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A RELATIONAL MODEL OF CHRIST'S IMPECCABILITY AND TEMPTATION

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

John Elton McKinley

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APPROVAL SHEET

A RELATIONAL MODEL OF CHRIST'S

IMPECCABILITY AND TEMPTATION

John Elton McKinley

Read and Approved by:

Gregg R. Allison

Gregg R. Allison (Chairperson)

Bruce A. Ware

Bruce A. Ware

William F. Cook, III

William F. Cook, III

Date November 14, 2005

THESES Ph.D. .M459r
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953-)
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum (Vindobonae: F. Tempsky, 1866-)
CO	*Ioannis Calvini Opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. W. Baum, E. Cunitz, E. Reuss (Halle: C. A. Schwetschke & Sons, 1834-1900; reprint, New York: Johnston Reprint, 1964)
$NPNF^1$	A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series, ed. P. Schaff (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1886; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980)
$NPNF^2$	A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series, ed. P. Schaff (New York: Christian Literature, 1887-94; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975)
OS	*Johannis Calvini Opera Selecta*, ed. P. Barth and W. Niesel (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1926-62)
PG	Patrologia Graeca (Paris: J. –P. Migne, 1857-66)
PL	Patrologia Latina (Paris: J. –P. Migne, 1841-64)
ST	*St Thomas Aquinas Summa Theologiae* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965-74)
WA	*D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe.* (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1883-)

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PREFACE

No one works alone at anything that is worthwhile in life. This study emphasizes the importance of relationality in the life of Jesus. The interdependence and interlaced network of human relationality that is demonstrated maximally in his earthly life contradicts the modern emphasis on individuality and separation in fractured relationships that especially plagues Americans. Against the modern trend, a study of Jesus' relationality reminds us that human personal existence is a relational experience by which each individual stands in relationship to many others. This dissertation is no exception because my help from God has come in many forms of relationship with him above all and importantly with fellow Christians.

My parents have offered continued friendship and encouragement since I left their home after college. Their prayers for me throughout these years are probably more valuable than I can count. In addition, my wife's parents, Richard and Mary Striegel, have been supportive, generous, and encouraging throughout this project.

My professors at the Talbot School of Theology (Biola University) prepared me to study theology with a special interest in Christology and sanctification. Subsequently, my professors at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary provided the necessary challenges and guidance for the project to take form as a dissertation. Among the several who have helped me along, Bruce A. Ware first suggested the topic in response to my interests in Christology and sanctification. My supervisor, Gregg R. Allison, guided me into the planning and research of the topic. His ongoing assistance by suggestions and frequent encouragement throughout my research and writing has been exactly what I needed to proceed. His ideas that are included among my writing are too

many to give him credit for them individually. I am also indebted to my other readers, Bill Cook and Bruce Demarest for their work to read the dissertation and provide feedback.

The people of Cornerstone Community Church in Indiana have been an ongoing support for my wife and me during our years with Campus Crusade and now more recently during doctoral study. Cornerstone generously offered us a ministry position and a supportive church family to sustain us during doctoral study. The flexibility they allowed me has been important to finish this dissertation faster than was otherwise possible. A continuing role in vocational ministry has also been valuable to stretch me between the academic study of theology and the practical applications of theology to the life of the church. Cornerstone allowed me to work out and share the fruit of my research in regular preaching about temptation, Jesus' example, and sanctification.

Among the help of several friends, Keith Poppen has been a close brother encouraging me in our regular appointments that stretch over a decade. I first entered seminary in response to his encouragement, and he has continually urged me integrate theology and life, doctrine and devotion, revelation and relationship—as in this study.

Most especially of all, Rebecca McKinley continues to be God's gift to assist me in this adventure of knowing God in Jesus Christ. She has borne the sacrifices for theological study along with me, making a home in which our two delightful children can thrive. She is a constant encouragement to me and deserves more praise than I can offer here. She contributes to me in countless ways without which I could not have persisted in theology and this research project. In relationship with her, I am most fully able to reflect on the wonder of Jesus Christ and his relationships in earthly life as a human being.

John McKinley

Floyds Knobs, Indiana

December 2005

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In his notorious novel, *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1960), Nikos Kazantzakis reconstructs Jesus as a man tortured by lifelong sexual desires for Mary Magdalene. The fantastical portrayal contradicts the traditional view that Jesus was asexual. This offended Christians from many quarters.[1] Nonetheless, *The Last Temptation* expresses a trend that has become common in recent centuries: Jesus was a normal man with ordinary desires and temptations shared by all. The popularity of this contemporary view of Jesus also shows in the bestselling success of Dan Brown's novel, *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), a concocted legend told as documented history about a line of people descended from Jesus' daughter, Sophia, by marriage to Mary Magdalene. These examples suggest that modern authors and readers prefer a degraded view of Jesus; instead of the God-man, they embrace the bare humanness of Jesus as merely one historical man among others. Many theologians have not been far behind, as in the nineteenth-century proliferation of lives-of-Jesus studies that stripped Christ of either his divinity or his historicity as a real man, or both.[2]

This modern revival of the ancient ebionitic heresy (Jesus was merely a remarkable man, not the preexistent Son of God) recalls the early struggle in the Church to explain the biblical evidence for Jesus the divine Messiah. According to the NT and

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[1]The observation that theologians prior to the last century have underplayed Jesus' sexuality is noted by Bernard L. Ramm, *An Evangelical Christology: Ecumenic & Historic* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 84. Ramm notes approvingly that Norman Pittenger reverses this trend by affirming Jesus' sexuality as part of his valid humanity. Pittenger and Ramm are not alone; other examples could be cited.

[2]Fisher H. Humphreys, "The Humanity of Christ in Some Modern Theologies," *Faith and Mission* 5 (1988): 3-13. Humphreys notes that Ernest Renan, *The Life of Jesus* (1863), is typical of the emphasis on Jesus' humanity and historicity to the diminution of his divinity; D. F. Strauss, *Life of Jesus* (1835), is typical of the critical scholarship that dispensed with historicity and divinity.

orthodox Christian faith, Jesus deserves worship as the exalted Lord and Savior who is able to save humanity because he is God incarnate. Early affirmations about Jesus in the Church's proclamation of the gospel established his divinity and humanity despite many competing proposals that diminished both claims. In the first few centuries of the Church, docetism and Apollinarianism diminished Christ's humanity while ebionitism and Arianism diminished his divinity. Other proposals construed the teaching about Christ in ways that were unacceptable, as in Nestorianism (the separation of his two natures into two personal subjects) and Eutychianism (the confusion of his two natures into one incarnate nature).

The Church progressively excluded these heresies as unacceptable interpretations of the biblical evidence for Jesus of Nazareth and established orthodox boundaries in response to these misguided formulations. Thus, following several centuries of theological contests, the Fourth Council (Chalcedon, 451) decisively clarified the orthodox biblical teaching that Jesus is fully divine and fully human, without confusion, change, separation, or division of the two natures. Chalcedonian Christology helpfully articulated the essential conclusions of Christ's two natures joined by union in one person, and defined the boundaries of orthodox teaching about Christ. The struggle to sharpen orthodox teaching among the variety of proposals indicates the difficulty of the Christological question about the content and relationship of Jesus' divinity and humanity.

Nonetheless, this definition did not address further problems stemming from the basic intuition that humanity and divinity seem qualitatively and quantitatively incompatible. The Chalcedonian definition described the basic truth of God incarnate, but many questions remained concerning how this doctrine of Christ's two-natured, divine-human existence could be coherent. How can one person be both omnipotent and weak? How can the Creator and source of life take up creaturely existence and die? How can one person function with two wills in two natures? Chalcedon cleared the stage of

heretical pretenders, but the Chalcedonian definition also set the stage anew for disputes about these and other questions that pressed for understanding the ways and means of God incarnate.

Theologians have been able to explain the many incongruities of divinity and humanity more or less satisfactorily by maintaining the distinction between Jesus' two natures in two conditions of existence. According to his condition of existence as the divine Son, Jesus is omniscient and omnipotent; according to his existence as a man, Jesus is limited in knowledge and subject to the normal human weaknesses—even death. While these explanations have not convinced all that the traditional Christological doctrine is coherent,[3] many evangelical theologians and Christian believers are satisfied with this foundational patristic interpretation of Scripture. Despite this satisfaction with the tradition, many Christological problems have proven to be difficult to explain adequately. One problem that will be the focus of this study is the apparent incongruity between Jesus' divine impeccability and his human temptability.

Statement of the Problem

Among the several points of apparent contradiction between the attributes of divinity and humanity, one that has provoked much disagreement is the incompatibility of divine impeccability and human temptability. Morally, at least three problems are noticeable. First, Scripture indicates that God cannot sin (e.g., Titus 1:2) or even be tempted to sin (Jas 1:13).[4] By contrast, God incarnate was tempted to sin on many occasions (cf. Heb 4:15), particularly in direct confrontation with Satan (Mark 1:12-13

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[3]Thomas V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), reviews and addresses the contemporary philosophical objections to the incarnation, among which are the incoherence of the numerical identity of Jesus and God, and the cosmological incongruence of divinity and humanity.

[4]But notice that God can be tested by humans in the sense that they can challenge his character and will, e.g., Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:9) and the issue of circumcising Gentiles (Acts 15:10). This sort of testing is not a temptation to sin. W. R. Baker, "Temptation," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, ed. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 1166.

par.). The divine inability to be tempted seems to contradict human vulnerability to temptation: how could God incarnate experience the moral struggle of temptation if God cannot be tempted to sin? A common answer is that Jesus was temptable according to his humanity. Thus, temptation is regarded as a marker of his real humanity; sinlessness indicates his real divinity.

Second, many theologians in recent centuries assume that temptability entails peccability—the possibility of choosing sin is assumed to be a necessary condition for a real experience of temptation. If God incarnate is impeccable, then how can he have had any sort of struggle when he immutably chooses good? Thus, impeccability and temptability seem to be mutually exclusive attributes. Because Scripture is clear that Jesus was tempted, how can he be impeccable in any sense that is compossible with his temptability? Common answers are that Jesus' temptation was the struggle to choose among many good options (but never among evil choices), or that Jesus' human peccability limited his divine impeccability, or that he was unaware of his impeccability and may have believed that sinful options were possible for him. The variety of answers to this question demonstrates the confusion, troubling proposals, and need for a clear answer in contemporary theology.

Third, contemporary philosophers have objected that the supposed sinlessness of God incarnate is not a praiseworthy accomplishment because he could not sin. The claim that Jesus possesses the divine attribute of necessary goodness (impeccability) disqualifies him from praiseworthiness for never having sinned. Critics charge that the claim of Jesus' impeccable sinlessness is nonsense—how can Jesus be praised for not having done what he could not do? A common answer is that Jesus (and God) must be able to sin. These are some of the moral problems that are concomitant with the traditional claim of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

A theological problem with the traditional claim is that the orthodox faith includes the affirmation that Jesus' impeccability extends to his humanity, but otherwise

he is not omnipotent, omniscient, or immortal as a man. These last three (and other) divine attributes seem inconsistent with authentic human existence; indeed, the Gospels report that Jesus was vulnerable to the common human weaknesses of hunger, thirst, fatigue, limited knowledge, and death. The exception is impeccability; Jesus was not vulnerable to sin in the way that is common to humanity. Theology makes an exception because of the plain problem that peccability entails possible sin, and sin is impossible for God and even God incarnate. Nonetheless, the exception seems to undermine the full humanity of Jesus because many contemporary theologians assume that peccability is essential to human freedom (cf. Adam and Eve before the Fall, and all fallen humanity). The problem of special pleading for impeccability seems to undermine the coherence of the orthodox doctrine. Moreover, until recently, theologians have traditionally affirmed that Jesus' sinlessness—declared many times in the NT as a redemptive necessity (e.g., 1 Pet 1:18-19)—is an expression of his divine impeccability. Thus, the overriding moral strength of his divine attribute seems to have canceled the humanness of Jesus' temptations in a way that is inconsistent with, and alienates Jesus from common human experience.

