor determine it by inference from other information. The knowledge is neither inferential nor even observational, as where, to determine visually the position of a limb, one must look. The knowledge might also be of a perceptual or at least sensory kind.

This last point brings us to the third, phenomenological element in embodiment. Insofar as God has experiential states that constitute representing anything in the universe—a matter plausibly considered wholly up to God—the entire physical universe might be experienced (or at least experienceable) in the divine mind in something like a sensory way, producing the appropriate percepts or other experiences. This possibility obtains even if the physical universe is not God's body, but it must hold of whatever is God's body. We see through eyes; God could (but of course need not) see either through something physical as a kind of organ of sight or in a more direct way. God could endow divine sensory knowledge, say visual knowledge, of the things in the world with as rich representational phenomenal qualities as God wishes that knowledge to have. It would be within the discretion of God whether to know certain truths in some perceptual way, or in a way that has a rich phenomenology or, as perhaps with the ugly, in a way that is comparatively abstract.[8] An omnicompetent God, then, can bring it about that divine knowledge of the physical universe be through, or accompanied by, sensory states or that divine knowledge is more purely cognitive. In either case the knowledge might be non-inferential. It should be added that, as this suggests, divine omniscience is not undermined by the cosmic embodiment view, nor, apparently, is divine omnipotence or perfect goodness.[9]

Regarding embodiment in general, it may be that none of the three criteria—ability to move parts of a certain physical object as a basic act, non-inferential, non-observational knowledge of the positions of some parts of that object, and experiential representation (or at least consciousness) of at least some of that object's states—is strictly necessary for embodiment in that object, and it is not obvious that they are jointly sufficient. I could lose control and even knowledge of my body and still have it; and one can even become insensate

[7] Not everyone considers this obvious. Leftow (1997) argues against it.

[8] Even if, qua person, God must have a body, this implies neither having any particular one nor that the body must play a role in giving God knowledge of anything else.

[9] A quite different view of what it is to have a body is suggested by Swinburne (2004): "In essence, to say that God is not embodied is to deny that there is any volume of matter such that by his basic actions he can control only it and such that he knows of goings-on elsewhere only by their effects on it." Neither limitation of embodiment is entailed by my conception.

and retain one's body. Perhaps meeting at least one of the criteria is *diachronically necessary*—such that the person (assuming an embodied life extended in time) meets the criterion at *some* time, a condition not entailing meeting the condition at all times during which the person has the body. But no one of the criteria seems *synchronically necessary,* in the sense that the person must meet it at *any* time the thing in question is the person's body. Still, all three criteria are important for understanding what it is to have a body—or at least to have it in the sense that goes with embodiment of the kind important for understanding human life as we know it; and it is arguable that their satisfaction in a normal way (and surely in some way possible for God) suffices for embodiment.

Moreover, for God, embodiment need not imply positionality: if God's body is the universe as a whole, the question where God is in any locational sense does not make good sense, nor is it clear how such positionality can be squared with divine omnipresence. Being (in some sense) everywhere is not compatible with being *wholly* anywhere in particular. On one view of omnipresence, then, it is not ontically locational as would be a point in physical space, but epistemic, in the sense of being equivalent to intimate (perhaps quasi-perceptual) knowledge of every event or object, for every location thereof.

Suppose some kind of divine embodiment obtains. It may seem that to take the universe to be God's body is in effect to naturalize God. It might be viewed by some philosophers as a step toward naturalization, but note that embodiment does not entail that the embodied being is nothing "over and above" the living body in question. This point is also important for understanding the possibility of afterlife for finite persons. If it occurs by virtue of a re-embodiment, as seems implicit in the idea of resurrection of the body, it is important to see that, should resurrection be in physical matter (which might be thought to have only natural properties) it would not follow that such afterlife requires countenancing a naturalistic conception of the surviving person. Even if some elements needed for having a body are natural, it does not follow that a person conceived as essentially embodied has *only* natural properties.

From the characterization of a body (of a person) just given, then, it does not follow that a body so conceived is physical in any sense implying composition by the elements recognized in modern chemistry. One might speculate that a kind of *corporiality* is entailed—say, a visible status such that its possessors have causal power, spatial location, and obey the requirement that no two of the same kind can be wholly in the same place at the same time. There is no need to develop this idea in detail here, but I should add that it might not apply to everything physical (I leave open now whether it applies to everything material). God (conceived as omnipotent and omniscient) could in any case provide a physical body for us after the death of our earthly body if indeed no non-physical material alternative should be possible.

10.2. DISEMBODIMENT

In speaking of the possibility of embodiment in matter (whether physical or not) other than our earthly body, I have not meant to suggest that we should consider non-embodied personal existence impossible. I am assuming that a Cartesian view of personhood is coherent.[10] This is not say to that there are no difficulties in showing its possibility, but whatever these are, they do not prevent intelligible reflection on what it might be like.

One question is whether a disembodied person could perceive. Another is whether agency is possible for the non-embodied. Let us begin with percipience, the capacity to perceive things external to oneself. If cross-categorical causation—in which cause and effect are in different metaphysical categories, such as the mental and the physical—is possible, as I see no reason to deny, then perception of physical entities would be possible for a disembodied person. But it should not be assumed that they could exist only in a realm of a kind that provides for its inhabitants causal or even epistemic access to the physical universe. If not, then an important question would be whether they would be able to perceive other non-embodied persons or at least their thoughts. This in turn raises the question whether there can be mental causation. I have argued that such causation is possible in our world, and I cannot see that there is any decisive impossibility argument regarding such causation in any other realm.[11]

If we can go this far, might there not also be agency? To be sure, if there is a (normal adult) person at all, there is the possibility of thought, and thinking itself is a kind of doing. The harder question is what agency would come to for non-embodied beings. My special interest here is in interpersonal survival, so the kind of agency of most concern here is communicative. Could one non-embodied person communicate with another, for instance by causing the other to have an impression of someone's speaking? If mental causation is possible, I see no bar to this. One person might perceive another (say by having an appropriate phenomenal sense of the presence of the other), direct attention to the other, and address the other with words that are sent in some telepathic way. Reponses would occur in a similar manner. Even if all parties to the communication are non-embodied, if their previous mode of existence was as we know human existence now, then perceiving messages could be accompanied by the phenomenal sense of seeing a body like their earthly one

[10] Work by Swinburne (2004), Plantinga (2007), Lowe (2008), and others contains extensive defense of this view. One difficulty the view faces is the pairing problem, as posed by Kim (2005) and others, as a further challenge to a substance dualist view. For critical discussion of the challenge, see P. Audi (2011).

[11] In *Rationality and Religious Commitment* (2011: ch.10) I have defended the possibility of mental causation for our world; its possibility in a non-physical realm might require different explanatory points but I cannot see that it must be more difficult to understand.

or of hearing a voice like a familiar one even if there is no actual voice heard. Such experiences need not even be deceiving, since people could know that they are in a sense hallucinating. (Some skeptics would say that we might be hallucinating as it is. More optimistic observers would say that even the most fleshly bodily communications can be as good in the hallucinatory realm as in the physical—"a kiss is still a kiss," as one popular song has it.)

I am leaving open here what relation a realm of non-embodied beings would have to the physical universe. I have already rejected the assumption that the perceptible must be physical, but even when it is physical there is no reason why it cannot be perceptible to the non-embodied. Whether it would be is something that, on a perfect-being, monotheistic picture, would be up to God. God might or might not want us to "look down on" the physical world.

I have intentionally spoken of the non-embodied rather than the disembodied. Assuming (as I will) that non-embodied existence is possible for persons, it would be up to God whether some persons ever have a body of the kind human beings do, or indeed any embodiment at all. This would raise the question whether, if the content of thought is in some cases essentially external—so that certain quite ordinary thoughts are not possible without the person's having been in a certain relation, presumably a causal one, to external objects—communication as we understand it is even possible. But we need not presuppose here that all content is internal, since, for some persons, there was embodiment on earth with all its causal engagements and, more important, causal connections to entities outside the mind are possible for the non-embodied—they might indeed be perceivers, even if they are not agents. Interaction with the physical universe is not ruled out by non-embodiment taken to involve percipience.[12]

Still, content externalism remains a problem from a theological point of view. What of infant death, in which case the earthly opportunities might be insufficient for acquisition of the understanding in the afterlife? What developmental possibilities might there be for them in that life? Presumably, they would have to learn language in relation to whatever external objects their new world contains. In any case, the kind of Cartesian view I am presupposing here would have no commitment to content externalism and might provide any of a number of accounts of afterlife for people dying in infancy.

10.3. SOCIALITY

If survival in a disembodied state is possible, there is no reason why it cannot occur for *communities* of persons or in any case for two or more in

[12] For critical appraisal of a common form of content externalism, see "Belief: A Study in Form, Content, and Justification" (R. Audi 2013).

communication. This is one traditional vision. Communication seems desirable for any kind of personal life human beings would normally look forward to, and I begin with that.

Telepathy is open even for the disembodied, but more than that is required for communication of a kind we would want. Telepathy can be one-way; communication, if full-scale, is two-way. My ability to send you a message does not guarantee that you know how to reply to me. Theoretically, we might be successful senders to certain recipients while they cannot respond, or at least reliably respond, to us. If, however, percipience is presupposed, then communication might proceed much as it ordinarily does. One would have a sense of the presence of others and could direct communication to them. Embodiment, in turn, might best facilitate percipience. It does not follow that it is necessary. One could have a phenomenal sense of the presence of another even if it comes from mental images, say images of an auditory kind or from some kinds we cannot describe, that do not require material embodiment.

What of love? Where communication is possible between people capable of love, so is love itself. We are of course accustomed to thinking of love as best when it involves "body and soul." But (with due respect to the physical aspects of love) much of love is psychological. In any case, materiality of some kind seems possible for survival. Even apart from that mode of survival, experience qualitatively identical with bodily experience is possible for non-embodied persons. Even without a body, one could, for instance, have the kind of experience of hugs and kisses one remembers from earthly existence. A static picture is also possible, if we may be guided by Keats's lines in "Ode on a Grecian Urn":

> Bold lover, never, never can't thou kiss,
> Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
> She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
> For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

It should not be assumed, however, that survival, even under God as conceived in Western perfect-being theology, *must* involve memories of earthly life. It would be up to God how much is remembered by those who survive. Granting that if one loses personal memories, one also loses one's *sense* of identity, one need not lose one's actual identity. You can be the same person you are even if you cannot remember who you are or even your past. Still, if certain relationships are properly forever, such as marriage, one would think that some version of these relationships might recur. Marriage would have to endure if it is indeed "until death us do part" and the death preceding it is only biological and not the end of personal life.

One reason to think that afterlife under a perfect being would preserve memory concerns forgiveness and repentance. Some people morally ought to

forgive or to repent; some people psychologically need to forgive or repent. Some people fit all of these descriptions. These points are perhaps more obvious for repentance, though it may be that, at least among civilized people, the psychological need is more prominent for forgiveness than for repentance, and the moral demand—or desideratum—is more prominent for repentance than for forgiveness. In either case, there is something important that is lost if memory is not preserved. If I do not remember wronging you, I cannot, at least in the full-blooded sense, repent regarding the action in question, much less ask your forgiveness. If you do not remember my wrongdoing toward you, you cannot forgive me for it. To be sure, we could be reminded of the matter. This could give us knowledge of the past but might not yield genuine memory. If reminding entails reviving a buried memory, the way is open for forgiveness and repentance as usually understood; if it can occur by simply creating knowledge of the relevant deeds or events, even with a sense of having been their agent or observer, then one would not have genuine remembering and there could be something *like* repentance and forgiveness, but neither exactly the same thing nor, perhaps, as valuable.

Suppose we assume the possibility of communication of the kind needed for a community of persons and imagine that there is a community consisting of both families in close interactions and also of others differing greatly from one another in their backgrounds and their outlooks. If we take the realm to be a heavenly one under the sovereignty of God conceived as perfectly good, we can suppose there might be a universal language. People might go where they will—even if the sense of 'go' is not spatial as we understand that dimension—and do as they like. Would such liberty imply a need for government?

> Recall Isaiah 11:6:
> The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

This does not give the impression of a realm under anything like what we call government. In any case, assume that, as would be plausible given an omnicompetent God, the world of afterlife is marked by persons who have much love and great wisdom. Why would they need law, even enabling law as opposed to criminal law, or punishment for violations of any laws there might be? Perhaps we who inhabit such a realm would have to be less competitive if we are to do without law and punishment. But excellence does not require that competitiveness. One could—as some do now—seek to please God, quite apart from how well others do in the same kinds of tasks. So capacious is the divine sensibility that there is room for unlimited kinds and degrees of appreciation for even the lowliest worthwhile achievements.

If we assume preservation of personal identity from this world to that of afterlife, we face the question of how forgiveness might figure in an

afterlife. (I assume that many die without being forgiven for all their wrongdoing or forgiving all those who have wronged them.) Indeed, this question arises even if those in the second realm only take themselves to be identical with their earthly predecessors. If I have wronged you, my virtually identical successor would want your forgiveness in the same way and for the same reasons or kinds of reasons I should—this holds, at least, for my psychological duplicate. Since God can create psychological duplicates of persons if God wishes—and might wish to do so if God were to resurrect us and it should be impossible to preserve bodily identity in the translocation from this world to the next. I see no reason why forgiveness would be any more difficult in an afterlife than in this one, and it might be easier. One variable would be how much enrichment in human understanding we might have in that life and how much sense we would have of the value of the relationships forgiveness makes possible.

There is also the question whether in an afterlife repentance is easier or more likely. Where repentance occurs, forgiveness is sometimes due and perhaps always more fitting than otherwise. If the leopard will lie down with the kid, should we not forgive at least repentant offenders? To be sure, even if there is no additional reason for forgiveness in an afterlife, there is at least (on my temporal assumptions here) more time for both forgiveness and repentance. This alone might matter since those needing forgiveness might (and arguably should) suffer from guilt, and those who do not forgive may suffer from bitterness. If a realm of life is ideal, it should not be marred by any eliminable evils. The painful memories might not be required—certainly persistence of personal identity does not require them—but that would not preclude their being part of a divinely structured realm.

Quite apart from the status of repentance and forgiveness in an afterlife under God, and whether or not laws and punishments are operating, we may raise the question whether, if we are under God in a realm of survival, there would be a high level of social structure. We would surely be free, but we could be virtuous and wiser, as I assume we would be. We could also have a less threatening environment than we do here. All these are reasonable hopes. But free finite beings at all like us are bound to disagree and there could be jealousy as well as competition. Even wisdom and love together need not entirely preclude these. Given these facts, such a realm could be law-governed. But even a system of laws does not imply that violations call for punishment in the form of incarceration. There are other forms of enforcement. Moreover, it is conceivable that no enforcement is needed, as opposed to reminders to people of good will that they should follow the rules.

My speculation, then, is that a realm of life for persons who, under God, survive bodily death would have norms and possible rules but could be free of punishments requiring restrictions of liberty or the imposition of suffering. There is no a priori formula for just how loving (or anyway caring) and wise

persons would have to be to live harmoniously under such a gentle regime, but the possibility is surely real.

It should be added here that in one sense there *must* be rules if the basic moral truths, such as those prohibiting lying and those requiring promise keeping, are necessary and hence hold in all possible worlds. Thus, the prima facie obligation not to lie would normatively govern communication whether this requirement is enforced or not. To be sure, the promissory obligation might never be actualized, since people could simply not make promises—nor would they need to in a certain kind of world. But a social world of any kind would have communication and the possibility of lies if its inhabitants are genuinely free;[13] hence, even if no one was seriously tempted to lie, obligations of veracity would be "active" in a way promissory obligations might not be. Interpersonal relations do not entail making promises and hence need not give rise to temptations to break them; but they do entail communication and hence may give rise to the temptation to lie.

10.4. MORTALITY

A common conception of afterlife entails the notion of immortality. Disembodied persons are not essentially immortal. God could make them so, as indeed God could make an embodied person. Would immortality be good? One response is that, if a life is inherently good, why should it end? Isn't there also reason to enhance value in ways possible through extending good lives or—especially—lives that are not good but can be made so, perhaps with the result that, however bad they are on earth, they are worth living overall because of their otherworldly phase? One would think that God would want for us this *ultimate fullness of life*, as we might call it, and there would be no problem of bodily decay if there is either no body or one that is indefinitely renewable.

Invulnerability does not follow from immortality; nor does vulnerability, in the sense implying liability to harm, follow from mortality. But no persons at all like us could be utterly invulnerable. Should we want to be? The question is especially important given the problem of evil. If vulnerability is not in some way desirable for human life as we know it, then it is more difficult to see how our having it even in this world is appropriate to our creation by an omnicompetent God. It seems impossible to care about anything essentially

[13] It is possible that in afterlife persons have (say by the grace of God) a psychological nature that makes wrongdoing (at least of an intentional kind) incompatible with their character; but this would not imply that they cannot do wrong, in the sense that there is no possible world in which they do it. They could be invariably and reliably moral without being *essentially* so.

like us without being vulnerable to experiencing or learning of its misfortunes. Thus, such empathic vulnerability seems intrinsic to love for beings who are finite in the ways we are. Granted, if nothing we cared about were capable of misfortune, we could be freed of such vulnerability; but free persons can presumably make bad decisions—say, to reject the company of others—and those decisions can cause pain to persons who care about the persons in question. We could, then, have fear of rejection if there is free will. I assume this is possible and may be desirable. Note, however, that on one possible account of afterlife, that segment of existence is freed of vulnerability but not of the *recollection* of it and earthly suffering. That recollection and elements of imagination might play the kind of role in valuing others that is now played by the sense of their vulnerability and of actual suffering.

We might consider love in particular in this light. Is love on the part of beings like us possible, or anyway as deep, without the sense of the other's vulnerability, at least to suffering? Love entails caring about the good of those we love for their sake, and it would be less rich if its concern were only positive, say a concern with how to enhance happiness already possessed. But a major dimension of love as we know it is concern to prevent or relieve suffering, and there is a distinctive value in activities that achieve these aims, especially that of relieving suffering—a point important for the problem of evil. It has a counterpart for the beloved as well: is there not a special value in being cared for, comforted, and, even when pain beclouds one, nursed? To be sure, these are familiar categories of value, and it should be stressed that there is no a priori reason why, for afterlife, there cannot be kinds of values possible of which we simply do not have any adequate conception, nor should we assume that an optimally good life for a kind of being must be typewise axiologically maximal: realizing every type of value possible for that kind of being.

The question of vulnerability to suffering of one or another kind, even if not to death, has a special importance here. It seems clear that the experience of relieving suffering has intrinsic value for the agent and the diminution of suffering has intrinsic value for the sufferer. These interpersonal values may be dependent on the negative intrinsic value of suffering; but they are not reducible to that value. The liberating, frequently restorative value of the diminution of suffering, often felt as increasing relief from it, is not possible without suffering itself, but it is itself neither necessarily pleasurable nor merely pain reduction, which seems possible without this common response. Even if it were just a kind of pleasure, however, it would be a kind impossible without suffering. A life without vulnerability and suffering, then, would lack one kind of intrinsic value. This in turn implies that, other things equal, it would not be as good or as rich as a life containing them. Taking this point together with the special place, in interpersonal love, of responding to and reducing suffering, it appears that if afterlife is to be optimally good, it might

well have (even if it need not have) both vulnerability to at least some kind of suffering and the value of relief therefrom.

If suffering and vulnerability, or at least disappointment not involving suffering, are necessary for love's deepest fulfillment and perhaps for its highest forms, it does not follow that mortality is required. Even the immortal can be hurt and disappointed. Still, we should not take mortality to preclude incalculably valuable experiences, and far from mortality's being a liability in relation to the possibility of the deepest and best kind of love, it might in this world be needed where life has gotten so bad that release is preferable to continuation. We can surely expect that if God provides life after biological death, it would not be of this same highly negative kind.

This is a good place to indicate that, apart from controversial theological assumptions that I will not make here, we can only hope for justified hypotheses about what kind of world an omnicompetent God would provide. I do think we can know this much, which is also clear in at least Christian theology: God's perfect goodness guarantees that God would not create beings with our level of sensitivity and value without loving us at least in the non-passional sense that goes with agapistic love. Creating us, especially in a world like this, without caring about us would imply a kind of indifference incompatible with perfect goodness. This point bears on the view of some people that it would not be good if God exists.[14] I can only speculate on what underlies this view. It might be a kind of pride that rejects the supreme authority of God, perhaps a sense of potential loss of control of one's life, perhaps a reluctance to think of being fully known in a way that makes privacy impossible. On the assumption of perfect divine goodness and free will on our own part, I find the view at best puzzling.

Something more should be said about privacy. Given the existence of an omniscient being, nothing is private—at least at the level of propositional information. But if God's omniscience is perfect, it includes the kind of phenomenal knowledge that goes with perception—even the kind of qualitative psychological knowledge that goes with introspection if it is possible for any being but a thinker to have qualitatively identical images, sensations, and thoughts. It would be up to God how much to "focus" on any private activity of ours, but ignorance of our activities would not be possible once they occur. I do not find the possibility of complete divine knowledge of my life disconcerting, but some might recoil from the counterpart thought about their lives. We can at least say that God's goodness would prevent misusing the kind

[14] Thomas Nagel, e.g., has said, "I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers…I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that" (1997: 130). He adds, in what I find a disarmingly candid footnote, "I won't attempt to speculate about the Oedipal and other sources of either this desire or its opposite" (130, n.8).

of private information about us that can be misused by beings like us. As to whether we would have privacy relative to each other in an afterlife under God, this would be up to God, but one would think that divine goodness would result in our enhanced understanding of one another without our having uninvited access to the full content of others' consciousness or memory.

10.5. CREATIVITY

A great value in human life is creativity and the enjoyment of its fruits. Creativity would surely be possible even in a non-embodied afterlife. Much creativity is possible *in foro interno* even as things are now. It usually begins in the mind; it can certainly both begin and end there. If we should be immortal, we would certainly need creativity, as we do now—positively, it is our best route to a distinctive kind of excellence; negatively, it is our chief bulwark against boredom. These points have some perhaps unexpected implications.

For one thing, if our creative capacity is (as I shall assume it would be) finite, then for optimal enjoyment of its fruits, which would include avoiding boredom, we would presumably need to forget certain things or at least to remember some things quite imperfectly or without vividness. Otherwise, as one or another of the finite set of creations we enjoy comes back again and again, we might suffer boredom or, in any case, fail to have the kind of responses to creative works that best befits them. This is perhaps not obvious: certainly some of us never tire of the best in music, art, and literature provided there is a suitable interval of time between our experiences of them. But even here, our imperfect memories may be crucial for our enduring enjoyment, and the relevant time span is of course quite limited. In any case, none of the required memorial or creative capacities we might need for a good life are beyond the power of God.[15]

I have been assuming, then, finitude in all aspects of afterlife except its duration. This is in part to portray a kind of afterlife in which personal identity is preserved. But presumably it may be preserved even if, by sufficiently gradual change, we develop certain infinite capacities. (If the change from finitude to infinite capacity in a given domain is in no sense gradual, it does not follow, and seems doubtful, that the change prevents preservation of

[15] Cf. Fischer and Mitchell-Yellin (2014), which is in part a critique of Bernard Williams' case for the view that immortality would be boring. They make useful distinctions among kinds of boredom but do not consider the possibilities for dealing with the boredom problem given the resources of God or even possibilities realizable in immortal life given finite capacities of the persons in question and quite apart from any exercise of omnipotence.

personal identity.) God might see fit to give us infinite creative capacities or, given finitude in those capacities, an infinite number of ways of appreciating creative works. Some, though not all, of the ways in which we might receive infinite capacities would take us in the direction of demigods, but there might still be a great—even an infinite—distance between us and God.

A second point here concerns a different kind of remedy for the problem of finitude in the objects of creation. Even if our creative capacity limits us to a finite stream of creations, our appreciative capacities could expand infinitely. Unlike the possibility (just entertained) of our having an infinite number of these, we might have a finite number with at least some getting increasingly and unlimitedly rich. This would be possible whether or not our memories are perfect. It would be up to God how close to allow such development toward Godlike status to go—it might or might not proceed toward "deification."[16] We would ideally have a capacity to appreciate the creative activities and products of others as well as our own. We would want to be able to achieve excellence and to enjoy realizing it, and also to enjoy appreciating its exercises and products, both in others and in ourselves. If we are anything like the persons we know in our present existence, we will care how the products of our creativity are received. This is especially so if we live in community with others and, perhaps even more so, if we love others. Love of others carries the desire to give them pleasures, and our creativity is a major route to some of these.

Thirdly, the experience and, especially, the enjoyment of creative activities and works is a major source of union with others. This applies especially to those we love and to the enjoyment, with them, of their creative activities or works of our own. If God may be supposed to be pleased by such activities and works, enjoyment of them might also make possible a kind of union with God. A finite person can enjoy some of the same valuable things enjoyed by an infinite being. That kind of union in shared experience—presumably knowingly shared experience—is an aspiration of artists in human history; the aspiration and its realization might be considered possible at a higher level in a world beyond the limited one we know. This would hold not only for

[16] Consider in this context how Swinburne (Chapter 17, this volume) describes life after death in a Christian context: "Above all a good after-life would be one where we can know God the source of all other being, interact with him, and worship him far better than we can on earth, and greatly enjoy doing so, and where this action and all other actions are done in cooperation with others. If…there is no death it must be a world in which we can grow in all these ways. For human well-being consists in growth—achieving new things, coming to understand things better and better, coming to know and love others and above all God more and more thoroughly, and to be known and loved by others more and more fully" (7). This suggests, without entailing, deification, by which the early Fathers understood "coming to share the divine life…A natural way to understand this is to say that the Blessed are—not by nature but by grace—omniscient, omnipotent, and perfectly good" (Swinburne 1998: 251, n. 17; cf. p. 119).

persons united in simply sharing a valuable experience, say of art, but of two or more working together to create something worth experiencing.

10.6. SOME THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Given the emerging picture of existence beyond our earthly one, I see no reason not to hope for an afterlife with a good combination of social harmony, loving community, and creativity as a gift to all. Given the philosophical character of this chapter, I have not touched on specifically Christian themes or indeed themes distinctive of any particular religion. But we might consider one Christian theme that suits most monotheistic conceptions of afterlife: beatific vision. There is no reason to rule out this possibility, especially given that the realm of existence sketched as possible for human beings might be ontologically the same as that of God. Being in that realm would not, however, entail beatific vision. It would not even entail any kind of union with God, though that would be less difficult to achieve than beatitude. To be sure, 'union' here is largely metaphorical. I take it to entail a mutual awareness and a mutual sense of shared experience and shared values, but it can be far more.[17] Neither existence in this realm nor union entails enhanced sensory capacities, but these would be a reasonable hope and would play a major part in the range or both our creativity and our appreciation of its fruits. If, however, Jesus took human form on earth, one could expect the possibility of his taking perceptible forms in the realm of afterlife.

So far, I have been assuming that embodiment is not necessary for continuation of personal life. What if personal identity over time requires bodily continuity and continuation therefore does require some kind of embodiment? There are still various kinds of bodies that might sustain personal life, and I cannot see that they would impose limitations that undermine the possibilities that I have contended may be hoped for. Our need for our bodies makes us both limited and vulnerable in this world; but the mere requirement of embodiment would not limit God's capacity to eliminate both our dependence on such things as nutrition and our vulnerability to physical suffering and biological death.

Hope, of course, is both possible and rational even where what is hoped for is considered highly improbable. This compatibility with acceptance of high improbability is doubtful for faith; and, even if it is possible for faith, hope tolerates a greater degree of projected improbability. Can faith that afterlife is possible for us be rational? For some people with certain kinds of evidence and

[17] For detailed discussion of the idea of union with another person, especially as understood in relation to love and from a Thomistic point of view, see Stump (2010: chs 5 and 6).

certain life experiences, I believe that it is rational. Here it matters greatly what religious and intellectual traditions one is in and what experiences one has had. This bears on both one's intellectual resources and one's likely experiences. Religious experience has been held to include perceptions of God; and even though perceptions of God do not include all the properties of God that bear on divine powers regarding afterlife, the connection of such perceptions with the perceiver's theology may provide a framework in which it is plausible to associate some of those properties with God as perceived.[18]

10.7. CONCLUSION

Survival of death as we know it cannot, in my view, be either guaranteed or ruled out a priori. Survival seems possible with or even without embodiment. Conceptions of afterlife differ greatly even apart from the important matter of embodiment. With or without bodies, a kind of personal survival would involve experiences, and they might be indefinitely varied. Strictly speaking, such survival does not entail theism, nor does theism entail it, but theism seems to be the most plausible route to rational hope for it—and to its desirability. On the assumption of perfect being theology—indeed, even on the assumption that God is perfectly good but not all-powerful—the prospect of a good and unending afterlife is more attractive. It might be social in the best sense, pervaded by love among persons and blessed by a framework of coexistence in which they abide in a union with one another that is enhanced by their mutual enjoyment of creative activities and works. What it would be like is well worthy of reflection even for those who consider it unattainable. The comparison with life as we know it might benefit our conduct therein. For those who take survival seriously, this benefit is possible, and rational hope seems both possible and a potentially sustaining stance in a world where the bad often seems so increasingly threatening to the good.[19]

[18] Perception of God has been informatively explored by Alston in *Perceiving God* (1991). This book says much about religious experience in general. Some of my views on the character of such experience are provided in "Perceptual Experience, Doxastic Practice, and the Rationality of Religious Commitment" (R. Audi 1995) and *Rationality and Religious Commitment* (R. Audi 2011: ch.5).

[19] To date this chapter has benefitted from presentation at conferences held at Christopher Newport University and Biola University, and from comments by Anne M. Jeffrey (who provided a helpful commentary on my presentation at the former conference) and by Jessie Reed and by Zachary Taylor (at the latter conference). Joseph Jedwab's written comments were especially helpful.

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Part VI

Resurrection in Paradise

11

Composition and the Will of God

Reconsidering Resurrection by Reassembly

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Christian eschatology traditionally posits the resurrection of the body. Throughout this tradition, it has been quite common to find theologians and philosophers who believe that the body in the paradisiacal world to come is numerically identical to the earthly body, and this is so even for those who would count as substance dualists.[1] So the aim to provide a coherent and plausible theory of sameness of body in the resurrection is not of interest only to materialists about human persons but also to dualists who stand in this tradition. Many bold attempts have been offered, such as Peter van Inwagen's (1978) "simulacrum" proposal, Dean Zimmerman's (1999, 2010) "falling elevator" account, and Trenton Merricks' (2001a) anti-criterialist theory.[2] What is common among many contemporary philosophers of religion is the outright dismissal of the possibility of resurrection by reassembly—a view that was held by many of the church fathers. According to this account, God resurrects the same body (or the same person for some materialists) by gathering the matter that formerly composed the earthly body and reassembling it into its previous shape and configuration (or at least organizing it in a sufficiently close enough way). Despite its early popularity, the resurrection by reassembly view has fallen almost completely out of favor due to various problems that appear intractable.[3] Due to such concerns, much more attention has been given to developing and defending the simulacrum, falling elevator, or anti-criterialist accounts.

[1] This seems to be true with many of the church fathers. However, many substance dualists today hold that the resurrected body will be distinct from the pre-mortem, earthly body.

[2] For additional discussion of these and other accounts of the resurrection (some of which maintain the sameness of the body and others which do not), see Hud Hudson's chapter in this volume (Chapter 13).

[3] For notable exceptions, see Davis (2001: 235–7) and Zimmerman (2013).

In this paper, we propose a modified version of resurrection by reassembly, one that is coherent and avoids many of the pitfalls that led to the original theory's widespread rejection.

After laying out several objections to resurrection by reassembly, we take a necessary digression into examining various theories of composition and offer our own novel account of restricted composition. After considering and responding to some objections to our view, we explain how our account can be incorporated into a modified version of resurrection by reassembly that avoids the standard problems associated with the original theory. It should be stated that we do not take this proposal to be the *actual* way in which God will resurrect bodies.[4] Like the other accounts of resurrection, we are merely offering a "just-so" story—a way in which God *might* do it. But we do regard our proposal to be no less plausible than the extant theories that are considered as viable options for sameness of body in the resurrection.

11.1. OBJECTIONS TO RESURRECTION BY REASSEMBLY

Resurrection by reassembly was held by many early Christian thinkers, most notably by Augustine.[5] This view might be supported by our intuitions involving the identity conditions of some material objects such as artifacts. For example, suppose someone takes a watch to a repair shop and the repairman takes the watch apart (with its parts scattered across the desk) and leaves it in that condition for a week. When the week goes by, the repairman reassembles the watch out of the parts on the desk. Now we might be inclined to believe that when the repairman returns the watch to its rightful owner, the watch that the owner now holds in her hands is the same watch that she dropped off a week ago. Had the repairman used completely different parts (i.e., parts distinct from the ones scattered on the desk) to assemble an indistinguishable watch, there is an inclination to believe that such a watch would not be numerically identical to the original watch. So there seems to be an intuition that the sameness of some macro-physical objects is accounted for by the reassembly (into its original form) of the exact same parts. Similarly, if God were to reassemble all the parts that once composed a pre-mortem body, we might believe that the reassembled body is identical to the pre-mortem body.

[4] In fact, neither of us would go so far as to endorse the proposal; but we do want to offer it as an alternative option on bodily resurrection to the ones currently available.

[5] See Augustine's *City of God* 22.20 and *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis* 12.35.68. For discussion of Augustine's view, see Niederbacher (2014: 128).

But things are much more complicated for human bodies. Our bodies are constantly undergoing changes in parts—through the acquisition and assimilation of new parts and the excretion of old ones—while maintaining structural stability. Hence, sameness of parts appropriately reassembled cannot be a necessary condition for the sameness of bodies across time (nor can it be a sufficient condition for reasons we will see below). Indeed, several well-known objections have been mounted against resurrection by reassembly that makes the account appear hopeless:[6]

> *Cannibal-Case*: one of the earliest worries over resurrection by reassembly involved thought experiments in which a cannibal consumes and ingests a human victim and then immediately dies. Given that the atoms that composed the victim now partially compose the cannibal, how is God supposed to bring both individuals back from the dead? And which body gets which atoms? One possible response is to assert that the original possessor of those parts would get those parts back, whereas the missing parts of the cannibal would be supplied by God.[7] Still, the problem can be posed in such a way that all and only the parts that composed the victim at his death later compose the cannibal at his death (such a scenario is, of course, very unlikely but logically possible). If so, then how can God resurrect the cannibal if (following the earlier policy of part distribution) the victim will be the recipient of all those atoms? Thus, if resurrection occurs by reassembly, then God cannot bring back both, which goes against the Christian belief that everyone will be resurrected (John 5:29).
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> *Two-Bodies-Case*: we know that human bodies undergo part fluctuation in such a way that it is possible (if not actual) that the parts that now compose Steve Davis do not overlap at all with the parts that composed him when he was ten-years-old. Now suppose that in the life to come, God reassembles the parts that now compose Steve and reassembles the parts that composed the ten-year-old Steve. If the mere reassembly of parts that once composed an individual is sufficient to bring back that individual, then it appears that both resurrected bodies are equally good candidates for being Steve (and it would seem arbitrary to choose either one). But they cannot both be Steve, and therefore neither one is Steve—thus, Steve would not be resurrected.
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> *Destruction-Case*: suppose that an individual, Smith, meets her unfortunate demise by way of total vaporization, say by a nuclear explosion. Or if such a devastating event is not adequate to destroy all of her parts, it is still possible that all or most of the parts that once composed Smith (at any level of decomposition) are completely destroyed. If the fundamental particles that once composed Smith no longer exist, then how can God bring Smith's body back when there are no parts to reassemble?

Due to such worries, most Christian materialists (and dualists who accept that the resurrected body will be identical to the earthly body) have opted for other

[6] Clear presentation and discussion of these problems are found in Merricks (2009) and van Inwagen (1978).

[7] Augustine *City of God* 22.20.

accounts of the resurrection of the body.[8] van Inwagen suggests that material and causal continuity is required for sameness of body over time, and hence he proposes that God snatches the body (or some crucial part of it, such as the "naked kernel" mentioned by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:37) and leaves a simulacrum of the body which we regard as the corpse of the former person.[9] The "falling elevator" model suggests that the body fissions prior to death, where the original body is immanently causally connected to both the corpse and to a living body that has "jumped" from one spatiotemporal region to another.[10] Since the living body is the closest continuer of the original person (because the corpse is not a viable candidate), the person survives in a new location. This view preserves the requirement of causal continuity (and perhaps even material continuity)[11] but requires denying the "only x and y principle"[12] concerning diachronic identity. Finally, Merricks has argued that there are no informative and non-trivial necessary and sufficient conditions for diachronic identity; identity across time is unanalyzable. Thus, it is a brute fact that the resurrected body is numerically identical to the pre-mortem body; nothing more can be said.

The problems or concerns with each of these accounts need not be mentioned here. But we believe that resurrection by reassembly can be reconsidered as an option that is at least as plausible as these three views. Or at the very least, we aim to show that resurrection by reassembly is not as implausible and worrisome as some may believe. However, we need to discuss a related issue concerning composition, where we provide our own account of when composition occurs.

[8] Another well-known objection has been stated by van Inwagen as follows:

> Suppose a certain monastery claims to have in its possession a manuscript written in St. Augustine's own hand. And suppose the monks of this monastery further claim that this manuscript was burned by Arians in the year 457. It would immediately occur to me to ask how *this* manuscript, the one I can touch, could be the very manuscript that was burned in 457. Suppose their answer to this question is that God miraculously recreated Augustine's manuscript in 458. I should respond to this answer as follows: the deed it describes seems quite impossible, even as an accomplishment of omnipotence. God certainly might have created a perfect duplicate of the original manuscript, but it would not be *that* one. (1978, 116–17)

If material objects cannot have a "second beginning" after having ceased to exist, then resurrection by reassembly would be ruled out. Such an objection is tied to the alleged impossibility of temporal gaps or the necessity of (immanent) causal continuity. We leave this objection aside since our view will not address this particular problem. However, there have been, in our opinion, adequate replies to this worry. For such responses, see Merricks (1999) and Davis (1993: 123–8). On the possibility of "second beginnings," see Quinn (1983).

[9] van Inwagen (1978). The "naked kernel" suggestion can be found in van Inwagen's "I Look for the Resurrection of the Dead and the Life of the World to Come" (unpublished).

[10] Originally proposed by Zimmerman (1999), such a view has also been endorsed by Corcoran (2001) and O'Connor and Jacobs (2010).

[11] Zimmerman (2010).

[12] The "only x and y principle" states that whether x is identical to y must depend only on facts concerning x and y. To deny such a principle would be to make identity (across time) partly extrinsic.

11.2. COMPOSITION AND THE WILL OF GOD

To begin, a few preliminary notions will have to be defined. Let us treat parthood as primitive, where the parthood relation is reflexive, asymmetric, and transitive. We can now define the following mereological concepts:

> x is a *proper part* of $y =_{df}$ x is a part of y, and x is not identical to y.
>
> O *overlaps* O* $=_{df}$ there is an x such that x is a part of O and a part of O*.
>
> The xs *compose* $y =_{df}$ the xs are all parts of y, none of the xs overlap with each other, and every part of y overlaps with at least one of the xs.

Now pre-theoretically, it seems that there are composite objects—things made up of proper parts. However, defending a pre-theoretical or naïve conception of material objects has proved to be fairly difficult. One reason is due to the difficulty in answering the so-called Special Composition Question, which asks for the necessary and sufficient conditions under which a plurality of objects composes some further object.[13] Quite generally, there are three broad answers to the question of when composition occurs: never, always, and sometimes (and sometimes not).

Compositional nihilism (or "nihilism" for short) affirms the first extreme answer that composition never occurs—there are only simple (non-composite) objects such as fundamental particles.[14] Statements involving composite objects must then be paraphrased. For example, a statement such as "I have a table" can be paraphrased as "I have particles arranged table-wise," "I have particles that would compose a table if they could compose anything," or "in our discourse (which includes fictional elements), I have a table."[15] Nihilism is difficult to accept given its denial of many of the objects we pre-theoretically grant as existing. Other objections have been raised against it, such as its alleged incompatibility with the possibility of a gunky world (i.e., a world that is infinitely divisible).[16] We reject such a view not only due to its eschewal of many of the objects we regard as existing but also because we find the arguments on its behalf unconvincing.

Universalism is the view that holds the other extreme answer to the Special Composition Question: composition always occurs (because composition is automatic). Universalism, thus, embraces the principle of unrestricted composition: whenever there are non-overlapping xs, there is a further object composed of the xs. According to Universalism, there are far more objects

[13] The *locus classicus* of this issue is found in van Inwagen (1990).

[14] It is currently debated whether simples can be spatially extended, but we will leave that issue aside.

[15] For discussion of some of these paraphrasing strategies, see van Inwagen (1990: ch.11), and Gideon and Dorr (2003).

[16] For such criticism, see Sider (1993), though Sider (2013) now seems to advocate compositional nihilism.

than we ordinarily take to exist, including strange objects such as the sum composed of the Eiffel Tower and our noses. Such a view might seem too extravagant; however, Lewis and Sider have offered a powerful case on its behalf: the argument from vagueness. One formulation of the argument can be stated as follows:

[1] If composition is restricted, then there must be a pair of cases connected by a continuous series such that composition occurs in one case but does not occur in the other.

