

# Remarks on Tuomo Mannermaa's Interpretation of Martin Luther's Lectures on Galatians<sup>[1]</sup>

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**Abstract:** Professor Tuomo Mannermaa accomplished an ingenious ecumenical achievement in opening up a new perspective on Luther's theology of grace: Analyzing Luther's Lectures on Galatians (1531/1535), Mannermaa concludes that justification does not only mean a forensic-judicial declaration of the guilty non-guilty, but it also is an intimate union of the sinner with Christ, *unio cum Christo*. In this union the believer participates in the divine person and in the divinity of Christ. This kind of a union can be called the "deification" of the human being, Mannermaa claims.

The present article agrees with the fundamental notion of participation and union discovered by Mannermaa, but at the same time, it raises some problems concerning Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther. There are three problematic limitations in Mannermaa's model: First, he overlooks the Holy Spirit as the sole agent and power which can create the faith that justifies. Second, Mannermaa concentrates on the idea of the union between Christ and the sinner basing justification solely on the person of Christ, his divinity and divine love, in which the sinner may participate. Luther's powerful teaching in his Lectures on the historical facts of atonement, reconciliation, and redemption by the cross of Christ, as well as the resurrection of Christ, is clearly underemphasized. Third, Mannermaa lays no emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit in the union between Christ and the sinner; the personal union between God and the justified sinner is deeply a Trinitarian reality for Luther, Christology and Pneumatology are substantially inseparable.

I propose three amendments to Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther's doctrine of justification. First, the Pneumatological understanding of *sola fide* should be emphasized; it is God's Holy Spirit who alone monergistically converts the sinner and creates "the faith in which Christ is present." Second, paying serious attention to the simultaneity of Christological and Pneumatological realities in Luther's understanding of *unio cum Christo* in *Spiritu sancto*, strongly related with Patristic soteriology, would abolish the ambiguity involved with Mannermaa's use of the philosophical ontological concepts leading to misunderstandings that contradict his true intention. Third, recognizing the link between the theologians of the Patristic period and Luther in their similar teaching on the inseparability of the person of Christ (incarnation) from the work of Christ (cross and resurrection) in soteriology would also make an important amendment to Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther.

Union with Christ in the Holy Spirit means participation in the person, life and divine properties of Christ, as well as in his cross, and resurrection——this participation can be called "deification" (theosis). The three amendments would strengthen the ecumenical relevance and reception of Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther's Trinitarian doctrine of grace/justification.

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When introducing new Finnish research on Luther, Risto Saarinen points out in his recent book *Luther and the Gift*: “I believe that the critics are right on this point; we do have a program but we also have to work it out in more detail.”<sup>[2]</sup> And then Saarinen goes on making his own proposal to outline such a theological program which is closely related with Risto’s philosophy and theology of giving which we have learned, for instance, from his book *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*.<sup>[3]</sup>

In the following, I intend to offer my little contribution to the discussion on how to work out in more detail the Finnish interpretation of Luther. I will make some remarks on Tuomo Mannermaa’s interpretation of Luther’s doctrine of grace in his *Lectures on Galatians*. My comments are linked with my analysis of Luther’s *De servo arbitrio* in my forthcoming book *The Trinitarian Doctrine of Grace in Martin Luther’s The Bondage of the Will*. The more comprehensive and detailed justification of my argumentation represented in the article at hand can be found in this book.<sup>[4]</sup>

Tuomo Mannermaa’s analysis of Luther’s *Lectures on Galatians* (1531/1535) establishes the idea of the justification of the sinner through the personal presence of Christ in the sinner: in a union between Christ and the sinner the sins are “absorbed” and “destroyed” by the divinity of Christ and the sinner participates in the very divine nature and divine life of Christ himself. In a union with Christ, the believer is taken into a process of growth in which the increasing “ruling by the Spirit of Christ” and participation in divine love, the essence of divine life, makes him/her more Christ-like. Mannermaa sees a close affinity between Luther and the Patristic concept of *theosis*, deification, although he does not show this connection in detail, there are no references to the church fathers or to Patristic research in Mannermaa’s work.<sup>[5]</sup> Mannermaa does not claim that Luther’s teaching on justification would be the same as the church fathers’ teaching on deification, but he assumes that a certain parallelism exists between these two conceptions of grace. Moreover, Mannermaa’s interpretation exposes the truly Augustinian character of Luther’s doctrine of grace: justification as participation in the divinity of Christ means participation in divine love.

Mannermaa’s interpretation of *Luther’s Lectures on Galatians* is the foundation of the so-called Finnish school of Luther interpretation. Mannermaa presented his seminal interpretation in his miniature magnum

[2] Saarinen 2017, 182.

[3] Saarinen 2005. Saarinen pointed to the potential of elaborating the Finnish Luther interpretation in terms of the theology of giving also in his article in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*; see Saarinen 2014.

[4] Mannermaa regarded Luther’s *Lectures on Galatians* as one of his major theological treatises; Luther himself saw that *The Bondage of the Will*, along with his catechisms, was his magnum opus. Building up a connection between these two works is meaningful.

[5] In fact, it is a bit amazing that no Finnish Luther scholar so far has done research on the Patristic ideas of deification, no accurate comparison of the early Christian teachings of *theosis* with Luther’s theology has been provided. Stephen J. Chester, 2017, 203, for a good reason, says that assessing the claims made by the Finns “would require both a careful analysis of Orthodox concepts of *theosis* and a careful comparison of them with Luther.”

opus *In ipsa fide Christus adest: Luterilaisen ja ortodoksisen kristinuskonsäilyksen leikkauspiste* (Helsinki: Finnische Gesellschaft für Missiologie und Ökumenik, 1979). The English translation is *Christ Present in Faith: Luther's View of Justification* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005).<sup>[6]</sup> Criticizing the modern interpretations which impose on Luther's theology alien philosophical paradigms, it was Mannermaa's intention to rediscover the Reformer who is a true inheritor of the best tradition of classical theology.<sup>[7]</sup> Typical of the modernistic interpretations is to emphasize in soteriology the distance between the human being and God. Mannermaa, on the contrary, establishes the paradigm of an intimate union between the sinner and the Savior. Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther's doctrine of justification, having a point of contact with the Patristic concept of deification, has drawn a great deal of attention in Luther research and in modern ecumenical theology.<sup>[8]</sup>

As a student of Mannermaa, I have learned to greatly appreciate my teacher's and my first *Doktorvater's* ingenious ecumenical achievement in his opening up a new perspective on Luther's theology of grace. In the following I shall not introduce Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther per se, but I will only pay attention to some evident limitations in his interpretation of Luther's *Lectures*. I intend neither to analyze other publications of Mannermaa nor to discuss with the other Finnish Luther researchers who have carried on Mannermaa's ideas; I limit my focus on the mentioned foundational work of Mannermaa. Moreover, I am not going to discuss the critical comments made by the international commentators of Mannermaa.

As we shall see below in my analysis, Luther's *Lectures on Galatians*, as a matter of fact, includes the same three dimensions of the doctrine of grace which I have found in his *The Bondage of the Will*:<sup>[9]</sup> (Point 1:) The work of God's Holy Spirit is the power creating conversion and justifying faith, *sola fide*; faith is not a product of any function of the human psyche but the sole gift of divine grace, effected by God's Spirit. (Point 2:) The cross and the resurrection, the work of Christ, are the foundation and the true content of grace; justification *sola gratia* means participation in the sacrificial atonement of Christ which brings about the forgiveness of sins, *favor Dei*, as well as participation in his imperishable life which overcame death in the resurrection (point 2a). But justification also includes, using Mannermaa's expression, the "real-ontic" personal presence of Christ in the sinner, *donum Dei*, or participation of the sinner in the person, righteousness, and divine life of Christ, the incarnated Son of God himself-*unio cum Christo in Spiritu sancto* (point 2b). (Point 3:) The Holy Spirit of the Father and Christ, indwelling the person, involves him/her in a life-long process of change, a growth in love in participation through the Holy Spirit in Christ's divine life and love. This is Luther's understanding of sanctification.

All of these three main aspects, which I have found in *The Bondage of the Will*, are explicit and fundamental in Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* which is the source of Mannermaa's interpretation of

[6] The English translation by Kirsti Stjerna is a faithful translation of the original Finnish, but there are some slight differences too. I use the English version but check its text with the original Finnish version.

[7] Risto Saarinen's first doctoral dissertation, which he accomplished under the supervision of Mannermaa, is the best analysis on the philosophical preconceptions which exercised great influence on the research and interpretation of Luther. See Saarinen 1989.

[8] Braaten & Jenson 1998; Vainio 2010 & 2004, 35-57; Saarinen 2014 & 2017, 181-203.