Two other problems arise from the biblical evidence for Jesus' temptations as experiences that are redemptively relevant for the Church. First, Scripture exhorts Christians to copy Jesus' pattern of life in humble obedience to God (Phil 2:5-11) and particularly with reference to his exemplary refusal to sin when he suffered unjustly (1 Pet 2:21-24). Because Jesus is the example for others to follow in resisting temptation to sin, and he is uniquely impeccable despite his assumed humanity, then how can he be a credible and relevant pattern for others who are not divinely immune to sin as he is? The exhortation seems plainly unrealistic and misapplied to those who are mere human beings because they possess all the common human susceptibility to sin—which Jesus apparently lacked—without possessing his advantage of the divine immunity to sin. Thus, Jesus' relevance as an example in resisting temptation seems to be nullified by his

impeccability. In response, some contemporary theologians seek to save Jesus' relevance by canceling his impeccability.

A second problem of relevance is that Scripture reassures Christians that Jesus is empathetic for others who are tempted (Heb 2:17-18). His ability to sympathize with others and his readiness to offer help are constituted by his own experiences of having been tempted as a man as others are. His temptations are the proof that he understands what others experience and consequently has help to give them that is relevant to their situation of temptability. The problem with the affirmation of Jesus' impeccability is that this undermines his relevance to be empathetic: his innate immunity to sin implies that he does not understand the strain of temptation as a personal, internal experience of struggle against enticement to sin. Accordingly, the author of the book of Hebrews addresses the possible misgivings of his readers by elaborating the claim that Jesus was tempted significantly to the same extent that they are (Heb 4:15), and then he illustrates this claim by recalling Jesus' struggle in Gethsemane (Heb 5:7-8). Right on the point of the readers' possible objection to Jesus' ability to empathize with their experience of temptation, the author writes that Jesus' struggle to obey God in the setting of his suffering and temptation was not mitigated by his divinity: "Although he was the Son, he learned obedience from what he suffered" (καίπερ ὢν υἱός, ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν, Heb 5:8).[5] Thus, Scripture is clear that Jesus was tempted, and because of his temptations, he can empathize with and help other people resist their temptations. Against this biblical evidence, the claim of Jesus' impeccability seems to nullify Jesus' relevance as priest for the people because his immunity to sin prevents him from being able to experience temptation the way they do.

These several moral, philosophical, and theological problems illustrate the complexity and difficulty of the traditional affirmation of Jesus' impeccability and

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[5]Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Scripture are mine. The Greek text for this and all subsequent NT quotations is from *Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. Eberhard and Erwin Nestle, 27th ed., rev. Barbara Aland and Kurt Aland et al. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993).

temptation. This difficulty is a subset of the basic Christological problem of how to reconcile coherently the biblical evidence for Jesus' full divinity and full humanity. Because of the clear entailments from biblical evidence for Jesus' two natures, and because of the further evidence for his sinlessness and temptation, the orthodox faith includes the paradoxical claim that Jesus, in his earthly life, was both impeccable and temptable. In answer to the question of how this paradox can be true and not self-defeating, many wise and pious theologians have responded simply: Because he was God. Theological giants such as Augustine of Hippo have affirmed plainly that Jesus triumphed over his temptation because he was God, implying the tautology that he remained sinless because he was unable to sin. Others throughout the tradition have offered the alternate answer that Jesus, to be an example for others, resisted temptation on other means than simply by relying on his divine impeccability.

Moreover, some innovative contemporary proposals seek to reconcile the problems by humanizing Jesus' divinity to be peccable, but they also affirm that he still overcame temptation successfully to remain sinless. This troublesome answer is echoed at the popular level: evangelical Church members will commonly affirm both that Jesus could have sinned (hence his real temptation) and that he overcame temptation because he was God. Aside from the inconsistency of this claim that Jesus was peccable despite his divinity (presumably on parallel with his capability to be weak despite his divine omnipotence) and the troubling implication for reformulating the doctrine of God to include peccability, the paradox remains unresolved. Worse still, Jesus' relevance in the peccability proposal remains nullified because of his recourse to the special advantage of innate divine powers in his earthly life as a man. Thus, following the example of God incarnate is no more reasonable than imitating God in his condition of existence as the eternal, immutable, and infinite Creator. God, despite having made human beings in his image and likeness, is qualitatively and quantitatively different from his creatures. Divine incarnation has not advanced God's assistance for humanity to have an example and

priest who wrestled on human terms and thus understands human difficulty in temptation. These proposals have no doubt discouraged many in the Church from taking solace from Jesus' empathy and courage from his example with the promise of support in the time of need (Heb 4:16).

Therefore, the problem of Jesus' impeccability and temptation has practical implications for the life of the Church. Christians need an explanation of the biblical and theological evidence that will clarify and illuminate Jesus' experience of temptation and impeccability, and inspire their own faithfulness after his pattern. A contemporary model of Christ's impeccability and temptation is needed to show how the disparate, paradoxical interpretations of the biblical evidence are true and valuable for Christians' everyday experience of temptation. In response to the cluster of problems related to Christ's impeccability and temptation and the need for a contemporary model, we will proceed through a thorough course of studying the topic by the methodology to be explained as follows. The goal of this study is to propose a model to meet the contemporary need.

Methodology

The methodology that we will follow is a combination of historical research, biblical exegesis, critical analysis, and theological proposal. We will gather the relevant theological and biblical evidence, and then evaluate the conclusions, formulate a proposal, and test the proposal for accuracy and adequacy as a model. This retroductive methodology is a dynamic process of reasoning to the best explanation of the data, and then testing that explanation in relation to the evidence. Within this methodology, we will follow several limitations of scope and a specific sequence.

Scope. This is a theological study within the broader topic of Christology with significant doctrinal overlap with sanctification. This study, however, will not propose a Christology or develop a distinct model of sanctification. Furthermore, as theological

research, this study will not emphasize psychological and philosophical accounts of temptation. We will seek assistance from these disciplines as they have proven helpful, but we are not assuming the burden of drawing significantly or contributing to the way our topic is understood in those disciplines.

Although our study will include both historical theology and biblical exegesis, our goal is neither to recount a history of the doctrines nor to formulate a biblical theology of Christ's impeccability and temptation. The purpose of using these materials is to draw from the main stream of orthodox theology and the biblical source; the goal is to formulate a proposal that is adequate for contemporary theology in the Western, Protestant, evangelical setting. To this end, the methodology is designed to assemble the materials for construction of a model that is biblically accurate, theologically rich, and relevant for the contemporary setting.

Accordingly, the historical-theological scope of our study will begin with patristic theology, narrow to Western Roman Catholic theology in the medieval period, and then follow primarily the models in Protestant evangelical theology from the Reformation to the present. The scope of contemporary theology is primarily limited to American and European Protestant scholarship; excluded are liberation theology, process theology, feminist theology, and global theologies. Although we will not pursue an exhaustive study of the material that has been included and excluded here, no evidence has become known to indicate that the limited historical-theological scope has missed formulations that constitute a model distinct from those apparent in the main stream of theology preserved in Western orthodoxy. Within the historical-theological scope we have defined, the research is not exhaustive to consider everything that has been written on the topic, but we have sought to be thorough enough to be confident that important contributions have not been missed. Thus, and despite our limited scope, the historical portion spans one third of this study.

The scope of our study will be limited as a theological topic to the dual

affirmation of Christ's impeccability and temptation as entailed by orthodox, Chalcedonian Christology. We accept the orthodox affirmations that cause the cluster of problems and necessitate a contemporary model, as noted above; hence, we take up the burden of explaining the problem that results from affirming both claims, and we do not assume the burden of defending either the claim for Jesus' impeccability or his temptation.

In recent centuries, divine impeccability has been questioned as inconsistent with divine freedom, praiseworthiness, and the divine attribute of omnipotence. Similar charges may be raised against the claim of Christ's impeccability. Most theologians readily accept Jesus' sinlessness, but some contemporary scholars have questioned Jesus' impeccability. The value of a special study to clarify and argue the evidence for Christ's impeccability is clear.[6] Nonetheless, we will be limited in this study to the compossibility of Christ's impeccability with his temptation. Thus, a presupposition that persists throughout this study—consistent with the main stream of theology until the modern period—is that Christ was impeccable despite his full humanity and experience of temptations to sin. The majority of theologians have recognized this, and most evangelical theologians continue to affirm this position in the present day.

Thus, despite the contemporary objections, we do not adopt a position on the topic that has no defense or long tradition in theology. We accept the burden of the dilemma because of our confidence that a solid defense for both claims could be presented, were sufficient space available. Moreover, having accepted the dilemma of Christ's impeccability and temptation, our goal will be to clarify and provide a better understanding of the biblical and theological evidence. As part of further defining the scope of our study so we may achieve this task, we will make explicit several other

---

[6]A good job defending Christ's impeccability has been done by Howard C. Zabriskie, "The Impeccability of Christ" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1938). Zabriskie's dissertation elaborates some of the same arguments that are presented vigorously in the eighteenth century by Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, ed. Paul Ramsey, vol. 1 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 281-94. Also, William G. T. Shedd has a thorough defense in his *Dogmatic Theology*, ed. Alan W. Gomes, 3rd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2003), 659-71.

presuppositions and definitions. These limitations are concomitant with the goal of proposing an adequate model for Western, Protestant, evangelical theology—and particularly in North America.

First, throughout this study, Scripture will persist as the unquestionable and final authority because the Bible is God's word revealed to humanity in human language. Interpretations of Scripture may be questioned and adjusted because these are the fallible human perception of revelation, but the biblical revelation will remain the decisive and truthful content for our understanding of Jesus Christ. Scripture provides the starting points for our Christological method and functions as the primary framework for evaluating theological conclusions. Our goal throughout is to be guided by Scripture and to remain accurate to biblical revelation in all our study, evaluation, and proposal.

Second, our presupposition is that Scripture reveals God as trinity: God is eternally Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All discussion of the three persons and their relationality in this study depends on the biblically-warranted claim that each of the three persons is fully God, and God is numerically one in his essence. The recognition of the trinity in Scripture allows incarnational Christology: the eternal, preexistent Son and Logos assumed human nature to live in a second condition of existence as a man and die for sinners.

Third, we will presuppose Chalcedonian Christology, that Jesus is God the Son who preexisted his incarnation. Jesus is the God-man, one person in two natures, fully God and fully man. Accordingly, this presupposition includes the traditional claims that Jesus could be tempted but he could not sin. We will offer some explanations to understand how this and other apparent paradoxes can be understood, but in advance of those arguments, we affirm with the orthodox tradition that such is the case for Jesus, whether or not we can satisfactorily understand the biblical-theological paradox.

Moreover, we presuppose five claims about Jesus' authentic human nature. (1) Jesus was not in a condition of spiritual death that is the consequence of Adam's guilt

for original sin (racial alienation from God because of guilt for sin). Jesus came in the *likeness* of sinful flesh (Rom 8:3), but was not himself sinful or implicated with Adam's guilt. (2) Jesus lacked corrupt desires that result from personal sin and spiritual death. (3) Jesus was voluntarily susceptible to the sufferings of sickness, pain, and death that accrued to Adam's race as consequences of original sin in the world. (4) Jesus was not able to sin but could be tempted to it. (5) Jesus' humanity was similar enough to those whom he redeems that he could be both an acceptable substitute to satisfy God's justice and a reasonable example for his followers. These five affirmations and denials are an alternative to the traditional ways of categorizing the states of humanity (e.g., pre-Fall, unregenerate, regenerate, glorified) and comparing them with Jesus' humanity. Whatever is meant by those in recent centuries who claim that Jesus assumed a *fallen* human nature (e.g., Edward Irving, Karl Barth), we disclaim that term as misleading and prefer the descriptive alternative of our five claims. These claims are minimal and not a comprehensive statement of Christ's humanity, but they are especially relevant for our study.

Fourth, we presuppose the specific definitions of some terms. *Impeccability* refers to the absolute inability of a person to commit sin. An impeccable person (1) has never sinned, (2) cannot sin in any actual state of affairs (i.e., not in any possible world), and (3) will never be able to commit sinful action or even intend to do so. Thus, impeccability is the negative statement of necessary goodness. An impeccable person is essentially and immutably good. Impeccability is thus a form of ethical immutability or the moral fixedness of the person to be unchangeably good and righteous.