[2] In such a continuous series, there is no sharp cut-off regarding when composition occurs (i.e., there is no adjacent pair of cases c and c* such that composition determinately occurs at c but does not determinately occur at c*).

[3] In any case in the series, either composition determinately occurs or it determinately does not occur.

[4] So, composition is not restricted.[17]

Those wishing to resist this argument would seem to require having to endorse indeterminacy or vagueness somewhere in their ontology—either indeterminacy or vagueness in composition, identity, or existence. Some proponents of restricted composition welcome some of these results.[18] When we provide our account of composition, we will offer our reply to the argument from vagueness. Nevertheless, we would like to find another answer to the Special Composition Question than universalism, for not only does it run afoul of ordinary intuitions by including strange, gerrymandered objects, but it also has been argued as not being theoretically superior to restricted compositional views.[19]

Nihilism and universalism provide principled and clear answers to the Special Composition Question. Though these views do have some troubling consequences, plausible versions of a moderate view (such that composition sometimes occurs and sometimes does not occur) have been notoriously difficult to advance. van Inwagen has offered decisive reasons for rejecting mere contact or fastening (of a plurality of objects) as the conditions under which composition takes place (and he also argues against any series-style answer such that there are different composition-relevant relations that hold among the parts of different kinds of objects).[20] van Inwagen's own view, sometimes labeled "organicism," states that composition occurs whenever the activities of some *x*s constitute a life (where a life is a self-maintaining, well-individuated biological event that maintains the complex internal structure of

[17] See Sider (2001: 120–32). See also Lewis (1986: 212–13).
[18] For example, van Inwagen (1990).
[19] For such criticisms, see Korman (2007) and Effingham (2011).
[20] Though for a defense of a series-style approach, see Carmichael (forthcoming).

an organism). Under such a view, the only material objects that exist are organisms and simples. Merricks (2001b) has advanced a similar view in which the only objects that exist are conscious organisms and simples. He accepts the existence of conscious organisms because they exhibit non-redundant causal powers, but there are no composite objects that would have only redundant causal powers if they existed—and therefore there are no baseballs since the causal activity of the baseball can be sufficiently accounted for by the causal activity of the atoms arranged baseball-wise. A worrisome consequence with these two accounts is that they still deny far too many objects. It is merely nihilism plus (conscious) organisms. In fact, their view of composition is too stringent, denying even the existence of the proper parts of organisms such as brains and hands—which is a difficult claim to accept.[21]

One final answer to the Special Composition Question that we will consider is the theory of brutal composition: there are no non-trivial, finitely long necessary and sufficient conditions for when a plurality of objects compose some further object (cf. Markosian 1998). Given the putative failure of the extant answers to the Special Composition Question, Markosian suggests that we should believe that no satisfactory answer can be given—composition is brute and unanalyzable (in non-mereological terms). We regard such a theory as a last resort for restricted compositional views provided that there are no other plausible theories of composition left on the table.

However, we believe that such an option is not required. We offer a version of restricted composition that we take to be promising and quite plausible, at least for those who embrace Christian theism. The motivation of our preferred account comes from our espousal of the theological claim of divine conservation such that God sustains in existence the world and all of its contents. Many traditional Christians believe that God is not only the creator but also the sustainer of the world. From such a commitment, one of us has argued that the will of God is a necessary condition for diachronic identity.[22] Objects lack "existential inertia." They would cease to exist were it not for God acting or concurring with their continued existence. Metaphorically stated, the will of God is "the glue of the world" (Davis 1993: 120). What we want to propose is a

[21] Hoffman and Rosenkrantz (1997) have offered another moderate view in which the only composite objects that exist are organisms and mereological compounds, which are objects that have parts that are so tightly joined together that one cannot causally affect one part without affecting the others (and hence, their use of "mereological compound" is non-standard).

[22] Regarding diachronic identity, consider the case of fission in personal identity and suppose that psychological continuity is at least necessary for sameness of persons. Rather than adopting a non-branching condition or claiming that identity does not matter, the view holds that a necessary condition for sameness of persons is that God wills that one of the successors be the original person. Though this makes personal identity partly an extrinsic matter, it is not implausible if we take seriously the fact that we live in a world that is ontologically dependent on God. For more on this, see Davis (2010) and Davis (1993: ch. 6).

view where such glue not only sticks things together diachronically but also synchronically. The world would simply be an array of particles were it not for the divine will purposefully joining some of these particles together to form a whole.

We propose, then, that God's will is needed in order for composition to occur. Whatever the conditions are for composition to take place, a necessary condition is that God wills that the matter compose a further object by willing that there be a sum or fusion of that matter. Accordingly, it is not sufficient that the proper parts of a composite merely exist (as it is for universalism) or that the activities of the proper parts constitute a life (as it is for organicism). Whatever other conditions are required, we claim that God must also will that those parts compose some further object. We propose, then, the following theory of composition (which we will call "the Will of God Theory" or "WoG" for short):

[WoG] The *x*s compose some *y* at t if and only if (i) the *x*s exist at t, (ii) God wills that there be a fusion of the *x*s at t.

So merely having particles arranged table-wise is not adequate for there to be a table; rather, God must also will that there be a sum of those particles. The kind of object that such a sum falls under will depend on the specific arrangement of those particles.[23]

Strictly speaking, WoG is compatible with the ontology of either nihilism or universalism, for it is possible that either God never wills there to be a fusion, or he wills that there be a fusion for every plurality. However, WoG can be cast as a version of restricted composition for several reasons. First, it may in fact be the case that God wills that there be some composite objects while not willing that there be others (such as strange or arbitrary sums). But the main reason we think of WoG as a version of restricted composition is that it provides a way of responding to the argument from vagueness—which some take to be the primary reason for accepting universalism. The proponent of WoG can deny premise [2] of that argument, claiming instead that there is a sharp cut-off in the continuous series. The plausibility of [2] rests on the fact that a minute physical difference (for example, the presence of a single atom) does not seem to be an adequate "difference-maker" for the occurrence or non-occurrence of composition in adjoining cases. But if the will of God is a necessary condition for composition to occur, then it is not implausible to suppose that there are two adjacent cases c and c* in the series in which God wills that the plurality of objects compose some further object in c and does not so will in c*. Divine volitions would be a robust enough difference-maker between these two cases in the series. Since the proponent of WoG has reasons

[23] We leave open whether there is a restriction to the kinds or sortals that there are, though we are inclined to accept that only certain arrangements are eligible for having an object fall under some kind. Thanks to Hud Hudson for this suggestion and with help in formulating our view.

for denying a key premise in the argument from vagueness, such a view is better construed as an account of restricted composition.

The main advantage for WoG is that it provides an alternative theory of composition that maintains our pre-theoretical intuitions concerning composite objects. Indeed, Markosian has claimed that brutal composition is "the overall theoretical position that best fits standard intuitions about composition and other metaphysical matters" (1998: 237). But our view also fits such intuitions; so there are at least two pre-theoretical, commonsensical views of composition. However, we take WoG to have an advantage over brutal composition because it is able to provide an answer to the Special Composition Question (as opposed to rejecting any possible answer).

Before moving back to the resurrection, we want to consider some possible objections to our account and offer some responses that should provide additional elaboration of our view.

Objection 1: Doesn't WoG suggest that God could will there to be any kind of object whenever there is a plurality of things? Couldn't God then will that particles arranged table-wise compose a human organism? *Reply*: First, recall the role of divine volition: God's will that there be a sum is only a necessary condition for composition to take place (it is not sufficient). Moreover, the divine volition does not determine the kind of object that results; it is the arrangement of those particles that does so. Even if there were particles arranged table-wise, God could not make those particles compose a human organism (on the assumption that a human organism cannot be arranged in a table-wise fashion). But there would be particles that composed a table if God wills that there be a fusion of those particles and that those particles are arranged table-wise. However, if God does not so will, then there would be no table—only particles arranged table-wise.

Objection 2: WoG makes the occurrence of composition an extrinsic matter, but it seems to be an intrinsic matter whether a plurality of objects composes some further object. *Reply*: we maintain that WoG does imply that the occurrence of composition is partly extrinsic, but we are already open to the claim that diachronic identity is partly extrinsic (and one of us has explicitly endorsed that claim). We believe that this should be unproblematic for anyone who holds to a strong view of divine conservation (as we do). Moreover, our account accommodates the intuition that the intention of a designer is a necessary condition for the existence of his or her product[24] or the Aristotelian claim that a craftsman puts something of his or her own soul (e.g., the form of the artifact) into the created work.[25] The world and its contents can in a sense be regarded as the product of divine craftsmanship such that the existence of these objects depends on the intentions of their maker.

[24] Cf. Baker (2004). [25] See Aristotle *Metaphysics* VII.7.

Objection 3: given WoG, we cannot know when composition takes place since we do not know whether God wills composition to occur or not. *Reply*: our account only provides a metaphysical criterion under which composition takes place; it does not necessarily provide an epistemic criterion. Such a consequence might be taken as a drawback, especially since the two extreme views (universalism and nihilism) provide a clear way of knowing when composition has occurred or not (and some of the moderate views do so as well). However, these views require abandoning our pre-theoretical ontology of composite objects. As mentioned earlier, the only other view that keeps our pre-theoretical ontology is the brutal composition account; but such an account also lacks a clear epistemic criterion. Under brutal composition, we might be mistaken that composition has taken place when it comes to a statue, a rock, or an organism; nevertheless, the view provides a framework for maintaining a pre-theoretical ontology of composite objects. And WoG is at least on par with brutal composition, though it might be able to do more since we might discover what composite objects God wills to exist via divine revelation. Or perhaps one way of knowing that God wills to exist just those objects that we pre-theoretically take to exist might be through some *consensus gentium*-style argument: on the assumption that God does not want to massively deceive the overwhelming majority of human beings, the fact that the overwhelming majority of human beings have taken certain objects as existing might be reason for us to believe that God has willed those objects to exist. Regardless, even if we cannot ever know for sure when composition takes place, we nevertheless have a metaphysical framework that is compatible with the existence of all and only those ordinary objects we pre-theoretically regard as existing.

We do not expect that all the worries concerning WoG have been mitigated. But we do offer WoG as a competing theory of composition that seems to fare at least as well as the other possible approaches to the Special Composition Question.

11.3. COMPOSITION AND THE RESURRECTION

We are now in a position to apply our theory to the resurrection. In this section, we will offer an account of the resurrection of the body that comes very close to the patristic account without falling into the same traps. The original patristic account claims that a human body can be brought back by using the same particles that once composed that body and appropriately arranging them. We suggest a modification to that account, one that adopts the additional commitments that follow from an acceptance of a strong view of divine conservation—viz., that the will of God is a crucial feature in both the

occurrence of composition and diachronic identity. In the previous section, we offered and defended WoG as a viable alternative to other theories of composition, and one of us has already argued for the relevance of the will of God concerning diachronic identity. Thus, for anyone who wants to accept an account of bodily resurrection that is inspired by the church fathers, we believe that he or she would benefit from accepting the addition of these two divine volitions.

The modified patristic account can be formulated as follows: God resurrects numerically the same body as the pre-mortem body if (i) a sufficient number of particles that once composed the pre-mortem body are (at the eschaton) suitably arranged, (ii) God wills that there be a fusion of those particles (at the eschaton), and (iii) God wills that the resultant fusion (viz., the resurrected body) be identical to the pre-mortem body.[26] We believe these amendments help the patristic account avoid several problems.

The original patristic account seemed to treat (i) as a necessary and sufficient condition for resurrecting the same body. But the modified account does not take sameness of matter arranged in the same way (or in a close enough way) as being in itself either necessary or sufficient. As stated earlier, "same matter in the same arrangement" is clearly not necessary for living bodies since bodies are constantly gaining and losing parts—but the modified account provides only sufficient conditions.[27] Moreover, "same matter in the same arrangement" is also not sufficient but is rather a part of a sufficient condition (i.e., (i)–(iii) are jointly sufficient). What more is required are the two divine volitions in (ii) and (iii). Given WoG, the divine will in (ii) is needed to have a composite object, and including the will of God in (iii) is not ad hoc, as one of us has argued for that claim independently of some of the issues raised in this paper.[28]

According to this modified account of resurrection by reassembly, God can bring back a human body by gathering and appropriately arranging (all or most of) the proper parts that once composed it, will that there be a fusion of those parts, and will that the resultant composite be the same as the pre-mortem body. Furthermore, God can bring back a human body using *any* plurality of particles that once composed the pre-mortem body during its

[26] The expression "a sufficient number of particles" in condition (i) is obviously imprecise and unclear. We do not want to take a hard line on exactly how many objects must overlap to satisfy such a condition. Exact overlap seems too stringent, and the minimal bound might seem to be at least half. We could stipulate a number (e.g., at least eighty percent of the particles that composed the pre-mortem body must be included in the plurality of particles that compose the resurrected body); however, we are content to leave it open.

[27] This is because we are open to the possibility of a disjunctive criterion of diachronic identity (where each disjunct serves as a sufficient condition). For additional elaboration, see Davis (2001: 237) and Davis (1993: 116–23).

[28] See Davis (2010, 1993).

career (i.e., the modified account does not require that the particles that God uses be the ones that composed the body immediately prior to death).

The real advantage of the modified patristic account is that it avoids the problems mentioned in section 1 that beset the original theory. Take first the *Cannibal-Case*. Consider the version of partial overlap between the cannibal and the victim. It seems that God can prevent the particles of the victim from partially composing the cannibal by not willing that they do so even though they are so arranged. Merely being located in the cannibal's body or being involved within such an arrangement is not sufficient for being parts of that body. Interestingly, this response is compatible with Athenagoras' assertion that human flesh is indigestible (which was his solution to the partial overlapping version of *Cannibal-Case*), for it could be the case that God never allows the parts of human flesh to partially compose a cannibal's body.[29] Such a response, however, does not handle the case of complete overlap between the parts of the cannibal and the parts of the victim at the time of the cannibal's death. But the modified patristic account has a ready response: God can take the particles that composed the cannibal and the victim at some point in the past in which the proper parts that composed each of them do not overlap with any of their proper parts during the time of the consumption. Then by reassembling those particles—the ones that are never shared by the cannibal and the victim—and having the relevant divine volitions to satisfy condition (ii) and (iii), God can resurrect both individuals.[30]

Next, consider the *Two-Bodies-Case*. Let "p" stand for the plurality of particles that will compose Steve Davis immediately before his death, and let "p*" stand for the plurality of particles that composed Steve Davis when he was ten years old. With the modified patristic account, there are different ways out of this problem. Even if p and p* were gathered and appropriately arranged by God, it does not yet follow that either p or p* composes some additional object. God could refrain from willing that both p and p* each compose a human body. Or God could will that both p and p* each compose a human body, but he could only will that one of those bodies be identical to Steve's body. This does not contravene divine omnipotence since an omnipotent being cannot bring about a contradictory state of affairs. Hence, God cannot simultaneously will that p and p* each compose a human body and will that p and p* each be identical to Steve's body. Thus, God would either have to not will that p and p* each compose a human

[29] See Bynum (1995). Of course, this does not mitigate the worry that the cannibal would then have oddly shaped spatial gaps in his body and whether a living body could exist in that condition.

[30] Some have suggested that God could stagger the time of each body's resurrection such that one body is resurrected, and after losing the parts that once overlapped the other body, God then resurrects the second body.

body or not will that p and p* each be identical to Steve's body. So the will of God guarantees that there can only be a *unique* successor, and therefore no contradiction arises.[31]

Finally, let us consider the *Destruction-Case*. Several responses can be given. First, provided that the account of the resurrection we are offering is merely a "just-so" story, it is possible that God preserves all or most of the particles that once composed me such that total destruction never takes place. Second, we have been discussing the identity conditions of only composite objects, but it may be the case that the identity conditions of simples are quite different. If simples can survive temporal gaps, then even if the particles that once composed a body are completely destroyed, it may be the case that God can bring back those very same simples and use them for reassembly. Thirdly, even if none of the particles that once composed a particular body right before death still exist, God could still use a plurality of particles that once composed the pre-mortem body, where those particles do not overlap any of the particles at the time of total destruction. By appropriately arranging those particles and willing that they compose a human body and that the resultant body be identical to the pre-mortem body, God can bring back the living body even if all of the parts that composed that body immediately prior to death no longer exist in the eschaton.

By overcoming these standard problems to the original theory of resurrection by reassembly, the modified patristic account provides a viable alternative of bodily resurrection to the currently available theories. Of course some worries for such a proposal remain. For one, this account requires the impossibility of two distinct bodies ever having significant overlap of its proper parts throughout their careers. Another objection may come from those who take immanent causal connections as necessary for persistence. So even the modified patristic account has some costs. Nevertheless, these costs seem neither to be any worse nor any more extravagant than the costs required by the other leading views of bodily resurrection.

To conclude, we have shown that by utilizing the concept of the will of God in a theory of composition and diachronic identity, a modified version of resurrection by reassembly can be developed that is both coherent and defensible from certain well-known objections. Hence, the modified patristic account of resurrection by reassembly should be considered as a competitor to the simulacrum, falling elevator, and anti-criterialist accounts. Or at least it should be regarded as no more puzzling and worrisome than these views.

[31] There might even be a principled reason for God to prefer having p compose the resurrected body and not p*, see Davis (2001: 236–7).

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12

Some Advantages for a Thomistic Solution to the Problem of Personal Identity beyond Death

Christopher M. Brown

In this chapter I argue that a Thomistic solution to the problem of personal identity beyond death is preferable to certain contemporary views. The chapter has four sections. In Section 12.1 I introduce a problem I call the Problem of Personal Identity beyond Death (PPID): in short, if there are—or will be—human persons in heaven or hell, such persons seemingly can't be numerically identical to any human persons in this life. But in that case a desire to go to heaven is not a rational desire, at least once one becomes acquainted with the PPID. In Section 12.2 I show why someone—and a Christian philosopher in particular—might think it important to solve the PPID. In Section 12.3 I explain a number of interesting responses to the PPID recently defended by Christian philosophers, showing why each of these solutions is sensible but nonetheless inconsistent with at least one philosophical or theological desideratum. In Section 12.4 I offer a sketch of St Thomas Aquinas' philosophical anthropology as well as a Thomistic solution to the PPID such an anthropology implies. Finally, I argue that a Thomistic solution to the PPID possesses a set of theological and philosophical virtues, which set of virtues is not possessed by any of the four contemporary views I discuss here. All other things being equal, a Thomistic solution to the PPID is therefore preferable to such contemporary solutions.

12.1. THE PROBLEM OF PERSONAL IDENTITY BEYOND DEATH

Consider a problem which I'll call the Problem of Personal Identity beyond Death (PPID). The problem can be formulated as follows:

(1) You are essentially an animal of a certain sort.
(2) An animal ceases to exist at death.
(3) Therefore, you cease to exist at death [from (1) and (2)].
(4) For any being *b* that begins to exist, *b* can only have one beginning to its existence, that is, "gappy" existence is impossible.
(5) Therefore, you do not exist after your death, and you won't exist ever again [from (3) and (4)].

Generalizing:

(6) For any human person S, if S dies, then, for any human person S1 that exists after S's death, S1 is not numerically identical to S.

The premises of the PPID appear plausible. For example, whatever else we want to say about human persons, human persons seem to share metaphysical common ground with other animals. So premises (1) and (2) appear to be true. In addition, (1) coheres well with both medieval and contemporary readings of the Old and New Testaments on the nature of human persons, readings that suggest a more holistic account of human persons than the classical Pythagorean-Platonic picture would seem to endorse. Although (4) has been questioned by some contemporary philosophers,[1] it certainly seems common-sensical. Therefore, even if it were reasonable to reject (4), all other things being equal, a solution to the PPID that does not require rejecting (4) would be better than a solution that does.

12.2. WHY CARE ABOUT THE PPID?

There are a number of reasons to take the PPID seriously. We might wonder whether a human person can (reasonably) believe her life is meaningful if she thinks it comes to a permanent end. But the PPID implies that the lives of human persons come to a permanent end. Or, we might ask: "Can a being whose existence comes to a permanent end be intrinsically valuable?" If we are inclined to answer this question in the negative, then the PPID constitutes a potential problem for those who also believe that human persons are intrinsically and not merely instrumentally valuable.

Christians have a different kind of reason for caring about the PPID. For the New Testament and Catholic Christian tradition clearly teach that human persons survive their deaths insofar as human persons that are numerically the same as human persons in this life eventually end up in

[1] See, e.g., Corcoran (2006: 127–31).

heaven or hell.[2,3] So the PPID is a direct challenge to the coherence of Christian theism.[4] Indeed, if the PPID is sound, then no one (who becomes aware of the problem of the PPID) can reasonably wish to go to heaven, since, given the soundness of the PPID, it's not possible for someone in heaven to be numerically identical to a person in this life who entertains such a wish.

12.3. SOME IMPORTANT CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHICAL SOLUTIONS TO THE PPID

In this section I explain and motivate four contemporary philosophical solutions to the PPID. Each of these contemporary solutions carries with it a theoretical advantage over other proposed solutions to the PPID. But, as I'll show, each of these solutions is also inconsistent with an important theological or philosophical desideratum.

12.3.1. Compound Substance Dualism as a Solution to the PPID

In speaking of contemporary solutions to the PPID, I begin with a philosophy of the human person that is contemporary only in the sense that some of the serious-minded among our contemporaries take the view to be true[5]—or plausible given other things Christians believe[6]—although the view is at least as old as the thirteenth century.[7] Unlike the substance dualism of Plato's *Phaedo*, which says that the human person is simply identical to an

[2] See, e.g.: Matt. 5:27–30; Matt. 7:21–3; Matt. 10:32–3; Matt. 16:21; Matt. 18:8–9; Matt. 19:16–29; Matt. 22:23–33; Matt. 25:31–46; Mark 8:31; Mark 9:43–8; Mark 10:29–30; Mark 12:18–27; Luke 10:25–8; Luke 20:27–38; John 3:15–16; John 3:36; John 4:14; John 5:24; John 5:25–9; John 6:27; John 6:54–6; John 8:51; John 10:27–8; John 11:17–27; John 12:50; John 17:3; Acts 13:46; Acts 24:15; Romans 2:7: Romans 5:21; Romans 6:22–3; Romans 8:11; 1 Cor. 5:12–58; 2 Cor. 5:1–10; Galatians 6:8; Phil. 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:14–18; 1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:8; Titus 1:2; Titus 3:7; Hebrews 9:27; James 1:12; 1 John 2:24–5; 1 John 3:14–15; 1 John 5:13; Jude 21; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 20:11–15; Rev. 21:1–27, and Rev. 22:1–5.

[3] For a sampling of early Catholic Christian sources, see, e.g.: the Symbol of Cyril of Jerusalem (*c.* 348); the Symbol of Epiphanus (374); the Symbol of St Ambrose (d. 397); the Symbol of the Roman Order of Baptism; the Symbol of Constantinople (381); the Profession of Faith of Pope Damasus (d. 384); the Symbol of Rufinus (*c.* 404), and the Pseudo-Athanasian Symbol, *Quicumque*.

[4] See, e.g., Badham (2001).

[5] See, e.g., Swinburne (2013: 170–3).

[6] See Zimmerman (2004). It should be noted that Zimmerman here defends the plausibility merely of (emergent) substance dualism, given other things Christians believe, and not either simple or compound substance dualism per se.

[7] For example, St Thomas Aquinas mentions a view that could be classified as a species of what I'm calling *Compound Substance Dualism* at *Summa theologiae* (ST) Ia. q. 76, a. 1,

immaterial soul,[8] the view of human persons I have in mind—call it *Compound Substance Dualism*—has it that the human person is normally or naturally composed of two different substances, one of which, that is, the human soul, is an immaterial substance that can survive the death of the body, whereas the other is a material substance, specifically, a human organism, which substance is corrupted at death. According to this ontology of human persons, a human person can be composed of her soul alone; indeed, if a compound substance dualist is a *traditional* Christian, she will believe *the human person is, in fact, composed of her soul alone during the interim state, that is, between death and the general resurrection*.[9]

Compound Substance Dualism has the advantage of offering a neat way of explaining human immortality—just as Plato's does—but without the negative implication that our bodies are not really parts of us. For if the simple substance dualism of Plato is correct, I don't ever kiss my wife goodbye, since my body is not—never is—a part of me. But (since I'm at least a minimally decent husband) that is absurd. *Compound* Substance Dualism doesn't have that implication. I can kiss my wife goodbye, according to the compound substance dualist, since the human organism that kisses my wife goodbye is (at least in this life) a real part of me. Nonetheless, just as most would admit that a human *organism* can exist without its pinky finger—although a pinky finger is a normal and natural part of a human organism, it is not a necessary or essential part of a human organism—so a human *person* can exist, according to an advocate of Compound Substance Dualism, without that part of her that is a human organism, that is, when she is composed of her immaterial soul alone during the interim state. This is because, although a human organism is a normal and natural part of a human person, it is not a necessary or essential part of a human person. In contrast, the immaterial soul is not only a normal and natural part of the human person, it is a part that is necessary (or essential)—and sufficient—for the existence of the human person.

How, then, can an advocate of Compound Substance Dualism respond to the PPID? The compound substance dualist can respond to the PPID in (at least) one of two ways, depending upon how one reads (1). Suppose one reads (1) as saying:

(1*) For any human person S, S is identical to an animal, that is, a human organism.

respondeo. In the seventeenth century, Rene Descartes seems to defend a version of this view in his *Mediations on First Philosophy*, meditation six.

[8] See esp. *Phaedo* 64c–67b and 114c.

[9] I make good on this claim below. *The general resurrection* is, according to traditional Christian belief, the day when all human persons stand together, raised from the dead, before the judgment seat of Christ.

If we read (1) as (1*), compound substance dualists will reject (1), for, according to Compound Substance Dualism, human persons are not identical to a human organism; rather, according to the compound substance dualist, a human person S is identical to an individual within a kind K such that any individual member of K has an immaterial soul as a natural and necessary part and a human organism as a natural and normal (but unnecessary) part. Analogously, a biologically mature human *organism* H is the sort of thing that has some parts that are necessary (or essential), for example, organs such as a brain, circulatory system, etc. and some parts that are natural and normal, but not necessary (or essential), for example, fingers, toes, and so on. Given that we read (1) as (1*), the compound substance dualist will reject (1), and so can also reject (3).

But let's say one reads (1) in this way instead:

(1**) For any human person S, S is normally and naturally (but not necessarily) composed of an animal.

If we read (1) as (1**), the compound substance dualist will not reject (1). She would rather reject the inference from (1) and (2) to (3). For the compound substance dualist thinks that, although a human person is essentially an animal in the sense that she *is normally and naturally composed of a human organism as a part*, a human person can nonetheless survive the loss of that part of her that is a human organism. Similarly, a biologically mature human *organism* is essentially something armed and legged in the sense that such an organism *is normally and naturally composed of arms and legs*, although a human organism can survive the loss of those kinds of parts.

So Compound Substance Dualism affords a solution to the PPID that does not deny my body is a (sometime) part of me. But there is a problem for Compound Substance Dualism and a solution to the PPID based on that philosophy of the human person: Compound Substance Dualism is subject to what I'll call, the *Unity Objection*.[10] If we think of *unity*, that is, *being one thing*, as a property that comes in degrees, then on one side of the spectrum of things that enjoy unity is a *heap* of substances, for example, that pile of things that is the result of my having swept the kitchen floor. A heap of substances is barely unified at all. On the other side of the spectrum of things that enjoy unity is *an actual substance*, for example, an individual organism. Substances are beings that are unified things of the highest order.[11] Now, we might think of *human persons* as paradigm cases of actual substances. So, a human person is a unified

[10] For some different criticisms of Compound Substance Dualism, see Olson (2001). For a response to these criticisms, see Swinburne (2013: 235–6).

[11] From the fact that *substances are the most unified sort of being*, it does not follow that *all substances are equally unified*. We might think, for example, that material substances, which have a naturally tendency to fall apart, are less unified than simple substances, which by nature, can't decompose. Nonetheless, material substances are *substances*, and so still belong on that side of

thing of the highest order. But if a thing T is composed of actual substances, then T is closer to the *heap of actual substances* end of the spectrum of unified things than it is to the *actual substances* end of the spectrum of unified things. Therefore, if a thing T is an actual substance that has parts, then the parts of T are not themselves actual substances. But Compound Substance Dualism has it that every human person is normally and naturally composed of two actual substances, namely, an immaterial soul and a human organism, and so every human person is sometimes composed of two actual substances. Therefore, according to Compound Substance Dualism, whenever a human person S is composed of an immaterial soul and a human organism, either it is the case that S is not an actual substance, which is *false*, since human persons are paradigm instances of substances, or S is an actual substance composed of two actual substances, that is, an immaterial soul and a human organism, which is a contradiction in terms. Compound Substance Dualism, given some plausible assumptions about the degree of unity enjoyed by actual substances, therefore entails something false or incoherent.

12.3.2. A Simple Materialist Solution to the PPID: Resurrection-as-Reassembly

Can we solve the PPID without invoking the existence of an immaterial soul? As some authors have recently pointed out, it would seem that the original sources of the Christian religion suggest we should try.[12] Rather than emphasizing the existence of an immortal soul that survives the death of the body as a way of making sense of Christian teaching about the after-life, as is done in neo-Platonic theological traditions, many contemporary theologians and philosophers argue the Christian religion is rather a religion that emphasizes embodiment insofar as it makes central the Incarnation, the resurrection of the body, and God's choice to give grace through the sacraments. Perhaps a credible Christian anthropology should therefore be a materialist one. Of course, such an understanding of the Christian religion only makes finding a solution to the PPID more urgent for the Christian theologian or philosopher.

One tradition-honored (part of a) solution to the PPID has it that God miraculously *re-assembles* a body at the general resurrection.[13] Someone

the spectrum of things that enjoy unity such that they are unified things of the highest order. I thank T. Ryan Byerly for calling to my attention the need to make this point explicit.

[12] See, e.g., Green (2008), Brown, and others (1998), and van Inwagen (1995).

[13] See, e.g., St Augustine of Hippo's famous discussion of resurrected bodies as bodies composed of the same matter that composed human bodies in this life in *City of God*, book xxii, ch. 20. See also his *Enchiridion*, ch. 88.

might think that those belonging to the tradition of which I speak accept the following criterion for diachronic bodily identity:

> *Sameness of Parts*: for any human bodies x and y, x and y are numerically identical if x and y are composed of (mostly) the same (or certain kinds of) integral parts, e.g., a set of fundamental particles.

If we add to Sameness of Parts the materialist view that *human persons just are living, human bodies* and the traditional Christian view that God miraculously brings about the resurrection of the body,[14] then we have that theory of how human persons at the resurrection are numerically identical to human persons in this life which we can call *Resurrection-as-Reassembly*.

How does an advocate of Resurrection-as-Reassembly solve the PPID? By rejecting premise (4); according to the advocate of Resurrection-as-Reassembly, Socrates goes out of existence when his body dies, God miraculously brings Socrates into existence again at the general resurrection, and between Socrates' death and the general resurrection Socrates does not exist. In other words, the advocate of Resurrection-as-Reassembly believes in the possibility of "gappy" or "intermittent" existence. Despite the intuitive force of (4)—that gappy or intermittent existence is not possible—some contemporary philosophers have argued that (4) is not obviously true.[15] Assuming it is plausible to deny (4) and that Sameness of Parts is true, we might think Resurrection-as-Reassembly explains how we can survive our deaths without invoking the existence of an immaterial soul.

There is a famous set of objections to thinking about resurrection as a function of reassembly, discussed, for example, by St Augustine of Hippo in the *City of God* (Book xxii, ch. 20). Consider a case where Carry the cannibal eats another person, Victor, where parts of Victor at Victor's death (call those parts, A, B, and C) are incorporated into Carry's body and Carry too is composed of parts A, B, and C when Carry dies. Whose parts will they be at the general resurrection? They can't belong to both Victor and Carry at the general resurrection, since Victor is *here* and Carry is *there* at the general resurrection.

[14] Contemporary philosophers sometimes wrongly equate (a) *the resurrection of the body is something miraculous according to Christian tradition* and (b) *any sort of human existence after death is something miraculous according to Christian tradition*. For two examples, see Baker (2007: 340) and van Inwagen (n.d.: 4). Although (a) is consistent with the majority report within the Christian tradition, (b) is not. According to a significant group of Church Fathers, it is really *the resurrection of the body* that counts as something miraculous and not *any sort of human existence after death*, since *the human soul exits immortally by nature*. See, e.g.: Athenagoras of Athens, *The Resurrection of the Dead* 12; St Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 5, 7, 1; Tertullian, *The Soul* 22, 2; Aphraates the Persian Sage, *Treatises* 6, 14; St Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panacea Against All Heresies* 64, 35; St Augustine of Hippo, *The Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, 7, 28, 43, and St John Damascene, *The Source of Knowledge* 3, 2, 12.

[15] See, e.g., Corcoran (2006: 127–31).

But as Stephen T. Davis has noted in his discussion of cannibal cases, given that God exists, there is no reason to think that God doesn't have principled ways of deciding which human body gets which physical simples at the general resurrection.[16] For example, perhaps God resurrects human bodies according to the following Augustinian principle:

(7) If human body *b* is composed of some simples (call them the *x*s) at time *t* and human body *b1* is composed of the *x*s at time *t*+1 (where *b* is not numerically identical to *b1*), then the *x*s compose *b* at the general resurrection and not *b1*.

Say God decides to always resurrect human bodies in accord with a principle such as (7). In that case, it will be clear that it is Victor's body and not Carry's that will be composed of parts A, B, and C at the general resurrection. Given that it is reasonable to think—and surely it is—that God can miraculously supply Carry's missing matter at the resurrection, the cannibal objection to Resurrection-as-Reassembly fails.[17]

One real limitation with Resurrection-as-Reassembly is its commitment to the falsity of (4).[18] Grant, for the sake of argument, that it is reasonable to reject (4). Nonetheless, many think (4) has strong intuitive appeal. Furthermore, there are passages in the New Testament that suggest personal identity beyond death is not gappy.[19] Therefore, all other things being equal, if solution A to the PPID requires rejecting (4) (or the positing of gappy existence beyond death) and solution B does not, we should prefer theory B over theory A as a solution to the PPID. As we'll see, there are solutions to the PPID that are just as plausible as Resurrection-as-Reassembly that do not require the rejection of (4) (or the positing of gappy existence beyond death).

12.3.3. Peter van Inwagen's "Naked Kernel" Solution to the PPID

Peter van Inwagen is a Christian philosopher who is a materialist about human beings, and so like the advocate of Resurrection-as-Reassembly, offers a solution to the PPID that does not rely on a belief that human beings possess immaterial souls. Although van Inwagen believes in immaterial beings, for example, God and the angels, he thinks that human beings do not have an immaterial soul as a proper part. Unlike some other materialists about human

[16] See Davis (2001: 235–6).
[17] For a different sort of worry for Resurrection-as-Reassembly, see van Inwagen (1995: 486).
[18] Resurrection-as-Reassembly is also subject to the *Objection from the Communion of the Saints* and the *Separate Soul Objection*, which objections I develop in sections that follow.
[19] See, e.g., Luke 23:43 and 2 Cor. 5:6–8.

beings, van Inwagen also thinks (mature, healthy) human beings have libertarian freewill and engage in rational activities, which cognitive activities differ in kind from the cognitive acts of even the most intelligent forms of non-human animals.[20] Christians, he thinks, have nothing to lose in giving up belief in an immaterial soul.

Van Inwagen's views also differ from some other *Christian* materialists in a significant way: whereas some Christian materialists think it possible to explain the numerical identity of human beings beyond death by way of God's re-creating human beings at the general resurrection,[21] van Inwagen does not think such "gappy" existence is possible.[22] How, then, does a Christian materialist such as van Inwagen make sense of the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead? Perhaps in this way: a small part of the human animal—her "naked kernel"—is preserved intact by God between death and the general resurrection, where this naked kernel is sufficient to preserve the existence and identity of the person whose naked kernel it is. Since this naked kernel is physically continuous with a human being before death and at (and after) the general resurrection, the existence and identity of a human being is thereby preserved between death and the general resurrection without invoking the possibility of gappy existence or an immaterial soul. Call this way of solving the PPID, *Naked Kernel.*

Before saying more about Naked Kernel, it will be helpful to begin with a proposal van Inwagen makes earlier in his career.[23] We can call this proposal "EVI," for *Early van Inwagen*.[24] According to EVI, it is possible that God miraculously preserves the existence and identity of a human person by whisking away her dead human body at the moment of death, replacing it with a simulacrum of the dead human body, where this similar-looking human body is what is buried, cremated, and so on. We might also imagine that the bodies that have been whisked away by God are stored and preserved until the general resurrection, at which point they are brought back to life. These dead bodies are materially continuous with human persons in this life and at the general resurrection. Or, as van Inwagen notes, if God's taking the whole body at death and replacing it with a simulacrum is too much to take, perhaps God "removes for 'safe-keeping' only the 'core person'—the brain and central nervous system—or even some special part of it. These are details" (Inwagen 1978: 121). EVI therefore counts as a logically possible way to solve

[20] See van Inwagen (2015: 183–7, 267ff.).
[21] See, e.g., Corcoran (2006: 130 ff.) and Baker (2001b: 162).
[22] See van Inwagen (1978 and n.d.: 7). [23] See van Inwagen (1978).
[24] I'm not offering here an exhaustive account of the similarities and differences between van Inwagen's early and later views on the possibility of the resurrection. For example, early van Inwagen is not as epistemologically modest as the later van Inwagen when it comes to making sense of the possibility of the resurrection. But such epistemological matters fall outside the scope of this chapter.

the PPID—by rejecting premises (2) and (3)—and does so without admitting the possibility of gappy existence or that human persons have immaterial souls.

There are objections to EVI, many of which have been aimed at van Inwagen's suggestion that God could remove the body as a whole at death, replacing it with a simulacrum. For example, some have argued that EVI involves God in a massive deception, since we often believe human bodies, for example, at open-casket funerals, to be the corpses of human persons, when, according to EVI, we never see the corpses of human persons (for, according to EVI, what we typically believe to be human corpses are merely simulacra of human corpses, the corpses of dead human persons having been taken to heaven or hell by God).[25]

We might think of Naked Kernel as van Inwagen's later development of EVI,[26] where Naked Kernel is not subject to the criticism above, whatever its merit,[27] since Naked Kernel drops the suggestion that it is possible that God replaces the human body as a whole with a simulacrum at death. Rather, Naked Kernel draws on St Paul's use of an expression in 1 Cor. 15:37 (*gumnos kókkos*) that might be translated as "a naked kernel." According to Naked Kernel, human persons are identical to human organisms. Upon the death of any human person S, God miraculously preserves a portion of S's living body, call it *the naked kernel* of S, such that S's naked kernel continues to exist (whether on earth, in hell, purgatory, or heaven) *as a dead human organism* until the general resurrection, at which time, a resurrected and living human organism is grown from it.[28]

Let us say that my naked kernel is composed of a set of physical simples (call that set of simples "the *x*s"). According to Naked Kernel, I am a living organism partly composed of the *x*s right before my death, I am a dead organism that is composed entirely of the *x*s between death and the general resurrection, and I will be a living organism partly composed of—and grown from—the *x*s at and after the general resurrection. It is thus my naked kernel that serves to preserve my numerical identity between death and the general resurrection. Since there is material continuity between a human person S in this life, S's naked kernel, and S at the general resurrection, and such material continuity is sufficient for the preserving of S's existence and identity, Naked Kernel is an explanation for how human beings survive after death that does not require a commitment to some sort of dualism or the possibility of gappy existence.

[25] See, e.g., Zimmerman (2010: 33). [26] See van Inwagen (1995, n.d.)

[27] See van Inwagen (n.d.: 7), for van Inwagen's discussion of the massive deception objection to EVI.

[28] Note how Naked Kernel is therefore continuous with EVI's suggestion that God might remove something less than the body as a whole, e.g., "the core of the person," and preserve it until the general resurrection.

Finally, it's worth emphasizing that, according to Naked Kernel, the naked kernel is a *dead* human organism between death and the general resurrection, and that means the human organism is at this point *unconscious*, incapable of understanding and willing.[29] As something van Inwagen says in one place suggests, the life of a dead human organism, although not *disrupted* (as would be the case if human organisms could exist gappily), is nonetheless *suspended*.[30] But, van Inwagen argues, although a disrupted life could not begin again, a suspended one could (compare with a tennis match suspended one evening for rain, where the match begins again the following morning. The match does not go out of existence and come back into existence; it simply begins where it left off). Of course, if the *life* of a dead human organism is suspended, that means the *consciousness* of that human organism is suspended too. As van Inwagen notes in one place, "what the Bible says about death and resurrection makes more sense if death is but a sleep" (van Inwagen 1995: 485).

How, then, does the advocate of Naked Kernel solve the PPID? By rejecting premises (2) and (3); for the human animal, if only by the grace of God, is the sort of animal that doesn't cease to exist at death. This is because a part of us—a naked kernel—miraculously survives between death and the general resurrection as a dead organism, where the existence of such a dead organism is sufficient to preserve the numerical identity of human beings between death and the general resurrection.

