

**THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN REDEMPTION AND  
CREATION: A THEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF  
INFLUENTIAL REFORMED VIEWS**

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## **DECLARATION**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis endeavours to evaluate influential Reformed perspectives on the work of the Spirit and to search for a constructive framework to understand more fully the work of the Spirit in redemption and creation. For Reformed theology, the work of the Spirit has mainly been interpreted in two ways, namely, redemption-centred and creation-centred. These perspectives have each generated its own focus and consequences for both pneumatology and the Christian faith and life. The result of the different perspectives was the tension between the creative and redemptive activity of the Spirit of God.

For both John Calvin and Karl Barth—because of their practical intention and the particular contextual circumstances—the work of the Spirit in redemption became priority and they, subsequently, gave more attention to this particular attribute. The Spirit quickens faith in us, enables us to have faith in the authority of the Scriptures as well as to understand and believe in the reality of God’s self-revelation. It is the primary work of the Spirit to lead us, in Christ, to unity with the Triune God and with the faith community.

Abraham Kuyper and Jürgen Moltmann focus on the cosmic, universal work of the Spirit, from whom life is quickened and given, by whom the destiny of creation is perfected, and through whom the Creator inhabits the whole creation. The creation-centred perspective means to positively, yet critically, affirm the world and culture, to extend the Christian life and action to the whole of creation, and to allow us to participate in the cosmic work of the Spirit.

Although Reformed theologians tried to understand the unity of the work of the Spirit in redemption and creation, the tension between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator* is still present and thus, a more satisfying pneumatological framework is needed. Contemporary theological movements hold most insightful implications towards establishing a constructive pneumatology—cosmic, trinitarian, and realistic pneumatology. According to the constructive perspective with which the work of the Spirit can be reflected in a more distinctive, relationally-personalistic, and concrete and realistic way, it is the Spirit—who is a fully divine person in the Trinity—who fulfils salvation for the glory of God, and who calls us to participate in his cosmic, godly, and unexpected work.

## OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis poog om invloedryke Gereformeerde perspektiewe van die werk van die Gees te evalueer en om na 'n konstruktiewe raamwerk vir 'n vollediger verstaan van die werk van die Gees in verlossing en skepping te soek. Vanuit Gereformeerde teologie word die werk van die Heilige Gees op hoofsaaklik twee wyses geïnterpreteer, naamlik, verlossing-gesentreerd en skepping-gesentreerd. Hierdie sienings het elk hul eie fokus en gevolge vir beide pneumatologie en die christelike geloof en lewe gegeneer. Die gevolg van die verskillende sienings was die spanning tussen die skeppende en verlossende handeling van die Gees van God.

Vir beide Johannes Calvyn en Karl Barth—vanweë die praktiese voorneme en die gegewe tydsomstandighede—was die werking van die Gees in verlossing, prioriteit, en het hulle daarom meer aandag aan die spesifieke funksie gegee. Die Gees wek geloof in ons, stel ons daartoe in staat om vertrou te hê in die gesag van die Skrif asook om te verstaan en glo in die realiteit van God se selfopenbaring. Dit is die primêre werk van die Gees is om ons in Christus tot die eenheid met die Drie-enige God en met die geloofsgemeenskap te lei.

Abraham Kuyper en Jürgen Moltmann fokus op die kosmiese, universele werk van die Gees, uit wie lewe gewek en gegee, deur wie die bestemming van die skepping vervolmaak word, en deur wie die Skepper die hele skepping bewoon. Die skepping-gesentreerde perspektief het ten doel om die wêreld en kultuur positief dog krities te bevestig, om die christelike lewe en handeling na die hele skepping uit te brei, en ons so aan die kosmiese werk van die Gees te laat deelneem.

Hoewel Gereformeerde teoloë gepoog het om die eenheid van die werk van die Gees in verlossing en skepping te verstaan, is die spanning tussen *Spiritus Redemptor* en *Spiritus Creator* steeds teenwoordig, en daarom word 'n meer bevredigende pneumatologiese raamwerk benodig. Kontemporêre teologiese bewegings hou insiggewende implikasies in om 'n konstruktiewe pneumatologie te vestig—kosmiese, trinitêre, en realistiese pneumatologie. Na aanleiding van die konstruktiewe perspektief waarin die werk van die Gees op 'n meer onderskeidbare verhouding-persoonlike, en konkrete en realistiese wyse gereflekteer kan word, is dit die Gees—wat 'n volwaardige goddelike persoon binne die Triniteit is—wie verlossing tot die verheerliking van God vervul, en wat ons oproep om aan sy kosmiese, goddelike en onverwagse werk deel te neem.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

*CD* ————— *Church Dogmatics*

*GS* ————— *God the Spirit*

*Institutes* ——— *Institutes of the Christian Religions*

*ME* ————— *Microsoft Encarta Reference Library*

*SL* ————— *Calvinism: Six Stone-Lectures*

*TWHS* ————— *The Work of the Holy Spirit*

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

In comparison with other universal religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism, Christianity is the youngest religion to have been influential during Korea's long history. In spite of its short history, Christianity became the dominant religious influence in Korea, and the growth of the Korean church has been so explosive and rapid that it would provoke the question of what makes it possible. There are several explanations for the amazing growth of the Korean church: the voluntary reception of Christianity by the Korean people, the tangible benefits of modernity that the missionaries initiated, the success of missionary methodology, the early adoption of some indigenous patterns of worship, the early linking of Christianity with Korean nationalism and independence movements against the Japanese colonisers, and so on. However, the most general and popular answer to the question is the attribution of the vitality of amazing growth to the work of the Spirit, which has been poured out on Korea (Han 1983:51-53; Hong 1983:171-181; Kim 1983:17-46; Ro 1983:159-170).

Among the historians of Korean Christianity, it is generally accepted that the rise and growth of the indigenous Korean church can be traced back to the revival of the Holy Spirit or the Holy Spirit movement that began at a Bible conference in P'yong'yang and spread all over the nation in 1907 (Min 1996:15-58; Grayson 2002:158).<sup>1</sup> From this time through the period of Japanese colonisation to recent time, revival meetings became a regular feature of Korean Christianity and many more such movements have been led by greatly influencing revivalists and preachers. To be sure, the Holy Spirit

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<sup>1</sup> This first revival of the Holy Spirit in Korea is called 'the Great P'yong'yang Revival'. The revival was stimulated by a North American Methodist missionary, Dr Robert A Hardie, who preached about his personal experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit through prayer and repentance. However, when it happened, the movement took on a momentum of its own, beyond missionary control (Kim 2007: 112-113). At a revival meeting, the congregation prayed aloud and confessed their sin publicly. These confessions are followed by the change of life, for example, giving up drinking, gambling, or beating wife, giving relief to the needed, devoting themselves to prayer and service, testifying to their community what had happened, et cetera. The astounding influence of the Holy Spirit revival stretched all over the country and many people who experienced and witnessed it entered into the Christian membership. Based on this experience, the Korean Protestant churches have a common recognition that the first year of the Korean church was 1907 and celebrated the centennial anniversary on a large scale in 2007.

movement came to be essential to the nature of the Korean Protestant church and made the doctrine of the Holy Spirit central to Korean Christian self-understanding (Kim 2007:112). In other words, the history of the Korean Protestant church is almost universally understood in terms of the outpouring of the Spirit, and the revival led by the power of the Spirit; this provides the 'matrix' for theological reflection and for church life and mission in Korea (Park 1998:18-33). The history of the Korean church is from the outset strongly connected with the work of the Spirit and therefore the doctrine of the Holy Spirit has played a key role in both theology and practice of the Protestant Church in Korea.

Despite the willingness to recognise the work of the Spirit and ardent enthusiasm for spirituality, however, Korean Christian theology does not seem to have integrated, balanced pneumatology, but rather seems to split into different views on the way the Spirit is understood.

On the one hand, the theology of the mainline Protestant faith in Korea can be marked by the Puritanic Reformed theology, that is, the Calvinistic Reformed theology of the European continent mingled with the Puritanism of Great Britain and the United States (Song 1999:24-27). The conservative Evangelical mainstream of the Korean church thus has a strong tendency to underscore the Spirit's work in the inspiration of the Scriptures, the repentance of sin, the sanctification of believers, and the fellowship of the church.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, there have been other views on the Spirit's work which differ from the conservative mainline Korean churches. I would like to take three examples. Kim Jae-Joon, who was one of the representative theologians of the 1950's, was excommunicated on account of his liberalistic views on the Bible. He then founded the *Kijang* group, and reflecting on the Spirit's activity in history, paved the way for the theology of democratisation and social progress. Suh Nam-dong, who developed the

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<sup>2</sup> These characteristics can be attributed to the influence of the early Presbyterian or Methodist missionaries who were influenced by Anglo-American revival movement and passed to Korean churches the traditional Calvinism, for example, the unyielding faith towards the Bible as the inspired word of God and its pre-eminent authority.

*Minjung* theology on behalf of the *Minjung*, which means the masses, the poor, and the oppressed, drew attention to the Spirit's activity in history, especially the Christ event and by so doing linked Christian theology with wider social movements. His theological framework was explicitly pneumatological and by connecting this to Korean shamanism, a distinctive Korean pneumatology was established. Lastly, Cho Yonggi, who is the founder and pastor of Yoido Full Gospel Church which has the largest membership of any local church in the world today, is a representative of Korean Pentecostalism. Cho emphasises the personhood of the Holy Spirit and His unique work in the church and in individual believers' experience.<sup>3</sup> Cho's pneumatology is particularly marked by its stress on material blessing and spirituality, leading to frequent insinuations encouraging shamanistic attitudes and materialism (Kim 2007:116-129).

However, the mainstream Korean churches have turned their face away from these different voices for such reasons as Kim's liberal theology, Suh's critical approach to the Bible and challenge to church and government authority, and Cho's shamanistic and materialistic tendencies. Thus, theologically at least, these movements could not become mass movements, but remained in the minority. Their view on the Spirit's person and work is not reflected in mainstream theological education in Korea. I believe that this plays a considerable role in making the Korean Protestant pneumatology more mystical, individualistic, and ecclesiastical than social and political. The recent slowdown of the growth of the Korean Protestant churches, I also believe, is closely related to some degree with this inadequate pneumatology. For the past few decades, whilst the Korean Catholic Church has been growing rapidly and still is growing, the Korean Protestant church has lost social trust and social influence. It is generally stated that the rapid growth of the Korean Catholic Church is due mainly to its action for justice in the time of the dictators' regime and its practice of love. In contrast, the mainline Korean Protestant churches have been disposed to keep themselves away from those social—sometimes, radical—actions. Consequently, many non-Christians and

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<sup>3</sup> Referring to the third person with pronouns, I will use the same pronoun referring to Father, Son, and God, that is, the capitalised masculine—He, His, Him, Himself. As Rogers Jr says (2005:21), the fact that traditionally the Spirit takes masculine pronouns in Latin, neuter in Greek, and feminine in early Syriac means that God is beyond gender itself. Therefore, by using the capitalised masculine I intend, keeping the personal pronouns, to avoid the sexism of the traditional language.

even some Christians look upon the mainline Korean Protestant churches as shamanistic, individualistic beliefs and neglect of social responsibility, and it comes in effect to dull the growth of the Korean Protestant churches (Kim 2003:184). Therefore, one can undoubtedly say that, in the Korean context, a pneumatological agenda of how to understand the way the Holy Spirit works has much to do with not only the life and spirituality of Korean Christians but also the revival and vital growth of the Korean Protestant churches through their mission to Korean society and culture.

Recently as the Korean church continues to mature in theological reflection and the members of local churches are eager for the experience of the Holy Spirit more and more, the demand for balanced pneumatology in which one can grasp the Spirit's work in salvation and history more fully is increasing in both theology and practice. Against this background and especially in the context of the mainline Korean Protestant churches who believe that their theological roots are originated from the Reformed tradition, it would be meaningful to explore the pneumatological view on the Spirit's work in Reformed theology.

## **1.2 Problem**

During the second half of the twentieth century, one of the most prominent changes in both Catholic and Protestant theology is a new interest in the doctrine of the Spirit (Dabney & Hinze 2001:11-22). At least three factors have contributed to this increasing attention to the Spirit. Firstly, the emergence of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement has had a profound influence upon the doctrinal concerns of the Western churches. Secondly, the development of the theological debates within the traditionally dominant churches gives an opportunity to discover pneumatology anew as a theological resource. Thirdly, the rapid cultural changes in contemporary world make the language of spirit more readily available for theological use in worship and witness.

In this situation of the new emphasis on the doctrine of the Spirit, Reformed theology has also undergone changes and developments of pneumatological thinking. As is

generally admitted, the classical Reformed tradition has sought to interpret God's redemption and creation through Christ in terms of the sovereignty of God, and to struggle to conform and reform both church and society in light of the revelation of God's will in God's Word. Hence pneumatology in the Reformed tradition played only the role of an assistant to the doctrine of salvation and lost its importance gradually to the extent of 'the eclipse of pneumatology' (Kim 2003). However, fortunately we can find a ceaseless interest in and commitment to honouring the Spirit in the work of major Reformed theologians such as John Calvin, Karl Barth, Abraham Kuyper, Jürgen Moltmann, and Michael Welker.

John Calvin developed the doctrine of the Spirit by systematising the biblical teaching regarding the work of the Spirit. His pneumatology is associated with soteriology so closely that the principal work of the Spirit is affirmed as uniting us with Christ, as is expressed in terms of 'the bond of union with Christ', and as giving faith to believers (*Institutes* 3.1.1-4). According to Calvin, the whole history of salvation including not only calling, conversion, regeneration, and justification but also sanctification can be realised only by the work and power of the Spirit. What is especially noteworthy in his pneumatology is the attachment of the Spirit's work to the means of God's grace: the written or preached Word, Church, and sacraments. The Spirit is the author of Scripture and internal witness to the authority of Scripture (*Institutes* 1.7.4). In addition, through the church as the mother of believers the Spirit preserves the people of God (*Institutes* 4.1.4).

In spite of this emphasis on the soteriological and ecclesiological dimension of the work of the Spirit, Calvin does not restrict the work of the Spirit merely to the special grace uniting believers to Christ, but rather affirms a universal, common grace or presence of God's Spirit among all human beings indiscriminately (Bolt 1998:256). In Calvin's thought, the Spirit's cosmic work in creation is a preserving, restraining one (*Institutes* 1.13.14). The power of the Spirit is indispensable for maintenance of the order and stability of the creation. In this regard, Berkhof (1964:96) says that Calvin was the first theologian who tried to do justice to the cosmic aspect of pneumatology.

Barth maintains consistently that the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Son, who mediates Christ to the church (*Church Dogmatics* = *CD I/2*). All Barth's theology including his treatment of the Trinity, election, reconciliation, ecclesiology, and social and political concern, confirms and concentrates on the Christological starting point. Corresponding to his Christocentric theology, his pneumatology is Christ-centred pneumatology as well. It implies the subordination of the work of the Spirit to that of Christ, which is characteristic of Barth's pneumatology as a whole (Smail 1986:92). Barth has defined the work of the Spirit as making the objective event of revelation in Christ a subjective reality in the awakening, confirming, and establishing of Christian life in the life of the church (Badcock 1997:180). The Spirit's ministry is the mediator of communion with Christ, with the Trinity, and with one another of believers (Hunsinger 2000:168). In the work of the Holy Spirit it takes place that Jesus Christ is present and received in the life of His community (*CD IV/3,2,760*). For Barth, creation and redemption, with the Trinity, are so closely related to each other that the work of the *Spiritus Creator* comes to be even identical with that of the *Spiritus Redemptor* (Rosato 1981:133; Thompson 1991:159).

Both Calvin's and Barth's views on the work of the Spirit seem to have a tendency to lay more stress on the Spirit's redemptive work in relation with christology, soteriology, and ecclesiology than on the Spirit's creative work. This tendency, however, may provoke the question of the continuity and discontinuity of the redemptive Spirit and the creative Spirit, that is to say, the relation between the *Spiritus sanctificans* and the *Spiritus vivificans* (Moltmann 1992:9).

As noted previously, Calvin paid attention to the cosmic Spirit and his theological thought encouraged later Reformed theologians to develop a doctrine of common grace. Abraham Kuyper is not only another Reformed theologian that Berkhof (1964:96) mentions as one who paid proper attention to the cosmic pneumatology, but also a representative who took the doctrine of common grace as his theological rationale for encouraging Christian public engagement. Kuyper (1931:56-57) affirms the existence and importance of common grace by which God, maintaining the life of the world, relaxes the curse which rests upon it, arrests its process of corruption, and thus allows

the untrammelled development of our life in which to glorify Himself as Creator. Albeit Kuyper spoke of Christ as the source of common grace, it is patently understandable that he recognised the Spirit as the agent of common grace (Bacote 2005:116).

As to the Spirit's work, Kuyper ([1900] 1975:21) argues that the proper work of the Spirit is 'to lead the creature to its destiny, to cause it to develop according to its nature, to make it perfect'. To put it differently, a central purpose of the Spirit's cosmic work is to be immanent in creation and to promote the progress and development of the created order towards its destiny, the glory of God (Bacote 2005:113). Additionally, the Spirit gives life to the biophysical order by animating and sustaining the principle of life in every creature, and keeps creation from falling into chaos by the restraint of sin (Kuyper [1900] 1975:24-26). From this notion, Kuyper has drawn a Christian ethics of public theology in which the Spirit, as the agent of common grace and the dynamic force of common grace, calls for responsible engagement of Christians into the creation.

Jürgen Moltmann (1993d:17), whose pneumatological interests are related to his concern for human liberation, ecological concern, and many of the disturbing aspects of social life, has argued for a trinitarian conception of God as the basis for resolving the personal, social, and ecological problems in the world today. What Moltmann takes as the starting point of the trinitarian doctrine of creation rooted in pneumatology is the reciprocal, indwelling, and mutual interpenetration of the trinitarian *perichoresis*. With this concept, Moltmann attempts to overcome the dualistic view of God and the world. According to his notion of panentheism functioning as an antithesis to monotheism, God indwells in all things and all things in God, which is also expressed in Moltmann's terminology 'immanent transcendence'. It may be safely said that an understanding of the Spirit as the power of creation and the wellspring of life becomes the theological grounds for his panentheism (Kärkkäinen 2002:127).

Moltmann (1992:8; 1997:74-79) criticises the anthropocentrism and spirituality of mysticism of the modern Western world. He points out two reasons of this trend: One is the continuing Platonization of Christianity, which still puts its mark on Western spirituality by the dualism of soul and body, of time and eternity. The other is the

Western theological favour of the *filioque*, by which the Spirit has come to be understood only as ‘the Spirit of Christ’, and not at the same time as ‘the Spirit of the Father’. This Western theological tradition to view the Spirit solely as the Spirit of redemption results in the impoverishment of the churches and the separation from the bodily life and the life of nature.

To overcome this one-sided approach and to discover the cosmic breadth of the divine Spirit, Moltmann (1992:37) suggests ‘a holistic doctrine of God the Holy Spirit’. A holistic pneumatology signifies that it comprehends human being in their total being—soul and body, person and sociality—and that it embraces the wholeness of the community of creation, which is shared by human being, the earth, and all other created beings and things. For Moltmann (1993d:100), the Spirit is the principle of creativity, the holistic principle that leads to mutual *perichoresis* and therefore a life of cooperation and community, and the principle of individuation. Most of all, the Spirit is the source of life, the origin of the torrent of energy. In short, the Spirit as such is the Spirit of life and the critical role of the Spirit is giving birth and sustaining life.

Michael Welker (1994) attempts to integrate a genuinely experiential dimension by taking seriously the reality and diversity of experience of the Spirit. Criticising the western theological orientation toward old European metaphysics, toward dialogical personalism, and toward a social moralism, Welker suggests ‘a realistic theology’, which affirms integrative plurality and cultivates sensitivity to the differences. Of great value in Welker’s argument is his emphasis on the concreteness and particularity of the Spirit’s work. Moreover, Welker takes up the critical exegesis of the biblical texts to achieve this goal. For Welker, the work of the Spirit does not flee from the world but overcomes the world, delivering and renewing life. The Spirit of God helps human beings to perceive God in the midst of creation, to experience God under the conditions of earthly life relations, and to live in a secure, strengthened, and dignified manner in God’s community, in which the public person of the Spirit is concretized and realised.

Based on the aforementioned review, we can place the view on the work of the Spirit under the category of redemption-centred and creation-centred.<sup>4</sup> Each position has different theological concerns, different emphasis, and different way to articulate the work of the Spirit. For instance, whilst a redemption-centred view focuses on the Spirit of the Son with regard to trinitarian relationship, a creation-centred view tends to focus on the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Father. This inclination is closely related with the biblical grounds of each position. That is, a redemption-centred view depends mainly on the source of the New Testament such as Pauline or Johannine pneumatology, whereas a creation-centred view has as its reference more interest in the Old Testament concept, *ruach*, which was Hebrew understanding of the divine Spirit. On the subject of soteriology, a creation-centred position intends to correct and broaden the traditional concepts such as sin, justification, sanctification as well as the purpose and scope of salvation beyond the boundary of the church. A redemption-centred view, concerning the ecclesiological dimension, is inclined to confine the community of the Spirit to the church or believers, but a creation-centred view endeavours to extend the fellowship of the Spirit to the rest of the creation from its concern to social justice and ecological problems.

In order to do full justice to pneumatology, it is ostensibly necessary over and above significant to maintain an integral perspective on the Spirit's work without marginalizing either *Spiritus Redemptor* or *Spiritus Creator*. This task, however, is located between the tensions and controversies for some reasons. For instance, stressing the redemptive Spirit can lead to otherworldly indifference toward the rest of the creation. In addition, that viewpoint can make it difficult for believers to understand the experiences of the Spirit beyond the boundary of the church. On the other hand, underlining the Spirit's creative work may have the hazard to bring about negation of the institutional church. Above all, it always bears danger of being inclined to radically immanent tendency and as a result possibility to fudge the particularity of the Spirit, the

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<sup>4</sup> Within theological discussion, the term 'creation' can be used in two differentiated senses: first, it often speaks of the origins and causality of the created order; second, it refers to the biophysical universe, which is a result of divine causality and in which we live (Bacote 2005:16). When referring to 'creation-centred' in this research, the term 'creation' is primarily understood in the second meaning.

Spirit of Christ and of the church. On this account, there are both necessity and peril to seek a pertinent Reformed view on the work of Spirit within redemption and creation.

Considering all of this, the problem that I would like to investigate in this thesis can be said in this manner: How can we understand the work of the Spirit in redemption and creation more fully in the midst of the pneumatological tension between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, particularly from the Reformed theological perspective?

### **1.3 Hypothesis**

Through exploring pneumatology of major Reformed theologians—Calvin, Barth, Kuyper, and Moltmann, we are bound to discover that there has been a tension in pneumatology, more specifically, a tension between the Spirit’s work in redemption and in creation from the first generation of Reformed theologians, and that there has been a development or a shift of pneumatological reflection to solve this tension. On the assumption that there is a tension between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, Reformed theologians have attempted to articulate their view on the Spirit’s work in their own way that was inevitably correspondent to their own theological intention and sensitive to contextual background. For example, Calvin and Barth had to struggle against Roman Catholicism, Radical Reformation, or liberal Protestantism. Moltmann and Welker do theology in the context of a contemporary world which can be characterised as plural, ecumenical, relation-oriented, ecological, postmodern, and so forth (Rosato 1981:31; Lopes 1997:40).

Accordingly, it should be our first hypothesis that in Reformed theology we can categorise pneumatological views on the work of the Spirit into two classified viewpoints, namely, *redemption-centred* and *creation-centred* views, and at the same time, we need to acknowledge both the redemptive and the creative Spirit as the very same Spirit.

The second hypothesis is that, in order to deal with the tension between the Spirit's work in redemption and creation in such a way as to be more coherent, intelligible, and relevant to the practice of Christian life, we should endeavour to establish a constructive pneumatology on the foundation of insightful implications from contemporary theological movements. A constructive pneumatology must be a pneumatology in which one can rediscover and reaffirm the cosmic activity of the Spirit, a theology in which the Spirit can be seen as a distinct personal agent of the Trinity, and thus His work can be understood in a more dynamistic and personalistic way; with which one can be aware of the Spirit's action and presence in our real world today more concretely and realistically.

## **1.4 Methodology**

The basic methodology of this research is a literature study of pneumatological arguments and notions about the work of the Spirit. This study will include not only the writings of major Reformed theologians—Calvin, Barth, Kuyper, Moltmann, and Welker, but also the writings of both proponents and critics who expound, interpret, and criticise their work. To enable the discussion to draw some helpful implications in chapter 4, a methodologically-limited literature study is required to allow for the selection of the relevant issues from broad theological movements.

In composing the structure of chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis, a method of categorisation will be used. On the one side, I will array Calvin and Barth in the line of those who focus on the work of the Spirit in redemption. Kuyper and Moltmann will take the other side that underlines the creative work of the Spirit. The pneumatological argument of each position about the Spirit's work is to be reviewed and then assessed according to its strength and weakness.

However, this thesis is oriented not towards maintaining categorisation but to seeking the proper framework within which to understand two positions more wholly, and thereby to ultimately overcome the tension of categorisation itself. Thus, the discussions of chapter 4 will be developed on the assumption of the categorisation of the previous

two chapters, and at the same time, it will attempt to reassess that categorisation with the help and insight of contemporary theological movements.

## **1.5 Outline of chapters**

This research consists of five chapters and its outline is as follows:

**CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION** presents the background of the research and states the problem, hypothesis, and methodology. By acknowledging the tension in pneumatology between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, this thesis seeks to find the way to understand the Spirit's work in redemption and creation more coherently and fully.

**CHAPTER 2 REDEMPTION-CENTRED VIEWS ON THE SPIRIT'S WORK: JOHN CALVIN AND KARL BARTH** shows that Calvin and Barth pay more of their attention and emphasis on the Spirit's work in redemption than in creation. Calvin and Barth both stress that the primary work of the Spirit is to unite believers to Christ and to create faith in them. They correlate the Spirit's work closely with the Word or Christ and by so doing with the fulfilment of God's soteriological end. This conclusion will be supported by their practical, contextual concerns as well as their theological articulation.

**CHAPTER 3 CREATION-CENTRED VIEWS ON THE SPIRIT'S WORK: ABRAHAM KUYPER AND JÜRGEN MOLTMANN** deals with Kuyper and Moltmann's pneumatological arguments that focus more on the Spirit's creative work than on the redemptive work. They attempt to extend pneumatological reflection on the Spirit's work to culture, world, and creation. For Kuyper, the Spirit's work in creation is primarily to perfect the destiny of creation—the glory of God—by His indwelling in it. For Moltmann, the Spirit's creative work is to connect Creator with creation by His cosmic indwelling in it and then to bring the whole of creation, including us, into the perichoretic relationship of the Trinity.

**CHAPTER 4 A CONSTRUCTIVE PNEUMATOLOGY: COSMIC, TRINITARIAN, AND REALISTIC PNEUMATOLOGY** proposes a constructive framework to understand the being and person of the Spirit more satisfactorily by using three contemporary theological movements. Cosmic pneumatology provides a vantage point to complement the one-sidedness of soteriological pneumatology. Contemporary Trinitarian theology would give the insightful, yet qualified implications with which one can conceive of the Spirit as a personal agent within the Trinity. In this Trinitarian mode, the Spirit's work in the divine life and in the history of salvation can be understood more profoundly and distinctively. In addition, realistic pneumatology would lead us to the practical point at which one can recognise the concreteness of the Spirit's work and affirm the Spirit's work not merely of union but also of diversity.

**CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION** gives a summary of the previous chapters and asks whether the hypothesis of this research is appropriate. After briefly considering several related issues, a conclusion and some final remarks follow.

# CHAPTER 2 REDEMPTION-CENTRED VIEW ON THE SPIRIT'S WORK: JOHN CALVIN AND KARL BARTH

## 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine Calvin's and Barth's views on the work of the Spirit. This examination aims to show that their viewpoint on the Spirit's work has a tendency to put more stress on redemption than on creation. This survey will deal with a set of related questions, namely, What position does pneumatology occupy in their whole theology? How important is the notion of the Spirit's work in relation with their theological intention as a whole? On what foundation and from what context have they established the notion of the Spirit's work? Above all, what is the most important work of the Spirit in their thought? And more specifically, how do they deal with the relationship between the *Spiritus Redemptor* and the *Spiritus Creator*?

In dealing with Calvin's pneumatology, the main attention is given to Calvin's position on the Spirit's work with reference to his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which comprehends the whole of his theological thoughts. Calvin's argument for the work and function of the Spirit is located in the opening section of Book III of the *Institutes*. Calvin started to write Book I under the title '*On the Knowledge of the Creator*', and then he gave the title '*On the Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ, which was revealed first to the Fathers under the Law and then also to us in the Gospel*' to Book II. After that, Book III was titled '*The Way in which the Grace of Christ is received, what Fruits come to us from it, and what Effects follow*', and Calvin's pneumatological thoughts converged on this volume. As Hendrikus Berkhof (1979) rightly points out, Book III of the *Institutes* contains great riches in the field of pneumatology. Furthermore, Calvin put pneumatological emphasis on his doctrine of the church and sacraments in Book IV. Accordingly, Calvin's view on the work of the Spirit is considered primarily with reference to Book III of the *Institutes* because it is there that his pneumatological thoughts are the most profusely expressed.

The exploration of Barth's view on the Spirit's work relies chiefly on *Church Dogmatics* as the main reference. In a strict sense, Barth's doctrine of the Spirit was never written. In his original design of *Church Dogmatics*, the person of the Holy Spirit and the eschatological context of His work were supposed to be the central content of the fifth volume (Smail 1986:87). However, that was left incomplete.<sup>5</sup> Hunsinger (2000:149-50) elucidates this in terms of the relationship between reconciliation and redemption. 'Redemption', which Barth defined as the future of reconciliation, was his category for the saving work of the Spirit in its own right. Whereas reconciliation was redemption's abiding ground and content, redemption was reconciliation's dynamic consequence and goal. Thus, it can be said that while from the standpoint of reconciliation the work of the Spirit served the work of Christ, the work of Christ in turn, from the standpoint of redemption, served the work of the Spirit. The 'never-written' part of *Church Dogmatics* was the volume to be on 'redemption'. 'Unfinished volume on redemption' implies in a sense that Barth's thought on 'reconciliation' remained incomplete as well.

Prior to examining Barth's pneumatology, we need to note that Barth's full idea on the Spirit's person and His redemptive work in *Church Dogmatics* is left unfinished, and that his argument about the Spirit's work is scattered over all of the volumes rather than being gathered and treated systematically. Nonetheless, it is without doubt that one can discover rich pneumatological material at almost every locus of *Church Dogmatics*.

## **2.2 John Calvin's view on the Spirit's work**

### **2.2.1 The significance of pneumatology in Calvin's theology**

Warfield ([1956] 1980:484-7) refers to Calvin as 'the theologian of the Holy Spirit', implying that Calvin's greatest contribution to theological development is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which comes to its rightful place for the first time in the history of

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<sup>5</sup> We can also surmise this from Barth's own words of his dream in his later years: 'someone and perhaps a whole age, might be allowed to develop a "theology of the Holy Spirit", a "theology which now I can only envisage from afar, as Moses once looked on the promised land"' (Busch 1976:464).

the Church rights. As Warfield correctly puts it, pneumatology is central to Calvin's theology, and especially the *Institutes*, can be seen as a treatise on the work of the Holy Spirit. Some aspects of the importance and centrality of pneumatology in Calvin's theology can be clarified as follows:

Firstly, Calvin's pneumatological prominence is related to its historical context. In the era of the Reformation, there was a shift of main concern and explicit interest in relation to the doctrine of the Spirit. While the fathers of the fourth century were concerned of the deity of the Spirit and medieval pneumatologists were preoccupied with the problem of the *filioque*, the Reformers focused distinctively on the doctrine of the work of the Spirit, and this was unquestionably true of Calvin (Heron 1983:99; Badcock 1997:86).

Secondly, and more critically, Calvin's pneumatology was shaped according to his theological intention, that is to say, his genuine concern for spirituality. One can catch a glimpse of his theological intention which was spiritual and pietistic rather than dogmatic, in Calvin's remarks that his purpose—of writing the *Institutes*—was 'to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness' (*Institutes*:9). Here the fundamental interest of Calvin as a theologian lay in the field of soteriology. Calvin underlined the dynamic work of the Spirit in illuminating the human being in the light of the Word of God. In so doing, Calvin, particularly in Book III of *Institutes*, connected a pneumatological emphasis with such themes as faith, regeneration, repentance, self-denial, meditation on the future life, justification, Christian liberty, prayer, election, and the final resurrection. In this regard, one can appropriately say that Calvin's great interest in spirituality and piety led to the focus on the *work* of the Spirit in his *Institutes* (Chung 2002:45).

In addition, Calvin's doctrine of the Holy Spirit is of great value since he not only systematised the biblical teaching on the Spirit's work exhaustively but also fully integrated his pneumatological reflection with other areas of theology such as regeneration, sanctification, the Scriptures, and the sacraments (Lopes 1997:40). Although not reserving a chapter exclusively to the person and work of the Spirit, Calvin's pneumatology included and permeated all other departments of theology.

Bearing all this fact in mind, we can conclude that for Calvin the doctrine of the Spirit was of very great significance in itself, and played a pivotal role in his theological reflection on other themes. In the historical context of the Reformation, Calvin formed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit which was thoroughly adherent to biblical teaching and integrated with all the crucial issues of theology. Most of all, the practical interest in the history of salvation, which governs his entire thought and suffuses the religious profundity, prompted Calvin to the great emphasis he ascribed to pneumatology wherein no meaningful discussion of salvation, no apprehension of God could occur apart from a clear understanding of the work of the Spirit.

### **2.2.2 The work of the Spirit in salvation**

According to Calvin, the principal work of the Spirit is to lead believers to union with Christ and to give faith to them.