A related theological term, *sinlessness*, refers to the person's actual lack of ever having sinned. Sinlessness is an entailment of impeccability but does not entail impeccability since mutable beings (e.g., angels, Adam and Eve before the Fall) can be potentially sinless and may cease to be so if they should sin. A peccable person *may* be sinless; an impeccable person *must* be sinless. The property of sinlessness means

positively that the person is pure and unstained in relation to evil.

Temptation has the specific sense of enticement to sin. Excluded is the peculiarly positive sense of temptation, as in merely a strong desire that does not necessarily involve a sin (e.g., the temptation to run another mile for athletic enjoyment). Temptation involves a sinful prospect and a desire leading to that sin. Throughout this study, temptation (and the related terms *tempted*, *tempting*, and *temptable*) always involves a sinful prospect.

Sequence. Within the limits of our scope, and according to our methodology, the study will proceed in the sequence of seven chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 will report the results of our historical research. The limitation on our study is to develop a taxonomy of the historical models of Christ's impeccability and temptation, not a history of doctrine *per se*. Seven main models are apparent in historical theology. Chapter 2 reports the description and representatives of four patristic models along with the historical-cultural setting within which they were developed. As is normally the case with patristic theology, these early models represent the majority of theological development of this topic and are thus foundational. Subsequent periods draw heavily from the four patristic models. Even some of the supposed innovations in contemporary theology are anticipated in one or other of the patristic models. Chapter 3 reports descriptions and representatives of three models in the medieval, Reformation, and modern periods. For each period, we will consider the setting, distinctive developments of the model for that period, and representatives of each model. The contemporary discussion will be included with the modern period (spanning the eighteenth to twentieth centuries).

Chapter 4 contains the biblical source material that is relevant to Christ's impeccability and temptation. The historical models suggest key passages and themes to consider here, and chapter 4 will seek a fresh interpretation of these biblical data for comparison with the theological models. The exegetical conclusions reached here will be foundational both for evaluation of the historical models and formulation of a

contemporary proposal. The passages considered here are grouped in four categories of evidence for (1) Jesus' temptation and (2) sinlessness, (3) the relevance of each for salvation, and (4) the ethical role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Messiah. The accuracy of the exegetical conclusions directly affects the accuracy and adequacy of the proposal.

Chapter 5 sets forth an evaluation of the seven theological models. The models are tested for accuracy in conformity to the biblical data and coherence with other biblical doctrines—especially Christology, soteriology, and pneumatology. The goal of this evaluation is to draw the valuable aspects of the historical models and note the problems that render these models inadequate for contemporary theology. The enduring value and benefit for these historical models will be retained in the positive formulation of our proposal.

Chapter 6 presents our proposal of a relational model of Christ's impeccability and temptation. The formulation is an attempt to include the theological advances of the historical models while avoiding the problems. The proposal seeks to clarify and illuminate the biblical and theological evidence in a way that aids understanding of particular aspects while also gathering all the evidence with the unifying concept of relationality. The proposal is offered as the best explanation of the data in a way that is a coherent and relevant contribution to contemporary evangelical theology, especially in its Western setting.

Chapter 7 presents an evaluation of the proposal in relation to the problems of earlier models and offers it as a more adequate solution and explanation of the evidence. As part of this test, five objections to the proposal will be considered and addressed. This evaluation completes our approach to gather the theological and biblical evidence, analyze the data, propose a model, and test our proposal for coherence and adequacy. Passing the test, our model commends itself in place of the other models.

In conclusion, chapter 8 explores implications of the proposal for other

doctrines. Several implications are apparent for Christology, soteriology, and eschatology. Other implications are likely. These implications commend the value of the proposed model for its relevance beyond the topic of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

Thesis

In response to the problem, chapter 6 proposes a relational model of Christ's impeccability and temptation. This model defines temptation as a relational problem that Christ meets and challenges with a relational solution. The solution is the explanation that Christ resisted temptation by relying on the divine assistance provided by his Father in at least five aspects of relational grace (divine assistance mediated relationally to enable and facilitate Jesus' human, voluntary choice for right). Jesus could have relied on divine impeccability, but for the sake of becoming an empathetic example for others who are not divinely impeccable as he is, Jesus chose to rely instead on other means of support by the relational grace that God provides for all believers. Thus, Christ is the reasonable example for others to resist temptation to sin on the same terms that he did. In brief, the description of this model is that Christ was *temptable* by pneumatological veiling of his divine power in his human frame of reference and *sinless* by relying on relational grace.

The model has three primary claims: (1) Jesus' impeccability was natural, personal, and relational; (2) his temptation was a relational experience; and (3) his sinlessness was a relational accomplishment. By relying on relational grace to resist temptation to sin, Jesus became empathetic and exemplary for others. His pattern of life is reasonable and attainable for Christians to copy according to the same relational grace that Jesus relied upon during his earthly life.

Central to this model is the unifying concept of relationality. Relationality denotes the dynamically interpersonal and creaturely connectedness that characterizes human existence. Human experience is a relational existence, and contemporary theologians have increasingly become aware of this concept despite the Western

tendency to individualism and self-determination. To illustrate this trend, John McIntyre observes two clichés that have gained prominence in the twentieth century: "Persons are essentially relational in character," and "The essence of persons is the relations in which they stand."[7] Relationality means that relationships are constitutive *means* for personal existence; relational connections to others are vital for human existence. Human beings are irreducibly relational in their making by God to bear his image. Associations and communications with others are not merely external transactions for human beings; these relationships bear the potential for expansive and substantive life.

The emphasis on the relationality of human persons coincides with the contemporary surge of interest in the social analogy of the trinity. The persons of the Godhead are commonly recognized as persons in the modern sense of psychological centers of thinking and willing in a dynamic self-giving of love and cooperation.[8] By application to our Christological study, the relationality of the trinitarian persons underscores the importance of relationality for understanding God incarnate.

Relationality is implicit in the biblical and theological evidence for Christ's impeccability and temptation—he was tempted in the setting of personal relationships,

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[7]John McIntyre, *Theology after the Storm*, ed. Gary D. Badcock (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 277-78. McIntyre explains the development of these clichés: "When the notion of persons as being always persons-in-relation was first mooted some fifty years ago, it very soon established itself as a dominant theological concept. The foundation for its popularity had originally been laid by Martin Buber's *I and Thou*, but it was through John Macmurray, especially in his Gifford Lectures, bearing the collective title, *The Form of the Personal*, that it became a philosophy of persons with emphasis upon the importance of the relationships into which they entered. The contribution of this insight into the nature of persons to philosophy and theology in the second quarter of this century can not be overemphasized." Others developing the concept of relationality are James E. Loder and W. Jim Neidhardt, *The Knight's Move: The Relational Logic of the Spirit in Theology and Science* (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1992); Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001); and F. LeRon Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology: After the Philosophical Turn to Relationality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). Moreover, another cliché reminds us of the relationality of human beings: "No man is an island."

[8]Colin Gunton is a representative proponent of the social trinity in his *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991). McIntyre, *Theology*, 281, gives a definition of the social trinity: "In such a Godhead the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are thought of as forming a *societas* of equal persons united by mutual love and understanding, and in full communion with one another through the process of *emperichoresis* (interpenetration), much referred to in classical accounts of the intra-trinitarian relations of the persons." Nonetheless, McIntyre limits the social analogy to the relations of the persons *ad extra*, and retains the *ad intra* relations according to the traditional relations of *paternitas, filiatio, procesio.*

and he resisted temptation by the means provided in personal relationships. The explicit orientation of this evidence to the concept of relationality clarifies and illuminates the different aspects of Jesus' impeccability and temptation. In particular, the model's emphasis on the relationality of Jesus' earthly experience elucidates how closely his temptation matches others' experience of temptation. Among the several points of correspondence between Jesus' relational experience and others' relational experience, the involvement of the Holy Spirit is a prominent relationship.

Therefore, we will arrive at this proposal of a relational model of Christ's impeccability and temptation in chapter 6. This proposal will be the critical and positive response to the theological and biblical evidence to which we now turn, beginning with the patristic models of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

CHAPTER 2

FOUR PATRISTIC MODELS OF CHRIST'S IMPECCABILITY AND TEMPTATION

In its first millennium, the Church formulated four models of Christ's impeccability and temptation as part of the larger task of Christological reflection. Our contemporary statement of a model of Christ's impeccability and temptation will depend on historical theology for building material, so we will expose the main contributions without chronicling the historical developments of doctrine. While we will not rehearse the entire history here, we do need to remember the circumstances that influenced Christological developments during the early centuries of the Church: geopolitical interests and problems, philosophical contexts, heresies, ecclesiastical politics, and other cultural changes that swirled around the formulation of theology. These historical conditions influenced theology in its development of several Christological models that emphasized different aspects of union and integrity of the two natures in Christ. This is not the place for a critique of Christological models or the conciliar judgments of what constitutes heresy and orthodoxy about Christ; instead, our goal is simply to uncover the main models of Christ's impeccability and temptation that will inform our contemporary statement of a model.[1]

The data of historical theology in the patristic period suggest four main models of impeccability and temptation for God incarnate: (1) Sinless by Innate Impeccability, (2) Sinless by Deification, (3) Sinless by the Divine Hegemony, and (4) Sinless by Empowering Grace. We will evaluate these models in a later chapter, so in the discussion

[1]Theologians of dubious reputation such as Apollinaris, Origen, Nestorius, and others are included because of their attention to this specific issue of impeccability and temptation, but others such as Paul of Samosata, Arius, and Pelagius are so problematic (e.g., diminishing the deity of Christ and the force of sin) that they are unhelpful and thus excluded.

here we will include both orthodox and unorthodox formulations to learn from these varied attempts to explain the biblical data—despite their problems.[2] The models are not mutually exclusive of each other; they have significant agreement because of the presuppositions common to all of them. Some presuppositions became common because of heretical proposals (e.g., Arius, Apollinaris). Other presuppositions are the common assumptions of patristic philosophical theology within the Hellenistic setting.

Church thinkers often do not treat the topics of Christ's impeccability and temptation thoroughly or systematically. More often the case is that writers allude to a model as part of discussing a biblical text or a theological topic that is more pressing, such as the coherence of divine impassibility and Jesus' suffering. Some representatives surveyed here will supply material to more than one model because they are attempting more than one way to explain the biblical data. This is not to say that these theologians are inconsistent, or that they change their views over time (though they may have, as with Nestorius). By including one or another theologian as a representative of a model is also not to say that he totally disagrees with the other models and does not support them in any sense as truthful (but in some cases there was clear and mutual disagreement, as in the dispute between Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius).

Some representatives of the models agree with each other (and disagree with others) regarding a model of impeccability and temptation as a subset of their broader agreement on the principles and results of a particular Christological type. For example, most Alexandrians agree on a model of Christ's impeccability and temptation as part of their commitment to the unity of Christ; those who are sympathetic with the Antiochene emphasis on the integrity of Christ's two natures likewise agree with each other on a model of his impeccability and temptation. Nevertheless, our concern is not the detailed study of individual contributors and evaluating which model they agree with most;

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[2]While not exhaustive of all the patristic writers and all their writings, this study is an attempt to cover thoroughly the breadth of theology for the period. Based on what I have uncovered, it does not seem that extending the study in depth and breadth exhaustively would yield more models than what I have reported here.

instead, we seek the larger trends of thought as the building blocks from which we can form a contemporary model in light of their collective wisdom. In the patristic period, the data suggest the main models that will be the basis for further reflection by theologians in later periods.

Background to the Patristic Models

Several common presuppositions influenced theological developments during this first period of the Church. We will briefly consider five categories of common presuppositions that account for the major likenesses among the models of Christ's impeccability and temptation before moving on to the models themselves. These five categories are the Nicene faith, soteriological requirements, opposition to heresies, theories of physical union, and the philosophical setting. The final part of our discussion of the background is to consider briefly the divergent Christological models and the geopolitical setting of the patristic Christological debates that yield models of impeccability and temptation.