In contrast to EVI, Naked Kernel does not involve God in a massive deception. Furthermore, Naked Kernel is not subject to the problems we've raised for Compound Substance Dualism and Resurrection-as-Reassembly. Whereas the compound substance dualist says that sometimes we are composed of two substances, according to the advocate of the Naked Kernel solution, the human person is ever and always only one substance, that is, a human organism, albeit, during the interim state, a compacted, dead, and unconscious one. In addition, like Resurrection as Re-assembly, and unlike Compound Substance Dualism, Naked Kernel is consistent with a thorough-going materialist account of human persons. But unlike Resurrection as Re-assembly, Naked Kernel does not need to invoke the possibility of "gappy" existence. Insofar as we are inclined to a materialist ontology of human persons, Naked Kernel thus seems to have the advantages of Resurrection-as-Reassembly, without its limitation.

Philosophers have raised objections to the ontology of human persons implicit in Naked Kernel, that is, Animalism, the doctrine that says that for any human person S, S is identical to a human organism.[31] I want to raise a different

[29] I thank T. Ryan Byerly for showing me the need to make this part of Naked Kernel more explicit.

[30] See van Inwagen (1990: 146–8).

[31] See Baker (2000:120–4, 2001a: 178–9), and Corcoran (2006: 55–7). See also my discussion of Corcoran's constitutionalist view of human persons in what follows, which mentions a potential problem for Animalism.

kind of objection for Naked Kernel. Naked Kernel is subject to what I'll call *the Objection from the Communion of the Saints.* Many Christians—including some members of van Inwagen's own Anglican communion—believe the following:

> *Communion of the Saints*: there is a communion of the saints such that, between death and the general resurrection, some saints who have died not only exist in heaven, but are intellectually and volitionally active there, for example, they pray for us.[32]

According to Naked Kernel, God preserves a "naked kernel"—a very small, material part of us—in order to preserve our numerical identity between death and the general resurrection. But this material part of us is a dead organism, and for van Inwagen, dead organisms are incapable of performing their characteristic functions, which in the case of human organisms, include embodied acts of understanding and volition.[33] Therefore, according to Naked Kernel, we are not intellectually aware or volitionally active in the interim state. That means Naked Kernel is incompatible with Communion of the Saints, which some Christian theists will see as a (serious) limitation for Naked Kernel as a solution to the PPID.

12.3.4. Kevin Corcoran's "Fission" Solution to the PPID

In a book (2006) and a recent paper (2001), Kevin Corcoran has offered a materialist account of human persons and a solution to the PPID that does not fall prey to the limitations of Resurrection-as-Reassembly and Naked Kernel. I'll call the solution of Corcoran's I'm thinking of here, *Fission*. Essential to Fission is a *constitutionalist* view of human persons. Therefore, before treating

[32] See, e.g.: the Symbol of the Roman Order of Baptism ("I believe…in the communion of saints"); St Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Lectures* 23, 9; St Jerome, *Against Vigilantius* 6; St Augustine, *Sermon* 159, 1; St Augustine, *Against Faustus* 20, 21; St Augustine, *The Care that Should be Taken of the Dead* 15, 18; Council of Trent, Session Twenty-five, Decree on the Invocation, the Veneration and the Relics of Saints and Sacred Images (1563); the Profession of Faith of Pius IV in *Iniunctum Nobis* (1564); Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 104 (1963); Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 48 (1964); the Profession of Faith of Paul VI (1968).

[33] T. Ryan Byerly and Thomas Atkinson have both suggested to me that Naked Kernel could be amended such that naked kernels are alive and conscious, and so be able to understand and will. First, note that such a view is clearly not van Inwagen's, which is the view I am explaining in this chapter (see esp. van Inwagen 1995, n.d.). Second, I have my doubts about whether such an amended version of Naked Kernel would be consistent with what we know about human organisms. Third, even if such an amended version of Naked Kernel is coherent and compatible with Communion of the Saints, it would still fall prey to at least one of the following two problems or objections: the Problem of the Glorified Body or the Separated Soul Objection (about which, see what follows).

Fission as a solution to the PPID, I need first to say something about constitutionalism, as Corcoran develops that view.

According to Corcoran's constitutionalist view, it is sometimes the case that a material object *x* and a material object *y* are spatially coincident but nonetheless non-identical. In such a case, *x* and *y* exist in the *constitution* relation. According to advocates of the constitution view of material objects such as Corcoran, examples of the constitution relation are ubiquitous. For example, statues are constituted by portions of bronze or marble, organisms are constituted by aggregates of fundamental particles, and human persons are constituted by human organisms.

Why think human persons are *constituted by* rather than *being identical to* human organisms? In short: the persistence conditions, and so the essential properties, of human persons and human organisms are different. According to Corcoran, I—and I'm not unique in this regard—am essentially a human *person* and human persons are essentially material beings, that is, *human person* is a substance-sortal and not a phase-sortal, human persons are material beings by nature, and *human person* is the fundamental substance-sortal to which I—and others like me—belong. But a human organism is *not* essentially a person. For, according to Corcoran, persons are such that they can't exist without the capacity for first-person perspectives "in hand," for example, the presently existing ability to refer to one's self in the first person by using the word "I," for example, when Sam, a human person, says, "I can't wait until I'm old enough to drive."[34] And, according to Corcoran, human organisms *can* exist without having such a capacity, for example, in the cases of preborn human organisms and newborn human organisms. Therefore, human persons and human organisms have different essential properties. But if *x* and *y* have different essential properties, then *x* and *y* are not numerically identical. Since it's obvious that there is a human organism existing wherever and whenever I exist in this life, I, a human person, am a material being that is spatially coincident with a human organism in this life. Therefore, I, a human person, am *constituted by*, but *not identical to*, a human organism.[35]

According to Corcoran's constitutionalist ontology of human persons, it is also the case that persons such as you and I are essentially *human* persons. That means that (i) we are persons that are *essentially* constituted by *human organisms*, that is, if human person S exists, then S is constituted by a human

[34] Of course, the meaning of *person* at play in this argument is controversial (I myself would reject it). But negotiating between competing conceptions of personhood would take me beyond the proper scope of this chapter and so I say nothing more about it here.

[35] For non-animalist, non-constitutionalist accounts (in the specific sense in which Baker and Corcoran speak of "constitution") of composite material objects, see Burke (1994) and Rea (1998, 2000). For some comparison and critical discussion of these different ways of thinking about the relations of composition and constitution, see Brown (2005).

organism (2006: 68). In fact, Corcoran also thinks that, (ii) for any human person S, S is constituted by numerically the same human organism at every time in which S exists (2006: 68–9).[36] Finally, Corcoran also recognizes and accepts (most of) the traditional Christian doctrine of *the general resurrection*.[37] This traditional Christian doctrine can be stated as follows:

> *Resurrection*: (a) human persons are physical things or human persons (sometimes) have physical bodies as parts or human persons are constituted by physical bodies;[38] (b) human persons are resurrected together at the end of time before the judgment seat of Christ,[39] save in exceptional cases such as that of the Blessed Virgin Mary;[40] (c) for any human person S, S is numerically identical to a human organism H, where H exists in this life and the next life, or S's resurrected body is numerically the same human body as the one S possesses in this life, or the body that constitutes S in the next life is numerically the same as the body that constitutes S in this life.[41]

[36] For a constitutionalist who rejects (i) and (ii) in this paragraph (because in her view human bodies in this life and the bodies of persons in the next life have different persistence conditions), see Baker (2001a). See also Baker (2001b, 2007).

[37] See, e.g., Corcoran (2006: 144).

[38] See, e.g.: 1 Cor. 15; the Symbol of St Ambrose (d. 397); the Symbol of Rufinus (*c.* 404); the Symbol of the Roman Order of Baptism; the Symbol of Cyril of Jerusalem (*c.* 348); the Symbol of Epiphanus (374); the Symbol of Constantinople (381); the Profession of Faith of Pope Damasus (d. 384), and the Pseudo-Athanasian Symbol, *Quicumque*. See also the texts cited in notes 39, 40, and 41 that follow.

[39] See, e.g., 2 Cor. 5:10; The Pseudo-Athanasian Symbol, *Quicumque*: "At his coming all human beings are to rise again with their bodies" (in Dupuis [1996: 13]; Fourth Lateran Council, Symbol of Lateran (1215); Second Council of Lyons, "Profession of Faith of Michael Palaeologus" (1274); Pope Benedict XII, *Benedictus Deus* (1336), and Pope Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*, 4 and 5 (1950): "According to the general rule, God does not will to grant to the just the full effect of the victory over death until the end of time has come. And so it is that the bodies of even the just are corrupted after death, and only on the last day will they be joined, each to its own glorious soul…. Now, God has willed that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be exempted from this general rule" (available at: <http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_p-xii_apc_19501101_munificentissimus-deus.html> [accessed August 4, 2016]).

[40] For the doctrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Christian tradition, see, e.g.: St Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 78:23 (AD 377); St Gregory of Tours, *Eight Books of Miracles* (inter *c.* 575–93) 1, 4; Modestus of Jerusalem, *Encomium in dormitionem Sanctissimae Dominae nostrae Deiparae semperque Virginis Mariae* (PG 86-II, 3306), (ante 634); Theoteknos of Livias, *Homily on the Assumption* (ante 650); Germanus of Constantinople, Sermon I (PG 98, 346) (ante 733); St John of Damascene, *Dormition of Mary* (PG 96, 741) (ante 749); St John of Damascene, PG (96:1)(ca. 747–51); the Gregorian Sacramentary, Veneranda (ante 795), and Pope Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*.

[41] See, e.g.: Eleventh Council of Toledo, Symbol of Faith (675): "We do not believe that we shall rise in an ethereal body or in any other body, as some foolishly imagine, but in this very body in which we live and are and move" (In Dupuis [1996: 940]). See also the Fourth Lateran Council, Symbol of Lateran (1215): "He shall come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead and to render to each according to his works, to the reprobate (*reprobis*) as well as to the elect. All of them will rise again with their own bodies which they now bear, to receive according to their works, whether these have been good or evil, the one perpetual punishment with the devil and the others everlasting glory with Christ" (In Dupuis [1996: 16], and the Second Council

Given the importance of Resurrection in the Christian tradition, someone who thinks an attractive solution to the PPID must be consistent with what the Christian tradition says about eschatological matters will see Corcoran's acceptance of (something such as)[42] Resurrection as advantageous.

Having said something about Corcoran's constitutionalist ontology of human persons, we can now turn to his preferred way of responding to the PPID. How does Corcoran respond to the PPID? As an advocate of the constitutionalist view, he rejects (1). However, some constitutionalists might nonetheless accept (3) and solve the PPID by rejecting (4). Although Corcoran has some sympathies with that way of responding to the PPID, he states in one place that "I am coming to believe…Scripture and tradition teach immediate or non-gappy survival" (Corcoran 2006:132). So, according to his preferred way of responding to the PPID, that is, the one I'm calling *Fission*, Corcoran accepts (4), but rejects (1), (2), and (3). This is because, according to Fission, the human organisms that constitute human persons in this life don't cease to exist in the interim state between death and the general resurrection. In order to make sense of Corcoran's Fission solution to the PPID, we need to explain three ideas essential to it, ideas which take us beyond Corcoran's constitutionalist philosophical anthropology: (a) that of *immanent causal relations*, (b) Corcoran's notion of *how human persons and human organisms remain numerically the same through time and change*, and (c) a hypothesis of Corcoran's about *what happens when a human person dies*.

As far as immanent causal relations are concerned, Corcoran explains that "[in a case of *immanent* causation] a state x of thing A brings about a consequent state y in A itself, whereas in cases of causation of the sort we normally think of, a thing A brings about state changes in a numerically distinct thing B" (Corcoran 2006: 72). Take a storm to be a good example of something involving immanent causal relations. A storm expels and draws into itself objects as it moves through space and time. In doing so, a state *x* of a storm brings about a consequent state *y* in the storm itself. According to Corcoran, an organism is rightly understood to be something analogous to a storm, for an organism picks up and sloughs off atoms as it moves through space and time. Therefore, the different sets of simples that constitute numerically the same organism at different times are immanently causally related; for the state *w* which is one set of simples (call them "the *x*s") constituting an organism O at a time brings about a subsequent state *z* in O, where in state *z* O is constituted by a set of simples different from the *x*s.

of Lyons, "Profession of Faith of Michael Palaeologus" (1274): "We believe also in the true resurrection of this body which we now bear" (In Dupuis [1996: 19]).

[42] I don't know Corcoran's views on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Given the analogy between an organism and a storm, and the notion of immanent causal relations, Corcoran thinks about the diachronic identity of human *organisms* as follows:

> A [living] body persists in virtue of the fact that the atoms that are caught up in a life-preserving (causal) relation at one time pass on that life-preserving causal relation to successive swarms of atoms. My body has persisted into the present because the atoms that are caught up in the life of my body now have been bequeathed that life-preserving causal relation from the atoms that were caught up in its life a moment ago (Corcoran 2006: 72).

Since Corcoran thinks that human persons are essentially related to their human bodies (organisms), he also thinks a human *person* remains numerically identical through time and change only if that human person is constituted by a human body or organism such that the stages of that human body are immanently causally related. In fact, for Corcoran, a necessary and *sufficient* condition for a human *person* S's survival though time and change is S's being constituted by numerically the same human organism through time and change such that the organism in question preserves "its capacity to subserve a range of intentional states, including a first-person perspective" (Corcoran 2006: 73).

Such an account of personal identity through time and change would seem to rule out the possibility of an interim state for human *persons* between death and the general resurrection. For when a human organism dies, presumably, so does its capacity to subserve a first-person perspective. This is where Corcoran's account of the possibility of bodies that "fission" comes in. Corcoran thinks it is possible that the causal paths of a set of simples (call this set of simples, "the *x*s") that constitute a human organism O the moment before its death (call this moment before death, "time *t*") can fission such that the causal paths of the *x*s at *t* are causally related to two numerically different material objects at time *t*+1.

The first material object to which the causal paths of the *x*s at *t* are related is a living human organism O1 capable of subserving a first person-perspective, where O1 is constituted by a set of simples at *t*+1 (call this set of simples "the *y*s") such that none of the *x*s are among the *y*s but the *x*s at *t* and the *y*s at *t*+1 are nonetheless successive states in numerically the same human organism insofar as the *x*s at *t* and the *y*s at *t*+1 are immanently causally related. Corcoran thus thinks it is possible that a human organism O undergoes total part replacement in the instant of its death. Here's the idea. The storm of simples that constitute O at *t* is immanently causally related to the storm of simples that constitute O1 at *t*+1. Since the simples that constitute O at *t*'s being immanently causally related to the simples that constitute O1 at *t*+1 is a sufficient condition for O1 at *t*+1's being numerically identical to O at *t*, O1 at *t*+1 *is* numerically identical to O at *t*. And since O and O1 are capable of

subserving a first-person perspective and *being constituted by numerically the same human organism through time and change such that the organism in question preserves its capacity to subserve a first-person perspective* is a necessary and sufficient condition for a human person's survival though time and change, human person S1 in the interim state is numerically identical to human person S in this life. This first material object O1 that results from the fission of O is thus the human organism that constitutes a human person S1 between her death and the general resurrection, whether in heaven, purgatory, or hell, where S1 is numerically identical to the human person S constituted by O in this life.[43]

The second material object to which the causal paths of the *x*s at *t* are causally related is a dead human body O2, where O2 is constituted of the *x*s at *t* +1. According to Corcoran, since O2 at *t*+1 is constituted of the same set of simples that constituted O at *t* and O2 at *t*+1 is a dead human body, O2 is rightly understood to be the *corpse* of O at *t* and not merely a *simulacrum* of O at *t*'s body (as in EVI's "body-switching" account of personal identity beyond death). Furthermore, since a human corpse has been left behind in the process of O's undergoing total part replacement, Corcoran thinks it is right to say that O at *t* has *died,* even though O at *t* is numerically identical to a living human organism O1 in heaven, purgatory, or hell, where O1 exists in the moment immediately after *t* and O1 constitutes numerically the same human person as O at *t*.

If Fission counts as a successful solution to the PPID, it solves that problem without invoking the possibility of gappy existence, and is, broadly speaking, a materialist account of persons. Furthermore, since human persons in the interim state are constituted by living, human bodies, Fission is consistent with the possibility of personal activity during the interim state and so, unlike Naked Kernel, it is consistent with Communion of the Saints.

Whatever its advantages over Naked Kernel, some philosophers have argued Fission has some potential problems of its own.[44] I want to raise three new objections to Fission here. The first objection is what I will call *the Premature Resurrection Objection*. According to Fission, the human organism O that

[43] See Corcoran (2001: 210–11).

[44] For example, Fission posits that, for every case of fission, an organism O at time *t* is causally related to two material objects, O1 at *t*+1and O2 at *t*+1. Fission suggests that O at *t* is numerically identical to O1 at *t*+1 by way of the immanent causal relations that obtain between O and O1. But why not rather say O at *t* and O2 at *t*+1 are immanently causally related and so numerically identical? For discussion of this "which one?" problem, see, e.g. Zimmerman (2010) and Corcoran (2001). In addition, William Hasker objects that, on Fission, human persons never die, which is absurd. Indeed, if Fission entails that human organisms never die, then Fission is inconsistent with Christian theism, which certainly teaches that human persons die (see, e.g., Hebrews 9:27). For discussion, see (Corcoran 2001: 214). Finally, some philosophers think a constitutionalist metaphysic of material objects such as Corcoran's is problematic. See, for example, Dean W. Zimmerman (1995) and van Inwagen (n.d.: 9–11).

constitutes a human person S in this life undergoes fission at death, and O is numerically identical to a living, human organism O1 that exists in immanent causal relations with O, and O1 constitutes S in the interim state. Therefore, human persons are constituted by bodies, that is, human organisms, between death and the general resurrection. But, according to Resurrection, the resurrection of the body happens for human persons (with some notable exceptions) only at the end of time, that is, at the general resurrection before the judgment seat of Christ. Therefore, given Resurrection and Fission, human persons get their resurrection bodies back too early.

An advocate for Fission might respond "so much the worse for Resurrection."[45] But such a response would suffer the unhappy consequence of being at odds with Christian tradition.[46] At any rate, Corcoran does not reject Resurrection, if only because of his respect for the Christian tradition's account of the resurrection of the body.

Corcoran has responded to the Premature Resurrection Objection without rejecting Resurrection. According to Corcoran, we should distinguish *the bodies of human persons in the interim state* from *the bodies human persons have at the general resurrection*. Where the bodies of human persons in the interim state are not *glorified* or *resurrected*, the bodies of saints at and after the general resurrection are glorified or resurrected. In other words, Corcoran accepts the following:

(C) The bodies that constitute human persons in the interim state are not *resurrected* or *glorified* bodies (Corcoran 2006: 144).

Since (C) is logically compatible with Corcoran's constitutionalist anthropology and Resurrection, Corcoran can respond to the Premature Resurrection Objection by positing (C).

But this way of defending Fission against the Premature Resurrection Objection—by accepting (C)—leads directly to another problem, which I'll call *the Problem of the Glorified Body*. We might ask: "Just what *is* the glorified body, i.e., the resurrected body of a *saint*?" Here is a traditional account: the glorified body is a *human* body that is *impassible* (it is unable to be hurt), *agile* (it can move very quickly), *subtle* (it in no way hinders a human person's acts of intellect and will), and *luminescent* (it is beautiful and noble).[47] But *why*

[45] For example, some argue for the possibility of an "immediate resurrection," that is, for any human person S who dies at time *t*, S is resurrected from the dead (whether in heaven, purgatory, or hell) immediately after *t*. See, e.g., Rahner (1981). For discussion of this view, see Nichols (2010: 147–8).

[46] See note 39, supra. The idea of an immediate resurrection arguably is also at odds with the dominant Jewish tradition of Christ's day. See, e.g., Wright (2003: 205).

[47] See, e.g.: St Thomas Aquinas, ST Suppl. qq. 82–5; *Summa contra gentiles* (SCG) IV, ch. 86; *Compendium theologiae* (CT), ch. 168; *Commentary on St Paul's* First Letter to the Corinthians (In 1 Cor.) 15, nn. 980ff., and *Commentary on the Symbol of the Apostles*, a. 11.

does the resurrected or glorified body of a saint have these properties? The following—call it *Glorified Body*—captures three apparent possibilities on the nature of glorified or resurrected bodies that we might think are open to an advocate of Fission:

> *Glorified Body*, *Possibility (a)*: A *glorified* or *resurrected* body B of a saint S is (i) one of two human bodies that results from God's causing a human body B1 in the interim state just prior to the glorification of human bodies at the general resurrection to undergo fission, where (ii) B is a living, human body (organism) numerically identical to B1, since the simples that compose B are immanently causally related to the simples that compose B1 just prior to the glorification of human bodies at the general resurrection, and (iii) B constitutes S in heaven after the glorification (resurrection) of human bodies (organisms), and (iv) B is glorified because it is composed of a kind of matter different from the matter that composes human beings in the interim state and in this life, that is, *glorified matter*, and (v) there is another body B2 that results from the fission of B1 in the interim state, where B2 is a corpse composed of the same set of simples that composes B1 in the interim state.
>
> *Possibility (b)*: A *glorified* or *resurrected* body B of a saint S is the body of S such that S is embodied and having the beatific vision where B is glorified because (i) S communicates to B something of the glory S has in God on account of S having the beatific vision or (ii) the soul of S communicates to B something of its glory in God on account of S's soul having the beatific vision.[48]
>
> *Possibility (c)*: A *glorified* or *resurrected* body B of a saint S is: (i) one of two bodies that results from God's causing the human body B1 in the interim state just prior to the glorification of human bodies at the general resurrection to undergo fission, where (ii) B is a living, human body (organism) numerically identical to B1, since the simples that compose B are immanently causally related to the simples that compose B1 just prior to the glorification of human bodies at the general resurrection, and (iii) B constitutes S in heaven after the glorification of human bodies (organisms), and (iv) B is glorified because S is having the beatific vision such that S communicates to B something of S's own glory in God on account of S having the beatific vision, and (v) there is another body B2 that results from the fission of B in the interim state, where B2 is a corpse composed of the same set of simples that compose B1 in the interim state.

[48] The beatific vision, according to some important Christian traditions, is the unmediated intellectual and volitional union with God that the saints in heaven enjoy, which union is a gift of God's grace and causes the saints in heaven to be perfectly happy. For one important and influential treatment of this traditional Christian view, see St Thomas Aquinas' ST Ia. q. 12 and ST IaIIae. qq. 3–5.

Given Glorified Body, the Problem of the Glorified Body is as follows: possibilities (a), (b), and (c) all have problematic consequences, at least when combined with component parts of Fission. For example, possibilities (a) and (c) both entail that, at the general resurrection, the interim state bodies of the saints in heaven will undergo fission such that, for any resurrected/glorified body of a saint, a body will *die* as the result of the fissioning process, leaving behind a *corpse*. Why think a death will occur? According to Fission, a human person S dies if S's body undergoes fission. Therefore, possibilities (a) and (c) entail there is *death in heaven*. I take it this consequence is absurd.

There are other problems for possibility (a) of Glorified Body. For example, it can be argued that (a) is heretical insofar as it claims that the glorified body is composed of a matter different from that of non-glorified bodies.[49] In addition, Corcoran himself thinks that a person S's numerical identity across time and change requires S's being constituted by numerically the same organism at every time in which S exists. But a person composed of *glorified* matter (as defined in possibility (a) of Glorified Body) is not a *human* organism, since an organism constituted by glorified matter (again, so defined) is constituted by non-human matter.[50] Therefore, (a) is inconsistent with Corcoran's own view—entailed by Resurrection—that the saints in heaven are constituted by (numerically the same) *human* bodies (that constitute us in this life).

Given Fission, there is potentially a different sort of problem for both possibilities (b) and (c) of Glorified Body. According to (b) and (c), the primary cause of a human body's being glorified in heaven is that such a body is the body of a person having the beatific vision. But according to some Christian traditions, the following is also true:

(BV) There are *saints* in the interim state in heaven who are having the beatific vision.[51]

Say Fission and (BV) are both true. If either (b) or (c) of Glorified Body is also true, then the saints *in the interim state* already have glorified—and so resurrected—bodies. In that case, we are brought back to the Premature Resurrection Objection. Assuming (BV) and the truth of (b) or (c) of Glorified Body, Fission is inconsistent with Resurrection, specifically, that part of Resurrection that says that (most of) the saints don't have glorified or resurrected bodies in the interim state.

But perhaps an advocate of Fission accepts neither (a), nor (b), nor (c) of Glorified Body. Or perhaps she does not believe that any of the saints in the

[49] See the texts cited in note 41, supra.

[50] Compare the following case: a person (or organism) composed entirely of silicon chips would not be a *human* person or a *human* being or a *human* organism.

[51] For example, that the saints in heaven are having the beatific vision between death and the general resurrection has been defined dogmatically by the Catholic Church in *Benedictus Deus* (1336) and the General Council of Florence in the Decree for the Greeks, session 6 (July 6, 1439).

interim state are having the beatific vision. Assuming there may be other possible ways of making sense of the nature of the glorified body than those possibilities laid out in Glorified Body, ways that are consistent with Fission, I offer one more argument against Fission, which I call *the Separated Soul Objection*. Many voices throughout Christian tradition have affirmed the following:

> *Separated Soul*: Between a human person S's death and the general resurrection, S is composed only of her immaterial soul; (with some notable exceptions) a human person S does not have a body in the interim state.[52]

Fission is inconsistent with Separated Soul, since according to Fission, if a human person S exists at *t*, S is constituted by a body at *t*. Therefore, Fission is false insofar as the traditional doctrine of Separated Soul is true.

12.4. A THOMISTIC SOLUTION TO THE PPID

The contemporary philosophical solutions to the PPID I've examined all fail to save at least one important philosophical or theological desideratum. I now contend that St Thomas Aquinas' account of human persons and personal identity beyond death provide us with a solution to the PPID that can save the theological and philosophical appearances in ways that these contemporary accounts cannot. In order to make such a case I do three things. First, I offer a sketch of St Thomas' philosophical anthropology.[53] Second, I propose

[52] See, e.g.: St Justin Martyr, *The Resurrection,* chs. 8–10; Origen, *The Fundamental Doctrines*, preface; St Hilary of Poitiers, *Comm. on Psalm* 2, para. 49; St Gregory of Nyssa, *The Great Catechism,* ch. 11; St Augustine, *Homilies on John*, ch. 49, 10; St Augustine, *City of God,* book xxi, ch. 3; St Augustine, *The Soul and its Origin,* bk. ii, ch. 4, 8; St Augustine, *Enchiridion*, ch. 29, 109; St Caeser of Arles, *Sermons* 5, 5 (*ante* 542 AD); Pope St Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, bk. 4, 29; Fourth Lateran Council, Symbol of Lateran (1215): "He also suffered and died on the wood of the cross for the salvation of the human race; he went down into the underworld, rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven; but he went down in the soul, rose again in the body and ascended equally in both" (in Dupuis [1996: 16]); Pope John XXII, *Ne super his* (1334); Pope Benedict XII, *Benedictus Deus* (1336); Letter of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on Certain Questions concerning Eschatology (May 17, 1979), part three.

[53] There is currently some active debate about how to interpret St Thomas on the ontological status of human persons in the interim state. Some read St Thomas as a *human survivalist*, that is, a human person, although never identical to her soul, nevertheless exists in the interim state such that she is composed of her soul alone. Others read St Thomas as a *corruptionist*, that is, for any human person S, S does not exist without S's body. Although I can't possibly settle this debate here, the human survivalist interpretation of St Thomas I present is consistent with all of St Thomas' theological and philosophical *principles*. For an argument that human survivalism is consistent with St Thomas' theological and philosophical principles—even if it is not consistent with everything St Thomas says—see Spencer (2014). For arguments that St Thomas holds the human survivalist view, see, e.g.: Eberl (2009, 2010); Oderberg (2007); Stump (2006); and Brown (2005). For arguments that St Thomas holds the corruptionist view, see Nevitt (2014); Toner (2009, 2010); Pasnau (2002); and Davies (1992). For an argument that St Thomas is neither a human survivalist nor a corruptionist, but rather a *non-human* survivalist, see Brower (2014).

a Thomistic solution to the PPID based on my sketch of St Thomas' anthropological views. Third, I show why such a Thomistic solution to the PPID is preferable to the contemporary views I've examined.

12.4.1. St Thomas' Philosophical Anthropology

St Thomas attributes to Plato of Athens the following view:

> (P) A human being, for example, Socrates, is numerically identical to his soul, that is, an immaterial substance; the body of Socrates is no—never is a—part of him.

St Thomas thinks (P) is false.[54] In fact, in his view there are good reasons to think a human being is not identical to her soul.[55] To take just one of his arguments, St Thomas thinks Plato's view of human beings does not do justice to our experience of ourselves as bodily beings. For St Thomas, Plato *is* right that we human beings do things that don't require a material organ, namely, understanding and willing.[56] But anything that sees, hears, touches, tastes, and smells, is clearly a bodily substance. We experience ourselves as something that sees, hears, touches, tastes, and smells. In short, *I* touch things, therefore, I am not numerically identical to an immaterial substance.[57]

Although St Thomas does not agree with Plato that we are identical to immaterial substances, it would be a mistake—or at least potentially misleading—to describe St Thomas as a materialist. Like Aristotle, St Thomas rejects the atomistic materialism of Democritus. In other words, St Thomas would also reject the following view:

> (M) Human beings are composed entirely of matter.

(M) is false, thinks St Thomas, since every human person is normally and naturally—if not necessarily—composed of prime matter and a *substantial form* and substantial forms are immaterial. In fact, even non-living things such as instances of *water* and *bronze* are composed of matter *and substantial form* for Thomas, since prime matter without substantial form has no actual existence.[58]

[54] See, e.g.: ST Ia. q. 75, a. 4 and ST IaIIae. q. 83, a. 11, ob. 5 and ad5.

[55] I take "human being" and "human person" to be interchangeable for St Thomas.

[56] For St Thomas' arguments that some acts of intellect do not make use of a material organ per se, see, e.g., ST Ia. q. 75, aa. 2 and 5.

[57] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 76, a. 1, *respondeo*.

[58] See, e.g.: *De principiis naturae* (DPN) ch. 1 (2); DPN ch. 1 (3); DPN ch. 2 (14); *Commentary on Aristotle's* Physics (In Phys.) I, lec. 13, n. 118; *Disputed question on the soul* (QDA) a. 18, ad5; ST Ia. q. 50, a. 5, *respondeo*; *Disputed question on spiritual creatures* (QDSC) a. 1, *respondeo*; *Commentary on Aristotle's* Metaphysics (In Met.) VII, lec. 2, n. 1292, and In Met. IX, lec. 9, n. 2289.

A word or two about the expressions *substantial form* and *prime matter* are in order. According to St Thomas, all material substances are not only composed of *integral* parts, e.g., quantities of matter smaller than the whole to which they belong, for example, legs and organs in the case of animals, but what we might call *metaphysical* parts,[59] namely, a substantial form and matter. The *prime matter* of a material, sub-lunary substance S is that metaphysical part of S that explains why S is a being spread out in three dimensions and why S's generation and eventual corruption is both a *natural* (rather than entirely supernatural) and *explicable* process. S's matter also explains S's *natural tendency toward* corruption (since S is not a pure form, but a composite of substantial form and matter, substantial form and sub-lunary matter are contraries, and things composed of contraries tend to fall part).

S's *substantial form* is that cause *intrinsic* to S that explains why S actually exists as a member of its substance-kind, and why S has (or, is apt to have) the species-specific potentialities, powers, properties, and parts that it does. According to St Thomas, there are different kinds of substantial forms. For example, a carbon atom has the substantial form of a carbon atom whereas a human person has the substantial form of a human person. St Thomas thinks a kind of substantial form is the more perfect insofar as the potentialities, powers, properties, and parts it confers on a substance are—to use a contemporary idiom—"emergent," that is, are features of that substance that cannot be said to belong to any of the integral parts of that substance, whether those parts are taken merely as a sum or singulatim.[60]

In St Thomas' view, substantial forms fall into the following sort of hierarchy of perfection. The least perfect kind of substantial form corresponds with the least perfect kind of material substance, what St Thomas calls an *elemental* substance (St Thomas would give the traditional four elements of *earth*, *air*, *fire* and *water* as examples of elemental substance-kinds; we might mention *quarks* and *leptons*).[61] St Thomas says that the substantial forms of elemental substances are wholly immersed in matter, since the only features that elements have are those that are most basic to matter. In contrast, the substantial forms of *compounds*, that is, instances of those non-living substance-kinds composed of different kinds of elements, have operations that are not caused simply by their elemental parts (again, taken merely singulatim or as a sum). More perfect than the substantial forms of compounds are the substantial forms of living things, including *plants*. The

[59] See, e.g., the following texts in St Thomas' DPN: "Matter and form are said to be intrinsic to a thing, because they are parts constituting a thing" (ch. 3 [17]); "[Matter and form] are related to a composed thing as parts to a whole, as the simple to the composed" (ch. 4 [22]). See also: SCG II ch. 54; QDA a. 1, ad13, and In Met. VII, lec. 21, n. 1095. All translations of St Thomas' texts are my own, unless otherwise noted. For the adjective "metaphysical" in *metaphysical parts*, see Stump (2003: 35).

[60] ST Ia. q. 76, a. 1, *respondeo*.

[61] ST Ia. q. 76, a. 1, *respondeo*.

substantial forms of living things reach a level of perfection such that they get a new name: "soul."[62] The substantial forms of living things (souls) enable substances composed of matter such as plants and animals to move, nourish, and reproduce themselves, something that non-living substances cannot do. Next in line come the souls or substantial forms of *non-human animals*, which confer on substances emergent properties to an even greater degree than do the souls of plants, since in virtue of these substantial forms non-human animals can *sense* the world.[63] Finally, the substantial forms of human beings have operations (namely, the species-specific operations of understanding and willing) that do not make use of bodily organs for their specific operations per se, although such operations are designed to work naturally in tandem with cognitive operations that do make use of bodily organs.[64] Nonetheless, St Thomas thinks the separated soul in the interim state can do things such as understand and will.[65]

Since human souls do not make use of matter per se for their species-specific operations, that is, understanding and willing, and given the principle that something's characteristic activity is a reflection of its mode of existence, it follows that human souls do not depend upon matter for their existence.[66] Thus, souls are *naturally* immortal and can exist apart from matter during the interim state. In contrast, the substantial forms of non-human material substances are immersed in matter such that they go out of existence whenever they are separated from it.[67] St Thomas therefore thinks (M) is false not only because each material substance is partly composed of an immaterial principle that explains why that material substance is more than the mere sum of its integral parts, but because the substantial form of a human person—what St Thomas calls an *intellect* or *intellectual soul*—is a kind of substantial form that continues to exist and act *without being united to matter* during the interim state.

In addition, since human souls can exist apart from matter and the origin of a thing matches its mode of being, human souls cannot have their origin in matter in the sense that they begin to exist simply by way of material activity.[68] Thus, although a human soul necessarily comes into existence as the substantial form of a living, human body,[69] unlike the substantial forms of non-intellectual material substances, a human soul does not have created secondary causes among its efficient causes.[70] For St Thomas, the beginning of the existence

[62] See, e.g.: QDA a. 1; ST Ia. q. 75, a.1, and ST Ia. q. 76, a.1, *respondeo*.
[63] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 76, a. 1, *respondeo*.
[64] See, e.g., SCG II, ch. 68 and ST Ia. q. 76, a.1, *respondeo*.
[65] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 89, a. 1, ad3.
[66] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 75, aa. 2 and 6.
[67] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 75, a. 3.
[68] See, e.g., SCG II, ch. 86.
[69] See, e.g.: *De ente et essentia* (DEE), ch. 6; SCG II, ch. 75, 6; QDA a. 1, ad2, and ST Ia. q. 76, a. 2, ad2.
[70] See, e.g., SCG II, ch. 87.

of every human person is both natural (insofar as the human parents of that person supply the matter of the person) and supernatural (insofar as God creates a person's substantial form or intellectual soul *ex nihilo*).

Although St Thomas sometimes speaks of the human soul acting, he thinks it does so only *derivatively*. That is to say, strictly speaking, it is the human person that acts by means of her soul.[71] Analogously, we might ask, "How does the eye see?" as shorthand for the question, "How do we human beings see by means of our eyes."[72]

Furthermore, when St Thomas speaks of certain acts of the soul not making use of the body per se, for example, the act of understanding, what he means is that the body has no role to play in those acts in and of themselves, where such acts form only part of a process such that some acts in that process do make use of the body. For example, consider a human person engaged in the process of *coming to understand* what *something is that one sees*. St Thomas thinks that certain human acts that are part of the process of coming to understand something *do* involve the body, since he thinks all knowledge in this life begins from sensation.[73] But the act of abstraction itself, for example, the intellect's act by which one ignores the accidental features of an object one sees in order to cognize *what* that something is—an act which St Thomas sometimes simply calls *the act of understanding*[74]—does not make use of the body, St Thomas thinks.

Compare how St Thomas thinks the intellect and the body function together in the process of coming to understand something with the ways in which the hands and the legs of a drum-set player function in her playing a typical and simple dance-hall beat, for example, in a pop, dance, or rock song. Consider first that a drum-set player typically sits on a stool in order to facilitate simultaneously (i) playing a bass drum beat with one leg, (ii) controlling the opening and closing of the hi-hat cymbals with her other leg, and (iii) playing tom-tom drums, the snare drum and additional cymbals with her two arms and hands. Second, when a drummer plays a typical and simple dance-hall beat in common time (4/4 time), the drummer simultaneously uses (iv) her legs to play the bass drum on (something like) beats 1 and 3 of each

[71] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 75, a. 2, ad2. Thus, St Thomas' view is not saddled with the so-called "too many thinkers" problem. For, strictly speaking, it is not the soul that thinks but a human person that thinks by means of her soul. This is true even in the case of the separated soul, which, as we shall see, composes the human person in the interim state but is not identical to the human person. Although the human person is composed of her soul alone in the interim state, it is really the human person that thinks and wills, by means of her soul, and not the soul itself that thinks and wills (just as it is the human person who sees and hears by means of her eyes and ears, respectively, and not the eyes and ears that see and hear).

[72] As is clear, for example, in the discussion of sight here: available at:<http://webmd.com/eye-health/amazing-human-eye> (accessed on May 20, 2016).

[73] See, e.g., *Disputed questions on truth* q. 1, a. 11, *respondeo*.

[74] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 75, a. 2, *respondeo*.

measure of a song, (v) one of her arms/hands to play a decorative cymbal pattern in each measure of a song, and her remaining hand to hit the snare drum on beats 2 and 4 in each measure of a song. Although the dance hall drummer does not (typically) play a dance-hall beat without her legs, the drummer's act of accentuating beats 2 and 4 in each measure of a dance song by hitting the snare drum with one of her hands is itself done without her legs during the song. Just as the drummer makes use of her legs to play a dance beat—so that there would be no dance beat without her using her legs—but that part of the drummer's playing which is hitting the snare drum is itself done apart from the drummer's legs, St Thomas thinks that our coming to understand what something is in this life makes use of the body such that there would be no understanding without the body, but that part of coming to understand which is abstracting *what a thing is* from its material conditions, for example, its alligator-ness, does not itself make use of the body.

Since the human soul has an act that does not make use of the body, that is, the act of understanding or abstraction, the human soul is a *subsistent* thing for St Thomas, and not an abstract object (as are the substantial forms of non-human material substances).[75] In being a subsistent (and so a concrete) part that acts, albeit derivatively, the human soul is thus like any of the *integral* parts of an organism, for example, its organs, which can also act or be acted upon in a derivative sense.

But despite the analogy that can be drawn between human souls and the *integral* parts of material substances, St Thomas thinks the human soul is *sui generis* as a kind of part. He notes that, generally speaking, when it comes to the part/whole relation, for any given part, *either* that part will cease to exist when it is separated from the whole to which it once belonged, for example, as the eyes of an animal cease to exist when that animal dies (since they are no longer apt to function as eyes) *or*, if a part does survive the corruption of the whole to which it once belonged, then the being of that part will not be identical to the being of the whole to which it once belonged. For example, consider a case where a log that is not currently a part of a log cabin and a log that was once a part of a log cabin are numerically identical. In such a case, the log's being is obviously not numerically identical to the being of the log cabin of which that log was once a part. Now, for St Thomas, the human soul *is* a part of a human being that can survive the death of the composite human being, while at the same time preserving the being, identity, and individuality of that *composite* human being. As St Thomas posits in many places, the human soul's being or existence (*esse*) is numerically the same as that of the composite human being.[76]

[75] See, e.g.: QDA a. 1; QDA a. 14, and ST Ia, q. 75, a. 2, *respondeo*.

[76] See, e.g.: ST Suppl. q. 79, a. 2, ad1; SCG II, ch. 68, 3–5; SCG IV, ch. 81, 11; ST Ia. q. 76, a. 1, ad5, and ST IaIIae q. 4, a. 5, ad2. One might object: How can St Thomas consistently accept both (a) Socrates'*soul* is not identical to the *composite* that is Socrates' soul and Socrates' matter and

Given that the substantial form of a human person—her intellectual soul—is a *sui generis* kind of part, the relationship between the human soul as substantial form and the matter of a human person such that there exists a composite human being is thus also *sui generis* for St Thomas. Generally speaking, prime matter *qua* metaphysical part of a material substance actually exists only insofar as a substantial form configures it. One never finds prime matter in the extra-mental world without a substantial form of some sort configuring it. Without denying that this axiom about the relation between substantial form and matter applies in the case of human persons, St Thomas thinks that the prime matter of a human person has its being or existence (*esse*) from the human soul in a unique manner. According to St Thomas, unlike typical substantial forms of material substances, the human soul is a substantial form that has its own act of being (*actus essendi*). Nonetheless, the human soul normally and naturally—if not necessarily—"shares" or "communicates" its act of being with matter such that what results is the composite human person.[77] This is one reason why the human person is not composed of two substances according to St Thomas, namely, a soul substance and a corporeal substance. Since a substance is individuated relative to its act of being, despite the fact that the human person is normally and naturally, if not necessarily, composed of her intellectual soul and matter, the human person composed of an intellectual soul configuring matter is only one substance and not two, since the composite human person has only one act of being, namely, the act of being of the soul as substantial form of the composite human person, which act of being the human soul shares with matter whenever the soul performs its function of configuring matter such that there exists the composite human person.