[9] I represent the three dimensions of Luther's doctrine of grace/justification in my forthcoming book *The Trinitarian Doctrine of Grace in Martin Luther's The Bondage of the Will*.

Luther's doctrine of justification. The sinner's forensic-judicial justification and participation in the atonement of the cross, as well as his/her participation in the resurrection of Christ are more explicit in Lectures than in *The Bondage of the Will*. Moreover, the notion of the sinner's participation in the person of Christ is also more emphasized in the *Lectures*. Now we turn to some of the problems involved in Mannermaa's analysis of Luther.

### Three problems in Mannermaa's interpretation

There are three problematic limitations in Mannermaa's analysis of *Luther's Lectures on Galatians*. First, Mannermaa overlooks the Holy Spirit as the sole agent and power which can create the faith that justifies (*sola fide*; point 1). Second, Mannermaa concentrates on the idea of the union between Christ and the sinner basing justification solely on the person of Christ, his divinity and divine love, in which the sinner may participate (point 2b). Luther's powerful teaching in his *Lectures* on the atonement, reconciliation, and redemption by the cross of Christ, as well as the resurrection of Christ, is clearly underemphasized (point 2a), in fact, Mannermaa's interpretation is silent in regard to these. Third, Mannermaa lays no emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit in the union between Christ and the sinner (point 2a & b); the personal union between God and the justified sinner is deeply a Trinitarian reality for Luther, Christology and Pneumatology are substantially inseparable.<sup>[10]</sup> Mannermaa brings in Pneumatology only when analyzing Luther's idea of Christian life and sanctification (point 3). At this point, my findings in *The Bondage of the Will* and Mannermaa's interpretation of the *Lectures on Galatians* converge; no substantial differences exist here. I will not pay much attention to Luther's teaching on sanctification because here I do not find any significant difference between Mannermaa's and my own reading of Luther's *Lectures*.<sup>[11]</sup>

In the following, I will demonstrate how Luther himself emphasizes all the mentioned aspects in his *Lectures on Galatians*. Being justified in a personal union with Christ (point 2b) and being taken into the process of change or sanctification (point 3) means simultaneously also being justified because of the faith created by God's Holy Spirit (point 1), and being participating in the atonement in the blood of Jesus resulting in the forgiveness of sins, as well as in his resurrection (point 2a). All these elements are essential in Luther's doctrine of justification in his *Lectures* and in his overall theology. I will relate my own findings to a critical and creative discussion on Mannermaa's work. In the present exercise, I take my analysis of Luther's *The Bondage of the Will* as a background for my evaluation of Luther's *Lectures* and Mannermaa's interpretation of it.<sup>[12]</sup>

[10] It is symptomatic that in one of his most important articles, "Hat Luther eine trinitarische Ontologie," Mannermaa pays no attention to the third person of the Trinity as God's soteriological agent but gives this role solely to God's word. In this aspect, Mannermaa echoes the Luther interpreters whom he criticizes for the lack of the classical Trinitarian perspective. Mannermaa 1993.

[11] The second main part of Mannermaa's magnum opus is titled "The Presence of Christ in Faith and the Holiness of Christians" and it concentrates on sanctification and growth as a Christian. See Mannermaa 2005, 47-86.

[12] While completing the essay at hand, my *The Trinitarian Doctrine of Grace in Martin Luther's The Bondage of the Will* was still in the process of publication, consequently, I could not quote it.

## The cross and justification

One might argue that Mannermaa does not link his interpretation of justification as a personal union with Christ with the cross because, in traditional dogmatics, the doctrine of atonement, reconciliation, or redemption do not belong to justification but to Christology, to the soteriological “work of Christ” in distinction from the ontological “person of Christ.” But in his *Lectures*, Luther explicitly states that the doctrine of atonement and the doctrine of justification are essentially the two aspects of one and the same reality: the gospel of the crucified Jesus Christ and the justification of the sinner through this gospel of grace are two dimensions of the same reality of salvation. In Luther's theology, the gospel of the cross and justification are essentially united, one cannot speak about justification without speaking about the cross and the holy blood of Jesus. It is impossible to create a doctrine of justification without the doctrine of atonement, reconciliation, and redemption.

Luther links the cross and justification in this way in his *Lectures*: “Then there comes, at the appropriate time, the saving word of the gospel, which says: ‘Take heart, my son, your sins are forgiven’ (Matthew 9:2). Believe in Jesus Christ, who was crucified for your sins. If you feel your sins, do not consider them in yourself but remember that they have been transferred to Christ, ‘with whose stripes you are healed’ (Isaiah 53:3). This is the beginning of salvation. By this means we are delivered from sin and justified and eternal life is granted to us (*hoc modo liberamur a peccato, iustificamur et donatur nobis vita aeterna*), not for our own merits and works but for our faith, by which we take hold of Christ (*propter fidem qua Christum apprehendimus*).”<sup>[13]</sup> There are several instances in the *Lectures* where Luther clearly and directly links justification with the atonement and redemption on the cross which bring about the forgiveness of our sins.

According to Mannermaa's main thesis in the opening section of his work, the very incarnation of the Son of God brings about the abolition of the sins of all humanity; Mannermaa has no reference to the cross of Jesus. Mannermaa states in the Introduction of his work: “The first part of this study shows that Luther's doctrine of justification rests on the Christological thinking of the early church, which he interprets in a particular way. In his human nature, according to Luther, Christ *really* bears the sins of all human beings; in his divine nature, he is eternal righteousness and life. Christ wins the battle between sin and righteousness, and this takes place within his own person. Faith, in turn means participation in the person of Christ. When a human being is united with God, he or she becomes a participant not only in the human but also in the divine nature of Christ. At the same time a ‘communication of attributes’ (*communicatio idiomatum*) occurs: the attributes of the essence of God—such as righteousness, life, power, etc.—are communicated to the Christian.”<sup>[14]</sup>

Mannermaa adapts the Chalcedonian Christology of the two natures of Christ to a certain type of “personalism” in his interpretation of Luther. In a peculiar way, he equates the Patristic Christological notion of *communicatio idiomatum* with Luther's favorite term *commercium admirabile* (*fröhlicher Wechsel*; this expression also has Patristic roots). The first concept speaks

[13] WA 40/1, 232, 16–23; LW 26, 131–132. The references here are all, unless otherwise mentioned, to the in 1535 published text of the *Lectures on Galatians*.

[14] Mannermaa 2005, 8. All italics in my quotations from Mannermaa are by Mannermaa himself.

about the mutual exchange of the two natures of Christ, the latter about the exchange of the qualities of Christ (holiness, righteousness, eternal life, etc.) with the qualities of the sinner (unbelief, sinfulness, corruption, mortality, etc.). The first is an ontological Christological (in fact, a Trinitarian) concept; the latter is a soteriological term. Mannermaa mingles the two.

In Mannermaa's interpretation, the decisive battle between the powers of evil and righteousness took place in the "person" of Christ; in Mannermaa's entire work, there is no discussion on the "work" of Christ, his cross and resurrection. Mannermaa says explicitly that Luther "does not separate the person (*persona*) of Christ and his work (*officium*) from each other." "Instead, Christ himself, both his person and his work, is the Christian righteousness, that is, the 'the righteousness of faith.' Christ—and therefore also his entire person and work—is really and truly present in the faith itself (*in ipsa fide Christus adest*). The favor of God (i. e., the forgiveness of sins and the removal of God's wrath) and his 'gift' (*donum*, God himself, present in the fullness of his essence) unite in the person of Christ."<sup>[15]</sup>

It is easy to agree with Mannermaa that Christ in person and his work belong together, the Giver and his gifts are inseparable. But this does not mean that we should not pay any distinct attention to the office or the work of Christ, to the historical facts of salvation, the cross and resurrection. Mannermaa discusses the person of Christ but is silent about the work of Christ. Luther also keeps the person and work of Christ inseparably together, yet he speaks about both of them in a distinctive way.

Mannermaa explains his understanding of salvation through incarnation: "According to Luther, however, the Logos did not take upon himself merely human nature, in a 'neutral' form, but precisely the concrete and actual human nature. This means that Christ *really* has and bears the sins of all human beings in the human nature he has assumed. Christ is the greatest sinner (*maximus peccator, peccator peccatorum*)."<sup>[16]</sup> In Mannermaa's subsequent direct quotation Luther says: "In short, he has and bears all the sins of all men in his body (*qui habet et portat omnia omnium peccata in corpore suo*)—not in the sense that he has committed them but in the sense that he took these sins, committed by us, upon his own body, in order to make satisfaction for them with his own blood (*pro illis sanguine proprio satisfactorius*)."<sup>[17]</sup> Luther clearly teaches that the incarnated body of Christ bears and takes away the sins of the world on the cross, not before the cross on the basis of incarnation alone.