Common Presuppositions

The Nicene faith. First, the models developed in the patristic period presuppose the Nicene faith of Christ as ὁμοούσιος with the Father.[3] This entails Jesus' preexistence as the divine Son and a monotheistic view of God as triune Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Christ's preexistence and divine nature are commonly noted as the divine πνεῦμα, often used as a term for the divine nature and a way of protecting the monotheistic concept of God. An early example of this is the way Clement of Alexandria calls Jesus "the Spirit incarnate."[4] Similarly, Hilary of Poitiers used *spiritus* and *virtus* as synonyms for the divine substance shared by the Son and the Father, and the divine

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[3]Frances M. Young, "Christological Ideas in the Greek Commentaries on the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 20 (1969): 151.

[4]Clement of Alexandria *Paedagogus* 1.6.43.3, ed. M. Marcovich, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae [SVC], 61 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 28. "'Η τροφή, τουτέστιν [ὁ] κύριος 'Ιησοῦς, τουτέστιν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, πνεῦμα σαρχούμενον, ἁγιαζομένη σὰρξ οὐράνιος."

nature in Christ.[5]

Soteriological requirements. Second, all contributors hold to the soteriological requirements indicated by the biblical evidence that Jesus had to be fully God and fully man to save humanity. Soteriological and Christological concerns are mutually determinative, especially so during this period.[6] When Apollinaris denied a human soul in Christ, the orthodox reacted by clarifying the requirements for a full humanity.[7] All contributors surveyed here affirm that for Christ to save humanity, he had to have power over death and the devil; thus, he had to be fully God. Since many in the early centuries of the Church understand salvation as healing or deification,[8] Christ had to be fully God if he was to raise humanity in its deification (θέωσις).[9] The famous maxim of Gregory Nazianzen, "For the unassumed is the unhealed" (Τὸ γὰρ ἀπρόσληπτον, ἀθεράπευτον·)[10] exemplifies the correlation of soteriology and Christology. Furthermore, the Hellenistic setting was likely influential in the theological development of this concept of salvation as healing in conjunction with biblical evidence that suggests

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[5]Paul C. Burns, "The Christology in Hilary of Poitiers' Commentary on Matthew" (B.Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1977), 74. "Spiritus, as the divine element in Christ, is often seen as the source of divine power and operation in Christ." Burns gives as examples Hilary's comments on the blasphemy of the Spirit in Matt 12:31, where in each case Hilary explains that the insult is against the divine nature, not the person of the Holy Spirit (ibid., 75).

[6]Young, "Christological Ideas," 162. "The formulation of both Trinitarian and Christological definitions was directly caused by soteriological beliefs. The reason for the development of different Christological theories was simply that each side viewed the problem with different soteriological presuppositions."

[7]Maurice Wiles, *The Making of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 106. "On the one hand was the conviction that the saviour must be fully divine; on the other was the conviction that what is not assumed is not healed. Or, to put the matter in other words, the source of salvation must be God; the locus of salvation must be man."

[8]The Antiochenes are generally an exception to this, as noted by Joanne McWilliam Dewart, *The Theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1971), 149: "It has been pointed out that Neo-platonism was a congenial soil for the teaching of divinization, but it is an historical commonplace that the Antiochenes generally, and certainly Theodore, were not Platonists, but were inclined rather to an eclecticism in which Aristotelianism and Stoicism predominated."

[9]I know of no technical distinction between the English terms *deification* and *divinization*, so I will use them as synonyms and any variation will be for stylistic, not semantic reasons.

[10]Gregory Nazianzen *Epistle* 101.7, *ad Cledonium* (ed. J. -P. Migne, PG 37 [1837]: 181).

the concept (Isa 53:5; Matt 13:15; 1 Pet 2:24; Heb 12:13).[11] Nevertheless, soteriology requires that Christ be fully human to meet the human need, not only for the deification of humanity but because of the biblical witness to his priestly sympathy (Heb 2:17), the example of his godly life (1 Pet 2:21), and his role as the second Adam overturning the first man's sin (Rom 5:19). Many recognize that his weaknesses, temptations, and death were signs of his full humanity, just as the Bible affirms (e.g., Matt 4:2; Heb 4:15, 1 Cor 15:3). Therefore, alongside the Nicene faith, the soteriological requirements that are common presuppositions account for the similarity of the models of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

Opposition to heresies. Third, orthodox theologians agree with one another in their opposition to the heretical formulations of the gnostics, Arians, and Apollinaris, as shows in the polemical titles of many writings, e.g., *Contra Arianos*, *Adversus Marcionem, Adversus haereses,* and *Contra Celsum.*[12] Christology was thus forged in answer to these challenges as theologians argue for biblical evidence of Christ's divinity by his miracles, preexistence, and soteriological necessity. Church teachers had to answer the problem that Arius raised about the possibility of suffering and change for the Logos incarnate. In one example, Gregory of Nazianzen equivocates when he interprets John 11:33 in opposition to Arius but later turns around and uses the Arian interpretation to refute Apollinaris.[13] For his part, Apollinaris constructed his Christological model specifically in opposition to the Arian problem of the mutability of the Logos in the

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[11]Anthony Meredith, *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 113. Meredith cites examples of Origen, *On Jeremiah* 1.16, *Against Celsus* 4.72, *On First Principles* 2.10.4-6, and Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechetical Oration* 8 and 26 as having taken over the idea of salvation as healing from Plato *Gorgias* 477A, 480C.

[12]The authors of these writings in order are Athanasius, Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Origen.

[13]Donald F. Winslow, "Christology and Exegesis in the Cappadocians," *Church History* 40 (1971): 391-92. Winslow notes the example of John 11:33 as one among many where Nazianzen accuses the Apollinarians of construing Jesus' question about where Lazarus was laid as a marker of Jesus' humanity (*Ep.* 102), then he himself uses the passage to argue for divine and human levels to Jesus' action (*Or.* 29.20).

incarnation, which entailed the possibility of sin.[14] Apollinaris's solution to eclipse the human soul in Christ provoked theologians to argue the biblical evidence for Christ's full humanity as including a rational human soul, a human will, and the full susceptibility to weaknesses of hunger, suffering, incomplete knowledge (for many), and death. Fear of the heretical formulations thus drives all the orthodox—for all their differences—in a common direction, sometimes leaving behind ideas that have since been reconsidered. One example is the fear of adoptionism provoked by the progressive, dynamistic action of God in Christ that was proposed by Arius, Paul of Samosata, and others. By this fear of adoptionism, most theologians avoid pneumatological Christology, a formulation that emphasizes the empowering role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' ministry (cf. Acts 10:38). An example of this fear shows in Cyril of Alexandria's ninth anathema, which is included in the documents of Third Council (Ephesus, 431).[15] As Aloys Grillmeier notes, Cyril's view is the norm:

> Cyril of Alexandria was not successful in allocating a sufficient function to the Spirit in the interpretation of the baptism of Christ. Dread of the Arian position hindered him from doing this. Because the divine Logos is present in Christ by nature, Cyril's Christ does not need the grace of the Spirit for himself. He receives it only for us.[16]

The limited evidence for the person of the Holy Spirit in Scripture, and the dangers of heretical formulations of dynamism in Paul of Samosata and Arius warded off theologians from considering a real role of the Holy Spirit in Christ. The opposition to doctrines of the Holy Spirit was so intense that a conciliar creed was necessary at the

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[14]Kelley McCarthy Spoerl, "Apollinarius and the Response to Early Arian Christology," in Studia patristica 26, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 421: "A vehement anti-Arian stance shapes Apollinarius' trinitarian and Christological thought . . . *KMP* [*ΚΑΤΑ ΜΕΡΟΣ ΠΙΣΤΙΣ*] reveals Apollinarius' concern to uphold the immutability of the Word . . . in response to the . . . Arian positing of a mutable or τρεπτός Saviour."

[15]The ninth anathema reads, "If any man shall say that the one Lord Jesus Christ was glorified by the Holy Ghost, so that he used through him a power not his own and from him received power against unclean spirits and power to work miracles before men and shall not rather confess that it was his own Spirit through which he worked these divine signs; let him be anathema." Cyril of Alexandria *Apologeticus Contra Theodoretum Pro XII Capitibus* 9 (ed. J. Auberti, PG 76 [1859]: 429C, trans. Henry Percival, NPNF^2, 14:214-15. The spectre of Montanism also discouraged any pneumatological formulations.

[16]Aloys Grillmeier, in collaboration with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, trans. John Cawte and Pauline Allen (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 2.2:303.

Second Council (Constantinople I, 381), which affirmed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit's procession within the Godhead, as developed in reaction by Gregory of Nazianzus to those called "the Spirit-fighters" (*pneumatomachoi*). Similar opposition to development of doctrines related to the Holy Spirit occurred in the East, as Maurice Wiles observes:

> Cyril of Jerusalem declared in his Catechetical Lectures delivered about A.D. 350 that it is enough to acknowledge the identity of the gifts of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, but that the nature and the substance of that Holy Spirit are not proper subjects of inquiry. Ten years later the attention of Athanasius was called to a group of Egyptian Christians who, while accepting the full divinity of the Son, spoke disparagingly of the Spirit as a creature; as a result of their errors he found himself forced to launch out on just such an inquiry into the nature of the Spirit as Cyril had discouraged, even though he had no clear terminology in which to discuss his subject-matter with any measure of precision. But the Tropici, as this Egyptian group were named by Athanasius, were not alone. There were others all over the Eastern world who followed a similar line of thought. They readily acknowledged the Son's divinity but, with varying degrees of definiteness, rejected any suggestion of the Spirit's godhead.[17]

Thus, the shadows of Arius and other heretics haunted theologians to form common presuppositions in opposition to the lurking dangers of Spirit-Christology.

Theories of physical union. Fourth, among the contemporary theories of physical union, theologians generally agreed on one of the five options supplied by Stoic philosophers and Aristotle as helpful for pointing to the incarnational union.[18] In Harry Wolfson's evaluation, the Fifth Council (Constantinople II, 553) specifically ruled out what he labels Stoic confusion—"union by confusion" (ἕνωσις κατὰ σύγχυσις)—in connection with the views of Apollinaris and Eutyches, and authorized what he calls Aristotelian predominance—"union by synthesis" (ἕνωσις κατὰ σύνθεσιν).[19] By Wolfson's definition (following Aristotle), this union of *predominance* occurs when two things interrelate in unequal ways such that the greater element is related to the lesser

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[17]Wiles, *Making of Christian Doctrine*, 32.

[18]These are analyzed by Harry Austryn Wolfson, *Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, vol. 1 of *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), 372-486. In his summary, the five theories are (1) composition, (2) Aristotelian mixture, (3) Stoic mixture, (4) Stoic confusion, and (5) Aristotelian predominance.

[19]Ibid., 417-18.

element as form is to matter without corruption of either component.[20] An example of this union is combining equal parts of water and wine, where the compound acts like the wine because it is the stronger element that "predominates" (ἐπικρατοῦν) over the water.[21] Wolfson's claim is that the orthodox agreement shows not only in the conciliar anathema but in the patristic Christological writings as well, despite the problem of their multiple uses for key terms of union.[22] Furthermore, Wolfson notes that Antiochene innovators Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius leave the mainstream at exactly this point in their rejection of the analogies of mixture, confusion, and predominance out of preference for a union of "conjunction" (συνάφεια)[23] what Wolfson also labels *composition*, as with the union of two things by their surface contact with each other.[24]

Wolfson's analysis is helpful as far as it goes, but requires some nuance. The evidence of patristic Christological discussions shows a further distinction in the relation of Christ's two natures and his impeccability and temptation.[25] The relation or union of *predominance* in its application to Christ's sinlessness as a man could be seen as subdivided in two ways: (1) by *natural* predominance of the divine *nature* that transformed the human nature to be like it in impeccability, i.e., divine nature over human nature, and (2) by *volitional* or *hypostatic* predominance of the divine personal direction of the Logos in his human experience to resist human weaknesses sinlessly, i.e., divine *person* over human nature. These two ways of union with predominance characterize two

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[20]Ibid., 385.

[21]Ibid., 377-78. Wolfson's citation from Aristotle is *De Gen. et Corr.* 1.10.322a, 9-10s.