Even when the human soul is separated from matter in the interim state, however, it remains the substantial form of a human being for St Thomas. That is to say, the soul is not—never is—a *substance*, but ever and always remains merely a metaphysical part of a substance. The human soul is, of course, *like* a substance in that it is a concrete being. But it is *unlike* a substance in that the human soul is not complete in its species, whereas a substance is *complete in its species.*[78] If something x is complete in its species, then we can define or describe x without making reference to a concrete thing extrinsic to x.[79] So whereas we can perspicuously describe any substance S without

(b) the *being* of Socrates' soul is numerically identical to the *being* of the composite of substantial form and matter in Socrates? For St Thomas, the nature or essence of a (part of a) thing and the being or existence (*esse*) of a thing are really distinct in creatures (see, e.g., SCG II, ch. 54). Hence, St Thomas can consistently accept both (a) and (b) insofar as he believes Socrates' soul and Socrates' being are really distinct. I thank Luke Henderson for showing me the need to make this point explicit.

[77] See, e.g., SCG II, ch. 68, 3. [78] See, e.g., ST Ia. q. 75, a. 2, ad1.

[79] See, e.g., DEE, ch. 7 and *Commentary on Aristotle's* De anima (In DA) II, lec. 1, n. 213.

making reference to a concrete thing extrinsic to S, for example, "Socrates is an individual member of the species, *rational animal*," the human soul cannot be so described, for Socrates' soul is that part of *Socrates*—here we mention a concrete thing extrinsic to the soul—that explains why Socrates belongs to the species *rational animal*. We therefore have a second reason why St Thomas' hylomorphic dualism does not entail that a human person is composed of two substances. For matter in and of itself is certainly not a substance; but neither is the human soul. Socrates is one substance, normally and naturally—but not necessarily—composed of two metaphysical parts, where neither of those parts is itself a substance.

Although St Thomas thinks a human person is not—never is—identical to her soul, nonetheless, all by itself the individual human soul can preserve the being and numerical identity of the human person whose soul it is. In other words, although the soul is not identical to the human person, a human person can be composed of her soul alone, as she is, for example, in the interim state.[80] Again, St Thomas explains this by positing that the intellectual soul of a human person has its own act of being, which act of being it shares or communicates to matter wherever and whenever a human person exists in its normal and natural state of being a composite of substantial form and matter. But since the act of being of the composite human person is numerically identical to the act of being of the intellectual soul of the human person, the human person survives in the interim state when she is composed only of her intellectual soul.

In defense of such a view of the relation between the human soul and the human person, consider the following analogy. Say Ted loses his arms and legs in a traffic accident, but survives the accident. After the accident, it wouldn't be right to say Ted is *identical* to the integral parts that now compose him. Otherwise, we would have to say, by the law of the transitivity of identity, that Ted's arms and legs (or the simples that composed them) were not really integral parts of Ted before the accident. Although Ted is composed only of a living body that lacks arms and legs after his traffic accident, Ted is not identical to a living body that lacks arms and legs at that time. Something analogous is the case where St Thomas' view on the relation between a human soul and the human person is concerned. Although the human soul is never identical to the human person for St Thomas, it is the case that, in the interim state, a human person (at least in the majority of cases) is composed of her soul alone.[81]

[80] See, e.g.: SCG IV, ch. 81, 11; ST Ia. q. 76, a. 1, ad5, and ST IaIIae. q. 4, a. 5, ad2. For St Thomas, the Blessed Virgin Mary is an exception to the general rule that a human person is composed of her soul alone in the interim state, since he believes that the Blessed Virgin was assumed body and soul into heaven (see, e.g., ST IIIa. q. 27, a. 1, *respondeo* and *Commentary on the Hail Mary*).

[81] For a contemporary philosopher who defends a position on the relation between the human person and the human soul similar to that of St Thomas, see Swinburne (2013: 236).

The human soul can exist and operate apart from matter in the interim state, according to St Thomas. But it is important to stress that, for St Thomas, existing separately from matter is unnatural for the human soul. The human soul, by its very nature, is a substantial form of a material substance.[82] Given St Thomas' belief in a good and loving God, he thinks such a state can only be temporary.[83] At the general resurrection, not only will all separated souls configure matter again, but by a miracle the separated soul of each human person will come to configure matter such that each human person will have numerically the same human body that she did in this life.[84] All human persons will then be restored to their natural state as *embodied* beings that know, will, and love.

As for the saints in heaven in the interim state, St Thomas thinks they are perfectly happy insofar as they are contemplating and loving God in the beatific vision.[85] But when the saints come to have their bodies again at the general resurrection, the glory of God beatifying the souls of the saints will flow over into the bodies of the saints, giving the bodies of the saints the traditional qualities of the glorified body, that is, impassibility, subtlety, agility, and clarity.[86]

12.4.2. Solving the PPID

St Thomas' philosophical anthropology allows for a novel way of solving the PPID, a *Thomistic* solution, one which shares the advantages of each of the contemporary views we've taken a look at, but without their disadvantages. Like Naked Kernel, a Thomistic solution to the PPID has its advocates denying premises (2) and (3) of the PPID. According to St Thomas, the human person, although essentially an animal, and so normally and naturally (if not necessarily) embodied, is the kind of animal that can survive her death without being embodied insofar as the human person's soul continues to exist after death. Nonetheless, the human soul is not—never is—identical to a human person. A person's intellectual soul is ever and always a *metaphysical part* of a human person, although it is a metaphysical part of the person that is sufficient to preserve the existence, numerical identity, and characteristic activity of that human person whose part it is during the interim state. Thus, a Thomistic solution can make sense of personal identity beyond

[82] See, e.g., SCG II, chs. 68 and 83. [83] See, e.g., SCG IV, ch. 79.

[84] See, e.g.: ST Suppl. q. 79, a. 1 and SCG IV, chs. 80 and 81.

[85] See, e.g., ST IaIIae. q. 4, a. 5. I'm ignoring some complications here regarding St Thomas' views on the perfect happiness of disembodied vs. embodied saints in heaven. For some of the details, see Brown (2009, 2015).

[86] See the texts cited in note 47, supra.

death without requiring the possibility of gappy existence.[87] Furthermore, since the soul preserves the existence, identity, and *characteristic activity* of human persons during the interim state, human persons understand and will things in the interim state. Therefore, a Thomistic solution to the PPID is compatible with Communion of the Saints.

In addition, according to St Thomas, human persons (save the Blessed Virgin Mary) are disembodied during the interim state, and will be embodied again at the general resurrection, where such resurrection bodies are numerically the same bodies those persons possessed in this life. A Thomistic solution to the PPID is therefore consistent with Resurrection and Separated Soul.

Finally, the bodies of the *saints* in heaven will not only be resurrected at the end of the age, but glorified in virtue of the soul's experiencing the beatific vision according to St Thomas. So, the advocate of a Thomistic solution to the PPID consistently accepts possibility (b) of Glorified Body.

12.4.3. Advantages for a Thomistic Solution to the PPID

The contemporary philosophical solutions to the PPID I've examined above all fail to save some important philosophical or theological desideratum. In contrast to these contemporary philosophical accounts, a Thomistic solution to the PPID saves all of these theological and philosophical appearances. All other things being equal, a Thomistic solution to the PPID therefore enjoys a definite advantage over the contemporary philosophical accounts I've examined here.

Like the advocate of Compound Substance Dualism, the advocate of the Thomistic solution has it that human persons are normally and naturally, although not necessarily, embodied. In addition, the advocates of both the Thomistic solution and Compound Substance Dualism (can) believe that human persons are composed of their souls alone in the interim state, are resurrected with numerically the same bodies they had in this life on the last

[87] T. Ryan Byerly raises an objection: since the human body does not exist during the interim state for St Thomas, and, in St Thomas' view, a human person S has numerically the same body at and after the general resurrection that she does in this life, St Thomas *is* committed to the gappy existence of the human body. Therefore, St Thomas adopts a kind of gappy existence solution to the PPID after-all. In responding to this objection, it should be noted that, for St Thomas, "human body" refers either to the human person as a composite of form and matter, or to a person's prime matter. But the *being* of the composite of the human person is preserved by the human soul for St Thomas during the interim state. In addition, according to St Thomas, a human person's prime matter (typically) continues to exist after a person dies, albeit as configured by a different substantial form (see, e.g., SCG IV, ch. 81, 6). Therefore, a person's *body* (understood as referring to her prime matter) does not exist intermittently for St Thomas. Therefore, St Thomas is not committed to the possibility of gappy existence.

day, are engaged in characteristic human activities during the interim state and, when such persons have glorified or resurrected bodes in heaven, their bodies are glorified or resurrected on account of the souls of such persons having the beatific vision. Both accounts are therefore consistent with Resurrection, Communion of the Saints, Separated Soul, and Glorified Body.

But a Thomistic solution to the PPID has an advantage over a solution founded upon Compound Substance Dualism. Unlike St Thomas' philosophical anthropology, Compound Substance Dualism is subject to the Unity Objection. An actual substance is a unified thing of the highest order. According to Compound Substance Dualism, human persons are sometimes composed of two actual substances, that is, an immaterial soul and a human organism. But something composed of actual substances is not itself a unified thing of the highest order. But human persons are substances, if anything is. Therefore, on Compound Substance Dualism, whenever a human person S is composed of an immaterial soul and a human organism, either it is the case that S is not an actual substance, which is *false*, or S is an actual substance composed of two actual substances, that is, an immaterial soul and a human organism, which is *incoherent*. Compound Substance Dualism therefore entails something false or incoherent. The Thomistic account of human persons and the interim state is not subject to the Unity Objection. For St Thomas thinks the human person is ever and always *one substance* that normally and naturally (but not necessarily) has two metaphysical *parts*, that is, the human soul and matter, where neither the human soul nor matter is itself a substance. Although the human soul is an immaterial thing that is sufficient to preserve the existence, identity, and characteristic operations of the human person, the human soul is not and never is a substance, but ever and always a metaphysical part of a substance. The matter of a human person only actually exists insofar as it is configured by a substantial form such as the human soul. Thus, a Thomistic solution to the PPID relies on an ontology of persons that ever and always preserves the substantial unity of the human person. This is its great advantage over the solution to the PPID afforded by Compound Substance Dualism.[88]

Like Resurrection-as-Reassembly, a Thomist solution to the PPID is consistent with Resurrection and part (b) of Glorified Body. But unlike Resurrection-as-Reassembly, the advocate of a Thomistic solution can solve the PPID without relying on a belief in the possibility of gappy existence. Since gappy existence is philosophically controversial, I take it that, all other things being equal, a Thomistic solution to the PPID is therefore preferable to Resurrection-as-Reassembly. Furthermore, Resurrection-as-Reassembly is

[88] For an analogous sort of advantage that St Thomas' philosophical anthropology has over Compound Substance Dualism, see Edward Feser's argument that the latter is saddled with a serious causal interaction problem whereas the former is not (Feser 2008).

inconsistent with Communion of the Saints (since, on Resurrection-as-Re-assembly, human persons don't exist in the interim state) and is therefore also subject to the Separated Soul Objection (since, on this view, no souls exist separately from bodies during the interim state). A Thomistic solution to the PPID is consistent with Communion of the Saints and is not subject to the Separated Soul Objection.

A Thomistic solution to the PPID is similar to Naked Kernel in that neither solves the PPID by invoking the possibility of gappy existence. In addition, both a Thomistic solution to the PPID and Naked Kernel posit that only a part of the human person S survives death during the interim state and that such a part is nonetheless sufficient to preserve the existence and numerical identity of S. Indeed, St Thomas' account of the relation between the intellectual soul and the human person is usefully compared and contrasted with the relationship, on Naked Kernel, between the "naked kernel" of a human person in the interim state and the human person. Just as the human person is not and never is identical to the naked kernel according to the advocate of Naked Kernel, the human person is not and never is identical to her soul according to a Thomistic solution to the PPID. Nonetheless, according to the advocate of Naked Kernel, a human person can be composed of her naked kernel alone between her death and the general resurrection. Similarly, St Thomas thinks that the human person is composed of her soul alone in the interim state.

But unlike Naked Kernel, which entails that the human person is unconscious during the interim state, a Thomistic solution to the PPID has it that the human soul is intellectually and volitionally operative between death and the general resurrection. So, unlike Naked Kernel, a Thomistic solution to the PPID is consistent with Communion of the Saints.

As we've seen, Fission is also consistent with Communion of the Saints. The Thomistic solution to the PPID has advantages over Fission, however. A Thomistic solution is not subject to the Premature Resurrection Objection or the Problem of the Glorified Body or the Separated Soul Objection, at least one of which poses a problem for Fission. This is because, according to Fission, human persons exist and are embodied in the interim state. But embodiment during the interim state appears to be inconsistent with Resurrection, which entails that the resurrection of the body happens (for most human persons) at the end of the age, and not during the interim state. Furthermore, the way an advocate of Fission can respond to the Premature Resurrection Objection—making a distinction between the interim state body, on the one hand, and the resurrected/glorified body on the other—leads directly to the Problem of the Glorified Body. Given Glorified Body, Fission is heretical or Fission is inconsistent with Resurrection after-all, at least given certain assumptions about the beatific vision and its effects, and that some of the saints in the interim state enjoy the beatific vision. And even if Fission is consistent with an account of the glorified body that is not mentioned in Glorified Body, Fission is still

subject to the Separated Soul Objection: Christian tradition teaches that the human soul (in most cases) exists separate from matter in the interim state; but that view is inconsistent with the constitutionalist theory of persons implied by Fission.

In contrast to Fission, a Thomistic solution to the PPID does not raise the Premature Resurrection Objection, since, according to St Thomas, most human persons are not embodied in the interim state. Rather, most human persons are composed of their souls alone in the interim state and are embodied again at the general resurrection. A Thomistic solution is therefore also not subject to the Separated Soul Objection. Finally, according to St Thomas, the bodies of the saints in heaven at the general resurrection are glorified bodies insofar as such bodies participate in the intellectual soul's beatific vision. Therefore, the Thomistic account is consistent with Glorified Body.

In conclusion, a Thomistic solution to the PPID need not posit the possibility of gappy existence and is consistent with both Resurrection and Communion of the Saints. Furthermore, a Thomistic solution is not subject to the Premature Resurrection Objection or the Problem of the Glorified Body or the Separated Soul Objection. The same cannot be said for the other solutions to the PPID I've treated here. For Compound Substance Dualism is subject to the Unity Objection, Resurrection-as-Reassembly requires the possibility of gappy existence, Naked Kernel is inconsistent with Communion of the Saints, and Fission is subject to the Premature Resurrection Objection or the Problem of the Glorified Body or the Separated Soul Objection. Given Resurrection, Communion of the Saints, and certain other traditional Christian views about the saints in heaven, a Thomistic solution to the PPID is, all other things being equal, preferable to the contemporary solutions to the PPID I've spoken about here.

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13

The Resurrection and Hypertime

Hud Hudson

It's a thought any five-year-old might have when being instructed on the rewards of heaven or punishments of hell:

So, just where are heaven and hell?

A good question: No one wants to go spelunking and wander through the wrong gate, abandoning all hope and entering hell through misadventure, whereas many might prefer the comfortable path of a commercial starship to the arduous path of virtue should heaven really happen to lie just a bit out of sight and beyond the Moon. I suppose no one really continues to think of hell buried in the bowels of the Earth (*down there*) or of heaven floating above the clouds (*up there*)—despite the curious and constant participation in such direction-laden talk in more sophisticated discussions. But again, if not *there*, what of our five-year-old's simple and straightforward question?

For the Christian (and especially for the Christian who takes seriously the Apostles', Athanasian, and Nicene Creeds), there is an important restriction on the sort of answer that can suffice. These three, great, first-millennial creeds are unanimous in encouraging a very specific expectation; as the Nicene Creed would put it—"we look for the resurrection of the body and the life of the world to come." That is, the general resurrection is an *embodied* resurrection, and bodies are essentially *located*; you need a where and a when to put them. In short, substantivalist spacetime is an ontological condition for bodies and so also for the Christian doctrine of the General Resurrection. Without subregions of spacetime serving as receptacles for the raised bodies and as an arena of interpersonal interaction for the life of the world to come, there is no General Resurrection.

Or so, *I* think. In this discussion I will note (but not engage) two sources of opposition: (i) the relationalists (who deny that a system of spatio-temporal relations necessary for a thesis of embodiment really requires substantivalism with respect to spacetime), and (ii) the idealists (who maintain that reality

consists of abstracta, immaterial minds, and mental entities, and who take the truth-makers of our ordinary and loose talk of embodied life and resurrected bodies to be furnished by facts about souls and about their shared representational states).

Still, even setting aside the relationalists and idealists, most of us who take the General Resurrection seriously are left with a real problem. To be sure, the dualists may have an easier time than their materialist counterparts in explaining how a given person is present post-resurrection—the same person is present, because the person is identical to a particular mind which is first in two-way, unmediated causal contact with a human organism and later so connected to a resurrection body. But the dualist and the materialist (and whatever it is that Aquinas is) must all face the location problem. Whether the resurrection body (as advocated by the dualist) is a mere new-and-improved causal companion for the immaterial person in the world to come or (as the materialist would urge) the person him-or-herself renewed, reconstituted, and raised, all such theorists are committed to the bodies . . . and so to their locatedness . . . and so to the genuine places and times they occupy.

13.1. SOME FAMILIAR PROPOSALS CHARACTERIZED AND CRITIQUED

My own leanings in the debates on the metaphysics of the human person are towards materialism, and accordingly, my own contributions to the various problems surrounding the Christian doctrine of the General Resurrection have revolved around how to square materialism for human persons with the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Creeds, the thought of the Church Fathers and its most influential theologians, and with the contemporary philosophical landscape on the metaphysics of the self and on the persistence conditions for material objects.[1]

I believe there are at least eight, quite-distinct strategies for reconciling materialism for human persons with the doctrine of the General Resurrection, each with its own peculiar roster of disadvantages that arise in addition to a shared and substantial difficulty (to be explored below) generated by their common commitment to a literal location for heaven. Consider the following review of the materialist models for the resurrection of the human person.[2]

[1] See Hudson (2001).

[2] For more comprehensive characterizations and criticisms of the views to be quickly canvassed below, see Hudson (2010).

First, we have Reassembly:[3] The parts (mereological simples, if you have them) that composed the person at his or her death are tracked down, recalled, and reconfigured so that the life of the person they then composed may resume. Problems: With God keeping tabs on things, there isn't really a tracking problem no matter where the parts wander off to between death and resurrection, but objections to reassembly have featured the (alleged) impossibility of temporal gaps in the persistence of a material object and the threat posed by a cannibal (who may at death be composed of simples which composed another human person at his or her death)—for who would ever have suspected the wages of cannibalism is eternal death?

Second, we have Constitution:[4] Just as one piece of metal may constitute an unnotched sword pre-battle whereas a numerically different piece of metal may constitute that very sword post-victory or one chunk of marble constitute a statue in ancient Greece and another marble serve that purpose in a modern museum, so too, different material bodies may constitute one and the same person at different times (e.g., consider first a plurality of simples that compose an adolescent human organism, then an entirely different plurality that compose an elderly human organism, and finally another entirely different plurality that compose a resurrection body, where each resulting fusion takes a turn at constituting one and the same persisting person). Problems: This strategy features a problematic, constitution (non-identity) relation which has been accused of unintelligibility, it requires the co-location of distinct material objects, and it invites the critique that whereas some person or other may be constituted in the world to come, it is merely a replica or representative of a former human person and not that former person raised.

Third, we have Anti-Criterialism:[5] Designed to deal with the problem of temporal gaps pressed against the reassembly theory, anti-criterialism argues against any criterion of personal identity whatsoever: and—no criterion, no (gap) problem. The dead will be raised and there need be no explanation of that. Problems: The strategy is only as strong as the case for anti-criterialism on this topic, and unfortunately, many who are seeking reconciliation for materialism and the General Resurrection are already firmly committed either to a biological or to a psychological criterion of personal identity on independent, metaphysical grounds.

Fourth, we have Simulacra:[6] Again, designed to thwart the problem of temporal gaps, this peculiar theory has God smuggle in a simulacrum to take the place of a dying animal which, in turn, is secreted away, to sleep, preserved and parts intact, until it shall be reawakened and reanimated (but

[3] Reassembly has a very long and popular history in the tradition of commentary on the General Resurrection. See Bynum (1995).

[4] See Baker (2000) and Corcoran (1998).

[5] See Merricks (1998).

[6] See van Inwagen (1978).

not reassembled) on resurrection day. Problems: The simulacra view has a space-allocation problem—just where to put all those sleeping animals? But this can be resolved, for they may be tidily tucked away in a fourth-spatial dimension from which their carefully-prepared simulacra may also emerge as if from thin air—(such a higher-dimensional suggestion certainly makes the mechanics of the process much easier). More worrisome, however, are the complaints that God is constantly engaged in intricate deception of the faithful and that there can be no genuine resurrection on this view since there is only a long sleep rather than a genuine death to be resurrected from.

Fifth, we have Fissioning:[7] Another way of dealing with the alleged gap problem is effected not by finding a way to avoid commitment to a gap but by suggesting that the causal requirements on the persistence of a material body can accommodate such a gap (even a multi-millennial gap). If God were to endow the right collection of particles (i.e., the ones that compose a human person on the brink of death) with the causal powers to undergo fission, then whereas one stream of the fission may continue on towards the death, burial, and decomposition of an animal, the other (once the requisite time has elapsed) will carry the human person who was present pre-fission into the world to come. His or her remains remain behind, but owing to the right causal connection between the last stages of the relevant body pre-fission and the first post-fission stages of a particular body come resurrection day, an afterlife is secured. Problems: This proposal requires the possibility of fission and the associated commitments in a theory of causal powers that would permit both division of this sort and immanent causal connections which can span temporal gaps. A far more threatening worry, however, is that this proposal also presupposes a closest-continuer theory of personal identity, a theory widely deemed implausible and nearly universally rejected.

Sixth, we have Temporal Parts:[8] A detour through the temporal dimension with an atemporal conception of parthood, arbitrary diachronic fusions, and a psychological criterion of personal identity can yield something very much like the fissioning story without any commitment to a closest continuer theory of personal identity. On this view, a human person is the fusion of an extended (earlier) temporal part which mereologically overlaps a human animal and an extended (later) temporal part which, in the words of St Paul, is a new and imperishable spiritual body. Problems: Despite all the wonderful advantages purchased by way of appeal to temporal parts, those advantages have to be purchased at the price of, well, a theory of temporal parts. And since that theory has been charged with incoherency, declared unmotivated, and criticized for the company it keeps (i.e., for its close association with counterpart

[7] See Zimmerman (1999).
[8] This view was introduced and defended in Hudson (2001: ch. 7).

theory), not everyone has been eager to purchase those advantages at this steep price.

Seventh, we have Multiple-Location:[9] Whereas the persistence of material objects has been frequently analyzed in terms of parthood, recently an alternative analysis in terms of location has been gaining ground. On one such conception (according to which a single material object may bear a location relation to two or more numerically distinct regions), the resurrection may amount to a single material object which exemplifies one set of properties at one region it occupies (e.g., "is a human animal at R," "dies at R") while it manifests another set of properties at another region it occupies (e.g., "is an imperishable, raised, and glorified body at R*," "is reconciled to God at R*"). Problems: Although a multiple-location approach can side-step objections about recombination, parthood, and causal requirements on temporal gaps, its reliance on treating occupation as a one-many relation, its liberal principles of recombination regarding modality, and its unavoidable region-indexing of properties are its primary potential weaknesses.

Eighth, we have scattered but Single-Location:[10] Even if occupation turns out to be a one-one relation, so long as the region an object occupies can be disconnected, persistence (and so resurrection) once again can be analyzed by (scattered) location rather than by parthood while retaining many of the same advantages as the multiple-location approach. Problems: As with anti-criterialism, location-based theories of persistence reject both biological and psychological criteria for personal identity and this, along with their other background metaphysical commitments, makes them vulnerable to a variety of metaphysics-based critiques.

Finally, and perhaps most persuasively, in addition to their individual drawbacks and difficulties, every one of these proposals is subject to a complaint that carries a tremendous amount of force with modern audiences—namely, that the proposals are (in some fashion or other) one and all at odds with contemporary science and our so-called contemporary worldview. In so far as they try to reconcile a metaphysics of the human person with an embodied and eternal resurrection to occur at some time and place in the far distant future, they are already (allegedly) scandalously indifferent to the pronouncements of science on the fate of our cosmos, and they only make their situation worse in this respect by piling on this or that miraculous story of causal powers or of asymmetrical-fissions or of tracking-and-recalling particles or of snatching-and-hiding billions upon billions of human animals.

[9] This view was introduced and critically evaluated in Hudson (2010).
[10] This view was introduced and critically evaluated in Hudson (2010).

13.2. THE HYPERTIME SOLUTION

By the phrase "The Hypertime Solution" I mean to indicate not only a new strategy for reconciling materialism for human persons with the doctrine of the General Resurrection but also a proposal for how to be a realist about the locations that host the bodies populating the world to come and thereby a proposal for answering our five-year-old's simple and straightforward question—"*So, just where is heaven?*"

The Hypertime Solution rests on the Hypertime Hypothesis, a hypothesis according to which there is a time-like series composed of hyperinstants each of which hosts a spacetime block. That is to say, a single hypermoment would be quite sufficient to contain the entirety of the four-dimensional spacetime (past, present, and future) in which we live and move and have our being, whereas hyperearlier and hyperlater hypermoments may contain remarkably diverse spacetime blocks of their own. Thus, the Hypertime Hypothesis, at first approximation, is something like a second temporal dimension.[11]

Accordingly, just as we take ourselves (from some given orientation) to have a left and right, a front and back, a top and bottom, a past and future ... so too, on the Hypertime Hypothesis (and on the assumption that we can persist across a hyperinterval), we can entertain the thought that we also have a hyperpast and a hyperfuture.

Recent literature reveals that the metaphysical possibility of the Hypertime Hypothesis has intrigued a number of theorists, especially those who hope to exploit the resources of hypertime to respond to a call for time's rate of passage, or to chart and explain the behavior of spacetime in a growing block, a shrinking block, or a morphing block model, or to account (and in a very satisfying way) for backward time travel and for changing the past. Moreover, to the extent that the actuality of the Hypertime Hypothesis is also an epistemic possibility, it may also play a prominent role in strategies for reconciling some of the purported conflicts in the dialogue between science and faith.[12]

Once the distinctions between past and hyperpast, future and hyperfuture are on the table, the observation that makes the Hypertime Hypothesis so potentially fruitful in the discussions in which it has been invoked is quite simply that *whereas for each instant of hypertime, claims about what is true in*

[11] For an extended discussion of the Hypertime Hypothesis—its proper formulation, its motivation, examples of the range of philosophical work it can be assigned, strategies for its defense, and its relevance to outstanding problems in metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of religion—see Hudson (2014). "A second temporal dimension" is only a first-pass characterization, however, for there are important reasons for not regarding a hypertime series as just yet another dimension to be added to the familiar four.

[12] Hudson (2014: ch.6) is devoted to defending the claim that the Hypertime Hypothesis is indeed such an epistemic possibility.

the past and in the future (relative to some given moment) are fixed by facts about the single spacetime block present at that hypertime (i.e., by facts about the contents of its hyperplanes and their relative positions to one another)—claims about what is true in the hyperpast and the hyperfuture (relative to some hypermoment) are fixed by facts about the plurality of spacetime blocks spread out along a hyperinterval (i.e., by facts about their respective contents and their relative positions to one another). Moreover, on the Hypertime Hypothesis, the features of a spacetime block at one hypertime are independent of the features of a spacetime block at other hypertimes. A spacetime block, like each of its creaturely contents, is a contingent entity. At any given hypertime, there could have been no block at all, or the very same block with different contents, or the very same contents in a different block, or a different block with different contents, or a piece of the old block surrounded by bits of a new one, and so on. Again (barring inconsistencies with the divine nature) there are no metaphysically necessary rules on how things look block-wise from one hypertime to the next. Whether the product of hypertime-designer or blind chance, the march of hypertime may see one block seamlessly replaced with another, or the destruction of large portions of a block's leading edge at a hypertime instant, or the alteration of large portions of everything but a block's leading edge at a hypertime instant, or the sudden introduction of a cavity in the interior of a block at a hypertime instant, and so on.

The Hypertime Solution, then, simply amounts to the thesis that the General Resurrection occurs in the hyperfuture rather than the future. Heaven lies not to the left or right, forth or back, high or low, or even in the future. From dust we came and to dust we shall (permanently) return, and yet heaven and the judgment of the living and the dead await us hyperhence. On the Hypertime Solution, to be resurrected is to be present at a special place in the hyperfuture—to be among those located in a privileged spacetime block with its own past and never-ending future, perfectly suited to host the new and imperishable, spiritual bodies that hyperwill populate it.

Of course, if the Hypertime Solution has any promise, one may suspect that the roads to hell and Purgatory may cut through hypertime, as well, and there is one *remarkable* feature of this thought I can't resist noting: The resources would be here available to maintain (i) that hell is a real place (i.e., yet another spacetime block confined to a different location in the hyperfuture), (ii) that it is populated, (iii) that its residents are permanent inhabitants (i.e., that assignment to hell is an eternal sentence), and (iv) that Universalism is true, nevertheless. With hell and heaven so separated, some may be consigned to eternal damnation and hyper-eventually saved all the same.[13]

[13] This remark is not intended to endorse a doctrine of a populated or eternal hell, but the reader is invited to worry about this unexpected combination of views, nonetheless!

13.3. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE HYPERTIME SOLUTION

What, then, are the distinctive advantages that can be claimed by the Hypertime Solution in comparison with its rivals rehearsed in Section 13.1?

Surprisingly—especially given what seems like its metaphysical extravagance at first glance—the primary advantages of the Hypertime Solution are to be found in its *metaphysical neutrality* on a surprising range of philosophical debates. Happily, the view faces no threats from puzzles of recombination, cannibals, and the like, for as with many of the most desirable packages, there is no assembly required. The Hypertime Solution can remain absolutely metaphysically neutral on the existence and nature of a constitution relation, on whether material objects can persist across temporal gaps, on the three-way debate between anti-criterialism, the biological, and the psychological criteria of personal identity, on whether the deity is deceptive, on whether fission and its associated causal requirements are possible, on whether closest continuer theories of personal identity have any plausibility, on whether material objects have temporal parts or no, on whether persistence (within a block) is to be analyzed in terms of parthood or location, and on whether material objects can be co-located or multi-located or if occupation is instead always a one-one relation.

Accordingly, almost every single criticism grounded in metaphysics which posed a problem for one or more of its predecessors can be deftly side-stepped by the Hypertime Solution.

Better yet, it is the only proposal on offer in a position to respond concessively to those familiar objections rooted in the deliverances of contemporary science without thereby losing any ground whatsoever. That is, even more impressive than its neutrality with respect to a wide range of metaphysical considerations is the Hypertime Solution's remarkable *scientific flexibility* which is prepared to countenance nearly any current feature or future development in science. Modern audiences—sympathetic to the view that science has revealed that God does not miraculously meddle in the world by interfering with unfolding physical processes or who insist on the authority of science to pronounce on the future states of our universe and on its dim prospects for furnishing an eternal, heavenly region hospitable to embodied beings—have little to fear. That is to say, like Lewisian Modal Realism, the Hypertime Solution is significant largely in virtue of what it proposes to *add* to reality (as opposed to contesting what this or that subfield of science has to say about the local—that is, this spacetime's—characteristics). So—let the universe deteriorate into that maximally-high state of entropy and the long night of equilibrium to follow (or whatever alternative fate physics currently champions), it matters not at all to the Hypertime Solution.

Finally, there is an interesting sense worth noting in which evil is defeated, a sense which only adds to rather than competes with any other account of this popular Christian notion. On the Hypertime Solution every tear is wiped away in a rather surprising way, for (strictly-speaking) it hyperwill be the case that there never was any evil or suffering or tears at all.

Of course, every view has its schedule of disadvantages, and the Hypertime Solution is no exception. Three closing remarks on this theme:

First, a possible misunderstanding and then a real difficulty: One might think a hypermoment is more or less like a LewisWorld, and thus vulnerable to many of the same worries facing Lewis's (1986) infamous proposal. There are some similarities, to be sure, but whereas there can be empty hypermoments, there can be no empty LewisWorlds; moreover, whereas a hypermoment contains a spacetime, a LewisWorld is a spacetime. Nonetheless, in each case we appear to have a vast collection of spatio-temporally and causally isolated spacetimes. The hypertimes are an ordering on one of those collections, but we can impose orderings on the LewisWorlds without thereby bringing it about that they then stand in timelike relations. So, just what makes the hypertime ordering a timelike ordering? This is a good question, and a range of possible answers stand ready for evaluation—answers appealing to bruteness, geometry, dimensionality, facts about consciousness, probabilistic lawlike explanations of the development of the world, and finally—hypercausation. Whichever device is employed to make plausible the suggestion that the hypertime ordering is a timelike ordering will almost certainly sacrifice some of the Hypertime Solution's boast of metaphysical neutrality.

Second, if pressed, I think the most problematic feature of the present strategy involves the notion of the reidentification of one and the same individual across hypertimes. We are familiar with puzzles regarding the persistence of a person across a temporal interval, but diachronic identity is one thing, transhypertime identity another. That there is *some* successful resolution or other to the problem of the criterion of transhypertime identity is clearly presupposed in the various invocations of hypertime to be found in discussions of the growing, shrinking, and morphing block theories of time, in discussions of time travel, and in discussions of problems in philosophy of religion.[14] But the topic is underexplored and worthy of further serious and careful attention, and once explored properly, the Hypertime Solution may once again have to relinquish some of its metaphysical neutrality. As with the previous remark, however, neutrality on just which questions remains to be seen and then evaluated against those commitments of the rival-solutions outlined in Section 13.2.

[14] Hudson (2014: ch.5) is devoted to exploring the prospects of different theories of transhypertime identity.

Third, one might be concerned about theological objections to the Hypertime Solution. One can cite the silence of Scripture and tradition on the topic of higher-dimensional time, but then again, it is not uncontroversial that there is such a silence.[15] Still, isn't it clear that tradition says heaven and the life of the world to come are in our future and not merely in our hyperfuture? Perhaps it's not so clear. Tradition says these things shall come to pass, but that may prove to be a commitment neutral between future and hyperfuture. Without the requisite conceptual resources to draw a sharp distinction, tradition certainly doesn't take an explicit stand against the hyperfuture interpretation, and once the distinction is on the table and choices are to be made, metaphysical neutrality, scientific flexibility, and explanatory power may select the hyperfuture option as the best refinement.

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Part VII

Freedom in Paradise

14

Resting on Your Laurels

Deserting Desert in Paradise?

Brian P. Boeninger and Robert K. Garcia

The light grew brighter and brighter, until Patty arrived at the end of the tunnel. She found herself standing before a huge lustrous gate.

> "Well done, my good and faithful servant!", boomed a voice. "Welcome to Paradise, to what some cheeky philosophers dare to call Impeccable Land. But never mind them! Prepare to enter a state of human existence than which none greater can be conceived. You will become all that you were meant to be. You will be maximally fulfilled and authentically human.
>
> But don't worry! None of this will go to your head. Indeed, never again will you have to worry about being conceited or prideful or acting wrongfully. For you will never sin again. Indeed, you will be *unable* to sin. Just step through this Impeccalator."

All agog to see what God was talking about, Patty hastened toward the gate.

> "Wait!" God shouted. "Didn't you hear what I said? You won't be able to go wrong in here, so this—this very moment—is the last time you'll be able to rightfully receive my praise.[1] So if you'd like, I'll bestow it again. And this time, savor the moment. Because once you walk through this praise-busting[2] Impeccalator, I'll be unable to ever pat you on the back again.[3] So. [clears throat] WELL DONE . . . "

Patty hardly noticed the thundering accolade. She was too confused.

> "Wait" she interrupted. "I don't mean to be one of those cheeky philosophers, but I really don't get it. How will I be completely and beautifully fulfilled, all amped

[1] Cf. 1 Cor. 4:5 (NIV), "At that time each will receive their praise from God."
[2] For more on "praise-busters", see Rachels and Rachels (2011: 122).
[3] The idea that heaven is "a place where we are patted on the back" comes from C. S. Lewis. See Lewis (2001b: 38).

> up on my authentic humanity, if I won't—won't ever—be able to do things that deserve your praise? I mean, I like the idea of never again being blameworthy, but it is *deeply fulfilling* to be praised for doing what's right—especially when the praise comes from you. Is that not a good thing? How is paradise maximally great if I'll never again be praiseworthy?"

She paused before the Impeccalator, wondering whether she had been too impertinent.

> "Oh, and another thing" she blurted out. "About this freedom you say I'll no longer have—the freedom to go wrong? According to some of those cheeky folks, you're not off the hook for all the horrible stuff people do with that freedom unless allowing us to have it is the *only* way we'll get to enjoy some really good stuff—goods that are so whoppingly valuable that they outweigh all of the evil that freedom leads to. But . . . " She paused to touch the gate with her toe. " . . . and here again I just don't get it. If the other side of the Impeccalator is so great and all, how can it not have those whoppingly great goods?"

God smiled knowingly at her.

> "Well, I suppose you'll have to step over and find out."

14.1. THE PROBLEM

The parable of Impertinent Patty displays several questions that occupy us in this chapter. Our central focus is on a problem (hereafter, we will simply call this "the Problem") that arises for a theist who accepts both a traditional view of heaven and a leading response to the problem of evil, the so-called free will defense. In this section, we sketch these commitments, represent them as premises, and touch on their motivations. We end the section by assembling these premises into a working formulation of the Problem, an aporetic cluster that displays the tension between these premises. To be sure, there are latent ambiguities in some of the premises. However, part of the challenge posed by the problem is to disambiguate or otherwise revise the premises in a way that provides a satisfying and adequate resolution of the tension. In subsequent sections we will consider some recent attempts to meet this challenge. Specifically, we will consider a set of responses to the Problem that rely on a distinction between direct or occurrent freedom and indirect or derivative freedom. This distinction has been used to underwrite a *tracing* (i.e. historical or externalist) account of freedom and moral responsibility, which (it is argued) allows the theist to retain commitments both to the traditional view of heaven and to the free will defense. The idea is that the denizens of heaven can be (derivatively) free and responsible even while impeccable in a way that

does not threaten the free will defense. We argue that the tracing account invoked has been insufficiently developed, and, indeed, faces unrecognized and significant challenges to being further developed in a way that would serve the theist's purposes.

Timothy Pawl and Kevin Timpe provide a useful way of thinking about a leading and traditional view of heaven (hereafter simply "Heaven"). As they say, heaven "is to be the state of human existence than which none more desirable can be conceived" (2009: 403). This is not maximally great existence *simpliciter*, which only God can enjoy. Rather, heaven will be a state of maximally great human existence, in that its human occupants will be maximally fulfilled *as human beings*. Heavenly existence is our telos. Thus, we may put the traditional governing concept of the kind of existence that humans enjoy in heaven as follows:

(H) Heaven is a state of maximally great human fulfillment.

This, in turn, is thought to motivate two more specific features of heaven. As we will show, these features, together with components of the free will defense, generate the Problem.

First, (H) is an apparent motive for the doctrine that heaven is populated by impeccable human persons, that is, persons who are no longer able to sin. Notice that this is stronger than the claim that the denizens of heaven never in fact sin. Rather, they *cannot* sin. This impossibility is no accident, and is at least partly due to the permanently perfected or impeccable character of heavenly persons (as touched on by the story of Impeccable Patty). On this view, heavenly saints enjoy a modally robust impeccability. This is a stronger kind of impeccability than one which might be underwritten by, say, a Molinist account of heavenly sinlessness.[4] We mean to express this strong notion of impeccability with the following premise:

(H1) Heaven is a state in which there is no possibility of moral evil.[5]

Second, (H) is the apparent motive for a further feature of heaven, the idea that heaven contains goods that, in some way or other, are uniquely actualized by human freedom. Following James Sennett (1999: 70f), we will call these "freedom goods," and put the claim as follows:

[4] For arguments against a Molinist account of impeccability, see Pawl and Timpe (2009: 404–5).

[5] It is customary to distinguish between moral evil and natural evil, where the latter is said to be evil that does not result from the agency of creatures. Putative natural evils include hurricanes, tornadoes, and the like. Presumably, the traditional view takes heaven to be free of both moral and natural evil. In what follows, however, we focus on moral evil; hence, the restriction in (H1). Although we invite the reader to consider how the issues discussed here might bear on the possibility and significance of natural evil in heaven, we do not directly take up this question.