A very long quotation from Luther reproduced by Mannermaa just a bit later demonstrates extensively the Reformer's idea of atonement and redemption on the cross; in this quotation Luther says, for instance: "...the Son of God is a sinner and a curse. . . he suffered, was crucified, and died. . . the Son of God was crucified and underwent the torments of sin and death...the suffering Christ, who undertook to bear the person of all sinners and therefore was made guilty of the sins of the entire world (*qui personam omnium peccatorum gerendam suscepit ideoque reus factus est peccatorum totius mundi*)."

Quite surprisingly, in his comments Mannermaa ignores Luther's words about the

[15] Mannermaa 2005, 5.

[16] Mannermaa 2005, 13.

[17] WA 40/1, 433, 32-434, 12; LW 26, 277.

cross and the atonement, although they are in the center of Luther's own argumentation. <sup>[18]</sup>

Mannermaa's view is based on the idea that salvation happened already in the "person" of Christ when his divine attributes overcame sin and death: "As a human being, Christ is the 'greatest sinner of all'; at the same time, as the Logos, he is God, the 'perfect righteousness and life.' Therefore his person is marked by an extreme tension and a most profound contradiction. By his divine nature Christ is the 'Divine Power, Righteousness, Blessing, Grace, and Life.' These divine attributes fight against sin, death, and curse—which also culminate in his person—and overcome them. Hence, there is no sin or death, or curse anymore because 'all sin is gathered together' in Christ and he was thus the 'only sinner.' It is important to appreciate that the conquest of the forces of sin and destruction takes place within Christ's own person. He won the battle between righteousness and sin 'in himself.' Sin, death, and curse are first conquered in the person of Christ, and 'thereafter' the whole of creation is to be transformed through his person." <sup>[19]</sup>

Differing from Luther, Mannermaa needs no reference to the "work" of Christ in order to explain the drama of salvation; concentration on the incarnation and the "person" of Christ is enough for him. This, of course, can be seen as an essential part of the drama, but why should Mannermaa be silent on the other essential parts; Where is the drama of the cross and resurrection, so important for Luther and, of course, for Paul whom Luther is interpreting in his Lectures? For Luther, the concrete locus where Christ "overcomes sin, death, and curse" is not just "within Christ's own person," as Mannermaa says, but on the cross and in the resurrection.

Mannermaa explicitly states: "Salvation is participation in the person of Christ." <sup>[20]</sup> He continues to explain: "It is a central idea of Luther's theology that in faith human beings really participate in the person of Christ, and in the divine life and victory that come with him. Or, to say it the other way round; Christ gives his person to us through faith. 'Faith' means participation in Christ, in whom there is no sin, death, or curse. ... In Luther's view, faith is a victory precisely because it unites the believer with the person of Christ, who, in himself, is the victory. ... Christ himself is life, righteousness, and blessing, because God is all this 'by nature and in substance.' Therefore, justifying faith means participation in God's essence in Christ." <sup>[21]</sup> Moreover, Mannermaa adds, participation leads to the "happy exchange" in which "Christ takes upon himself the sinful person of a human being and bestows his own righteous person upon him or her." <sup>[22]</sup>

In Mannermaa's explanation, the victory of Christ took place at his incarnation; he does not refer to the cross or resurrection as a victory over evil powers—this is the essential truth for Luther. Consequently, in Mannermaa's interpretation, salvation means participation in the person, the divine attributes and the divine essence of Christ—participation in the cross and resurrection of Christ is never mentioned by him, although it is several times clearly mentioned by Luther in the quotations reproduced by Mannermaa.

After these explanations, Mannermaa quotes extensively from Luther's Lectures; in this

[18] Mannermaa 2005, 14-15. Mannermaa quotes WA 40/1, 434, 29-36; 435, 21-436, 16; LW 26, 278.

[19] Mannermaa 2005, 16.

[20] Mannermaa 2005, 16.

[21] Mannermaa 2005, 16-17.

[22] Mannermaa 2005, 17.

quotation Luther explains the profound meaning of the atonement on the cross and of the resurrection of Jesus as the foundation of justification and salvation. In Mannermaa's quotation Luther, explaining Christ as "the Propitiator and Cleanser of the church," says for instance: "For, according to the theology of Paul, there is no more sin, no more death, and no more curse in the world, but only in Christ, who is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, and who became a curse in order to set us free from the curse (*qui factus est maledictum, ut nos a maledicto liberaret*). ... But the true theology teaches that there is no more sin in the world, because Christ, on whom, according to Isaiah 53:6, the Father has laid the sins of the entire world, has conquered, destroyed, and killed it in his own body. Having died to sin once, he has truly been raised from the dead and will not die anymore (*Is semel mortuus peccato, resuscitatus vero ex mortuis, amplius non moritur*)."<sup>[23]</sup> In spite of quoting this text of Luther, Luther's teaching on the cross and the resurrection are left unremarked by Mannermaa. Luther follows his logic of *theologia crucis*, whereas, it seems, Mannermaa does not.

### Participation both in the work and in the person of Christ belong together

In many of the quotations from Luther used by Mannermaa, the Reformer himself speaks about the atonement and redemption on the cross as the foundation and essence of grace and justification. Without the cross of Christ, there is no gospel, no forgiveness, and no grace. In his analysis Mannermaa does not pay attention to this aspect. In the following I will pick up some further evidence from Luther's *Lectures* on the importance of the cross; these are quotations not used by Mannermaa. Unfortunately, so far, no proper research on Luther's comprehensive teaching on the doctrine of atonement exists. It may well be that it would be difficult to do such research because Luther employs a variety of biblical and traditional concepts and imagery of atonement, reconciliation, and redemption; Luther probably has no systematic view of the various dimensions of the cross. Here a plurality of views prevails in Christian theology; the church has never created any detailed or normative doctrine of the cross.<sup>[24]</sup>

Atonement and redemption by the blood of the Son of God is a frequent theme in Luther's *Lectures on Galatians*; here we refer to texts not quoted by Mannermaa. On his cross Jesus paid an "infinite price *pro me*"; his "own holy blood" brings about the "redemption" of humanity. Luther frequently uses expressions such as "Christ, the Son of God, was made a victim," "sacrifice," "propitiation," "expiation," and "satisfaction" for our sins. He is the "substitute" and "representative" of humanity who on his cross takes the sins of the world on himself. Luther dedicates extensive space to explaining these traditional motifs of the doctrine of atonement and redemption.<sup>[25]</sup>

Luther seems especially fond of speaking about the blood of Jesus: "He might have made satisfaction for all the sins of the world with only one drop of his blood (*potuisset enim per unicam*

[23] Mannermaa 2005, 17-18. WA 40/1, 445, 19-32; LW 26, 285-286.

[24] "Indeed, while the conviction of redemption through Christ has always been the motive force of Christian faith, no final and universally accepted definition of the manner of its achievement has been formulated to this day." Kelly 1958, 163.

[25] See, for instance, WA 40/1, 83-89, 232-233, 273-278, 295-299, 433-437; LW 26, 33-36, 132, 159-163, 176-178, 277-279.



guttulam sanguinis satisfacere pro peccatis mundi ), but now he has made abundant satisfaction.”<sup>[26]</sup> “God...cannot be placated except by this immense, infinite price, the death and the blood of the Son of God, one drop of which is more precious than all creation (*eum non placari posse nisi hoc immenso et infinito pretio, scilicet morte et sanguine Filii sui, cuius una gutta praetiosior est tota creatura*).”<sup>[27]</sup>

It is the cross of Christ that destroys sin and its consequences: “...on his shoulders lie all the evils of the human race—the law, sin, death, the devil, and hell—all of which die in him, because by his death he kills them (*quae omnia moriuntur in eo, sua enim morte occidit ea*).”<sup>[28]</sup> “... Jesus Christ, the Son of God, dies on the cross and bears my sin, the law, death, the devil, and hell in his body (*in corpore suo*)”; “he bears all the sins of all men in his body...upon his own body, in order to make satisfaction for them with his own blood (*pro illis sanguine proprio satisfactorus*).”<sup>[29]</sup> In addition, Luther loves to speak about the “victory” of Christ on his cross over the powers of evil and over the law and God’s wrath; this is the gospel which “liberates” the sinners from the consequences of sin.<sup>[30]</sup> Luther summarizes: “...I immerse my conscience in the wounds, the blood, the death, the resurrection, and the victory of Christ (*immergo conscientiam meam in vulnera, sanguinem, mortem, resurrectionem et victoriam Christi*). Beyond him I do not want to see or hear anything at all.”<sup>[31]</sup> This is the central teaching of Luther in his Lectures overlooked by Mannermaa.