Firstly, the activity of the Spirit is that of Christ Himself in the uniting of Himself with believers: ‘the Holy Spirit is the *bond* [italics mine] by which Christ effectually binds us to himself’ (*Institutes* 3.1.1). That is, the Spirit is the bond of union with Christ. In another sense, the Spirit effectuates salvific benefits of Christ in us. Calvin wrought the heart of the ministry of the Spirit when opening Book III of his *Institutes* as follows (3.1.1):

We must now examine this question. How do we receive those benefits which the Father bestowed on His only-begotten Son—not for Christ’s own private use, but that he might enrich poor and needy men? First, we must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value for us. Therefore, to share with us what he has received from the Father, he had to become ours and to dwell within us....It is true that we obtain this by faith. Yet...reason itself teaches us to climb higher and to examine into the secret energy of the Spirit, by which we come to enjoy Christ and all His benefits.

Here Calvin is emphasising that benefits of redemption can be ours only in union with Christ through the Spirit.<sup>6</sup> As Calvin set forth in Book II, Jesus Christ is the focus of attention in salvation. Christ is the One to whom the Spirit points as fulfilling the covenant. He is the elect head of redeemed humanity, the obedient servant, the perfect man who has overcome the disorder of sin and reigns over the church and the world. However, the saving work of Christ is made efficacious in us only through the work of the Holy Spirit. In other words, it is through the role of the Spirit that Christ's work is made into our justification and sanctification. Christ works through the Spirit, and the Spirit by His secret power makes believers 'partakers of Christ and all His benefits' (Milner Jr 1970:165; Faber 1989:3; Ferguson 1996:100-101; Chung 2002:43).

Does this imply that Calvin's pneumatology is Christocentric? The answer is negative. Osterhaven (1982:170) explains why a Christocentric interpretation of Calvin does not do justice to him: '[T]he Holy Spirit is none other than the Spirit of Christ as well as of the Father....Calvin sees all of this, including Christ's redemptive work, as being accomplished through and within the all-embracing work of the Holy Spirit....Calvin would agree that the work of the Holy Spirit is more comprehensive than that of the Messiah.' Calvin makes every effort to be balanced and faithful in his interpretation of biblical revelation. Each of the persons of the Godhead ought to be treated equally: 'I cannot think on the one without quickly being encircled by the splendour of the three; nor can I discern the three without being straightway carried back to the one' (*Institutes* 1.13.17). Calvin makes as much of the work of the Son as of the Spirit and the Father. He believes that each person in the Godhead is active in all the external works of God and must be honoured for who He is and what He does. Salvation is affected by God in the person of Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is more accurate to say that Calvin's view on the redemptive work of the Spirit is trinitarian rather than Christocentric.

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<sup>6</sup> According to Parker (1995:79), the union has two aspects: on Christ's side and on ours; on Christ's side, the union is already accomplished in that He united Himself with men by incarnation. However, there is a more intimate union, in which Christ lives within the believer. Thus, on our side, we ought to be engrafted into Christ.

This trinitarian characteristic of Calvin's pneumatology is marked by his thought on the union. The union to which the Spirit leads us is not limited to the *noetic* realm, but is a participation in the trinitarian communion in that the union of believers with Christ envisages the union of Father and Son (Rogers Jr 2003:246). Calvin (1979:148) reaffirms this point in his commentary on John 17:21 as follows: 'From this, too, we infer that we are one with Christ; not because He transfuses His substance into us, but because by the power of His Spirit He communicates to us His life and all the blessings He has received from the Father.'

Secondly, the foremost work of the Spirit, according to Calvin, is to create faith in or to give faith to believers: 'faith is the principal work of the Holy Spirit' (*Institutes* 3.1.4). The close link between the work of the Spirit and the gift of faith came from the emphasis of the Reformation on the Word of gospel. This implies that faith, by which we appropriate the promise of God, is the gift of the Spirit (Badcock 1997:89). Calvin defines faith as follows (*Institutes* 3.2.7): 'Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit.' As stated here, the function of the Spirit with respect to faith is twofold: it is an illumination of our minds and a sealing upon our heart. The Spirit opens the ears of us, sinners and blinders to the truth, to hear the truth, and teaches inwardly our hearts to perceive the truth of Christ and to accept it as our own. Therefore, for Calvin faith is the recognition of God's benevolence towards us, and the Spirit gives a new mind of faith that corresponds to God's benevolence, which is the object of faith (Faber 1989:6).

Faith has a close connection with the concept of adoption. Calvin, using the biblical term 'the Spirit of adoption', writes (*Institutes* 3.1.3): 'First, he is called the "spirit of adoption" because he is the witness to us of the free benevolence of God with which God the Father has embraced us in His beloved only-begotten Son to become a Father to us.' Adoption is one of the most important concepts in Calvin's soteriological understanding (Griffith 2001:147-149). Adoption is a forensic concept; it establishes the sinner with the status of son. Calvin says: 'as soon as you become engrafted into Christ

through faith, you are made a son of God, an heir of heaven, a partaker in righteousness, a possessor of life; and...you obtain not the opportunity to gain merit but all the merits of Christ, for they are communicated to you' (*Institutes* 3.15.6). This implies that the Spirit engenders faith in the elect by a secret influence and joins them to Christ. The Spirit reproduces the secret adoption of election in the soul of the elect. In this sense, the Spirit as faith-giver is also the Spirit of adoption by their co-relationship.

In brief, the central role of the Spirit, in Calvin's doctrine of the Spirit, is to reveal Christ, and to unite us to Him and to all those who participate in His body. It is the Holy Spirit who links the objective work of Christ to our subjective benefit. The Spirit is thus certainly the Spirit of Christ in a way that is not Christocentric but trinitarian. What is more, the Spirit carries out the critical ministry as the provider of faith. Only through the work of the Spirit, perception and acceptance of the truth of gospel—Christ Himself and His benefits—is made possible.

In order to create a faith in believers, the Spirit makes use of the Word. The role of the Spirit as faith-giver is closely associated with His work of testimony to the truth, which will be considered below in Section 2.2.3.

### **2.2.3 The correlation of the Spirit and the Word**

Right from the start of Book I of the *Institutes*, Calvin presents the relationship between the Spirit and the Scripture. The Spirit, for Calvin, is the author of Scripture and thus the authority of Scripture must be confirmed by the witness of the Spirit. He writes (*Institutes* 1.7.4):

[T]he testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded.

Without the testimony of the Spirit, the Word itself could not be unequivocal for us. 'For by a kind of mutual bond the Lord has joined together the certainty of his Word and of his Spirit so that the perfect religion of the Word may abide in our minds when the Spirit, who causes us to contemplate God's face, shines' (*Institutes* 1.9.3). To put it differently, the testimony of the Spirit makes us confident not only of the authority of Scripture as the Word of God, but also of the contents of God's word, the promise of salvation in Christ (Faber 1989:2). Thus, the inner working and witness of the Spirit contains the knowledge of God, the authority of Scripture, and the efficient *loci* of preaching.

Undoubtedly, the centrality of the Word and the strong attachment of the Spirit to the Word are the characteristic of Calvin's theme of the Spirit as the inner witness to the truth that God has revealed (Badcock 1997:88). The same applies for the preached Word. As Paul calls his preaching 'the ministration of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:8)', the Holy Spirit is so intrinsic in His truth, which He expresses in Scripture, that only when the proper reverence and dignity are given to the Word does the Holy Spirit show forth His power (*Institutes* 1.9.3). As Faber (1989) asserts, specifically concerning the Word as the preached Word, Calvin maintains an equilibrium: the Spirit is not without the Word and the Word is not without the Spirit. Calvin writes, 'the Word is the instrument by which the Lord dispenses the illumination of his Spirit to believers' (*Institutes* 1.9.3). One thus can say that the Word is unavailable without the Spirit. This is because of the depth of our depravity—our minds have such an inclination to vanity that we can never cleave fast to the truth of God and our dullness is such that we are always blind to the light of God's truth. The Spirit thus is the efficacy of the preached Word as well as the author of the written Word.

However, Calvin's argument of the absolute correlation of the Spirit and the written or preached Word does not imply that the Spirit ought to be restricted to the preaching of the Word. Although the Spirit ordinarily works through the instruments of the Word or the Church, He is not bound to them. Calvin firmly articulates the sovereign freedom of the Spirit over those ordained means (Milner Jr 1970:191; Lopes 1997:44-46). That is to say, the close relationship between the Spirit and the Scriptures never means the

subordination of the Spirit to the Word. Rather, it is to recognise the inner consistency of the Spirit, who both inspired the Scriptures and now convinces believers of their truth (Heron 1983:105). As the divine teachings are found in the Scriptures, the work of the Spirit consists in illuminating them, causing these teachings to be understood by believers. Another point stressed by Calvin is that the working of the Spirit could be recognised by His harmony with the Scriptures, which had been inspired by the Spirit Himself: 'He is the Author of the Scriptures: he cannot vary and differ from himself. Hence he must ever remain just as he once revealed himself there' (*Institutes* 1.9.2).

At this point, we need to take into due consideration the historical, theological context of Calvin's pneumatology. Calvin's doctrine of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* was contoured amidst his battle on two fronts: on the one hand, against the captivity of Scripture to the Roman Catholic Church; on the other hand, against the abandonment of Scripture by the Radical Reformation (Lopes 1997:40-44).

The Roman Catholic Church's position was that the authority of Scripture depended on the witness of the Church. In other words, the Word and the interpretation of it were captive under ecclesiastical authority. Working contrary to this position, Calvin advocated the internal witness of the Spirit, by means of which the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures can be proved to be true. As Lopes (1997:42) argues, through the emphasis on the internal witness of the Spirit as the greatest evidence of the divinity and authority of Scripture, Calvin liberated the Scriptures from the captivity imposed by the medieval church, and put them back where they truly belonged, in the hands of the Holy Spirit.

On the other hand, Calvin had to struggle against the teaching of the Radical Reformation, more exactly, the excesses of the 'Enthusiasts' or 'Fanatics' who claimed to be taught directly by the Spirit through new revelation. They affirmed that the Spirit could not be restricted to written word or dead letters, for that would reduce His sovereignty. One could regard the 'Enthusiasts' as an over-reaction against the slavery of the Scriptures to the Church. They dismissed Calvin's position as simplistic pursuit of 'the dead and killing letter'; Calvin responded to this 'devilish madness' by insisting

that the Word and the Spirit belong together. He seriously questioned their separation between the Spirit and the Word, and then confirmed that ‘the Spirit has not the task of inventing new and unheard-of revelations, or of forging a new kind of doctrine, to lead us away from the received doctrine of the gospel, but of sealing our minds with that very doctrine which is commended by the gospel’ (*Institutes* 1.9.1). The Spirit does not substitute for or supplement the Word, but rather authenticates it.

To sum up, it is the Holy Spirit who as the author of Scripture and internal witness of the truth uses the written or preached Word to generate faith in the heart of believers. Only through the Spirit does the Word come to be efficacious so that it may accomplish God’s purpose in the believer’s life. To put it differently, the objective ground for faith is the Word of God, and its subjective cause is the Spirit who brought the Word into being (Osterhaven 1982:173). From this, Warfield ([1956] 1980:486) legitimately considered the doctrine of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* as another great contribution of Calvin’s theology to the Church.

#### **2.2.4 The dynamic work of the Spirit in the ministry of the Church**

While Calvin, in Book III, deals with the application through the Holy Spirit of the salvation given in Christ, he explores in Book IV the outer means which God uses in this activity of the Spirit, in the activity of the process of salvation. Calvin’s pneumatological importance is palpable in his doctrine of the church and sacraments, which was unfolded in Book IV of his *Institutes*.

The title of the first chapter of Book IV is ‘*The True Church with Which as Mother of All the Godly We Must Keep Unity*’. By calling the church as ‘Mother’ of believers, Calvin suggests that the knowledge of the visible church is useful and necessary to us. His reasoning is that ‘there is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and, lastly, unless she keep us under her care and guidance until, putting off mortal flesh, we become like the angels’ (*Institutes* 4.1.4). Through the working of the Spirit, believers have entered into

fellowship with Christ, namely, ‘the communion of saints’. Therefore, the true church is primarily a synonym of both the mother who embraces ‘the children of God by grace of adoption’ and the society of ‘true members of Christ by sanctification of the Holy Spirit’ (*Institutes* 4.1.7).

For Calvin, the church is above all Christ’s kingdom and the head of the church is Jesus Christ. ‘He alone should rule and reign in the church as well as have authority or pre-eminence in it, and this authority should be exercised and administered by his Word alone’ (*Institutes* 4.3.1). However, Christ, continues Calvin, ‘does not dwell among us in visible presence...he uses the ministry of men’. This is stated in different manner as follows (*Institutes* 4.14.8):

But for one blessing of God which they proclaim, we recognize three. For first, the Lord teaches and instructs us by his Word. Secondly, he confirms it by the sacraments. Finally, he illumines our minds by the light of his Holy Spirit and opens our hearts for the Word and sacraments to enter in, which would otherwise only strike our ears and appear before our eyes, but not at all affect us within.

Following from this, Calvin sets out his thought about the dynamic working of the Spirit in the ministry of the Church, specifically, Word and sacrament.

In the motherly church, the work of the Spirit constitutes the most important dynamic-factor at every turn. God has ordained both the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments as the marks of the Church. Calvin writes: ‘Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ’s institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists’ (*Institutes* 4.1.9). However, only when accompanied with the efficacious working of the Spirit, these ordained means constitute the reality of the true church.

Firstly, only when attended by the Holy Spirit is the preacher’s word able to become the very Word of God. The working of the Spirit is given in order that the preacher’s

teaching may not be unprofitable; in order that it may not only smite upon the hearers' ears with the sound of the preacher's voice. Referring to some passages in which Paul attributed all his ministry to God, Calvin says: 'we ought to remember those statements in which God, ascribing to himself illumination of mind and renewal of heart, warns that it is sacrilege for man to claim any part of either for himself' (*Institutes* 4.1.6). That is to say, the efficacy of the preached Word does not come from the human tongue, nor does it lie in the sound itself, but ought to be wholly ascribed to the Holy Spirit (Armstrong 1987:107).

Secondly, the efficacy of the sacraments also ultimately depends on the Spirit. The sacraments, writes Calvin, 'properly fulfill their office only when the Spirit, that inward teacher, comes to them, by whose power alone hearts are penetrated and affections moved and our souls opened for the sacraments to enter in' (*Institutes* 4.14.9). The sacraments cannot profit at all without the power of the Holy Spirit. As Calvin writes once more, the Spirit, by opening our minds and hearts and making us receptive, makes the sacraments of benefit to us (*Institutes* 4.14.17).

His assertions regarding the dynamic working of the Spirit saves Calvin's doctrine of the church from leaning towards one-sidedness of either institutionalism or individualism. It is true that the magisterial Reformers including Calvin formulated a new direct relation between the Spirit and the individual. One can notice this from the fact that when Calvin dealt with the subjects of Book III of his *Institutes* such as faith, regeneration, penitence, the life of the Christian, justification, good works, Christian liberty, prayer, and predestination, the individual believer was certainly at the centre as the receiver of those spiritual gifts. Does it imply that, as Brunner (1962:19) argues, the Church comes to be an accidental, subsidiary in faith and that faith is essentially regarded as something individual? Berkhof (1964:47-49) makes an objection to Brunner's interpretation of Calvin as individualism—I absolutely agree on Berkhof's assertion. Berkhof stresses that for Calvin the church, particularly with the ministry of the Word, generally is the only means by which the Spirit draws men into the communion with Christ. Although Calvin gives full emphasis to the relation between the Spirit and individual, he never fails to recognise that the church is a creation not of

men but of the Spirit. Thus, for Calvin, the work of the Spirit is evident and discernable in the Church as much as it is in the individuals.

Another point definitively made by Calvin is the freedom of the Spirit. For the Spirit to coincide ordinarily with the ordained means—Word and sacrament—does not imply that the Spirit is bound to the institutional church. In opposition to the ecclesiasticism of the Roman Catholic Church, Calvin affirmed that the Spirit has the sovereign freedom of God. Thus, the Spirit may be withdrawn from the means He uses and the Spirit may work efficaciously apart from the objectively revealed will or appointed means of God. In other words, the ordained means cannot be of detriment to the sovereign freedom of the Spirit.

Concisely, for Calvin the church as ‘mother of all the godly’ is the sphere of the redemptive activity of the Spirit. It is by the power of the Spirit that just as the preaching is an audible form of the very Word of God, so the sacraments can be made the visible forms of the real presence of Christ. Only through the work of the Spirit can Word and sacrament as the marks of the true church be efficacious. Hence, the Spirit is the effective agent of Word and sacrament, and gives the dynamic life of grace to the church.

### **2.2.5 The cosmic work of the Spirit in creation**

In the doctrine of creation, Calvin underlined the Spirit as the Spirit at work in creation, through which the world is to be preserved, restored, and guided. Without the power of the Spirit in preserving creation, the world cannot sustain itself and will consequently degenerate into the chaos of bestiality. Calvin asserted this as follows (*Institutes* 2.2.16):

It is no wonder, then, that the knowledge of all that is most excellent in human life is said to be communicated to us through the Spirit of God. Nor is there reason for anyone to ask, What have the impious, who are utterly estranged from God, to do with his Spirit? We ought to understand the statement that the Spirit of God dwells only in believers [Romans 8:9] as referring to the Spirit

of sanctification through whom we are consecrated as temples to God [1 Corinthians 3:16]. Nonetheless he fills, moves, and quickens all things by the power of the same Spirit, and does so according to the character that he bestowed upon each kind by the law of creation.

For the purpose of inquiry into the cosmic scope of the Spirit's work, it is worth paying attention to Calvin's notion of common grace.<sup>7</sup> Herman Kuiper (1928:179-203), in his thorough survey of Calvin's doctrine of common grace, classifies three types of common grace: universal, general, and covenant common grace. In universal common grace that God grants to all creatures, all sin-cursed creatures participate in God's blessing of preservation. General common grace touches humankind *in general* and every individual member of the human race *in particular*. Through general common grace, God bestows the gift of intelligence and reason by which men are able to not only cultivate various arts and sciences but also regulate human society. Covenant common grace is a grace that is common to God's elect and all those who live in the covenant sphere including Jews. Of three forms of common grace, the first two are related with the Spirit's work in creation.

Krusche (quoted by Bolt 1989:19), in his study of Calvin's pneumatology, also divides the Spirit's threefold activities according to the threefold level of all life in this world: the Spirit's cosmic but hidden power within universal life, the Spirit's general and indiscriminate bestowal of various gifts upon all men, and the particular regenerating work of the Spirit for the sake of believers elected and adopted as God's children. For Calvin, especially the Spirit's work in the first level of the cosmic dimension has a twofold sense: to maintain order and to produce life. The Spirit played an equally decisive role in the creation of the cosmos. Calvin writes: 'Moreover, although no mention is made of the Spirit except in the history of the creation of the universe, nevertheless the Spirit is introduced here, not as a shadow, but as the essential power of God, when Moses tells that the as yet formless mass was itself sustained in him

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<sup>7</sup> According to Kuiper (1928:177), the term 'common grace' is actually not employed by Calvin but by subsequent Reformed theologians. However, considering that Calvin speaks of a grace that is nonsalvific and given to the entire creation, the use of this term would make no difference.

[Genesis 1:2]' (*Institutes* 1.13.22). It is the Spirit who reduces the primordial chaos to the order of nature.

The power of the very same Spirit is needed to maintain the order and stability of creation, to prevent it from falling into chaos, as in the commentary of Genesis Calvin (1948:73-74) writes:

We have already heard that before God had perfected the world it was an undigested mass; he now teaches that the power of the Spirit was necessary in order to sustain it....seeing that we now behold the world preserved by government, or order. He therefore asserts that this mass, however confused it might be, was rendered stable, for the time, by the secret efficacy of the Spirit.

Additionally the Spirit who maintains order also is the source of all life: 'For it is the Spirit who, everywhere diffused, sustains all things, causes them to grow, and quickens them in heaven and in earth. Because he is circumscribed by no limits, he is excepted from the category of creatures; but in transfusing into all things his energy, and breathing into them essence, life, and movement, he is indeed plainly divine' (*Institutes* 1.13.14).

In a certain sense, Calvin distinguished the *Spiritus Creator* from the *Spiritus Redemptor*. One can see that through the whole theology of Calvin, the formula, *distinctio, sed non separatio*, functions as the consistent pattern. This formula stands behind all Calvin's references to the theological categories, for example, the word and the Word, the law and the gospel, the general and the special elections, the external and the internal calling, the preaching and the hearing of the word, the sign and the reality of the sacraments, the lawful and the true ministry, discipline and repentance, the external aids and the spiritual worship, the visible and the invisible church, and so forth. To this list we may also add the knowledge of God the Creator and the Redeemer, that is, the *Spiritus Creator* and the *Spiritus Redemptor* (Milner Jr 1970:191).

The formula, *distinctio, sed non separatio*, can be explained by the historical background of the Reformation. In medieval Scholasticism, there was a clear tendency to posit a fundamental continuum between nature and grace, the Creator and the created, and between creation and redemption. From that perspective, Scholastic theology claimed that human beings could come to right relationship with God through being enabled by infused grace to fulfil nature's law, and so ascend to our Creator. However, Reformation theology worthy of being called 'Protestant theology' protested against, above all else, this root affirmation of Scholastic theology. Contrary to the position of Scholasticism, Reformation theology resolutely contended that by the sin and consequent incapacity of the human being for God, we ought to place our trust in Christ the Redeemer, who by grace, freely imputes His righteousness to us. Thus the Reformers took as their fundamental maxim '*solus Christus, sola fide, sola scriptura, sola gratia*' (Dabney 2001:249-251). This also came to express a tendency for Calvin to assert utter contradiction between law and Gospel, God and world, creation and redemption.

As noted above, Calvin made a distinction between the *Spiritus Redemptor* and the *Spiritus Creator* in theologically dialectic methodology. Although two kinds of the Spirit's work can be seen to be distinctive but not separate, the relationship of the two is not equivalent; the *Spiritus Redemptor* has in fact priority over the *Spiritus Creator*.

Why, then, does Calvin consider and discuss the cosmic work of the Spirit? The reasons why Calvin accents the cosmic, creative work of the Spirit are summarised by Bolt (1989) as: to demonstrate the full deity of the Spirit; to invite men to recognition of God in His works; to point and invite men to the true end of their own creation; to encourage man to praise God for His constancy and to enjoy God's good gifts in thankfulness; to manifest the inexcusability of man in the face of God; and to make Christians honour the civil order and love our neighbour as implication for social ethics.

In spite of these benefits of emphasis on the creative work of the Spirit, Calvin formulated his cosmic pneumatology precisely to demonstrate that the Spirit's cosmic, universal work in creation is not a sanctifying but a preserving, restraining work. As

Calvin writes: ‘The Spirit comes, not from nature, but from regeneration’ (*Institutes* 2.2.27), and again: ‘We have nothing of the Spirit, however, except through regeneration’ (*Institutes* 2.3.1), the primary work of the Spirit is a work of regeneration, a work of redemption. From all this it becomes obvious that, for Calvin the Spirit’s cosmic, creative work is subsidiary with relation to the redemptive work.

## **2.3 Karl Barth’s view on the work of the Spirit**

### **2.3.1 The Spirit’s work of union within the Trinity**

The doctrine of the Trinity stands in the vanguard of Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*. Barth takes the Trinity as the condition for the rest of his theology. According to Barth, the doctrine of the Trinity is not only the distinctive Christian idea of God, but also a work of the Church established through the biblical revelation (*CD* I/1,339-383). In the light of the doctrine of the Trinity, we must recognise God to be the Father through the Son by the Holy Spirit as God reveals. God above us, for us, and in us is God in this unity of being yet in the distinctions of ways of being. In addition, we are able to know the internal being of God, ‘the immanent Trinity’ from what He is and does in revelation, ‘the economic Trinity’.

Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity seems to be grounded in his analysis of God’s self-revelation. The Triune God is the unity of the Revealer, the act of revelation, and the effect of revelation (*CD* I/1,415). That is, Barth attributes to the one God the functions of Revealer, Revelation and Revealedness (Rosato 1981:49). The doctrine of the Trinity has the function of designating the identity and sovereignty of God in every aspect of His self-revelation. That is, firstly, God as Revealer or as the Father is the source and origin of the whole deity; secondly, the Son as the incarnate Reconciler is the centre of the revealing activity of God; thirdly, the Spirit is the Lord who brings us Christ’s reconciliation and makes us children of God. In this formulation, the appropriate work of the Spirit is to effect the revelation and to form salvation. Whereas Christ represents the ‘objectivity’ of this self-revelation, the Spirit represents the subjective dimension,

that is, making people understand and believe in the reality of God's self-revelation which they would not have been able to understand and accept on the basis of their own efforts (Oberdorfer 2006:35). From this we can infer that Barth's pneumatology is strongly interrelated with a Christocentric view of revelation, as we shall examine in the next section (Thompson 1991:23).

Accordingly, the foundation of the Spirit's work in humanity and the world is, for Barth, in the Triune God. The saving work of the Spirit must be sought on trinitarian grounds. It is because all of God's work in the world must find its basis in the Trinity as it is in itself: 'The triune life of God, which is free life in the fact that it is Spirit, is the basis of His whole will and action even *ad extra*, as the living act which He directs to us' (CD IV/2,345).

We can find at least four implications in the trinitarian grounds of Barth's pneumatology: the Spirit's role within the transcendent life of the Godhead, the absolute negation of any anthropological grounds, God's love in the mutuality of the Trinity, and the Spirit's being the Lord (Thompson 1991:26-29; Hunsinger 2000:151-157).

Firstly, on firmly the trinitarian grounds, Barth recognises the Spirit's role in the primordial trinitarian communion. Following Augustine, Barth views the Spirit as the common element, the fellowship, 'the act of "communityness" of the Father and the Son' (CD I/1,537-538). Barth writes, 'This participation of the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit. Thus the special feature of the Holy Spirit's divine mode of existence consists, paradoxically enough, in Him being the common factor between the mode of existence of God the Father and that of God the Son. Not what is common to them, so far as they are the one God, but what is common to them so far as they are the Father and the Son' (:537). The Spirit is thus a person in the union and communion of the eternal life of the Triune God.

However, this does not imply that the Spirit can be understood merely as a neutral relation or principle. The Spirit is not 'a mere attribute or relation of the Father or of the Son', but 'equally well of the Father or of the Son or of both' (CD I/1,558). Just as fully

as the Father and the Son, the Spirit is ‘a mode of existence of the one essence of God’ (:542). Thus, the Spirit, with the Father and the Son, is to be worshipped and glorified. Through the person or hypostasis of the Spirit, the trinitarian God’s ineffable communion in love and knowledge is conveyed, confirmed, and fulfilled to all eternity.

Secondly, trinitarian grounds provide the significant insight that the activity of the Spirit *ad extra* can in no sense be construed on anthropological grounds. Our reconciliation with God is grounded in the divine freedom and not at all in human capacity. God’s actions in which He wills to be our God ‘is grounded and typified in His own essence, in His Godness itself’ (*CD I/1,440*). Due to the operation of the Spirit, we receive what is impossible for us by nature. The Spirit who proceeds from the Father to the Son, and from the Son to the Father, is the very Spirit who unites us in communion with God. The very same Spirit proceeds to us from the Father in order to unite us with the Son. In this sense, Barth endorses the controversial *filioque* clause, the Western addition to the creed stating that the Spirit proceeds from the Father ‘and the Son’. Without the *filioque* clause, writes Barth, our fellowship with God would lose its eternal basis and guarantee (:552). Our communion with God is always a gift of grace exceeding the capabilities of human nature. Thus, the communion with God effected by the work of the Spirit is conceived as entirely trinitarian ground and in no sense anthropological one.

Thirdly, the reality of the Spirit as the union and communion of Father and Son repudiates all loneliness in God. God is love in this mutuality, indwelling, and relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Barth writes (*CD I/1,553*):

By being the Father who brings forth the Son, He brings forth the Spirit of love; for, by bringing forth the Son, God already negates in Himself, from all eternity, in His utter simplicity, existence in loneliness, self-sufficiency, self-dependence. Also and precisely in Himself, from all eternity, in His utter simplicity, God is directed towards the Other, refuses to be without the Other, will only possess Himself, by possessing Himself along with the Other, in fact in the Other. He is the Father of the Son in such a way, that with the Son he brings forth the Spirit, Love, and thus is in Himself the Spirit, Love.

Likewise, the Spirit draws us out of our sinful isolation and loneliness into the communion and love of the Triune God.

Fourthly, the Holy Spirit, while drawing our lives from sin and bringing us into union with the Triune God, remains at the same time Lord over us. The Holy Spirit, in distinction from all created spirits, is the Spirit 'who is, remains, and always becomes again transcendent over man, by being immanent in him' (*CD I/1,559*). Hence, the Spirit both transcendent and immanent is not in any way to be identified with human spirits or with human being's spirituality or religiosity. Here we need to recall Barth's struggle against two theological opponents. Modern Protestantism since Schleiermacher and Roman Catholicism since Augustine have both sought to abolish the immense gulf between Christ and the human being by psychological, philosophical, practical, and ecclesiological attempts to identify the Spirit of the Creator and man. Against these positions, Barth, as Rosato (1981:32) says, 'has first to separate the Spirit radically from the experience both of the individual Christian and of the worshipping community' and insists that only the sovereign Spirit of the Word can accomplish the communion of us with the Triune God. Therefore, for Barth, the Spirit is 'the purely other, the superior'—the living Lord (*CD I/1,519*).

In short, the Spirit mediates the communion between the Father and the Son within the eternal Trinity. This activity of communion in the Trinity is also paradigmatic of the Spirit's work in humanity and the world. Our fellowship and communion with the Triune God is solely grounded in the mediating work of the Spirit, which depends not on human capacity but on the freedom and sovereignty of the Spirit as Lord.

In trinitarian theology, Barth insists that there can be no adequate approach to the Son which does not involve an accounting of the Spirit in His relation to, and distinction from, the Son. This leads to the following discussion of the relationship between Christ and the Spirit.

### **2.3.2 The Spirit of Christ: Christocentric pneumatology**

As noted in the previous discussion, the Spirit is the Lord. For Barth, however, the Spirit is not merely the Lord, but above all ‘the Spirit of the Lord Jesus’.

For Barth, it is Jesus Christ who constitutes the saving work of the Spirit in a way that is not true in reverse. There is ‘not a second, special revelation of the Spirit alongside that of the Son’ (*CD I/1,542*). The Holy Spirit is a unique person as God, but ‘He is not an independent divinity side by side with the unique Word of God. He is simply the Teacher of the Word: of that Word which is never without its Teacher’ (*CD I/2,244*). The Spirit does not perform a new and supplemental saving intervention alongside of the Son. The Spirit does not adopt the believer directly into the communion of the Trinity. ‘The only content of the Holy Spirit’, Barth writes, ‘is Jesus; His only work is his provisional revelation; His only effect the human knowledge which has Him as its object’ (*CD IV/2,654*). In other words, the Spirit brings no independent content of His own, but instead a content that is determined wholly and entirely by Jesus Christ. The Spirit’s abiding content and focus is thus Jesus Christ Himself. From this one can say to some extent that the knowledge of the Spirit is merely concomitant with the knowledge of Christ.

Barth places important emphasis on the close association of Word and Spirit in saving action. Here the Word is Jesus Christ the Reconciler in His prophetic office present with us by the Spirit. Barth writes (*CD I/2,199*): ‘The very possibility of human nature’s being adopted into unity with the Son of God is the Holy Ghost. Here, then, at this fontal point in revelation, the Word of God is not without the Spirit of God. And here already there is the togetherness of Spirit and Word. Through the Spirit it becomes really possible for the creature, for man, to be there and to be free for God. Through the Spirit flesh, human nature, is assumed into unity with the Son of God.’ This indissoluble unity of Word and Spirit is such that in this instance the Spirit is almost identical with Christ (Thompson 1991:189).

Barth states that ‘He is the Holy Spirit in this supreme sense...because He is no other than the presence and action of Jesus Christ Himself: His stretched out arm; He Himself in the power of His resurrection, i.e., in the power of His revelation as it begins in and with the power of His resurrection and continues its work from this point’ (*CD IV/2,322-323*). Speaking of ‘The Holy Spirit and the Gathering of the Christian Community’, Barth says, ‘It is strange but true that fundamentally and in general practice we cannot say more of the Holy Spirit and His work than that He is the power in which Jesus Christ attests Himself, attests Himself effectively, creating in man response and obedience’ (*CD IV/1,648*). In a word, the presence and power of the Spirit must be understood to attest what the incarnate Word of God has done for our salvation apart from us and to mediate our participation in it by faith (Hunsinger 2000:158).

Further, Barth even sees the Holy Spirit as the coming of Jesus Christ Himself and His witness. Accordingly the Spirit and His witness are in fact the self-revelation of Jesus Christ (*CD IV/2,128*). Pentecost is seen as one of the forms of the *parousia* of Christ, which is ‘no less genuinely his own direct and personal coming, His *parousia*, presence and revelation, than was his coming then and there to his disciples in the Easter event, or than will be His coming in its final and conclusive form as the Judge of the quick and the dead’ (*CD IV/3,356*).

At this point, a degree of dissonance between the hypostatic distinctness of the Spirit and the subordination of the Spirit’s work to Christ comes to the fore. On the one hand, we can find that what is evident is a distinction between God the Son who is the object of our knowledge, the One to whom we are related and God the Spirit who as ‘the subjective reality of revelation’ is at work within us making that knowledge possible and enabling us to enter into that relationship. On the other hand, this hypostatic distinction of the Spirit seems to be constantly maintained with difficulty in Barth’s theology owing to the identification of the Spirit with Christ (Smail 1986:92). The identity of the Spirit with Christ is sometimes so thorough that we cannot but throw the reality and necessity of the hypostatic distinction between them into doubt. With respect to this point, Berkhof (1964:24-29), as a proponent of Barth, claims that the identification of the Spirit with Christ is found in the entire New Testament tradition

and that Barth is a spokesman of this traditional view when he speaks about the Spirit as the risen Christ. In contrast, Rosato (1981:162), from a critical view, dubs this dissonance as ‘Trinitarian formalism and Christological bias’, and argues that Barth ‘adheres to the general tendency of Western theologians to assign the Holy Spirit primarily an instrumental function in faith and in ecclesial existence, and thereby inevitably to confine the Spirit to a fundamentally domestic rather than cosmic role’.