(H2) There are freedom goods in heaven.

Later we will say more about the different kinds of freedom goods. For now it will be useful to note the dialectical significance of (H2). In recent discussion, (H2) is taken to be part of the traditional view of heaven, the thought being, presumably, that (H2) follows in some way from (H). For example, Sennett accepts (H2), apparently on the grounds that heaven is where "the lives we desire for ourselves are most fully and naturally realized" (1999: 78). To be sure, however, it is less than obvious exactly how (H) motivates (H2). We will pick up this matter below, after showing how (H1) and (H2) contribute to the Problem.

"The free will defense" typically refers to Alvin Plantinga's (1974) strategy for responding to the so-called logical problem of evil. Here we will use "the free will defense" (hereafter simply, "Defense") more inclusively, to refer to the prominent general strategy of taking humans to have libertarian freedom and appealing to that freedom as a central part of responding to atheological arguments from evil.[6] Thus, the Defense includes free will *theodicies*, which address the so-called evidential problem of evil. Each instance of the strategy we have in mind appeals to the premises we list below.

The Defense is an attempt to reconcile the existence of evil with the existence of the God of traditional monotheism—minimally, a God that is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent. Here we focus on three crucial premises in the Defense. The first is that freedom makes evil possible.[7] As Sennett puts it, "human freedom makes logical room for the existence of evil, even if God exists. . . . [T]he presence of freedom eliminates . . . the *guarantee* of no evil" (1999: 69). We will put this in contrapositive form:

(D1) If there is no possibility of evil in a state, then it is not the case that there is freedom in that state.

According to the Defense, although freedom makes evil possible, it also makes certain goods possible. Indeed, freedom is *necessary* for those goods and those goods are essentially borne out of freedom. These are the goods referred to as *freedom goods* in (H2). This provides the second crucial premise of the Defense, the idea that freedom is necessary for freedom goods. Or, again in contrapositive form:

[6] We take libertarianism to be the conjunction of two claims: (1) *incompatibilism*, the view that human freedom is incompatible with the thesis of determinism, and (2) that at least some humans sometimes act freely.

[7] More precisely, it is *morally significant* freedom that makes evil possible. Following Plantinga, an agent has morally significant freedom on a given occasion if he is free with respect to a morally significant action; and an action is morally significant for a person "if it would be wrong for him to perform the action but right to refrain or vice versa" (1974: 30).

(D2) There are freedom goods in a state only if there is freedom in that state.

These two components of Defense, together with the above commitments of the traditional view of heaven ((H1) and (H2)), comprise the aporetic cluster we call the Problem. Before making the problem explicit, however, we wish to draw attention to a third commitment of the Defense. This commitment is important because it makes solving the problem more difficult.

The Defense requires both that freedom makes evil possible (D1) and that freedom is necessary for freedom goods (D2). But it also requires that freedom goods be *outweighingly valuable*. This is because God's endowing us with evil-permitting freedom is supposed to be justified in terms of the goods made possible by that freedom. In other words, the fact that freedom makes freedom goods possible is sufficient to justify God's endowing us with evil-permitting freedom *only if* freedom goods are so valuable that they in some sense *outweigh* all of the evil that arises from that endowment.[8] We wish to bring out two aspects of this notion of being outweighingly valuable.

First, to say that freedom goods outweigh the evil made possible by freedom is only to ascribe a *comparative* value to them. But we can also speak of their absolute or non-relative value. If the (negative) value or magnitude of actual moral evil is enormous (which it surely appears to be), then, to outweigh it, the value of freedom goods must also be (at least) enormous. The profound depths of depravity, suffering, and wickedness in the world indicate (if the Defense is to succeed) that the freedom goods must be among the very best goods human creatures can obtain. Following Swinburne (1983), let us say that they are *supremely* valuable.

Second, arguably, something that is good for humans is supremely and outweighingly valuable only if the enjoyment of it is an essential part of human fulfillment. For example, however tasty tiramisu may be, the enjoyment of it is not an essential part of human fulfillment. Although the pleasure of eating

[8] The language used here—of the value of goods *outweighing* the disvalue of evils—might suggest that the Defense is committed to the view that moral justification must be understood along broadly consequentialist lines. Such an understanding, in turn, could raise the concern that the Defense is unavailable to—or, at best, must be severely retooled by—those who reject consequentialism. We do not mean to convey such an understanding by our use of the language of comparative axiological "weights". Rather, we intend it to be understood broadly enough to permit non-consequentialist interpretations. We note two things. First, the question of whether such language *can* be understood loosely enough to be consonant with, say, deontological ethical frameworks is beyond the scope of this chapter. And second, the language of "weights" has common currency in the literature on the Defense and the problem of evil more generally—for a representative discussion, see Murray and Rea on "The Outweighing Condition" (Murray and Rea 2008: 161f). If the notion of outweighing is unduly wed to a consequentialist framework, then the Defense faces a potential objection that is independent of the Problem. For a helpful discussion of the role of ethical theory for theodicy see (Reed MS). For a specifically deontological formulation of the problem of evil, see Tooley (2008: 105ff).

tiramisu is a human good, it is not a supremely and outweighingly valuable human good. Thus, it seems that freedom goods are outweighingly valuable only if they are the sorts of goods that constitute human fulfillment. Putting these thoughts together, we have the third crucial premise of the Defense:

(D3) Freedom goods are supremely and outweighingly valuable human-fulfillment goods.

In recent work on the Problem, the distinction between *freedom goods in general* (which (D2) makes reference to) and *freedom goods that are supremely and outweighingly valuable* (which (D3) makes reference to) is, at best, tacit, and its significance is unexplored. However, distinguishing them reveals that the relationship between Heaven and Defense is more intimate than some may have thought. Indeed, although (D3) does not feature directly as a premise in our formulation of the Problem, we will later show three ways that (D3) makes the problem more difficult.

We will now formulate the Problem, the conclusion of which is that either the Defense fails or the traditional view of heaven is mistaken. The Problem is the aporia comprised of the following claims:

(H1) Heaven is a state in which there is no possibility of evil.
(H2) There are freedom goods in heaven.
(D1) If there is no possibility of evil in a state, then it is not the case that there is freedom in that state.
(D2) There are freedom goods in a state only if there is freedom in that state.

These claims are jointly inconsistent. On the one hand, (H1) and (D1) entail:

(C1) It is not the case that there is freedom in heaven.

But on the other hand, (D2) and (H2) entail:

(C2) There is freedom in heaven.

In other words, the commitments of Heaven and the Defense lead to a contradiction. Thus, it seems that Heaven and the Defense are incompatible.[9]

The reader will notice that (D3) does not appear in the above aporia. But (D3) plays an important role in motivating the Problem. We discuss this role in the next section.

[9] In light of this incompatibility, it is tempting to follow Sennett in describing the Problem as a *dilemma* between Heaven and Defense. In the next section, however, we will show why the problem is not best described as a dilemma, at least not in the usual sense; the dialectical situation is a bit more complex.

14.2. AN INSTRUCTIVE BUT UNACCEPTABLE SOLUTION

We will now consider an instructive but ultimately unacceptable solution. Under pressure to resolve the Problem, a theist might dissent from tradition and offer the following reply:

> If the tradition has it that (H) requires or otherwise involves (H2), then the tradition must be mistaken. (H2) doesn't capture what (H) means to convey and maximally great human fulfillment needn't involve freedom goods at all. Perhaps there are other goods that conduce toward human fulfillment in heaven, but these needn't include goods borne out of freedom.

In other words, the dissenter denies (H2) while maintaining that the following is sufficient to capture the relevant content of (H):

(H3) Heaven has all supremely valuable human-fulfillment goods.

This "replace-(H2) strategy" appears to permit the dissenter consistently to accept (H1), (H3), (D1), and (D2), while denying (H2).

But notice that this solution will work only if the following three conditions are met. First, it needs to be the case that (H3) captures the relevant content of (H); second, that (H) does not already provide, on its own, independent and sufficient reason for accepting (H2); and third, that a theist isn't ultimately committed on other grounds to (H2).

Unfortunately, even if we grant the first two conditions, the third seems false. To see why, recall our previous claim that (D3) makes the tension between Heaven and Defense harder to resolve. The dissenter affirms (H1), (H3), (D1), and (D2). As argued above, however, the Defense commits one to (D3). But (D3) and (H3) together entail:

(H4) Heaven contains freedom goods that are supremely and outweighingly valuable human-fulfillment freedom goods.

This, in turn, entails (H2), which the dissenter denies. The upshot is that, given (D3), the dissenter cannot consistently deny (H2) while accepting (H3). Thus, the first way that (D3) exacerbates the tension between Heaven and Defense is purely formal: the replace-(H2) strategy becomes logically more vulnerable than it would have been without (D3). Without (D3), the dissenter affirms ~(H2); but with (D3), the dissenter must affirm the logically stronger conjunction, ~(H2) & ~(H3), and therefore must find another way to replace (H2).

But there is a second, more significant way that (D3) exacerbates the tension. To wit: (D3) makes the denial of (H2) enormously, and by our lights, prohibitively costly for the theist who accepts (H). By *modus tollens* on the above argument, given (D3), denying (H2) requires denying (H3). However, (H3)'s antecedent plausibility on (H) is very high. For consider: although the

inference from (H) to (H3) may not be logical entailment, it is nevertheless hard to see how a heaven could satisfy (H) but not also (H3).[10] In other words, it is hard to see how a state of maximally great human fulfillment could be lacking in any of the supremely valuable goods that constitute human fulfillment. Thus, (D3) requires the replace-(H2) strategist to deny something that is highly plausible, namely, (H3).

A third way in which (D3) makes the Problem more difficult is by significantly weakening the replace-(H2) strategist's ability to provide a successful free-will based Defense. For, as we noted, (D3) demands that the aggregate value of freedom goods must outweigh the aggregate (dis)value of moral evil that actually obtains. But if (H2) is false, then there are no heavenly freedom goods—there are only pre-heavenly freedom goods. Thus, if the replace-(H2) strategist is to meet the demands of (D3), she must affirm that the aggregate (dis)value of moral evil is outweighed by the aggregate value of *only pre-heavenly* freedom goods. But it seems implausible that pre-heavenly freedom goods could be valuable enough to outweigh the enormity of moral evil. Although he is not singling out freedom goods per se, C. S. Lewis emphasizes the crucial role played by heavenly goods in theodicy:

> "I reckon", said St. Paul, "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." If this is so, a book on suffering which says nothing of heaven, is leaving out almost the whole of one side of the account. Scripture and tradition habitually put the joys of heaven into the scale against the sufferings of earth, and no solution to the problem of pain which does not do so can be called a Christian one. (Lewis 2001a: 148)

Here we agree with Oppy, Nagasawa, and Trakakis (2006) that the heavenly goods—the joys of heaven—that are so supreme as to outweigh evil will have to include *freedom* goods, on pain of fatally undermining the free-will defense. A free-will based response to the problem of evil will be dramatically—and arguably catastrophically—limited if it cannot appeal to the possibility of heavenly freedom goods. As William Hasker says, "Theism needs an afterlife in which injustices can be remedied and suffering assuaged; without this, there is a massive, perhaps insoluble, problem of evil" (2015).

To sum up, here is the third way in which (D3) exacerbates the Problem: Although (H2)-denial is a tempting strategy, (D3) entails that this strategy can appeal only to a tiny fraction of the aggregate value of freedom goods available to the (H2) advocate—to wit, access only to the aggregate value of freedom goods that obtain during pre-heavenly existence; but this does not seem to be a great enough value to justify God's permission of evil.

[10] One might deny the entailment by holding that, possibly, a person could be in a state of maximally great human fulfillment without having *every single one* of the supremely valuable human-fulfillment goods—perhaps a (large but) proper subset suffices.

The last paragraph also indicates (D3)'s dialectical significance. It shows that the denial of Heaven (and (H2) in particular) is a potential defeater for the Defense (and (D3) in particular). If (H2) is false, then it is very hard to see how the Defense can succeed. More obviously, the converse is also true. The failure of the Defense provides a strong reason to think that theism is false, which in turn provides a strong reason to think that there is no Heaven, since the heaven conceived of by traditional theism exists only if a theistic God exists. Thus, Heaven and Defense are intertwined in such a way that the viability of each is affected by the viability of the other. In light of their interviability, it is perhaps misleading to describe the Problem as a *dilemma* between Heaven and Defense. To say that there is a "dilemma" between two propositions, P and P^*, strongly suggests that the denial of P is not itself a potential defeater for P^*. In other words, one would expect the denial of P to at least leave P^* as a live option, perhaps even a more plausible option. One would not expect the denial of P to significantly and negatively affect the plausibility of P^*. For example, the so-called "dilemma of freedom and foreknowledge" is aptly named—after all, denying freedom doesn't tend to undermine foreknowledge, or vice versa.[11] As we've shown, however, this is importantly *not* the case with respect to the Problem. Issues concerning the nature of heaven and the problem of evil are mutually informing.

14.3. ASSUMPTIONS AND SCOPE

In the foregoing we noted several commitments of Heaven and Defense, and explained how together they generate a problem. In addition to those commitments, however, we've seen other background assumptions at work. Before considering further strategies for resolving the Problem, it will be useful to fix our working framework by expanding on two key assumptions and restricting our focus to a specific type of freedom good.

First, we assume that human freedom should be understood in the way that libertarians suggest: humans at least sometimes act freely, but could not do so if determinism were true. One might seek to resolve the Problem by giving up this assumption. Indeed, one of us once argued that the nature of heavenly freedom puts considerable pressure on the theist to reject incompatibilism (Garcia 1999). We invite the reader to consider whether or not rejecting incompatibilism is the best strategy for resolving the Problem, but we will not consider that strategy here.[12]

[11] We thank Ryan Byerly for suggesting this illustration.
[12] See Sennett (1999: 71) for objections to this strategy.

Second, we assume that heavenly saints are impeccable in a particularly strong sense: not only *do* the denizens of heaven refrain from sinning, but they are also *unable* to sin. Again, it might be thought that one can resolve the tension between Heaven and Defense by offering a different understanding of impeccability, or giving up the general assumption of impeccability altogether. Such a strategy (e.g., offering a Molinist understanding of impeccability) deserves attention, but we do not entertain it in this chapter.[13]

We want also to mention an additional assumption that will play a significant role in our discussion. We have so far left the idea of *freedom goods* somewhat vague, indicating only that they are "goods that are uniquely actualized by human freedom," and that they are central to the Defense in virtue of their outweighingly great value. In the sequel, we focus primarily on a specific kind of freedom good. In the remainder of this section we will identify this freedom good and say why we've singled it out.

According to Robert Kane, "free will is significant and worth wanting because it is a prerequisite for other goods that humans highly value" (1996: 15). He mentions ten goods for which freedom is necessary:

> (1) genuine creativity; (2) autonomy (self-legislation) or self-creation; (3) true desert for one's achievements; (4) moral responsibility in an ultimate sense; (5) being suitable objects of reactive attitudes such as admiration, gratitude, resentment and indignation; (6) dignity or self-worth; (7) a true sense of individuality or uniqueness as a person; (8) life-hopes requiring an open future; (9) genuine (freely given) love and friendship between persons (or in religious contexts, freely given love toward God); and (10) the ability to say in the fullest sense that one acts of one's own free will. (1996: 80)[14]

In our opening parable, Patty wonders how a state of maximally great human fulfillment could be a state where humans are no longer eligible to be subjects of moral praise. She has in mind the freedom good of interest here, namely *moral responsibility and desert*, especially the good of *being morally praiseworthy*. Many libertarians believe that freedom is a prerequisite for deserving moral praise, and that the (possibility of the) latter is highly valuable.

Each of the freedom goods mentioned by Kane is worthy of its own treatment in the context of the Problem. But here we focus on praiseworthiness. We do so for several reasons (besides considerations of space). First, and foremost, praiseworthiness strikes us as a kind of good that theists can reasonably expect to obtain in heaven, especially according to its traditional conception. Consider (H) again, which says that "Heaven is a state of maximally great human fulfillment," one in which, as Sennett put it, "the lives we desire for ourselves are most fully and naturally realized" (1999: 78). Kane

[13] See Pawl and Timpe (2009) for discussion.

[14] Laura Ekstrom (2000: 6–13) discusses a similar set of goods for which freedom is necessary.

remarks that moral desert is among the goods that "humans generally desire and [believe] are worth wanting" (1996: 80). This aspect of our moral lives greatly contributes to human fulfillment. Thus, it would be surprising, even disappointing, if it were absent—indeed, not possibly present—in the state of maximally great human fulfillment. Moreover, theists can reasonably expect that heavenly agents perform acts of great value. But as the story of Impertinent Patty suggests, it is hard to see how heavenly acts of such great axiological import could warrant *no credit at all* for the perfected agent. In the normal course of things we ascribe moral *blame* to agents who perform a bad act unless we have reason to think that such agents occupy excusing conditions. Similarly, we ascribe moral *praise* to agents who perform superlative acts unless we have reason to think they were done under "praise-busting" conditions (Rachels and Rachels 2011: 122). But it is hard to see what could constitute such "praise-busters" in heaven. Furthermore, the idea of heavenly praiseworthiness enjoys a place of prominence in the Christian tradition. Consider the following observation by C. S. Lewis:

> I was shocked to find such different Christians as Milton, Johnson and Thomas Aquinas taking heavenly glory quite frankly in the sense of fame or good report. But not fame conferred by our fellow creatures—fame with God, approval or (I might say) "appreciation" by God. And then, when I had thought it over, I saw that this view was scriptural; nothing can eliminate from the parable the divine *accolade* "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." With that, a good deal of what I had been thinking all my life fell down like a house of cards. I suddenly remembered that no one can enter heaven except as a child; and nothing is so obvious in a child—not in a conceited child, but in a good child—as its great and undisguised pleasure in being praised. (2001b: 36–7).

It is important to note that the praise Lewis has in mind is not merely praise for aesthetic value, or even for axiological value. He reserves the notion of "luminosity" to capture those. Rather, Lewis has in mind a further aspect of praise that is clearly *desert*-entailing—what he calls "fame" (36). As Lewis indicates, from Scripture itself to diverse figures of importance in the Christian tradition,[15] it appears to be well accepted that "heaven [is] a place where we are patted on the back" (38).[16]

[15] Marilyn McCord Adams identifies a closely related view in the writings of Julian of Norwich, who holds that the redeemed will experience God's *gratitude* for the suffering they endured before heaven. According to Adams, Julian "says that the creature's experience of divine gratitude will bring such full and unending joy as could not be merited by the whole sea of human pain and suffering throughout the ages" (1990: 219). Here we have both a claim about divine accolades, and a claim about how such accolades outweigh the pre-heavenly suffering experienced.

[16] A reader might wonder whether Lewis's claim that heavenly saints will be patted on the back—that we will receive *praise*—is at odds with his claim elsewhere that "There is no morality in heaven" (2007: 115). But his point there isn't that there won't be moral praiseworthiness in

Our focus on the good of praiseworthiness is also motivated by its connection with the broader literature on moral responsibility. In the latter, there has been much attention paid to general issues concerning the relations between moral responsibility and freedom, including (as we elaborate below) the crucial idea of responsibility *transfer* or *tracing*. This makes it fruitful to use the idea of praiseworthiness as a test case for understanding the more general behavior of freedom goods in heaven. In addition, heaven—even considered as a merely possible "Impeccable Land"—provides a useful context for understanding the limits and behavior of responsibility transfer.[17]

Finally, given (H), it seems that a full treatment of the Problem would require an examination of *every* freedom good one can expect to obtain in heaven. Such a project is well beyond the scope of this chapter. Here we identify challenges that arise from considering the idea of praiseworthy heavenly agents. The behavior of other freedom goods in heaven might well raise additional problems for traditional theism—and the Defense in particular—beyond those that we develop below for praiseworthiness. It remains to be seen whether putative answers to these challenges will find successful application with respect to other freedom goods.

14.4. THE DISAMBIGUATE AND DENY STRATEGY

The first strategy we will consider is what we will call the Disambiguate and Deny Strategy, or the D&D Strategy, for short. (Lest there be any confusion, it does not, sadly, involve an appeal to dungeons or dragons!) In short, the strategy aims to exploit an ambiguity in at least one of the premises of the Problem by providing an alternative interpretation that is compatible with the remaining premises.

This is clearly one of the strategies deployed by Sennett, and has been endorsed by others such as Jerry Walls (2002: 61–2) and Pawl and Timpe. This is not to say that this is the *only* strategy deployed by these philosophers, but it is one way to understand a crucial part of their view.

The D&D Strategy involves four steps. First, introduce a distinction between two types of freedom. Second, deploy the distinction to yield two disambiguations, or versions, of the Problem. Third, show that a theist can consistently deny a premise from each version. If this can be done, then neither version succeeds. Fourth, pronounce a Scottish verdict: the Problem is *not proven*.

heaven. Rather, his point is that moral duties and principles—you *ought* to do this or that—will no longer be necessary to guide and motivate our action because rightful actions will "flow out of [us] as spontaneously as song from a lark or fragrance from a flower" (114–15).

[17] For a related discussion, see Ekstrom's "Paradise Island" (2000: 8ff).

Step one is accomplished by drawing a distinction between two types of freedom. Sennett, for example, distinguishes between two senses of freedom, to which we will give the names *occurrent* freedom and *derivative* freedom. An agent S is *occurrently free* with respect to action A at time *t* only if S's doing A is *proximately undetermined* at *t*. An event is proximately undetermined, according to Sennett, just in case "there is no time in the past such that the laws of nature and the state of the world at that time entail that the event will occur" (1999: 72). An act is *occurrently free*, then, only if it is not determined by any antecedent states or events. This is a typical understanding of libertarian freedom.

By contrast, consider an act A that occurs at time *t* which is such that, just prior to *t*, it *was* determined that A occur. Suppose further that, although A is determined by the laws of nature and the state of the universe just prior to *t*, there was some previous time t^* at which the laws and the state of the universe did *not* determine that A occurs. Sennett helpfully describes such an action as being *proximately determined* but *remotely undetermined*. Call these "Here I Stand Cases." They arise as follows. Suppose Martin performs an act, or series of acts, that forms his character in a particular way. Suppose he acts so as to make himself into an extremely courageous person. These character-forming acts, we may suppose, were undetermined and occurrently free. But the result is that he now has a character that, in some future situation, *proximately determines* that he performs a particularly courageous act. The courageous act is determined by (among other things) Martin's character; and yet, given that he occurrently freely contributed to that character, the courageous act is *derivatively free*. It is free not in virtue of being occurrently free, but in virtue of being the result of (i.e. deriving from) a character that was partly formed through previous occurrently free acts. (The reader may be troubled by the rather loose language of "being the result of" central to the notion of derivative freedom. We encourage such readers to read on: our own misgivings about it will soon become clear.)

With the distinction between occurrent and derivative freedom in place, steps two and three can now be taken. The first way to disambiguate the Problem is to read "freedom" as "occurrent freedom." This yields an aporia:

(H1) Heaven is a state in which there is no possibility of evil.
(H2) There are freedom goods in heaven.
(D1-O) If there is no possibility of evil in a state, then it is not the case that there is occurrent freedom in that state.
(D2-O) There are freedom goods in a state only if there is occurrent freedom in that state.

These claims are jointly inconsistent. On the one hand, (D1-O) and (H1) jointly entail that it is *not* the case that there is occurrent freedom in heaven. And, on the other hand, (D2-O) and (H2) jointly entail in that it *is* the case

that there is occurrent freedom in heaven. But by appealing to Here I Stand Cases, the D&D Strategist can reasonably deny (D2-O). In such cases, freedom goods are manifested by acts of merely derivative freedom. And she will hold that, more generally, so long as a good is related in the right way to an act of occurrent freedom, the good can count as a freedom good. Thus, it is not necessary that an act be occurrently free for that act to manifest freedom goods. But rather:

(F) There are freedom goods in a state only if there is either occurrent or derivative freedom in that state.

According to the D&D Strategist, (F) is true and provides a way to understand or capture the spirit of (D2) without requiring a commitment to (D2-O). Thus, she can reasonably deny (D2-O) and thereby resolve the aporia on occurrent freedom.

This leaves the second way to disambiguate the original problem. Reading "freedom" as "derivative freedom" yields another aporia:

(H1) Heaven is a state in which there is no possibility of evil.
(H2) There are freedom goods in heaven.
(D1-D) If there is no possibility of evil in a state, then it is not the case that there is derivative freedom in that state.
(D2-D) There are freedom goods in a state only if there is derivative freedom in that state.

These claims are jointly inconsistent. On the one hand, (D1-D) and (H1) jointly entail that it is *not* the case that there is derivative freedom in heaven. And, on the other hand, (D2-D) and (H2) jointly entail in that it *is* the case that there is derivative freedom in heaven. But the D&D Strategist may reasonably deny both (D1-D) and (D2-D). Regarding (D1-D), she will affirm that the following are compatible: (i) agent S has derivative freedom in temporal interval *t*, and (ii) S is unable to do anything that is evil in *t*. The idea here is that possibly, S's non-evil acts in *t* are (derivatively) free in virtue of being "the result of" prior *occurrently* free acts. In other words, the D&D Strategist rejects (D1-D) on the grounds that the following is true:

(F1) It is possible that a state have both derivative freedom and the impossibility of evil.

And (D2-D) may be reasonably denied too. After all, surely it is possible for occurrent freedom to ground freedom goods.

To sum up: the D&D Strategy deploys a distinction between two types of freedom—occurrent and derivative—to disambiguate the original Problem into two versions. But for each version, the theist is within her rights not to accept at least one of its premises. Thus, the D&D Strategy secures a Scottish verdict for the Problem: *the inconsistency is not proven*.

Of course, to show that the inconsistency is not proven is not to show that there is no inconsistency. Thus, an important question is whether the D&D Strategy might be advanced further, to *show* that Heaven and Defense are consistent—viz. to *model* them. It isn't entirely clear, but it seems that recent advocates of the D&D Strategy—Sennett, Walls, and Pawl and Timpe—take the above considerations to provide the material for a model of Heaven and Defense. But to do this, it is not sufficient to appeal to (F), which states only a necessary condition on the manifestation of freedom goods. Rather, modeling requires affirming a claim about the sufficiency of derivative freedom for the manifestation of freedom goods. This *Advanced D&D Strategy*, as we will call it, requires a premise that is stronger than (F). To wit:

(F2) An act's being derivatively free in a state is sufficient for that act's manifesting freedom goods in that state.

However, the advanced strategy also requires that *there is derivative freedom in heaven*. The latter claim, together with (F2), entails the intended conclusion, (H2), that there are freedom goods in heaven. Thus, tying these thoughts together, the Advanced D&D Strategy aims to model Heaven and Defense by affirming that the following is at least possibly true:

(M) There are derivatively free acts in heaven and an act's being derivatively free in a state is sufficient for that act's manifesting freedom goods in that state.

In more detail, to use (M) to give a model the Advanced D&D Strategist must make four claims.

- First, she claims that (D1) can rightly be interpreted along the lines of (D1-O), and that (D2) should be understood along the lines of (F).
- Second, she affirms that (M) is compatible with the conjunction of (H1), (D1-O), and (F).
- Third, she claims that (M) is at least possibly true, in the broadly logical sense of possibility.
- Fourth, she claims that (H2) is entailed by the conjunction of (M), (H1), (D1-O), and (F).

By affirming (D1-O) and (F), the Advanced D&D Strategist is still intending to affirm—or, at any rate, has done nothing to remove the commitment to or plausibility of—(D3) and (H3), from whence (H4) follows. Thus, (M) succeeds as a model only if (H4) is entailed by the conjunction of (M), (H1), (D1-O), and (F). Later this will be important. In sum, if the above four claims are true, then the Advanced D&D Strategist has shown that there is an interpretation of the original four premises of the Problem on which the premises are all true and thus jointly consistent.

We have outlined two strategies for responding to the Problem. The (unadvanced) D&D Strategy aims at burden-shifting, whereas the Advanced D&D Strategy aims to resolve the Problem by way of modeling. We will now raise challenges for this second, dialectically stronger strategy.

As shown in the previous section, the success of the Advanced D&D Strategy depends on whether the crucial premise (M) is possibly true. We've also noted that others—Sennett, Pawl and Timpe, and perhaps Walls—seem to think that something like (M) is not only possibly true but also plausible. Unfortunately, this prima facie plausibility is belied by a two-fold ambiguity in (M). Indeed, in the end, we will argue that (M)—even its being *possibly* true—is implausible. The first ambiguity concerns (M)'s notion of "derivative freedom." The second concerns the scope of freedom goods that (M) ranges over. In the next section we discuss the former.

14.5. THE ADVANCED DISAMBIGUATE AND DENY STRATEGY

The ambiguity on "derivative freedom" stems from the causal language often used to describe a derivatively free act. Sennett, for example, speaks of derivatively free actions having occurrently free action "in their causal past," and that the former "are causally dependent on" the latter (1999: 75). Likewise, Timpe and Pawl suggest that a determined act's being "the result of" an occurrently free act suffices to make the former derivatively free (2009: 408). To capture this general idea, let us say that an agent's action is *traced* when it is causally determined, at least in part, by her previous occurrently free actions. For example, an agent's action is traced if it is determined by her character, provided the latter is (at least partly) the result of her previous occurrently free actions.

With the above notion of tracing in mind, consider the view that to be derivatively free is to be traced. Although it is less than clear, Sennett appears to hold this view. And, although Pawl and Timpe's account is more sophisticated (more on this below), they too seem inclined to accept it. But here our main interest is in the claim itself, that tracing is sufficient for derivative freedom.

As we will argue in detail later, tracing, though necessary, is by itself *insufficient* for the manifestation of freedom goods. Arguably, there are other necessary conditions—such as epistemic conditions—for their manifestation. At any rate, if a derivatively free action manifests freedom goods, then it does so by satisfying certain conditions, including but not limited to tracing. We propose to use the term *anchoring* to refer to those conditions, whatever they might be (and including tracing), that are sufficient for a derivatively free action to manifest freedom goods.

We can now disambiguate the notion of derivative freedom featured in (M). Because the notion occurs twice there, the traced/anchored distinction yields four ways to understand (M):

(MTT) There are traced acts in heaven and an act's being traced in a state is sufficient for that act's manifesting relevant freedom goods in that state.

(MAT) There are anchored acts in heaven and an act's being traced in a state is sufficient for that act's manifesting relevant freedom goods in that state.

(MTA) There are traced acts in heaven and an act's being anchored in a state is sufficient for that act's manifesting relevant freedom goods in that state.

(MAA) There are anchored acts in heaven and an act's being anchored in a state is sufficient for that act's manifesting relevant freedom goods in that state.

We can now introduce our general thesis about the Advanced D&D Strategy: all four interpretations of (M) fail to model Heaven and Defense. We will now show why.

We can treat (MTT), (MAT), and (MTA) in one fell swoop. Each can provide a model only if tracing is sufficient for anchoring. This is transparently the case for (MTT) and (MAT). Given the definition of anchoring, their second conjuncts amount to the claim that an act's being traced is sufficient for its being anchored. But (MTT) and (MAT) can provide a model only if they are *possibly true*. Hence, they succeed only if tracing is in fact sufficient for anchoring. Now consider (MTA). Although it appears to be true, it provides a model only if (H2) is entailed by the conjunction of (MTA), (H1), (D1-O) and (F). But this entailment holds only if tracing is sufficient for anchoring. Thus, if tracing isn't sufficient for anchoring, then neither (MTT), (MAT), nor (MTA) can model Heaven and Defense. So, *is* tracing sufficient for anchoring?

Unfortunately, no. It is deeply implausible to think that tracing is sufficient for anchoring. Indeed, it is at odds with the way that almost all contemporary agency theorists talk about tracing. Or so we will now argue. Consider the freedom good of *being morally responsible*, such that one deserves moral credit, praise or blame, and is an appropriate candidate for such reactive attitudes as gratitude, resentment, or admiration. To see a counterexample to the claim that an act's being merely traced is sufficient for the manifestation of the freedom good of moral responsibility, suppose the following:

Dave performs some act A at time t_2, but did not have indeterministic control at t_2 over doing A. However, Dave had occurrent freedom with respect to an act B at earlier time t_1, and Dave's doing A at t_2 is a partial causal consequence of having (freely!) done B at t_1. In this case, A traces to B.

Most theorists who have talked about "tracing" conditions will grant that Dave is morally responsible for A at t_2 only if A traces to one or more occurrently free acts, such as B. But we know of *no one* who takes a mere causal connection of this sort as sufficient for moral responsibility. This is for good reason: for suppose that Dave, when performing B at t_1 *could not have reasonably foreseen* that B would (or even could) result in A, and, moreover, that Dave is not at all morally responsible for the fact that he could not have reasonably foreseen B's leading to A. Then, despite the fact that A traces to B, it is plausible to think that Dave is not in fact morally responsible for A. Or, if he is morally responsible for A, it is not in virtue of A's merely tracing to B.

Such epistemic conditions on moral responsibility are commonly accepted. If we focus on more specific judgments of, say, moral blameworthiness and praiseworthiness, it seems clear that other conditions—again, beyond mere causal tracing—may also be necessary for a determined act to manifest blameworthiness or praiseworthiness. Suppose that Dave's act A is bad, so that we would normally say that doing A is blameworthy. And suppose that refraining from B at t_1 was the only way that Dave could have avoided doing A at t_2. Grant that he did foresee, at t_1, that doing B would lead to A. Even this much is insufficient for Dave's being blameworthy for A. For it could be that, though he could have refrained from doing B at t_1, doing so would have (foreseeably) guaranteed that he would have done something far worse than A. In such a case, the fact that Dave faced morally worse alternatives than B is a reason to think that he will not be blameworthy for A. Indeed, we may want to say that he is actually praiseworthy in such a case. What the example of Dave shows is that tracing *alone* is insufficient for blameworthiness or praiseworthiness to "transfer" from free act to subsequent determined act.[18]

Further conditions suggest themselves as well if we attend to the *degree* of moral blame or praise someone deserves for a given act. For instance, an agent's culpability—that is, whether an agent performs an act intentionally, knowingly, recklessly, or only negligently—can plausibly make a difference to the degree to which they deserve blame or praise for an act.

When thinking of *degrees* of blame or praise in the context of derivative freedom, the metaphor of freedom good *transfer*, mentioned previously, suggests a second metaphor: that of the *carrying capacity* of the anchoring relation between prior occurrently free acts and subsequent determined acts. If the relational "pipeline" between the two acts is of poor quality, meeting only

[18] More generally, we will sometimes speak of freedom goods—such as blameworthiness or praiseworthiness—*transferring* from prior occurrently free act(s) to subsequent determined act(s). The idea is that the subsequent (determined) acts acquire or "inherit" certain moral properties from the earlier (occurrently free) acts, and they do so in virtue of the fact that the earlier acts (have those moral properties and) are suitably related to the subsequent acts. The free acts *ground* the determined acts' manifestation of freedom goods since, after all, the former are the only acts over which the agent had any genuine libertarian control.

the minimum thresholds required for anchoring at all (along the various dimensions identified in Section 14.8), then it will have a minimal carrying capacity—only freedom goods of diminutive value could be transferred to, and thus manifested by, the determined acts. And if a determined act is to manifest greatly valuable freedom goods, then the anchoring relation to the prior free act must be of superlative quality. We say more about this in Section 14.8.

What these examples show is that *mere* tracing is only a necessary condition—one of many—on the successful transfer of freedom goods. Such a conclusion is entirely in keeping with leading work on moral responsibility. Carl Ginet (2000), for example, has offered an analysis of moral responsibility which focuses on the epistemic requirement on being blameworthy. The result (drum roll please) is a 360-word necessary condition containing about 10 main disjuncts and conjuncts. After subjecting the reader to the condition than which none more colossal can be conceived, he ventures to suggest that his condition *may* also be a sufficient condition on blameworthiness!

We mention Ginet's analysis for two reasons. First, his analysis is a rare instance of a libertarian venturing to offer, if only tentatively, a sufficient condition for moral responsibility—most libertarians offer only necessary conditions. Second, the complexity of his condition speaks to the implausibility of proposing mere tracing as a sufficient condition on the transfer of various freedom goods, such as moral desert. This underscores the inadequacy of responding to the Problem by appealing only to tracing.

Now, to be fair to the Advanced D&D Strategist, perhaps we should take the obvious inadequacy of the tracing readings of (M)—the first three above—as good evidence that (M) should be understood as (MAA). So let's see how the strategy fares on (MAA). By way of a reminder:

> (MAA) There are anchored acts in heaven and an act's being anchored in a state is sufficient for that act's manifesting relevant freedom goods in that state.

Notice that, while (MAA)'s second conjunct appears to be analytically true, its first conjunct is ambiguous. How many anchored heavenly acts is (MAA) committed to?

It is not exactly clear how to resolve (MAA)'s ambiguity. No matter. This much is clear. If (MAA) is to model Heaven and Defense, then its ambiguity must be resolved in a way that still allows (MAA) to imply that (H4) is true. Recall that (H4) captures the idea that the aggregate value of heavenly freedom goods outweighs the aggregate (dis)value of moral evil. Thus, if (MAA) is to imply (H4), then it would seem that the number of anchored acts in heaven must be exceedingly great and that the value of the freedom goods they manifest must be exceedingly high.

Unfortunately, recent writers who appear to support the Advanced D&D Strategy have not provided support for claims like (MAA). They only appeal

to tracing. But (MAA) is far from self-evident, and, as we argue below, there are reasons to think that (MAA) is false. Indeed, we shall argue that it is difficult to see how *any* heavenly acts could be anchored, let alone an exceedingly great—perhaps potentially infinite—number of them, so the Advanced D&D Strategist's order is a tall one.

Before we consider these problems, it will be useful to introduce a proposal by Pawl and Timpe that is advertised as an improvement on the Advanced D&D Strategy.

14.6. IMPECCABLE OCCURRENT FREEDOM

Pawl and Timpe attribute derivative freedom to heavenly persons. And, like others, they are less than clear on whether or not mere tracing is sufficient for the manifestation of freedom goods. If anything, they seem to suggest that tracing *is* sufficient. So far, then, their view is subject to the same objections developed above. If derivative freedom is supposed to be mere *tracing*, then their view is highly implausible (since, as we saw, tracing does not entail anchoring). And if derivative freedom is supposed to be understood as *anchoring*, then the cogency of their view depends on the truth of the claim that a sufficiently large number of heavenly acts could be anchored. But this claim is unsupported, unobvious, and (as we will argue) objectionable.

These points notwithstanding, Pawl and Timpe take their picture of heaven to be an improvement on that presented by Advanced D&D. As we have seen, on the latter view, heavenly persons have only derivative freedom and lack any type of occurrent freedom. Pawl and Timpe propose a more enhanced picture on which heavenly persons enjoy occurrent freedom, but not *morally significant* occurrent freedom. Instead, a person has the occurrent freedom to choose between alternative actions, all of which are morally good. Thus, regardless of how a saint uses her occurrent freedom, her action will be a morally good one. We will call this *impeccable occurrent freedom*. There is much to say about this aspect of Pawl and Timpe's view,[19] but for our purposes we want to consider only the following question: Does their picture of heaven fare better with respect to the objections we have raised against the Advanced D&D Strategy?

[19] Pawl and Timpe also claim that heavenly agents enjoy what we might call *variegated* impeccable occurrent freedom, which amounts to the ability to freely choose from amongst alternatives each of which is good but *to different degrees*. That is, some available ways of acting are better than others, but no choice will be *wrong* or *bad* (2009: 418). Pawl and Timpe develop this view further in the present volume. For objections to, and refinements of, this view, see Brown (2015: 63–80). And for further related discussion, see the chapter by Tamburro in the present volume.

Recall the problem for the latter strategy: because heavenly freedom goods are both maximally great and only manifested by derivatively free actions, all of the value of those freedom goods must be "transferred" from the occurrently free acts that ground them. Hence, the anchoring relation must have a great carrying capacity, as it were. Thus, Pawl and Timpe's view will improve things only to the extent that impeccable occurrent freedom *can* manifest freedom goods.

To anticipate, on the question of whether Pawl and Timpe's view fares better than the Advanced D&D view, we will ultimately conclude the following:

> If acts of impeccable occurrent freedom do not manifest freedom goods, then they are irrelevant to improving on the Advanced D&D Strategy for solving the Problem. But, if they do, then to the extent that they do, either the free will defense is weakened or the carrying capacity of the anchoring relation must be increased.

To defend these conclusions, we need to introduce two distinctions. We borrow the first one from John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza. The distinction is between *snapshot* properties and *historical* properties. Roughly, this is a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic properties. Put more precisely:

- The "snapshot properties of an object at a time are the temporally non-relational [intrinsic] properties of the object at that time, together with the properties that supervene on these properties." (Fischer and Ravizza 1999: 171)
- The historical properties of an object at time *t* depend on some features of the object's history *prior* to *t*. *Were* that history to have been different, *and*, holding fixed the snapshot properties of the object at *t*, *then* the historical properties at *t* could have been different.

Using their distinction, we can draw another one between direct and derivative manifestation of freedom goods:

- Action A *directly* manifests a freedom good G only if G's being manifested depends solely on the snapshot properties of A.
- Action A *derivatively* manifests a freedom good G only if G's being manifested depends at least partly on the historical properties of A (e.g., on A's being *anchored*).