If compared with Gustaf Aulén’s famous *motivforskning* on the three paradigmatic models of interpreting the suffering of Jesus,<sup>[32]</sup> it is clear that Luther combines the “classical” *Christus victor* motif with the Anselmian doctrine of satisfaction and the post-Anselmian doctrine of penal substitution. Moreover, the Abelardian motif of the cross of Jesus deeply moving the human heart and molding the form of Christian existence is not absent in Luther’s theology either. One of the great weaknesses of Aulén’s analysis of the three main motifs of the atonement is that he does not link the cross of Jesus with its Old Testament background; the Passover meal (“the Lamb of God,” emphasized in all of the four Gospels and by Paul) and the sacrificial system of the temple (Leviticus, interpreted typologically by Paul and by the Letter to the Hebrews). The notion of the sacrifice is lacking in Aulén’s analysis, yet it is an essential part of Luther’s interpretation of Paul.

Because Luther uses an abundance of soteriological imagery, it is impossible to place him in any particular interpretational framework, even though Aulén places him in the paradigm of *Christus victor*. Luther’s theological understanding of the cross of Jesus is rich; it includes elements of atonement, sacrifice, reconciliation, redemption, vicarious representation, penal substitution, expiation, satisfaction, transference of guilt, victory over the evil powers, participation in his death, etc. It is also evident that Luther does not follow the Patristic notion of the impassibility of the divine nature of Christ. Following the realistic and dynamic biblical language, Luther freely speaks about

[26] WA 40/1, 232, 31-33; LW 26, 132.

[27] WA 40/1, 295, 30-34; LW 26, 176.

[28] WA 40/1, 273, 26-29; LW 26, 160.

[29] WA 40/1, 274, 24-25; LW 26, 160. The unpublished text of Luther’s Lectures emphasizes that Christ, when crucified, “kills sin in his body”: “*Christus solus tollit et occidit peccatum in corpore suo*.” WA 40/1, 274, 8-9. WA 40/1, 433, 32-434, 12; LW 26, 277.

[30] See, for instance, WA 40/1, 260-261, 439-441; LW 26, 151, 281-282.

[31] WA 40/1, 564, 12-14; LW 26, 369.

[32] Aulén 1931.

the suffering of the Son of God—“Christ, the Son of God was given into death for my sins (*Christus Dei Filius pro ipsis in mortem traditus est*)”—or even about “the blood of the Son of God (*sanguis Filii Dei*).”<sup>[33]</sup> Moreover, his emphasis is in accordance with the notion of *communicatio idiomatum*: what concerns the human nature of Christ also touches his divine nature; although his divine nature cannot die, it can and it did suffer.

In his *Lectures on Galatians* Luther links his understanding of the cross inseparably with his doctrine of justification. He states that the gospel is the good news of the forgiveness of sins based on the atonement of sins on the cross of Jesus; “Believe in Jesus Christ, who was crucified for your sins. If you feel your sins, do not consider them in yourself but remember that they have been transferred to Christ (*ea translata esse in Christum*), ‘with whose stripes you are healed’ (Isaiah 53:3). This is the beginning of salvation. By this means we are delivered from sin and justified, and eternal life is granted to us (*iustificamur et donatur nobis vita aeterna*)…”<sup>[34]</sup> “...he gave himself for me—for me, I say, a miserable and accursed sinner, I am revived by this ‘giving’ of the Son of God into death... these words are the purest proclamation of grace and of Christian righteousness (*ista verba sunt purissima praedicatio gratiae et iustitiae Christianae*)...”<sup>[35]</sup> Because of his cross, Christ is “the Justifier and the Savior (*iustificator et salvator*).”<sup>[36]</sup>

In a significant manner, in his *Lectures*, Luther combines the dimension of participation, emphasized by Mannermaa, with the cross and resurrection when explaining the key verse Galatians 2:20: “Here Paul clearly shows how he is alive; and he states what Christian righteousness is (*quae sit iustitia Christiana*), namely, that righteousness by which Christ lives in us, not the righteousness that is in our own person. ... But here Christ and my conscience must become one body (*oportet Christum et conscientiam meam fieri unum corpus*), so that nothing remains in my sight but Christ, crucified and risen (*in conspectu meo nihil maneat nisi Christus crucifixus et resuscitatus*).”<sup>[37]</sup> After explaining at length the meaning of the atonement on the cross in another key verse, Galatians 3:13, Luther concludes: “This is how we must magnify the doctrine of Christian righteousness in opposition to the righteousness of the law and of works (*Ita oportet nos magnificare articulum de iustitia Christiana contra iustitiam legis et operum*)...”<sup>[38]</sup> Here Luther powerfully emphasizes a union with Christ as a union with the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ, true man and true God, not just with his divine nature.

In a way of a summary, we may conclude that Luther’s teaching about the cross is rather traditional, not as original and systematic as his teaching on the application of the fruit of the cross in his doctrine of the justification of the sinner. Mannermaa’s interpretation has a bias towards focusing solely on the reception of grace in terms of a personal union between Christ and the sinner at the expense of the historical dimension of salvation, the work of Christ. For Luther, the historical cross

[33] See, for instance, WA 40/1, 88, 29–89, 11; LW 26, 3. WA 40/1, 84, 14. The passibility of the Son of God in Luther’s theology has been rightly emphasized by Jürgen Moltmann in his vindication of Luther’s theology of the cross. Moltmann 1974.

[34] WA 40/1, 232, 18–22; LW 26, 132.

[35] WA 40/1, 297, 19–24; LW 26, 177.

[36] WA 40/1, 298, 34; LW 26, 178.

[37] WA 40/1, 282, 16–22; LW 26, 166.

[38] WA 40/1, 438, 18–19; LW 26, 280.

and the historical resurrection are the foundation which makes the personal union possible. Some might defend Mannermaa by saying that he takes the historical dimension of the cross and resurrection for granted, there is no need to mention it. But if Luther in his *Lectures* continuously speaks about it, why should Mannermaa never mention this essential content of Luther's doctrine of grace? *Argumentum ex silentio* in defense of Mannermaa is not convincing here.

It is obvious that Luther understands justification in terms of the forgiveness of sins and of the imputation of the gift-righteousness of Christ (juridical or forensic justification, *favor*), based on the atonement and the penal substitution of the cross. But simultaneously, he also sees justification as participation in the fruits of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus as well as in the personal righteousness and the divine person of Christ (Mannermaa's "real-ontic" union with Christ, *donum*). Mannermaa concentrates on the latter, and even then he emphasizes only participation in the divinity of Christ with no mention of the fruits of his cross and resurrection.

We may raise this concern: Even the participation in the person of Christ is necessarily bound up with his deeds, the person and the work of Christ are both necessary for the justification of the sinner. As seen above, Mannermaa also underscores the inseparable unity of the person and the work of Christ, although he does not speak about the latter. The Giver and the gifts enter the life of the sinner simultaneously; the Giver cannot come without the gifts of his cross and resurrection, nor can the gifts be separated from the Giver and his righteous, divine person. Luther follows the Patristic understanding according to which the person of Christ is always in his saving work, and the saving work is always in his person. <sup>[39]</sup>

Luther's deep commitment to Chalcedonian Christology is another fact which cannot possibly let him see salvation as the work of the divine nature of Jesus Christ only—that would lead into some sort of monophysitism; salvation is simultaneously the work of both of the natures, the human and the divine. For Luther, the historical man of Nazareth on the cross, the son of Mary, being simultaneously his Father's divine Son, is at the core of salvation. Moreover, the physical, historical resurrection of the same man is the guarantee of our future salvation.

## God's Holy Spirit creates both faith and the sinner's union with Christ

Now we take a look at the deficiency of Pneumatology in Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther's *Lectures*. Mannermaa criticizes the way later Confessional Lutheranism (*Formula of Concord*) separates justification and sanctification; first the sinner is justified by Christ, then the Holy Spirit will begin his sanctifying work in the believer. In a programmatic manner, Mannermaa

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[39] This is the integral view of Irenaeus in which the cross of Jesus is the precondition of divinization, because it abolishes guilt and corruption so that the corrupt may be transformed into incorruption, and death is overcome by the resurrection of Christ so that the mortal may put on immortality. Hans Urs von Balthasar, 1990, 3, emphasizes that, according to Irenaeus, redemption depends on more than just the incarnation. It depends on three things: "the real incarnation, the real suffering on the cross, and the real resurrection of the flesh." As to Athanasius, Thomas G. Weinandy, 2007, 43, states: "It would ... be erroneous to interpret Athanasius' soteriology as merely incarnational, that is, by merely assuming our humanity he divinized it and made it incorruptible, thus diminishing the significance of the cross and the resurrection. ... [Divinization is] achieved only through the whole of the soteriological economy—the incarnation of the Word and the salvific actions that he undertakes as man, especially his death on the cross."

states that justification and sanctification cannot be separated; they are one and the same reality based on participation in the person of Christ who is “present in the faith” of the believer. <sup>[40]</sup>

Yet, in a peculiar way, in his magnum opus Mannermaa makes an important distinction: The first main part of his book (“The Doctrine of Justification and Christology”) concentrates on justification in terms of Christology as participation in the divinity of Christ with no reference to the work of the Holy Spirit. But in the second main part of his work (“The Presence of Christ in Faith and the Holiness of Christians”), which concentrates on Christian life and sanctification, the theme of the Holy Spirit becomes the dominant one. This is a paradox because Mannermaa seems partly to commit the same mistake which he criticizes in later Lutheranism: justification and sanctification, though linked, yet are somewhat different realities. One might argue that Mannermaa places the work of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of sanctification because Paul’s *Letter to the Galatians* speaks about the Spirit mostly, but not exclusively, in its latter part. But in Luther’s *Lectures* this is not the case; Luther sees the work of the Holy Spirit as crucially important from the very beginning of his commentary on Paul.