As seen above, in Barth’s Christocentric pneumatology, to speak of the Holy Spirit is simply to speak of the extension of the power of Jesus Christ into the subjective sphere (Smail 1986:93). Although Barth treats formally the Son and the Spirit as hypostatically distinct, he often speaks as if the Spirit is only the mode of presence and action of the ascended Christ. From the outset of his *Church Dogmatics*, Barth deals with the work of the Spirit exclusively in terms of conveying the work of Christ into the sphere of human responsiveness, and this tendency is sustained throughout his *Dogmatics*.

Why did Barth strongly link pneumatology to christology? Barth’s pneumatology presupposes the freedom of the man’s response to God. Barth’s approach to the God-man relationship was a personal encounter between a divine ‘I’ and a created human ‘thou’. He sees clearly that the biblical notion of the covenant requires the personal human’s response to the sovereign grace that encounters us in Jesus Christ. In this respect, Barth’s pneumatology is therefore designed to affirm the human freedom to respond God’s grace and to give a theological explanation of its actuality and possibility. Barth in the context of his doctrine of revelation writes (*CD I/1,518-519*):

The act of the Holy Spirit in revelation is the Yea to God’s Word, spoken through God Himself on our behalf, yet not only to us but in us. This yea spoken by God is the ground of the confidence with which a man may regard the revelation as meant for him. This yea is the mystery of faith, the mystery of knowledge of the Word of God, but also the mystery of willing obedience, well-pleasing to God. All of it exists for man “in the Holy Spirit,” to wit, faith, knowledge, obedience.

As stated here, the true relationship between God and man in the covenant requires man's authentic answer to God's speaking and acting, and man's response does not come from himself, but has to be given to him by the Spirit. That is, only God can properly respond to God; only God the Spirit enables men to respond truly to God within them. At this point, Barth differentiates his pneumatology from both liberal Protestantism, which reduces the Spirit of God to spirits of man, and Roman Catholicism, which sees the Spirit as the soul of the Church or the Christian tradition. The Spirit, for Barth, is neither to be psychologised and seen as the inner core of man's own being, nor to be ecclesiasticised as the spirit of the Church. Rather the Spirit must be seen always as *the Spirit of Christ* (Smail 1986:88-91). Rogers Jr (2004:177) argues that Barth deliberately and forcibly intends to turn every question about the Spirit into a question about Christ by means of a rhetorical manoeuvre, because christology has an objective density that can resist the excessively anthropological conceptualisation of the Spirit in the post-Schleiermacher era. As a result, Barth restores the primary, essential connection of pneumatology to christology and, as is succinctly expressed by Rosato (1981:162), 'he positions pneumatology and ecclesiology under the umbrella of christology'.

In short, the activity of the Spirit, as understood by Barth, is totally determined by Christ. In no sense that may be independent, supplemental, or superior, does the Spirit's work focus on Himself. The Spirit is the presence and action of Jesus Christ. In this sense, Barth's pneumatology is unwaveringly Christocentric.

### **2.3.3 The Mediator of communion**

What then is the central work of the Spirit in Barth's pneumatology? The primary work of the Spirit, as Barth understands, is the mediation of communion. 'Communion', as elucidated by Hunsinger (2000:168-173), has a deep implication of fellowship and mutual self-giving. It means participating in the being of another, without the loss of identity by either for in true communion the identity of each is not obliterated but enhanced. The deepest form of communion is mutual indwelling. For Barth, the Spirit

who proceeds from the Father and the Son, the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, is at once the mediator of this indwelling and yet also the indwelling itself, the mediator, the mediation, and the very essence of what is mediated.

This communion involves three distinctive aspects: with Christ, with the Trinity, and with one another, and all of them take place by the Spirit.

The first aspect is the communion with *Christ*. The Spirit unifies two disparate realities. The disparate realities of deity and humanity can be indwelling in the incarnate Christ by the power of the Spirit. Likewise, the Spirit unites Christ to His community. Barth writes the following (*CD IV/3,761*):

The work of the Holy Spirit, however, is to bring and to hold together that which is different and therefore, as it would seem, necessarily and irresistibly disruptive in the relationship of Jesus Christ to His community, namely, the divine working, being and action on the one side and the human on the other, the creative freedom and act on the one side and the creaturely on the other, the eternal reality and possibility on the one side and the temporal on the other. His work is to bring and to hold them together, not to identify, intermingle nor confound them, not to change the one into the other nor to merge the one into the other, but to co-ordinate them, to make them parallel, to bring them into harmony and therefore to bind them into a true unity.

The Spirit's paradigmatically unifying work applies not only to the incarnation of Christ, but also to the communion of Christ and His community. By mediating Christ to the community, 'the Spirit constitutes and guarantees the unity of the *totus Christus*, i.e., of Jesus Christ in the heights and in the depths, in His transcendence and in His immanence' (*CD IV/3,760*). In other words, it is through the mediating work of the Spirit that Christ is at the same time the heavenly Head with God and the earthly body with His community.

The second aspect is the communion with the Trinity. The communion with Christ in the Spirit involves participation in the communion with the Holy Trinity, that is, 'the primordial communion of love and knowledge between the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit' (Hunsinger 2000:169). The Spirit is not only the union and communion of Father and Son, but also the bond of union between God and humanity in Jesus Christ. In seeking and creating this communion, God 'wills to be ours, and he wills that we should be his. He wills to belong to us and he wills that we should belong to him. He does not will to be without us, and he does not will that we should be without him' (*CD II/1,274*). 'He receives us through his Son into his fellowship with himself' (:275). In the calling and drawing of the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father, man is also called and drawn to the divine love by the power of the Holy Spirit (*CD IV/2,778*).

In this communion with the Trinity, the knowledge of God plays an important role because we do not participate in God's eternal love without participating in the truth of God's self-knowledge. For Barth, the knowledge of God is so closely correlated with fellowship with God that knowing and loving God are inseparable (*CD II/1,182*). Barth writes (:49), 'God knows himself: the Father knows the Son and the Son the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit. This occurrence in God himself is the essence and strength of our knowledge of God.' Through God's revelation, we become participants in this occurrence. However, our participation in God's self-knowledge is always an 'indirect' one because it is mediated in and through Jesus Christ (:59). Only through the true humanity of Jesus, we come to share, indirectly, in God's own trinitarian self-knowledge. God's revelation in Jesus Christ cannot be known apart from our reception of it and participation in it through the work of the Spirit. Thus, Barth says that the Holy Spirit is both the subjective reality and the subjective possibility of revelation. In this meaning, one can say that the Spirit is the means by which we come to enjoy the communion with God which is realised in the revelation of God (*CD I/2,257*).

The third aspect is our communion with one another as members of the Christian community (Hunsinger 2000:171). As the Spirit unites us with Christ, and so with the Trinity, we also become members one of another. The work of the Spirit is to form the community of Christ: the gathering of the community in faith (*CD IV/1,643-739*), the

upbuilding of Christian community in love (*CD IV/2,614-726*), and the sending out of the Christian community into the world in hope (*CD IV/3,681-901*). Christians know themselves ‘in their union with Jesus, and also with one another, in the fellowship of faith and love and hope in which they express themselves as His and find self-awareness as this people which has a common descent’ (*CD IV/2,651*).

Not only does the Spirit incorporate the community into communion with one another, but also the Spirit makes the community a distinctive and serious partner in discussion with the world. Within the community, members do what is not done elsewhere: they uphold one another instead of causing one another to fall; they serve one another by love instead of ruling over one another; and they show a love which is inward unfeigned, sincere, and constant (*CD IV/2,816-817*).

To summarise, the Spirit as the mediator of communion unites us with Christ, through whom we participate in the eternal communion of the Trinity while at the same time finding communion with one another in Christian community. In His saving activity, the Spirit is the presence and power of communion joining believers to Christ, through Him to the Triune God, and to one another.

#### **2.3.4 The Spirit’s awakening, upbuilding, and sending work in the Church**

How does Barth shape his understanding of the Spirit’s work in the Church? As to the relationship between individual and community, Barth gives priority to the Church as the creation of the Spirit over the individual who is brought to new life within the sphere of the Church. Although there can be no possible tension between them and neither individualism nor collectivism can occur in community (*CD II/2,313*), the Holy Spirit works ‘first in the community of God, and only then...in individual Christians’ (*CD IV/1,154*). Barth also writes as follows (*CD IV/1,150*):

The “pillar and ground of truth”, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the city set on a hill, is the community of God and not the individual Christian as such....It is the Church which is ordained to the ministry of reconciliation and the witness of the grace of God in relation to the rest of the world....It is primarily in it that there is fulfilled in the sphere of sinful man and his world, as the work of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ, the subjective apprehension of the atonement objectively made in Him.

In other words, the corporate application of Christ’s work is given deliberate priority over any personal application, and Barth does so with the intention of correcting the individualistic bias of so much of the Protestant thinking of his time (Smail 1986:98). However, the precedence of the community in Barth’s pneumatology does not involve an abstract collectivism, but rather allows for the significance of the individual as a locus of the Spirit’s work (*CD* II/2,311-314).

Barth unfolds his doctrine of the Church within the large volumes on the doctrine of reconciliation. Barth develops his thought of the work of the Holy Spirit and the Church in correspondence to three aspects and directions of reconciliation: (1) the Son humbling Himself to do His priestly work; (2) humanity being exalted through the Son to fellowship with God, to a royal office; (3) the Son as the God-man being His own self-witness to the light and truth of the world. Corresponding to each aspect, the Church is called and gathered by Christ; built up and grows up into Christ; and sent into the world to bear witness to Christ as Lord and victor, to be a missionary agent of His light in the darkness (Thompson 1991:91-104). Here, we come to appreciate the awakening, the upbuilding, and the sending work of the Spirit in the Church.

Firstly, the Holy Spirit is the awakening power of the Church, specifically, the community which Jesus Christ has formed and continually renews as His body. Sinful humanity cannot itself will and do the awakening to the life of Christ. Thus, ‘it must be on the basis of a particular address and gift, in virtue of a particular awakening power of God....God in this particular address and gift, God in this awakening power, God the

Creator of this other man, is the Holy Spirit' (*CD IV/3,645*). The awakening presence and activity of Spirit, in this sense, is the presupposition of the community and faith.

Although a person is, by the awakening power of the Spirit, given the capacity and freedom to believe, and to participate in the fellowship of Christ and community, the Spirit does not become the possession of the Church or fall under the control of individual. On the contrary, the Spirit is and remains the Lord with sovereignty; He has sovereign freedom to us. The Holy Spirit is the power in which Jesus Christ attests Himself, attests Himself effectively, creating in man response and obedience (*CD IV/3,648*). In an undeviating sense, the Spirit must be seen as the Spirit of Christ rather than the Spirit of the Church.

Secondly, the upbuilding of the community takes place in the power and operation of the Holy Spirit, and the corresponding action of those who are assembled and quickened by Him (*CD IV/2,641*). The Christian community, which arises by the Holy Spirit as the life-giving power of the living Lord Jesus, continues and is building up sanctified men and their work into the true Church (:617). As a community, the Church is being built up into a temple of God by the Spirit, within the context of which the congregation gather for worship. The Church also grows up into Christ by extensive moving out and by intensive growth in holiness and fellowship. Additionally, the Church is maintained and upheld in the world by the same risen Lord presented by the Spirit.

Thirdly, the Spirit is not merely the power of Christ gathering and building up its members within the Church to grow in sanctification, but also the power reaching out through the Church to the world and the whole created cosmos. Christ's reconciling work, according to Barth, is done for *all* men (*CD IV/1,644*), whereas it becomes clear in the life of the Church that the Spirit has been given only to some men; not all hear the gospel and not all who hear believe. Christ as Reconciler of the world is both Head and King of the race and at the same time Head and King of the Church; thus His rule is wider than the sphere of the Church. The distinction between Christians and non-Christians, Barth asserts, is not an absolute one but a relative and provisional state (*CD IV/3,354*). Non-Christians, as those who have not yet believed, are not to be regarded as

outside the scope and promise of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Church is the provisional form of what in reality has happened to and for the world. To put it differently, the Church is only preliminary, the first-fruits of the Spirit and the promise of all that is yet to come (Smail 1986:100; Thompson 1991:89; Hunsinger 2000:183-184).

If so, the Church must be said to exist in and for the world. Jesus Christ in His prophetic Word and action reveals His grace to all the man in the world through the Church. Accordingly, the very nature of the Church is a missionary one based on Christ's reconciliation and revelation as truth and light by the power of the Spirit bringing it in enabling efficacy to humanity. This idea of the missionary task of the Church and the Spirit's work in Christ's prophetic office is one of the most stimulating and original aspects of Barth's thought on the nature of the work of the Spirit in the Church (Berkhof 1964:33; Thompson 1991:105).

In a nutshell, the Church corresponding to the priestly, kingly, and prophetic work of Christ, is gathered, built up into Christ, and sent into the world. It is in the power and operation of the Spirit that the gathering, upbuilding, and reaching-out of the Church take place.

### **2.3.5 The identification of the *Spiritus Creator* with the *Spiritus Redemptor***

How does Barth articulate the relationship between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, or more precisely, the work of the Spirit in reconciliation and in creation?

As we have seen in the previous sections, the theology of Barth is wholly Christocentric in character and so is his doctrine of creation. For Barth, it is only in Jesus Christ that we know the knowledge of God, humanity, and creation (*CD* III/1,24-29). Barth renounces any form of 'natural theology' that presupposes some other source of that knowledge. Only in the union of God and humanity in Jesus Christ can we have the one

confident way of knowing who God is and what humanity is in the relationship to its Creator. Jesus Christ is not only the *noetic*, i.e., the way we know the truth about God, ourselves, and the world, but also the *ontic* basis of creation, i.e., the reality of it and basis of its actuality. Thus, all things are through Jesus Christ, by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ: without Him nothing could be made. Creation is not to be understood without the eternal Word, the man Christ Jesus. Besides, Jesus Christ is the meaning and content of the covenant. On the one hand, the covenant is the centre and key to creation as its inner ground, and on the other hand, creation is the outer ground of the covenant. Consequently, we can see that Barth's doctrine of creation is based on christology in its close connection with reconciliation, revelation, and covenant (Thompson 1991:56-57).

In addition, creation has a trinitarian basis as well as Christological one. Creation is the work of the Triune God, the whole Trinity. In the creed, creation is particularly ascribed to the Father. 'As the Father, God is in Himself the origin which has no other origin, the source of the other eternal modes of existence of the divine essence; and as the Creator, in virtue of His origination activity *ad extra*, He is the absolutely sovereign Lord of all that exists and is distinct from Himself' (CD III/1,49). We thus rightly designate God the Father as Creator. However, the external works of the Trinity are indivisible: *opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*. When the Triune God acts towards us, these actions are one. 'Hence the proposition that God the Father is the Creator and God the creator the Father can be defended only when we mean by "Father" the "Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit"' (:49). However, there are two distinct functions of the Spirit in creation and in redemption. Barth writes, 'As the Spirit of Jesus Christ who, proceeding from Him, unites men closely to Him *ut secum unum sint*, He distinguishes Himself from the Spirit of God who lives as *vita animalis* in creation, nature and history, and to that extent in the godless as well' (CD I/2,241).

How do we speak of the specific role of the Spirit in creation? As we have already noted, the Spirit is the communion of Father and Son, their mutual self-giving to one another in love, that is, the principle of the inner, divine, Triune life of God. 'To this extent it may well be said that it is in the Holy Spirit that the mystery of God's trinitarian essence

attains its full profundity and clarity. He is at once the innermost secret of God, and in God's relationship with man the great, bright and incontrovertible revelation of the unity and diversity of the Father and the Son' (CD III/1,56). In other words, the Spirit focuses the whole divine activity *ad extra*, towards humanity and creation. In the same way as the Spirit affirms the Triune nature of God, He confirms and guarantees what God has done in creation. To put it in other way, God the Father is the Creator, God the Son, the basis and goal of creation, and God the Spirit, the One who guarantees all created being and its continued existence (:57). Therefore Barth writes (:59), 'The creation of this essential condition of its existence is the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit in creation'. The work of the Spirit in creation is the confirmation and guarantee of its validity in the will and purpose of the Father and the Son.

We need to note that Barth elaborates the doctrine of creation in the direction of 'from reconciliation to creation', 'from covenant to creation as its outer ground' (Thompson 1991:161). The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ in reconciliation and the same Lord is the agent of creation. That is, the Spirit who is the subjective realisation of reconciliation is also the confirmation of creation. Since, in Barth's thought, reconciliation and creation are related so closely that we come to know creation through reconciliation which is known and applied to us by the work of the Spirit. In this sense, one can say that Barth's view on the relation of *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator* is not separate but intimate. Seeing reconciliation and covenant as the basis and grounds of creation, Barth speaks of the work of the Spirit as Reconciler and Creator in their inter-dependent relationship.

Rosato (1981) criticises Barth's pneumatology for failure to develop a theology of the *Spiritus Creator* because of the dominance of christology. Barth's understanding of pneumatology in an exclusively Christocentric sense makes the *Spiritus Redemptor* overtake the role of the Father's life-giving Spirit at work in creation. The Spirit is the *Spiritus Redemptor* and only as such also the *Spiritus Creator*. In other words, the Redeemer Spirit so monopolises Barth's attention that the Creator Spirit has no power to lead man to truth which is not explicitly Christological. As a result, the Holy Spirit is seen as the sole reality and possibility of personal faith in God's self-revelation.

Before endorsing Rosato's criticism of Barth, it is necessary to point out that Barth makes an assumption fundamentally different from Rosato's. One can suppose the distinction between the Spirit's work in redemption and in creation; in the former, humanity is brought into a saving relationship with God, in the latter, the work of the Spirit applies to all creatures (McLean 1981:60). Rosato (1981:149) intends to separate creation from redemption and argues that the *Spiritus Creator* has a semi-independent role in humanity and creation apart from reconciliation as revealed in Jesus Christ. To the contrary, for Barth the Spirit's work in creation is not separate from but intimately related to reconciliation and thus it can be known only through God's covenant fulfilled in reconciliation. In other words, Barth intends to distinguish and yet unify the concept of the *Spiritus Redemptor* and the *Spiritus Creator*. However, his Christocentric tendency, in which the Spirit is subordinate to Christ, prevents his intention from being fully honoured and apparently leads to the identification of the role of the *Spiritus Creator* with the role of the *Spiritus Redemptor*.

In summary, we can see that in Barth's thought the Trinity, redemption, and creation are in such a intimate relation that the Spirit's creative activity cannot contradict, but rather confirms the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, and so the Spirit of God. In addition, the presence of the Spirit in creation cannot be different from the manifestation of Christ as Lord of all by reconciliation. Therefore, for Barth the Spirit is primarily the *Spiritus Redemptor* just as the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

## **2.4 Summary and conclusion**

In this chapter, I have examined from several viewpoints how Calvin and Barth think and formulate the work of the Spirit in redemption and creation. Through this survey, I attempted to show that both Calvin and Barth have redemption-centred views on the Spirit's work.

On account of the historical context of the Reformation era and the motivation that is practical and pastoral rather than theoretical, the doctrine of the Spirit's work held a

central position in Calvin's theology. Calvin approached the work of the Spirit mainly from a soteriological perspective, and hence he regarded the bond of union with Christ and the provider of faith as the primary work of the Spirit. The work of the Spirit, as understood soteriologically, is first and foremost to bring about the salvific benefits of Christ in believers and in this regard, the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. It is indeed remarkable that Calvin highlighted the correlation of the Spirit and the Word. The Spirit is not only the author of the written Word, but also the efficacy of the preached Word. In ecclesiology, the work of the Spirit is to effectuate the God-ordained means, that is, the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. In spite of the use of these ordained means, the Spirit is neither dependent on nor bound to them in His actions on us with His sovereign freedom. Through the dynamic function of the Spirit, the ministry of the Church is made to be efficacious and vibrant, and the motherly church is able to be the sphere of salvation.

With regard to the cosmic Spirit, Calvin asserts that in creation the work of the Spirit is to maintain the order of the creation, to restrain the sin, and to bestow a gift of morality and reason to humankind in general. However, although Calvin speaks of the work of the *Spiritus Creator* in a distinctive manner, his theological emphasis is explicitly on the redemptive work of the Spirit—a work of regeneration or salvation. Undeniably, the foremost work of the Spirit is, for Calvin, to create faith using the Word written or preached, and by way of that, to unite believers with Christ. Given this, the creative work of the Spirit can be seen as secondary or subordinate.

Unfinished as Barth's doctrine of the Spirit is in his *Church Dogmatics*, the formulation of the Spirit's work is formed on the trinitarian, and specifically Christocentric, norms over many volumes. In the doctrine of revelation, the appropriate work of the Spirit is to effect the revelation and to form salvation. The work of the Spirit as the subjective reality of the revelation is to make us understand and believe in the reality of God's self-revelation. Within the immanent Trinity, the Spirit is the communion of the eternal life of the Triune God. The very same Spirit makes us participate in and indwell communion with Christ, with the Trinity, and with the community. Accordingly, for Barth the primary work of the Spirit is the mediation of communion. In this saving

activity, the Spirit is the presence and action of Jesus Christ joining us to Christ Himself, and through Him to the eternal life of the Trinity. The work of the Spirit is nothing other than the work of Christ and therefore the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. Ecclesiological, the Spirit is the awakening, upbuilding, and out-reaching power of the Church.

Barth maintains that the creative work of the Spirit is to confirm and guarantee all created being and its continued existence. However, the result of reconciliation, which is the saving work of Christ, is so universal that the work of the Spirit accompanying it is also universal to the extent that it even contains creation. Despite the fact that Barth originally intended to co-ordinate the Spirit's work in reconciliation and in creation, his Christocentric, redemption-centred pneumatology prevented him from appreciating any wider work of the Spirit in creation beyond the Christian revelation, and hence the inferior treatment of the activity of the *Spiritus Creator* (Kim 2007:34).

It is very evident that, for Barth, the Spirit's work is above all a saving activity in strong connection with christology. This redemptive work of the Spirit is not only revelational but also relational: both to mediate the knowledge of God's revelation, that is, to attest what the incarnate Word of God has done for our salvation and to mediate the reality of the revelation, that is, to lead us to participation in it by faith.

In the face of all the evidence presented in this chapter, we are bound to conclude that in Calvin's and Barth's pneumatology the Spirit's work in redemption is given more emphasis and attention than His work in creation. For them, the primary work of the Spirit is most of all to fulfil God's purpose in the history of salvation. The work of the *Spiritus Redemptor* is distinct from, and prior to, that of the *Spiritus Creator*. For a fuller recognition of this emphasis on the Spirit's redemptive work, we must be mindful of the fact that, as we have seen, historical situation and theological intention play a part in their articulation of the Spirit's work.

In the following chapter, I will explore the formulation on the Spirit's work by Abraham Kuyper and Jürgen Moltmann, both of whom are believed to treat the role of the *Spiritus Creator* more seriously.

# CHAPTER 3 CREATION-CENTRED VIEWS ON THE SPIRIT'S WORK: ABRAHAM KUYPER AND JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN

## 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, Calvin's and Barth's formulation of the Spirit's work was examined and it was concluded that the approach of both was a redemption-centred viewpoint. As to the relationship between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, although they recognise and treat the creative work of the cosmic Spirit, they certainly take the redemptive work of the Spirit into account more seriously as being more significant than the Spirit's creative work.

In this chapter, a different position on the work of the Spirit will be considered, namely, the creation-centred view. Considering Abraham Kuyper and Jürgen Moltmann as representatives within the Reformed circle who pay serious attention to the Spirit's work in creation, I will examine the tenets of their pneumatology.

Abraham Kuyper was one of the most influential and inspiring figures of the neo-Calvinism that revived Calvinism in the second half of the nineteenth century. He achieved eminent positions in various fields: an academic theologian and founder of the Free University at Amsterdam; a journalist, founder, and chief editor of *De Strandaard* which was one of the first popular daily newspapers in the Netherlands; a writer of devotional and religious literature including *De Heraut*, a weekly religious journal; a politician and an organiser of the Anti-Revolutionary Party which was the first modern Dutch political party, and Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1901 to 1905; a church reformer leading a major secession from the Dutch Reformed Church and establishment of a new confederation of Reformed Churches (Heslam 1998:2). This distinguished and multifaceted career of Kuyper makes a study of his life and work one of complexity which is caused by the contrasts and contradictions in his life and work (De Bruijn 2000:45). However, in this investigation we focus just on his percept of the

Spirit's work and therefore it may suffice to say that Kuyper's variegated achievement makes his cultural influence more important than his theology as such.

Apart from his work on pneumatology, to appreciate Kuyper's notion of the Spirit's work, we first and foremost need to examine his doctrine of common grace, which can be considered as his most influential contribution to the church and Christians. Kuyper sought to reassess Calvin's fundamental ideas in line with the prevailing circumstances of modern times.<sup>8</sup> Kuyper explored the implications of the doctrine of common grace far more extensively than any other theologian. In so doing, he made the doctrine of common grace, which had generally not been a major element in traditional Calvinistic theology, a doctrine of overriding and central importance. Kuyper articulated his doctrine of common grace in the Stone Lectures and in his *De Gemeene Gratie*. The former can be regarded as 'a manifesto of Kuyperian Calvinism' for its complete, cogent, and visionary expression of Kuyper's thought, and the latter is Kuyper's major treatment of the doctrine of common grace (Heslam 1998:11; Bacote 2005:96). In addition to these two works, *The Work of the Holy Spirit* will be sourced, in which Kuyper reflected explicitly on the Spirit's work.

Jürgen Moltmann is regarded as one of the most influential Protestant theologians alive today, and who continues to hold much interest. Since the publication of his *Theology of Hope* in 1964, Moltmann has been called the father of the 'theology of hope', and has had a profound effect on contemporary theology. The theology of Moltmann has been surely moving in process, and it is much more veracious in his doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

In the earlier phase of his theology in which the triad of books constituted the major works on systematic theology: *Theology of Hope*, *The Crucified God*, and *The Church in the power of the Spirit*, we do not find any significant pneumatology. Although there are stray comments about the Spirit which speak of resurrection and suffering, the Spirit

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<sup>8</sup> By its reinterpretation and reapplication of traditional Calvinism, Kuyper's total body of thought is designated as 'neo-Calvinism', a term first used by Kuyper's critics. Kuyper himself, however, preferred to avoid too close an association between his ideas and those of Calvin (Heslam 1998:87). For a more detailed account of the term 'neo-Calvinism', see Bolt (2001: 444-445).

of God shut up in the future and away from the present as ‘the power of futurity’ (Dabney 1993:94). On this account, his theology was criticised severely for disconnecting between the present and the future or breaking the chain of cause and effect between the acts of Christians and/or non-Christians in the present and the coming kingdom of God in the future (Gutierrez 1974:217-218). It was, Dabney (1993:96) says, these kinds of criticism that drove Moltmann beyond his earlier theology in search of an understanding of God and the world which leads not just to an unbridgeable contradiction, but to real continuity between the present and the future. In this context, pneumatology emerged as pivotal to those attempts to overcome the problem of discontinuity.

Dating from 1970s to the present, Moltmann has published a series of books described by himself as ‘Contributions to Systematic Theology’ which are intended ultimately to form a ‘Messianic Theology’.<sup>9</sup> It is in Moltmann’s later theology that the doctrine of the Spirit has come to the fore, climaxing with the appearance of the volume on pneumatology, *The Spirit of Life* (Dabney 1993:82). According to Moltmann (1992:x-xi), his pneumatology is a part of ‘Messianic Theology’ series and is thus in line with objective grounds and external reasons. To be more precise, the objective grounds of his pneumatology ‘are to be found in the logic of Trinitarian thinking’, namely, the social doctrine of the Trinity. As he tried to develop this notion in the context of creation in his *God in creation* in 1985, his pneumatology ‘is designed to move in the same direction, in the context of life’s quickening and its sanctification’.

Thus, to understand fully Moltmann’s articulation of the Spirit’s work, our examination must range from his social model of the Trinity, through the doctrine of creation, and on to pneumatology. Reflecting on Moltmann’s doctrine of the Trinity, of creation, and pneumatology within their close interrelation, I will attempt to make clear that Moltmann’s pneumatological emphasis is laid on the Spirit’s creative work.

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<sup>9</sup> *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (original publication-1980), *God in Creation* (1985), and *The Way of Jesus Christ* (1989) were published as the first three of the originally planned five volumes. *The Spirit of Life* (1991) was a book unforeseen in the initial conception of the series. For his own announcement of the original plan, see Moltmann (1993d:xvi-xvii).

## **3.2 Abraham Kuyper's view on the work of the Spirit**

### **3.2.1 The context and intention of the doctrine of common grace**

The doctrine of common grace is the most important contribution of Kuyper to the Reformed church. Kuyper expanded, systematised, and developed so thoroughly what earlier Reformed theologians had left as hints and pieces that it became a 'hallmark of Dutch neo-Calvinism' (Bratt 1998:165; Bolt 2001:197). By means of the doctrine of common grace, Kuyper strove to provide an answer to one of the most crucial questions that have faced Christianity throughout its history, that is, the question of the relationship between Christianity and the world, Christianity and culture. In order to understand fully how Kuyper unfolded the doctrine of common grace, it is necessary to reflect not only on the theological foundation but also on the social-historical background.

Kuyper's innovative development of the concept of common grace set out with the intention to reconcile two observations, which seemed in conflict with one another. This is lucidly expressed in his remark: 'The world exceeds my expectations, while the church disappoints'(quoted by Kooi 1999:96). To be more specific, on the one hand, humans suffer from total depravity as stated in the Reformed confession. Alongside that, the church is the community of believers who have been sanctified by Christ and have been made into new men. Based on these two affirmations, one would expect that the church should show the characteristics of the kingdom of God, and in contrast, the world would be dominated by pure wickedness and corruption. This expectation, however, does not appear to be fulfilled. Kuyper then tried to explain how the world could prove to be better than expected, and to establish, through the concept of common grace, the framework within which we might theologially grant the value of non-Christian culture, science, and philosophy (Klapwijk 1991a:170-171; Kooi 1999:96).

Kuyper set up his doctrine of common grace on the foundation of the affirmation of both total depravity and Christ's universal salvation (Heslam 1998:118,177). In the nineteenth century, modernistic theology placed the church-world relationship firmly at

the top of theological agenda and stimulated the church to rediscover the world. Kuyper, as a theology student at Leiden, had been under the tutelage of the leading representatives of modernistic theology, and even after his conversion to orthodox Calvinism, the questions of modernistic theology concerning the relationship of Christianity to culture remained central to his thought. However, in contrast to the belief of modernist that man is basically good but in need of greater knowledge, Kuyper insists on the radical character of sin—the total depravity of human nature. He claimed that the confession of total depravity provides the foundation for the doctrine of common grace: ‘It has not arisen out of philosophical reflection but out of the confession of the deadly character of sin’ (quoted by Heslam 1998:118). In other words, the doctrine of common grace accounts for the existence of so much that is good in human society, not by the modernist’s belief in man’s inherent goodness, but on the basis of total depravity.

Another theological foundation of the doctrine of common grace is the cosmic scope of Christ’s redemption (Heslam 1998:175). According to Kuyper, the objective of Christ’s redemptive work is not limited to the salvation of individual sinners, but extends itself to the redemption of the world. The scope of redemption stretches out to the regeneration of the cosmos and therefore, the final outcome of the future is not merely spiritual existence of saved souls, but the restoration of the entire cosmos (Calvinism: Six Stone-lectures = *SL*:192-193). This is also associated with what Kuyper claims to be Calvinism’s ‘dominating principle’: ‘*the Sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole Cosmos, in all its spheres and kingdoms, visible and invisible*’ [Kuyper’s italics] (*SL*:126). Kuyper declares in his foreword to the trilogy of *De Gemeene Gratie* (quoted by Bratt 1998:166):

[T]he doctrine of common grace proceeds directly from the Sovereignty of the Lord which is ever the root conviction of all Reformed thinking. If God is sovereign, then his Lordship must remain over all life and cannot be closed up within church walls or Christian circles. The extra-Christian world has not been given over to satan or to fallen humanity or to chance. God’s Sovereignty is great and all-ruling also in unbaptized realms, and therefore neither Christ’s

work in the world nor that of God's child can be pulled back out of life. If his God works in the world, then there he must put his hand to the plow so that there too the Name of the Lord is glorified.

Thus, the belief in the cosmic redemption effected by Christ, and the sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole cosmos, is the staunch principle from which the doctrine of common grace is derived.

This theological background and motive did not influence Kuyper's development of the doctrine of common grace as separate from social, political, and historical causes. Kuyper formulated his ideas on common grace not only as a theologian, but also as one who, as his multifaceted career shows, was determined to encourage Christians to participate positively in social issues and political activities. His idea on common grace provides the foundation for the discussion of the vocation of the Christian in the world outside of the church. The Christian has a duty to engage with human culture, to discover the divinely imparted energies at work in it, and to develop them according to God's laws. Given this perspective, it is no wonder that Kuyper particularly criticised the Anabaptist worldview, which inevitably leads to world-flight, that is, the avoidance of all forms of social and political involvement for fear of worldly contamination. The Anabaptists scorned creation and common grace, and as a result, bore unhealthy fruits such as the rejection of art, scholarship, science, culture, and all the goods of earthly life; hence the spurning of the vocation that rested upon Christians in family, business, and the state (Zuidema 1972:67; Bavinck 1989:53; Heslam 1998:119).

In addition, we need to note that Kuyper's views are deeply marked by modern culture and progress theory. This point can be described by his vision of history. Kuyper does not believe that history is the story of a rising church or Christian culture in the midst of a dying pagan civilisation, which is a characteristic view of pietism. Neither is it a course of merely human events, which is a proposal of modernism. Rather, history is the dynamic interaction of God and humankind. This vision of history fits to some extent into the accepted pattern of the years prior to the First World War. Kuyper has such a vision of westward development of culture, according to which Western society, under

the influence of the Gospel, forms the centre of civilisation, that he can write with conviction as follows: ‘The triumph of Christian Europe is an absolute’ (quoted by Kooi 1999:97).