We can now state the problem. Where the acts in question are acts of impeccable occurrent freedom, clearly the anchoring relation's carrying capacity must increase to the extent that those actions *derivatively* manifest freedom goods, since all of the value of those goods derives from the value of the grounding, occurrently free acts. And, we will now argue that the Defense is weakened to the extent that acts of impeccable occurrent freedom *directly* manifest freedom goods. For suppose a freedom good can be directly manifested by impeccable occurrent freedom. If that's possible then *morally*

significant occurrent freedom is not necessary for that good. Thus, God could have secured those goods without permitting morally significant freedom—that is, without permitting the type of freedom that makes evil possible. Thus, to the extent to which the freedom goods directly manifested by impeccable occurrent freedom are greatly valuable, it will be to that extent difficult to see how God's permission of morally significant occurrent freedom can be justified. If God could have created a world with both a guarantee of no evil *and* greatly valuable goods manifested by impeccable occurrent freedom, then it is questionable whether he would be justified in creating a world with morally significant occurrent freedom. Thus, as the value of directly manifested heavenly freedom good increases, so does the damage to the Defense.

More generally, the problem for Pawl and Timpe is that at least one of the following seems true:

1. Their Proposal does not increase the amount of heavenly freedom good, and so is irrelevant with respect to the Problem.
2. Their proposal increases the amount of directly manifested heavenly freedom good, thus weakening the Defense, or
3. Their proposal increases the amount of derivatively manifested heavenly freedom good, thus increasing the burden on anchoring.

It seems then, that however you go, Pawl and Timpe's proposal doesn't help—and perhaps hurts—the Advanced D&D Strategy.

14.7. INTERMISSION

Before taking a closer look at the carrying capacity of the anchoring relation, it will be useful to take stock.

We have argued that the Advanced D&D Strategy will solve the Problem in the sense of giving a model only if it can be shown that it is possible for heaven to contain freedom goods while having only derivative freedom. To show this, it is not sufficient to point out that heavenly derivatively free acts can be traced back to pre-heavenly occurrently free acts. Rather, it needs to be shown that the former can be *anchored* in the latter.

But even if this could be shown, we have argued that there still remains an *evidential* problem. Suppose for the moment that derivative freedom is compatible with *some freedom goods or other* being manifested in heaven. It in no way follows that derivative freedom is compatible with the amount, kinds, and features of the freedom goods—supremely, outweighingly valuable ones, as indicated by (H4)—to which the traditional view of heaven is committed. The latter is possible only if the anchoring relation has a great—perhaps maximally

great—carrying capacity. That is, it would have to be possible for the outweighingly enormous value of heavenly freedom goods to be grounded in the comparatively miniscule value of the finite, limited, imperfect, fragile, occurrent free acts that feature in their pre-heavenly causal etiology.

Furthermore, we have argued that Pawl and Timpe's Proposal represents no advance over the Advanced D&D Strategy in solving the Problem. It enhances heaven, we suggested, only by either weakening the Defense or putting a yet greater burden on anchoring. But Pawl and Timpe do not take their proposal to weaken the Defense. Thus, their proposal, just like the Advanced D&D approach, would seem to stand or fall with the carrying capacity of anchoring.

14.8. ON THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF ANCHORING

We will now indicate and develop some of the problems facing any attempt to show that derivative heavenly freedom can be anchored in the way required to solve the Problem.

One important point to re-emphasize here is this. It is not enough to show that a derivatively free act manifests a given freedom good *to some degree or other*. Heaven, being maximally great, manifests freedom goods to a maximal degree, that is, they are maximally valuable. Hence, we must look for the conditions on anchoring that must be satisfied in order for a derivatively free action in heaven to manifest a given freedom good *to a heavenly degree*.

Focusing on moral desert, it may be helpful first to distinguish two senses in which one might say that blame or praise come in degrees. First, one might mean that an agent is *more or less deserving* of (some quantity of) moral blame or praise; and second, one might instead mean that an agent deserves *more or less blame or praise*. The first, one might think, has to do with *how responsible* someone is for an action or consequence—a question that may turn on whether the agent occupies mitigating or excusing conditions for what she has done or brought about. The second, by contrast, concerns the quantity or quality of moral blame or praise merited. One can *perfectly deserve* a trivial amount of blame (e.g., for a trivially bad act), or one can *only partly* deserve some moral credit or sanction. And one can (e.g., perfectly) deserve an enormous amount of blame or praise, or only a trifling amount. Different factors will affect each of these properties.

But now consider the case of heavenly acts. If they are to manifest the *heavenly degree* of praiseworthiness indicated by (H4), it seems that the anchoring acts must not only confer the *desert* perfectly (i.e., the agent must not occupy any conditions that diminish how *fit for praise* she is in the first place), but must also confer a huge "quantity" of praise on the subsequent act (i.e., the conditions must be satisfied for the property of *being praiseworthy to a heavenly degree*).

For a given derivatively free action or consequence, then, what sorts of factors make a difference either to the degree to which an agent is *deserving* of moral blame or praise, or to the degree *of moral blame or praise* an agent deserves? And what conditions must be satisfied in order to say that moral desert has been conferred or "transferred" to a great degree from a prior free act to a subsequent determined one?

Below we will consider several factors that seem relevant to these questions. But before we do, we wish to emphasize three things. First, we take the considerations developed below to be *relevant* to whether or not derivatively free heavenly acts can in fact be anchored in the way required by the AD&D Strategy. And yet, it seems that advocates of this strategy have failed to take much, let alone sufficient, notice of these factors. Second, we will offer reasons for thinking that most, if not all, actual human agents will fail to satisfy the conditions necessary and sufficient to anchor the requisite quality of *heavenly praise* for their derivatively free heavenly actions. And third, it is important to stress that the burden of proof is on those who believe such anchoring is possible. This is a tall order, as discharging this burden requires providing accounts of each of the relations and factors we discuss below—accounts that show how humans *could* (or do) successfully anchor heavenly actions here on earth.

We will now discuss five relevant factors, though there may be others.

The first factor affecting anchoring is what we might call the *axiological significance* of an act or consequence. Some actions are *worse* or *better* than others in virtue of how good or bad they are, that is, in virtue of how valuable or disvaluable they are. For instance, an experience of significant, unmitigated pain for a long time contains far more disvalue than an experience of minor, short-lived annoyance at having lost a game of chess. In the case of an action or consequence *occurrently* freely brought about, then, axiological significance contributes (ceteris paribus) to an agent's degree of moral desert for that act or consequence. All else equal, Carol deserves more blame for murdering someone than Jill does for making fun of her brother's haircut.[20]

How might this factor affect cases of *derivatively* free acts? If B is a (proximately) determined act performed by S, then whether S deserves blame or praise for B seems to depend on whether B is *anchored* in some previous act(s) that S did freely. Suppose that A anchors B: it seems plausible to say that any moral desert accruing to S for B does so because of the nature of (facts related to) S's having previously done A. But then facts about A will contribute to the quality of blame or praise deserved for B—any moral desert

[20] To invoke a distinction identified earlier, here it may turn out that Carol and Jill are *equally deserving* of moral blame, because both are just as responsible for what they have brought about—neither, we might stipulate, occupies any excusing or mitigating conditions for her free choice. Nevertheless, Carol deserves *more blame* (more moral condemnation, more indignation, etc.) than Jill in light of the (moral value of the) kind of act Carol performed.

for B must be "transferred" from (S's performance of) A. And, as we've just argued, the axiological value of A is one factor that affects the quality of moral blame or praise deserved by S for A: hence, since the blame or praise credited to S for B derives from S's doing A, the axiological value of A likewise affects the quality of blame or praise S deserves for B.

A consequence of this principle is that, in the case of derivatively free *heavenly* acts, the quality of moral praise deserved will depend, in part, on the axiological value of the earthly act(s) that (purportedly) anchor them. But these prior acts will have been performed by pre-heavenly, characterologically deficient, imperfect agents. The axiological value of those pre-heavenly free acts will surely be very small in comparison with the superlative value of the heavenly acts they are said to anchor. How could a heavenly degree of moral desert be transferred from anchoring acts of far from heavenly axiological value?

A few complications are worth noting. First, which sorts of states of affairs (e.g., acts, act-types, consequences, events, etc.) have axiological value—and, if they do, the valence and degree of value they have—will surely depend on one's moral theory. Consequentialists will assign moral value to things quite differently, in some cases, than the contractarian or virtue theorist, for instance. And second, while we have focused here on the relation between an anchoring act's *axiological value* and an anchored act's *moral desert*, there are further relations—such as between the anchoring act's *axiological value* and the anchored act's *axiological value*, and between the pair of acts' *moral desert*—that are relevant to the question whether derivatively free heavenly acts can manifest the kinds and amounts of freedom goods required by the key premises of Heaven and Defense. The task for the advocate of AD&D is daunting. To *model* Heaven and Defense, he must provide, and defend, both an account of moral value, and accounts for each of the relevant relations mentioned above, which are such that they satisfy the "evidential" requirements of anchoring freedom goods in heaven.

The second factor that makes a difference to an agent's degree of responsibility for an act is her *culpability*. Doing something intentionally (whether with occurrent or derivative freedom) makes one more blameworthy or praiseworthy than doing something merely knowingly, recklessly, or negligently. Again, diminished culpability for an occurrently free act A would seem to diminish the total blame or praise of any goods manifested by subsequent determined acts causally related to A by tracing or anchoring. Yet surely, such diminished culpability attends many of the actual free acts that ground the manifestation of non-occurrently free heavenly acts. For instance, in the ordinary believer's life, character-building acts will not *always*—indeed, might in some cases only rarely—be intentionally and knowingly aimed at the freedom goods that will manifest in heaven.

Third, the axiological value of the *open alternatives* at the time of acting (and the relative difference in value between the chosen act and its

alternatives) can contribute to the degree of moral blame or praise an agent deserves—or even whether it is blame rather than praise (or vice versa) that is deserved in the first place.[21]

Consider first a case of *occurrent* freedom. Suppose that, faced with only bad alternatives, Bob chooses the least bad option. This might make Bob praiseworthy, even though Susie could be blameworthy for choosing the same (bad) action type when facing much better options. The difference in value between the chosen action and the available alternatives affects whether, and how much, praise or blame is due. One upshot for the discussion of heavenly freedom, then, is that it would appear that *impeccable occurrently free* acts (in heaven or elsewhere) do not merit significant (or any) praise, since the available alternatives for any such free acts will be (just as) morally good.[22]

But how do open alternatives affect cases of *derivative* freedom? There are likewise cases in which facts about the alternative actions open to an agent freely performing some act at a given time affect the valence and degree of praise or blame for subsequent (determined) actions *anchored* by that act. Consider a variant of the Martin case described earlier: suppose that at some crucial character-forming time, Martin were offered a substantial, and much-needed, bribe to perform some vicious act V rather than the more virtuous path open to him. Suppose that he nonetheless chooses the virtuous path, forming his character in a particular way that leads him, some months later, to be proximately determined to perform some act A of significant moral value. It seems plausible to maintain that he is not only praiseworthy for doing A (assuming the other conditions of anchoring are met), but deserves *more* moral praise for doing A than he would have deserved had the *anchoring* act been performed in circumstances in which he did not face the strong temptation (to V) that he in fact overcame.

Similarly, suppose instead that Martin *did* succumb to the bribe, fixing his character, via the performance of V, in a way that then predictably leads to the subsequent performance of a further vicious act V_2. He may deserve moral blame for V_2, but to a *lesser degree* than he would deserve had he freely performed the vicious anchoring act, V, in circumstances in which he had not been offered a tempting bribe (or anything else of similar moral significance) to do so.

More generally, then, there will be at least some—perhaps a great many—cases in which facts about the alternative actions open to an agent at a given

[21] Doesn't this reduce to a consideration of the axiological significance of the act chosen, as already discussed above? No: for while the discussion above about axiological value applies to actions (or action types) themselves, here the concern is comparative or relational: degree of blame or praise deserved for an act depends partly on (the moral quality of) the *other* acts one could have chosen instead, independent of the value of the chosen act itself.

[22] Being *impeccable* free acts, one might think it won't be possible to choose any *better* option than the one actually chosen. But see note 19 for a relevant wrinkle.

time *t* will affect the degree of blame or praise merited by that agent for *subsequent* acts anchored by the action chosen at *t*. And it seems very plausible to maintain—particularly given common Christian commitments concerning the corrupted and sinful character of humankind—that actual human agents routinely choose actions, including character-forming actions, that are *morally suboptimal*, given their available options.[23] But if so, then it seems that the actions anchored by these less meritorious choices are themselves less meritorious as well—the praise-diminution *transfers* from anchoring act(s) to anchored acts(s).

Hence, a second upshot for the discussion of heavenly freedom is that *derivatively* free heavenly actions will, ceteris paribus, deserve less praise than they would have otherwise to the extent that (and because) their earthly anchoring acts were performed by agents in circumstances in which they had available to them alternatives that it would have been morally better to perform. It is hard to see how derivatively free heavenly acts could merit the *heavenly* degree of praise required by (H4) when they are derived from character-building acts that are themselves—particularly taken collectively over a given agent's lifetime—very far from being of heavenly pedigree, considering what most human agents *could* have done instead.

It is important, however, to keep in mind the dialectical position of our target. For even if (aspects of) the analysis just offered meets with objections or needs refinements (we offer our analysis as more of a plausible exploration of these matters than as a final word), it is proponents of the AD&D Strategy that have the *positive* burden to show how to make good on the claim that derivatively free heavenly acts, and the freedom goods they manifest, can be anchored. That burden includes providing an analysis of the moral import of open alternatives for situations of heavenly praise transfer of the sort required by (H4).

Fourth, as noted above, epistemic conditions loom large. The foreseeability of a given outcome at the time of an occurrently free act makes a difference to the degree to which the agent is morally responsible for the ensuing outcome. But foreseeability comes in degrees, as do a host of related features, such as the quality of one's evidence, one's responsibility for having the evidence one does (or failing to have better evidence), the temporal distance between the

[23] What makes a given act count as morally suboptimal in a given set of circumstances will likely depend on which moral theory one has in view. On a standard consequentialist view, for instance, there may be many occasions on which a character-building act increases the amount of good (even specifically with respect to building character), but the agent could (and perhaps should) have increased it *even more* via an available alternative act. For virtue theorists, an act may be morally suboptimal in virtue of being done merely continently rather than virtuously; or because it hit near, but not on, the mean between vices; or because the act involved the wrong amount or kind of relevant emotion; or not done quite in the right way or for the right motives, etc. If the more virtuous options were open to the agent, then even when the action chosen was not *bad*, it will deserve less praise than would be deserved by choosing the better alternatives.

anchoring act and the relevant consequence, and so on.[24] It would then seem that whether heavenly actions are anchored (and not merely traced) partly depends on their foreseeability. But even for ordinary, non-heavenly contexts, spelling out what relevant foreseeability amounts to is easier said than done. Witness Peter van Inwagen's lament that it is "*dismally difficult*" to say "what it is for a consequence of an act to be 'foreseeable' in the relevant sense" (1989: 421). In the case of heavenly actions, then, we have the makings of a maximally dismally difficult issue.

Fifth, Sennett, Pawl and Timpe make much of acts that are *character-determined*, where agents freely contributed to the formation of their character. But it seems plausible that agents can contribute to the formation of their character *to different degrees*, ranging from having only minimal control over (aspects of) their character to having very significant control. And again, issues of culpability, relevant alternatives, and epistemic conditions concerning these contributions to character deeply inform the *degree* to which freedom goods are transferred to ensuing character-determined actions. But consider, then, some particular heavenly act that is character-determined. Surely the agent's praiseworthiness ought to be a function (in part) of the degree to which her perfected character "resulted from" her prior character-forming actions. And surely this degree will have a relatively small value. But if so, how can her heavenly act manifest goods of supreme value?

Finally, consider the following principle, the general idea of which we find quite plausible, and which underwrites some of the concerns just mentioned:

> *The Principle of the Conservation of Desert*: Anchoring is non-amplifying in that the degree of moral desert (praiseworthiness or blameworthiness) for the anchoring action fixes a limit on the degree of moral desert for the anchored action.

Put differently, the degree to which an agent deserves blame or praise for an *anchored* (derivatively free) action or outcome cannot exceed the degree of blame or praise warranted by the *anchoring* (occurrently free) action. We think this principle can help to explain a range of intuitions about various ordinary cases of responsibility transfer. But we also note that the principle needs refinement. For instance, what should we make of cases in which *multiple* occurrently free actions jointly anchor a *single* future outcome? Or, vice versa, when a single free action results in multiple non-occurrently free actions or consequences? Note that the latter question is especially pressing for the case of heavenly actions. This is because each heavenly agent performs an endless series of heavenly actions but only a comparatively tiny finite number of pre-heavenly actions that are supposed, on the proposals evaluated in this paper, to anchor them.

[24] Manuel Vargas (2005) argues that the epistemic condition on "traced" responsibility cannot generally be met.

We end with a summary and a parable. In this chapter we've been considering the compatibility of Heaven and the Defense. We began by looking at an alleged tension between them. We saw that one strategy—the D&D Strategy—succeeds in showing that a theist isn't obligated to hold all of the premises required for the Problem. However, we've argued that attempts to demonstrate the compatibility of Heaven and Defense founder on an ambiguity in the notion of derivative freedom. On the one hand, the fact that a heavenly action merely traces back to pre-heavenly free actions isn't sufficient for the former to manifest freedom goods. On the other hand, although a heavenly action would manifest freedom goods if it were anchored, it hasn't been shown that the conditions for anchoring heavenly actions can actually be satisfied, especially to the extent required by a maximally great heaven. Indeed, there are reasons to doubt that these conditions *can* be satisfied. At any rate, it remains to be seen whether it can be *shown* that the Defense is compatible with Heaven.

And now we offer a final parable, one loosely based on actual events.[25] It captures some of the central issues and intuitions expressed in this chapter.

> Meet Maestro Mike. He is an enormously intelligent programmer, specializing in writing software that can create novel classical music compositions. Mike's greatest pride is his latest application, which he names Symphatico. At the press of a button, it will write and then play a complete, brand-new, world-class quality symphony, in the style of any of the great composers. The compositions produced by Symphatico can mimic the styles of well-known human composers so well that even music experts often fail to distinguish the computer-generated symphonies from the genuine article. After beta testing, Mike publicly announces, with great fanfare, a Wonderful Event to take place in Carnegie Hall—the world premiere of Symphatico's First Symphony.
>
> The Event did not disappoint. Upon Mike's excessively ceremonious button-pressing, Symphatico proceeds to generate a three-movement symphony, which many listeners compare favorably to the best of Mahler. Upon its conclusion, the crowd goes wild. Maestro takes a bow as shouts of "Bravo!" and "Encore" fill the Hall. Mike feels a deep sense of pride and satisfaction. At last his musical and algorithmic genius has been appreciated! He soaks in the praise, then indulges the crowd with an encore—at the press of a button. Mike revels in the crowd's adulation. Later, on the talk-show circuit, he readily takes credit for the beauty of the music Symphatico produces. Most think this is only appropriate. Mike *did*, after all, bring Symphatico into existence by the free exercise of his creative and intellectual powers.
>
> Coming to realize that he cannot maintain the travel schedule demanded by his fans, Mike installs an "Auto" function on Symphatico, whereby the program automatically produces one new piece of music after another. He uploads it to the internet for public consumption and goes on vacation. While on vacation, he sees

[25] For those interested, visit <http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/cope/> for a fascinating look at music composition as a collaboration between human and machine.

> a patron at an outdoor cafe logging onto the Symphatico website. Mike stops to watch as Symphony No. 3,171,452 is given a world premiere. He gesticulates wildly at the patron's screen, exclaiming "*I* made that—that's *my* symphony! Isn't it beautiful?" But the patron didn't respond with the praise Mike expected. Instead, she gave him a sneering look and said "Well, it's true that the software you created is a work of pure genius. You certainly deserve credit for that. And it's true that it produces music of great aesthetic value. But it's at best unseemly of you to try to take additional credit for each new symphony that Symphatico spits out. Your credit ran out long ago—get off your laurels!"

This parable illustrates several key issues that attend the Problem.

First, notice that Mike freely contributed to the creation of Symphatico. Second, Mike intended—and foresaw—that Symphatico, once set on Auto, would generate countless pieces of beautiful music. Third, it seems fair to praise Mike for *something*—though the praise may not be of the moral stripe. But what's not as clear is what, precisely, Mike can rightly take credit for. It doesn't comport with our intuitions about desert to think, as Mike does, that each new symphony produced by Symphatico merits him just as much praise as, say, the very first one, or as much as the praise due him for his creation of the software in the first place; and it seems especially bizarre to think that his praise accumulates over time at all.

Yet Mike seems to occupy a position relative to those symphonies that is in important respects analogous to the position occupied by a human agent relative to her future heavenly acts. In both cases, there are free acts that are part of what foreseeably and intentionally lead to (occurrently) *unfree* consequences; both Mike and the advocates of the traditional view of heaven seem to think that agents deserve something like full (and accumulating) credit and praise for these (accumulating) consequences, unavoidable though they (now) are.

We think the patron is right about Mike. Though much more could be said about the matter of how "desert curves" might function in such cases, the idea that the curve is as Mike expects it to be—roughly linear, and limitless—strikes us as highly implausible. And yet, such a view seems to be implicit in derivative-freedom-based solutions to the Problem.

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15

The Possibility and Scope of Significant Heavenly Freedom

Richard Tamburro

An interesting problem arises for those committed to the free will defense to the problem of evil when they consider how God prevents sin in heaven. If one is committed to the free will defense, then one is committed to two propositions:

A: God cannot prevent sin without destroying free will.
B: Free will is a great good whose existence outweighs the prevalence of evil.

The second of these plausibly leads us to expect the existence of free will in heaven—a perfect state instantiating the highest good achievable for creatures.[1] However, in heaven creatures necessarily do not sin, so God must be preventing sin somehow, since the existence of free creatures is supposed, by itself, to entail the possibility of sin. And a commitment to A puts us at odds with the possibility of God preventing sin without destroying this great good. So we are faced with a problem of logical consistency for those who want to espouse a freedom-containing heaven along with a free will defense. This chapter is part of a larger project exploring the sort of free agency required to instantiate the good-making properties required for the free will defense to work.[2] We will just assume that a proposed theory of free agency is true, or at least required for those who want to espouse a free will defense, and will

[1] There is much to be said about why we should think this, but we do not have space to embark on this discussion here. However, let us assume this to be the case to set up this problem of consistency, a problem that many at least, will be interested in tackling. Eric Silverman's chapter in this volume (Chapter 1), contains some arguments for a conception of heaven that requires the sort of change we might think free will is necessary for. Boeninger and Garcia's (2017) contribution contains some good arguments for why freedom must be "richly" present in heaven (i.e., not wholly derivatively), and this chapter should provide a solution to some of the problems that they raise.

[2] My own thoughts on this project can be found in Tamburro (2014).

explore how God can prevent sin in heaven without destroying this sort of freedom, and whether the freedom this leaves agents with is significant enough to be a great-good-making property.

The sort of free will required for the free will defense is libertarian, where the explanation of the metaphysics of control in action production is non-causal.[3] Agents who act, perform something that is goal-directed, where they are both motivated to achieve the end which they direct their action at, and are relevantly connected to the world, so that they have a reason for their action that is grounded in the way that they, and the world, actually are. When an agent is free they should be able to act in a way that accords with their all things considered preferences, given their character, desires, reasons and so on. This sense of freedom has to do with the power of self-determination, or an agent being the source of how they act, so that the action is expressive of the agent.[4] But it is also important to consider the way that agents end up constituted as they are, particularly if their motivations and reasons are formed under freedom-reducing duress. Agents need to be able to form reasons and motivations that they value as good. An agent's valuing something as good is a matter of structuring their conception of the world around them, and their relationship to it, and this in turn gives structure to their practical and ethical rationality. Lastly, agents need to be more than instrumentally involved in their self-formation and choices if they are to be active rather than passive, and to truly exercise control. This means that they need some autonomy from past determining influences, some degree of independence in how they use their power to choose. The exercise of this power is incompatible with determinism and also requires the existence of alternative possibilities concerning possible actions the agent can perform (which can include simply refraining from acting as an alternative).[5] But that freedom of choice can be derivative, and an agent's action can be said to be one over which there was freedom of choice, and hence control, not only if there were alternative possibilities that the agent settled at the time of their acting, but also if the settling of alternative possibilities occurred by some past exercise of the agent's active power in acting.[6]

[3] The details of this proposed theory can be found in Tamburro (2014), and there is a good recent discussion of libertarianism and the free will defense in Pawl and Timpe (2009, 2013) and Cowan (2011).

[4] This is the sort of concern that is normally central to compatibilist theories of free will, and at the root of their most pointed objection to libertarianism: the luck objection. See Timpe (2008), Fischer and Ravizza (1998), and Mele (2006).

[5] I have in mind the sort of relationship between freedom and alternative possibilities at the heart of the Consequence Argument, an argument that has many failures as a knock down argument for libertarianism, but much insight to offer about the nature of freedom. See van Inwagen's (1983) classic, and some helpful discussion in Steward (2012).

[6] Such derivative settling of possibilities might explain why the semi-conscious drunk is responsible for an action he had no "present" control over, such as pressing the brake pedal in

The criteria agents must satisfy to be able to produce free actions are as follows (and this much we will simply assume):

I. Motivation Possession—An agent must possess a desire (or other motivation contributing state), for a particular end, E.
II. Goal-directedness—We must be able to describe the agent's action in terms that identify it as aiming at this same end, E.
III. Reason Awareness—The agent must be aware of some feature of the world that provides a reason for them to take their action as a means to possibly achieve this end, E.
IV. Character Accord—The actions of free agents must accord with the way they are rationally and motivationally constituted.
V. Value Alignment—Free agents must not be so influenced that they are unable to form motivations and reasons for ends they value as good and must not be forced to form motivations and reasons for ends they value as bad.
VI. Aseity—Agents possess freedom of choice regarding an action if the action they perform is up-to-them through the exercise of an active power to settle among alternative possible actions, concurrently, or in the past.

Agents can possess a multitude of reasons and desires, and they exercise their freedom of choice over how, and when, they act on those reasons, or satisfy those desires, by acting—which is intrinsically doing something for a reason.[7] Importantly, agents can act on any of their reasons, and do not only "act," when they act on their strongest reasons (or motivations/desires).[8] Agents can be described as possessing (and being partly constituted by) a web of beliefs, desires, judgments, and so on, which constitutes their character. The topography of this web models how some features of their character are prominent, well connected, or deeply embedded. Changes to their character can require a "cost" in reforming that topography. When agents act against prominent reasons there is a cost, as resources are utilized to effect self-change, in addition to action production. When agents deliberate, decide, choose, and act, they do not only recognize the structure of their web, or the weights of reasons, or value of ends, but there is a reciprocal effect: deciding, choosing

time, but was determined by a past action, such as deciding to drink another round. There is some good introductory discussion of this issue in Kane (2011).

[7] Note that the relationship between reasons and actions is not causal, but constitutive. There is no space to discuss this here, but since this is so often a misunderstood aspect of freedom and agency, it is worth drawing attention to. For more discussion, see Tamburro (2014: ch. 4), Alvarez (2010), and Pink (1996, 2004).

[8] This is a contested point among philosophers of action, but one that is vitally important for libertarians to make if they are to avoid forms of rational determinism, see Tamburro (2014) and Mele (2003) for discussion.

and acting alter the structure of the web, or change the weightings assigned to reasons and ends. So the power agents possess is not only one over which actions they perform, but is also a power over the development of their "self."

15.1. HOW CAN GOD PREVENT SIN IN HEAVEN—THE BEATIFIC VISION

God needs to ensure that it is impossible for agents to sin in heaven, while preserving the conditions required for agents to remain free. One of the most prominent themes in theological discussions of heaven is the beatific vision enjoyed by glorified saints. The saints in heaven are glorified, that is to say they experience being brought into the presence of the glory of God.[9] But they are also changed so that they are fit for heaven, and this change is the completion of their redemption: they are perfected in their nature and character. The beatific vision provides the saints with knowledge of God that is different to the knowledge available on Earth. In heaven the saints will know God exactly, in the sense of "as he really is" rather than comprehensively. This contrasts with the idea that our earthly knowledge of God is limited by some imprecision, or uncertainty.[10] This may enable heavenly beliefs about God to play a greater role in our thinking. Such beliefs would have the same sort of status as undeniable truths, ones that we cannot deny, contradict or question (as long as our capacities for thinking are in good order). There is also an indication that we will know more about God in heaven than we do on Earth. So there may be things that we do not, or even cannot know about God, but will have access to in heaven.

We do not need to explore what the content of this knowledge could be at the moment. But we will ask whether this beatific vision, and especially the knowledge of God it imparts, could be something that would prevent sin. Could the knowledge the saints possess somehow alter their range of possible actions to prevent there being any sinful possibilities—are there just no sinful alternative possibilities given the way the saints are constituted—their reasons, beliefs, desires and so on? If knowledge is going to prevent sin, it must do so by providing the saints with a rational and motivational base that cannot produce any sinful act. Consideration of the first free creatures is illuminating.[11] The

[9] See Romans 8:30. Also, note that "the redeemed" refers to all humans whose destination is heaven, and "the saints" refers to the human occupants of heaven, not some special subset of the redeemed. For a brief discussion of glorification see Demarest (2006), and Elwell (2001).

[10] See 1 Corinthians 13:9–12.

[11] There is much insight in Anselm's De Casu Diaboli, the starting point for many discussions of this issue. See also discussion in Rogers (2008) and Timpe (2013).

Devil, and Adam, did not possess any false beliefs, or bad desires, when they were created. All that God made was good, or in the case of Adam, very good. They did not possess anything in their rational and motivational base that shouldn't have been there, for example a desire for something that it would be wrong to desire, or a reason to act in a way that would be wrong. Nor did they lack anything that is required for right action production, such as a desire to show compassion. If they did possess some flaw in their character, then they might rightly complain that they could have been better made (which cannot be the case if the free will defense is true, or the fault would lie not with how they exercised their agency, but with how they were constituted at their creation). And yet, they fell. So if it is possible for free agents with unflawed characters to fall, then any knowledge gained by the saints, via the beatific vision, does not look like it will be able to prevent the same possibility.

Why the primal sin occurred is a difficult question, but we will say a little. Creatures need to apply their desires in the right way and can fail to do what is right if they fail to apportion each desire, or reason, its correct place in their deliberation.[12] For example, in the Fall narrative Eve takes the fruit after being tempted by the serpent to do so. But the serpent did not need to appeal to a sinful desire to take something that was forbidden, nor did he need to introduce a sinful reason or desire to Eve, which she subsequently accepted. In fact, the telling detail here is the proposal that eating the fruit would make Eve more like God. Now considering the emphasis in Christianity on human perfection and growth being a matter of becoming more like God, Eve's desire to be like God does not seem to be a desire that is wholly out of place. However, Eve acts on this desire, or for this reason, without balancing her consideration of what was appropriate to do with other reasons, such as to obey God, or to trust what God has said. The serpent played a part in stoking some uncertainty in Eve concerning reasons that could have been brought to bear in her deliberation. But this is illuminating for our problem. Eve possessed the ingredients for right action, but these ingredients did not issue in the right action.[13] Human agents possess cognitive limitations concerning their ability to include all reasons in deliberation, and they possess the ability to act on any of their reasons (often more than one). This ability is required for VI, aseity. So Eve's cognitive limitations create the space for uncertainty to be possible about how her reasons apply to the alternative possibilities before her. Furthermore, since she possesses aseity, she can adopt any of her reasons in acting, and her acting for the reason of "wanting to become like God" satisfies all of the criteria for being a free action. So Eve's sin was deliberate and not an

[12] Although Anselm would not frame his discussion in our terms, there is a strong sense of connection with his discussion of the possession of rectitude in Adamic innocence, and he may have something like this in mind.

[13] There is a huge literature on akratic action that is relevant here, for a start see Mele (2012).

accident.[14] She was not forced to sin, and possessed the ingredients required to act in a non-sinful way. But due to the nature of freedom, she did not possess any further ability that necessitated the ordering and influence of her reasons in a certain way.[15] All of the ingredients for sinlessness can be in place in an agent's psychology, in their rational and motivational base, and this makes performing a non-sinful action possible—but it does not make performing a sinful action impossible. Clearly agents can sin if they possess a reason to sin that is itself "sinful," such as my desiring to kill someone because I hate them. But agents do not need a reason to sin in this sense, because sin can also be a matter of misappropriating their desires and reasons, which are perfectly good in the right contexts.[16] So if we are going to secure sinlessness, we need to do more than remove flaws in the characters of agents by filling them with "right knowledge."

But perhaps there is some form of knowledge that is only available to those who have fallen and been redeemed. This would mark a difference between the saints and Adam, and so could explain why what they know keeps them from sin, while what Adam knew could not. There is a plausible candidate for what the saints know that Adam did not (in his innocence). Adam had never sinned, and so he did not know what it was to feel guilt, shame, pain, separation and other experiences contingent on sinning. Similarly, Adam did not know the joy of being forgiven, the humility and repentance required for reconciliation, what it is to be the recipient of mercy, and so on. God could not simply get Adam to read a book about these issues, because the redeemed relate to the content of these propositions in a special, first-personal way. Not only are they aware that sin is bad, or that guilt and shame have certain properties, but also they are aware that they were sinners, that they felt guilt and shame, and were transformed by experiencing forgiveness and reconciliation. The difference is analogous to the difference between knowing that being in debt to someone would carry certain obligations, and knowing that I am indebted to you, and have certain obligations. Is this extra knowledge sufficient for preventing sin?

The redeemed know that they did sin and were forgiven. They have experienced the pain, guilt and shame of sin. It is very plausible to suggest that such knowledge furnishes an agent with an extra reason not to sin, in the same way

[14] Contra the objections that it was arbitrary, discussed in Timpe (2014).

[15] Recall that reasons are not causes; otherwise we would end up with a problem of rational determinism, one that would threaten freedom.

[16] It is interesting to note the different angles on original sin, a doctrine that connects strongly with these issues. In the Augustinian tradition the fall is a matter of willful pride, and all sin is similarly a sign of willful rebellion (even if willful might mean something different to Augustine than it does to some of us). But for someone like Irenaeus, the fall is a naïve tragedy of weakness, and sin is not tarnished with the same brush. An excellent starting point for this issue is Rea (2007).

that a scar can remind us not to act in a certain way. Perhaps the memory of having sinned, and then having seen sin for what it is, the horror of the pain it causes God, the loss of potential goods that then cannot be realized in our relationships, all seen with a clarity that the beatific vision imparts, is like a vivid scar on the character of the saints.[17] The possession of psychological states like this would certainly be helpful for preventing sin for the saints. But does knowledge like this necessitate my never sinning again? Given the capacity to misappropriate reasons, this extra knowledge could help me to have success in not sinning, but is not sufficient for doing so. However, if God could somehow ensure that I was always reminded of this scar and that it always effectively influenced my deliberations, then it could be something that God could use to ensure I don't sin.

15.2. HOW CAN GOD PREVENT SIN IN HEAVEN—UNION

So, in order to prevent sin there needs to be something extra added to the saint's character in agency.[18] Glorified agents may include some new prominent features in the topography that represents their character, such as their hating sin, recognizing the pain of sinning, and so on, as well as positive reasons/desires such as the joy of forgiveness, their awareness of the need for dependence on God, and so on. Let us just sum up whatever these new features might be as a "love for God." The agency of the saints needs to be augmented in some way, to ensure that the love of God remains prominent and always has an appropriate influence, so that it is never a reason whose application is missed or diminished when agents act. This means that this something extra must involve an interaction that limits how agents act for reasons, which means that God exercises some control over how agents act.[19]

[17] The presence of "scars" is suggested by the common proposal that the redeemed are healed, but not cured.

[18] This step is an important departure from the more common approach that the saints' sinlessness is secured through perfecting their character. For instance, in Boeninger and Garcia's chapter in this volume (Chapter 14), they assume that moral perfection is a result of character alone. Assuming this can be forgiven due to the rich tradition it enjoys, but it is this very assumption about the reason that sinlessness is enjoyed that is the root of so many objections to the problem of heavenly freedom. Rejecting this assumption leads us to examine their premise (D1), and provokes us to think about whether the connection between the possibility of evil and the possibility of freedom-goods is dependent on freedom in the same sort of way. Freedom is not functioning univocally in the discussion and we need not give up the modality of strong impeccability to make space for a solution.

[19] Someone must be exercising control, or sinlessness would be a matter of luck, and although there could be an intermediary (like angels) the problem will arise again for them. So in the end, we will arrive at God's control. However, this does leave us with some interesting questions about

This influence has two aspects, but they are two sides of the same coin. Recall that we said that an agent influences their character when they act, and different reasons, ends and desires can become more or less prominent when acted on. So agents need to be prevented from acting in a way that would mean that the love of God was made less prominent, though other features of who they are could change. As long as the love of God is prominent relative to the agent's other reasons then it exerts greatest influence over the way the agent orients their self toward the world, and the way they order their thinking, deliberating and evaluating of it. The structure of their web is the lens through which they interact with the world. However, this structure does not only present weights of various reasons, values and so on to the agent, as the agent also has the power to alter the structure of their web, and they do this by exercising their agency in acting, choosing, forming intentions, making plans, and so on.[20] There is a cost in such restructuring, and so some restructuring is more difficult than others. So agents also need to be prevented from applying their reasons, values, and so on, to the exercise of their agency in a way that does not feature the love of God as a dominant reason for what they do, thus ensuring that the prominence of love for God is maintained in their web.[21]

At this point, matters become very speculative, as we are not given many clues about how God might effect this influence. However, the theme of permanent unity between God and the saint is a prominent theme in Scripture, especially in the sense of God becoming a part of human psychology (often using the term "heart").[22] When agents act on weaker reasons, there is a "cost" of moving that reason in their web, so it is difficult to act against a habit, or central character trait.[23] If God is acting upon the web of the saint's beliefs/reasons, God can ensure that this "cost" is always above a threshold that means that sinful applications of the agent's rational and motivational bases through their acting are off limits to the agent, or beyond their ability to produce. In the same way that an agent has the power to change their "self"

divine freedom and agency, given that we want to lay claim to the proposition that God necessarily cannot sin. See Rowe (2007) for introductory discussion of this issue.

[20] The web is not something distinct from the self, or person, that the person has access to, but is also partly constitutive of self and personhood. So we are talking about the power of self--formation—another important theme in the literature on freedom. See Ekstrom (1993).

[21] In other words, whatever heavenly agents do, it should be expressive of their love for God, perhaps not explicitly so, but since their web is interconnected, however they act will be oriented implicitly at the end of loving God.

[22] See Jeremiah 31:33, Ezekiel 18:31, Romans 5:5, 2 Corinthians 1:22, Galatians 4:6.

[23] Unfortunately, there is not space here to expand on this idea of cost, or the "effort," or expenditure of energy and resources in acting. I do not have in mind the sort of effort of will involved in theories of free will that have volitions as distinct "tryings" of agents that are necessary constituents of an action's being free, but instead would point the reader to think about the actual neurophysiological dynamics of action production. An interesting example of this can be found in Muraven and Baumeister (2000).

and promote or demote ends, reasons, desires, and so on, God can also exercise his agency to promote and demote of facets of the agent, but not to remove or disconnect them from their practical rationality.

God could achieve this by the sort of normal influence of interacting with the agent, for example by speaking to them. In the same way, I could influence a friend to do something important by reminding them how important it is to them. God's acting in this way can be guided by God's perfect knowledge of the agent, that is to say, God would always know what to say and when. But the divine influence must go beyond this, for God needs to ensure that agents always listen and apply what they are told in the right way, even if the need for this further influence is relatively rare. There must be a form of divine influence over agents that exerts a promotion of some features of the saint's self, or blocks what would have been the promotion of something that would have then been out of place, by exerting an influence counter to, or supplementary to, that of the saint. Thus the power of change over the self is one that the agent possesses in cooperation with God.[24] God does not take over, but is a contributor to self-formation.[25]

We need to ask whether these special, supernatural acts of intervention are bad, or freedom destroying. When an agent acts in a way that is cooperative with God, that is to say, includes divine influence, are our conditions for free agency broken? The agent will still possess a motivation for an end, since their action is the application of one of their own desires and they will be acting in order to achieve an end that they themselves possess, and the performance of the action will satisfy them. God does not need to implant an alien desire or end; he only needs to manage the possible ends that agents aim at. This could be by preventing one choice through suppressing a desire or reason, or by ensuring the better choice by promoting the relevant desire, or reason. Agents already have the ingredients required for good ends through what they have learned by being glorified. Therefore, motivation possession (I), and goal-directedness (II), are both satisfied. Reason awareness (III), is also satisfied, since agents, once adopting an end, or when adopting an end, do so because they are aware of their heavenly environment and know (in a way that does not admit of the possibility of error found on earth) that features of heaven,

[24] I use the term "cooperative" advisedly, bearing in mind cooperative theories of grace in soteriology, but that is a subject we do not have space to explore, though it is connected. Timpe (2015) has some interesting suggestions for the mechanisms through which this influence could be mediated, and how we can understand cooperative agency through examination of the two wills of Christ in the incarnation—an approach I favor, though I would contest that God's infusion into our lives makes him become not just a part of what influences us, or of what we are, but also of who we are, that is a part of our very person.