[22]"But in the philosophic literature, as we have seen, there was no special term for the union of what we have described as 'predominance'; it was loosely described as a 'mixture' or as a 'composition.' 'Mixture' and 'composition' are therefore the terms used by the Fathers only in the sense of 'predominance'" (Wolfson, *Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, 386).

[23]Ibid., 451-63.

[24]Ibid., 379. Other stock terms for this as given by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* 5.6.1015b are σύνθεσις and παράθεσις, or the juxtaposition of things held together as with glue (ibid., 375); also the Stoic version in Philo *De Confusione Linguarum* 37, 185 (ibid., 379).

[25]However, the further distinction that I propose is in spite of the way patristic writers use the stock terms and analogies of physical union equivocally, a point that Wolfson admits (ibid., 386).

models of Christ's impeccability and temptation. All of this is to say that the Stoic and Aristotelian supply of stock terms and analogies were a common background for application to the union of two natures in Christ. The stock analogies for union of fire and iron, a drop of vinegar in the ocean, and a drop of wine in ten thousand gallons of water appear frequently in the patristic Christological writings in East and West.

Hellenistic philosophical setting. Fifth, the philosophical setting of the Hellenistic world provides norms for Church theologians despite their deep allegiance to the teaching of Scripture.[26] Among these norms are the negative views of passibility and ignorance because for philosophers of the day, these traits seem to entail sin of some sort.

The first contribution by Hellenistic philosophers is their entirely dim view of passions as being opposed to reason and right action. This prejudice against passions shows in the way Stoic philosophers identify passions as diseases of the soul. Right reason must rule the passions. As two examples, Plutarch classes grief and passion as detestable sins in company with fear and lust, and Philo associates grief with punishment for sin and an indication of guilt.[27] Consequently, the theology that develops in this setting is that God must be devoid of emotions and suffering, eternally undisturbed in the ideal of "divine impassibility" (ἀπαθὴς θεός).[28] Christian theologians affirm the same, as Nestorius observes: "the Godhead is not susceptible to passion."[29]

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[26]Young, "Christological Ideas," 160-61. "As we have frequently noted, Nicene orthodoxy as it was understood within the framework of contemporary philosophical theology made the Christological problem essentially insoluble."

[27]Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Absence of Jesus' Emotions–the Lucan Redaction of Lk 22,39-46," *Biblica* 61 (1980): 155-56. Neyrey notes Diogenes Laertius and Cicero as other examples of impassibility in Stoic philosophy.

[28]T. E. Pollard, "The Impassibility of God," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 8 (1955): 353-64, argues that the Greek idea of divine impassibility is one of several dubious gifts to Christian theology. Kevin Vanhoozer, *First Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 74, observes the effect of Stoic views of impassibility on Christian theology: "Where the Bible appears to ascribe emotion or suffering to God, the tradition quickly concluded that such language must be figurative. . . . For the Stoics and the whole eudaemonist tradition of antiquity, happiness is a matter of uninterrupted bliss. The wise person is one who learns how not to be disturbed by changes in the world. The wise person lacks pathos: he or she is without passion, is impervious to changes that would overturn the rule of reason."

[29]Nestorius *Second Letter to Cyril*, in *The Christological Controversy*, trans. and ed. R. A. Norris (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 137. Hence, Nestorius's strict distinction of Christ's two natures.

The problem for Christian theologians is that their affirmation of divine impassibility is difficult to reconcile with the suffering of Jesus, as reported in the Gospels. An example of this is Origen's commentary on Matthew, where he explains away the evidence of Jesus' passibility by introducing a distinction to the gospel account: "Matthew's description, 'He began to be,' implies that Jesus only entered upon these emotions, but did not suffer them in their fullness. He was subject to προπάθεια but not to the πάθη themselves."[30] *Propatheia* was thought to be the state that occurs before the soul becomes imbalanced in the full experience of πάθος, and thus becomes susceptible to sin.[31] As Origen shows, Christian theologians believe that a necessary relation exists between passibility and evil, reinforcing the belief that God incarnate cannot be passible.[32]

The Hellenistic presupposition of divine impassibility further complicates Christological formulation because patristic theologians assume that human actions are necessarily passive, and thereby passible and evil, in contrast to the active, impassible, and good divine motions. An example is John of Damascus:

> Thus if, because the divine motion is action, the human is passion, then it will definitely follow that, because the divine nature is good, the human will be evil. Conversely, because the human motion is called passion, the divine is called action; and because human nature is evil, the divine will be good.[33]

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[30]Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Person and Work of Christ,* ed. Samuel G. Craig (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1950), 138 n.120; his translation of Origen's comment on Matt 26:37. Warfield does not give his source for Origen's comment, but the Latin version of Origen's commentary on Matthew bears out Warfield's translation: "Propter quod quasi multis illis constituis, et in maltia potentibus, coepit tristari et taediari, vel et pavere. Et considera quia non dixit tristabatur et taediabatur, sed coepit tristari et taediari. Multum enim interest inter tristari et incipere tristari. Si ergo aliquis, defendens passiones humanas, profert nobis etiam ipsum tristatum fuisse Jesum, audiat quoniam qui . . . [quotes Heb 4:15], hic non est tristatus tristitia passionis ipsius, sed factus est secundum humanam naturam tantum in ipso principio tristitiae et pavoris, ut ostendat discipulis suis praesentibus." Origen *Commentaria in Evangelium secundum Matthaem* (ed. C. and C. Vicentii Delarue, PG 13 [1857]: 1741).

[31]Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, trans. John Bowden, 2nd ed. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 1:363.

[32]An example is Gregory of Nyssa *Against Eunomius* 6.3, where he boldly states that passions are a diseased condition of the will that tend to sin; Jesus had only a natural sort of passions that are different from those of fallen humanity so he could be passible without also being sinful.

[33]John of Damascus *De Fide Orthodoxa* 3.15, trans. Frederic H. Chase, Jr., in *Saint John of Damascus: Writings*, Fathers of the Church [FOC] 37 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1958), 312.

This extension of the basic starting point to view passibility negatively causes great difficulty for explaining a divine incarnation of Jesus Christ who is both fully God and fully man.

As the solution to the problems of passibility for the God-man, patristic theologians develop various ways of attributing passibility to Jesus. One way is to predicate suffering only of Jesus' humanity, thereby protecting his divine impassibility as the eternal Logos. By this way, theologians could predicate passibility and impassibility to his two natures in a double predication model. Another solution is to predicate suffering and impassibility of Jesus as the single subject of his two natures.

The second philosophical concept from the Hellenistic setting that complicates matters for Christological formulation is the assumption that ignorance entails or at least leads to sin. Underlying this assumption is an intellectualist theory of action, by which volition depends upon cognition, and knowledge determines moral action.[34] This theory means that ignorance causes sin, a conclusion that causes trouble for Christians who read the Gospel suggestions of Jesus' ignorance (e.g., Mark 13:32). Many theologians denied any ignorance in Christ because ignorance entails a liability to sin.[35] Examples of this trend are Jerome, Augustine, Basil, and John Chrysostom.[36] Theodosius is an example of

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[34]John J. O'Keefe, "Sin, ἀπάθεια and Freedom of the Will in Gregory of Nyssa," in Studia patristica 22, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Leuven: Peeters, 1989), 52-53. "Because they perceived the world as fundamentally knowable through reason, and because they saw this world as conforming to certain predictable standards . . . the Greeks naturally concluded that proper moral behavior was the natural product of correct knowing. Conversely, error and failure had little to do with a failure of the will, but a great deal to do with ignorance of the good and the true. The Socratic maxim, οὐδεὶς ἑκὼν ἁμαρτάνει (no one fails on purpose) illustrates clearly how deep this conception was imbedded in the Greek philosophical tradition."

[35]Grillmeier's comment, *Christ*, 2.2:363-64, is helpful: "Ignorance (*agnoia*) was already seen by the ancient Greeks in relation to moral evil, indeed as the font and reason for false moral decisions. Thus with regard to Christ, if ignorance were to be conceded in him, his 'sinlessness' would be undermined."

[36]Jerome, *Dialogue against the Pelagians* 32, in *Saint Jerome: Dogmatic and Polemical Works*, trans. John N. Hritzu, FOC 53 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1965), 278-79; Augustine *De Trinitate* 1.12.23 (ed. W. J. Mountain, CCSL 50 [1968]: 61-62); Basil *Ep.* 236 *ad Amphilochius*, in *Saint Basil: The Letters*, vol. 3, trans. Roy J. Deferrari and Martin R. P. McGuire, Loeb Classical Library [LCL] (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1930), 387-405; John Chrysostom *In illud: Pater si possible est* 1 (ed. D. Bern de Montfaucon, PG 51 [1859]: 31), cited by Camillus Hay, "St John Chrysostom and the Integrity of the Human Nature of Christ," *Franciscan Studies* 19 (1959): 304.

those who admit Christ's ignorance as a predication of his assumed humanity.[37] Others such as Gregory of Nyssa, Themistius, Athanasius, and Cyril of Alexandria affirm Christ's ignorance as a marker of his full humanity,[38] despite the reservations that many have about the Arian use of John 11:34 and Mark 13:32 to undermine orthodox claims.

These five sets of common presuppositions—the Nicene faith, soteriological requirements, opposition to heresies, theories of physical union, and the philosophical setting—influence the Christological models in general, and they specifically inform the early models of Christ's impeccability and temptation. Two other background topics relevant to the models of impeccability and temptation are the divergent Christological models and the geopolitical setting of the patristic Christological debates.

Divergent Christological Models

The two primary schools of thought that are opposed to each other during the patristic period have been generally described as the Alexandrian (Word-flesh) and Antiochene (Word-man) schools.[39] As part of summarizing their differences,[40] it is generally true that the Alexandrian school of thought includes an allegorical method of

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[37]Theodosius of Alexandria *Tome to Empress Theodora* 337-339, in *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century*, ed. and trans. Albert Van Roey and Pauline Allen, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 56 (Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 51. "Clare ostendit non in veritate ignorasse Emmanuelem nec in sua humanitate, sed per appropriationem tantum eum abscondisse seipsum economice etiam in hoc humano."

[38]Gregory of Nyssa *Antirrheticus adv. Apollinarem* 11, 14, 24, 32, cited by J. H. Srawley, "St Gregory of Nyssa on the Sinlessness of Christ," *Journal of Theological Studies* 7 (1906): 435; Themistius was the Alexandrian founder of the Agnoetae movement in opposition to those who denied Christ's ignorance (noted by Van Roey and Allen, *Monophysite Texts*, 18); Grillmeier's comment (*Christ*, 1:315) on Athanasius: "Athanasius displays a general tendency to weaken the character of certain of Christ's inner experiences which might be attributed to a human soul so as to dissociate the Logos from them from the start. Thus Christ's anguish was only 'feigned', and not real anguish; his ignorance was not real ignorance, but only an *ignorantia de jure*, which was proper to the human nature from the start"; Cyril of Alexandria *Thesaurus*, *assertio* 22 (ed. J. Auberti, PG 75 [1859]: 369B).

[39]R. A. Norris, "Christological Models in Cyril of Alexandria," in Studia patristica 13, pt. 2, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, Texte und Untersuchungen 116 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1975), 255-68, questions the helpfulness of using these labels as oversimplifying the complexity of the discussion and the formulations, as in his study of Cyril. I am simply noting the turmoil and dominant trends that are the setting for developing models of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

[40]This summary is the barest of comments that one could say about patristic Christological models and schools of thought. I only note them as a background to the models of Christ's impeccability and temptation that were developed as part of Christological formulation.

exegesis that coheres with the Platonic philosophical trends preferred in Alexandria.[41] The Christologies produced by this school tended to emphasize the unity of Christ's person at the risk of diminishing the full integrity of his humanity.[42] By contrast, the Antiochene emphasis on grammatical exegesis and a theory of double predication of the attributes of Christ's two natures seems to fit an Aristotelian worldview, by which "God was understood through the empirical world."[43] Antiochenes typically emphasize the human example of Christ's life as a distinct experience from the impassible Logos who could not share in the passible humanity in any way.[44]

Geopolitical Setting

While exegetical method, philosophical preferences, and theological commitments would have been sufficient to set these two schools of thought apart, geopolitical interests on the part of Church and state further provokes proponents to distinguish themselves in opposition to their rival school. From the political side, the Roman emperors frequently meddle in Church affairs for the sake of unifying the empire on doctrinal grounds; this was the motivation for several of the first ecumenical councils. Emperors sought the aid of Church leaders and alternately installed or exiled Christian teachers to promote imperial interests with the assistance of the Church. From the ecclesiastical side and to a lesser degree, church leaders invited imperial involvement to promote and secure ecclesial unity in the midst of doctrinally-based divisions. A threat to

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[41]Maurice F. Wiles, "The Doctrine of Christ in the Patristic Age," in *Christ for Us Today*, ed. Norman Pittenger (London: SCM, 1968), 87. "The Platonic approach, according to which humanity as such is a more fundamental and more real concept than individual man, provided a framework of thought within which it seemed possible to make the essential Alexandrian affirmation of the subjecthood of the divine Logos throughout without destroying the humanity of Christ, or even reducing it in any really significant respect." Cf. David F. Wells, *The Person of Christ* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1984), 101.