In short, Kuyper unfolded the doctrine of common grace intentionally to answer the question regarding the relation of Christians and culture. Contrary to the Culture-Protestantism of modernists, which insisted that Christ is the great hero of culture and tended to identify Christianity with culture, Kuyper held that the whole creation, including human nature, was fallen and perverted and hence the radical distinction between God’s work in Christ and the work of the human being in culture. Moreover, in criticism of the pietistic assertion that the institutions of culture, being part of the fallen world, were essentially opposed to Christ, Kuyper rejected their cultural withdrawal and claimed that Christianity was the very means by which culture could be transformed according to God’s ordinances. In conclusion, the doctrine of common grace can be said to be the theological tool of Kuyper’s alternative to both modernism and pietism for solving the problem of the relationship between Christianity and culture

### **3.2.2 The function of common grace**

What is the function of common grace in Kuyper’s percept? There are at least three functions: the restraint of the effect of sin, the foothold of particular grace, and the presupposition of the possibility of Christian cultural activity. The first two aspects are to be explained from the theological standpoint of the relationship between common grace and particular grace, and the last from a practical viewpoint—Christian public engagement.

Firstly, the function of common grace is related to sin and is directed against the continuing spread of the effect of sin in the work of creation. Common grace restores the original condition of Paradise and, without re-creating, reduces the Fall and its results to a minimum. In this sense, common grace is regarded as a purely negative instrument to halt the disintegrative effect of sin (Kooi 1999:97). This braking effect

belongs, in the relation with particular grace, to an independent purpose of common grace which as such cannot be placed in subservience to God's redeeming work. Wherever in the present dispensation particular grace has not yet entered, there common grace finds its own proper and true domain. In other words, Kuyper, by locating the domain of common grace outside of the regenerated heart, in the temporal and visible, and in the natural, makes the distinction between particular and common grace (Zuidema 1972). However, the independent purpose and function of common grace is not absolute but relative. This becomes clear when considering the second function of common grace.

Secondly, common grace serves to facilitate the development and fulfilment of particular grace on earth. How does common grace serve particular grace? Zuidema (1972:73-83) gives some answers to this question by summarising Kuyper's argument in his *De Gemeene Gratie*. The first significance of common grace for particular grace is the protecting and sustaining of the generation of humankind. 'To be born again' is possible only for those who are born and it is only owing to God's common grace that after the Fall 'to be born' is possible at all. Common grace is as such no less than the pre-condition for particular grace. There is another way Kuyper speaks of common grace as the basis, the groundwork, and the possibility of particular grace. For Kuyper, the church institution does not grow out of creation, nor does it stem from common grace and therefore must be a new creation of God's particular grace. However, the church institution does not form part of the spiritual and inner life of the regenerate; rather it is particular grace's visible instrument and also its manifestation in the visible, temporal domain of common grace. Therefore, the church institution cannot be without the assistance of common grace.

In this indirect manner, common grace serves the fulfilment of particular grace. Christian politics, for instance, is not as such 'Christian' in itself but it may be called 'Christian' inasmuch as it enables the institutional church to carry out its mission. Likewise there are many 'footholds' that serve particular grace in an indirect way such as a Christian family and marriage, a Christian society, a Christian economy, a Christian state, a Christian university, and a Christian art and literature. Such spheres that belong

to the domain of common grace may furnish particular grace with a 'foothold' in the face of the forces of chaos, nihilism, and Anti-Christ. In this sense, common grace is the ground for the possibility of particular grace.

Thirdly, the most decisive function of common grace is, for Kuyper, the foundation for the theory of culture and the theological rationale for public engagement. To be sure, the core of common grace lies in this last aspect. Common grace enables Kuyper to create a perspective in which all the fields of culture are not to be seen primarily as expressions of a hostile attitude to God, but rather principally as the effects of the unfolding of God's thought. It therefore follows that common grace supplies Christians with the material for fulfilling God's calling to be culturally formative and to fight the battle of the Lord in the world of culture. In other words, common grace can function as the platform on which all Christians' cultural tasks are to be acted out. Thus, the whole import of Kuyper's doctrine of common grace is, as Van Ruler (quoted by Zuidema 1972:57) maintains, 'to stimulate, as well as to justify, truly Christian action by God's people from out of the particular grace of regeneration'. Briefly, common grace is the prerequisite for the possibility of Christian cultural activity (Zuidema 1972:57-59; Kooi 1999:98; Bacote 2005:91-116).

At this point, we should take note that in Kuyper's mind the object of common grace as well as of particular grace is the glory of God, His Self-glorification. Each grace achieves this goal in its own proper way. Whilst particular grace glorifies God in the salvation of sinners, common grace proclaims the glory of God by bringing all creation to its destination, to its full unfolding and flowering, and by preserving it against the rule of the Devil. To put it differently, it is for the honour of God that through common grace all the potential lying concealed in culture and life can come to its fullest development. Accordingly, all knowledge and cultural development belonging to the domain of common grace could serve to enhance the honour of God, the glory of God.

The last aspect of the function of common grace shows us why Kuyperian thought is called neo-Calvinism. When developing the doctrine of common grace, Kuyper appeals

to Calvin. However, Kuyper's argument is not identical to that of Calvin.<sup>10</sup> Kuyper systematises the doctrine of common grace by making a sharp distinction between God's common grace to all people and His particular grace to believers. As a result, common grace has a different content, scope, purpose, and ground from that which can be ascribed to particular grace. By contrast, Calvin nowhere attempted to provide a systematic account of God's activity on behalf of an apostate humanity in terms of 'God's general grace', nor did he maintain an accurate distinction between such and particular grace. Whenever Calvin speaks of general grace, he refers to God's merciful disposition towards fallen humanity. Calvin does not intend to demarcate a realm of being into ontological categories: the realm of nature over against the supernatural realm of grace. Rather Calvin approaches the relational, religious categories, that is, sin as a broken relationship and grace as a restored relationship (Klapwijk 1991a:171-173; 1991b:135-138). Judging from this, it becomes clear that Kuyper attempts not only to make more explicit an element that is implicit in Calvin's thought but also to insist, with the intention of motivating Christian public engagement, on the centrality of this doctrine to the extent that one cannot identify Kuyper's argument with Calvin's.<sup>11</sup>

In brief, for Kuyper, common grace has its own functions and domain, which are distinguished from those of particular grace. Common grace restrains the effect of sin from spreading and preserves the life of creation. Furthermore, common grace serves as both condition and ground for particular grace by making it possible for the elect to be born, by giving visible, temporal forms to the instruments of particular grace, and by providing 'footholds'. Above all, Kuyper emphasises the centrality of common grace as the theological motive for encouraging Christian public engagement. In this regard, Kuyper went beyond Calvin and hence is delineated as neo-Calvinist, especially with regard to the concept of common grace.

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<sup>10</sup> As to the debate about discontinuity and continuity between Calvin's Calvinism and Dutch neo-Calvinism, see Bolt (2001:443-464).

<sup>11</sup> In the early twentieth century, the opposition to the doctrine of common grace arose and that caused the separation of the Protestant Reformed Churches (PRC) from the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). For more details, see Klapwijk (1991a:136).

### 3.2.3 Common grace and the Spirit's work in creation

According to Bacote (2005:112-116), the Spirit's work in creation can be understood as a 'missing link' in understanding Kuyper's doctrine of common grace and his public engagement theology. Even though Kuyper, in speculating on the doctrine of common grace, made his major concern to christology, one can find that his reflection on the Spirit's cosmic work in many points concurs with his description of the operation of common grace.<sup>12</sup> This section looks into Kuyper's view on the Spirit's cosmic work and reaffirms the point that Bacote makes—that the Spirit is the dynamic elements of common grace.

At the outset of his *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, Kuyper provides an alternative standpoint to the redemption-limited standpoint on the Spirit's work (*The Work of the Holy Spirit* = *TWHS*:8-12). From the standpoint of redemption, one can appreciate the Spirit's work involving the incarnation, the preparation of Scripture, the forming of man and the universe, the Lord's return, the final judgement, and the last cataclysm. However, this standpoint prevents us from our expanded spiritual recognition and confession—that the chief thing is not that the elect be fully saved but that God be justified in all His works and glorified through judgement. The Spirit's work is thus the vindication of the counsel of God with all that pertains from the creation and throughout the ages, unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and onward throughout eternity, both in heaven and in hell. In other words, Kuyper seeks to establish a standpoint quite different from that from which, for a long time, the Church has looked upon the Spirit's work and from which the Spirit's work refers to the life of grace only, and is confined to regeneration and sanctification (:44). This standpoint of the cosmic scope of the Spirit's work, which Kuyper calls 'superior view point', is correspondent with the cosmic redemption of Christ, as was mentioned earlier.

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<sup>12</sup> Kuyper reflected on the Spirit's work in his *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, which was published in 1888 and translated into English in 1900. It preceded Kuyper's work on common grace by several years.

From this cosmic perspective, Kuyper articulates his doctrine of the work of the Spirit. There are, by Kuyper, three aspects of the Spirit's activity in creation: the perfecting of destiny of creation, the animating principle of all life, and the restraint of sin.

Firstly, the Spirit's activity in creation is to lead all creation to its destiny through love (TWHS:18-21). Kuyper makes a general distinction between the work of the Spirit and that of the Father and of the Son: 'That in every work effected by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in common, the power *to bring forth* proceeds from the Father: the power *to arrange* from the Son, the power *to perfect* from the Holy Spirit' (:19). In the construction of the universe, the Father is the Royal source of the necessary materials and powers; and the Son as the Builder constructs all things according to the counsel of God. It is, however, the proper work of the Spirit 'to lead the creature to its destiny, to cause it to develop according to its nature, to make it perfect' (:21). Only through the cosmic work of the Spirit can the creation reach its perfection, its destiny.

The notion of telos or perfected destiny is the key to Kuyper's proposals on the universal work of the Spirit. This world is God's creation and is definitely created for a purpose that has been established by God's counsel. Accordingly, all creation, humanity included, exists for and reflects God and His glory. In this regard, not whether we will be saved and happy, but whether God will be honoured in the end should be the crucial question on a teleology of creation. Kuyper maintains that the glory of God will be honoured fully through the renewal of this world (Van Egmond 1999:93-94).

It is through and by love that the Spirit perfects and brings creation to its final goal. The being of the world reflects the very being of the Triune God. To discuss the inner being of God, one must begin with love. God's children, says Kuyper, can deprive deeper and richer conceptions of the divine Love from the Love-life of the Triune God whereby the Father, the Son, and the Spirit mutually love each other (TWHS:514-515). About the Spirit's dwelling in our hearts as love, Kuyper writes as follows (:520):

And this is the proper work of the Holy Spirit, that shall remain His forevermore. When there remains no more sin to be atoned for, nor any

unholiness to be sanctified, when all the elect shall jubilate before the throne, even then the Holy Spirit shall perform this divine work of keeping the Love of God actively dwelling in their hearts.

Accordingly, a central purpose of the Spirit's cosmic work is to dwell in creation through love and to promote the progress and development of the created order towards its proper telos (Bacote 2005:113).

Second, the Spirit is the animating principle of all life. The operations of the Spirit are marked by invisibility and imperceptibility. The Spirit works behind the visible world as an invisible background of life. Kuyper says as follows (*TWHS*:25-26):

From the unfathomable depths of all an inward, hidden principle works upward and outward. It shows in nature, much more in man and angel. And what is this quickening and animating principle but the Holy Spirit?...This inward, invisible something is God's direct touch. There is in us and in every creature a point where the living God touches us to uphold us; for nothing exists without being *upheld* by Almighty God from moment to moment. In the elect this point is their spiritual life; in the rational creature his rational consciousness; and in all creatures, whether rational or not, their life-principle. And as the Holy Spirit is the Person in the Holy Trinity whose office it is to effect this direct touch and fellowship with the creature in his inmost being, it is He who *dwells* in the hearts of the elect; who *animates* every rational being who sustains the *principle of life* in every creature [Kuyper's italics].

There is on earth no life, energy, law, atom, or element but the almighty and omnipresent God quickens and supports that life from moment to moment, causes that energy to work, and enforces that law. Such is the same in human, skill, gift, and talents. This animating work, though it is related with the Father and the Son as well, is particularly attributed to the Spirit for He touches the creature directly in its inward being. Kuyper states, 'It is this act of coming into immediate contact with every creature, animate or inanimate, organic or inorganic, rational or irrational, that, according to the profound conception of the Word of God, is performed not by the Father, nor by the

Son, but by the Holy Spirit' (*TWHS:43-47*). In a word, the Spirit's proper work in every creature consists, as the animating principle of life, in the quickening and sustaining of life with reference to not only its being and talents but also its salvation—eternal life.

The third aspect of the Spirit's operation in creation is the restraint of sin. Sin is a power to keep man and nature from their destiny. To lead the creature to its destiny, the Spirit must antagonise sin; His activity is to annihilate the power and effect of sin, and despite the opposition of sin, to cause the elect and the entire creation to reach their end. At this point, Kuyper maintains that redemption is not a new work added to, but identical with that of the Spirit. The Spirit undertakes to bring all things to their destiny either without the disturbance of sin or in spite of sin; first, by redemptive work, and then by restoring all things in heaven and on earth at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, Kuyper affirms that in spite of sin's disturbance the destiny of the universe to glorify God might be secured (*TWHS:24-25*).

As noted above, Kuyper's reflection on the Spirit's cosmic work in creation is implicitly linked to common grace. His description of the Spirit's role in creation has in common with his expounding of the function of common grace, 'by which God, maintaining the life of the world, relaxes the curse which rests upon it, arrests its process of corruption, and thus allows the untrammelled development of our life in which to glorify Himself as Creator' (*SL:56-57*). Within the relation of the Spirit and common grace, the Spirit is indisputably the agent of common grace and the underlying force for public theology.

Consequently, Kuyper seeks to discover and state the Spirit's operation anew both in redemption and in the economy of natural life, in re-creation and in creation. The Spirit brings all creation to its destiny, that is, the glory of God. The Spirit does so by keeping the love of God indwelling in the hearts of creation. In addition, the Spirit is the One who sustains and animates the principle of life in the very creature. To achieve His operation in the situation of the Fall, the Spirit restrains sin and restores what sin had corrupted and defiled. For Kuyper, only on the validity of the standpoint from which the cosmic scope of the Spirit's work is recognised, can we understand more properly the Spirit's work in redemption/re-creation as well.

### 3.2.4 The one omnipotent Worker in creation and re-creation

From Kuyper's view, what inference can we make of the relationship between the Spirit's work in creation and re-creation?

To answer this question, we need first to review his theological methodology of polar contrast between two realms: common grace and particular grace, earth and heaven, creation and re-creation, cultural activity and salvation of the soul, and so on. In particular, Kuyper refers to the work of the Son from two different aspects: the eternal Word as the mediator of creation, and Jesus Christ the incarnate Word as the mediator of redemption. To be more specific, Kuyper teaches that salvation history and the church, which is the domain of particular grace, are borne by Jesus Christ as the mediator of redemption. However, the creation-order unfolding in the broad stream of history and culture is the terrain of God's common grace that is originated in the eternal Son of God, Christ as the mediator of creation. Put it in another way, while common grace rests in Christ the Son of God as the mediator of creation, particular grace is rooted in Christ as the Incarnate Word, the mediator of redemption and thus these two never overlap or merge (Zuidema 1972:68). Considering this, one can assume reasonably that, in Kuyper's thought, the work of the *Spiritus Creator* as the agent of common grace is obviously distinguished from that of the *Spiritus Redemptor*.

This way of thinking is often criticised for 'the compartmentalising of theology' or 'a spiritualising dualism' (Klapwijk 1991a:173; Kooi 1999:99). According to Kuyper, the believer's being human has to do with God the Creator; his or her belonging to the church has to do with the work of the Son; and the situation of his or her personal life is grounded in the work of the Spirit. In addition, a person in the church is related to Christ as the agent of salvation; in the state and in culture, a person is in connection with Christ as the agent of creation (Kooi 1999:99). The same distinction takes place in his understanding of the work of the Triune God. In his *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, Kuyper makes a sharp distinction between the Spirit's work and that of the Father and the Son. For instance, it is evident in his speaking of gifts and talents: 'gifts and talents come from the Father; are disposed for each personality by the Son; and kindled in each

by the Holy Spirit by a spark from above' (*TWHS*:39-40). Here Kuyper's thinking seems to be confronted with the problem that he cannot answer the question of how Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are involved in each other's work.

Kuyper emphasises the importance of the distinction between the functions of the Triune God as the agent of creation, and those of Jesus Christ the incarnate Word, as the agent of redemption. According to Kuyper, the acts of God must not be entirely swallowed up in the act of redemption. The work of God is more than salvation. Whilst admitting that Jesus Christ has crucial significance, both in the experience of faith and in theology, Kuyper underlines that the centre of everything is God, and criticises strongly the traditions which attribute inappropriate centrality to the figure of Jesus Christ, such as the Moravian Brothers, Neo-Kohlbruggians and Lutherans (Van Egmond 1999:87). Based on this, it becomes plausible to critically assert that Kuyper's theology is 'dualistic' (Kooi 1999:99).

In Kuyper's doctrine of antithesis, however, we find another way of thinking, according to which the distinction between common grace to all and particular grace to believers is not worked out dualistically into a doctrine of two separate domains of life. Rather, an attempt is made to view all of created reality as an undivided whole, albeit damaged by sin, but at the same time accommodated within the light of God's gracious acts in Jesus Christ (Klapwijk 1991a:177). His emphasis on the notion of antithesis appears in his renowned *Lectures on Calvinism*, which were presented as the Stone Lectures at Princeton University in 1898. In the chapter of 'Calvinism and Science', Kuyper presents a program of Christian scientific activity. This program is more radical than what is articulated in his *De Gemeene Gratie*, because he speaks in terms of two types of people throughout: the regenerate and the unregenerate. They are not the same, nor can they be made to coincide (*SL* 1931:209). To Kuyper the difference between the unregenerate and the regenerate is striking. While the unregenerate mind believes the cosmos to be normal as it is, the regenerate mind knows that because of the intrusion of sin, the world is abnormal and unable to reach its goal except through regeneration. Thus, the antithesis in science is between the 'Normalists' and the 'Abnormalists', and 'the *normal* and the *abnormal* are two absolutely differing starting points, which have

nothing in common in their origin' (*SL* 1931:210, 204). In other words, Christians and non-Christians have different kinds of minds, and as a result, they perceive the entire universe differently and develop different approaches to science that reflect their different perspectives (Bacote 2005:82).

For this reason, Zuidema (1972:57) argues, 'common grace cannot be accepted without at the same time accepting the antithesis and the call to Christian action, action *pro Rege*, for Christ the King, action born of the grace of regeneration.' In other words, what Kuyper wants to draw from his doctrine of common grace is a means to pave the way for God's believing people to engage in the world and culture *in their own distinctive way*. It is not the world but God that common grace compels Christians to serve in everyday life. For Kuyper, this non-redemptive grace is given so that believers may appreciate the world God made and they may, 'in every domain, discover the treasures and develop the potencies hidden by God in nature and in human life' (*SL* 1931:59).

Therefore, we can draw two lines of inference about the relation between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator* from Kuyper's formulations. First of all, Kuyper, by his doctrine of common grace, gives much of his attention to the Spirit's work in creation. The Spirit as the dynamic agent of common grace works in creation and the telos of the Spirit's work is the honour of God's glory. However, as is recognised by the doctrine of antithesis, the Spirit's work in creation provides a basis and is the prerequisite for the Spirit's work in regeneration. Accordingly, the tension between the antithesis and common grace prevents us from concluding that the *Spiritus Redemptor* has been marginalised in Kuyper's thought.

More precisely, Kuyper intends to maintain the unity of the Spirit's work in natural and spiritual life, the realm of nature and that of grace (*TWHS*:46-47). For Kuyper, the Spirit, who in regeneration kindles the spark of eternal life, has already kindled and sustained the spark of natural life. In addition, the Spirit, who imparts unto the regenerate people the gifts necessary for sanctification and for appropriate response to His calling in the new sphere of life, has in the first creation endowed them with natural gifts and talents. Thus, for Kuyper it is quite logical and consonant that the work of the Spirit bears the

same character in both creation and re-creation. The Spirit, who vitalises life in that which is created by the Father and the Son, once more invigorates the innermost being of everyone who is called of the Father and redeemed by the Son. Again, the Spirit, who touches and animates the creature's being, enters into man's heart through regeneration, makes it His temple, and sanctifies it. Therefore, Kuyper pronounces as follows: 'however different the measures of operation and of energy, the Holy Spirit remains in creation and re-creation the one omnipotent Worker of all life and quickening, and is therefore worthy of all praise and adoration' (:47).

### **3.3 Jürgen Moltmann's view on the work of the Spirit**

#### **3.3.1 A social doctrine of the Trinity as starting point**

The doctrine of the Trinity is the framework and starting point of Moltmann's whole theology including a doctrine of creation and a pneumatology. Moltmann asserts that Western Christianity at large has developed a defective soteriology because it has a defective pneumatology. According to him, the root cause of this problem is a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of God (Wood 2000:54). Prior to suggesting an alternative model for a doctrine of Trinity, Moltmann criticises the Western doctrine of the Trinity for two reasons: its monotheistic conception and its favouring of the *filioque* clause.

Despite the development of the concept of the Trinity in the Western tradition which began with Tertullian's coining of the word *trinitas* and Augustine's more systematic development of *una substantia, tres personae*, the Western church's trinitarian doctrine has almost without exception a tendency to modalism whereby 'the doctrine of the Godhead's single substance has taken precedence, logically and epistemologically, over the doctrine of the Trinity' (Moltmann 1993d:190). For instance, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas saw the Trinity as a single subject with two 'processions' and thus assumed that the Trinity had a monarchical structure: the Father is the origin of the godhead of the Son and the Spirit. In consequence, this monarchical understanding of

the Trinity brought forth ‘the spiritual subjectivity of the human being’ assuming that the spiritual nature of the human being also has such a monarchical structure that one should interpret correspondingly the human soul as a subject of reason and will (:239). This tendency towards a monarchical concept of the Trinity has been rooted implicitly, yet deeply, in the Western Christianity and therefore the doctrine of the Trinity has been designed to secure and interpret God’s sovereignty in every direction.

For the same reason, Moltmann denounces Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity as a typically western pattern. Barth resorted to the Hegelian concept of God as Absolute Subject to define the nature of God’s oneness, and he consequently substituted ‘modes of being’ for the trinitarian persons (*CD* I/1,407). Barth, through fear of tritheism, featured the oneness of God—defined as a Person with self-consciousness—to such an extent that he avoided any possibility of ascribing personality to the trinitarian distinctions (Wood 2000:58). Barth, whose starting point was the recognition that God is Lord, put divine lordship before the Trinity, and used the doctrine of the Trinity to secure the sovereignty of God. Consequently, Barth presented the doctrine of the Trinity as Christian monotheism (Moltmann 1993c:140-143). In this way, ‘a Christian doctrine of the Trinity which is to be presented in the medium of the modern concept of God as absolute subject’ renounces the trinitarian concept of person and hence leads unintentionally but inescapably to ‘the disintegration of the doctrine of the Trinity in abstract monotheism’ (Moltmann 1993c:17-18)

In addition, Moltmann (1993c:178) believes that this monarchical tendency was aggravated by the unofficial introduction of the *filioque* clause into the Nicene Creed in the West, which finally led to the schism between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church in 1054. The defence and favour of the *filioque* clause by the Western theologians, contrary to the denial and rejection of it by the Eastern theologians, brought about a one-sided trinitarian doctrine in the West, and hindered the development of a trinitarian pneumatology. ‘With the *filioque*, the Spirit is once and for all put in third place in the Trinity, and subordinated to the Son’ and no independent personhood, understood as ‘God’s efficacious presence’, can be perceived in the Spirit over against the Father or the Son (Moltmann 1992:290-293).

About the problem of this monotheistic conception of the doctrine of the Trinity, Moltmann (1993d:1) says in connection with a doctrine of creation:

As long as God was thought of as the absolute subject, the world had to be viewed as the object of his creation, preservation and redemption. The more transcendent the conception of God became, the more immanent were the terms in which the world was interpreted. Through the monotheism of the absolute subject, God was increasingly stripped of his connection with the world, and the world was increasingly secularized. As a result, the human being since – he was God’s image on earth – had to see himself as the subject of cognition and will, and was bound to confront his world as its ruler. For it was only through his rule over the earth that he could correspond to his God, the Lord of the world. God is the Creator, Lord and owner of the world; and in the same way the human being had to endeavour to become the lord and owner of the earth. This was the idea behind the centralistic theologies, and the foundation of the hierarchical doctrines of sovereignty.

In other words, the Western understanding of the Trinity, marked by the terms ‘monotheistic’, ‘monarchical’, has resulted in a repressive cultural individualism and its concomitant social irresponsibility, and caused human being’s domination over and against nature/other humans, rather than participation in the life of community.

From the recognition of, and in an attempt to overcome these problems, Moltmann develops a social model of the Trinity, which is distinctive from ‘the trinity of substance’ and from ‘the trinity of subject’. The Western tradition begins with God’s unity and then goes on to ask about the trinity, whereas Moltmann begins in his social model with the trinity of the Persons and then to the unity. What he intends to overcome and to accomplish through a social doctrine of the Trinity is implied in this statement (Moltmann 1993d:2):

If we cease to understand God monotheistically as the one, absolute subject, but instead see him in a Trinitarian sense as the unity of the Father, the Son and the Spirit, we can then no longer, either, conceive his relationship to the

world he has created as a one-sided relationship of domination. We are bound to understand it as an intricate relationship of community – many-layered, many-faceted and at many levels. This is the fundamental idea behind non-hierarchical, decentralized, confederate theology.

This social model of the Trinity is based on the Scriptures testifying to the history of the Trinity's relations of fellowship, which are open to men and women, and open to the world. This scriptural trinitarian hermeneutics, superseding the subjective thinking of separation and isolation, bring us to a trinitarian thinking of relationships and communities. At this point, the reason why a doctrine of the Trinity is the premise of all Moltmann's theology becomes explicit: 'In this way it is not merely the Christian *doctrine* of the Trinity that we are trying to work out anew; our aim is to develop and practise trinitarian *thinking* as well' (Moltmann 1993c:19).

To formulate the mutual indwelling of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in the social doctrine of the Trinity, Moltmann takes the concept of *perichoresis* and deepens its meaning within his thought.

Beginning with the Cappadocian Fathers, the trinitarian relationships have been defined in terms of reciprocity and mutual interpenetration in the Eastern Church's understanding. *Perichoresis*, taken and reinterpreted primarily in a trinitarian sense by John of Damascus in the Seventh Century, is a summary of the Eastern Church's position on the Trinity at the time.<sup>13</sup> In contrast to the Western idea of divine substance, which minimises the personal differences, *perichoresis* grasps the circulatory character of the eternal divine life, causing Moltmann to adopt this concept in favour of the Eastern Church's notion. The trinitarian *perichoresis* is presented in this manner (Moltmann 1993c:175):

Precisely through the personal characteristics that distinguish them from one another, the Father, the Son and the Spirit dwell in one another and

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<sup>13</sup> *Perichoresis* contains a pictorial image. 'Peri' means 'around' and 'Choresis' means literally 'dancing'. With this term, we can visualise that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are like three dancers holding hands, dancing around together in harmonious, joyful freedom (Guthrie 1994:91).

communicate eternal life to one another. In the perichoresis, the very thing that divides them becomes that which binds them together. The 'circulation' of the eternal divine life becomes perfect through the fellowship and unity of the three different Persons in the eternal love....The doctrine of the perichoresis links together in a brilliant way the threeness and the unity, without reducing the threeness to the unity, or dissolving the unity in the threeness. The unity of the triunity lies in the eternal perichoresis of the trinitarian persons. Interpreted perichoretically, the trinitarian persons form their own unity by themselves in the circulation of the divine life.

In the aspect of the immanent Trinity, *perichoresis* is a concept for community without uniformity and personality without individualism. That is, 'in God there is no one-sided relationship of superiority and subordination, command and obedience, master and servant'; rather 'in the triune God is the mutuality and the reciprocity of love' (Moltmann 1993c:174; 1993d:16-17). This does not mean that Moltmann negates the Father as the eternal origin of the Son and the Spirit. He acknowledges 'the monarchy of the Father' in the eternal sense of the *constitution* of the Trinity, namely, 'the origin of the Godhead'. However, it has no validity within the eternal circulation of the divine life. In the perichoretic unity of the Trinity, the three persons are equal (Moltmann 1993c:175).

This mutual reciprocity and interdependence of the Triune God functions as the social model for understanding the meaning of the whole of human life and creation. Thus, the social implication of the perichoretic concept of the Trinity is that, just as there is mutuality, reciprocity, and equality among the persons of the Trinity, so presents a model for the world (Wood 2000:56).

Moltmann's social doctrine of the Trinity comes to serve as the starting point for the following doctrine of creation and pneumatology. It is apparently presented in his remarks about the starting point of the trinitarian doctrine of creation that is rooted in pneumatology, as follows (Moltmann 1993d:17):

Our starting point here is that all relationships which are analogous to God reflect the primal, reciprocal indwelling and mutual interpenetration of the trinitarian perichoresis: God *in* the world and the world *in* God; heaven and earth *in* the kingdom of God, pervaded by his glory; soul and body united *in* the life-giving Spirit to a human whole; woman and man *in* the kingdom of unconditional and unconditioned love, freed to be true and complete human beings [Moltmann's italics].

His perichoretic interpretation of the Trinity designates that the meaning of creation, reconciliation, and glorification is to take men and women, together with the whole of creation, into the perichoretic relationship of the Trinity. Given this, his social doctrine of the Trinity is obviously the foundation and starting point for, not only his doctrine of creation, but also his pneumatology.

### **3.3.2 The Spirit in a trinitarian doctrine of creation**

Moltmann develops a trinitarian doctrine of creation out of his social doctrine of the Trinity. His starting point is differentiated from Christian monotheism, which presupposes an antithetical relationship between God and the world, heaven and earth, soul and body, and man and woman. Instead, in Moltmann's doctrine of creation, the intra-trinitarian *perichoresis* plays an archetypal role for understanding the relation between God and creation. For Moltmann (1993c:157), the history of God's trinitarian relationships with creation, including human beings, corresponds to 'the eternal perichoresis of the Trinity'. 'The history of salvation is the history of the eternally living, triune God who draws us into and includes us in his eternal triune life with all the fullness of its relationships.' Since the relationship within the Trinity is one of mutual reciprocity and mutual interpenetration, the relation of God and creation must therefore be characterised in a same manner.

The Christian doctrine of creation takes its impress from the revelation of Christ and the experience of the Spirit. Moltmann (1993d:97-98) speaks of the notion of trinitarian creation as follows:

The One who sends the Son and the Spirit is the Creator – the Father. The One who gathers the world under his liberating lordship, and redeems it, is the Word of creation – the Son. The One who gives life to the world and allows it to participate in God’s eternal life is the creative Energy – the Spirit. The Father is the creating origin of creation, the Son its shaping origin, and the Spirit its life-giving origin.

Therefore, creation is a trinitarian process: God the Father creates through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Creation exists in the Spirit, is moulded by the Son, and is created by the Father. All things are created ‘*of God*’, formed ‘*through God*’, and exist ‘*in God*’ (Moltmann 1990:100).

However, the tradition of the Western church has long emphasised only the first aspect of the trinitarian creation, namely, the Father as the creative cause, in order to distinguish God the Creator from the world as God’s creation. God’s transcendence over creation has been overstressed, and relatively, God’s immanence or presence in creation underestimated. As a result, this tendency ‘has robbed nature of its divine mystery and abandoned it to desacralization through secularization’ (Moltmann 1990:100). This becomes clear when we grasp the fact that the ruthless conquest and exploitation of nature which fascinated Europe during modern European times found its appropriate religious legitimation in that ancient distinction between God and the world (Moltmann 1993d:13-14). It reveals that too much stress on divine transcendence over creation too easily leads to relentless ecological degradation. This is why Moltmann, by rediscovering and emphasising the immanence of the Creator in creation, attempts to bind together God’s transcendence and immanence. Therefore, Moltmann (:13-14) says, ‘The one-sided stress on God’s transcendence in relation to the world led to deism, as with Newton. The one-sided stress on God’s immanence in the world led to pantheism, as with Spinoza. The trinitarian concept of creation integrates the elements of truth in monotheism and pantheism.’ In other words, through his trinitarian doctrine of creation, Moltmann properly seeks a way to emphasise divine immanence without sacrificing transcendence. The trinitarian doctrine of creation does not start from an antithesis

between God and the world; it affirms that ‘the God who is transcendent in relation to the world, and the God who is immanent in that world are one and the same God’ (:15).

It is the concept of ‘panentheism’ that Moltmann employs both to describe more exactly the relationship between God and creation, and to preserve God’s transcendence and immanence.<sup>14</sup> With the concept of panentheism, Moltmann argues that God is in no way to be identified ontologically with the world in a pantheistic sense, nor is God’s relationship to be denied in terms of deism, as if God stands above the world in another realm separate from this realm. According to Wood (2000:59-60), Moltmann’s choice of the terms ‘panentheism’ is related to his purpose to demonstrate that God is the source of all reality, the agent in all reality, and the power active in all reality. In other words, panentheism reflects Moltmann’s theological intention on account of its ability to express the close proximity of the Creator to His creation. Thus, panentheism can be said to be a terminological substitution for monotheism which fails to convey the dynamic involvement of God in creation.

As to Moltmann’s panentheism, some critics raise the question, and even suspicion, of denial of God’s eternal Triune existence by identifying God’s essence with the world. However, while clearly stressing divine immanence, Moltmann is explicitly determined to preserve divine transcendence. He contends that *creation ex nihilo* indicates God’s self-distinction from the world—it entails that the world is not in itself divine, nor is it an emanation from God’s eternal being (Moltmann 1993d:72). Even in new creation when ‘the Creator’s distance from those he has created will be ended through his own indwelling in his creation’, the ontological difference between Creator and the creature will not disappear (:64).

His fundamental affirmation of a distinction between God and creation can be proved in a different way, namely, Moltmann (1993d:78-79) argues that process theology rejects

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<sup>14</sup> Panentheism was originally expounded centuries ago, in the sixth century, by the Hindu philosopher Ramanuja and is finding new popularity in the East and West (Juster 1995:167). Occupying a position midway between theism and pantheism, panentheism has been popularised through process theology as an attempt at reconciling the immanence of God with His transcendence. About panentheism and process theology, see Osborn (1993:66-68).

the notion of *creation ex nihilo* and therefore fails to preserve the fundamental distinction between Creator and creation. He also rejects Tillich's inclusion of God's essence within the world. Moltmann (:84) claims that 'by identifying the divine creativity with the divine life itself, Tillich is really abolishing God's self-differentiation from the world which he has created'. Thus, Moltmann clearly distinguishes an emphasis on the nearness of God to His creation from a panentheistic identification of God with the world. Over and against all other forms of panentheism, Moltmann insists on the fundamental distinction between Creator and creation. Moltmann's affirmation of God's involvement with the world is by no means an ontologically panentheistic involvement, but rather an involvement based on God's decision of love.