[25] There is not space to explore this more here, but the connections to perichoresis in incarnational theology, and the doctrines of theosis and deification are highly suggestive. See Crisp (2007) and Christensen and Wittung (2008).

their self, or of God, provide a basis for the appropriateness of their action to its goal. Since the way the agent acts derives from ingredients found in the agent, character accord (IV) is trivially satisfied. But does any of the influence God exerts mean that agents are unable to form motivations and reasons for ends they value as good, or are forced to form motivations and reasons for ends they value as bad? Well, saints have a perspicuous knowledge of which ends are good or bad, and do not evaluate any good end as bad, or vice versa. God, necessarily, only promotes ends that are good, due to his good nature. So it is impossible in principle for an end God promotes to be one that an agent would evaluate as being bad. This is tantamount to saying that a saint would never judge any of this divine intervention as being unwanted or bad for the agent. Therefore, value alignment (V) is satisfied.

The last condition is aseity (VI). Given that some influence over the determination of the agent's action in these (possibly) rare situations is external to the agent, it does appear that what happens is not up-to-the-agent. It will not do to claim that since the nature of the influence is cooperative, such that the way the agent acts is up-to-"God-and-saint" the condition is satisfied. For aseity was supposed to mark the independence from determinism of agents in controlling how they act among alternative possibilities. The removal of a possibility by another is a mark of manipulation.[26] But remember that this aseity is not entirely unfettered from all influence each time it is exercised, and the way that agents have exercised their agency in the past can mean that the absence of an alternative can still be something that is up-to-the-agent, even though this is not through the agent's current exercise of their powers. So, is the heavenly limitation of an agent's possibilities for the exercise of their active power to choose a limitation that has resulted from a past exercise of their agency?[27] During our earthly existence we have ample opportunity to exercise our capacity in a way that limits future possibilities, but are any of the ways we exercise aseity relevant to this particular limitation, and, also common among

[26] Manipulation is not always negative: there may be instances of influence by others that diminishes, or even removes our freedom, that we are nonetheless grateful for. But if the great good of freedom is to be significantly present in an agent, that agent must meet this condition still. Otherwise we would have a heaven that is good, but does not contain significant freedom. Such a heaven may be a possibility (even though I believe it not to be), but that is not the problem of consistency we are exploring here.

[27] Note that in introducing a derivative satisfaction of this condition of freedom we are not suggesting that the only freedom in heaven is derivative freedom—the suggestion here is that agents possess, perhaps, an awful lot of non-derivative freedom in heaven. What is at stake here is that at the times at which their freedom between alternatives is curtailed in heaven. There is no suggestion that the admission of this possibility means that they cannot possess freedom at all (or just derivatively), nor that their freedom is being manipulated in a bad way—which would then beg the question why God could not have manipulate humankind in the beginning to prevent evil. Boeninger and Garcia's are quite right, and provide some good reasons for thinking that a wholly derivative freedom would be insufficient to be a great good-making property (see Chapter 14).

all of the redeemed? What about the decision of the redeemed to accept Christ's offer of salvation? This is certainly a necessary requirement on the redeemed, so will be a common exercise of past agency among all the saints. But is it relevant to the limitation of my heavenly possibilities for action?

Because of the nature of God, in asking God to save them from sin, the redeemed have necessitated that God will intervene salvifically. If we consider what is involved in an agent exercising their agency in accepting salvation, we will be able to see that the sort of heavenly influence the redeemed are subjected to will not be an unwanted surprise, in fact it is implicit in their action of receiving salvation.[28] In order to come to a point of recognizing that the invitation of salvation is something that is worth accepting, the sinner needs to come to a recognition that sin is a problem, and that it is a problem that the sinner cannot deal with on their own. This involves consideration of the need for the forgiveness of past sin and some way of dealing with the prospect of their possibly sinning in the future. The sinner must come to the recognition that their own control is insufficient. The sinner also needs to recognize that salvation is by grace, that is to say, there is nothing they can do to merit salvation. So the sinner acknowledges that God has offered to do something about sin (and the sinner may have only a vague idea what this will consist in). The key though, is that part of what the decision to accept salvation consists in, is to put oneself in submission to God. Having come to the end of one's own efforts to exercise control over oneself in the right way, a sinner relinquishes their autonomy and invites God to participate in the controlling of their life—in their self-formation.[29] So the nature of the decision to accept salvation involves sanctioning God to interact with the exercise of the agent's capacities to act, think, decide, reason, evaluate, and so on. So there is indeed a past exercise of freedom of choice, which is directly pertinent to the limitation of heavenly alternative possibilities, which can be the basis of the claim that the instances of agency we are focused on, ones where God cooperatively influences the exercise of aseity, are derivatively free. Thus condition VI is satisfied, and God's interaction does not destroy freedom, but is able to prevent sin.[30]

[28] It is implied here that receiving salvation is an action—something the agent does, rather than something that happens to them. There is a nest of questions waiting for us here, but this is not the time to engage them. For a good starting point on this issue, Timpe (2013), Stump (2001), and Flint and Rea (2011) are particularly helpful.

[29] Although the sinner does not initiate this interaction. God initiates the process of salvation, the sinner's role is to relinquish their resistance, but this is still an exercise of agency. See Stump (2012).

[30] This is closely connected to why God could not prevent sin in the beginning. God cannot create agents who have decided to submit to God, because an essential property of submission (in our sense at least) is that it is freely chosen. Agents who are forced to be good, in a freedom preventing way, cannot possess a valuable freedom, even if there is a freedom left for them to possess. Valuable freedom requires the possibility that free creatures sin, because having a character oriented toward the good, for goodness's sake, requires the exercise of freedom of

15.3. IS THERE SIGNIFICANT FREEDOM IN HEAVEN?

It has been thought by some that once the self has been sufficiently oriented toward God, the alternative possibilities that remain for agents in heaven would not be ones that are significant.[31] This would mean that although we may have significant freedom on Earth, we do not have significant freedom in heaven, since we are not free to sin in heaven. A choice is significant if it engages an agent's capacity for freedom between alternatives that engage the agent's evaluative faculties in an assessment that recognizes more than one option that the agent conceives of as good, and if the choice matters to the agent because in making that choice they are determining what goods they want to instantiate, associate themselves with, and to prioritize—the choice reflects their power to not only react to the goods around them, but to exercise their freedom over who they are, and the goods that constitute their character, interests, loves, and so on. Note that I am resisting any suggestion that actions are only significant if morally significant, which brings with it the attendant worry about moral determinism.[32] While I can appreciate Pawl and Timpe's suggestion, in their chapter, that we can grow in love and appreciation for God, and with that growth could come attendant growth in our desires toward God, I am wary of using the framework of virtue to unpack this aspect of heavenly growth, and the role of freedom in such growth. I find the idea of 'clinging to a mean' confusing, since the virtuous mean is a position of self-awareness from which a person has the ability to see the risks of inappropriateness in courses of action, and the further ability to respond appropriately because they see all the knowable factors relevant to decision, and how they interrelate and balance out. I fail to see how such a mean could be further clung to. If anything, growth would involve becoming aware of further factors, that were previously morally irrelevant to the agent's decision for some reason——but a lot of controversial issues about duties and supererogation, and desert and knowledge, lie behind this possibility. I suggest that we abandon the idea that significant freedom has to do with moral significance, and then we would not need the framework of virtue and supererogation to unpack the significance of heavenly choices. As I will contend, our choices can relate to the good in more ways that the relation of moral requirement. In fact, I do not think that the moral dimension of the growth in Pawl and Timpe's view is really necessary to the heart of what they

choice. This is part of the nature of what it is to act for a reason. To act for a reason involves our making free evaluative judgments about reasons (and ends), not having our evaluative judgments caused/determined. This means that I cannot be caused to desire the good, or to value good ends, but must exercise my own aseity in orienting myself regarding the good—and this entails the possibility of not choosing the good, which is sin.

[31] See Rasmussen (2013).

[32] See Sennett (1999), and Pawl and Timpe (2009, 2013, and Chapter 6, this volume.).

suggest about the scope and possibility of growth, which I am closely sympathetic to.

So once the redeemed have been glorified, are there any significant alternative possibilities for them to exercise their freedom between, any possibilities that enhance the value of possessing heavenly freedom? Or is the only scope for the exercise of heavenly freedom rather mundane, such as whether to sing in the heavenly choir, or to play the harp, deriving all of its value and significance derivatively?[33] Although the choice between playing the harp and singing in the choir might appear to be a trivial one, the choice of what the saint might sing to God about in heaven is not obviously trivial. Perhaps it is a requirement that saints exercise their capacities in the worship of God, but how they express themselves, and what they express themselves about, could vary.[34] One saint might worship God by engaging in an exploration of the complexity and beauty of the cosmos, and in expressing to God their wonder at God's handiwork, and what it might reveal to them of God's character. Another saint might worship God by engaging Jesus in conversation about the experience of forgiving his executioners while on the cross, and marveling at the depth of God's mercy and the perfection of his moral character. So we have two forms of worship, cosmic, and moral. I have chosen these two because it is very difficult to see how a human agent could engage in an appreciation of both of these cosmic and moral matters at the same time. Given our cognitive limitations, the explorations of these matters seem to be distinct endeavors, and not ones that can be undertaken simultaneously, or at least not to the same degree. Since these are two forms of worship that are mutually exclusive, is the choice of which one to perform one that is open to agents? Well, given the constitution of an agent, it may be that they are particularly well-suited to a cosmic exploration rather than a moral one and that this would engage them in love of God to a greater extent. So there is some prima facie reason to think that given the constitution of a saint, there may be one choice here that is better for them. By saying that the best choice would engage their love for God in a greater way we have, plausibly, made the choice one that is a moral matter, since failing to love God, or express your love for God, could be a failure to make of the saint's heavenly relationship with God all that can be made of it.

[33] Note that if playing the harp or singing was something that the agent really conceived of as a choice that mattered, because these two possibilities connected differently to their conception of the good, then for them, this would be significant and not mundane.

[34] It is worthwhile connecting this with Katherine Rogers's chapter in this volume (Chapter 2). She identifies aseity as playing a role in Anslem's conception of heaven, and unpacks the role of aseity in morally significant choices, choices between good and bad options. My hope here is to suggest something I think Anselm would be sympathetic to, extending a framework for freedom including something like Anslemian aseity, that does not limit the significance of aseity's presence to these sorts of moral choices, with the attendant concerns about moral determinism and a static heaven.

Any lapse in the realization of the potential for good would be cause to worry that a sin had been committed.

Now agents admit of variety when they enter heaven.[35] After all, we are different from one another on Earth. There does not seem to be any reason to think that it is necessary that all the saints be made identical to each other upon glorification. After all, there is variety among the form and roles of the angels in glory. So there can, at least, be some variety among the saints concerning what form their worship takes. How you worship is partly constitutive of how you relate to and interact with God, therefore this variety means that there can be variety among the saints' relationships with God. But the presence of this variety does not mean that saints possess a choice. Given their constitution upon becoming a saint, and the evolution of their relationship with God, the different forms of worship they engage in at different times may still be something that they are always constrained in, on pain of sinning (or failing to realize the best relationship they can), and thus it is something they do not possess alternative possibilities concerning. If this is the case then although there is significant variety in heaven, we are no closer to demonstrating that there can be significant freedom.

But, we need to remember that as well as agents possessing the power to apply their character to how they act, how they act also has a reciprocal effect on how they are constituted. In one way, this is quite a basic claim to make; after all, hopefully time spent discussing the cross with Jesus would effect a change in the worshipper. But we mean more than this. When agents act for a reason, that reason, the end at which they aim, the desires, beliefs and other psychological states relevant to acting for that reason, can all become more prominent in the constitution of that agent, or connected to their other states in different ways, or closer to the surface of the attention of the agent. So the effect of acting a certain way on the agent is not only whatever external effect is a result of the action, but there is also an effect of having acted for that reason, or in that way, quite apart from the results that follow later. This does change the situation concerning how agents should assess whether they will worship morally, or cosmically. For a given saint, they may possess a greater potential for realizing great good in their relationship with God if they worship morally rather than cosmically right now. But the measurement of the potential for great good does not only include an assessment of the good that will be realized in the performance of that action. Suppose the saint instead decided to worship God cosmically, the good realized by the act itself would be less (by definition) since the saint would be less able to express their love for God. However, by so acting, the saint would engage in self-formation that alters how they are constituted and thus alters the potential for future realization of

[35] And in many theological traditions, while in heaven as well, often in significant ways, for example Stump (2012) claims that the saints can be in a greater or lesser union with God.

good. The good that can be realized by the altered-saint who worships cosmically, even though this is not a "personal strength," will be different from the good that can be realized by the saint who goes with their strength and worships morally. In the long term, there is nothing to say that the goods the cosmic worshipping saint will be able to explore, instantiate and participate in, will be of a lesser quality than if they had worshipped morally instead. The goods will be different, and the way the saint relates to them will be different, because the saint changes as well.

Let us illustrate to try and show that this is not an unusual idea. Consider a normal human agent who wants to explore beauty as expressed in suggestion. They are an artist, and so will greatly flourish in this endeavor if they study the works of the great impressionists. If they study the music of Debussy and the other impressionist composers, they will gain much less. However, in the long term, if the artist sticks at his task, he may discover more through his slowly getting to grips with music, especially as he can now relate it to his knowledge of art. Although he may not have as deep an appreciation for some details of the art, there may be details he would not have appreciated without a knowledge of music. Whichever choice the artist makes, he will be able to explore beauty in a "great" way, but differently. There is nothing about the fact that he is an artist that means that one choice will be worth more or less than the other. Because we are limited in our time and opportunities on earth, we are used to making decisions like this by also factoring in the practicality of what is achievable given the time we have available. However, in heaven, there are no such limitations—time is on our side.

So the constitution of agents does not determine that one single course of action will be the one that realizes the greatest potential for great good. There can be more than one possibility whose potential is not calculable in this way, since the potential will evolve and change with the agent—it may at best be a calculation that is ill-defined. This means that the choice of whether to worship cosmically or morally is one that could be open to the saint, where concerns about doing their best, realizing the greatest good, and so on, do not constrain the choices of agents to a single option. This is because the choice is not simply about what the agent will do, it is also about who an agent will become. But is an open choice such as this, an alternative possibility of this type, one that makes for a significant exercise of freedom? A choice is significant if it engages the agent in evaluating and choosing between more than one option they conceive of as good,[36] and if the choice matters to the agent because in making that choice they are determining what goods they

[36] This does not mean they conceive of it as being the "best," but that the good-making properties on the possibility connect to their own conception of the good—which is not purely subjective, but is a matter of "subjective attraction meeting objective attractiveness," to borrow from Susan Wolf (1997).

want to instantiate, associate themselves with, and to prioritize—the choice reflects their power to not only react to the goods around them, but to exercise their freedom over who they are, and the goods that constitute their character, interests, loves, and so on. Well, our imagined saint will exercise themselves in evaluating the options, and we have described two good options that the agent is free to choose between. So the choice engages the saint in a non-trivial way. Also, by making their choice the agent decides what sort of person they want to be, what interest they want to pursue, what ends they want to prioritize and what goods they want to explore. This is the power of self-formation, and critically the formation of the self in relation to non-trivial matters.

Consider also that the saint's relationship with God (which may be the most significant of all matters) is partly constituted by the form of interaction that composes that relationship. So this choice is one that gives the saint power over how they relate to God. If our argument for these types of variety is correct, then the beatific vision is not the instantiation of a perfect relationship with God, because there is no single concept of a perfect relationship with God.[37] Certainly the relationship is developed so that it does not contain any flaw, so there are no false beliefs about God. But, if we think carefully, it is not surprising that there is no single perfect relationship with God, for if by perfect relationship we mean one that instantiates all true beliefs about God and explores all forms of interaction involving those beliefs, then such a relationship is impossible for a creature to possess. Creatures are finite, and limited in their cognitive capacities; thus, they are not able to apprehend all of God. So there is a limitation on the saints' relationships with God. However, the saints are free to explore how they relate to God and what can be known of God. It is just that this may be an exploration that is without end. So the beatific vision does not impart a perfect relationship to the saint; however, it does perfect the saint regarding their being equipped to enjoy God and to grow in their relationship with God.[38] How this relationship grows, and what facets of God are explored when, and how, are matters that the agent has freedom of choice over, though God will provide input to the direction of the relationship too (after all it is not a relationship with something inanimate, but an active, three-personned Godhead). Therefore, saints do possess alternative

[37] Perhaps God may instantiate perfect relationship, but this could be because God does not change, and cannot change, or because the scope of interaction between the persons of the Godhead is so broad as to be constantly all-encompassing–which suggests some interesting avenues for those interested in social Trinitarianism and in the problem of divine freedom.

[38] If the analogy helps, being perfectly proficient in the capacities required to play the violin would not stop me from developing in my enjoyment of playing a piece of music. Furthermore, as I play, it engages me emotionally, and changes me, so that if I play it again, the experience has some new dimension. The analogy is limited as I may, perhaps, be able to exhaust the possibilities of engaging with a piece of music, whereas God is limitless, and the prospects for growth are richer.

possibilities that are significant, and there is no need for them to be able to sin to possess such possibilities.[39] Thus the saints in heaven can be both free from sin, and free as an agent with freedom of action and will, and the scope of this freedom is interestingly significant—significant in a way that enables us to see how it could instantiate a great good.

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[39] Note also that, contra Boeninger and Garcia's chapter in this volume (Chapter 14), it is not necessary for the saints to enjoy moral praise for there to be a richness to their experience of relationship in heaven. Agents can be satisfied by their relationship to the good, through the way that they exercise their agency in relation to the good, because it is good for them to do it—they enjoy being able to relate to the good in the ways that they do by exercising their agency. I suspect that praise enters in not because of a suggestion that we are driven to the good by the need for reward (which would be somewhat crass), but because it is being used to signal a rich relationship between the agent and goodness, or value. But the act, or relationship, of praise is just not necessary, and there is a rich tradition of emphasis on divine grace that suggests that agents are able to relate to the good in a way that causes them joy, and to praise God, without the hint of a suggestion (and the merest hint of its introduction being strongly resisted) that human agents should be praised for the good state they find themselves in. So I find the suggestion that praise is a necessary component unconvincing.

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Part VIII

The Desirability of Paradise

16

Hume, Happiness, Heaven, and Home

Jerry L. Walls

The death of David Hume was one of the defining events of the modern period. More precisely, it was not his death per se, but rather, his attitude, conversation, and demeanor leading up to his death that was so significant, and indeed, controversial. To get a sense of the controversy, consider these words from the great economist Adam Smith, a friend of Hume's who was in touch with him and spent time with him during his final weeks, and wrote a short account of his last days.

> A single, and as I thought, a very harmless Sheet of paper which I happened to write concerning the death of our late friend, Mr. Hume, brought upon me ten times more abuse than the very violent attack I made upon the whole commercial system of Great Britain.[1]

In published form, Smith's single sheet runs around five pages, but regardless of length, it is remarkable that an account of the final days of a famous philosopher would generate such "abuse." Why was Smith's account of Hume's death not the "harmless" thing he suggested it was?

For a start, Smith was perhaps not so innocent in composing his account as his remark suggests. According to Norman Kemp Smith, Adam Smith was "intentionally provocative" and wrote his account for the purpose of "generously vindicating his friend's reputation in face of the wellnigh universal prejudices of the uninformed, and misinformed, general public" (1977: 2). Still, even if we acknowledge that Smith was deliberately provocative in his account of the death of Hume, the question persists why the narrative of a dying man would stir such passionate reaction.

Consider Smith's claim that, while there may be legitimate disagreement about Hume's philosophical opinions, there could not be such difference about his "character and conduct." Indeed, the last sentence of his account

[1] Cited in Neiman (2002: 149).

sums up his view of Hume's character as follows: "Upon the whole, I have always considered him, both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will admit" (Smith 1977: 247–8).

Here we can see one of the factors that provoked the controversy. Hume's secular outlook was widely recognized by his critics, even though his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* was only published posthumously. Despite his coy professions of piety in his published writings, it was clear from his arguments against the rationality of belief in miracles, as well as his arguments against providence and a future state, that he was hardly a sincere theist, let alone a devout Christian. Moreover, his moral philosophy did not depend on God or Christian doctrine, and indeed, he thought religion made men less, rather than more, truly good and moral. This attitude is reflected in another famous account of Hume's last days, namely, that of James Boswell, the biographer of Dr. Johnson. According to Boswell (1977), Hume "said flatly that the Morality of every Religion was bad, and I really thought was not jocular when he said 'that when he heard a man was religious, he concluded he was a rascal, though he had known some instances of very good men being religious'" (76).

So the first factor is that Smith's account challenged the widely held assumption of the time that religion, and in particular Christianity, is at least morally beneficial, if not essential to morality. Indeed, the deists and natural theologians typically shared with orthodox Christians the conviction that belief in God and an afterlife is essential for morality. Hume stands as a striking counterexample to that assumption, insofar as he is acknowledged to be a man who approached "as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will admit." Perhaps complete perfection is out of reach in this world, but if a man who had no sympathy for Christianity or even natural religion was a virtual saint, then that poses an enormous threat to the assumption that belief in God and moral virtue are essentially connected. The example of Hume severs the connection and potentially points to a better way to think about and achieve moral virtue.

But there is a second factor here that was perhaps even more disturbing to Hume's contemporaries, and certainly it is more central to my concerns in this essay. I am referring to the attitude and easy manner with which Hume approached his impending demise. In short, he went to his death with a sense of complete acceptance, and good humor. As Smith put it, "His cheerfulness was so great, and his conversation and amusement run so much in their usual strain, that, notwithstanding all bad symptoms, many people could not believe he was dying" (1977: 244).

The Christian tradition has often emphasized the notion of a "good death" and it is something to which many Christians aspire. That is, they want to die with a sense of peace, confident that they are in a state of grace and will be

received into heaven where they will enjoy eternal life in the presence of God and others who are saved (Smith 2011: 85, 98–100). It is important to emphasize that there is an objective as well as a subjective aspect to this sense of peace. The objective element consists of the conviction that God really exists, that he is a perfectly good being who loves us and has provided for our salvation and eternal happiness in the death and resurrection of Christ. These beliefs are the objective ground for the hope that our desire for eternal life will be realized, and the subjective sense of peace that hope provides for us in the face of death.

Hume, however, did not share these convictions, and he argued explicitly against a "future state." He had no hope that death would usher him into eternal joy, but rather, he was confident that the fate awaiting him was personal oblivion. Yet despite rejecting the objective beliefs that ground the Christian hope, he seemed to enjoy a subjective sense of peace as he looked death in the face. Not only did he show no sense of fear, regret, or melancholy, but his attitude remained so upbeat, as Smith observed, that those who visited him found it hard to believe he was really dying.

Indeed, according to Smith, Hume was downright jocular, engaging in witty monologues and humorous flourishes. A notable example was a soliloquy inspired by Lucian's *Dialogs of the Dead*, which contains accounts of persons who made excuses to Charon for not entering his boat that would carry them over the River Styx. Playing off of this, Hume insisted he could think of no good reason that might buy him time to live any longer. He imagines, among other things, appealing to Charon that he has been working to open the eyes of the public and bring them enlightenment that will dispel prevailing superstitions. If he lived longer, he might enjoy the satisfaction of witnessing the downfall of those superstitions and the success of his life's work. But in Hume's scenario, Charon would not buy his line, but rather would lose his temper and reply: "You loitering rogue, that will not happen these many hundred years. Do you fancy I will grant you a lease for so long a term? Get into the boat this instant, you lazy loitering rogue" (Smith 1977: 245).

According to witnesses, Hume's cheer continued right up to the end. Doctor Black, a physician who was with Hume when he died wrote a letter to Adam Smith recounting his death, and Smith includes it in his letter. The final line quoted from Black's letter says that "he died in such a happy composure of mind, that nothing could exceed it" (Smith 1977: 247). The claim that "nothing could exceed" his happy composure of mind could hardly fail to be taken as a frontal challenge to the Christian conviction faith in God is essential not only for a fully happy and meaningful life, but also for a good death.

We can get some sense of how this account of Hume's cheerful disposition in the face of hopeless oblivion affected his largely religious contemporaries by considering Boswell's reaction to his own final interview with Hume, which was also near the end of his life. Boswell reports that he "contrived" to raise the

issue of immortality, and pressed Hume on the matter, asking if he thought it was at least possible there is a future state. While Hume allowed it was possible, he thought it a rather implausible fancy, as it would imply immortality for the whole human race, many of which have few intellectual qualities. For instance, it would mean "that a Porter who gets drunk by ten o'clock with gin must be immortal" (Boswell 1977: 77).

Later in the course of this account, Boswell recalled an earlier conversation with Hume in which he had expressed indifference to the notion of immortality. His reason here, I think, is a telling one. Here is Boswell's account of that exchange:

> He had once said to me on a forenoon, while the sun was shining bright, that he did not wish to be immortal. This was a most wonderful thought. The reason he gave was that he was very well in this state of being, and that the chances were very much against his being so in another state; and he would rather not be more than be worse. I answered that it would be reasonable to hope he would be better; that there would be a progressive improvement. (1977: 78)

Boswell reports that he came back to this thought in his final interview, and proposed that Hume must at least admit it would be a pleasant thing to hope to have the chance again to see valued friends who had died. Hume acknowledged that it would, but remained incredulous of the possibility.

I will come back to examine more carefully Hume's reasons for rejecting any hope of a future life, but for now the point I want to emphasize is that his serene acceptance of his personal oblivion was deeply disconcerting to Boswell, who wrote:

> I was like a man in sudden danger eagerly seeking his defensive arms; and I could not but be assailed by momentary doubts while I had actually before me a man of such strong abilities and extensive inquiry dying in the persuasion of being annihilated. But I maintained my Faith. (1977: 77)

Now if a man of Boswell's intellectual and literary capacities had a sense of "sudden danger" in response to Hume's calm repose, and even cheer, in the face of death, it is not hard to imagine how Adams's account of his death would pose a threat to those he characterized as "the uninformed, the misinformed, general public."

In short, the case of Hume suggests that we do not need God either to live a good life or to die a good death. It proposes that a man can be virtuous and he can die in peace, even cheerfully, with no prospect of immortality or any hope for goods beyond this life. Perhaps most unsettling is Hume's utter lack of interest in immortality. He seems not merely resigned to death and annihilation, but seems not even to hope or wish that there might be more to life than we experience in this world. The seeming ease with which Hume dispenses with heaven, and the claim that "nothing could exceed" the happy state of

mind with which he died, calls radically into question not only the Christian account of what we can, and should hope for, but the very meaning of our lives.

16.1. THE INDISPENSABILITY OF HEAVEN

Despite Hume's suave dismissal of a future life and the apparent grace with which he faced his demise, the hope of heaven represents a good of such magnitude that it cannot be disposed of without enormous cost. Consider the axiomatic fact that all rational persons desire to be happy. Now it is easy to see from here that perfect happiness is preferable to happiness that is partial, fragmentary or episodic. This is not to assume any particular account of what constitutes perfect happiness, for perhaps perfect happiness includes adventure, challenge, and drama. But the point remains that perfect happiness, however it is constituted, is preferable to some lesser or inferior degree of happiness that falls short of it.

Now here is where losing the hope of heaven comes at enormous cost, for heaven, however conceived, has been understood as the actualization of the perfect happiness we crave. If the hope of heaven is never realized, our lives are destined to fall far short of the perfect happiness heaven represents. Moreover, if we reflect on this reality, our lives will inevitably end with some degree of disappointment. Here is why. If we never achieve perfect happiness, and we reflect on that fact, we would realize our lives fall short of the thing most to be desired, which would mean our lives would end with disappointment. On the other hand, if we achieved perfect happiness, we would not want it to end, so if it did, our lives would certainly end on a disappointing note, even if we went on living.

Indeed, as Aquinas argued, the very nature of perfect happiness is such that it is impossible to lose it once it has been attained. Here is one of his reasons for thinking this:

> First, from the common notion of happiness, for since happiness itself is a perfect and sufficient good, it must give rest to man's desire and exclude all evil. But a man naturally desires to retain the good he has and seeks security in the having of it, otherwise the fear of loss or sadness from the certainty of loss would afflict him. Therefore true happiness requires that a man have a certain knowledge that he will have it and never lose it. (Aquinas 1998: 542)[2]

[2] Compare this statement from Richard Baxter: "The last jewel in our crown, and blessed attribute of this rest, is that *it is an eternal rest.* This is the crown of our crown; without which all were comparatively little or nothing. The very thought of once leaving it would embitter all our

So then, not only would our lives end in disappointment if we had perfect happiness, and then lost it, according to Aquinas, it is not possible to lose perfect happiness since the very possibility of losing it would itself make it less than perfect.

The only way we can avoid falling short of the happiness we most desire then, is to achieve perfect happiness, a sort of happiness that by its very nature could not come to an end. For those who have reflected on this reality, to give up the hope of heaven is to resign ourselves to final disappointment.

But here we come back to Hume, and it may be objected that his example provides a rebuttal or a counterexample to this argument. Perhaps the moral of the story is precisely that the best happiness possible is actually achieved by denying the appeal of immortality, and embracing finitude with cheer, and even humor. If immortality is simply an absurd idea, purely the product of human fancy and imagination, and not worthy of a rational man's hope, then perhaps it is not so costly after all to reject it out of hand and treat it as fodder for deathbed humor. Perhaps it is in reality to purchase wisdom at a very sensible price.

16.2. "FOR HAPPINESS IS NOT TO BE DREAMED OF"

To assess these claims, we need to look more carefully at Hume's view of the prospects for human happiness, particularly in his writings about religion, and especially in his *Dialogues.* In that book, Hume delivered a classic statement of the problem of evil as an argument against classic theism. None of the participants in the dialogue is an atheist, but Philo, the character who perhaps is closest to reflecting Hume's actual views defends a minimal sort of theism/deism that denies the moral attributes of the deity. Philo acknowledges that it is reasonable to infer that something like a human mind, though possessed of much greater powers, created our world. But what he emphatically denies is that the creator is good in any sense resembling the ordinary meaning of that word. Moreover, he insists that affirming such a deity is functionally identical with atheism since his existence has no practical or religious implications. Indeed, the most probable judgment is that the creator is simply amoral, with no concern whatever for either good or evil, since our world is a puzzling mixture of both of these.

What is particularly significant for our concerns is the fundamental reason why Philo argues that the creator is not good, and that reason is that our world

joys; and the more would it pierce us because of the singular excellencies which we must forsake" (2004: 82).

clearly was not built for the happiness of its inhabitants. Despite the fact that it is a mixture of good and evil, it is not conducive to the flourishing of its sentient creatures. The misery of the human condition in particular is spelled out in eloquent terms by both Philo and Demea, the latter of whom is an orthodox believer who defends God's goodness on the ground that everything will be made right in the life to come. Here is how Philo summarizes the case against the goodness of the deity:

> His power, we allow is infinite; whatever he wills is executed: But neither man nor any other animal is happy; therefore he does not will their happiness. His wisdom is infinite; He is never mistaken in choosing the means to any end; But the course of nature tends not to human or animal felicity: Therefore, it is not established for that purpose. (Hume 1977b: 198)

Later in the conversation, Philo employs an analogy to argue that this world is not at all the sort of world we would expect a very powerful, wise and benevolent deity to create.

> Did I show you a house or palace where there was not one apartment convenient or agreeable; where the windows, doors, fires, passages, stairs, and the whole economy of the building were the source of noise, confusion, fatigue, darkness, and the extremes of heat and cold, you would certainly blame the contrivance without any further examination . . . .you will always, without entering into any detail, condemn the architect (Hume 1977b: 204–5).

This analogy is particularly interesting because Hume used a similar example earlier in his argument against particular providence and a future state in *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. His argument there is similar to his argument in the *Dialogues* that we must make our inferences about the nature of causes strictly from what we observe in effects, so any claims about the attributes of a deity or his purposes must be based on the natural order as we actually observe it. On this principle, it is totally misguided to make inferences that go beyond the present order of things in an attempt "to render this life a mere passage to something farther; a porch, which leads to a greater, and vastly different building; a prologue , which serves only to introduce the piece, and give it more grace and propriety" (Hume 1977a: 97).

He considers, however, an objection to this claim, based on the example of a half-finished building. If one saw such a building surrounded by piles of bricks, mortar and the tools of masonry, the objection goes, surely one would infer not only that it was a work of design, but also that the builder would return to it and properly finish what he started. The same reasoning, then, should be applied to the present order of nature.

> Consider the world and the present life only an imperfect building, from which you can infer a superior intelligence; and arguing from that superior intelligence, which can leave nothing imperfect; why may you not infer a more finished

> scheme or plan, which will receive its completion in some distant point of space and time? (1977a: 98)

This analogy, however, is rejected on the grounds that the implied comparison between the deity and human agents does not hold up. We are acquainted with lots of human agents, and human actions, and we understand the sort of reasons and motives that explain their actions. In the case of human agents we can reason from effect to cause, and back again to further inferences about what the cause is likely to do because we are familiar with human psychology and motivation. The deity, however, is a singular being, not one of a species with which we are familiar, and the only effect of his activity we have to go on when making inferences is this world.

The big mistake in this analogy, he says, "and of the license of conjecture, which we indulge, is, that we tacitly consider ourselves, as in the place of the Supreme Being, and conclude, that he will, on every occasion, observe the same conduct, which we ourselves, in his situation, would have embraced as reasonable and eligible" (1977a: 100). Since we cannot legitimately conjecture about any other world based on what we know about this one, we have no reason to think the Supreme Being has any plans in mind to finish this world in some fashion that will make it conducive to our happiness.

Hume expressed similar thoughts in a rather poignant fashion in another of his books devoted to religion, namely, *The Natural History of Religion.* This slim volume is an attack on what he calls "popular religion," which he depicts not only as driven by ignorance and superstition, but also as a poor substitute for true morality. In the final chapter of the book, he sounds themes similar to those in the *Dialogues* about the mixed character of our world, and our prospects for happiness, and again the outlook is rather bleak.

> Good and evil are universally intermingled and confounded; happiness and misery, wisdom and folly, virtue and vice. Nothing is pure and entirely of a piece . . . . And it is not possible for us, by our most chimerical wishes, to form the idea of a station or situation altogether desirable. (1956: 74)

Notice in particular the final line quoted: it is not even possible "to form the idea of a station or situation altogether desirable."

Hume reiterates similar thoughts a few lines later, insisting that "the most flattering hopes make way for the severest disappointments." He continues in this vein, offering this counsel as the best way to cope with this harsh reality: "And, in general, no course of life has such safety (for happiness is not be dreamed of) as the temperate and moderate, which maintains, as far as possible, a mediocrity, and a kind of insensibility, in every thing" (74–5).

Now let us return to Hume's last days and the cheer with which he faced the prospect of his annihilation. I want to suggest that his profoundly pessimistic views about the prospects for happiness place his deathbed cheer in a rather dark light.

Indeed, at best, given's Hume's view that "happiness is not to be dreamed of" he was making the best of a bad situation. If the world was not designed for our happiness, and it is simply out of reach for us, our situation is even more dismal than I described above. Not only is it the case that our lives must inevitably fall short of the happiness we most desire because we never achieved *perfect* happiness, they must do so because *happiness, period*, is completely out of the question. According to Hume, we cannot even conceive of perfect happiness, for it is quite beyond us to "form the idea of a station or situation altogether desirable." Obviously then, if happiness itself is not to be dreamed of, perfect happiness even more so is a fantasy far more remote than "our most chimerical wishes."

Now here it is very much worth emphasizing that, while Hume made much of the problem of evil, in one sense he simply dissolved the problem. For one of his key arguments was that this world is not the sort of world we would expect, a priori, that an all-powerful, wise, and benevolent deity would create. Given the clash between our a priori expectations, and the actual world, we have no reason to believe it was created by such a God. The problem, then, persists only for those who believe in such a God.

By contrast, however, if the Supreme Being is amoral, if he is simply indifferent to good and evil, and to whether or not we are happy, well, the world as we know it is not at all surprising. Suffering and misery is a problem for those who believe God is all-powerful, knowing, and good, because it is hard to account for on those terms, and requires some sort of explanation of how it is compatible with the existence and purposes of such a God. But if God is morally indifferent, there is no good reason to think such evil is fundamentally at odds with him and whatever purposes he may have, and indeed, perhaps it is as much to be expected as any other scenario. In that sense, evil is not a problem in the classic sense of the word. It still poses practical problems to be sure, and challenges to cope with it, but it is not at odds with what we should expect, and it should not elicit the same sort of perplexity and outrage as it should if it is profoundly at odds with ultimate reality.

Now in light of this, I want to hazard the suggestion that the death of Hume, and his demeanor leading up to it is not only a defining event of the modern period, but also a harbinger of postmodernity. I mean by the modern period, roughly, the period characterized by the project to make positive sense of our lives without the resources of theism and Christian theology. Given Hume's bleak assessment of our prospects for happiness, his cheerful embrace of death is not so much a positive example of demonstrating meaning without God as it is a display of ironic despair. Life is so little to be desired that he would not even wish for immortality, or any chance to extend his conscious experience. Making jokes whose punchline is that there is no plausible reason to delay getting on board with Charon rings more of the hollow laughter of

postmodernism than it does of any deep sense of cheer that is worthy of celebration and emulation.

16.3. A DEEP INCOHERENCE AND A HOPEFUL RESOLUTION

However, Hume's contention that the Supreme Being is most likely morally indifferent is dubious on other grounds as well. Indeed, there is good reason to think that Hume's views here are in fact deeply incoherent. I have argued this in some detail elsewhere, and will not repeat the full argument here.[3] But I want to reiterate the central point and its large implications for our prospects for happiness and the doctrine of heaven.

Hume's argument that the deity is morally indifferent fails because Hume completely ignores one of the most important and telling aspects of our world, namely, our moral nature. Hume of course, is famous for rooting moral judgment not in reason, but in sentiment, which he also calls some "internal taste or feeling" (1983: 88). Our moral judgment is based on feelings of approval or disapproval, and what generates these feelings in particular are things that cause happiness or unhappiness. "This sentiment can be no other than a feeling for the happiness of mankind, and a resentment of their misery; since these are the different ends which virtue and vice have a tendency to promote" (83).

Now what leads Hume to incoherence here is his claim that the Supreme Being is the one who gave us our moral nature: "Now the standard of the other [taste], arising from the internal frame and constitution of animals, is ultimately derived from the Supreme Will, which bestowed on each being its peculiar nature" (88). I emphasize here that the issue is not whether Hume actually believed in a Supreme Being, or sincerely thought that such a being designed our "internal frame and constitution." The issue is whether he gave due consideration to the empirical reality of our moral nature when judging the probability of whether there is really is a God, and what He is like. When our moral nature is taken into account, the claim that the Supreme Being could be amoral loses credibility. For either he shares our moral judgments about the value of happiness that he has structured us to feel, or he does not. If he does, then he is a morally good being. But if he designed us to make such judgments but does not share them, he is not amoral, but rather morally perverse.

[3] See Walls (1990) and Walls (2002: 14–30).

Consider the juxtaposition of these two statements, both of which express Hume's claims.

1. Our world is full of misery, and it is apparent it was not designed to promote our happiness.
2. Our moral nature, built into us by the Supreme Being, is constituted in such a way that we disapprove of, and judge as vicious whatever promotes misery rather than happiness.

Now the notion that the Supreme Being could be morally indifferent in light of these two claims is highly implausible, to put it mildly. If this world reflects His final purpose for humanity, He is not merely immoral, but vicious according to the very moral judgments He has designed us to make. On the other hand, if we think He must share the moral judgments He has designed us to make, then He must want to promote our happiness, so this world cannot reflect His final purpose for humanity.

But Hume's position leads to disconcerting conclusions even if any notion of a Supreme Being is eliminated from the picture. There still remains a deep conflict between the way the world is, and our moral judgments. To put the point in Kantian terms, there remains a painful clash between the way the world is, and the way we judge that it ought to be.

In her book *Evil in Modern Thought* (2002), Susan Neiman tells the story of how the modern world increasingly came to cope with the problem of evil by denying its reality, decreasing its scope, or defining it out of existence. Particularly after the Lisbon earthquake, the natural world was stripped of moral significance, and natural evil was eliminated as a meaningful category. Moreover, as the modern period moved more explicitly in the direction of naturalism, eventually even moral evil was diminished as human beings came increasingly to be seen as part and parcel of the larger natural order. The final chapter of her book is tellingly entitled "Homeless" and there she reiterates the dilemmas that must be faced by inhabitants of our world who experience it as hostile to our happiness and flourishing, but cannot dispense with moral judgments. "For those who refuse to give up moral judgments, the demand that they stop seeking the unity of nature and morality means accepting a conflict in the heart of being that nothing will ever resolve" (268).

Later in the chapter, she notes Kant's conviction that our drive to seek reason in the world "is as deep as any drive we have. It's this urge that keeps the problem of evil alive even after hopes of resolving it are abandoned." This urge manifests itself in our deep rooted conviction that the *is* and the *ought* should converge, and it is this conviction that drives the metaphysical enterprise. "We proceed on the assumption that the true and the good, and just possibly the beautiful, coincide. Where they do not, we demand an account" (322).

Now why we have such a deep rooted conviction is an interesting question, particularly in a godless universe. In a naturalistic world, what reason do we have to demand, or even expect that the true, the good and the beautiful coincide? There is, I think, no good reason, and indeed, naturalists have even less reason to have a problem of evil than those who posit an amoral deity. If something like naturalistic evolution, characterized by conflict and the survival of the fittest, is the fundamental truth about reality, we should hardly be surprised by evil or think it is problem in the way it is for classical theists. Rather, suffering and evil is simply woven into the fundamental fabric of reality.