[42]Young, "Christological Ideas," 161, in critique of Cyril of Alexandria's views: "It must be regarded as a form of Docetism to say: the Logos cannot have suffered; the flesh suffered but it was so united to the Logos that the possibility of its giving way or succumbing to temptation and sin is not a real one." Cf. Meredith, *Cappadocians*, 110-11.

[43]Wells, *Person of Christ*, 102. He adds that the Antiochene theory of double predication was often misunderstood as entailing two persons, not simply two natures that retained their integrity and difference by union to the single *prosopon.*

[44]Wiles, "The Doctrine of Christ," 88; Meredith, *Cappadocians*, 110-11.

both Church and State is the rising power of Persian and Arab forces encroaching from the East. Within the Church geopolitical structure, leaders had established Rome as the dominant ecclesial authority in the West, while Alexandria vied with Constantinople for ascendancy in the East. This rivalry became enflamed when the Antiochene Nestorius gained the patriarchate of Constantinople.[45] Jaroslav Pelikan explains how this geopolitical mixture influenced theological developments: "Even more than the christological controversies before Chalcedon the continuing debate after Chalcedon was shaped by nontheological factors, ranging from mob rule and athletic rivalry to military promotions and the domestic intrigues of the imperial household."[46] Nonetheless, the attendant circumstances to the Christological models of the patristic period need not detract from the theological achievements that developed amidst the mixture of the philosophical setting, geopolitical changes, cultural forces, and heretical challenges.

Four Models in the Patristic Period

As part of these achievements of Christological formulation, the Church developed four models of Christ's impeccability and temptation. Unfortunately, patristic writers did not always articulate these models as precisely as we would wish. The difficulty for our analysis is that we do not find that theologians set their views out in a direct or explicit way on this issue of Christ's impeccability and temptation. We must rely on inferences, associations, hints, and suggestions of the models as they show up in the extant discussions of biblical texts, the incarnational union, the salvation wrought by Christ—and especially in refuting what were perceived to be heretical Christological formulations.

In their comments that are relevant to our topic, the patristic writers are not

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[45]Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 6. Fairbairn notes that Nestorius pushed the teaching of his teachers, Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, through a corps of monks in Constantinople. Whereas Cyril had ignored such teaching before Nestorius's patriarchate, the combined factors of doctrine and politics seemed to have roused Cyril to denounce to the Antiochenes' teaching.

[46]Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, vol. 1 of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 266-67.

always univocal; they can be read to support more than one model, and even read in ways that seem contradictory. An example of this ambiguity was at the Sixth Council (Constantinople III, 681-82) when the monothelites and dyothelites appealed to the same passages from the early fathers.[47] Some anachronism is unavoidable because both the questions of Christ's will(s) and his impeccability were taken up in later times with more precision than in the early centuries; these initial discussions will by comparison seem ambiguous and even equivocal. Therefore, it should not count against accuracy in our study if it seems that patristic writers can be read in support of more than one model of Christ's impeccability and temptation. This will be the case with two prolific contributors in the East and West: Origen and Augustine.

Another difficulty is that while the writings of the orthodox are preserved relatively well, others who innovated in ways that may be helpful for our study have not been retained with the same care, if at all. Indeed, the writings of so-called "heretics" such as Nestorius, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret, and Apollinaris survive only minimally in the fragmentary citations of their opponents as memorials of error, remembered only to warn against them.[48] Nevertheless, we will proceed through the descriptions and representatives of four main models as they can be recognized in the inferential, suggestive way we have noted. The four models in their briefest labels are: (1) Sinless by Innate Impeccability, (2) Sinless by Deification, (3) Sinless by the Divine Hegemony, and (4) Sinless by Empowering Grace.[49] Accepted by all are three key factors of Christ's actual sinlessness, his temptations, and his divine impeccability. Disputed is the way these factors relate to one another, other factors of soteriology, and Christology.

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[47]Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (700-1700)*, vol. 2 of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 69. The monothelites brought three volumes of quotations in support of their view. Both sides accused the others of quoting out of context and emending texts.

[48]Doubtless there is much bad theology that should not be retained, but the judgments of what are good and bad contributions are sometimes difficult to discern. I wish that in some cases a bit more of the heterodox material had been preserved, if even to make comparisons with later thinkers who follow the same paths, and to refute them by reference to their predecessors.

[49]Hereafter all such models will be referred to with the letter *M* and the relevant number.

M1: Sinless by Innate Impeccability

Description. The first model of Christ's impeccability and temptation in the patristic period is the general claim that his sinlessness was caused by his innate impeccability as God. By his divine nature as the eternal Logos and Son, Jesus was immune to sin even in his human experiences. This matches the Nicene affirmation that Jesus is ὁμοούσιος with the Father. The distinctive of this model is the emphasis on Christ's preexistence to his incarnation, whether as a perfect soul (as in Origen, see below) or as the Logos who becomes incarnate as a man. Because Christ is God before the incarnation, and God cannot sin, then Christ cannot sin even when he is tempted as a man. This innate impeccability model is the early answer to the problem posed by the Arians that since a man would have a mutable will with liability to sin, and God cannot be mutable or sin, then Christ the man could not also be God. The simple answer, to be worked out in different ways as Christological problems came into view more sharply, was that despite his incarnation in humanity—and despite having been tempted as a man—Jesus Christ could not sin because he is divine by his nature as the preexistent Logos. His sinlessness is a necessity of his divinity; these writers however do not specify whether this is a necessity of his nature or his person. Theologians affirm simply that because Christ was the divine Lord, it was logically impossible for him to sin.[50] Thomas Oden summarizes this general patristic view: "*If God does not will contrary to God's will, and if sin is to act counter to God's will, then the God-man would not sin.*"[51] M1

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[50]A summary statement of the idea is given by Jacques Dupuis, *Who Do You Say I Am? An Introduction to Christology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), 129: "If Jesus were to commit sin, God would be the author of sinful actions, which is a contradiction."

[51]Thomas C. Oden, *The Word of Life,* vol. 2 of *Systematic Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 254 (his italics). Unfortunately, Oden provides no sources for his summary of this argument. An example that seems to demonstrate Oden's conclusion is from Dionysius of Alexandria (ca. 190-ca. 265) a pupil of Origen: "Thus he, the beloved, knew his *will*, which was *perfect* (Rom. 12.2), and he says often that he was come to accomplish this—not his own, i.e., that of men . . . . For he assumed the *prosopon* . . . of man when he became man. For that reason then he also refused to do his own will, the lesser, and rather asked that the will of the Father, the greater, the divine will, might be done; of course, in keeping with the Godhead his will and that of the Father are wholly and utterly one. For it was the Father's will which enjoined him to go through all temptation, in which the Father preserved him in a wonderful way from falling into temptation. He was not involved in it, but stood high above temptation and left it behind him. However, it is neither impossible nor to no purpose that the Redeemer should pray with his will set over against that of the Father." Cited in Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:164.

becomes an umbrella for M2-M4 by the general M1 affirmation of Christ's innate impeccability. Further development will take up the questions about the compossibility of certain biblical details—the Son's incarnation in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom 8:3), Jesus' sinlessness as a human example (1 Pet 2:21-22), his sympathy for human sinners (Heb 4:15), and the accounts of his own struggle to obey the Father (Luke 22:40-44).[52] Figure 1 summarizes the elements of M1.

Key Question:	- How was Jesus sinless?
Answer:	- God is impeccable, and Jesus is the divine Son, so Jesus is impeccable
Concerns:	- The preexistence of the divine Son before his incarnation - Jesus' divinity is necessary to salvation - Jesus is eternally divine despite becoming a human being - Protection of the divine impassibility - Protection of the divine immutability
How tempted?	- He was tempted as a man
How triumphed over temptations?	- He conquered temptation because he is almighty God - He is innately immune to sin as God incarnate
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a necessity of his divinity

Figure 1. Summary of M1: Sinless by Innate Impeccability

Representatives of M1. Among the many that could be cited to represent M1, Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215),[53] Tertullian (ca. 155–220), Augustine (354–430) and Origen (ca. 184–ca. 253) are examples of the way most explain the divine

[52]Luke 22:40-44 is textually uncertain; we will address this passage in chapter four.

[53]The dates given for the early fathers are sometimes disputed as historians disagree by a few years about birth and death dates. Chronology is not an important aspect in this study, so I have used dates that are generally reported by what seem to be reliable historical studies, while acknowledging that more careful study could be done.

impeccability of the Logos as the efficient and material cause of Christ's human sinlessness, without distinguishing between the divine person and the divine nature. Clement writes that Christ is "sinless" (ἀναμάρτητος) and "passionless in soul" (ἀπαθὴς τὴν ψυχήν) because he is the Son of the Father and God the Logos who has "the nature of God" (τῷ σχήματι θεός).[54] In this way, Clement connects Christ's divine impassibility to his human sinlessness as the ground of impeccability in Christ's human experience. Similarly, Tertullian affirms Christ's sinlessness based on his deity; just as God alone is without sin, so also Christ is the only man without sin.[55] Tertullian insists that the normally sinful humanity was emptied of sin when assumed by Christ, becoming a sinless, transformed humanity.[56] Augustine represents this model with a clear declaration in his sermon on the temptations that Jesus endured and conquered: "That Christ was the conqueror there, why should we be surprised? He was almighty God."[57] Augustine also affirms that the sinlessness of Christ as a man was caused by his exceptional constitution, because Christ "is in His nature not man only, but also God, in whom we could prove such perfection of character to have existed."[58] Again, the plain logic of the model shows in the connection between the impeccable divine nature and the sinless human action as a direct result.

Origen follows the same principle of a preexistent cause of Jesus' human sinlessness,[59] but his deviation is to apply the Platonic doctrine of preexistent human

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[54]Clem. *Paed.* 1.2.4.1-2 (3-4).

[55]Tertullian *De Anima* 41.3 (ed. J. H. Waszink [Amsterdam: J. M. Meulenhoff, 1947], 57). "Solus enim deus sine peccato et solus homo sine peccato Christus, quia et deus Christus."

[56]Tert. *De Carne Christi* 16.780-81 (ed. J. -P. Migne, PL 2 [1866]: 826). "Quando hinc etiam confirmamus eam fuisse carnem in Christo, cuius natura est in homine peccatrix; et sic in illa peccatum evacuatum, quod in Christo sine peccato habeatur, quae in homine sine peccato non habebatur."

[57]Aug. *Sermon* 284.5 (PL 38 [1863]:1292, trans. Edumund Hill, *Sermons 273-305A: On the Saints*, vol. III/8 of *The Works of Saint Augustine* [Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1994], 91). "Ibi Christum victorem quid miramur? Deus omnipotens erat."

[58]Aug. *On the Spirit and the Letter* 1, in *Saint Augustin's Anti-Pelagian Works*, trans. Peter Holmes and Robert Ernest Wallis, rev. Benjamin Warfield, NPNF[1] 5 [1956]: 84.