In Mannermaa’s magnum opus, there is no mention of the Holy Spirit effecting justifying faith, converting the unbeliever into a believer (point 1), or the presence of the Holy Spirit being a synonym of the “real presence” of Christ in the Christian (point 2) — the themes which are essential for Luther’s theology of grace in *The Bondage of the Will*. <sup>[41]</sup> For Luther, the Pneumatological understanding of *sola fide* is crucially important to safeguard the theocentric nature of the conversion of the sinner from unbelief to faith. This is one of the main themes of *The Bondage of the Will*: faith is not a human accomplishment but a sole creation of God’s Holy Spirit. <sup>[42]</sup> Moreover, following Paul’s theology, Luther understands the union with Christ simultaneously as a union with his Holy Spirit—Christology and Pneumatology coincide. For Luther, the Holy Spirit is not only a reality belonging principally to the dimension of sanctification (point 3), but the Spirit is crucially important at every phase of the justification of the sinner; also in creating conversion and faith—justification *sola fide* (point 1), and in the sinner’s union with the work and with the person of Christ (point 2a & b). It is exactly in and through his Holy Spirit that “Christ is present in faith” and present in the sinner.

Mannermaa’s interpretation of justification is clearly lacking the strong Pneumatology characteristic of

[40] See Mannermaa 2005, 49.

[41] Mannermaa’s *Two Kinds of Love* is another important work where he analyzes Luther’s doctrine of grace. It is symptomatic of Mannermaa’s partial dependence on the traditional paradigm of Luther research, as he employs the vocabulary of *kerygma* theology, “Luther’s theology of the word/Word” and lays no emphasis on Pneumatology when interpreting Luther’s view of justification. See Mannermaa 2010, 57–66.

[42] Olli-Pekka Vainio correctly warns about the danger of making faith a human achievement when separating the forensic favor aspect of grace from the notion of *donum* as a union with Christ: “If, however, we wish to argue for the view that *unio cum Christo or inhabitatio Dei* is the consequence of imputation, we face some surprising problems. What is faith, then? If the presence of Christ is just a logical consequence of faith, then faith has to be a human achievement.” Vainio, however, does not bring in Pneumatology here. Vainio 2015, 468.

Luther and his understanding of Paul in his *Lectures*.<sup>[43]</sup> Someone might say this is self-evidently presupposed in Mannermaa's interpretation with no need to mention it. Again, we might ask: How convincing is this kind of *argumentum ex silentio*? If Luther so often explicitly mentions the Holy Spirit in the very work analyzed by Mannermaa, why then should that be overlooked and not mentioned at all by Mannermaa? Luther's Pneumatological expressions are present even in many quotations used by Mannermaa, but he pays no attention to them.<sup>[44]</sup>

Here we look at some teachings of Luther in his *Lectures* overlooked by Mannermaa. As to the first function of the Holy Spirit effecting the conversion of the sinner and creating faith (point 1), Luther explains Paul's teaching on justification *sola fide* as the work of the Holy Spirit: God's Spirit creates faith in the unbeliever through the preaching of the gospel. When commenting on Paul preaching the gospel to the gentiles, Luther often uses expressions such as "the Holy Spirit came upon those who heard the word" and "cleansed their hearts by faith," etc.<sup>[45]</sup> "For just as through the gospel God gave the Holy Spirit to gentiles who lived without the law, so he gave the Holy Spirit also to the Jews, not through the law... but solely through the proclamation of faith (*per solam fidei preadicationem dedit Spiritum sanctum*)."<sup>[46]</sup> "... the Holy Spirit, who comes with the preached word (*qui cum verbo praedicato venit*), purifies our hearts by faith (*qui fide purificat corda*), and produces spiritual motivation in us."<sup>[47]</sup> "We are justified solely by faith in Christ, without works, and the Holy Spirit is granted solely by hearing the message of the gospel with faith (*solo auditu fidei Spiritum sanctum dari ad vocem Euangelii*)..."<sup>[48]</sup> "Then what does justify? ... hearing the proclamation of faith-when this is heard, it justifies (*audire sermonem fidei, is sermo auditus iustificat*). Why? Because it brings the Holy Spirit who justifies (*Quia affert Spiritum sanctum qui iustificat*)."<sup>[49]</sup> "We are justified through the Spirit by faith (*Iustificamur Spiritu ex fide*");

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[43] Among the Finns, Pekka Kärkkäinen has done substantial research on Luther's Pneumatology. He notes that in his writings before 1520, Luther sees the role of the Holy Spirit "in bringing about the union between Christ and the human being, but the union itself is mostly described in Christological terms." Kärkkäinen comes to the conclusion that, from 1520 onward, Luther emphasized more clearly "the parallelism of the divine sending of the Son and of the Spirit": the presence of the Spirit is a reality in itself, not just a derivation from Christology. See Kärkkäinen 2003, 134, 137, 198-199. This is an important notion, and in *The Bondage of the Will* this development has reached its peak; Luther adapts Pneumatological terminology to the very idea of the participation of the sinner in Trinitarian life. The role of the Spirit is not just that of an "instrument," but the Spirit is Christ himself in the sinner.

Simo Peura, a student of Mannermaa, somewhat differing from Mannermaa, fully recognizes the simultaneity of the Christological and Pneumatological dimensions of justification. It is typical of Luther to understand the terminology of Christological grace and the terminology of Pneumatological grace as nearly synonymous ways of speaking of one and the same reality. Referring to Luther's *Lectures on Romans*, Peura speaks about "the totality of the gift": "Zu dieser Totalität des Schenkens gehört auch ... die Gabe des Heiligen Geistes. Der Reformator ist der Ansicht, dass der Heilige Geist durch den Glauben in das Herz und in das Innerste des Menschen eingegossen wird, wenn das Wort der Gnade an die Ohren klopft. Der Heilige Geist wird aber nicht nur als Gabe unter anderen Gaben geschenkt, sondern er ist auch selbst an der Eingießung der Gnade, der Gerechtigkeit und der anderen Gütern Christi beteiligt." Peura 1990, 211-212.

[44] One curiosity in Mannermaa's magnum opus shows a certain belittling of the person of the Holy Spirit; in his original Finnish work he always calls God's Spirit by the impersonal demonstrative pronoun "se," "it," not by the personal pronoun "hän," "he/she."

[45] WA 40/1, 150-156; LW 26, 79-82.

[46] WA 40/1, 332, 26-29; LW 26, 205.

[47] WA 40/1, 572, 20-23; LW 26, 375.

[48] WA 40/1, 336, 25-26; LW 26, 208.

[49] WA 40/1, 336, 30-31; LW 26, 208.

“righteousness...is achieved by the Spirit through faith in Christ.”<sup>[50]</sup>

When interpreting Galatians 3:2, Luther creates a sharp contrast between “being justified by works of law” and “being justified by the Holy Spirit.” “For whatever is not the Holy Spirit or hearing with faith is clearly the law (*Quidquid enim non est Spiritus sanctus vel auditus fidei, hoc plane est lex*). We are dealing here with the issue of justification (*Versamur enim iam in causa iustificationis*).”<sup>[51]</sup> Luther implies that preaching of the gospel brings the gift of the Spirit to its hearers; God’s word gives the Spirit who brings about faith in those who hear the word. The human being does not have a free choice in matters of unfaith and faith or of sin and grace, only God’s Spirit, using God’s word as his instrument, can change the orientation of the human heart and create faith.