However, even though one could approve of Moltmann's clear manifestation of a dual emphasis on both God's transcendence and immanence, and of the fundamental distinction between God and creation, there still remains a controversial problem of whether his panentheistic view on the relation between God and the world sufficiently preserves God's transcendence, sovereignty, and complete freedom. Many criticisms of the problematic element in Moltmann's doctrine of creation have converged upon his failure to recognise and maintain God's freedom (Cooper 1990:155-156; Molnar 2002:198). Some theologians would harbour suspicion that Moltmann takes a disturbing turn towards the radical immanence of God within creation, even a sliding movement towards pantheism.<sup>15</sup> Given this, it cannot be denied that despite all Moltmann's appropriate intention and arduous endeavour, it is not evident that his panentheistic view actually allows him to preserve the otherness of God or affirm the integrity of creation (Bouma-Prediger 2004:80).

When considering the position taken by the being and work of the Spirit in Moltmann's doctrine of creation, it becomes clear that pneumatology is pivotal, to quote: 'without a pneumatological doctrine of creation there cannot be a Christian doctrine of creation at all'; and also 'without a perception of the Creator Spirit in the world there cannot be a

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<sup>15</sup> For instance, Roser Olsen and Stanley Grenz (1992:182-183) are anxious about Moltmann's panentheism due to his overemphasis on God's immanence within the world. Out of that deep anxiety, Olsen (1993:32) seriously poses the question: 'Is Moltmann the Evangelicals' ally?'

peaceful community of creation in which human being and nature share' (Moltmann 1993d:99). In the distinction to a monotheistic, Christological doctrine of creation which has hitherto been underlined in the Western theological tradition, Moltmann moves the trinitarian understanding of creation through developing and focusing on the third aspect, namely, creation in the Spirit. Citing Psalm 104, Moltmann (:9) notes the following regarding its biblical grounds:

According to the biblical traditions, all divine activity is pneumatic in its efficacy. It is always the Spirit who first brings the activity of the Father and the Son to its goal. It follows that the triune God also unremittingly breathes the Spirit into his creation. Everything that is, exists and lives in the unceasing inflow of the energies and potentialities of the cosmic Spirit. This means that we have to understand every created reality in terms of energy, grasping it as the realized potentiality of the divine Spirit. Through the energies and potentialities of the Spirit, the Creator is himself present in his creation. He does not merely confront it in his transcendence; entering into it, he is also immanent in it.

The Old Testament tells us that God is not merely the Creator of the world; He is also the Spirit of the universe. 'Through the powers and potentialities of the Spirit, the Creator indwells the creatures he has made, animates them, holds them in life, and leads them into the future of his kingdom' (Moltmann 1993d:14). Thus, Moltmann's doctrine of creation, as an ecological doctrine of creation, sees God's Spirit in all created beings and hence takes the indwelling divine Spirit of creation as its starting point.

In Moltmann's doctrine of creation, it is the powers and energies of the Spirit that bridge the difference between Creator and the creature—a difference which otherwise seems not to be bridged by any other relationship. The trinitarian doctrine of creation in the Spirit and of the Creator Spirit who indwells creation makes it possible to link God's immanence in the world with His transcendence in relation to it (Moltmann 1993c:113; 1993d:103). The Spirit preserves and leads living things and their communities beyond themselves. By the power of the Spirit, creation can be perceived to be a dynamic web

of interconnected processes, that is, relations of mutual reciprocity. God the Creator takes up His dwelling in His creation and in so doing makes it His home. It is through the work of the Spirit that the world is transformed and glorified into ‘the home of the Trinity’ (Moltmann 1993c:105). In this sense, the presence and the efficacy of the Spirit is the eschatological goal of creation and reconciliation.

In conclusion, in Moltmann’s doctrine of creation, the Spirit is not only the Creator Spirit of the world as its life-giving origin, but also the indwelling Creator and the cosmic Spirit. The Spirit, as the cosmic Spirit, works within creation in His distinctive ways: firstly, the Spirit is the principle of creativity on all levels of matter and life; secondly, the Spirit is the holistic principle and a common Spirit of creation; and thirdly, the Spirit is the principle of individuation (Moltmann 1993d:100).

### **3.3.3 The Spirit’s work in a holistic pneumatology**

Moltmann presents his pneumatological discussion on the foundation of the same logic of trinitarian thinking as a doctrine of creation. According to him (1992:x-xi), while *God in creation* is intended to apply to the wider trinitarian framework of the doctrine of God in the context of creation, his pneumatological work, *The Spirit of Life*, is designed to move in the same direction in the context of life’s enlivenment and its sanctification. His basic argument is that ‘the operations of God’s life-giving and life-affirming Spirit are universal and can be recognized in everything which ministers to life and resists its destruction’. Behind this pneumatological notion lies the most fundamental attitude, that is, ‘to affirm life’ as Moltmann (:xii) states:

So the essential thing is to affirm life – the life of other creatures – the life or other people – our own lives. If we do not, there will be no rebirth and no restoration of the life that is threatened. But anyone who really says ‘yes’ to life says ‘no’ to war. Anyone who really loves life says ‘no’ to poverty. So the people who truly affirm and love life take up the struggle against violence and injustice. They refuse to get used to it. They do not conform. They resist.

In other words, the foundations of Moltmann's pneumatology are not only his social doctrine of the Trinity but also 'the experience of affirmed and loved life'. That is why Moltmann uses as subtitle 'a universal affirmation' and he describes his work as 'a holistic pneumatology'.

Moltmann (1992:2-3) points out the Western church's limitations in discussion of the doctrine of the Spirit. Because of the fear of subjectivity and experience of the modern world, particularly nineteenth-century liberal pneumatology and modern Pentecostal pneumatology, the churches tended to confine the Spirit to the ecclesiastical institution for mediating grace, and to the preaching/proclamation of the Word. He also claims that the postulated, but false alternative proposed between divine revelation and human experience is largely due to the dialectical theology of Barth in which revelation and experience are in antithetical relation. This dialectical theology led to a permanent discontinuity between God's Spirit and the spirit of human beings. However, God's Spirit is more than merely the Being-revealed of God's revelation in human beings, and more than simply the finding of faith in the heart through the proclaimed Word. Rather than binding the experience of the Spirit solely to the Word, the various dimensions of experience must be taken into account seriously.

At this point, Moltmann seeks to reinstate the role of personal experience by correcting modern rationalistic concept of experience. According to the modern definition of experience, all truth and reality are reduced to active determinations of the human mind, humankind's rational reflection. Over and against this modern idea, Moltmann asserts that self-experience is neither absolute nor self-constituted; rather, there is a relationship which exists between human beings and their world. More precisely, human beings have a body within the larger framework of nature, which provides the basis for our primal and tacit experience of ourselves and our understanding of our world, which the modern concept of experience ignores. As an alternative to the modern concept of experience, Moltmann proposes a *multidimensional* concept of experience. He insists on the enlargement of the modern concept of experience to allow for potential experiences beyond consciousness, and for the self-determination of things (Wood 2000:53).

Based on the recognition that an experience of God restricted either to the word and the church or to immediate self-consciousness is not an experience of God as the lover of life, Moltmann (1992:37) suggests a holistic pneumatology, in which the Spirit is allied with life and its source rather than merely a matter of revelation. In other words, he insists that divine revelation and human experience belong together; they are not opposite of one another. His thesis is articulated in the following: 'The Holy Spirit is called "holy" because it sanctifies life and renews the face of the earth', which is antithetical to Barth's assertion that 'The Holy Spirit is holy because it is *eschatologically* present to the human spirit in God's revelation, and in no other way' (:6-8).

Here one could raise a critical question: 'How can God possibly be an object of experience?' 'Immanent transcendence' is Moltmann's terminology answering this question. His multidimensional concept of experience leads not to a Western spirituality of individualistic mysticism, but to a spirituality of 'immanent transcendence', to quote: 'every experience that happens to us can possess a transcendent inward side' (Moltmann 1992:34). The experience of God's Spirit encompasses as its constitutive element, not merely the human subject's experience of the self, but also the experience of the 'Thou', the experience of sociality, and the experience of nature. If God is in all things and all things in God, 'it is possible to experience God *in, with and beneath* each everyday experience of the world' (Moltmann 1992:34-38). Hence, as Kärkkäinen (2002:127) explicates, every experience of a creation of the Spirit is an experience of the Spirit itself; every true experience of the self also becomes an experience of the divine spirit of life in the human being. This possibility of perceiving God in all things and all things in God is grounded theologically on an understanding of the Spirit of God as the power of creation and the wellspring of life (Job 33:4; Psalms 104:29).

Accordingly, Moltmann puts forward a new paradigm of pneumatology, for what he calls 'a holistic pneumatology'. Moltmann (1992:37) states its implications in this way:

It must be holistic in at least two ways. On the one hand, it must comprehend human beings in their total being, soul and body, consciousness and the

unconscious, person and sociality, society and social institutions. On the other hand it must also embrace the wholeness of the community of creation, which is shared by human beings, the earth, and all other created beings and things.

In other words, Moltmann attempts to create a pneumatology that does not exclude any area of life, but rather incorporates all of the multidimensional experiences of human being and all creation.

### **3.3.4 The continuity between the *Spiritus sanctificans* and the *Spiritus vivificans***

How does Moltmann understand the relationship between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*? Moltmann (1992:9) mentions the importance of this problem in the following way:

But this brings us up against the question about the continuity and discontinuity of the redemptive and the newly creating Spirit on the one hand, and the creative and all-animating Spirit on the other—the relation between the *Spiritus sanctificans* and the *Spiritus vivificans*. This is not a special problem of pneumatology, however. It is the question about the unity of God's work in the creation, redemption and the sanctification of all things.

Referring to the new approaches to an ecological theology, cosmic christology, and the rediscovery of the body, Moltmann (1992:9) appreciates and agrees with their starting point—the Hebrew understanding of the Spirit as the Spirit of creation—, and their presupposition—that ‘the redeeming Spirit of Christ and the creative and life-giving Spirit of God are one and the same’. Thus, the recognition and experience of the work of the Spirit must go beyond the limits of the church to the rediscovery of the same Spirit in nature, in plants, in animals, and in the ecosystems of the earth.

However, this 'cosmic breadth of the divine Spirit' can be discovered only when the redemption-limited and individualistic pneumatological approaches are overcome (Moltmann 1992:8). Moltmann states as follows (:8):

In both Protestant and Catholic theology and devotion, there is a tendency to view the Holy Spirit solely as *the Spirit of redemption*. Its place is the church, and it gives men and women the assurance of the eternal blessedness of their souls. This redemptive Spirit is cut off both from bodily life and from the life of nature. It makes people turn away from 'this world' and hope for a better world beyond. They then seek and experience in the Spirit of Christ a power that is different from the divine energy of life, which according to the Old Testament ideas interpenetrates all the living....It would seem as if the Spirit of God is simply and solely the Spirit of the church, and the Spirit of faith. But this would restrict 'the fellowship of the Holy Spirit', and make it impossible for the church to communicate its experience of the Spirit to the world. Some theologians have discovered a new love for the charismatic movements; but this can also be an escape, a flight from the politics and ecology of the Spirit in the world of today.

Moltmann believes that there can be two reasons behind this undoubtedly individualistic, redemption-restricted pneumatology: 'the continuing Platonization of Christianity' and 'the far-reaching decision in favour of the *filioque*'. Firstly, the Platonic dualism of soul and body in the form of the Gnostic contempt for the body and its otherworldly longing for redemption, greatly influenced and facilitated Christianity's convergence with the Gnostic concepts of redemption, which was spiritualised. It consequently led to the replacement of 'the original Jewish, Christian vitality which lives from God's creative Spirit' with 'a spirituality more or less mildly hostile to the body, a spirituality non-sensuous, unworldly and non-political' (Moltmann 1992:90). In addition, Augustine, through the emphasis in his theology on 'God and the soul', provided the theological and anthropological basis for Western individualistic spirituality. Second, with the *filioque* clause, the Holy Spirit has been understood solely as 'the Spirit of Christ', and not at the same time as 'the Spirit of the Father'. In other words, as a result of the

radical discontinuity of redemption and creation, the Spirit of Christ becomes dissociated with the Spirit of the Father (Moltmann 1992:8; 1997:74-79).

In opposition to this redemption-limited view on the Spirit, Moltmann attempts to discover the cosmic breadth of God's Spirit with 'holistic pneumatology'. To do so, Moltmann (1993d:7) is determined to break the dual structure of 'creation and redemption' to which theological tradition had hitherto given preference. Furthermore, he seeks to expand the range of traditional pneumatological categories such as 'communion of the Holy Spirit', 'sanctification', and 'the gifts of the Spirit'.

Firstly, Moltmann radically expands the traditional notion of the 'communion of the Holy Spirit' to encompass the whole 'community of creation, from the most elementary particles to atoms to molecules to cells to living organisms to animals to human beings to communities of humanity' (Kärkkäinen 2002:128). According to Moltmann (1992:225), 'to form community is the life principle of created beings....Creation itself lives in the complexity of ever-richer communal relationships. That is why it is appropriate to talk about the community of creation, and to recognize the operation of the life-giving Spirit of God in the trend to relationship in created things.' All creatures come to life through the one and the same *ruach*, and hence they constitute the community of creation. To put it differently, any kind of community of creation is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. In a community of creation, we expand the relationships in which our identity is really experienced rather than surrendered. Moreover, only in the framework of the community of creation can human beings have their unique character and assume their own responsibility. Thus, if we believe in the community of creation through the life-giving Spirit of God, we discover the 'sympathy of all things', and make ourselves consciously a part of it (Moltmann 1992:42,255-259).

Secondly, Moltmann (1992:171-174) stretches out the implication of sanctification to several aspects that he calls 'sanctification today'. From Moltmann's comprehensive pneumatological perspective, 'sanctification today' means rediscovering the sanctity of life and the divine mystery of creation, and defending them from life's manipulation, the secularization of nature, and the destruction of the world through human violence. It

also denotes ‘reverence for life’, particularly for vulnerable life; the poor, the sick, the defenceless, and even the weaker plant and animal species threatened by extinction. In this sense, sanctification is the equivalent of ‘the renunciation of violence towards life’. Besides, sanctification must involve ‘the search for the harmonies and accords of life’. It is because life should be seen as intersecting circles: the soul in the body, the person in the community, the community in the sequence of generations, the generations of human beings in the shared house of the earth.

Thirdly, Moltmann speaks of the gifts of the Spirit, *charismata*, in a wide sense. Traditionally, the gifts of the Spirit have been operated within the confines of the church and individual piety. Moltmann insists that the Spirit gives spiritual gifts for service in the world (Kärkkäinen 2002:129). Moltmann says (1992:186): ‘If charismata are not given us so that we can flee from this world into a world of religious dreams, but if they are intended to witness to the liberating lordship of Christ in this world’s conflicts, then the charismatic movement must not become a non-political religion, let alone a depoliticized one.’ What is more, the gifts of the Spirit are not creations of the Spirit, for the Spirit Himself is poured out in the gifts. Hence, through the charismatic experience of the Spirit, we experience the reciprocal perichoresis of God and ourselves. It is a much more intimate communion than the community between Creator and the creature because ‘in the Holy Spirit the eternal God participates in our transitory life, and we participate in the eternal life of God’ (Moltmann 1992:195-196).

Through this expanded meaning of pneumatological categories, we can describe how we experience the being and work of the Spirit in a profound way. In the community of creation, we experience the Spirit as the Creator and the new Creator of all things. Out of the experience of the life sanctified and perceived as holy by the Spirit, we experience the Spirit as the life-giving Spirit—in Moltmann’s own terms (1992:179), as ‘our immanent power to live, our transcendent space for living’. In the charismatic experience, we experience the Spirit as the source of energy and the field of force.

### **3.4 Summary and conclusion**

In this chapter, I have looked into the theological notions of Kuyper and Moltmann regarding the work of the Spirit. As indicated by this survey, their views on the Spirit's work attach more emphasis to creation rather than to redemption.

Through his most influential doctrine of common grace, Kuyper attempts to set up the theological framework in which Christian social and cultural engagement is prompted and has its legitimate foundation. Although the whole of creation, including human nature, was perverted by the effect of sin, God holds, supports, and restores the world with His common grace. Within the world which God created, common grace functions not only to restrain the effect of sin, but also as the foothold of particular grace. Above all, common grace plays an important role as the theological rationale for Christian public engagement. The goal of all these functions of common grace is 'the glory of God'.

According to Kuyper's pneumatological reflection, the Spirit's activity in creation has three aspects corresponding to the functions of common grace: the perfecting of destiny of creation, the animating principle of all, and the restraint of sin. A central purpose of the Spirit's cosmic work is to dwell in creation and to promote the development of the created order toward its destiny.

The noteworthy point is that Kuyper's description of the cosmic Spirit's work in creation overlaps with that of common grace. From this we concluded that for Kuyper the Spirit is the agent of common grace and the underlying force for his public theology.

Judging from the examination described above, it is apparent that Kuyper's view on the Spirit's work is unmistakably creation-centred. One must not overlook the sense in which Kuyper strives to maintain the unity of the Spirit's work in the realm of nature and that of grace, as is implicitly revealed in the tension between his doctrines of antithesis and common grace. However, considering the centrality of the doctrine of common grace and corresponding emphasis on the activity of the cosmic Spirit, it is

quite legitimate to say that Kuyper pays much of his pneumatological attention to the Spirit's cosmic activity, namely, the Spirit's work in creation.

To understand Moltmann's view on the Spirit's work, we began with his social doctrine of the Trinity. With his perichoretic interpretation of the Trinity, Moltmann develops a model with which all relationships, including those involving God and creation, humanity and the world, reflect the reciprocal indwelling and mutual interpretation of the trinitarian perichoresis, and hence, 'God *in* the world and the world *in* God' (Moltmann 1993d:17).

This intra-trinitarian perichoresis serves as an archetype for understanding the relation between God and creation in Moltmann's doctrine of creation. Over and against the prevailing one-sided monotheistic divorce between Creator and creation, Moltmann attempts to restore God's immanence, which has been ignored so far. In so doing, Moltmann employs the concept of panentheism, from the viewpoint of which God the Creator indwells the creature He has made through the powers and potentialities of the Spirit. Therefore, in this sense, the Spirit is the ontological bond which bridges the difference between Creator and the creature. By virtue of the Spirit's bridging activity, creation can be perceived as comprising in relations of mutual reciprocity. The most decisive role of the Spirit is 'to make the whole creation the house of God' (Moltmann 1993d:xv). Thus it is indeed remarkable that in Moltmann's panentheism the indwelling of God in creation is possible only by the power of the Spirit.

With a holistic pneumatology which is suggested as an alternative to the Western deficient, one-sided pneumatology, Moltmann takes various dimensions of experience into pneumatological consideration. According to this, the Spirit has relation to life and its source. Every experience of a creation of the Spirit means an experience of the Spirit itself. The Spirit, as the power of creation and the wellspring of life, makes it possible to perceive God in all things and all things in God.

Moltmann's holistic pneumatology encompasses what has been ignored and alienated. It comprehends not only human beings in the totality of their being—soul and body,

person and sociality, but also the wholeness of the community of creation. Moltmann seeks to involve the whole creation in participation in the fellowship of the Spirit and admission into the Spirit's sanctifying and life-affirming work.

Drawing on insights of Moltmann, one can see the Spirit first and foremost as 'the life-giving Spirit', 'the source of energy and field of force'. The power and energy of the Spirit reaches beyond the limits of the church to the inclusion of plants, animals, and the ecosystems of the earth. In this evaluation of Moltmann's persistent affirmation of the Spirit as 'the source of life', which is certainly related with his concern for human liberation and our ecological crisis, we come to conclude that Moltmann's view on the Spirit's work is manifestly creation-centred.

As we have seen in the previous chapters, Reformed theologians have applied their greatest effort to solving the pneumatological tension between redemption and creation. Their pneumatological arguments give us valuable insight into how to deal with the tension between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, and at the same time spur us to move towards a vantage point from which to understand the Spirit's work more coherently and wholly. The next chapter will describe a search of significant foundations for a constructive pneumatology with which we could be enabled to comprehend the Spirit's activities in creation and redemption more adequately.

# CHAPTER 4 A CONSTRUCTIVE PNEUMATOLOGY: COSMIC, TRINITARIAN, AND REALISTIC PNEUMATOLOGY

## 4.1 Introduction

In chapter 2 and 3, I have examined the arguments of four major Reformed theologians—Calvin, Barth, Kuyper, and Moltmann—in terms of the work of the Spirit by means of placing them in categories of the redemption-centred and creation-centred pneumatology. Through the exploration of their thoughts, the conclusion is reached that, while the former two Reformed theologians paid attention to and laid particular emphasis on the work of the *Spiritus Redemptor*, the latter two developed their pneumatological reflection more emphatically on the Spirit's work in the world and creation, and thereby stressed the activity of the *Spiritus Creator*. In spite of the fact that both perspectives attempted to understand the unity of the Spirit's work in redemption and creation, it is obvious that their way of thinking in dealing with the tension between the redemptive and the creative work of the Spirit is different to a certain extent. The differences of focus, starting points, and method between these two distinctive perspectives could bring about very different applications and divergent conclusions in the Christian practice of life as well as in theology itself.

In this chapter, I will attempt to find an acceptable theological framework of thinking with which to approach the problem of the tension between the Spirit's work in redemption and in creation, and to understand the Spirit's activities more integrally. To carry out this task, three movements within the contemporary theological conversation will be followed—'cosmic', 'trinitarian', and 'realistic'—which I believe have very promising implications for the future of pneumatology.

To begin with, the possibility and necessity of cosmic pneumatology, particularly within the Reformed theological tradition, will be discussed. On the basis of the recognition that the most critical issue in cosmic pneumatology is *how we can understand the relationship between Christ and Spirit, christology and pneumatology*, which is in a

sense related with the issue of the *filioque*, I will try to find a significant clue to the solution in the notion of *the reciprocity of the Spirit and Christ*.

In its logical necessity, cosmic pneumatology is strongly engaged with trinitarian theology since, as McDonnell (1985:192) aptly points out, in any age trinitarian theology would bring with it a new awareness of the Spirit. Trinitarian pneumatology must be seen as a concomitant framework with cosmic pneumatology to understand the Spirit's work in such a way as not only to link it to the Son and redemption, but also directly to the Father and creation. Thus the enquiry will emphatically focus on doing pneumatology in a trinitarian mode, according to which the Spirit is to be regarded as a truly divine person and as a result, the Spirit's work in redemption and creation can be distinguished, but understood as the work of the Triune God. In particular, I will attend to the specific claims of contemporary trinitarian theology that seem to provide insightful implications for our shaping a constructive framework of pneumatology. The focus of our attention becomes the following issues: a reorientation to the concrete content of the economy of salvation, an emphasis on the concept of relationality both in the trinitarian life of God and in His relation with creation, and its practical thrust.

Lastly, I will explore Welker's realistic pneumatology which I believe provides very helpful implications for understanding the Spirit's work in the concrete context of our 'postmodern' life. Additionally, its new approach to, and emphasis on, the relevance of a biblical-theological orientation would shed light on how to deal with the dimension of our real experience. Using a realistic pneumatology, I will try to gain ground for an adequate pneumatological spirituality to affirm the Christian's participation in, and transformation of, the *real* world.

To be sure, the above-mentioned three movements are very extensive in their range of issues and ramifications—more particularly, trinitarian theology. For that reason, the discussion of this chapter cannot but be highly selective and restricted. I thus intend not to elucidate a thoroughgoing survey of the three movements, but to appropriate some of the more stimulating insights from current theological discussion, while hopefully avoiding significant pitfalls. I hope that this chapter can serve as a challenge to the

Korean church to pursue a more intelligible, satisfying framework towards understanding the work of the Spirit.

## **4.2 A cosmic pneumatology**

### **4.2.1 Cosmic pneumatology in Reformed theology**

From what we have seen in the previous chapters, we can identify some distinctive features of traditional Reformed pneumatology.

Firstly, Reformed theology has distinguished the Spirit's work in creation from that in redemption. This dialectical distinction emerged from the characteristic Reformation polemic against the scholastic continuum between creation and redemption, and it is Calvin's legacy to Reformed theology as a *Protestant* theology. In addition to this distinction between redemption and creation, and correspondingly between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, theological intention and the context of the age have had a great effect on the contour of pneumatological arguments. In the case of Calvin, although he certainly spoke of the Spirit's cosmic work, both his pastoral concern for spirituality and his thoroughly biblical method led him to give more emphasis on the *Spiritus Redemptor* and hence to soteriological pneumatology. A dialectical way of thinking left the problem to the successors of the Reformers. That is, the discontinuity rather than continuity of creation and redemption makes post-Reformation theologians less successful in developing an account of the world's continuing relationship with God the Creator, the *Spiritus Creator*. Here is a tension we ought to attend to in order to formulate pneumatology satisfactorily; the tension between the *Spiritus Redemptor* and the *Spiritus Creator*, between the Spirit of the Son and the Spirit of the Father.

Secondly, the Reformed tradition has been determined to decline turning pneumatology into anthropology. It has tried to distinguish thoroughly the divine Spirit and the human spirit, as we have observed in typical examples in the ideas of Calvin and Barth. Calvin's firm insistence on the absolute correlation of the Spirit and the Word was

closely associated with the context of his struggle against the subjectivism of the Spirit. This important feature of the Reformed tradition can be stated thus: ‘the canons of authenticity, and the measure of God’s presence, are objective and public, rather than subjective and experiential’ (Badcock 1997:95). This implies that the experience of the Spirit must come through the written and preached Word, and through the visible words of the sacraments. Hence, classical Reformed theology generally has an explicit tendency to link the activity of the Spirit strongly to the preaching and understanding of the Scriptures, as well as to the endowment of Christians with various gifts (Leith 1993:163). Frequently some have denounced this Reformed tendency, saying that while the Reformers protested against Roman Catholic Church’s ritualism and ecclesiasticism as a substitute for the Spirit, the same tendency to subordinate the Spirit occurred with the new supremacy given to the Scriptures.<sup>16</sup> The Reformed pneumatological inclination to confine the work of the Spirit to the Word and the Church eventually leads to a limited view on the Spirit’s activity in creation and to the delimitation of the Spirit’s freedom working beyond those limits—although this is not what Calvin intended in his emphasis on the correlation of the Spirit with the Word.

In line with this tradition, Barth completely differentiates his pneumatology from the tendency of liberal Protestantism in which the Spirit was psychologised and reduced to the human spirit. To avoid any hint of the anthropological grounds of subjectivism, Barth developed his pneumatology on the basis of the supra-naturalistic concept of the Triune God and maintained that the Spirit must be seen as the Spirit of Christ. To some theologians, Barth’s extreme pursuit of ‘against subjectivism’ seems to cause a problem of ‘a dualistic, supra-naturalistic bifurcation of God and the world’ and as a result, introduces a difficulty in understanding the Spirit’s universal work in creation. For example, the Dutch Reformed theologian Arnold A van Ruler (1989:xxxvi-vii), who was a sharp critic of Barth’s pneumatology, argued that, by concentrating all that is valuable in the person of Christ, Barth dismissed the significance of history and consequently devaluated the world as a mere stage on which the drama of the covenant

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<sup>16</sup> This tendency is related to some extent to the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, and accordingly to the principle of biblical infallibility, which, as a contradiction of the infallibility of the Pope, was defended and developed by later Protestantism (Jeanron 1991:34-36).

of grace is played out. Interestingly and ironically, Van Ruler imputed the emerging of secular and revolutionary theology in the sixties to Barth. That is, by failing clearly to distinguish salvation and creation, church and world, and by merging salvific and ontic reality into one Christocentric perspective, Barth paved the way for the particularity of grace disappearing into the universality of the world process.

In this sense, to do pneumatology in the Reformed tradition means that it must be done with adherence to the salient distinction between the divine Spirit and the human spirit, and at the same time in pursuit of affirming the significance of history.

Thirdly, no matter how distinctive the previous features may be, the most remarkable and important attribute of Reformed pneumatology is its awareness of the cosmic work of the Spirit, that is, cosmic pneumatology (Guthrie 1994:293-294; Bolt 1998:256; Kim 2003:174). In Reformed pneumatology, as Hesselink (1992:378) states, 'there is a greater appreciation, deeper understanding and more comprehensive and balanced presentation of the full power and work of the Holy Spirit than in any other tradition'. This implies that Reformed pneumatology recognises the work of the Spirit not merely in the spiritual life of individuals and in the church, sacraments, Scripture and preaching, but also in human history and creation. Calvin articulated his ideas of the Spirit's work from both a particular, soteriological perspective and a general, cosmic perspective. Although Calvin gave more weight to the redemptive work of the Spirit through practical concerns, he did not restrict the work of God's Spirit to particular grace, but instead affirmed a universal, common grace and the presence of the Spirit among all human beings indiscriminately. For Calvin, the Spirit's quickening, life-bestowing activity, which is not restricted to believers or the church, but extends to all of humanity and all creatures, is the proof of the Spirit's true divinity. Authentically, the Holy Spirit is Creator, Preserver, and Defender of the life of all God's creation and all God's creatures.

Calvin's cosmic pneumatology, which came to be the accepted Reformed tradition, has provided the motivation and inspiration for many pneumatological discussions made by

later Reformed theologians including Kuyper and Moltmann, as already noted in Chapter 3.

Based on the affirmation of both the cosmic redemption of Christ and the sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole cosmos, Kuyper insists from the viewpoint of the cosmic scope of the Spirit's work that the Spirit is the One who leads all creation to its destiny, the glory of God. Kuyper's pneumatological contribution to Reformed theology occurs at the point at which, by relating the work of the Spirit to art, culture, and science so thoroughly and innovatively, he rejects pietistic withdrawal from culture and thereby encourages Christians to respond God's calling to transform and serve the world, and to participate in social, political activity. In Kuyper's formulation, we can see how cosmic pneumatology in the Reformed tradition provides theological grounds for Christian public engagement in the world.

We can also regard Moltmann's 'holistic pneumatology' as a vision of cosmic pneumatology. Rejecting the dialectical method of theology for the reason that it leads to a permanent discontinuity between God's Spirit and the human spirit, Moltmann attempts to take the various dimensions of experience into pneumatological reflection. Moltmann stresses the role of experience in pneumatological reflection and approaches pneumatology from the historical understanding of reality. Throughout his whole theology, Moltmann endeavours to overcome the one-sidedness of the Western theology, and to integrate theological concepts which have been regarded as antithetical so far, namely, transcendence and immanence, God and the world, redemption and creation, revelation and experience, for example.

It is clear that Moltmann's pneumatological reflections are stimulating and quite helpful in certain respects, for instance, in providing insight into the direction a Christian ecological theology must go. In addition, his pneumatology has strength in terms of what has been pointed out as weakness in Reformed theology—Reformed pneumatology has no socio-political dimensions of liberation. Nevertheless, in several aspects Moltmann offers a breadth of concepts and categories that advance beyond the Reformed tradition: a panentheistic concept of God's relation to the world, a

perichoretic interpretation of the Trinity, the concept of the social and ecological implication of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the concept of the reciprocal *perichoresis* of God and us. Thus, one can say that there is a place for continuity and a place for discontinuity of the Reformed tradition within Moltmann's cosmic pneumatology.

#### **4.2.2 The need for a cosmic pneumatology**

Why should we rediscover and develop a cosmic pneumatology? What theological reasons compel us to describe the cosmic reality and the concomitant work of the Spirit?

##### **4.2.2.1 The complementarity of cosmic and soteriological pneumatology**

To do full justice to Reformed pneumatology, we need to complement the redemption-centred perspective. As is shown by our survey of Barth's pneumatological position, he defines the work of the Spirit as geared to making the objective event of revelation in Christ a subjective reality in the awakening, confirming, and establishing of Christian faith in the life of the church. However, the idea of Revealedness in Barth's pneumatology involves too limited a role of the Spirit in soteriology, and even in ecclesiology, and thus considers the role of the *Spiritus Creator* as only secondary. As a result, redemption-centred pneumatology seems to ignore the sustaining activity of the Spirit in creation, the movement from God to the world that takes place whether or not the world accepts it and people know or believe it (Badcock 1997:180-181).

With relevance to ethics and spirituality, redemption-limited pneumatology inevitably gives rise to cultural withdrawal, otherworldly spirituality, and the avoidance of all forms of social, political engagement with the world. The redemptive Spirit is, as Moltmann (1992:8) states, cut off both from bodily life and from the life of nature, and thus makes people turn away from this world and hope for a better world beyond. This effect is in part caused by a tendency to defend tenaciously the doctrine of the sinfulness of man and the world, and to view with suspicion every secular activity that attempts to overcome or alleviate the weakness of humanity. Consequently, it leads to politically and socially conservative attitudes that are apt to be threatened by the development of

psychoanalysis, social work, and political programs for the improvement of human life (Richardson 1967:158). Furthermore, an imbalanced redemption-limited viewpoint of the Spirit's work can lead to 'evangelical Gnostic sectarianism'.

In addition, from the perspective of the teleology of creation, redemption-limited pneumatology must be complemented by cosmic pneumatology. Kuyper maintains that the purpose of the Spirit's activity involves more than salvation or redemption. The world, which is not the result of an accident but God's creation, has its destiny. For Kuyper, the destiny of creation is to honour the glory of God fully, and the distinct activity of the Spirit is 'to lead the creature to its destiny' (*TWHS* 18-21). This teleological insight is formulated in the work of Herbert Richardson. Richardson (1967:156-160) argues that the primary purpose of God in the incarnation of the Son and the indwelling of the Spirit is *sanctification*, which means the ordering of all things to the super-ordinate purpose of the Triune God's own honour and glory, rather than redemption. The primary reason for the incarnation of the Son and the indwelling of the Spirit must be sought in something essential to the life of God Himself rather than in man's need for redemption; in sanctification of the world rather than in the redemption of humanity. To put it in another way, God created the world for His own sake and not primarily for ours; God created the world to enter into it and to make it holy by His personal presence; thus, Christ's incarnation and the Spirit's indwelling are primarily fulfilments of this purpose of God in creation. Therefore, if Christ and the Spirit are fully God and their work can be no less than God's work in creation, then the primary work of Christ and the Spirit must be seen as more than redemption. The scope of the Spirit's work must be more than redemptive, since it must be equivalent to God's work in creation (Goot 1989:36).