[59]Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 2nd ed., trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 356, suggests that Origen was the first to argue for the impeccability of Christ when others had commonly affirmed his actual sinlessness. This may be the case,

souls to the incarnation.[60] Origen writes that the preexistent human soul assumed by the Logos became immune to the possibility of sin after choosing to cling to the Logos so that "what formerly depended upon the will was by the influence of long custom changed into nature."[61] Origen's idea is that the human soul merited its assumption by the Logos, and the miraculous birth in a human body was the divine action to secure that impeccability which the soul merited.[62] Few accept Origen's notion of a merited assumption by the Logos,[63] and others condemn it.[64] Nevertheless, everyone agrees with the general idea of this model as Origen affirms it in his statement against Celsus that Jesus was "incapable of all evil because he was the divine Word."[65] The other models of Christ's impeccability and temptation take their starting points in general agreement with the principle of M1 (but not Origen's version of it) and then they diverge from one another as the specific ways of accounting for Jesus' actual temptation and sinlessness in view of his divine impeccability. M1 is accurate, but theologians offer other proposals because M1 is not adequate to explain the biblical data. These data raise the general, primary question: What was it about Jesus that distinguished him from other men? M1 gives the answer by philosophical deduction: Since God cannot sin, and Jesus is divine,

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but Clement should also be counted as one of the earliest to affirm Christ's impeccability, if not the first.

[60]Melvin E. Lawrenz, *The Christology of John Chrysostom* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1996), 22. "Origen reflected the prevailing Platonism of his native Alexandria in the soteriological presuppositions that underlie his Christology. All souls have pre-existed, and God used the one soul that did not fall away—that of Jesus—to be united with his Logos or Wisdom which in turn became united with human flesh thus providing a way of redemption for the race." Cf. Or. *In Canticum Canticorum* 2.8 (ed. C. and C. Vincentii Delarue, PG 13 [1857]: 126C).

[61]Or. *De Principiis* 2.6.5, in *Origens Werke*, vol. 5, *De Principiis*, ed. P. Koetschau, Die grieschischen christlichen Schrifsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte [GCS] 22 (Berlin: Academie, 1913), 145; trans. G. W. Butterworth (London: S.P.C.K., 1936), 112-13. "Quod in arbitrio erat positum, longi usu affectu iam versum sit in naturam."

[62]Or. *Contra Celsum* 1.33 (ed. M. Marcovich, SVC 54 [Leiden: Brill, 2001], 35). "ἵνα τῆς κακίας ἄγευστος ἡ ψυχὴ διαμεῖναι δυνηθῇ;" (*so that the soul may be able to remain untasting of evi*) .

[63]An exception is Evagrius Ponticus, who developed Origen's preexistent soul application in Christology by which the preexistent human soul in Christ is "the seat of moral decisions and of sinlessness" (Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:379).

[64]E.g., Augustine denounces the idea of merit in the incarnational assumption repeatedly, as in *Enchiridion* 36 and *Letter 187*.

[65]Or. *Celsum* 4.15 (229). "διὰ τὸ εἶναι λόγον θεοῦ αὐτὸς πάσης κακίας ἀπαράδεκτος ἦν."

then Jesus was sinless because of his innate impeccability. Under this general affirmation of Jesus' divine impeccability other questions differentiate the other models from each other. These secondary questions of the other models focus on specific aspects of biblical data.

M2: Sinless by Divinization

Description. The question asked in M2 is this: How does the union of Jesus' divine nature with his human nature make him sinless as a man? The answer given is that Jesus' sinlessness is the result of the deification of his human nature by his divine nature. The divinity in Christ dominates his humanity, deifying and strengthening it against natural human weaknesses. As in M1, M2 affirms that the divine impeccability of the Logos is the main factor securing and transforming Christ's moral life as a man; thus sin is impossible for Christ. Temptations never threaten him, just as a bar of heated iron cannot admit cold because of its union to the fire. Unlike M1, the deifying union of M2 specifies *the way* that Jesus' divine nature affects his humanity for the result of a sinless life. The general principle of necessary sinlessness in M1 is defined in M2 as the deification of Jesus' humanity by transformation in union to his divinity, making deiform humanity. Proponents of M2 would deny any substantial change to his human nature (just as iron is unchanged when united to fire), but the effect of the union is that Jesus' humanity is made functionally divine (just as hot iron receives the burning properties of fire). The transformation of his humanity is from lower to higher humanity, not from common humanity to something essentially different from humanity.

How does the union of divine and human natures make Jesus sinless? M2 answers that the divine nature deifies the human nature. The theory of salvation by deification deals especially in terms of transforming the human mutability and liability to sin. The Logos assumes and deifies universal human nature to heal and restore it for others as immutable and impeccable.[66] The deification of Christ's humanity by his

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[66]Wiles, *Making of Christian Doctrine*, 109 "Cyril of Alexandria with his Platonist background

divinity is a relation between the two natures that is a type of believers' deification and future sinlessness through sharing in the divine nature of the Logos. Representatives of M2 tend to rely upon something like the Aristotelian theory of union by predominance: the lower, weaker human nature in Christ becomes like the dominating divine nature to which it is united. In other words, in a union by *natural* predominance, the divine nature transforms the human nature to become impeccable.[67]

Important to M2 is the *communicatio idiomatum* relation between the unified natures, understood in two ways: (1) by attribution of the divine and human predicates to the single subject of the union—*praedicatio idiomatum*, and (2) by the predication of attributes of the divine nature to the human nature through their union in the uniting person.[68] M2 depends on both formulations. Because of the deifying communication of divine attributes to the humanity of Christ, his sinlessness becomes a necessity of his deiform human nature that bears divine attributes. Jesus can experience temptations (by predication to him as the subject of his human nature), but his humanity is naturally impeccable in the face of them (by predication of one nature from the other). Nonetheless, Christ's temptations occur solely for the instruction of humanity—not that he really had to struggle to obey God when tempted to sin.

Specifically in M2, the divine nature is the efficient cause of the human impeccability, which is then the material cause of Christ's human sinlessness. Proponents assert the unity of the two natures so strongly that the incarnational union is often summarized with the monophysite maxim: "One incarnate nature of the Son" (μίαν τὴν

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similarly saw the incarnation as an assumption of humanity in general rather than as the becoming of a man. Thereby they could interpret Christ as divinizing mankind as a single entity."

[67]I do not mean to say that proponents of the deified humanity model subscribed to the Aristotelian theory of predominance, just that this theory most closely resembles the sort of union that is implied by those writers grouped together in this model. It is possible that the resemblance was from conscious reference to Aristotelian or related Stoic schools of thought, but I am not arguing for that.

[68]These definitions are given in Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2.2:287. Later theology distinguishes these as *in concreto* and *in abstracto.* Generally, the first sort of predication was more common, and we will avoid confusion by calling it single-subject predication. John Anthony McGuckin writes in the introduction to *St Cyril of Alexandria: On the Unity of Christ* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 40, "The person of the Logos is the sole personal subject of all the conditions of his existence, divine or human."

τοῦ υἱοῦ φύσιν σεσαρκωμένην).[69] To avoid the extreme view of Eutychianism, of course, due regard in M2 is made for the reality of the full humanity and divinity. Since the humanity in Christ has become deified by union to the Logos, it is a humanity that is sinless by *natural* causation—between the natures—through union with the divine nature. The moral immutability and impassibility of the Logos constitute the moral immutability and impassibility of his human nature.[70] Figure 2 summarizes the main elements of M2.

Representatives of M2. In roughly chronological order, Clement of Alexandria is one of the first to express M2.[71] He suggests the divinizing elevation of Jesus' humanity by calling it the "heavenly flesh sanctified" (ἁγιαζομένη σὰρξ οὐράνιος).[72] Clement marks Christ's human sinlessness as the result of his freedom from human passions through a transforming union with the divine nature—a communication of the divine ἀπάθεια to his humanity.[73] For Clement, *apatheia* was the highest ethical ideal, the moral likeness of God. [74] Accordingly, he exhorts his readers to follow Christ's example of being free from human passions in their own striving against temptations.[75]

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[69]Cyr. *Epistola* 44 *ad Eulogius* (PG 77 [1859]: 225B). Lionel R. Wickham, ed. and trans., *Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters*, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 62-63, notes that this phrase appears in a series of quotes from Athanasius, but that scholars have generally accepted it to be from Apollinaris. The reading given in Migne is Θεοῦ, with Υἱου as a variant; Wickham takes the variant as the best reading.

[70]Leontius of Jerusalem *Adversus Nestorianos* 1.6 (PG 86 pt. 1 [1860]: 1425D). "καὶ τρεπτὸν φύσει κατὰ τὴν κρείττονα τροπὴν καὶ φύσιν ἐφάπαξ, ἤγουν εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτοῦ ἀτρεψίαν." Cited in Patrick T. R. Gray, "Leontius of Jerusalem's Case for a 'Synthetic' Union in Christ," in Studia patristica 18.1, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1985), 151.

[71]*Paedegous* was written ca. 190, as noted in the introduction to *Clement of Alexandria: Christ the Educator*, trans. Simon P. Wood, FOC 23 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1954), xi.

[72]Clem. *Paed.* 1.6.43.3 (28). "Ἡ τροφή, τουτέστιν [ὁ] κύριος Ἰησοῦς, τουτέστιν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, πνεῦμα σαρχούμενον, ἁγιαζομένη σὰρξ οὐράνιος."

[73]Ibid., 1.2.4.1-2 (3-4). "ὃ μὲν ἀπόλυτος εἰς τὸ παντελὲς ἀνθρωπίνων παθῶν (διὰ τοῦο γὰρ καὶ μόνος κριτής, ὅτι ἀναμάρτητος μόνος)·"

[74]Salvatore R. C. Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 277.

[75]Clem. *Paed.* 1.2.4.1-2 (3-4). "Ἔοιχεν δὲ ὁ παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν, ὦ παῖδες ὑμεῖς, τῷ πατρὶ τῷ αὐτοῦ τῷ θεῷ, οὗπέρ ἐστιν υἱός, ἀναμάρτητος, ἀνεπίληπτος καὶ ἀπαθὴς τὴν ψυχήν, θεὸς ἐν ἀνθρώπου σχήματι ἄχραντος, πατρικῷ θελήματι διάκονος, λόγος θεός, ὁ ἐν τῷ πατρί, ὁ ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ πατρός, σὺν καὶ τῷ σχήματι θεός. Οὗτος ἡμῖν εἰκὼν ἡ ἀκηλίδωτος, τούτῳ παντὶ σθένει πειρατέον ἐξομοιοῦν τὴν ψυχήν·"

Key Question:	- How does the union of Jesus' divine nature with his human nature make him sinless as a man?
Answer:	- His divine nature divinizes his human nature to bear the divine attribute of impeccability
Concerns:	- The union of Jesus' divine and human natures - The powerful effect of the divine nature on human nature - The completeness of each nature with all their predicates - Protection of the impassibility of the divine nature - The union of natures in Christ is a paradigm for human sanctification in Christ by divinization - Salvation as healing of human nature through union to the divine nature that cleanses and elevates human nature
Influential theories:	- The mode of union by natural predominance of a powerful nature over a weak nature when the two are united - Christ assumes human nature as a universal to save for all - Divinization is a re-creation of humanity by sharing in the divine nature by a transforming communion in Christ
How tempted?	- He was tempted as a man - He is the subject of all of his human predicates
Why tempted?	- For the instruction of humanity to show how to resist sins - Permitted for the sake of those needing an example - For a sign of his true human nature
How triumphed?	- He triumphs by his impeccable divine nature that empowers his temptable human nature
Relation to M1:	- M2 specifies the necessity of his sinlessness as the natural necessity by the union; the impeccability of the divine nature elevates the human nature to be sinless
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a necessity of his divine nature

Figure 2. Summary of M2: Sinless by Divinization

As with Clement, we have seen Origen's views above as a prominent representative of M1. More examples of his thought show that Origen, like Clement, saw Christ's sinlessness in terms of M2—the result of the deifying union with his divine

nature. An example already noted shows this (though with reference to the soul as preexistent) as having been changed through union to the Logos to become naturally insusceptible to moral change and thus impeccable.[76] Origen supports this claim with the analogy of fire and iron,[77] saying that once the iron has received the fire into it thoroughly, it becomes fire with the same burning property and cannot admit cold so long as it remains united to the fire. Similarly, the soul of Christ was deified in union with the Word so that it had the same immunity to change and evil.[78] Origen also states plainly that the presence of the divine Word with the human soul of Christ causes him to be "incapable of sin" (*peccati incapax fuit*).[79] In typically allegorical exegesis to establish Christ's impeccability, Origen takes the poetic phrase "anointed with the oil of gladness" from Psalm 45:7 as a Christological description of the way that the essence of God filled Christ's human soul. In *Contra Celsum*, Origen expresses his view of the transforming union without specific reference to Christ's sinlessness but as a general purpose for salvation: "For Christians see that with Jesus human and divine nature began to be woven together, so that by fellowship with divinity human nature might become divine, not only in Jesus, but also in all those who believe."[80] The theme of a universal humanity deified in Christ shows up here as the soteriological emphasis of M2. Later in the *Contra Celsum*, Origen affirms Christ's humanity as changeless and incapable of evil because of the divine Word.[81] Finally, Origen also defends the virgin birth on the basis that the

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[76]Or. *De Prin.* 2.6.5 (145).