Faith and the work of the Holy Spirit belong together—this teaching is constantly repeated by Luther in his Lectures: “you received the Holy Spirit merely by hearing with faith (*solo auditu fidei accepistis Spiritum sanctum*)”; “the Holy Spirit was granted to you solely by your hearing with faith (*solo auditu fidei vobis datum esse Spiritum sanctum*)”; “through the gospel God gave the Holy Spirit to gentiles...he gave the Holy Spirit also to the Jews...solely through the proclamation of faith (*per solam fidei praedicationem dedit Spiritum sanctum*).”<sup>[52]</sup> Luther himself follows Paul’s teaching according to which justifying faith is the sole creation of the Holy Spirit, effected by the proclamation of the gospel. Consequently, without the monergistic work of God’s Spirit, there is no justification *sola fide*.

Curiously, Luther confronts Erasmus by name in his *Lectures on Galatians* of 1531, he criticizes Erasmus’ interpretation of the conversion of Cornelius in Acts 10. Following Peter Lombard’s interpretation in his *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, Luther says Erasmus holds the view that “Cornelius was a good man, righteous, one who feared God, gave many alms to the people, and prayed to God continually. Therefore he merited the forgiveness of sins and the sending of the Holy Spirit ‘by congruity.’” In fact, referring to the case of Cornelius, in his *Diatribes* Erasmus speaks about preparation for receiving grace: “...a man may, with the help of God, prepare himself by morally good works for the divine favor (*per opera moraliter bona sese praeparare favori divino*), as we read of Cornelius, the centurion, who was not yet baptized and had not been inspired by the Holy Spirit ...”<sup>[53]</sup> Here Erasmus represents the standard Nominalist doctrine of *facere quod in se est*. Luther, of course, fiercely denies that God pardoned Cornelius because of his seeking God’s favor by the manner of doing good works; he argues that Cornelius “received God’s Spirit” and “was justified by hearing with faith (*per auditum fidei iustificatus est*). Hence God does justify without the law.”<sup>[54]</sup>

The very conversion of a sinner and the birth of faith in his/her heart—the coming into existence of justifying faith—is already the very work of the Holy Spirit. This important aspect of Luther’s doctrine of grace is lacking in Mannermaa’s interpretation. The very title of Mannermaa’s magnum opus, *In ipsa fide Christus adest*, is a quotation from Luther’s *Lectures* implying the presence of Christ in faith in and through

[50] WA 40/2, 23, 25; LW 27, 20. WA 40/2, 32, 30-32; LW 27, 27.

[51] WA 40/1, 329, 23-24; LW 26, 203.

[52] WA 40/1, 330, 21-22, 26-27; 332, 26-29; LW 26, 203, 205. “Euangelium vero affert Spiritum sanctum...” WA 40/1, 336, 34. For more documentation, see WA 40/1, 329-337, 400-403, 572-580; LW 26, 202-208, 255-256, 374-381.

[53] *Diatribes* IIIb3; Walter, 62, 22-26; LCC 17, 75.

[54] WA 40/1, 337, 23-338, 18; LW 26, 209. Luther explicitly refers to Erasmus a few times in his *Lectures on Galatians*; his main criticism is that Erasmus teaches salvation by law, emphasizing human free preparation for receiving and even meriting divine grace, in the sense of *meritum de congruo*. See WA 40/1, 220, 4-29; 259, 26-33; 291, 29-294, 22; 500, 25-34.

his Holy Spirit—by definition the actuality of the “real-ontic” presence of any of the persons of the Trinity is a Pneumatological reality: “Christ...is present in the faith itself (*in ipsa fide Christus adest*). ...Therefore faith justifies because it takes hold of and possesses this treasure, the present Christ (*apprehendit et possidet istum thesaurum, scilicet Christum praesentem*).”<sup>[55]</sup>

It is typical of Luther research and Lutheran theology to use the expression *sola fide* with no reference to God's Holy Spirit. Consequently, there is a great danger of comprehending faith as an anthropological reality, something accomplished by the human psyche. The reality of “Christ being present in the faith itself” (*in ipsa fide Christus adest*) is by definition a Pneumatological reality; it is in his Holy Spirit that Christ is present in faith. Faith is a perfect gift of the Trinitarian God or otherwise it is a human achievement and thus a merit.

In regard to the second function of the Holy Spirit in uniting the sinner with Christ (point 2), in his *Lectures* Luther frequently equates participation in Christ as participation in the Spirit. The justified sinner is “the temple of the Holy Spirit,” and it is just because of this that he/she can be justified. Commenting on Galatians 4:6, Luther says: “God has also sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, as Paul says here. Now Christ is completely certain that in his Spirit he is pleasing to God. Since we have the same Spirit of Christ, we, too, should be certain that we are in a state of grace (*cum eundem Spiritum Christi habeamus, debemus certi esse nos esse in gratia*), on account of him who is certain.”<sup>[56]</sup>

Mannermaa quotes a similar text from Luther where the Christological and Pneumatological dimensions of justification are closely connected, but Mannermaa neither comments on nor even mentions the Holy Spirit here. In this quotation Luther says: “But so far as justification is concerned, Christ and I must be so closely attached that he lives in me and I in him (*oportet Christum et me esse coniunctissimos, ut ipse in me vivat et ego in illo*). What a marvelous way of speaking! Because he lives in me, whatever grace, righteousness, life, peace, and there is in me is all Christ's; nevertheless, it is mine as well, by the cementing and attachment that are through faith, by which we become as one body in the Spirit (*unum corpus in Spiritu*). Since Christ lives in me, grace, righteousness, life, and eternal salvation must be present with him; and the law, sin, and death must be absent.”<sup>[57]</sup> Moreover, Luther sees the idea of “being filled with God” as a Pneumatological reality. In his interpretation of Luther's *Lectures*, Mannermaa quotes a sentence from Luther's *Predigten des Jahres 1525* and highlights the idea of being “filled with God” but makes no reference to the Spirit, although Luther clearly says: “We are filled with God, and he pours into us all his gifts and grace and fills us with his Spirit, who makes us courageous.”<sup>[58]</sup>

## The Trinitarian reality of divine grace

It is clear that in his *Lectures* Luther sees the work of the Holy Spirit as crucial in the

[55] WA 40/1,229,15-23; LW 26,131-132.

[56] WA 40/1,577,20-25; LW 26,378-379.

[57] WA 40/1,284,20-28; LW 26,167-168. Mannermaa 2005,40.

[58] *Predigten des Jahres 1525* (Predigt 61), WA 17/1,438,16-18; the original text says: “Wir erfüllet werden auff alle weise, damit er voll macht und voll Gotes werden überschuttet mit allen gaben und gnade und erfüllet mit seyden geyst, der uns mutig mache ...” Mannermaa 2005,45. (The English translation of Luther is taken from Mannermaa's book.)

justification of the sinner; First, God's Spirit converts the human mind and heart from lack of faith into faith—the faith which justifies the sinner—*sola fide*, is a monergistic gift of the Spirit (point 1). Moreover, second, the Holy Spirit unites the sinner with the gifts of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ (point 2a), and makes Christ present in faith enabling the believer to participate in Christ's divine person and life (point 2b)—a union between Christ and the believer is simultaneously a union between the Holy Spirit and the believer, *unio cum Christo in Spiritu sancto*. This conception is fully in accordance with Luther's Trinitarian scope of the doctrine of grace: *opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*. By definition, for Luther, this union also means a simultaneous and inseparable participation both in the work of Christ and in the person of Christ.

Finally, third, the Holy Spirit renews the Christian in the life-long process of sanctification (point 3) in which “the rule of the Spirit of Christ” and the believer's participation in divine love through participation in the divine nature of the Trinity can gradually increase and become stronger. Mannermaa only emphasizes the influence of the Holy Spirit in the last dimension (point 3)—at this point I agree with Mannermaa's interpretation—the other dimensions of the work of the Spirit are overlooked by him.<sup>[59]</sup>

Luther represents a powerful theocentric and monergistic doctrine of the justification of the sinner. In order to be so, this doctrine must be essentially Trinitarian: the salvation the Father has given to his creatures in his Son can be objectively, monergistically, and effectively delivered to humanity only through the living and effective activity and presence of God's own Holy Spirit. A big problem in Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther is the weakness of Pneumatology, which leads into a weakness in the Trinitarian nature of justification and the doctrine of grace.

This weakness in Pneumatology is even more surprising because Mannermaa created his new interpretation of Luther in the context of the Lutheran-Orthodox ecumenical dialogue—Pneumatology acquires a central role in the very heart of Orthodox soteriology. Moreover, Mannermaa's vision of Luther's doctrine of grace reflects the Augustinian paradigm of grace as participation in divine love. For Augustine, the entire reality of salvation—not only sanctification—means participation in God's substantial quality, love. For Augustine, this is the same as participation in God's Holy Spirit, because the Spirit is the *vinculum caritatis* between the Father and the Son, *i. e.*, the Holy Spirit is the very essence of divine love.<sup>[60]</sup> Why does Mannermaa, in his exposition of Luther's teaching on justification, emphasize only love and not also the Spirit?