With this promising teleological perspective, we can understand the Spirit's work in redemption and creation in more integral way. As Kuyper and Richardson state definitely, the object of both activities is the same—the glory of God. We can thus see the Spirit's creative work as the groundwork and possibility of the Spirit's redemptive work. Conversely, we can also understand and see the redemptive work of the Spirit as the meaning of creation. That is why Calvin sees the universe as created *ex nihilo* to be

the *theatrum gloriae Dei*, in which we may behold the Creator's glory (*Institutes* 1.6.2; 1.14.20; 2.6.1; 3.9.2). In the creation imprisoned by sin and evil, God's promise to recover the glory of God embraces not only the redemption of human beings in their conversion to God from sin, but also a new created cosmos which includes a changed natural order. In conclusion, the Spirit's work in redemption and creation must be understood to be intimately interrelated, and therefore we need both soteriological and cosmic approaches to pneumatology in their complementary relationship.

#### **4.2.2.2 Givens from the biblical materials**

In addition to spiritual and teleological reasons, the rationale for cosmic pneumatology to be corrective to the redemption-limited pneumatology can be found in biblical-theological materials. The New Testament is relatively silent about the cosmic work of the Spirit. There are no cosmic pneumatological passages in the New Testament corresponding to cosmic Christological passages such as Colossians 1:15-20 or John 1:1-18.<sup>17</sup> The Swiss Reformed theologian Eduard Schweizer (1978:67) gives a plausible explanation with regard to this paucity of reference to creation and the Spirit's work in creation within the New Testament: since the Old Testament's belief in God as Creator of heaven and earth is presupposed and unquestioned, the New Testament community does not deny the work of the Creator-Spirit throughout the universe. Whatever elucidation may be given, it is evident that cosmic pneumatological texts depend more or less on Old Testament passages such as Genesis 1:2, 2:7, Job 26:13, 33:4, Psalm 104:26-30.<sup>18</sup>

However, it is also noteworthy that, not only immediate pneumatological passages, but also important biblical themes—holiness, Sabbath rest, tabernacle and temple as the dwelling of God with us, and glory—should also be taken into account in cosmic pneumatology. Moltmann's Sabbath doctrine of creation is an example of this broad

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<sup>17</sup> For example, Romans 8:22-23, often used in the creation-centred approach, connects the redemption of humanity with the liberation of the whole creation. However, in this passage, the Spirit is not said to be at work in creation, rather at work in believers (Schweizer 1989:408).

<sup>18</sup> In addition, there are Exodus 31:2-11; 35:30-35 speaking of the gifting of artisans such as Bezalel and Oholiab, and Judges 3:10; 11:39; 14:6,19 referring to the anointing of charismatic judges such as Othniel, Jophthah, and Samson.

biblical-theological theme for cosmic pneumatology. Moltmann (1993d:5-7) maintains that, according to the biblical traditions, creation is aligned towards its redemption from the very beginning, for the creation of the world points forward to the Sabbath. Sabbath is a sacred anticipation of the world's redemption. It is the Sabbath that completes and crowns creation. The creative God comes to His goal only in His Sabbath. That is why Christians celebrate the first day of the week as the feast of the resurrection; first day of the new creation; the first day of the Christian Sabbath.

Moreover, we can infer cosmic implications from scriptural references to the Holy Spirit's particular work as the Pentecostal Spirit of Jesus. Philip J Rosato (1990) draws, as a theological basis of his argument that the church must implore the Holy Spirit on behalf of the renewal of the entire world, the biblical designations of the cosmic mission of the Spirit from various New Testaments passages. According to Rosato, there are four specific categories of cosmic pneumatological implications. *The Spirit of truth* (John 14:17) renews not only the faith of Christians but also the intellectual quest of humanity in general. *The Spirit as Unifier* (1 Corinthians 12:13)—who brings believers in union with Christ and with each other in the body of Christ—promotes all human solidarity and community, and thus extends the divine love to all humanity. The Spirit who anointed Jesus to bring salvation to the poor (Matthew 3:15, Luke 4) is the *Spiritus Liberator* in all social and political movements seeking justice for the oppressed (Romans 8:9-11). Finally, the Holy Spirit as *the Vivifier and Consummator*, who is the divine source and guarantee of Christians' eschatological hope (Ephesians 4:4, 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:17, Galatians 6:15), is also the source of all creation's hope and expectation (Romans 8:23).

Taking into consideration these relevant biblical themes and their cosmic implications, as well as other more immediate passages, we can derive a plentiful source for cosmic pneumatology from biblical materials.

#### **4.2.2.3 The request of the trinitarian perspective**

Drawing renewed theological interest, the doctrine of the Trinity has recently become the central point of theological discussion. Certainly, pneumatology seems to be associated with this revival of trinitarian theology. One of the various accounts for why modern theology has shied away from the Trinity could be the lack of adequate view of the Holy Spirit in relationship to the Trinity.

Traditionally, Western trinitarian thought, established principally upon Augustine and Aquinas, envisages the Trinity as the Father begetting the Son; and the Holy Spirit, as their communal love, proceeding then from the Father and the Son. In terms of pure relations, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit subsist as distinct persons or subjects within the one being of God. These relations establish their distinct personalities or subjectivities, and also their oneness of being. The Father is the Father for He begets the Son and so subsists only in relation to the Son. Likewise, the Son is the Son because He is begotten and so subsists only in relation to the Father. The Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit because He proceeds from the Father as His Love for the Son, and in turn proceeds from the Son as His Love for the Father and so subsists only in relation to both (Weinandy 1995:6-7).

This conception of the Trinity, forged as they are from biblical revelation and the conciliar tradition, is the fruit of centuries of theological thought and controversy. It is not without defect, however. The weakness of the Western tradition of the Trinity lies in the inadequate, even flawed, conception of the role or function of the Holy Spirit within the trinitarian life.

Firstly, Western theology has not ascribed to the Holy Spirit a function sufficient to justify our calling Him God in person. Rather, it has attempted to ascribe such a divine function to the work of Christ. In general, the thorough theological reflection given to Christological doctrines in both the Patristic and modern eras do not have a pneumatological counterpart. The mission of the Spirit has been looked upon as secondary and supplementary to that of Christ. Even when Western theologians did eventually turn their attention to the Spirit, they did so with a specific *Logos* logic

(McDonnell 1985:194).<sup>19</sup> This tendency of ‘the dominance of christology over pneumatology’ sometimes makes the Spirit appear to be little more than an appendage of Christ.

Secondly, in the Western tradition especially from Augustine, the relation of the Spirit to the Father and the Son has been considered as a mutual communion of both and this tends to depersonalize the Spirit, making Him less than Father and Son. The Spirit is merely the Love or Gift shared by the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit as the Love between the Father and the Son does not play an active role, and thus appears less clearly as an acting subject. He has no subjective depth because He has no defining activity as a person. Furthermore, there appears a marked tendency to deny that the Spirit is a person in the same sense that the Father and the Son are persons. For instance, the Dutch Reformed theologian Hendrikus Berkhof (1964:116) says, ‘The Spirit is a Person because he is God acting as a Person. However, we cannot say that the Spirit is a Person distinct from God the Father. He is a Person in relation to us, not in relation to God; for he is the personal God himself in relation to us.’ In order to avoid tritheism and to reclaim the unity of God, Berkhof radically breaks with the trinitarian tradition by repudiating the notion of ‘the personality of the Spirit’. Even, the Anglican theologian Geoffrey Lampe (1977:34-60) rejects the trinitarian conception of the Spirit and argues that the Spirit is to be seen as merely a bridge-concept, a power that mediates between the transcendent God and His creation. Similarly, throughout western Christianity it has been common to define the Spirit in impersonal ways such as a power, an energy, an activity, a bond, a relation, and so forth. In other words, Western theology, despite its formal confession that God is Triune, has for the most part been binitarian functionally and theoretically: functionally, it has been concerned more with the Father and the Son than with the Holy Spirit; theoretically, it has developed the *filioque* doctrine, which upgrades christology by downgrading pneumatology (Richardson 1967:149-151).

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<sup>19</sup> K McDonnell (1985:196-200) gives a brief historical note about how the fourth-century theologians struggled to establish the function, and particularly the divinity, of the Holy Spirit within the prevailing framework of Christological logic. For the shape of Patristic pneumatology, see Badcock (1997:35-62).

From this, it follows that cosmic pneumatology must be established from a trinitarian perspective. It is also legitimate to assert that trinitarian theology necessitates cosmic pneumatology as well as redemptive pneumatology. If the Spirit is to be considered a truly divine person in the Trinity, it will follow that the Spirit's work in creation as the Spirit of the Father can be understood as much as His work in redemption as the Spirit of the Son.

In conclusion, it is unequivocally necessary to establish a proper cosmic pneumatology in Reformed theology. From the vantage point of Christian ethics, and teleologically, cosmic pneumatology might make amends for the weakness of redemption-limited pneumatology; from a vantage point of biblical-theology, it reflects fully on scriptural teaching on the Spirit; and dogmatically, it corresponds with the trinitarian assertion of the unity of Father and Spirit in their reality and deity.

### **4.2.3 The reciprocal relationship between the Spirit and Christ**

As pointed out above, if the work of the Spirit is identified with that of Christ and accordingly understood merely as redemptive, there would be no room for cosmic pneumatology. Therefore, to lay the foundation of cosmic pneumatology we need to rectify the tendency to subordinate pneumatology to christology, the tendency to view pneumatology with Christological logic. Here, we are compelled to answer the question: How can we understand the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, or between pneumatology and christology?

#### **4.2.3.1 The issue of the *filioque* clause**

The problem of the Western doctrine expressed as the credal *filioque* clause has been posed afresh because of a widespread interest in trinitarian theology and through the new ecumenical climate of recent years.<sup>20</sup> It is mandatory to look into the problem of

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<sup>20</sup> The word *filioque*—Latin meaning ‘and from the Son’—was added to the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed by the Third Council of Toledo in 589: *Credo in Spiritum Sanctum qui ex patre filioque procedit* (‘I believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and from the Son’). The clause refers to the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son (ME 2004).

the *filioque* clause in our examination of trinitarian cosmic pneumatology, for it is the point of entry into a wider discussion of the relation of the Spirit to Jesus Christ, and indeed into the whole of trinitarian theology.

Ever since the encounter of Western theology with Eastern Orthodoxy, the issue of the *filioque* clause has exclusively been focused on as the doctrinal difference that led to different forms of theology, liturgical practice, spirituality, and, particularly and more decisively, different perspectives of Eastern and Western views on the Trinity. Eastern Orthodox theologians have maintained a whole range of distortions and imbalances which they claim to detect in Western theology, and which they believe to be connected with the *filioque* clause. Heron (1981:113-114) summarises those criticisms as follows:

*In the doctrine of the Trinity*, a tendency towards monistic, indeed Sabellian, thinking, in which the distinct hypostases of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are dissolved into an (effectively undifferentiated) “Godhead”, with the consequent displacement of a trinitarian by a unitarian view of God himself.... *In relation to christology*, a subordination of the Holy Spirit to the person of Jesus Christ which tends towards a “depersonalizing” of the Spirit, a reduction of him to a mere “power” flowing from Christ, and so loses sight of his sovereign freedom and initiative as the Spirit who, like the Word, is one of what Irenaeus called “the two hands of God”.... *In soteriology*, a similar downgrading of the Holy Spirit, enfeebling the sense of his creative and restoring energy, his activity in the incarnation, life and resurrection of Jesus, and his work as the divine restorer of the cosmos. Salvation is thus narrowed down to the event of the cross, seen as standing in total isolation, and interpreted simply as a sacrifice, a punishment or an example, and to the “benefits” flowing from it, and “Christomonism” obscures the action of the whole Trinity in the work of redemption. *In ecclesiology*, an unbalanced emphasis on the “objective” rather than the “subjective”, on the “given” rather than on the “yet to be received”, on established and settled authority, whether of Church or of Bible, rather than on creative freedom in the Spirit, on the past rather than the future, and even on rational understanding, focused upon the Word made flesh, rather than upon personal engagement in the living

pilgrimage of faith, hope and love in the power of the transforming Spirit. This imbalance, it is further argued, provokes its natural reaction in the opposite direction: hence arises the excessive subjectivism of much western Christianity, especially in Protestantism generally. Thus the *filioque* effectively runs out into an *ecclesiaeque* or an *homineque*, each equally, though in different ways, symptomatic of the lack of an adequate pneumatology.

The weakness of the *filioque* that Orthodox theologians fear is clear: it might lead Christians both ‘to depersonalize’ and ‘to subordinate’ the Holy Spirit. Owing to its tendency to erect safeguards and channels to control, monopolise, and mediate the Spirit, the Western Church itself becomes hardened in authoritarian institutionalism (Vischer 1981:17-18; Cox Jr 2006:94). In other words, the criticism of Western trinitarianism by Eastern Orthodox theologians can be encapsulated in this way: the Western view of the Trinity built on the *filioque* jeopardises the full equality of the third person and leads to a wholly problematical Christomonism in theology, spirituality and in the understanding of the church.

However, before appropriating such criticism, we must take serious note of the strength of the *filioque* concept, particularly in the Western tradition. It reminds us that the Spirit is not an undefined divine force, but is characterised by His being the Spirit of Christ. It protects us against the vogue of certain spiritualities that detach the Spirit from Christ, and functions as a barrier that blocks the road to any kind of access to the Father risking dismissal of the one mediator, Jesus Christ. In other words, the *filioque* clause can be seen as ‘a necessary bulwark against the dangers of christologically uncontrolled “charismatic enthusiasm”’ (Vischer 1981:17; Houston 2005:142). Furthermore, since in Western theology the processions are the sole grounds of the personal intra-trinitarian relations, it has to be through the *filioque* concept. Within the terms of Western theology, the Eastern doctrine of the procession of the Spirit from the Father alone would mean that the Spirit has no relation to the Son, or vice versa (Badcock 1997:245-246). This is why Barth advocates and adopts the Western *filioque* (CD I/1,549-557). For Barth, the *filioque* appears not only defensible, but actually required in order fully to articulate the bond between the Son and the Holy Spirit, and through it, the integrity

of the Trinity (Heron 1981:111-112). Barth, using the *filioque* clause, describes the Spirit as the power of the risen Christ, but, as Heron (1983:127) points out, he does not go so far as to recognise that 'Jesus is not only the giver but also the *receiver* of the Spirit'. In other words, the *filioque* clause, in spite of its ability to express the bond of the Spirit with Christ, is disposed to fail in depicting a distinctive person of the Spirit, and thus fails to produce a dynamic doctrine of the Spirit.

As seen above, through the controversy of the *filioque* clause, the distinctive person and work of the Spirit comes to the fore, and the relation between the Spirit and Christ is brought into focus in theological discussion of pneumatology as well as of christology.

#### **4.2.3.2 Structural differences between pneumatology and christology**

Van Ruler's theological insight for 'structural differences between the Christological and pneumatological perspectives' could be useful and relevant to reflection on the relationship between christology and pneumatology.<sup>21</sup> According to Van Ruler (1989:27-46), pneumatological dogma has its own distinct structure in comparison with Christological dogma. For this argument, he describes several structural differences which can be observed between the perspectives of pneumatology and christology, and then claims that 'whenever one considers Christian salvation...from a pneumatological perspective, one must deal with different laws and apply different rules than when one considers it from a christological perspectives' (:28-29).

Firstly, there is a structural difference between the Christological category of *assumption* and the pneumatological category of *adoption*. Whereas the human nature is assumed by the *Logos* in the incarnation and is taken up in the unity of His person, the Spirit, by adoption, indwells the human person, yet as two distinct realities. Secondly, there is a structural difference between *substitution* in christology and *reciprocity* in pneumatology. While Christ's messiahship can be described as substitutionary, for it

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<sup>21</sup> Noting that Van Ruler's focus is primarily soteriological, Bacote (2005:118-133) attempts to find a constructive approach from Van Ruler's theological reflection applicable to the Spirit's work in creation and common grace, and thus excludes some aspects. Within our discussion, it seems to be adequate and sufficient to follow Bacote's selection. For full aspects of structural differences, see Van Ruler (1989:27-46).

takes the place of sinners, the Spirit works not only ‘with’ but also ‘together with’ us reciprocally. Thus, in reciprocity the Spirit’s activity puts the activity of humans to work rather than replaces it (Bacote 2005:121). Thirdly, the *eph hapax* (once for all) of Christ’s atonement is distinguished from the *eph hapax* of the outpouring of the Spirit in that the poured-out Spirit remains dwelling on earth after Pentecost. Fourthly, the continual immanence of the Spirit leads directly to another structural difference, namely, the idea of indwelling. The concept of *indwelling*, which is unacceptable to christology, pneumatologically means that ‘God the Spirit, the triune God in the mode of the Spirit, dwells in and with us’. Fifthly, a structural difference occurs at the category of *perfection or infallibility*. In the context of christology, one must speak in a perfectionist manner because Jesus is an all-sufficient Saviour. In the context of pneumatology, however, perfectionism is a life-threatening heresy. Since what is typical about the work of the Spirit is to incorporate humanity, ‘perfection and imperfection’/‘infallibility and fallibility’ do not exclude each other. Lastly, while christology focuses on Christ and the salvation centred in Him, pneumatology is oriented to the eternal kingdom and its glory. For this reason, Van Ruler (1989:46) argues that pneumatology needs to be understood much more from the eschatological point of view than it does from the viewpoint of christology.

Van Ruler’s argument for the structural difference of pneumatology from christology shows why pneumatology must not be seen only from the logic of christology. Such categories as adoption, reciprocity, *eph hapax* of continual immanence, indwelling, imperfection, and eschatological orientation shed light on our understanding of the Spirit’s work in creation, and by so doing could be helpful for shaping a cosmic pneumatology. It also calls for the need for a trinitarian understanding of the Spirit’s work, not only in redemption but also in creation through establishing the congruent relationship between pneumatology and christology.

#### **4.2.3.3 The reciprocity of the Spirit and Christ**

As we noted above, pneumatology and christology are distinguished from each other in their logic and structure. However, alongside this distinction of pneumatology and

christology, there is a radical relation of the one to the other, that is, 'the reciprocity of the Spirit and Christ'. In the contemporary theological context, of ultimate importance is a theology of the mutuality of the Spirit and Christ in the economy and in the Trinity. For our discussion of cosmic pneumatology, it provides key suggestions for a new approach to the work of the Spirit in relation with Christ. It also presents, in respect to the ecumenical movement, a theological grounds for the diversity of the different theological traditions, for example, Eastern detachment of pneumatology from Christological control, and Western subordination of pneumatology to christology. In this sense, it must be seen to be of central importance to the ecumenical enterprise, and also be considered an appropriate approach to the issue of the *filioque* clause (Vischer 1981).

The starting point of this concept, the *reciprocity*, is the diversity of the biblical witness, which presents the mission of Christ as dependent upon the work of the Spirit and which at the same time presents the mission of the Spirit as dependent upon the work of Christ. In the New Testament, the Spirit appears both as the One who rests upon Jesus and who fills Him in His humanity, and as the One whom Jesus promises to send us from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father (John 15:26). The Spirit therefore does not have an action separate from that of Christ Himself. Luke also has this reciprocity of Spirit and Son (Luke 24:49; Acts 2:33). In Pauline theology, the reciprocity or mutuality expressed in 'Lord' and 'Spirit' becomes almost interchangeable (Romans 12:5, 11; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 3:17, 18). According to Ernst Käsemann (1980:221-222), 'a decisive feature and perhaps even an original insight of Pauline theology' is this reciprocity of pneumatology and christology. Thus, in Pauline theology 'being in the Spirit' and 'being in Christ' mutually interpret each other. The formula 'through Christ in the Spirit' means that the mission of the Son is operative and effective only in that of the Spirit. In addition, the Spirit acts in us so that Christ may be our life (Colossians 3:4), so that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:12). The Spirit, who proceeds from the Father, is also therefore the Spirit of Jesus Christ Himself (Romans 8:9; Philippians 1:19) who rests in Jesus (Luke 3:22, John 1:32-33), in whom alone we can confess Jesus as Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3), the Spirit of the Son (Galatians 4:6). Consequently, throughout various passages in the

New Testament, we can find a full and constant reciprocity of the incarnate Word and the Holy Spirit (Vischer 1981:8-9).

According to Killian McDonnell (1985:210-212), the two distinct invisible missions of Christ and Spirit must, and can, be seen as ‘coextensive’ by way of this concept of ‘reciprocity’. Both missions go out from the Father and lead to the Father, and thus both missions are coextensive. The mission of Christ is operative and effective only in the mission of the Spirit. In this sense, the Spirit can be said to be ‘the point of entry’ into the Christological and trinitarian mysteries, into history and the Church. To put it in hermeneutical terms, pneumatology is the universal horizon determining the interpretation of all reality, and the hermeneutical principle both for the interpretation of christology and the Trinity, and for the interpretation of history and ecclesiology.

Within the trinitarian perspective built on the reciprocity of the Spirit and Christ, cosmic pneumatology neither threatens nor replaces christology. In the Christian life, cosmic pneumatology enables us to recognise the universal working of the Spirit in creation and motivates us to open ourselves to culture, history, and creation where the Spirit’s presence and activity are now taking place. In no sense it implies that we can add to or share Christ’s work of reconciliation and redemption; rather, cosmic pneumatology definitely affirms that christology is the central proclamation of theological reflection and the central content of the gospel (Bloesch 2000:263-264).

It follows from the above that, speaking of a cosmic pneumatology is inevitably linked with a trinitarian reflection; in our context of cosmic pneumatology, doing pneumatology in a trinitarian mode means putting its foundation on the reciprocity of the Spirit and Christ. Pneumatology needs to be reflected as distinctive from christology methodologically however, not materially. In other words, the work and being of the Spirit can be understood more profoundly in a trinitarian way in which the reciprocity

of pneumatology and christology is included.<sup>22</sup> Thus we are forced to examine a trinitarian pneumatology more intensively, as follows in the next section.

## **4.3 A trinitarian pneumatology**

### **4.3.1 Contemporary trinitarian conversation**

Recently the doctrine of the Trinity has emerged to become the focus of renewed attention by theologians, and to become relevant to practical church life. Several causes and motives have brought about this trinitarian resurgence. Firstly, because of the renewal of biblical studies with its revitalised understanding of the distinctive roles of the three persons of the Trinity, systematic theologians are attempting to give trinitarian theology a more biblical foundation and thus to breathe new life and relevance into a doctrine of the Trinity. Secondly, the renewal of the liturgy has heightened an awareness of the importance and presence of the Trinity in personal prayer and communal worship. The distinctively trinitarian nature of Christian worship has compelled theologians to re-examine the Trinity in the light of liturgical realities. Thirdly, the exceptional growth of the charismatic renewal throughout the world has not only revitalised interest in the Holy Spirit but also fostered a renewed awareness of the Christian's particular relationships with the individual persons of the Trinity. Fourthly, in light of the aforementioned biblical, liturgical, and spiritual movements, theologians have engaged in ecumenical dialogue between the Latin theology of the Western tradition represented mainly by Karl Barth and Karl Rahner, and Eastern Orthodox thought going back to the Cappadocian fathers. In midst of that dialogue, significant attempts are being made to surmount the ecumenical obstacle of the *filioque* controversy (Weinandy 1995:2-4).

Against this background, it might be worthwhile to revisit the doctrine of the Trinity Barth and Moltmann set forth—albeit a brief glance at their trinitarian formulations has already been taken in previous chapters. This is because they represent the two main

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<sup>22</sup> For this reason, Badcock (1997:232) calls for a developed and integrated pneumatological christology and christological pneumatology, which can be taken up in their reciprocity into Trinitarian theology.

options in contemporary Reformed trinitarianism on the great trinitarian issues of method, threeness-oneness, and the immanent and economic Trinity. Furthermore, considering that Barth is unquestionably the greatest twentieth-century pioneer of the doctrine of the Trinity, and Moltmann is another Reformed theologian who, by his pioneering social trinitarianism, has influenced a variety of theological proposals, I believe that this succinct overview of their trinitarian perspectives could help us to take a further step towards shaping a trinitarian pneumatology.

#### **4.3.1.1 Barth's trinitarian theology**

Karl Barth put the doctrine of the Trinity back into its place of centrality, resisting the unitarian, pietist, and nineteenth century liberal conviction that the doctrine of the Trinity is practically sterile. Barth has recovered and reinterpreted the classical Greek patristic understanding of the Triune God grounded in God's incarnate self-revelation and self-impartation to humankind. The doctrine of the Trinity is, for Barth, 'what basically distinguishes the Christian doctrine of God as Christian, and therefore what already distinguishes the Christian concept of revelation as Christian, in contrast to all other possible doctrines of God or concepts of revelation' (*CD* I/1,301). The doctrine of the Trinity is both the foundation and the goal of dogmatics just as the Triune God Himself is the basis, centre, and goal of all Christian faith, life, and worship. For this reason, the doctrine of the Trinity functions both as prolegomenon and as structuring motif for his *Church Dogmatics*, in which one can see Barth's effort to reassert the centrality of the doctrine of the Trinity (Cunningham 1998:23; Grenz 2001:36). In other words, Barth has shown once again that the doctrine of the Trinity constitutes the fundamental grammar of Christian theology, for all Christian faith and worship depend upon our knowledge of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and from it they take their essential orientation and significance (Torrance 1994:4).

Barth's trinitarian theory is marked by, in the terms of Grenz (2001:34), 'a revelational trinitarianism' since he establishes the doctrine of the Trinity only on the basis of revelation. He pursues such a thoroughgoing theological revelationism that he excludes all philosophical or other bases for the Trinity and seeks to articulate it firmly on

revelation. Even differing from the revelational approach of classic Protestant orthodoxy which as a theory of proposition would appeal to isolated proof-texts, Barth's revelation-focused theory draws the doctrine of the Trinity from an understanding of the gospel as a whole as focused in Christ (Grenz 2001:35). Barth is convinced that the Triune God stands behind and within the actual event of revelation, in the life and mission of Jesus, and therefore God's three-in-one nature reflects the pattern present within the act of the one God in Christ. For Barth, God's revelation and God are identical. God *is* who God is revealed to be. To say it again, 'the Word of God in revelation is not just a word *about* God but rather *is* God in the Godself' because He is the subject, the content, and the very happening of revelation (Peters 1993:90). Thus, revelation is trinitarian and God Himself is trinitarian. This becomes manifest in Barth's trinitarian formulation: God is Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness (*CD I/1,344*). This formula, corresponding to the New Testament symbols, Father, Son, and Spirit, shows that God Himself is the revelation-event; *God* reveals, God reveals *Himself*, God reveals *through Himself* (Hill 1982:116).<sup>23</sup>

Regarding the issue of the relation between the one *ousia* and the three *hypostases*, namely, oneness/threeness, Barth deliberately grants priority to the one divine subject. Barth writes (*CD I/1,413*):

The statement "God is one in three modes of being, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" thus means that the one God, i.e. the one Lord, the one personal God is what He is not in one mode only, but—we appeal in support simply to the result of our analysis of the Biblical concept of revelation—in the mode of the Father, in the mode of the Son, in the mode of the Holy Spirit.

Frankly acknowledging the great difficulties of this problem and the inadequacy of all our concepts in the face of the trinitarian mystery, Barth nevertheless connects God's personhood or subjectivity with the divine *ousia* itself, to which he seems to give logical

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<sup>23</sup> In a sense, this revelational Trinitarianism can be attributed to 'Christocentric Trinitarianism' since to Barth the unique and unsurpassable self-revelation of God is identified with Jesus Christ and the centrality of the triune God is none other than Christ's centrality (Bromiley 1979:ix). Thus, the content of the affirmation that God is triune is not different from the confession that 'Jesus is Lord'.

precedence, rather than to *hypostases* (Hunsinger 2000:191). Instead of the term ‘person’ to refer to the trinitarian members, Barth uses his controversial designation ‘mode of being’ to translate *hypostasis*. For Barth, the term ‘person’ inevitably implies ‘personality’, that is, the connotation of self-consciousness, which ultimately runs the risk of tritheism. To avoid any glimmer of tritheism, Barth first chooses to accord priority to the absolute oneness of God and then seeks to understand threeness subsequently. Thus for Barth, God is above all one divine person—a single acting subject who is the Lord—and Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the divine ways of being that eternally subsist within God in absolute unity (Grenz 2001:37).<sup>24</sup>

Barth’s trinitarianism is rooted in a strong incarnationism. The climax of God’s self-revelation is the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At the very event of the cross and resurrection, God reveals Himself as Father of the Son and thereby reconciles us to Himself, opening up for us a way back to the Father. Thus, the doctrine of the Trinity, as an interpretation of the relationship of Son to Father articulated on the cross, of Father to Son manifest in the resurrection, takes up those differentiated relationship of cross and resurrection into the concept of God (Thompson 1986:20). Furthermore, trinitarian theology of the cross and resurrection brings us into the very heart of God to share in His intimate life of relationship of love. Therefore, Barth’s trinitarian theology can be correctly describes as centred on the cross and resurrection, where God is revealed as He eternally is in Himself (Thompson 1986:13; 1994:46-47).

Barth set the significant parameter and stage for contemporary trinitarian discussion of the relationship between the economic and the immanent Trinity. In a manner which treats the Trinity in association with the revealed economy, Barth makes clear that the doctrine arises from an exclusively revelational basis. To avoid a speculative theological

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<sup>24</sup> Barth’s trinitarianism often faces a charge of modalism. However, in its traditional sense, modalism implies that the trinitarian *hypostases* are merely manifestations of God in history, but not essential distinctions within the eternal Godhead itself, whereas Barth believes that the trinitarian *hypostases*, each of which is fully God, coexists in, with, and for one another eternally and essentially (Hunsinger 2000:191). On this account, Hill (1982:117-121) suggests that it might be called, not ‘modalist trinitarianism’, but ‘modal trinitarianism’ in that it prefers not to conceive of three distinct subjectivities constituting the one Godhead.

approach to the doctrine, Barth works from the economic Trinity to the immanent Trinity (Grenz 2001:36). Barth emphasises this point repeatedly (*CD* I/1,548):

But we are completely tied to the rule—and regard this rule as fundamental—that pronouncements upon the reality of the divine modes of existence, “antecedently in themselves” could not in content be any different from those that have to be made about their reality in revelation. The whole of our statements on the so-called immanent Trinity proved very simply for us to be confirmations and underlinings, or, materially, the indispensable major premises of the economic Trinity.

For Barth, God revealed in the economy of salvation is none other than God as God is within the eternal divine reality. As Peters (1993:213) correctly observes, Barth’s resolute commitment to a revelation-focused trinitarianism, in which the divine self-disclosure is sought only in the salvation events, is one of the major factors which have intersected to form the basis of the present trinitarian movement.

However, although Barth steadfastly seeks to hold the immanent Trinity together with the economic Trinity, he nevertheless distinguishes between God’s essence and God’s work.<sup>25</sup> A leitmotiv of Barth’s theology is the total otherness of God. Avoiding any synthesis of experience and revelation, Barth insists that theology cannot begin with experience, nor can it redefine God’s antecedent existence from experience. Only in the paradoxical character of revelation does God make Himself known but precisely as the Unknown (Hill 1982:116). This leads Barth to follow a clearly traditional view which rests on the idea that the immanent Trinity is to be differentiated from the economic Trinity. This distinction is also evident in his discussion of the ‘primary’ and ‘secondary objectivity’ of God (*CD* II/1,16). God’s givenness to us in revelation cannot be identical

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<sup>25</sup> The immanent Trinity is the traditional phrase for the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit considered independently of the economy of creation and redemption. The immanent Trinity is an altogether different position from what is usually called ‘divine immanence’, which implies denying any possibility of a meaningful discourse on God apart from the work and apart from history. While *divine immanence* is a concept in the category of ‘transcendence vs. immanence’, *the immanent Trinity* is a concept in the category of ‘ontology vs. economy’. Therefore, in our discussion, the immanent Trinity means the ontological Trinity; the Trinity in the *opera ad intra*; the Trinity of God *in se* (Blocher 1997:104-105).

with God in Himself for ‘not by a lesser degree of truth, but by its particular form suitable for us, the creature’.

#### **4.3.1.2 Moltmann’s trinitarian theology**

Moltmann attempts to extend Barth’s line of thought, namely, that the historical event of Christ is constitutive of the divine life *per se*. However, in doing so, Moltmann is dissatisfied with, and breaks away from the preoccupation with the divine subject that characterised Barth’s trinitarian theology. Peters (1993:103) puts it that Moltmann’s trinitarian proposal is ‘perhaps the biggest step yet away from the substantialist unity of God toward a relational unity in which the divine threeness is given priority’.

Since Moltmann is convinced that the divine life is in no sense monotheistic, he finds Barth’s trinitarian theory deficient in that it owes so much to Hegelian subjectivity and monism that it becomes tainted by a tendency towards Sabellianism. To overcome and correct Barth’s trinitarian position, Moltmann offers a social model of the Trinity in which all monotheism, monachianism, and modalism are rejected. In his social model, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are joined essentially and freely together in community by their loving harmony and perichoretic fellowship. They are open not only to each other, but also to a suffering humanity.

Moltmann’s trinitarianism stems from his underscoring the event of the cross as the trinitarian *history*. According to him, the cross is not only the event that effects human reconciliation but also the occasion of God’s act of self-constitution within history as the Triune one (Grenz 2001:42). Moltmann (1993a:244) says, ‘In the cross, Father and Son are most deeply separated in forsakenness and at the same time are most inwardly one in their surrender.’ ‘What happened on the cross was an event between God and God. It was a deep division in God himself, in so far as God abandoned God and contradicted himself, and at the same time a unity in God, in so far as God was at one with God and corresponded to himself.’ Here, the Trinity is the conceptual framework to understand that the history of Jesus crucified and raised is the history of God. The

crucifixion is an event between God and God, an event within the Trinity, and the history of Christ is the inner life of God Himself.