16.4. IF GOD IS GOOD, WE HAVE HOPE FOR HOME

Now then, let us turn to consider what would have been reasonable for Hume to believe about our prospects for happiness if he had taken more account of our moral nature in judging what sort of Supreme Being probably created our world. If the Supreme Being shares the moral judgments he has structured us to make, we have reason to believe He desires our happiness and wants to promote it.[4]

But to believe this is to embrace the problem of evil with all its jagged edges, and acknowledge that the way the world is leaves us far short of the happiness we crave. It is to continue to make the moral judgment that the world is not the way it ought to be, and frankly to own the fact that we are not at home in the world as it currently is. However, to embrace the problem of evil in this fashion is better than merely dissolving it as Hume and other modern thinkers did. To hold fast to the conviction that the world ought to be different than it is because it is at odds with the ultimate purposes of a God who is perfectly good as well as all powerful and knowing is to hold out the hope that it will eventually be the sort of world it ought to be. It is to have reason to believe that we shall yet arrive at home.[5]

Indeed, if God shares the moral judgment that happiness should be promoted, the analogy of the half-finished house that Hume rejected has more force than he allowed. The half-finished nature of the world as we currently experience it is reflected in the reality that it is not consistently conducive to our happiness, let alone our perfect happiness, yet it still provides us numerous

[4] Here I will ignore the option that God could be evil. I offer some argument against taking this option seriously in (Walls 1990: 264–5) and (Walls 2002: 26–8).

[5] One of the images of heaven that recurs in popular, sentimental pictures of heaven is that of domestic bliss, heaven as the perfect home. See Smith (2011: 70–86). Perhaps there is a sound insight underlying this common picture.

experiences of joy and delight. But what has deeply impressed many thoughtful observers is that these experiences also leave us dissatisfied and thirsting for more. Consider a recent statement of this phenomenon from Alvin Plantinga.

> Think of the haunting, supernal beauty of the prairie on an early morning in June, or the glorious but slightly menacing aspect of the Cathedral group in the Grand Tetons, or the gleaming splendor of Mount Shuksan and Mount Baker from Skyline Ridge, or the timeless crash and roar of the surf, or the melting sweetness of Mozart's 'Dona Nobis Pacem' that can bring hot tears to your eyes, or the incredible grace, beauty and power of an ice-skating routine or a kickoff returned for ninety-eight yards. In each, there is a kind of yearning, something perhaps a little like nostalgia, or perhaps homesickness, a longing for one knows not what. (2000: 317–18)

Plantinga's examples, of course, are only representative, and indeed, he discusses at more length erotic love as another notable instance of an experience that points to deeper realities. What all these things have in common, Plantinga notes, is that they elicit a desire for a kind of union that eludes us. But regardless of how it is characterized, most people understand the yearning he is describing from similar experiences in their own lives.

Notice particularly his suggestion that this is experience is like nostalgia or homesickness. It is a desire for a home we have never known, or a home of which it seems we have some faint memory, but is now hard to locate. I would suggest that this experience could be characterized as the emotional counterpart of the analogy that compared our world to a half finished building that leads us to infer that it will yet be finished and perfected. Both a world that is like a half finished building, and the experiences that fill us with yearning and a sense of homesickness, are similar in the sense that they are partial and incomplete. Both of them intimate something yet to come. Indeed, if the Creator of the world, including our moral and emotional nature, is good in the sense that He shares our judgments about the value of happiness for human beings, there is good reason to think the half-finished and partial are not the last word. Rather, there is reason to think they point forward to a future completion that will fulfill the potential they intimate.

This has large implications that profoundly challenge Hume's cheerful dismissal of the prospect of immortality. Recall the reason he insisted to Boswell on a "forenoon, while the sun was shining bright that he did not wish to be immortal," namely, that he "was very well in this state of being, and that the chances were very much against his being so well in another state." Recall too Hume's very dim views about human happiness, which certainly relativize his claim to be "very well in this state of being." Indeed, he insisted that happiness was not even to be dreamed of, and that the best course to take in light of this was to maintain "as far as possible, a mediocrity, and a kind of insensibility, in everything." Hume's claim to be very well, then, seems to

amount to his good fortune in being able to achieve a certain sort of detachment, to rise above the general misery of humanity and to maintain a moderate attitude in all things.

However, if God is good in the sense that He values human happiness, there is good reason indeed to think the prospects are excellent that the life to come will provide the happiness that is so elusive in this life. Again, there is reason to think those moving experiences of beauty and goodness are intimations of a kind of happiness that will answer to the longings and yearnings they elicit from us. So Hume's judgment that the "chances" are small that the life to come would be better than this one are premised on the assumption that any such life would simply be a continuation of this life with the same sort of moral indifference to human happiness. But that judgment is profoundly misguided if our own moral nature, at its best, is a telling reflection of the moral intentions of God.

It is also telling, in the same light, that Hume defended his indifference to oblivion by appealing to the claim of Lucretius that the prospect of annihilation should cause us no more distress than our non-existence before we were born. But the alleged symmetry between our past non-existence and our future non-existence simply does not hold, and it requires a remarkably cavalier attitude to the value and meaning of one's own life to think it does. The obvious difference is that one's death deprives him of existence in a very different sense than his prenatal nonexistence does. As Thomas Nagel has pointed out, our lives have a very distinct beginning, and indeed, there is a relatively small window of time in which a man can be born. Anyone born substantially earlier would not be that very man. By contrast, the end of our lives is more open ended, and as our lives proceed, we can enjoy new goods that death will eventually rob from us. "Viewed in this way, death, no matter how inevitable, is an abrupt cancellation of indefinitely extensive possible goods" (Nagel 1993: 69).

So in Hume's own case, the prospect of oblivion represented the final end of actual friendships he valued, with no further opportunity to relish those friendships, deepen them, or develop new dimensions of them. Death meant he would not live to see the outcome of projects into which he poured great effort and energy. For instance, he would not live to see whether his attempt to vindicate the Stuart family in his *History of England* would be successful, particularly his effort to vindicate the first two of them so thoroughly that they would "never again be attacked" (Boswell 1977: 79). The fact that Hume should judge the loss of such goods as no more to be regretted than his prenatal nonexistence seems remarkably insensitive to their true value. Again, to put the best face on this is to recall his dismal views about the prospects for happiness, and his recommendation of moderation and a "kind of insensibility" as the best measures for coming to terms with this despair.

16.5. DREAMING OF HAPPINESS

Let us turn now to consider more specifically what happiness we are warranted to dream of if there is a good God. Indeed, let us look specifically at the sort of happiness that is possible if we assume the Christian God to which Hume often gave ironic lip service. As we turn to consider the possibilities here, it is worth pointing out that on one hand, Hume complained of those who argued, dubiously he thought, from causes to speculative effects that we have not experienced, that "they have aided the ascent of reason by the wings of imagination" (1977a: 95). On the other hand, recall his claim that it is not even possible for us "to form the idea of a station or situation altogether desirable."

So let us take up Hume's challenge of imagining a life that would be "altogether desirable" by taking seriously not only the idea of a good God as reflected in our moral intuitions at their best, but also the distinctive resources of Christian theology to which Hume often gave ironic lip service. I would suggest that Christian theology empowers us to imagine what our world would be like if finished by the Triune God and can thereby take us a long way toward forming an idea of what Hume thought impossible. Indeed, drawing on these resources, we may not only conceive of a kind of happiness most to be desired, but know that we are warranted in dreaming of it, and more, believing in our dreams.

Here we may begin with an important aspect of heavenly happiness that is quite pertinent to our longing to be finally at home in this world, and this is a point that has been recovered in contemporary theology, but one that is often obscured in popular pictures of heaven. I refer to the fact that the final hope to which Christians look is an embodied life on a renewed earth. This is crucial to keep squarely in focus if heaven is to be truly home to creatures the likes of us. For on the popular picture, heaven is about saving our souls by fleeing this world and existing forever in a sort of timeless ethereal realm. By contrast, recent biblical theology has recovered the holistic vision of salvation according to which God is intent on saving and redeeming his entire fallen world, and restoring the original cultural mandate that was given to humanity in the beginning.[6] This mandate involves at the very least tending this world and developing its potentialities in the service of truth, beauty and goodness.

In this connection, it is worth noting that Boswell's picture of immortality seemed to fall short of this biblical picture. When Hume ridiculed the notion of immortality by protesting that new universes would have to be made to contain all the people who would be there, Boswell reports that he thought this an unphilosophical objection and replied, "Mr. Hume, you know that Spirit

[6] See, for example, Middleton (2014).

does not take up space" (1977: 77). While I do not know the details of Boswell's theology, his seeming picture of a heaven in which we do not take up space falls short of the biblical vision of our final home.

But perhaps more to the point, the picture of the new heaven and the new earth in the book of Revelation is one from which the causes of pain and misery so eloquently described by Hume have been altogether banished. "Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4). While this description is far removed from our experience, it is arguably close to our hearts, and our imaginations. But more importantly, such a world could be realized by a God of perfect power and knowledge as even Hume would admit. And if God is also good, we have reason to think he will.

But the essential goodness of heaven is not merely a matter what is banished from God's perfectly finished world, but rather of the positive delights that would qualify it as perfect happiness. The heart of the positive good is what Hume's contemporary, Jonathan Edwards focused on when he described "Heaven as a world of Love."

The longing for, and experience of, love is the very paradigm of human happiness and fulfillment. We naturally yearn not only to be truly and deeply loved, but also to give love in return. The experience of being "in love" is among the most relished of human joys, and the love of sexuality and marriage is profoundly treasured when it is happily shared. Moreover, the distinctively different love between children and parents, along with other family members, as well as friends brings its own particular delights that are also relished and cherished.

The other side of this reality is that the disappointments of love are among the most bitter. While all human relationships we have experienced have their flaws and failures, sometimes love is not given or reciprocated when it should be, and sometimes it is abused and betrayed. While love can empower us to face and overcome many kinds of challenges and adversity, the loss of love cannot be compensated for by anything else.

Now then, consider the profoundly inviting picture of heaven as the ultimate love relationship. Heaven, so understood is an eternal love relationship with the greatest possible lover, as well as a perfect love relationship with all creatures. The ultimate spring of these relationships, of course, is the triune God who has existed from all eternity in a relationship of mutual, ecstatic love between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Edwards comments on this as follows.

> Seeing he is an all-sufficient Being, it follows that he is a full and an inexhaustible fountain of love. Seeing he is an unchangeable and eternal Being, he is an unchangeable and eternal source of love.... There in heaven this fountain of love, this eternal three in one, is set without any obstacle to hinder access to it.

> There this glorious God is manifested and shines forth in full glory, in beams of love; there the fountain overflows in streams and rivers of love and delight, enough for all to drink at, and to swim in, yea, so as to overflow the world as it were with a deluge of love. (1999: 245)

Edwards goes on to elaborate the delights of love to be enjoyed by all who drink from this fountain, and even swim in it. The implications of such love are profoundly far reaching with regard to our prospects for deep and lasting happiness.

One notable aspect of this love is that it transforms our relationships with each other so that they generate mutual pleasure for all persons. Too often in this life, genuine love is not appropriately received or returned. In heaven, Edwards argues, love will always be fully reciprocated, so there will no frustration from unrequited love. "In proportion as any person is beloved, in that proportion his love is desired and prized. And in heaven this inclination or desire of love will never fail of being satisfied. No person there will ever be grieved that he is slighted by those whom he loves, or that he has not answerable returns" (1999: 252).

This does not mean, however, that all persons in heaven will be equal in every respect. To the contrary, some will surpass others in glory for various reasons, such as the fact that some will have larger capacities to see the divine perfections. In our fallen world, any recognition of superiority often leads to pride, envy, suspicion, misunderstanding, competition for domination, insecurity, and so on. As Edwards points out, persons thoroughly transformed by the love of God will love each other with such sincerity and genuine affection that it will altogether displace and eliminate those attitudes that mar and even destroy relationships.

In heaven, the fact that some persons will surpass others in glory or holiness will not be an occasion for jealousy, but rather, for some distinctive variations of genuine love. Indeed, there will be certain paradoxes in the perfected love relationships of heaven. The higher saints "will love those who are below them more than other saints of less capacity . . . . So that those who are lower in glory will not envy those who are above them." The perfect love flowing back and forth between these saints will completely eliminate any sense that the higher slight the lower, or are in any way condescending to them. "And what puts it beyond doubt that seeing the superior happiness of others will be no damp to their happiness is this, that the superior happiness which they have consists in their greater humility, and their greater love to them, and to God and Christ, whom they will look on as themselves" (1999: 251). Notice, these higher saints will take joy and delight in the happiness of lower saints even as they delight in the vastly superior happiness of God himself.

Moreover, the love of perfected saints will not be vulnerable to doubt or worries that it is in any way superficial, exaggerated or fickle. To the contrary,

the saints "shall be perfectly satisfied of the sincerity and strength of each other's love, as much as if there were a window in all their breasts, that they could see each other's hearts" (1999: 253).

But as delightful as perfected love relationships with the saints may be, the greatest pleasure is loving, and being loved by, the eternal fountain of love, God himself, who is the source and wellspring of all love. In heaven, Edwards contends, we shall understand far better the depths of God's love for us, and that will in turn elicit from us an intense love for God.

> And God will then gloriously manifest himself to them, and they shall know that all the happiness and glory of which they are possessed is the fruit of his love.... They shall then be more sensible than they are now of what great love it manifested in Christ, that he should lay down his life for them. Then Christ will open to their view the great fountain of love in his heart far beyond what they ever saw before. (1999: 252)

As we come to see and feel in our hearts how intense is God's heart of love for us, Edwards says, the love between God and us will become mutual.

In coming to understand God's heart of love for us more fully, we are assured not only of its utter permanency, but also of the enduring love of the saints. And this shall assure us that our happiness is perfect, with no shadow of doubt to compromise it in any way.

> They shall know that God and Christ will be forever, and that their love will be continued and manifested forever, and that all their beloved fellow saints shall live forever with the same love in their hearts. And they shall know that they themselves shall ever live to love God, and love the saints, and enjoy their love. They shall be in no danger of any end of this happiness, nor shall they be in any fear or danger of any abatement of it through weariness of the exercises and expressions of love, or cloyed with the enjoyment of it, or the beloved objects becoming old or decayed, or stale or tasteless. All things shall flourish there in an eternal youth.... The paradise of love shall always be continued as in a perpetual spring. (1999: 257–8)

Again, no happiness could be perfect if there was a possibility that it could end, and Edwards bases our confidence that our happiness shall be perfect in the eternal love of God. This is the ultimate ground of our hope for a "paradise of love" that will be always be as fresh as "a perpetual spring."

It is worth emphasizing here that Edwards's comments are pertinent to a challenge to heavenly joy that only gained currency in later modernity, namely, the fear that heaven must inevitably at some point become boring. And if so, the notion of eternal happiness is really an incoherent one, and the hope for it is misguided.[7]

[7] This argument has been famously articulated by Bernard Williams (1993). For a discussion of this issue and several proposed answers, see Hallett (2001).

Everything hinges here on whether there really exists a God of love who is himself eternally and ecstatically happy, as Christian theology teaches. If so, perfect happiness is not only possible but actual. Still, however, it might be objected that God's eternal happiness does not entail the possibility of eternal happiness for finite creatures like us.

Once again, whether God is perfectly good in the sense that he values our happiness is most relevant. Recall my earlier argument that the only way our lives will not fall short of the happiness we most desire is if we achieve perfect happiness, which can only be such if it never ends. Now if God is perfectly good, he would not create beings like us whose lives must end with the disappointment of our deepest desires. So if a perfectly good God has created us, perfect happiness must be possible for us.

Arguments like this, however, along with Edwards's assurances, may do little to assuage our fears if we cannot imagine any sort of happiness that would not grow stale eventually. And perhaps it is endemic to our fallen condition that we cannot imagine anything that would make us happy forever. But here it is worth reflecting on Edwards's claim cited above that the love of God "will be continued and manifested forever."

So here is the point. If God's love for us will continue forever, he will forever desire our happiness. And we have every reason to trust that an omnipotent, omniscient God who intensely loves us has the resources to provide for our eternal happiness. There will be ever new aspects of himself and his divine nature for him to disclose to us and his eternal nature is a never ending supply of truth, beauty and goodness for us to relish and enjoy.[8]

It is worth reiterating in this connection that every pleasure we savor in this life is a reflection of God that is mediated through his creation. We can hardly fathom this universe in all of its extraordinary variety and fascination, and the universe compared to its creator is but a shadow of his glory. Those numerous pleasures we discussed above that charm and captivate us are at times so enchanting that we lose any sense of time, even as we wish they could go on forever. These pleasures, however, as Plantinga noted, elude us and leave us with a yearning that nothing in this life seems fully to answer. Mediated as they are by God's good but fallen creation, they are foretastes of heaven, perhaps even shrouded glimpses of the face of God.

Revelation promises the redeemed that when heaven comes to earth they shall enjoy the singular privilege denied the greatest of Old Testament saints: "But the throne of the God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will

[8] This may require that our intellectual capacities will be continuously enlarged throughout eternity. A number of theologians have suggested this. Charles Hodge, the nineteenth century Reformed theologian, for instance, wrote that: "Another element of the future happiness of the saints is the indefinite enlargement of all their faculties" (1989, III: 860).

worship him; they will see his face and his name will be on their foreheads."[9] When they see the face of God, no longer shall they be limited to fleeting glimpses that leave them with a bittersweet nostalgia or a feeling something like homesickness. Rather, his glory shall pervade the entire creation, and they shall see his face everywhere they look as they take in the beauty of this world as renewed by its creator. But the face they shall behold is not merely that of a powerful Creator, but a loving Father.

With the prospect of basking forever in their Father's eternal love, and sharing the infinite ways he will design to express that love; and with the confidence of relishing forever the uniquely individual expressions of the love of each of the saints; and with the anticipation of enjoying every delight of his creation as he originally intended it to be enjoyed, they shall know at last that they have arrived at home.

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[9] Rev. 22:3–4.

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17

Why the Life of Heaven Is Supremely Worth Living

Richard Swinburne

In this chapter I shall develop widely held intuitions about what makes a life a good life to live, and so what would make a life the best sort of life to live forever; and I shall then argue that the kind of after-life to be enjoyed by the Blessed as described in patristic thought, is just that sort of life.[1]

17.1. WHAT MAKES LIFE GOOD TO LIVE

Enjoyment consists in being in a situation where you desire (or in the modern sense "want") to be, to have the feelings, desires, and beliefs which you desire to have, and to be doing an action which you desire to be doing. And it is of course good to enjoy life, to be happy—so long as you are not getting your enjoyment from having feelings of hatred or other bad feelings, or from false beliefs or from doing what is morally wrong. But, as most people realize, there is more to a worthwhile life than enjoyment.

It is good to have true beliefs and correct feelings. It is good to have true beliefs (which I shall call merely "knowledge") about anything but especially about what is intrinsically good or bad, and about the causes of intrinsically good or bad states, and more generally about deep moral, metaphysical, aesthetic and scientific matters (which may be articulated in appreciation of literature and other arts rather than in precise philosophical terminology). It is good to have good desires—for the well-being of all humans (and animals), and especially for those close to us, and for ourselves. It is good to have

[1] This chapter is partly an expansion of Swinburne (2005: 177–82). Its content overlaps that of Swinburne (2016).

correct feelings—of love for all humans, and so of sympathy for those suffering, of affection for those friends who have interacted with us in important ways over a long time (and especially our spouses, parents and children), or grief at the deaths of such friends, of sorrow at the failure of their projects, of anger at wrongdoers. It is good to have significant powers, powers (and so opportunities) to make differences to oneself, others, and the world. To be of no use to anyone is tragic. It is good to have respect for all people—especially for the good and wise and powerful. It is good to feel respect for all persons for what is good in them, and so especially for morally good persons, but also for those who have great wisdom, power and responsibility; since having great wisdom, power and responsibility would be a great good in us, it is great good in anyone else—so long as they exercise their power wisely. It is good to have feelings of gratitude to those who have given us much and therefore especially (let us hope, in most cases) our parents and teachers. And it is good to love and to be loved, and so to need someone else and to be needed by them; and for all the good things that we have, it is always better if the good thing is given to us out of love. And it is good for us if there is at least one good person who cares for us and also knows all about us, and so can help us to become a good person.

While it is good for us to have fulfilled desires, right attitudes, and significant powers, it is a basic intuition that what we do with our powers and especially what we do successfully, contributes more to the goodness of our life than what happens to us. Our actions are better, the better their goals, and the more those goals take time and energy to achieve. We have special obligations to our benefactors and especially to our parents who are to some small degree the cause of our existence, and—if they are also nurturing parents—to a larger degree for all their actions of feeding and nurturing us. We have special obligations to spouses who have promised us their lifelong loyalty; and special obligations to our children whom we have caused to exist in an initial condition of total impotence. And we have lesser obligations to those who have benefitted us in lesser ways, including simply by cooperating with us at work or having a friendly conversation with us. It is good that we should not merely feel, but show the respect due to the good who have great wisdom, power and responsibility. Good actions also include the best actions of all, supererogatory actions, actions "beyond the call of duty," actions of doing more than we are obliged to do—caring for the parents and educating the children of others, and sacrificing our own life (not merely some time and energy) to save the life of someone else. It is very good, too, to write novels, poems and plays, play music, paint pictures, and develop our understanding of moral, metaphysical, and aesthetic realities—even if solely for our own benefit, but better of course if others can enjoy our creations. It is good to do these actions spontaneously, out of a natural desire for the well-being of others. It is also good if we do them as an act of libertarian free will, despite desiring not to

do them, that is despite contrary temptation. But of course naturally doing good, and doing good despite temptation, while both goods, are incompatible goods. Yet we are so made that by choosing often to do good actions despite contrary temptation, we can gradually make ourselves less inclined to yield to temptation and thereby gradually become people who do good actions naturally. It is good too that we should be able with help from others to work out for ourselves (as well as deep metaphysical, aesthetic, and scientific truths) the moral truths about what is good and what is bad to do, and in that sense be autonomous. (Given that there are objective moral truths, it is not possible to be autonomous in the sense of "deciding" which actions are good or bad.) But, as I claimed earlier, it is also good that we should know what is morally good and what is morally bad. And again these are incompatible goods, since we cannot work something out for ourselves if we already know the answer. But given time and honesty, we can, I believe,[2] make some progress in moving from ignorance to knowledge (as well as of metaphysical, aesthetic, and scientific truths) also of moral truths. It is a lot better if our actions succeed in achieving their goal, but is still good to try to achieve a good goal, even if we fail.

If there is a God, these aspects of a good life can be realized in far more and deeper ways than they could otherwise be. It is good, I argued, to seek true moral and cosmic beliefs. Physics may be able to tell us what are the fundamental laws which govern the physical universe (or—if there is one, the multiverse); but if there is no God, the existence of the physical universe (or multiverse) and the operation of these particular laws will simply be a brute fact for which there is no explanation. If there is a God then there will be an explanation of why there is a universe governed by these laws—that the universe is created and sustained by God, and that he made it the way it is because that is a good way for it to be and it makes it possible for us to live in it. And either by our natural reason or because God reveals it, we can discover this explanation. True, there may remain questions to which we will never know the answer—for example why there is a God at all—but there will be discoverable answers to some otherwise unanswerable questions.

It is good, I argued earlier, to have good desires and correct feelings. If there is a God, there will be many more good desires and correct feelings to be had, and it will matter a lot more that we should have them, since it matters that we should have good desires and correct feelings towards God. Since it is good to reverence those mildly good persons who have some wisdom, power, and responsibility, it will obviously be very good to have feelings of deep reverence towards God who has total wisdom, power and responsibility, and is the ultimate cause of things. And it is obviously good to have deep gratitude to

[2] For my account of the necessary nature of fundamental moral truths, and of how we can discover them, see Swinburne (2015).

God for our existence and all the good things in our life, and to have a strong desire to please him who has been so generous to us. Further, all the desires and feelings which it is good that we should have towards other humans (and animals) will be good to have for another reason, the reason that God has intentionally made them and continues to sustain them in existence by the same process as he made and sustains us to share the same universe. They are all therefore in a wide sense our brothers and sisters; and so it is even more important than it would be otherwise, that we shall be concerned for their well-being. If we do have the right desires and feelings of these kinds, our life will be significantly better than it would otherwise be.

I argued earlier that while it is good for us to have some good thing, it is always better if the good thing is given to us in an act of love for us. Now our parents may have chosen to have a child, but they did not choose to have us. While laws of nature may determine that the child produced by their intercourse was a child of a certain kind (e.g., with a certain genetic make-up), there are innumerable possible children of just that kind. Only God or (if there is no God) chance could determine which of those possible children their actual child would be. So if there is a God, our life is immediately far better in the respect that it comes to us, not by chance, but by an act of love. I also argued earlier that it is good for us if there is some good person who cares for us and also knows all about us. For so many humans, there is no other human who knows very much at all about their plans and pleasures; and, I suspect, there is no human whose pains and pleasures are fully known by any other human. An omniscient God would know all, including our private thoughts. Atheists sometimes claim that this would only be good if we consent to it.[3] But if we need help to live a good life (and surely we all do) that is only possible if there is someone who knows what our problems are, and is ready to help. It is good for us if a supremely good and all-knowing God who is not merely ready to help, but ready to overcome our foolish resistance to accepting his help; for he can help us only if he knows all about us, more that we are willing for him to know.

It is good, I argued, to need others, and good to be needed by them. If there is a God, we need him to keep us and the good things of life in existence; and he who has created us, like all parents, has taken the risk that we may rebel against him. So, although he did not need to create us,[4] once having done so,

[3] Christopher Hitchens posed the rhetorical question, "Who wishes that there was a permanent unalterable celestial despotism that subjected us to continual surveillance and could convict us of thought crime?" (Hitchens 1997: xxii). Guy Kahane (2011) sees it as a disadvantage if "even our innermost thoughts" and feelings are not entirely private. For a more thorough presentation of this view, advocating that we should construe God's "omniscience" as not including knowledge of the private thoughts of humans, see Falls-Corbett and McClain (1992).

[4] On the Christian view, God is a Trinity of persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and so each member of the Trinity has two other members whom he loves and needs, and by whom he is loved and needed. So the whole Godhead did not need to create us in order to be complete.

he needs us not to rebel.[5] Needing and being needed encourages love and being loved. And God, like any good parent, will love us whatever we do; and to be loved by the all-good source of our being is an enormous benefit for us. If I hurt your child, I wrong you who have fed, nurtured, and educated her; and so if I wrong any other human, I wrong God who is so much more the source of their existence than are her parents. And if I hurt some other human, I also wrong my parents insofar as they have fed and educated me and taught me how to live; and so again in wronging others, I wrong God because I misuse the power and moral sensibilities of which he is the ultimate source. So if I fail in my obligations to pray and worship, or wrong others, I must repent not merely to those wronged directly, but also to God for my wasted life. And the Christian tradition assures wrongdoers of God's forgiveness, if they seek it by pleading the atoning work of Christ on their behalf, subject to one condition—that we forgive others.[6] Because of that, there is a considerable incentive to the other humans whom I have wronged to forgive me—since God's forgiving them is conditional on their forgiving me. God thus makes it easier for our guilt to be removed.

17.2. A LIFE WORTH LIVING FOREVER

I have been describing what makes life good; and to some considerable extent life on earth is quite good for many of us. But for many of us, it is far from perfectly good. Many of us suffer from physical pain; our circumstances and disabilities frustrate our good ambitions, we are very ignorant of the truths of morality, of the nature of the universe and of the God who created it. We suffer from bad desires—hatred and greed, instead of love and sympathy for others; and although it is good to have grief and sorrow where it is appropriate, it is bad that it is appropriate—those whom we love and who love us die, and their projects fail. And, as I commented, there are significant limits to how well we know them and they know us. And for so many of us there is no one whom we love at all well and by whom we are loved at all well. It is often difficult for

[5] Some theologians will be unhappy with the claim that God "needs" us not to rebel. But since clearly he desires us not to rebel, then if we do rebel, his desires have been frustrated. And if someone's desires have been frustrated, then they do not have what they need for their complete well-being. But of course this need only arises because by his voluntary action of creating humans with free will, he has voluntarily exposed himself to the risk of having this need.

[6] For how the life and death on the Cross provides a sacrifice which sincerely repentant sinners can offer to God as their reparation for their wrongdoing, and how they can offer it to God through faith and baptism, see Swinburne (1989). Jesus taught that God will forgive us in response to such sincere repentance if and only if we forgive others who seek our forgiveness. See, for example, Matt. 6:14–15.

those of us who believe in God to worship him; he seems so often a distant God; he may understand us, but there is so much about him that we do not understand. When we ask him for some good gift, often he does not provide it, nor explain why he does not. Our powers to achieve good are limited, and frustrated by circumstances and death. When we have wronged others, even if we repent and ask them for forgiveness, they do not always forgive us, and anyway they may be dead and unable to do so. It may not even be possible for someone to ask for forgiveness with enough sincere repentance appropriate to a very bad wrong, because they are not the sort of person capable of sincerely repenting for something so wicked. John Hick illustrates the latter by Dostoevsky's fictional example of the general who set his hounds to tear to bits a serf child because the child threw a stone which hurt the general's dog.[7] Such a wicked person would probably need a far longer period than is available in a life on earth in which gradually to change his character totally in order to be able to show sincere repentance.

So all of that suggests that a good after-life would be one in which all these earthly frustrations are removed. It would be a life without physical pain, and one when we are not subject to bad desires, where we begin to understand the deep truths of morality and metaphysics, where we love others fully and know them deeply, and are loved fully and known deeply by others, and where we and they do not die, and where we can do greatly worthwhile action. It would also be a life where those who could not achieve reconciliation on earth, because the wrongdoer was not capable of the requisite sincere repentance, could after a long purgatorial period show that repentance which would make forgiveness and so reconciliation possible. Above all a good after-life would be one where we can know God the source of all other being, interact with him, and worship him far better than we can on earth, and greatly enjoy doing so, and where this action and all other actions are done in cooperation with others. If such a world is to be an everlasting world, where there is no death it must be a world in which we can grow in all these ways. For human well-being consists in growth—achieving new things, coming to understand things better and better, coming to know and love others and above all God more and more thoroughly, and to be known and loved by others more and more fully.

I suggest that only that sort of life would be worth having forever. Only a task which made continued progress valuable for its own sake but which would take infinite time to finish would be worth doing for ever; only a situation which was ever more worth having would be worth living in forever. The growing development of a friendship with a God who, if he is the sort of God pictured by Christian theology, has ever new aspects of himself to reveal, and the bringing of others into an ever-developing relationship with God,

[7] See Hick (1976: 161–6).

would provide a life worth living forever, and a person who desired only to do the good would want that sort of life forever. Most earthly occupations indeed pall after a time, but the reason why they pall is that there are no new facets to them which are greatly worthwhile having. A person who desires only the good and its continuation would not, given the Christian doctrine of God, be bored in eternity.

17.3. THE LIFE OF HEAVEN IS THE LIFE WORTH LIVING FOREVER

If this would indeed be the best life worth living, then heaven, as depicted by the fairly unanimous patristic tradition would provide that life. The very large measure of agreement in the patristic tradition about the nature of heaven is brought out by the very full account of this tradition in B. E. Daley's *The Hope of the Early Church*.[8] The Fathers all agree that the Blessed (the inhabitants of heaven) will be free from pain, and suffer no disability; the body will go "wherever the spirit wills" (Augustine 1871: *City of God* 22.30). They will be freed from bad desires. Augustine wrote that "there the virtues shall no longer be struggling against any vice or evil" (*City of God* 19.10). But that, he claims, does not deprive the blessed of free will. It does however, he acknowledges, deprive them of freedom to choose the bad. In my view, the reason for this, though he does not state it, is that to believe some action good to do motivates us to do it; and so in order to have a choice of doing what we believe bad, people have to be subject to non-rational desires to do what is bad; when freed from these bad desires, and given true moral beliefs and a correct understanding of some situation, the blessed will inevitably do whatever in that situation is the best action to do, if there is one. But if there is no one best action, they will have a choice between two or more or maybe even an infinite number of equal best actions; or perhaps—like God—they may sometimes have a choice between an infinite number of incompatible good actions, each less good than some other one. They may thus have a very considerable range of choice between actions. Indeed, if there is an infinite number of individuals whom they can help and a finite limit to the number they can help at any one time, they will have an infinite number of choices. But, all the same, objectors will say, such choices are not nearly as significant as choices between good and bad; and that is surely so. But having free will to choose between good and bad, and spontaneously and naturally doing good are both good states; but—as

[8] See Daley (1991). The subsequent part of this chapter is obviously much indebted to Daley.

I pointed out earlier—they are incompatible good states, and no one can have both of them to a maximum degree. And it is surely good for us on earth who have the choice between good and bad, to seek to become the sort of people who do the good naturally. The best arrangement is surely that we shall have a choice by choosing the good so often on earth, of making ourselves so naturally to want to choose the good that God gives us what we want—the freedom from bad desires.[9]

We will come to understand deep truths of science, as well as of metaphysics, theology and ethics. Origen wrote that the blessed "will see clearly the nature of the stars, one by one, and will understand whether they are living creatures, or whatever may be the truth about them" (Origen 1966, 11.7). Augustine wrote that we shall discern all the interior parts of the body whose nature and interaction "at present elude our observation," "together with the other great and marvelous discoveries which shall then kindle rational minds in praise of the great Artificer"; this will lead to "the enjoyment of a beauty which appeals to the reason" (*City of God* 22.30). Above all God will no longer seem a distant God. We shall "see" God and know far better what he is like, an awareness of God traditionally called "the Beatific Vision." "Then I shall know fully even as I have been known," wrote St Paul (1 Cor. 13:12). God's servants will worship him; they will "see his face" (Rev. 22:3–4), wrote the author of *The Book of Revelation*, the one book of the New Testament which tells us much about heaven. Origen wrote that the heavenly banquet consists in "the contemplation and understanding of God" according to the measure "appropriate and suitable to this nature which has been made and created" (Origen 1966: 2.11.7). That vision will give us great joy; "O blessed, thrice blessed, many times blessed are those who will be worthy to look on that glory," wrote John Chrysostom.[10]

All this led some of the early theologians to describe heaven as involving or leading to "union with God"; but those who so describe it in this way usually make it clear that God's presence in the saints is "by his good pleasure"[11] and by conformity to his will; our individuality remains. A similar point applies to talk of heaven as involving deification (*θεοποίησις*), an expression made popular and given permanent currency in the Orthodox tradition by St Maximus the Confessor. This does not mean literally "becoming God," for to be God is to be eternally and necessarily God; rather it is "enjoying the divine relation of Son to Father, sharing the divine life."[12]

[9] "The first freedom of will which man received when he was created upright consisted in an ability not to sin, but also in an ability to sin; whereas this last freedom of will shall be superior, in as much as it shall not be able to sin" (*City of God* 22.30).

[10] John Chrysostom, *In Joan Hom* 12.3, cited by Daley (1991: 109).

[11] Theodoret of Cyprus, *Commentary on I Corinthians* 15.28, cited in Daley (1991: 116).

[12] See Williams (1990: 51), expounding the understanding of this term in Origen, Athanasius, and their successors.

This awareness of God, so absent from life on earth will make it possible to show him far more fully the respect due to him; and so—as *Revelation* depicts it—worship will be the central activity of heaven (Revelation 5). Worship will be a cooperative activity. Heaven is a society in which people do things together; *Revelation* never pictures solitary worshippers. And its favorite metaphor of heaven as a "city," Augustine wrote, would have no meaning "if the life of the saints were not a social life" (*City of God* 19.5). Although that will not be the primary point of heaven, it will involve renewal of earth's friendships. John Chrysostom suggests that the joy of the blessed will not be complete until they are joined by the whole company of the saved, "just as a kind father might tell his children, who have worked hard and deserved well, that he will not give them anything to eat until their brothers and sisters come."[13] And we shall know each other thoroughly and be known thoroughly by them. The inevitable distance of understanding and so of loving between people on earth will have been overcome. Julianus Pomerius, a priest in Gaul in the late fifth century, wrote that each person will be "completely transparent, in thought and desire, to all the rest, yet completely without embarrassment. This mutual openness will lead to a divine and reciprocal love "that will bind the citizens of heaven to each other eternally, as well as to God."[14] Honor will be given not merely to God but to each person to whom it is due; it shall be denied to none who is worthy; nor yielded to any unworthy.[15]

The blessed will help God in his work. Jesus told his disciples "truly I tell you at the renewal of all things . . . you who have followed me will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). "Judging" may mean "ruling over," and Ambrose claims that the apostles will share in the universal rule of Christ.[16] And a primary occupation of the saints has always been supposed to be, to intercede on behalf of others. Jerome consoles bereaved friends by assuring them that their loved ones who have died now enjoy the company of the angels and saints, even while they remain concerned about us on earth and continue to intercede for us.[17] And many church prayers ask the saints not merely to intercede for us, but to help us more generally.

All the Fathers of course claimed that, at least after the General Resurrection, the blessed will be embodied; they claimed this because it was a central Christian doctrine. After all, Jesus rose from the dead in an embodied state, and so it was only to be expected that the Blessed would be embodied. But "why must the spirits of the departed be reunited with their bodies in the resurrection, if they can be admitted to the supreme beatitude without their

[13] *In Hebr Hom* 28.1, cited in Daley (1991: 109).
[14] Julianus Pomerius, paraphrased in Daley (1991: 206).
[15] Augustine, *City of God* 22.30. [16] See Daley (1991: 100).
[17] See Daley (1991: 103), citing Jerome *Ep* 39.2, 7 and *Ep* 39.7. For Gregory Nazianzen on the work of the saints in intercession, see Daley (1991: 88).

bodies?" (i.e., before the General Resurrection), asked Augustine in *De Genesi ad Litteram*.[18] And he continued "this is a problem . . . too difficult to be answered with complete satisfaction in this essay." And I have not found much of an answer to Augustine's question elsewhere in his or other patristic writing. There is however in my view a very powerful reason why God should resurrect humans with bodies. This is that they need to recognize each other and to contact this person and not that person. As I argue elsewhere,[19] what makes a human person the person he is is not his body or his mental or physical properties, but his soul, a mental substance which has "thisness"; a person's soul having "thisness" means that his soul is just numerically different from any other soul but not in virtue of having different properties. It follows that humans in heaven would need contingent publicly accessible (that is in my terminology, physical) properties by which they could recognize each other. Obviously if they manifested in their public behavior physical properties which showed that they had different mental properties (e.g., although not embodied, they had different voices which publicly recalled different past events), that would help them to recognize each other. But such properties are readily duplicable—it would be easily possible for two persons to recall more-or-less the same events; and we would not readily feel that we were thoroughly in touch with a particular person merely because the person whose voice we heard seemed to recall different events from those which others recalled. Clearly if the Blessed also had public spatially extended physical properties—including both monadic properties (they look different from each other), and relational properties (each looks similar to one and only one former person on earth)—it would be far more obvious, as it is on earth, to whom one was talking. And spatially extended physical properties belong to a person in virtue of belonging to their body. God, having essential properties so different from human properties, which he can manifest publicly, for example by showing the enormous degree of his power and knowledge, and being present everywhere, needs no body in order to be contacted. Other kinds of being, such as angels, if there are such, may have other ways of being contacted, but clearly embodiment provides a way for humans to contact each other.

I have brought out that fulfillment in heaven involves actions—doing things. But the patristic descriptions of heaven often speak of it providing "rest", "peace," and contemplation rather than action. Cyril of Alexandria writes that it will be "a life of rest and glory and delight."[20] Augustine expects an "eternal repose not only of the spirit, but of the body"(*City of God*, 22.30). Surely part of the joy of knowing God must consist simply in looking at him

[18] Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram* 12.35.
[19] Most recently in Swinburne (2013: ch. 6).
[20] *In Joan* 10, cited in Daley (1991: 110).

(with our spiritual vision) in the way that we just look in admiration at a great work of art. But that in the patristic view would be only part of the life of heaven; as my previous quotations illustrate and as Augustine brings out in his next sentence, "there we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise"; "praise" is an action.

If heaven is to be fully satisfactory, as I mentioned earlier, it must involve continued growth in knowledge and activity. And some of the Fathers recognized that.[21] Those who "follow the way of God's wisdom," wrote Origen, should think of themselves as living in tents, "with which they always walk and always move on, and the farther they go, so much more does the road still to walk grow long and stretch out endlessly . . . [the mind] is always called to move on, from the good to the better and from the better to still higher things."[22] Our desire for God and so love of him will be ever-increasing. Gregory Nazianzen remarks that seeing God involves "never to reach satiety in one's desire; one must always look through what is possible to see towards the desire of seeing more, and be inflamed."[23]

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[21] But not all Fathers recognized it. Clement of Alexandria, over-influenced by Plato's view that the eternal things are changeless, "denies that the just will be capable of progress in knowledge after the resurrection, since all change is characteristic of an earthly, materially circumscribed existence" (Daley 1991: 245, note 4, paraphrasing Clement's *De Dogmatum Solutione* 5).

[22] Origen, *Homily 17 on Numbers*, cited in Daley (1991: 50).

[23] Gregory Nazianzen, *Life of Moses*, 2.239, cited in Daley (1991: 88).

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