## Conclusion: Luther's doctrine of grace in the context of Patristic theology

Here we cannot but come to the conclusion that Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* has some significant limitations. These appear, first, in Mannermaa's inability to link Luther's doctrine of justification with the work of Christ, *i. e.*, with his cross, atonement, reconciliation, and redemption, as well as with his resurrection. Luther himself explicitly emphasizes

[59] In his other major work, *Two Kinds of Love*, Mannermaa offers a lively description of Luther's teaching on Christian life; Christians are called to be “Christ's” to their neighbors; “do to your neighbor what Christ has done to you.” See Mannermaa 2010, 67–75.

[60] On Augustine's concept of love, see Ruokanen 1993, 43–69.



the participation of the sinner both in the work and in the person of Christ as the content of divine saving grace. Second, Mannermaa reduces the scope of Luther's Pneumatology to the sphere of the sanctification of the justified sinner (point 3). In his *Lectures* Luther, however, clearly underscores the crucial role of God's Holy Spirit both in creating the justifying faith, *sola fide* (point 1), and in making both the divine person and the gifts of the work of Christ realistically and truly "present in the faith itself," i. e., present in the sinner (point 2). It is the Holy Spirit of Christ and of his Father alone who enables the presence of Christ in the faith and accomplishes the realistic union between Christ and the sinner: *unio cum Christo in Spiritu sancto*.

My remarks on Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther's *Lectures* are based on my close reading of Luther's *Lectures on Galatians*, and at the same time, as a framework of a wider reference, I pay attention to some of the results of my forthcoming volume analyzing Luther's *The Bondage of the Will*. This will eventually show that my remarks on Mannermaa have a foundation in the larger framework of Luther's theology. <sup>[61]</sup>

Why does Mannermaa offer a reduced, narrowed interpretation of Luther's comprehensive doctrine of grace in his *Lectures*? One might argue it is because of the context in which he wrote this small book of his; for the ecumenical dialogue between the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church and the Russian Orthodox Church. He wished to emphasize that there is a relevant point of contact—although not a full similarity—between the Orthodox doctrine of grace understood in the Greek Patristic term of *theosis* and Luther's special emphasis on understanding justification as participation in the divine nature of Christ. Perhaps it was not Mannermaa's intention to present the entire structure and content of Luther's doctrine of grace in the *Lectures*. Even if this were the case, there is a danger that a selective approach to Luther's thought may give the reader a twisted picture of the Reformer's teaching on grace. We need to present an authentic understanding of the true, complete, and coherent Trinitarian doctrine of grace in Luther's *Lectures* and in his overall theology. As we have seen, connecting *Lectures on Galatians* with *The Bondage of the Will* is helpful for seeing the more comprehensive view of Luther's doctrine of grace.

This is also an ecumenical imperative; paying due attention to all the above-mentioned aspects of the Trinitarian doctrine of justification will strengthen ecumenical dialogue on the doctrine of grace among the churches of the Reformation and between them and the Orthodox and the Catholic churches. For example, Pneumatology is a crucially important element in the Orthodox doctrine of *theosis*; therefore, strengthening the Pneumatological aspect of Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther's doctrine of justification will strengthen Mannermaa's intention of bringing Luther's view closer to Orthodox soteriology. It will also bring Luther's doctrine of grace closer to Pentecostal, Charismatic, and non-denominational interpretations of divine grace; these interpretations are becoming more and more influential in the development of global Christianity in our times. Moreover, highlighting the atonement, reconciliation, and redemption on the cross of Christ keeps Luther's doctrine of grace strongly connected with several Protestant interpretations of grace as well

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[61] Antti Raunio, one of the students of Mannermaa, sees the soteriology of Luther in a wider perspective which emphasizes Pneumatology and the cross. In his remarks on *The Bondage of the Will*, Raunio follows Mannermaa's paradigm by seeing Luther's conception of grace as "participation of the human being in divine love." But then Raunio continues: "Das Evangelium ist also ein Wort, mit dem der Geist und die Gnade zur Vergebung der Sünden durch den gekreuzigten Christus dargebracht werden." Raunio 1997, 85.

as with Catholic soteriology.

Mannermaa has been criticized for employing philosophical ontological terminology in his interpretation of Luther. Most importantly, the substance ontological term “real-ontic” participation, frequently used by Mannermaa, has been under attack. Using this expression, Mannermaa emphasized the justified sinner’s actual participation in the “divine nature” of Christ. According to the critics, Mannermaa’s terminology is ambiguous enough to imply the possibility of an ontological mingling of the human essence with the divine essence. Surprisingly, the harshest critic of Mannermaa, Reinhard Flogaus, makes no reference to Luther’s Pneumatology in his criticism. He could have used Pneumatology to highlight the difference between the Patristic view of deification, which is part of his own research, and the presumed “mix of divine substance with human substance” by Mannermaa. A typical German theologian under the influence of the paradigm of relational ontology, Flogaus only operates with the concepts of “word” and “faith.”<sup>[62]</sup> Andrea Vestrucci criticizes Mannermaa for mixing ontological and theological claims, for even “reducing theology to ontological speculation.” Neither does Vestrucci introduce Pneumatology as an alternative approach for understanding Luther’s concept of the union between Christ and the believer.<sup>[63]</sup> Both of these critics of Mannermaa focus on ontological problems only and lack reference to Luther’s Pneumatological language and mode of thought.

Patristic theology, which Mannermaa willingly refers to, strictly denies the possibility of the union of the created substance with the divine substance. Commenting on 2 Peter 1:4 was common among the church fathers, the expression “partakers of the divine nature” was understood as Christ “making us partakers of his divine nature through the Spirit,” not as a partaking in divine essence. The human being as a creature can just participate in divine person, divine life, and divine attributes, and this happens through the Holy Spirit. There is fluctuation between persons and personal properties through the presence of Christ in the Holy Spirit—this is how the properties of Christ are given to the sinner. Divine grace, which the sinner partakes of, remains alien justice, *iustitia aliena*, the property of the righteous person of Christ and of his gifts of salvation, made present and effective in the human being by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when speaking about union, participation, and deification, theosis, the fathers did not use ontological terms of philosophy but the Biblical language of Pneumatology. The human being’s union with divine life is a mystery which is by definition

[62] Flogaus 1997, 377-379. Mannermaa coined the term “real-ontic” in Finnish as “reaalis-onttinen.” It has been translated into German as “real-ontisch,” but, unfortunately, for instance, in the translation of Mannermaa’s main work *Christ Present in Faith*, an English translation “ontological” was used, which, of course, increased critical voices.

[63] “The Finnish school thinks of ontology very generally as ‘theological’ in order to avoid ‘reference to any philosophical (Platonic, Aristotelian, Kantian, existential) ontology.’ ... Thus I wonder whether aiming to speak of ontology with no reference to a tradition does not mean taking already a position within the plurality of ontologies. This applies to the Finns. Their ontology is based on a clear theoretical claim; the rejection of the exclusively relational ontology. This implies that the position of the Finnish school must present something that overcomes the limits of relational ontology.” Vestrucci 2019, 79.

Vestrucci wonders whether the conception of *unio cum Christo* can at all be an ontological statement; “such a statement implies knowledge of this unio.” “In sum, either the presence is not hidden and the ontological statement of its reality is possible, or it is hidden and no ontological statement is possible whatsoever. ... My position avoids mixing theology and ontology—or, more precisely, avoids reducing theology to ontological speculation.” Vestrucci ends up claiming that the ontological critique of the Finns is not valid; all ontologies are paradigmatic propositions and as such they are “formally identical—they are all paradigms—and thus it is fallacious to criticize one of them in light of another one.” *Ibid.*, 81-83. (Italics by A. V.)

simultaneously and inseparably both a Christological and a Pneumatological reality. The fathers did not try rationally to explain the mystery of the union, they contended themselves with using the language of Paul and John in the New Testament. So did Luther, he follows the fathers, his conception is similar to that of Irenaeus and Athanasius.