Moltmann's trinitarian history of the cross brings forth the trinitarian panentheism according to which, contrary to the classical theistic notion of God's immutability, God not only affects the world but also is affected by the world. Unlike Barth, Moltmann does not envisage God breaking into history but instead sees history in God. From Moltmann's panentheistic perspective, creation is understood as an act of divine self-limitation that began already within the divine life. Creation derives from the creative resolve of God to create, but this creative resolve is inherent in the very being of God. Creation rests on the necessity of love to share itself. To create a world outside Himself, to commit Himself to His limited creation, and to dwell in it, God's self-limitation, self-humiliation, and self-surrender must be presupposed (Moltmann 1993d:80-102). Thus, Moltmann (:91) writes:

In this sense, by yielding up the Son to death in God-forsakenness on the cross, and by surrendering him to hell, the eternal God enters the Nothingness out of which he created the world. God enters that 'primordial space' which he himself conceded through his initial self-limitation. He pervades the space of God-forsakenness with his presence. It is the presence of his self-humiliating, suffering love for his creation, in which he experiences death itself. That is why God's presence in the crucified Christ gives creation eternal life, and does not annihilate it....By entering into the God-forsakenness of sin and death (which is Nothingness), God overcomes it and makes it part of his eternal life.

Therefore, the trinitarian history of the cross entails the central act of suffering and death through which God not only effects the reconciliation of the world but also constitutes Himself as the Triune one. Moreover, the Trinity understood as an event for history, 'presses towards eschatological consummation' at which the Trinity will be all in all and life will triumph over death (Moltmann 1993a:255). One must see the Trinity as the event of the cross, and then as eschatologically open history. At this point,

Moltmann presents the movement from God's initial self-limitation to His eschatological delimitation in respect of His creation.

Introducing the notion of eschatology into trinitarian theology, Moltmann (1993d:249) maintains that the trinitarian event of the cross is also to be understood, not as a self-contained event, but as an entire eschatological, trinitarian process open for men on earth. The cross is an event within the eschatological history of the Trinity, which is yet to be completed. In other words, the Trinity is an evolving event between three divine subjects and the world, and thus the Triune God is not complete until the end (Moltmann 1993c:161). As the economy of salvation is oriented to the future consummation of the kingdom of God, so is the Trinity in itself and hence Moltmann goes on to speak of a trinitarian *history of God*. Accordingly, Moltmann's trinitarian theology can be described as 'open Trinity' not only towards future or completion, but also towards history or creation involving its sufferings and agonies (Peters 1993:107; Bloesch 2000:237). To be sure, the notion of open Trinity derives from the critique of the metaphysical view of the *apatheia* and immutability of God in Western theology. The fact that God sent His Son and Spirit into the world, thus opening Himself to it, means that God is in Himself open to His creation and allows Himself to be determined by its continuing history. 'The Trinity in the origin is the foundation of the trinity in the sending, and hence the Trinity in the sending reveals the Trinity in the origin as being from eternity an open Trinity' (Moltmann 1993b:55). If God is love, then He neither will nor can be without the one who is beloved (Moltmann 1993c:58). God must suffer because He is love, and that is His gracious and free choice, and this suffering is carried into the very nature of God Himself. In other words, Moltmann goes to the opposite extreme against the classical idea of lordship, to the extent that freedom and necessity are one in God.

What is the relation of the trinitarian history of God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit to God's sovereignty? In answering this question, Moltmann extends his discussion from a trinitarian eschatological panentheism to a social trinitarianism, which is unfolded in his *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*. Differing from Barth, who talks about the Trinity only as the 'three modes of being' of the one God in favour of the

sovereignty of that one God, Moltmann (1993c:viii) has developed a social doctrine of the Trinity according to which God is a community of Father, Son, and Spirit, and the unity of God is constituted by mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration. To describe the nature of divine unity, Moltmann draws on the concept of *perichoresis* with reference to the intimate indwelling and complete interpenetration of the persons in one another. To Moltmann (:150), the concept of God's unity cannot in the trinitarian sense be fitted into the homogeneity of one divine substance, or into the identity of the absolute subject which is characterised by Barth; instead it must be perceived in the *perichoresis*, which Moltmann believes links together the threeness and the unity in a brilliant way. Thus, the use of *perichoresis* is a sign of Moltmann's attempt to distance himself from the classical understanding of the Trinity as well as its reformulation in Barth. In a social doctrine of the Trinity, the understanding of the Trinity must begin with the fellowship of a plurality of persons understood as three centres of conscious activity, and only then can one speak about their unity (Grenz 2001:44).

In Moltmann's critique of classical 'monotheism' and proposal for a social trinitarianism, one can be aware of his great concern for socio-political implication. Moltmann consistently rejects a monotheistic interpretation of God as Trinity because it reduces the three persons to modes of a single subjectivity and consequently sets God over against the world and implies a monarchical relation between them. Behind this lies Moltmann's preference of fellowship, equality, and interdependence over structures of power and hierarchy. Moltmann's social trinitarian thinking links God intimately with the world and its history. His proposal of the perichoretic relationship of the trinitarian persons provides the foundation for a mutual indwelling of the world in God and God in the world. Furthermore, it gives place to the inclusion of creation into the perichoretic relationship of the Trinity. Moltmann (1993c:19) says:

Here, thinking in relationships and communities is developed out of the doctrine of the Trinity, and is brought to bear on the relation of men and women to God, to other people and to mankind as a whole, as well as on their fellowship with the whole of creation....In this way it is not merely the

Christian *doctrine* of the Trinity that we are trying to work out anew; our aim is to develop and practise trinitarian *thinking* as well.

Moltmann is convinced that the social trinitarian thinking in which God is seen as trinitarian unity and community has important implications for social and political interaction (Grenz 2001:44). Only through this social trinitarian view can the Christian community, or humanity at large, reflect the Triune God without domination, subjection, and oppression. From this social model of the Trinity, we can achieve both an appropriate paradigm for society, and a critique of a false idea of God. Thus, as Grenz (:45) indicates, the doctrine of the Trinity functions as a 'critical principle' for theology in its mission of transforming the world.

As stated earlier, for Moltmann, God's very being is historical. However, this historicity of God is not out of need as is the case with creatures but out of the freedom of God's immeasurable love. Moltmann argues that God's freedom cannot consist in the freedom of either loving or not loving (Grenz 2001:42). God is bound to love. He is not compelled to love by any outward or inward necessity. Love is self-evident for God. One has to say that the Triune God loves the world with the very same love that He Himself *is*. From this it follows that there is no need for correspondence between immanent and economic Trinity, and no distinction is allowable between them. Moltmann (1993c:151) maintains that 'the notion of an immanent Trinity in which God is simply himself without the love which communicates salvation, brings an arbitrary element into the concept of God which means a break-up of the Christian concept'. In this sense, Moltmann (:154) accepts what is called Rahner's axiom, and develops it as his own trinitarian principle, which is expressed in this way: '*Statements about the immanent Trinity must not contradict statements about the economic Trinity. Statements about the economic Trinity must correspond to doxological statements about the immanent Trinity.*'

Here, the immanent Trinity is to be understood only in the context of doxology, in which we adore and praise the God of transcendence. It implies that the economic Trinity is the object of kerygmatic theology that speaks of God soteriologically, whereas

the immanent Trinity is the content of doxological theology. In this way, the distinction between immanent and economic Trinity is minimised and, to say the least, it survives in its minimalist form (Peters 1993:107; Badcock 1997:207). In other words, Moltmann, in contrast to Barth, rejects the classical distinction between immanent and economic Trinity even to the extent that he comes close to eliminating the need for the immanent Trinity. Moltmann (1993c:152) offers the idea that the economic and the immanent Trinity form a continuity in which the two merge into one another. From this he maintains that '[t]he economic Trinity not only reveals the immanent Trinity; it also has a retroactive effect on it' (:160).

#### **4.3.2 The pneumatological implications of contemporary trinitarianism**

Within the theology of Barth, revelation is the hermeneutical key to understanding the role of the Spirit. How can the revelation, which is *objectively* given in Jesus Christ through the event of the cross and resurrection, be *subjectively* realised by men and women? According to Barth, the resurrection opens up and gives to man true knowledge of what God has done for him in Christ. And the subjective reality of revelation is the work of the Holy Spirit (*CD IV/2,333*). In other words, the idea of the outpouring of the Spirit who bears witness to Christ after the resurrection and ascension constitutes Barth's total understanding of the work of the Spirit. The mission of the Holy Spirit is intimately related to that of the Son. The Spirit comes from Christ, makes people new creations in Him, creates a community of faith, and conforms us to the image of the Son. We have already noted that this understanding of Barth's reflects to some extent the Western binitarian tendency.

Speaking of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, Barth appeals to the notion of 'the communion of the Spirit', which is derived from the Augustinian-Western view of the Spirit as the bond of love. The Spirit is the Spirit of union and fellowship, and as He comes to us as the divine Lord, He is also 'the bond of union' of Father and Son in the divine life. To put it in another way, both in the history of salvation and in God Himself, the Spirit is the transition from the one to the other, from Jesus to us and between Father

and Son. In the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation history, ‘there is repeated and represented and expressed what God is in himself’, for He reveals in His work among us ‘the fellowship, the unity, the peace, the love, which there is in God, in which God was and is and will be from and to all eternity’ (CD IV/2,341). As the Spirit is ‘the bond of union’ who binds us to Christ and to His reconciliation, He is also the bond of Father and Son in the divine life. As the One who unites us with Christ, this mission of the Spirit reflects His role in the Trinity as the union and communion of Father and Son.

Stated briefly, in Barth’s trinitarian theology, the Spirit is the Revealedness of Revelation, and the Spirit’s primary work is the bond of union between Father and Son in God Himself, and between Jesus Christ and us in the history of salvation as well. It is in and by the Holy Spirit that ‘the history, the transition, the mediation and the communication between the Father and the Son take place and are revealed as such’ (:345). For Barth, this dynamic work of the Spirit is not merely in and for the union of Father and Son, but also as such *pro nobis* and *in nobis*.

In Moltmann’s eschatological trinitarian theology, pneumatology has an enormous importance, to the extent that without the Spirit his future-oriented theology would be inconceivable. According to Heron (1983:167), Moltmann’s emphasis on the cross implies that he stresses the *distance* opened up between the Father and the incarnate Son. That is, Jesus’ abandonment and cry of dereliction on the cross makes a larger inner space within the Trinity, and hence assigns a more decisive and distinctive role to the Spirit as the overcomer of that distance, which at the same time drives towards God’s future kingdom—eschatological completion. It is the Spirit who relates the Father and the Son to the created order, and who thereby gives Father and Son their concreteness and dynamism (Bloesch 2000:237). The Spirit is, in Moltmann’s terms (1993d:100), ‘the principle of creativity’ and ‘the principle of evolution’. God Himself is understood to be so radically and continually involved in temporality that He Himself has a future, as well as a history, of His own. The locus of this involvement is not so much the Son, through whom God once entered into the darkness of death, as it is the Spirit, through whom God indwells in creation continuously. There is no way other than through the Spirit’s indwelling and renewing of creation that God Himself is His presence in the

world, and that, for this reason, the world is involved in the very being of God (Badcock 1997:199). Thus, it is clear that Moltmann interprets the Spirit in a more dynamic and personalistic sense.

The trinitarian theology developed by Barth and Moltmann gives the very significant impetus towards a contemporary theological approach to the Trinity. In what follows particular attention is given to its constructive implications which could provide a helpful vantage point for our shaping of a trinitarian pneumatology.

#### **4.3.2.1 The reorientation towards the concrete economy of salvation**

The most suggestive contribution of the contemporary trinitarian theology as documented by Barth and Moltmann, is its reorientation towards the concrete content of the economy of salvation. According to Badcock (1997:170-171), in its concern for the doctrine of the Trinity, the point of Christian theology has been that since God truly gives Himself in the saving work of the Son and the Spirit, there can be real access to Him or genuine participation in His own divine life. Whatever the eternal definitions and distinctions posited, there have always been temporal repercussions for soteriology, that is, the economic implications of the doctrine. Nevertheless, for historical and theological reasons, the traditional content of trinitarian theology has put its distinctive focus on none other than the Triune God as He is in Himself, for only thus has theology ensured that its proper object is truly God.

This is the point whereat the renewed approach of contemporary trinitarian theology takes place. The development of contemporary trinitarian theology involves a rather radical and explicit reorientation of the traditional doctrine of the Trinity towards the economy of salvation in its own proper content. Instead of the preoccupations of the tradition—the eternal Logos, the eternal processions, or questions of *ousia* and *hypostasis*, contemporary trinitarian theology is preoccupied with the involvement of God in the world and, correlatively, of the world in God. In this regard, contemporary trinitarian theology is much indebted to Barth, according to whom God is none other than who He is in His outreach to us and He is free to be who He is in doing so. From

this, contemporary trinitarian theology has launched out into a wide-ranging discussion of the very being of God as 'open to history through Christ and the Spirit'. Consequently, God in contemporary theology is no longer seen as isolated from creation, nor regarded as absolute and eternal in the heavens, because God is revealed through His Word and Spirit not to be such.

In addition, a conviction that the ultimate basis of trinitarian theology must be in the economy of salvation leads to the soteriologically important implication that the divine trinitarian life has truly been shared with us in Jesus Christ, in the salvation-historical events. Unless trinitarian theology is immediately oriented to salvation history in the interests of soteriology, it loses its proper theological function and becomes irrelevant to the primary concern of Christian theology, which is precisely the saving work of God. In other words, theological reflection based on the economy of salvation prevents our discussion of pneumatology as well as the doctrine of the Trinity from flowing into fruitless speculation. By so doing it leads to a positive 'shift from the more abstractive or scholastic framework of thought to one intended to be bound up closely with the piety, worship and experience of the Church' (Torrance 1994:78). Considering the fact that from the very beginning Reformed pneumatology focused on and approached the Spirit's work from the soteriological perspective, this point of contemporary trinitarian movement may well be seen as *re*-orientation to the concrete economy of salvation.

Before we can bring this contemporary trinitarian emphasis on the economy of salvation into our constructive shaping of a trinitarian pneumatology, we must pay attention to a significant pitfall, that is, the problem of the relation between the immanent and the economic Trinity.

Over and against the traditional trinitarian distinction between the immanent and the economic Trinity, contemporary theologians including Barth and Moltmann seem to reach almost unanimous agreement with contemporary trinitarian insight: there is indeed a close relationship between the economic and the immanent Trinity, and thus both aspects must be viewed as essentially related. In other words, the economy of salvation must not be seen as only a temporal manifestation of an eternal, immutable

immanent Trinity, yet rather the economic Trinity contains the reality of the immanent Trinity in a way appropriate to its representation in the created order.<sup>26</sup> Despite this ‘consensus’, there is a delicate but definite difference of ideas on how to connect the two realities of the immanent and the economic Trinity: a strong tie by minimising or abolishing the doctrine of the immanent Trinity in the belief of a strong identity of these two, or a loose tie by emphasising the distinction of the two even in their unity or by positing a prior actuality of the immanent Trinity (Olson 1990). For example, one can see that the economic basis in the concrete relations of the persons in Moltmann’s theology is much stronger than the economic basis of the idea of self-revelation underlying Barth’s trinitarian theology.

In Barth’s theology, the immanent Trinity can neither be identified with, nor separated from, nor synthesized with the economic Trinity. For Barth (*CD* II/1,257), ‘God is who He is in the act of His revelation. God seeks and creates fellowship between Himself and us, and therefore He loves us.’ However, ‘He is this loving God without us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in the freedom of the Lord, who has His life from Himself.’ In other words, the immanent Trinity is the indispensable premise of the economic trinitarian actions *ad extra*, but cannot be simply identified with these historical events. For Barth (:258,260), since only God reveals God, revelation is the validating factor for understanding the nature of God’s inner trinitarian relations and we cannot leave the

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<sup>26</sup> In traditional trinitarian theology, these two aspects of trinitarian discourse are separated and thus it follows that the question of the immanent relations in the Godhead becomes a matter of speculative theology, whereas the economic Trinity is placed in the context of the history of salvation. As a result, this distinction leads to the conclusion that the trinitarian constitution of God’s being becomes irrelevant for the history of salvation. It also implies that God’s revelation could not disclose the divine being in its immanent trinitarian constitution. If the immanent constitution of the Triune being is not actualised in the divine economy, it loses any function for conceiving the relations of God to the world, from the doctrine of creation to the teachings on eschatology. In addition, the distinction of the immanent and the economic Trinity implies that the scriptural witness to God’s relationship with creation in the people of Israel and in Christ is irrelevant for understanding the immanent constitution of the divine being (Schwöbel 1995:6-7). Contemporary trinitarian theology seeks to find a solution of this problem in Rahner’s axiom. The leading Roman Catholic theologian Karl Rahner (1970:21-22) offered this well-known formula: ‘the “*economic*” Trinity is the “*immanent*” Trinity and the “*immanent*” Trinity is the “*economic*” Trinity.’ The most general implication of Rahner’s rule can be said to be that the immanent and the economic Trinity cannot be considered in abstract isolation; rather each is to be understood in unity with the other. This marks not only an important departure from the older trinitarian theology, in which two aspects of discourse are to be clearly differentiated, but also a new stage of development at which contemporary trinitarian theology has arrived.

sphere of God's actual free movement *ad extra* in order to speak about Him. While God is truly the transcendent other in His works *ad extra*, He is not only who He is in these works but remains superior to them.

Accordingly, our knowledge of God *in se* is indirect knowledge; it takes place only in acknowledging the supremacy and mystery of God's action *ad extra* in Christ; and it can be known only in faith created by the Spirit, more precisely, *analogia fidei*. Analogies must be subordinate to Christ and the Spirit, and thus movement beyond this limit constantly confuses our experience with the trinitarian actions *ad extra* (Molnar 1989:398). By rejecting the *direct* knowledge of the immanent Trinity, Barth intends to respect God's freedom. God's Fatherhood, the Son's being as Reconciler, and the Holy Spirit's act as Redeemer never derive their meaning from our experiences but only from God's sovereign and independent existence. There is the 'veil' of creation or God's hiddenness. Any denial of those would obliterate the distinction between philosophy and theology, reason and revelation, Scripture and direct illumination, spirit and nature, and the distinction between the immanent and the economic Trinity (CD I/1,551). The denial or ignorance of the reality of the veil by assuming that creation as such reveals God would deny God's hiddenness and this kind of direct knowledge inevitably stems from identifying the immanent and the economic Trinity and confusing humanity and the divinity of Christ.

On this account, in Barth's theology, the immanent and economic Trinity could be united only in a way analogous to the incarnate Logos. The relation between God and the creature, between God's antecedent existence and the sphere of history is firmly irreversible. Theology is none other than 'faith seeking understanding' (Molnar 1989:369). Faith leads to an explicit acknowledgement of God's sovereign freedom *from* us as the immanent Trinity, and freedom *for* us as the economic Trinity. Given this, it is no surprise that Barth's trinitarian theology, based on revelation, comes into conflict with Moltmann's social trinitarian tendency to identify the immanent with the economic Trinity.

In contradistinction to Barth, Moltmann (1993c:160) surrenders the traditional distinction between the immanent and the economic Trinity, and explicitly accepts and affirms Rahner's thesis regarding the fundamental identity of the immanent and the economic Trinity. According to Moltmann, this distinction is usually justified by the freedom of the divine decision and by human salvation's character of grace, that is to say, in order to preserve the freedom of God in His saving activity in the economy. Moltmann rejects this argument as ill founded. Instead of the alternatives of the freedom of God on the one hand and the necessity to save humanity in God on the other hand, Moltmann (:151) maintains that a correct understanding is to be based on the evangelical truth that God is love. Out of the love that God Himself is, God opens Himself to creation and wills not to be Himself without creation. God's freedom means His love and God's love is His freedom. Therefore, Moltmann cannot and does not conceptualise God's freedom in the same way Barth does. Instead, he redefines God's freedom as fellowship rather than lordship. However, the difficulty with Moltmann's identifying the economic with the immanent Trinity seems to be that it ties God to His relationship to the world and history, and thus makes the world a contributory factor to the ultimate nature of God. In other words, historical events become determinative of the immanent, eternal being of God. At this point, Moltmann's view fails to give proper expression to the abiding perfection of the Triune God (Thompson 1994:51). The doctrine of the Trinity as formulated by Moltmann has the danger of reducing the immanent Trinity to the economic Trinity, and of making God in Himself a product of the historical process. This is why Moltmann's theology provokes the suspicion that it borders on pantheism, and the criticism that he endangers God's freedom and sovereignty.

In my judgement, while agreeing with the essential connection between the immanent Trinity and soteriology, we must not deny the fact that an adequate understanding of the economic Trinity requires a satisfactory doctrine of the immanent Trinity. The role of the doctrine of the immanent Trinity has been, and still is to root the saving work of the Triune God in the being of God Himself (Badcock 1997:234). Without the being of the Triune God Himself, that is, the immanent Trinity, we cannot but fail in providing an absolute ground for salvation. In this regard, it is worthy of note that Calvin argued for

the deity of the Spirit on both soteriological and ontological grounds (Torrance 1994:52-53). To establish the deity and consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit, Calvin claims that if the Spirit were not one in being and agency with God the Father, His renewing and sanctifying acts could not be divine and we would not believe in Him or worship Him with the Father and the Son as we do (*Institutes* 1.13.19). For our salvation, the Spirit does not act from outside but from within the whole being and nature of the Godhead. There is an inseparable relation between what the Holy Spirit does and who He is. For the Spirit does not act from outside of God or apart from Him, but from within Him, the activity and presence of the Spirit can be said to be the immediate reality of the activity and presence of God.

Therefore, the contribution offered by contemporary trinitarian theology will be determined in significant ways according to how well we maintain a healthy understanding of the distinction between the immanent and the economic Trinity—God *ad extra* and God *ad intra*. For it is this distinction which enables us to speak with confidence about God's being and action by keeping the focus on His economy, while at the same time holding the ontological distinction between God and creation, and maintaining appropriately epistemological limits to our knowledge of God *ad intra* (Robinson 2005:58).

From this qualified perspective, contemporary trinitarian insight that is expressed in Rahner's axiom must be viewed as offering a methodological or epistemological rather than an ontological insight. Within our discussion of a trinitarian pneumatology, only after affirming the immanent Trinity can we move from the economy of salvation to achieving it.

In conclusion, the Spirit is, in the economy, the One who leads us into the union with Christ, brings a community into being, and dwells in us as the personal presence of God. As such, the Spirit is the One who is the union, communion, and goal of all three persons of the Trinity. Without the Spirit as fully personal and divine, God would be neither God nor Triune. The Spirit's work in the economy of salvation mirrors His place,

being, and function in the divine life of the Trinity and His personal relationship to the Father and the Son.

#### **4.3.2.2 The focus on ‘Relationality’**

Another significant, far-reaching achievement that contemporary trinitarian theology has made is a relational understanding of God. The category of ‘relationality’ is seen as providing an alternative to the metaphysics of substance, which has so significantly shaped theological reflection on the Trinity. Recent trinitarian theology, sometimes referred to as ‘social trinitarianism’, has expressed discontent with the traditional claim that God is a single divine substance. More precisely, western traditional trinitarianism, which stemmed from Augustine and was further shaped by Aquinas and Anselm, begins with the unity of the being of God and then seeks to fit the three persons into that framework.<sup>27</sup> The oneness of God is said to have an ontological priority over the persons, and this makes it more difficult to conceive of them as distinct centres of consciousness, thought, and action. This in turn tends to evoke an image of an isolated, passionless monad, and hence to obscure God’s internal relationality and God’s loving relationship with the world (Cunningham 1998:25-26). Contrary to this Western tradition, recent social trinitarianism begins with an assertion of the priority of the plurality of the persons over the unity of the one God. By giving immediate concern to intra-trinitarian relationality, the way is pointed to a new understanding of the trinitarian life of God as *relational*. God is neither a simple substance nor an individual self; God is a community of persons united in giving themselves each to the other and to the world; the Triune God is the inexhaustible life that the three persons share in common, in which they are present *with* one another, *for* one another, and *in* one another (Meeks 2006:15).

Based on this perspective, Plantinga Jr (1989:22) presents three conditions of social trinitarianism. Firstly, a social trinitarianism must view Father, Son, and Spirit as distinct centres of knowledge, will, love, and action, or as persons in some full sense of the term. Secondly, any accompanying sub-theory of divine simplicity or divine unity

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<sup>27</sup> For the main objections to Augustine’s Trinitarianism, see Gunton (1990).

must be modest enough to be consistent with the first condition, that is, with the real distinctness of trinitarian persons. Lastly, Father, Son, and Spirit must be regarded as tightly enough related to each other so as to render plausible the judgment that they constitute a particular social unit. In other words, the central intention of a social trinitarian theology is to state the personal, social, and compassionate character of God by focusing on divine reciprocity, the mutuality that lies at the heart of the universe. Social trinitarian theologians have employed explicitly communal or social analogies to express such mutuality.

According to Cunningham (1998:26-27), the contemporary focus on relationality can be traced to two primary influences. First and foremost, there has been the reintroduction into Western Christianity of certain strands of Greek Patristic thought, namely, the Cappadocians in terms of emphasising relationship over and above substance. The focus on relationality has also been shaped in part by various postmodern influences that are constantly urging a rethinking of the concept of *personhood*, which, since the Enlightenment era, has been understood as an isolated individual consciousness. A claim that personhood cannot be divorced from relationship seems to be substantiated in a wide variety of humanistic disciplines, from sociology and psychology to history and literature in our postmodern time. With regard to this latter point, we need to pay attention to the limitations of the social trinitarian concept of 'relationality'. To be sure, a social category of relationality provides an insightful analogy for the eternal communion of God's trinitarian life. However, this trinitarian thinking of relationality could neither define God, nor displace God as the foundation of true knowledge. In other words, the true knowledge of God takes place not from 'within us', but from 'outside us'—'a centre in God acting for us', 'Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit'. Thus, we must not use the doctrine of the Trinity to validate a general principle of relationality, whether or not it derives from our postmodern times (Molnar 2002:125-128).

In my view, to offer a genuine contribution to theology as a whole, as well as to pneumatology, social-trinitarian theology must present its relational insight in such a way that the unity of God is not denied. Its emphasis on the three persons of God as

subjects must not underemphasize the oneness of God. To avoid the imperilment of tritheism and to affirm fully the unity of God, the social model of the Trinity needs to be complemented by another model that more clearly expresses the ontological unity of God.

Nevertheless, it seems to be quite obvious that a social trinitarian focus on relationality provides a vantage point for our trinitarian pneumatology. Representing the Spirit successfully as a personal agent within the Trinity, it effectively overcomes the problem of traditional trinitarian pneumatology—a binitarian tendency. That is, the Spirit is not just something the Father and the Son share in common, or a power of God by which creation is liberated; rather, the Spirit is actually the agent of acts that affect the Father and the Son. The Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son by bringing creation back to the Father through the Son, and by unifying it with the Father and the Son. What is said of the Spirit economically is also true immanently; thus, the Spirit has a distinct role of His own to play in the divine life, at once economic and immanent (Badcock 1997:202). In addition, relational insight helps us to understand more profoundly the Spirit's work of union both between God Himself and between Christ and believers, God and creation. Through the Spirit's indwelling of us, who Himself dwells in the eternal communion of the Trinity, we are enabled to participate in God, in the relations of the Trinity.

#### **4.3.2.3 The practical function of the doctrine**

A third constructive implication in contemporary trinitarian theology is its conviction that the doctrine is not merely an abstract theological affirmation, but should have real, concrete implications for how Christians are called to live their lives (Cunningham 1998:29). Contemporary trinitarian theology aims to render the doctrine less abstract, more intelligible, and more relevant to the Christian life. For example, Moltmann's entire theological approach is marked by its intensive attention to concrete practice. For Moltmann, the practical implications of trinitarian doctrine flow directly from God's saving activity through the cross of Christ. He seeks to escape from abstract speculation about a distant being, and to consider the real intersection of God with history. In a sense, this impetus of practical concern seems to compel Moltmann to extend

perichoretic relationship in God Himself to the reciprocal relationship between God and creation by way of his panentheistic view. Thus, one might say that for Moltmann, the Trinity functions not only as the primary criticism of all sub-Christian conceptions of God, but also as the theory of practice of the church's life and mission to the world (Meeks 2006:14).

In sympathy with Moltmann's thinking, Metzger (2005:7) declares that contemporary trinitarian theology is not a re-statement of the doctrine of the Trinity, but a revisiting of systematic theology in view of new insights regarding the Trinity. Over and against a classical non-relational metaphysical and foundationalist framework, trinitarian theology frames consideration of divine and human being in interpersonal, communal terms. In other words, recent social trinitarian theology aims to be a constructive theological enterprise in its attempt to recover and extend trinitarian thinking to the reshaping of classic systematic foci in particular ways.

As noted in the previous chapters, Reformed pneumatology can be characterised by its practical concern and contextual implications. Pneumatological arguments are not drawn as an end in themselves; rather they are intended to have some effect on the practice of the believing community, and by so doing, they always have immediate practical import. This practical thrust implies that a trinitarian pneumatology must entail the aspect of the church's participation in the Triune community and its extended significance in the ultimate horizon of God's history with the whole creation.

Not surprisingly, this practical thrust drives us to the question of how to deal with the experience of our real world today, within pneumatological discussion. Indeed, the intensive focus on the relationality, or sociality, of the Trinity is to some degree connected with the plurality of the experience of God in our 'postmodern' world. Bearing this in mind, we proceed to the next constructive pneumatological suggestion—a realistic pneumatology.

## **4.4 A realistic pneumatology**

Michael Welker's pneumatological argument in his *God the Spirit* sheds fresh light on the study of the theology of the Spirit in its distinct form, methodology, and content. In our exploration of the being and work of the Spirit, a review of the work of Welker could be meaningful and helpful in understanding how to integrate the dimension of experience—particularly the reality of our postmodern age—and the biblical tradition into our pneumatological reflection.

### **4.4.1 The starting point and premise of a realistic theology**

For Welker (*God the Spirit* = *GS*:5-6), the most imperative task of pneumatology is to confront the tensions and conflicts between the attestations that in the Spirit, God is acting and can be experienced, and the assertion of secular common sense that God is distant and powerless or does not exist at all. His pneumatological aim is thus to find a new perception of God and God's power in the reality in which we live. Welker (:41-44) criticises the predominant forms of theological reflection in the Western world: (1) 'the orientation toward old European metaphysics', which, by solidifying one universal system of reference, provides a single, universal vision of reality; (2) 'the orientation toward dialogical personalism', which undertakes to express the whole of faith in the I-Thou correlation; (3) 'the orientation toward a social moralism', which runs from Kant to liberation theology, primarily expressed in the idea of progress, and brings all experience and action under a pressure to change.

The aforementioned forms of thought are, Welker (*GS*:46) maintains, unable to give a proper answer to a key question: If there is a recognisable reality of the Spirit that clearly mediates God's presence to us, how can we obtain theological access to that reality of the Spirit? Therefore, Welker (*GS*:x) proposes, as an alternative to these three forms of bondage, a method of what he labels as 'realistic theology'. A realistic theology puts the theology of the Spirit on different ground. Within the viewpoint of a realistic theology, God does not act in particular structural patterns of life; instead, God's vitality and God's freedom are expressed in a plurality of contexts and structural

patterns of life. It leads us to recognise that, ‘even the most elementary perception of the world cannot be grasped and reconstructed by means of person-to-person relations’, and accordingly, to give up the I-Thou or subject-object model. In addition, with regard to social moralism, a realistic theology formulates its own purpose with the awareness that, ‘even the highest and most noble experience, goals, and conceptions of value can be corrupted by human selfishness and by the corresponding perspectival distortion’ (:46-49). Basically, ‘a realistic theology is a theology that is related to various structural patterns of experience and that cultivates a sensitivity to the differences of those various patterns’ (:x).

In the process of examining the experiences of the reality of God, a realistic theology takes and concentrates on two kinds of materials, namely, the ‘primary testimonies’ of the biblical traditions and the ‘secondary testimonies’ in our postmodern culture. Thus, a realistic theology of the Spirit can be characterised as both ‘biblical theology’ and ‘postmodern theology’ (GS:xii).

#### **4.4.2 The biblical-theological orientation**

A realistic pneumatology approaches its investigations with the ‘new’ biblical theology. Departing from all earlier attempts to take a single form or a single theme and to highlight it as *the* form or *the* content of the biblical tradition, the new biblical theology is consciously pluralistic (Welker 1999:3). In other words, a realistic theology takes seriously the various biblical traditions with their different situations in life, with the continuities and discontinuities in their experiences and expectations of God, since those experiences and expectations are sometimes compatible with each other, and sometimes *not* directly so. This ‘biblical-theological orientation’ is derived from the conviction that, ‘the dominant fundamental concepts and theoretical models of Christian theology need to be subjected to a critique on a biblical-theological basis’, and that, ‘this “Reforming” orientation is still relevant and promising today’ (Welker 1999:3). The biblical traditions attest, in their diversity and variegation, to the reality of God and of the world intended by God. As testimonies, the biblical traditions refer to experiences

that are concrete and partial, and in this manner fragmentary. In this sense, the Bible is a multitude of such testimonies. Moreover, the Spirit not only makes these testimonies true and living testimonies, but also enables these testimonies to speak out of various contexts and experiences (*GS*:276). From this it follows that in a realistic theology the orientation towards the biblical traditions has its material foundation insofar as they present a highly differentiated and complex interconnection of testimonies to God's reality and presence (*GS*:47).

#### **4.4.3 The 'postmodern' context of pluralistic reality**

In addition, a realistic theology attempts to examine past, present, and future experience and expectations of God with the development of 'a sensitivity to difference', which is acquired by analysing our society. Welker believes that the biblical traditions rediscovered and interpreted with critical-exegetical tools, might sharpen, subvert, and answer our present constructive concerns, which are in turn, deepened by careful social analysis. In Welker's pneumatology, both the demand for relevance in the pluralistic age in which we live, and the demand for the faithfulness to the biblical witness, could be met at one point. To secure the relevance for our age, he develops the theology of the Holy Spirit in the context of 'postmodern' culture/world and does not hesitate to refer to his realistic theology as 'postmodern theology' (*GS*:xii).

According to Dabney (2001:246), the Enlightenment, which set the course for the development of western thought for the last three centuries, has faltered in that the systematic erosion of its epistemological foundationalism has led many to the conclusion that the intellectual framework of modernity has suffered irremediable damage. About this times, many in fields of philosophy, aesthetics, and social theory term 'postmodern' age in which every universal claim to knowledge is rejected in favour of particular epistemic claims of race, gender, nation, and class, and in which all forms of totalising metaphysics and meta-narratives are dismissed. Postmodern societies are, as Welker (*GS*:29-35) observes, 'the functionally differentiated societies', which decompose the unity of the public sphere into a plurality of publics that can develop

different guiding interests and different forms of understanding. Accordingly, societies today no longer have single centre but are organised and perceived polycentrically. The cultural world in which we live is an utterly pluralistic one in which any and all claims to continuity or unity of reality or experience are dismissed, and difference and discontinuity are emphasised. In such a context, resources for addressing the various processes of disintegration and destruction are sought not in the dominant forms of theological reflection, but rather in emergent processes and realities, which represent new possibilities of understanding and of creating continuity within the profoundly fragmented and fragmenting world in which we find ourselves.

Thus, Welker (GS:39-40) maintains that pneumatology can better be developed against this postmodern background than in the artificial light of an apparently unbroken reality and rationality continuum, or in the midst of an integral moral market. At this point, Welker explicitly assumes the philosophical stance of postmodernism. Reality, he repeatedly insists, is irreducibly *pluralistic*. Accordingly, pneumatology must be able to reflect the ever new and unexpected reality of a pluriform God in the inescapable pluralism of the real world. A realistic theology will not try to reduce all differences to an underlying sameness. Instead, it appreciates postmodern sensitivity to differences.

From the perspective of 'postmodern' pneumatology that is sensitive to differences, the unity as the most important activity of the Spirit must take ever-new forms. The Spirit is the One who enables us to gain immediacy to God, even a unity not only with one another but also above all with Christ and with God Himself. These unities, intimacy, and immediacy do not mean simplicity or uniformity. On the one hand, as seen previously, God's Spirit works union, unanimity, and unity among human being. On the other hand, the Spirit maintains and cultivates differences that do not contradict the justice, mercy, and knowledge of God (GS:22). The action of the Spirit is 'pluralistic for the sake of God's righteousness, for the sake of God's mercy, and for the sake of the full testimony to God's plenitude and glory' (GS:25). As a grand example of this kind of diversity, Welker takes the miracle of the Pentecost event: 'Through the pouring out of the Spirit, God effects a world-encompassing, multilingual, polyindividual testimony to Godself' (GS:235).

To put it in other terms, ‘the multi-contextual and polyphonic presence of the Spirit requires us to question simple one-on-one relations and monohierarchical forms of social interaction in their ability to express basic religious experiences and interaction’ (Welker 2006:228-229). However, this complex multicontextual and polyphonic unity brought forth by the Spirit is not a ‘postmodern’ invention. There is a definite difference between ‘individually disintegrative pluralism’ and ‘the life-enhancing invigorating pluralism of the Spirit’ (*GS*:27). The postmodern mind-set is susceptible to disintegrative pluralism which is destroyed by individualism. Postmodern pluralism is thus likely to result in the dissolution of all forms, and also to oppose the life-enhancing power of the Spirit (Kärkkäinen 2002:134). On the contrary, ‘the pluralistic unity of the Spirit is the divine power by which God works through frail and finite human creatures against the power of sin and distortion’ (Welker 2006:229).

#### **4.4.4 The pneumatological implications of a realistic theology**

A noteworthy contribution made by a realistic pneumatology is its emphasis on the concreteness and particularity of the Spirit’s actions. Through systematic exposition of Joel 2:28-32 and talking about the pouring out of the Spirit, Welker claims that ‘God’s presence is not grasped with metaphysical and other reductionist, abstract distortions, but is experienced in the complexity of diverse, concrete, mutually challenging and mutually enriching attestations to the reality intended by God’ (*GS*:147-158). In tandem with this, he maintains that the abstract reference to the Spirit’s ‘ubiquity’, ‘universal causality’, and ‘universal effectiveness’ must be corrected and replaced by the biblical testimonies teaching the concrete and differentiated forms of the action of God’s Spirit. All notions of a ubiquitous, uninterrupted action of the Spirit are due to vague wishful thinking about God’s omnipotence, not to the knowledge of faith (:162). In addition, the widespread opinion that the Spirit is the ‘unknown God’ or ‘the most hidden mystery within the Trinity’ must be rejected; instead we should affirm the biblical conviction that the Spirit represents the presence and reality of the salvation event ‘in a way that can be experienced with the senses’ (:184). The concreteness of the work of the Spirit is also attested in the claims that the renewal of creation by the Spirit does not remove

fleshliness. Fleshliness is a necessary condition of creaturely life and thus ‘the renewal of creation goes hand in hand with a renewal of and change in fleshliness’, which is made clear by the biblical texts such as Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:26-28 (:164). Therefore, for Welker, not wanting to perceive and to take seriously the clear and concrete demonstration of divine action under the conditions of earthly life—even though they have already experienced—is none other than the ‘blaspheming the Spirit’ that is impossible to be forgiven (:218-219).

The clear recognition of the concreteness of the Spirit’s actions provides Christian spirituality with the criteria for discerning God’s Spirit. The action of the Spirit does not flee from the world, but overcomes the world, delivering and renewing life. The Spirit does not cause a flight from the world, but rather engenders the resurrection of the flesh and participation in eternal life. In other words, the criterion for recognising God’s Spirit is not a tendency to flee from the world, not hostility to body and life, but participation in and transformation of the world with freedom attendant on life in the Spirit’s force field (*GS*:263). In this light, we must resist all pneumatologies of the ‘beyond’, which prevent us from recognising clearly that ‘God’s Spirit acts in, on, and through fleshly, perishable, earthly life’ (*GS*:339).

## **4.5 Summary and conclusion**

Reformed theology has affirmed the Spirit’s cosmic, universal work in creation on the presupposition of a dialectic thinking of the work of *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*. Within the Reformed tradition, much emphasis has been fallen upon the Spirit’s redemptive work to unite believers with Christ from its soteriological concern and from a strong correlation of the Spirit with the Word. However, the recent pneumatological emphasis on the cosmic, universal work of the Spirit represents a shift from an earlier Christological focus to pneumatological one; a shift of pneumatological focus from the *Spiritus Redemptor* to the *Spiritus Creator*, and hence cosmic pneumatology. I have sought the requisite causes for the need for a cosmic pneumatology. A cosmic pneumatology plays a complementary role towards a

redemption-centred pneumatology. It redresses an imbalance between a Christian spirituality operating apart ‘from the world’ and active Christian engagement ‘into the world’. Put differently, a cosmic pneumatology is an attempt to seek to serve the church in helping to discover anew how it could recognise and experience the Spirit’s redemptive activity, and at the same time, to serve creation by speaking to violence, destruction, and injustice, all so overt in our society at large. A cosmic pneumatology also makes it possible to recognise teleologically the primary end of the Spirit’s work, that is, the glory of God rather than the redemption of us. We also find the biblical materials indicating cosmic pneumatological significance within not only several passages of the Hebrew Bible, but also in relevant biblical themes such as Sabbath rest and biblically inferred designations of the cosmic work of the Spirit. From all these we are pro-activated into the establishment of a cosmic pneumatology.

A cosmic pneumatology is inevitably associated with a trinitarian pneumatology for the reason that a more profound necessity for a cosmic pneumatology derives from the trinitarian assertion: the Spirit must be considered as not ‘subordinate to Christ’ nor merely the ‘depersonalized bond or relation between Father and Son’, but a ‘fully divine person’ in the Triune God. A significant issue of the relationship between pneumatology and christology, which is fundamental both for cosmic pneumatology and for trinitarian pneumatology, comes to the fore. As we have argued, *methodologically*, it is necessary to note that pneumatology has its own logic and structure distinguished from those of christology. However, *materially*, we must recognise and affirm the reciprocal relationship between the Spirit and Christ, which is manifestly suggested in various passages of the New Testament. This reciprocity of the Spirit and Christ is advocated as an appropriate foundation for both cosmic and trinitarian pneumatology.

To draw contemporary trinitarian implications into the pneumatological discussion, Barth’s and Moltmann’s trinitarianism were looked into briefly. Barth’s trinitarian theology can be characterised by revelational trinitarianism in which God Himself is the revelation—Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness. This revelation-focused theory leads to strong emphasis on the concrete history of salvation, to be specific, the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the climax of God’s self-revelation. Trough fear of

tritheism, Barth gives priority to the oneness over the threeness of God in favour of the sovereignty of the one God. Although he develops the doctrine of the Trinity from the economic to the immanent Trinity, Barth argues that the immanent Trinity cannot be identified or confused with the economic Trinity. In Moltmann's social model, Father, son, and Holy Spirit are joined essentially and freely together in community by their loving harmony and perichoretic fellowship. Moltmann views the event of the cross as God's self-constitutive history. His panentheistic trinitarianism implies that the Trinity itself is an eschatological event open for creation and for consummation to be reached with creation. Rejecting Barth's monotheistic perspective, Moltmann tries to understand the Trinity as the fellowship of a plurality of persons. Through the social trinitarian thinking, Moltmann intends to offer a socio-political implication for human society and Christian community.

The most noteworthy contribution of contemporary trinitarian theology to our shaping of a trinitarian pneumatology is its reorientation towards the concrete history of salvation. Contemporary trinitarian theology attempts to overcome a conjectured distinction between immanent and economic Trinity, and to bridge a gap between them in an essentially related way. This leads to more emphasis on the involvement of God in the world through the salvation-historical event since our knowledge of God refers to the concrete history of salvation rather than to abstract, philosophical speculation about an eternal, immutable immanent Trinity. It also provides an approaching movement—from the economy to the immanent Trinity, from the work to the being of God—which might be helpful for pneumatology, as well as for theology in general.

However, the close connection of the economy with the being of God does not mean that the two aspects are identified with each other. We must insist that, on the one hand, the economic Trinity contains the reality of God Himself and, on the other hand, the immanent Trinity is the essential postulation of the economic Trinity—since it is to be the eternally firm ground for God's saving work. On this account, widespread agreement with the emphasis on the concrete history of salvation must not preclude God's transcendence, nor the doctrine of the immanent Trinity. We must acknowledge the importance of the immanent Trinity as the presupposition, meaning, and the goal of

any theology (Molnar 2002:4). In this regard, the extreme tendency to ignore or to deny the immanent Trinity in recent social trinitarianism needs to be qualified. While appreciating the focus on the economic Trinity, we must also affirm that the Triune God has the fullness of deity in Himself. However related to or involved with the world, God is not incomplete without the world. Confusing God the Creator and the created world is not at all a proper representation of God's unity with the world. The way to affirm a dynamic understanding of God's engagement with the world is not to deny God's ontological distinction from creation, but rather to recognise that there is an epistemological distinction in our knowledge of God Himself. This also reminds us that theology deals with revealed 'mystery', and that it thus has to be 'faith seeking understanding'. From this qualified perspective, we can understand the Spirit's work in the divine life of God *analogously*: as the Spirit is the One who unites us with Christ and who enables us to participate in the trinitarian life, He is the union of all three persons of the Trinity.

Another remarkable offering of contemporary trinitarian implication is its emphasis on intra-trinitarian relationality. Recent social trinitarianism suggests the category of 'relationality' as an alternative to the traditional theological reflection of the Trinity, which tended to evoke an image of an isolated, passionless, and impassible God, and thus to bring forth caricatures of God as distant, disengaged with the world. Discontented with the traditional emphasis on God's 'single divine substance', contemporary trinitarian theology recovers and stresses the relational understanding of the trinitarian life of God, that is to say, its dynamic and social character of the being of God. This movement towards 'sociality' or 'relationality' affirms not only God's internal relationality but also God's external loving relationship with the world. However, social trinitarian focus on relationality could underestimate or overlook the unity of God. Therefore, only by means of adherence to the unity of God, we can assert that the dynamic relationality rooted in social trinitarian theology might be an appropriate foundation for a trinitarian pneumatology. A relational perspective has the capacity to see the Spirit successfully as a personal agent within the Trinity. The Spirit is not to be seen as just something Father and Son share in common, or as a power of

God; rather, as the agent of action affecting the Father and the Son, the Spirit has a distinct role of His own to play in the Trinity—both economic and immanent.

Realistic pneumatology provides us with its constructive suggestion for doing pneumatology in such an appropriate way as to be faithful to the biblical tradition and to be authentic to God's world today. Of great value to Reformed pneumatology are the various contributions made by a realistic pneumatology: its affirmation of the relevance of the biblical-theological orientation for today, and its emphasis on the concreteness of the Spirit's activities. Its contextual sensitivity can be understood to reaffirm that the doctrine of the Spirit must have immediate practical import to the Christian life and to the believing community. Thus, realistic pneumatology can help us to do pneumatology in the context of Christian participation in the concreteness of the various realities of faith, community, and the world. It thus helps to dispel all ecclesiastical or pietistic tendencies to acquiesce to the temptation to flee from the world or to withdraw into a Christian ghetto.

In conclusion, progress towards the ultimate goal of understanding the Spirit's work in redemption and creation more appropriately and more fully can move forward in the light of some insightful implications discussed in this chapter. That is, a constructive pneumatology can be established on the reciprocal relationship between pneumatology and christology; on the root of the concrete history of salvation, yet not denying the immanent Trinity; on the ground of the trinitarian dynamic relationality; and on the concreteness of the Spirit's activities which is affirmed by the biblical testimonies and the contextual sensitivity.

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

### 5.1 General summary of previous chapters

This research began with the question of how to understand more fully the Spirit's work in redemption and creation, particularly from the Reformed perspective. From the outset of Reformed theology, there has been the pneumatological tension between the work of *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*. In accordance with the Reformed traditional distinction between redemption and creation, I categorised influential Reformed views on the work of the Spirit into two different perspectives: 'the redemption-centred view' (Calvin and Barth) and 'the creation-centred view' (Kuyper and Moltmann).

In chapter 2, the examination of Calvin and Barth's view on the work of the Spirit leads to the conclusion that in their pneumatological reflection the redemptive work of the Spirit is highlighted more than the creative work. For Calvin, the foremost work of the Spirit is soteriological activities—to lead believers to unity with Christ and to give faith to them. In other words, the Spirit makes the salvific work of Christ efficacious in believers by way of illuminating and consolidating believers' minds, and thereby preparing them to receive the truth of Christ and God's benevolence towards them. In Calvin's pneumatology, the most noteworthy strand is the solid correlation of the Spirit with the Word. The Spirit uses the Word to generate faith in believers; believers thus are able to accept or conceive the truth of the Word only by the inward testimony of the Spirit, who Himself is the author of the Scriptures. Within the ministry of the motherly church, the Spirit works a dynamic activity to make effective the ordained means of grace—the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. In His freedom as the sovereign God, the Spirit uses the means of grace, yet is not bound to them. In addition to the Spirit's redemptive work, Calvin speaks of the Spirit's cosmic work as preserving, restoring, and enlivening all creatures. The Spirit who is the source of all life maintains the order of creation. However, it is undeniable that Calvin makes a distinction between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, and then gives priority to the former over the latter. In other words, for Calvin the primary work of the Spirit is regeneration or redemption, rather than creation. It is also noteworthy that Calvin's

practical concern for spirituality, and the historical context of the Reformation, lay behind his emphasis on the soteriological work of the Spirit.

For Barth, the Spirit's work in humanity and the world must be understood on the basis of the Trinity. In the analogous way in which the Spirit mediates the communion of the Father and the Son within the eternal life of the Triune God, so the Spirit brings us into communion with the Triune God. Seen from Barth's trinitarian formulation of the Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness, the Spirit's work as the subjective reality of the Revelation is to make us understand and believe in the reality of God's self-revelation. Barth resolutely brings pneumatology under the banner of christology, and as a result makes his pneumatology unmistakably 'Christocentric'. From the perspective of Barth's Christocentric pneumatology, the Spirit seems to be no other than the mode of the presence and action of the ascended Christ, and the permanent content of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the Spirit and His witness of what Jesus Christ has done for our salvation can be seen to be identical to the coming of Jesus Christ Himself. With the saving activity of mediating union, the Spirit makes it possible for us to unite with Christ, to participate in the eternal communion of the Trinity, and to find communion with one another in community. In the Church, the Spirit is present and works for awakening the community called and gathered by Christ *in faith*, upbuilding the community into Christ *in love*, and sending the community into the world *in hope*. As to the Spirit's work in creation, Barth following Calvin's thought, maintains that God the Spirit is the One who guarantees all created being and its continued existence. Barth attempts to explain the relationship between the Spirit's work in redemption and in creation in such a way that they are not separated but deliberately placed in the direction of 'from reconciliation to creation', since reconciliation and covenant is the basis and grounds of creation. As a result, for Barth, the *Spiritus Redemptor*—the Spirit of Christ in reconciliation—is prior to the *Spiritus Creator*—the Spirit of the Father in creation.

From this, I reached the conclusion that both Calvin and Barth accentuated the Spirit's redemptive work more than the creative work. They held that the primary work of the

Spirit is to fulfil God's purpose of salvation by leading believers to unity with Christ and by creating faith in them.

In chapter 3, I attempted to show that Kuyper and Moltmann give particular attention to the Spirit's work in creation. In a sense, their pneumatological argument for the cosmic work of the Spirit arises from the recognition of the deficiency of redemption-limited pneumatology. By virtue of the creation-centred perspective, they both aimed to perceive the activity of the Spirit in such a way as to embrace the culture, the world, and the whole creation.

Through the revival and development of the doctrine of common grace, Kuyper strives to affirm the value of culture, science, and philosophy, and by so doing to solve the problem of how Christians should engage in the world. For Kuyper, common grace is the force with which all the potentiality in culture and life can stretch to its fullest development, and thereby to its destiny. It is the Spirit who is the very agent and the dynamic element of common grace. At this point, the uppermost development of the doctrine of common grace and cosmic pneumatology in Kuyper's thought come to be associated with each other. The Spirit's work in creation conforms to the operation of common grace. Thus, the Spirit's activity in creation is to perfect the destiny of creation—the glory of God—by indwelling it; to quicken and support all life as the animating principle of life; and to restrain sin by annihilating the power and effect of it. This derives from Kuyper's attempt to correct the redemption-limited viewpoint on the Spirit's work by introducing a cosmic standpoint, according to which we are able to understand the Spirit's continuous and perpetual work, from the creation throughout the ages, and to the final consummation. With reference to the relationship between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator*, Kuyper indeed intends—despite the fact that he gives particular attention to the *Spiritus Creator* with the doctrine of common grace—to understand the Spirit's work in the realm of both particular and common grace. Thus, the *Spiritus Redemptor* who invigorates the innermost being of the Christians by sanctification is also the *Spiritus Creator* who enlivens all life created by God.

Moltmann's concept of the Spirit's work is an extension of his reasoning with regard to a social doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of creation. Over and against the Western monotheistic concept of the Trinity, Moltmann advocates a social doctrine of the Trinity in which God's relationship to the world is conceived not as a one-sided relationship of domination but as non-hierarchical, mutual relationship of community. To formulate his social trinitarianism and to link together the threeness and the oneness of the Trinity, Moltmann adopts the Eastern concept of '*perichoresis*', which contains the implication of 'mutual reciprocity' and 'mutual interpenetration'. From Moltmann's perichoretic perspective of the Trinity, the Spirit's work is to bring us with the whole of creation into the perichoretic relationship of the Trinity. For the doctrine of creation, this perichoretic understanding of the Trinity provides a paradigm for the relationship between God and creation. Moltmann ascribes the theological cause of the recent ecological crisis to tendencies to place too much stress on God's transcendence over creation. To solve the immediate issues of today, he tries to rediscover and emphasise the immanence of God in creation by way of panentheism as an alternative model to monotheism. Thus, in Moltmann's trinitarian doctrine of creation, it is the work and power of the Spirit that draws reciprocal connection between Creator and creation. The Spirit Creator takes up His dwelling in creation and in so doing transforms and glorifies the whole creation into *the house of God*. In opposition to the traditional tendency—particularly the dialectical theology of Barth—in which human experience is regarded as antithetical to divine revelation, Moltmann attempts to take into serious account the dimensions of experience which could mean a multidimensional experience stretching to the whole world beyond self rather than the modern concepts of self-consciousness or self-determination. As expressed in his term 'immanent transcendence', the presence and activity of the Spirit is to be perceived in this expanded experience, namely, not merely in the self but also in others, community, and nature. Accordingly, for Moltmann, the traditional discontinuity of redemption and creation is not acceptable. Rather, he insists on the unity of God's work in redemption and creation, and thus argues that the work of the Spirit must be recognised and experienced in redemption and creation in the same way. This also implies that the experience of the Spirit must go beyond the church to the world and nature. Accordingly, theological concepts hitherto confined to the church and believer such as 'communion of the Holy Spirit', 'sanctification', and 'the

gifts of the Spirit' must be expanded to the whole of creation. What accounts for this is that the Spirit is, above all, *the Spirit of life* who enables us to affirm our life, and that of the universe surrounding, which includes ourselves.

From this, we can see that in the pneumatological thought of both Kuyper and Moltmann, the *Spiritus Creator* is held in more significant account than the *Spiritus Redemptor*; both Kuyper's and Moltmann's positions can be seen as representing the creation-centred viewpoint. They both criticise the redemption-limited pneumatology and contend that the activity of the Spirit must be understood in wider breadth, that is, from the cosmic perspective. However, there are some differences between Kuyper and Moltmann. Kuyper's pneumatology has its origin and basis in the general affirmation of Calvinist principles such as the total depravity of human nature, and the sovereignty of God over the whole cosmos. From this Kuyper develops his arguments for the theology of Christian social engagement. Moltmann's pneumatology, in contrast, seems to have in part the discontinuity from the Reformed tradition, as is shown in the concepts of 'perichoresis' and 'panentheism'.

In chapter 4, I have sought to find a constructive framework for a more adequate, coherent understanding of the Spirit's work. From the review of Reformed theologians in chapter 2 and 3, we can draw an assumption that the tension between redemption and creation, between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator* has been, and still is present in pneumatological discussion. The Reformed theologians we have explored also recognised that pneumatological tension, and attempted to cope with it in their own way. To find a more coherent vantage point to deal with the pneumatological tension relating to the Spirit's work, I attempted to draw insights offering promising potential from the current theological conversation, and to bring those into our pneumatological discussion. For this, I have followed three contemporary theological movements—cosmic, trinitarian, and realistic.

Firstly, it is necessary to establish a cosmic pneumatology to complement the weak points of soteriological pneumatology, to reflect on the biblical witness on the Spirit

more comprehensively, and to consider the Spirit as a truly divine person in the Trinity. Most of all, the adequate formulation of a cosmic pneumatology depends—as has been observed in the debate upon the *filioque* clause—on how to deal with the issue of the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, pneumatology and christology. Notwithstanding that pneumatology is to be distinguished from christology in its logic and structure, cosmic pneumatology must be shaped in terms of the reciprocity of the Spirit and Christ, through which the Spirit's work is seen as coextensive with the universal work of Christ. From this it becomes evident that we must reflect on the Spirit's work in creation as the Spirit of the Father as much as the Spirit's work in redemption as the Spirit of the Son. Secondly, contemporary trinitarian theology generates some implications that could make several valuable contributions to pneumatology. Its reorientation towards the concrete history of salvation reminds us that our understanding of the Spirit must be approached from His concrete work in the history of salvation, and creation. At the same time, the Spirit's work is grounded in His being of God, namely, the immanent Trinity. In addition, the social trinitarian model's focus on relationality helps to overcome the Western binitarian tendency, and to understand the Spirit's work in a more dynamistic and personalistic way. Lastly, according to a realistic pneumatology, the Spirit works not only for union/unity, but also for diversity/plurality. In other words, the Spirit's work of union is not simple, monophonic, uniform, but rather multicontextual, polyphonic, and pluralistic. Positively, its way of connecting the affirmation of the plurality of our reality in the world with the relevance of the biblical testimony, could give light on the question of how Reformed theology should take into account our experience of this real world. This then leads to a realistic Christian spirituality within which we are called not to flee from the world, but empowered to engage in, overcome, and transform the world.

## **5.2 Hypothesis revisited**

In the introduction, two hypotheses were formulated to investigate the question posed for this research, namely, 'How can we understand the Spirit's work in redemption and in creation more fully?'

The first hypothesis stated that, within Reformed theology, pneumatological viewpoints on the work of the Spirit could be divided into *redemption-centred* and *creation-centred* categories. I assigned major Reformed theologians' notion of the Spirit's work into one of the two different positions, and then reviewed and evaluated them. I concede that each position attempts to deal with the pneumatological tension between the Spirit's work in redemption and in creation, and attributes both to the same Spirit. Nevertheless, their standpoint and focus regarding the activity of the Spirit are clearly different from each other, as is demonstrated in the argument of this research, and hence the tension seems to be ongoing. Therefore, methodological categorisation of the redemption-centred and creation-centred views on the Spirit's work can be said to be relevant.

Secondly, I suggested that the pneumatological task to overcome the tension between *Spiritus Redemptor* and *Spiritus Creator* should acquire whatever promising stimulus and insight it can from contemporary theological movements, and by so doing could establish a constructive pneumatological framework on several of the suggested foundations. Owing to the soteriological inclinations of Reformed pneumatology, a more complete understanding of the Spirit's work might mean that the redemption-centred view has to be complemented by the creation-centred view. This leads to the necessity of a cosmic pneumatology through which the Spirit's work can be seen as distinctive from that of Christ, but at the same time, as reciprocally related with that of Christ. Our efforts towards a constructive pneumatology could be given much more insightful impetus from contemporary trinitarian theology. Even though I cannot agree with contemporary trinitarianism on certain points, it certainly offers a very valuable vantage point for pneumatology. Despite the fact that the discussion on contemporary theological movements is limited to selected themes, and that a suggestion of this thesis could not solve the tension completely, the second hypothesis can be said to be appropriate, not only because of its taking a further small step towards a renewed understanding of the Spirit's work, but also because of its anticipation of further engagement on this subject.

### 5.3 Related issues

Whilst conducting this research, I discovered some relevant issues that are closely associated with aspects of constructive pneumatology, yet remain to be explored.

Firstly, the most challenging issue for cosmic pneumatology is to give a theological account of what is happening in society and in the human environment—in pneumatological terms, including the Spirit’s work in culture, and religions apart from Christianity. Cosmic pneumatology is strongly associated with the Christian theological understanding of society, political economy, and other religions. It could raise several questions (Gregorios 1989:193): How are Christ and the Spirit at work in bringing human social life to fulfilment, specifically considering the development of modern science and technology? How do Christians align themselves with the Spirit’s work in culture and humanity? How do we understand culture and its positive contribution to human identity? What guidelines does cosmic pneumatology give us in relation to our responsibility towards cultures? How do we assess the work of the Spirit in other faiths and religions? In addition, if the Spirit indwells and works ‘beyond Christianity’, how is it possible to discern the work of the Spirit in culture, humanity, and other religions? The significance of an attempt to answer these questions can be seen in the idea that gives impetus to the practice of Christian life as engaging with, and transforming the world.

Secondly, within the conversation about social trinitarianism, one of the most crucial questions seems to be concerned with the validity of using the term *person* to speak about the trinitarian members (Grenz 2001:6).<sup>28</sup> As has been noted earlier, the most far-reaching theological insight of social trinitarianism is undoubtedly the notion of God’s relationality, from which the three trinitarian persons are seen as persons-in-relation, and acquire their personal identity by means of their interrelationality. However, despite the near consensus concerning a relational concept of God’s person, theologians differ

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Person’ is the traditional English translation of *hypostasis*, which was used to identify that of which there are three in God. The concept of person was introduced into the fourth-century discussions of the Trinitarian being of God.

widely on the terminology that should be used to express it. In this sense, social trinitarian emphasis on relationality has brought the issue of terminology to the theological agenda (Cunningham 1998:27-28). For an example of this terminological problem, the charge of tritheism against the social model of the Trinity emerges whenever it gives the impression of using *person* univocally rather than analogically. The tendency to view the relationship between divine and human persons univocally rather than analogically in the social trinitarianism could imply, to most listeners, three consciousnesses and three wills in God, however closely related they might be (Gresham Jr 1993:330). Thus, whether the designation 'persons' can be purified of tritheistic implications and be rescued for a positive role in trinitarian theology is not yet clear.

Furthermore, the question of the Spirit's 'personality' in pneumatology is an even more complicated problem. Searching questions can be raised concerning the Spirit's personality (Oberdorfer 2006): Is it appropriate to call the Spirit a person? Whether or not the use of the term *person* makes a full understanding of the biblical witnesses, in which the Spirit is described to produce a sphere of public resonance of Christ and His manifestation of God, more difficult? Is the Spirit is 'a person' or 'a field of power'? Could too much emphasis on the personality of the Spirit describe the Spirit as a 'personality' external to and even competing with our own? In the end, can we speak of the Spirit in personal or nonpersonal terms, or both of them?<sup>29</sup> These questions need to be answered for a more appropriate understanding of the work of the Spirit.

Thirdly, pneumatological tension between redemption and creation is inescapably related to the tension between revelation and experience. More precisely, concerning the question as to whether experience can or should be a source or the grounds for theology including pneumatology, two fundamentally different methodologies emerge, on the one hand 'revelation-centred theology' and on the other hand 'experience-involving theology'. Revelation-centred pneumatology claims that the only valid norm and source

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<sup>29</sup> One of attempts to answer these questions is seen in Welker's pneumatology. Speaking of the Spirit's essential 'selflessness' or 'self-withdrawal', Welker calls the Spirit a 'public person'. For more details, see Welker (GS:312-315).

of theology is God Himself, since God can be known only through God, in His Word and Spirit. From this perspective, experience can in no sense be the condition for the possibility of experiencing and knowing God (Molnar 2002:14-15). Moltmann's pneumatology presents a contrast to this revelation-centred theology. He denounced the dialectical methodology in which the relation between divine revelation and human experience is seen as antithetical. Moltmann (1992:2-3) states, 'God's Spirit is more than merely the being-revealed of his revelation in human beings, and more than simply the finding of faith in the heart through the proclaimed word'. Moltmann asserts that there are no words of God without human experiences of God's Spirit and that hence we must take the dimensions of experience today into pneumatology and theology in general. According to him, to bind the experience of the Spirit only to the revelation leads to repressing the dimensions of human experience, on account of the model's one-sidedness. In my thought, neither of those two options is perfect in itself. On the one hand, experience-involving theology might be in danger using theology more as an imaginative way to achieve political, social, and religious goals than as an attempt to understand who God really is, and what He has actually done and is doing, in history. On the other hand, revelation-centred theology might show its one-sidedness and limits by setting aside the dimensions of experience through its fear of subjectivity.

As pointed out previously, the social trinitarian emphasis on relationality is influenced by the postmodern impact. With this in mind, it is not going too far to say that the fields of 'outside revelation' give a significant inspiration for the most influential implications of social trinitarianism. Whether this impact and implication from outside is acceptable to theology depends on the methodology adopted. Therefore, we have another set of open question to be explored: Whether or not revelation and experience would draw a line parallel to each other? If pneumatology would take into account the dimension of experience in the end, how could it do that without injustice to the revelation? To what level, or at what point can revelation contact with experience?

## 5.4 Conclusion and final remarks

As Bavinck (1989:55-56) pinpoints, at the bottom of every serious question of theology lies the self-same problem: the relation of faith and knowledge, of theology and philosophy, of authority and reason, of head and heart, of Christianity and humanity, of religion and culture, of the contemplative and the active life, of church and state, and so on. These questions are determined by the problem of the relation between creation and re-creation/salvation, by how to understand the Spirit's collateral work in redemption and creation. These theological tensions are not to be solved completely by means of a specific theological reflection; at best, it can be said that they are dealt with more satisfactorily than before or other. No theologian and no movement can escape from the culpability of a greater or lesser one-sidedness in dealing with these problems. The same applies in our case. One might say and recognise without difficulty that the redemptive and the creative activity belong to the very same Spirit; but it is quite a different thing to comprehend wholly *how the Spirit works*, and by way of that, *who the Spirit is*. The Spirit's work is always couched in mystery due to its divine character. The Spirit's activity in redemption as well as in creation is always a surprising work of grace. As the finite cannot grasp the infinite, so is it impossible to figure out completely whence the Spirit comes and where He goes.

Because of this difficulty in grasping the Spirit's way, we are susceptible to falling into the tendency to erect safeguards and channels to control the Spirit. However, what we really need is not to control, but to discern what is the Spirit's work and how the Spirit works; not to confine the Spirit within our boundaries, but to participate in His cosmic work, whatever it may be or wherever it may take place. Pneumatological tension is inevitably related with the tension between the community of Christian faith in the world, and evangelical, socio-political mission to the world. In this regard, a renewed understanding of the Spirit's work in redemption and creation should impact on our response to the Spirit's calling to proclaim and manifest His redemptive and creative work in our lives, in ways which enable us to participate in His divine work and life. In other words, a renewed understanding must reinforce the distinct identity of Christian

faith, and at the same time encourage the community of Christian faith to engage in, and serve the world without compromising their Christian identity.

I hope that the renewed understanding of the Spirit's work might play a key role in reawakening the Korean conservative churches to participate in the Spirit's cosmic activity as well as the salvation. From the very beginning, the ever-growing vitality of the Korean Protestant churches has had its root in the dynamic work of the Spirit, through which Protestantism in Korea was able to be warmly received, not only as a religious credo, but also for its political, social, educational and cultural aspects. Accordingly, the renewal of balanced pneumatology can be said to be pivotal and urgent for the restoration of the spiritual energy and of the social responsibility of the Protestant churches in Korea. Lastly before finishing this research, I would like to quote James Dunn's saying which urges us to go into the unexpected, yet surely amazing work of the Spirit (Dunn 2006:26).

A church that seeks to restrict and control the Spirit, as too dangerous and unpredictable, may be safe, but it has signed its own death warrant. A church that seeks to follow where the Spirit leads will have to expect the unexpected and be prepared to be shaken to its core. But that's life, the life of the Spirit.

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