Norman Russell explains Irenaeus' use of the Pauline "exchange formula": "The 'exchange formula' has its roots in Pauline thinking; though Christ was rich, 'yet for our sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich' ... The 'exchange' signifies precisely that; an exchange of properties, not the establishment of an identity of essence." Russell continues to expose Irenaeus' thought: "The incarnation is part of a larger economy that enables us to participate in the divine attributes of immortality and incorruption and attain the telos which had been intended for Adam." Irenaeus employs the concept of adoption: "He who was Son of God by nature became a man in order to make us sons by adoption. ... The Spirit is at work throughout this process ... The Spirit is the Pauline 'guarantee of our inheritance.'" [64]

After Irenaeus, especially Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria continued to emphasize that Christ makes the humans "partakers of the divine nature through the Spirit." [65] The fathers deny "an identity of essence" between Christ and the human being, and teach participation in the divine attributes. It seems obvious that the fathers do not understand the statement of 2 Peter 1:4, also quoted by Mannermaa, in terms of a union of divine essence with human essence, but rather as participation in the person, life, and attributes of Christ—especially his incorruption and immortality—through the Holy Spirit. "There is no confusion between the essence of God and that of the human

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[64] Russell 2004, 108, 113. "Recapitulation" is a central concept of Irenaeus' theology; Irenaeus teaches that recapitulation of the human being with the Triune God can be accomplished solely by God's Holy Spirit: "These things, therefore, He recapitulated in Himself; by uniting man to the Spirit, and causing the Spirit to dwell in man, He is Himself made the head of the Spirit, and gives the Spirit to be the head of man; for through Him (the Spirit) we see, and hear, and speak." *Adversus Haereses*, V, 20, 1; *The Ante-Nicene Fathers Down to A. D. 325—The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus* 1, 548.

[65] Russell 2004, 203-204.

soul...”<sup>[66]</sup> John Behr confirms this understanding of Athanasius; “To whatever degree human beings partake of the divine nature, they do so from the outside; the gift remains other than what they are, and they are external to the divine essence.”<sup>[67]</sup>

John D. Zizioulas underlines the teaching of the Greek-speaking fathers on theosis in terms of a personal-not an essential-union between the Triune God and the believer: “This legitimate and imperative soteriological necessity for ‘deification’ can be satisfied only by pursuing the path of the person. The path of essence or of nature cannot lead to deification, because man cannot break the barrier between the natures of created and uncreated and be deified by nature. The essence of God (‘what God is’) remains not only unknown but not susceptible of participation—at least according to the Greek Patristic tradition.”<sup>[68]</sup> The Greek-speaking church fathers understand the union of humanity with divine life both in Christological and Pneumatological terms but make a distinction between the two inseparable economies of Christ and of the Holy Spirit; Christ divinizes humanity, whereas the Holy Spirit divinizes individuals. The Holy Spirit is the giver of grace to the human beings, he delivers God’s grace, the deifying gift. Vladimir Lossky interprets the Eastern doctrine of grace: “In Orthodox doctrine...the effect of the presence of the Trinity, is seen as uncreated grace, simply grace, the Gift or Gifts of the Holy Spirit, truly given ceded and truly received, acquired, appropriated by the person.”<sup>[69]</sup>

Adapting the simultaneity of the Christological and of the Pneumatological language would mean an important amendment for Mannermaa’s project. It would abolish the ambiguity involved with the use of the philosophical concepts leading to misunderstandings that contradict Mannermaa’s

[66] *Ibid.*, 151-152. The term “divine nature,” *theia physis*, is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, only 2 Peter 1:4 mentions it. As such it should not be placed over the other, frequently used soteriological terminology in the New Testament. Such terminology consists of, for instance, Paul’s frequently used expressions of personal union: “being in Christ,” “Christ in you,” “the Holy Spirit / the Spirit of Christ/ the Spirit of God in you,” “you in the Spirit,” etc. James Starr, 2000, argues that 2 Peter’s perspective is fundamentally Pauline, based on the simultaneity of Christological and Pneumatological realities.

David M. Gwynn maintains that, according to Athanasius, divine grace has a deeply Trinitarian nature: Grace is given from the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. The human being’s participation in Christ (Logos) and in God is possible exclusively through participation in the Holy Spirit. There is no communion in the gift of grace except in the Holy Spirit. Gwynn 2012, 73, 92.

Athanasius teaches the human being’s Pneumatological participation in God in his *Orationes contra Arianos*: “Therefore because of the grace of the Spirit which has been given to us, in him we come to be, and he in us; and since it is the Spirit of God, therefore through his becoming in us, reasonably are we, as having the Spirit, considered to be in God, and thus is God in us. ...the Spirit does not unite the Word to the Father, but rather the Spirit receives from the Word. And the Son is in the Father, as his proper Word and radiance; but we, apart from the Spirit, are strange and distant from God, and by the participation of the Spirit we are knit into the Godhead.” *Orationes contra Arianos*, III, 24; *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* 2/4, 406-407.

Also in his *De decretis* Athanasius expresses clearly his Pneumatological accent in teaching deification; the humans participate in the incarnated divinity of Christ through the Holy Spirit, without losing their human substance: “...that the Word was made flesh in order to offer up this body for all, and that we, partaking of His Spirit, might be deified, a gift which we could not otherwise have gained than by His clothing Himself in our created body, for hence we derive our name of ‘men of God’ and ‘men of Christ.’ But as we, by receiving the Spirit, do not lose our proper substance, so the Lord, when made man for us, and bearing a body, was no less God; for He was not lessened by the envelopment of the body, but rather deified it and rendered it immortal.” *De decretis*, III, 14; *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* 2/4, 159.

[67] Behr, 2004, 237.

[68] Zizioulas 2010, 31. (Italics by J. D. Z.)

[69] Lossky 2014, 81. Vladimir Lossky explains: “The work of Christ concerns human nature which He recapitulates in His hypostasis. The work of the Holy Spirit on the other hand concerns persons, being applied to each one singly...the one lends His hypostasis to nature, the other gives His divinity to the persons.” Lossky 1957, 166-167.

true intention. Thus it would strengthen the ecumenical relevance and reception of Mannermaa's interpretation of Luther.

Tuomo Mannermaa opened up a new, fresh perspective on an ecumenically relevant interpretation of Luther's doctrine of grace. We need to take some further steps on this road, clarifying and further developing his vision. Risto Saarinen has already started his elaboration, as indicated above. In addition, we need to invest more attention and energy on working out in more detail the full ecumenical potential of Martin Luther's Trinitarian doctrine of grace in terms of *unio cum Christo in Spiritu sancto*. This union is a mystery which cannot be fully explained by rational concepts, it is best preserved and transmitted by employing the realistic Scriptural language, just as Luther himself did.

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中文题目:

评析曼多马对马丁·路德《加拉太书讲义》的诠释

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**摘要:**曼多马教授在为路德的恩典神学开辟一个新的视角上完成了一个巧妙的普世神学成就:通过分析路德的《加拉太书讲义》(1531/1535),曼多马得出结论说,称义不仅表示一个关于罪人无罪的法庭式-法律性宣告,而且表示一个罪人与基督的亲密联合(或合一)(*unio cum Christo*)。在这个合一中,信徒有份于(或:参与)基督的神圣位格(the divine person)和神性(the divinity of Christ)。曼多马宣称,这种类型的合一可以被称为人的“神化”(the “deification” of the human being)。

本文赞同曼多马所发现的基要性概念“有份于”和“合一”,但同时,本文提出曼多马诠释路德时的一些问题。在曼多马的模式中有三个问题性的局限:第一,他忽略了作为能够创造称义的信心的唯一施动者和权力的圣灵。第二,曼多马集中于基督与罪人的合一上,而这称义的基础是惟独以罪人可以有份于其中的基督的位格、他的神性和圣爱。路德在其《加拉太书讲义》中关于赎罪、和好、通过基督的十字架而来的救赎、及基督的复活的有力教导,很明显地被强调的不够充分。第三,曼多马在基督与罪人的合一中没有重视圣灵的角色;对于路德来说,上帝与被称义的罪人之间的人格性合一(the personal union between God and the justified sinner)深深地是一个三一事实,基督论和圣灵论是本质上不可分的。

我对曼多马关于路德称义教义的诠释提出了三点修正。第一,对于“惟独信仰”进行圣灵论的理解,应该得到强调:是上帝的圣灵独作性使罪人皈依并创造出“基督就在其中的信”(the faith in which Christ is present)。第二,在路德理解“在圣灵里与基督合一”(unio cum Christo in Spiritu sancto)时,特别关注基督论和圣灵论的真实的的同时性,与教父救赎论强烈相关,将可以消除曼多马使用哲学本体论的概念所涉及的模糊性,避免产生与他的真正动机相矛盾的误解。第三,辨认出教父时期的神学家们和路德之间的连接,他们关于基督的位格(道成肉身)和基督的工作(十字架与复活)在救赎论里的不可分割性的类似教导,对于曼多马的路德诠释来说,也会成为一个重要的修正。

在圣灵里与基督合一,表示有份于基督的位格、生命/生活和神性、以及祂的十字架和复活-这个有份于/参与可以被称作“神化”(deification / theosis)。这三个修正将有益于加强曼多马对路德关于恩典/称义的三一性教义的普世神学意义和从而使其更容易被接纳。

**关键词:** 圣三一; 恩典; 赎罪; 惟独恩典; 惟独信仰; 信; 称义; 分享(有份于); 神化/成神; 与基督合一(联合); 在圣灵里合一