[77]Wolfson, *Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, 380-81, identifies this analogy as typical of the Stoic view of a mixture (μίξις, κρᾶσις) of two things with mutual corruption but the two can be unmixed and do not constitute a *tertium quid*, just as water that has been mixed with wine can be drawn out by an oiled sponge.

[78]Or. *De Prin.* 2.6.6 (145).

[79]Ibid., 4.4.4.31 (354).

[80]Or. *Cels.* 3.28 (174; trans. Henry Chadwick [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953; reprint, 1965], 146). "ὁρῶσιν ὅτι ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἤρξατο θεία καὶ ἀνθρωπίνη συνυφαίνεσθαι φύσις, ἵν' ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη τῇ πρὸς τὸ θειότωρον κοινωνίᾳγένηται θεία οὐκ ἐν μόνῳ τῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς μετὰ τοῦ πιστεύειν."

[81]Or. *Cels.* 4.15 (229). "ὁ δὲ τὰ τραύματα τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν θεραπεύων διὰ τὸ εἶναι λόγον θεοῦ αὐτὸς πάσης κακίας ἀπαράδεκτος ἦν." Notice also here the emphasis on salvation as healing.

human body assumed in the incarnation had to be miraculous and extraordinary to prevent sin from contaminating the human soul.[82] Therefore, Origen relates the factors of divine impeccability, temptation, and human sinlessness through an elevation of Jesus' humanity by deification.

Hilary of Poitiers (ca. 300–368) exemplifies M2 when he describes the commingling of the natural predicates in Jesus' divine-human life:

> Taking upon himself the weakness of our flesh, and remaining both his and ours, he performs, prays, professes, looks for all those things that are ours in such a way that those things which are his own are also *commingled* with them: at one time he speaks as a man, because he was born as a man, suffered and died as a man; at another time he speaks completely as God the Word.[83]

This example can be read two ways, both as a double predication of attributes properly to the two natures, and as the single-subject predication of the attributes to the one person. Hilary is not as clear as we would like. He recognizes the reality of Christ's humanity in the wilderness temptations, where Christ overcomes the devil as a man and reverses Adam's defeat.[84] Hilary also emphasizes the progressive exaltation of Christ's humanity, as Grillmeier observes: "He sees this mixing of divine and human in all of the earthly activity of Christ, until finally the Godhead is fully revealed and the humanity of Christ is virtually overwhelmed by the Godhead."[85] In his comment on Psalm 53, Hilary affirms the result of a commingling that causes Christ's human immunity to sin: Jesus "is not liable" to the anger, hatred, greed, and shame that are "common failings of human

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[82]Ibid., 1.33 (35). "ἵνα τῆς κακίας ἄγευστος ἡ ψυχὴ διαμεῖναι δυνηθῇ;" Unfortunately, in Origen's view this is the preexistent human soul, but he still expressed the basic idea of the model that there was a transformation of the assumed humanity by the divinity to be sinless.

[83]Hilary *Tractatus In LIV Psalmum* (PL 9 [1844]: 348B, trans. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:400, his italics). "Hic ergo assumens carnis nostrae fragilitatem, et manens suus atque noster, ita agit, orat, profitetur, exspectat omnia illa quae nostra sunt, ut in bis admisceat etiam illa quae sua sunt : loquaturque interdum ex persona hominis, quia et homo et natus et passus et mortuus est; interdum autem omnis ei secundum Deum sermo sit."

[84]Burns, "Christology in Hilary," 141.

[85]Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:400. Burns, "Christology in Hilary," 163, concurs: "Christ also experienced in himself the progress from humility to glory. So to that extent he does share our condition and could be at least an example for our progress. But there is evidence in the Commentary that Christ is more than just an example."

instability" ("*ut his humanae demutationis vitiis non esset obnoxius*").[86] That he has sin in view as part of these common failings shows in Hilary's next statement that Christ is unique in his sinlessness of perfect obedience despite being persecuted (*qui peccatum non fecit*; alludes to 1 Pet 2:22-24). In *De Trinitate*, Hilary gives another example of Christ's humanity as divinely constituted to be impassible, which entails impeccability because of the widely assumed connection between *pathos* and sin:

> That flesh, that is, that Bread, is from Heaven; that humanity is from God. He had a body to suffer, and He suffered: but He had not a nature which could feel pain. For His body possessed a unique nature of its own; it was transformed into heavenly glory on the Mount, it put fevers to flight by its touch, it gave new eyesight by its spittle.[87]

Hilary sees the humanity of Christ as elevated to be unable to sin because of divinization, or the progressive glorification that finally showed in its fullness at the transfiguration. With respect to our study, this suggests the deification model by which Jesus was tempted to sin but his divinity made him impeccable as the heavenly man.

One example from Didymus the Blind (ca. 313–ca. 398) shows the Alexandrian tendency for the deification model. Didymus comments on 1 Peter 2:21 that the cause of Jesus' sinlessness is that he is "good by nature" (*quasi substantiale sit ejus bonum*), by contrast to Christians who are merely good by grace.[88] That Didymus makes a distinction here between Christ's natural goodness and others' "goodness by grace" (*habet benignitatem*) is important because Peter commends Jesus as an example for his readers to follow as they face the temptations to sin that come with persecution. However, Didymus reasons that Christ is able to experience temptation in his humanity

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[86]Hil. *Tractatus In LIII Psalmum* 6 (PL 9:341A). Anger et al. are in the preceding context.

[87]Hil. *De Trinitate* 10.23 (PL 10 [1845]: 363A, trans. E. W. Watson and L. Pullan, ed. W. Sanday, NPNF^2 [1955], 9:188). "Caro illa, id est, panis ille de coelis est; et homo ille de Deo est. Habens ad patiendum quidem corpus, et passus est; sed naturam non habens ad dolendum. Naturae enim propriae ac suae corpus illud est, quod in coelestem gloriam conformatur in monte, quod attactu suo fugat febres, quod de sputo suo format oculos."

[88]Didymus of Alexandria *Enarratio In Epistolam 1 S. Petri.* (ed. J. -P. Migne, PG 39 [1858]: 1767D). "Praesentes equidem laudes ejus sunt, qui voluntariam, et non substantialem habet benignitatem, per quae verba nos invitat ad laudem ejus, qui naturam non habuit ad peccandum, quasi substantiale sit ejus bonum."

because his human soul does not share in the immutability and impassibility of the divine nature.[89] Didymus uses the concept of *propatheia* (προπάθεια) as that moment of human experience just prior to the full instability of πάθος which entails liability to sin.[90] Christ's human soul can experience the stresses of temptation at the level of *propatheia* without the dangers of actual failure, as in Didymus's comment on Psalm 39:2: "Now as the soul which Jesus took is something other than the Trinity, it is by nature created to endure *propatheia* and the beginning of amazement."[91] Therefore, Didymus makes a way to see how Jesus could experience temptation despite his inability to sin. Didymus's formulation is less clear to represent the deification model than others are, but it is plain at least that he explains Jesus' sinlessness in terms of a distinct, natural goodness that follows the deification model.

Another Alexandrian, Athanasius (328–373) represents M2 by his emphasis on Jesus' "divinized humanity" (ἐθεοποιήθη ἄνθρωπος) for the divinization of all. This shows in his comment that the power of the Logos "destroys" (ἀνήλωται) the sinful corruptions of the flesh ("these things" [ταῦτα] are earlier specified as sin and corruption) for Christ and others so that they may share in his eternal life to be "immortal and incorruptible" as he is (ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἄφθαρτοι).[92] Athanasius suggests that the transformation in Christ is a microcosm for the universal humanity because Jesus has broken the power of sin in human nature through union to the divine Word, as in an

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[89]Adolphe Gesché, *La christologie du 'Commentaire sur les Psaumes' découvert à Toura* (Gembloux: Éditions J. Duculot, 1962), 135. "Elle a pu les éprouver parce qu'elle ne jouit pas, comme dieu seul en jouit, de l'impassibilité, de l'immutabilité."

[90]Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:363. He notes that the remains of *Commentary on the Psalms* found at Toura in France (1941) may be inauthentic, but they were written by somebody from the same time and region as Didymus.

[91]Didym. *Commentary on Psalms* Text 18.1.4-5 (ed. Gesché, *La christologie du 'Commentaire sur les Psaumes'*, 135); trans. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:363. "ἐπεὶ τοίνυν ἡ ψυχὴ ἣν ἀν[έλα]βεν Ἰησοῦς ἄλλη ἐστὶν παρὰ τὴν Τριάδα, πέφυκεν δέχεσθαι προπάθειαν καὶ ἀρχὴν τοῦ θαμβεῖσθαι."

[92]Athanasius *Oratio III contra Arianos* 33 (ed. B. de Montfaucon, PG 26 [1857]: 393B). "Νῦν δὲ τοῦ Λόγου γενομένου ἀνθρώπου, καὶ ἰδιοποιουμένου τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς, οὐκέτι ταῦτα τοῦ σώματος ἅπτεται διὰ τὸν ἐν αὐτῷ γενόμενον Λόγον· ἀλλ' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ μὲν ἀνήλωται, . . . ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Λόγου δύναμιν ἀναστάντες, ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἄφθαρτοι ἀεὶ διαμένουσιν."

example from *De Incarnatione*: "the all-holy Word of God . . . being incorruptible, vivified and purified the mortal body. For Scripture says: '*He did no sin, nor was deceit found in his mouth.*'"[93] Athanasius connects incorruption and purification (ἐκαθάριζεν) with Christ's sinlessness. This association shows that even though his main concern is death,[94] the problem of sin is still important in his soteriology. In his view, God has solved both problems by means of a universal human nature that the divine nature of the Logos deifies in Christ. Therefore, in his view the way that the Logos accomplished a sinless human life and our deification is by enhancing the human nature that he assumed for redemption.

Basil of Caesarea (ca. 330–379) reflects the Cappadocians' concern with human passibility in its relation to sin. He distinguishes between the natural *pathe* that Christ assumed, and those *pathe* that arise "from wickedness" (ἀπὸ κακίας πάθη).[95] The transformation of his humanity must eclipse the evil *pathe* because they are unworthy of Christ's divine purity.[96] Basil sees this transformation in an incarnational union by which the divine nature in Christ absorbed his humanity.[97] By this sort of union, the divine nature destroys both death and sin in Jesus' humanity to make it immortal and impeccable—"not liable to sin" (μήτε ὑπεύθυνον ἁμαρτία).[98] His human sinlessness was thus caused by his divine impeccability as a divinization of human nature that Christians will share in at their resurrection (ὥστε ἡμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει).

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[93]Ath. *De Incarnatione* 17, in *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*, ed. and trans. Robert W. Thomson, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 177, italics in trans. "ὁ πανάγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος . . . ἄφθαρτος ὤν, καὶ τὸ σῶμα θνητὸν τυγχάνον ἐζωοποίει καὶ ἐκαθάριζεν. Ὃς ἁμαρτίαν γάρ φησιν οὐκ ἐποίησεν, οὐδὲ εὑρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ."

[94]Cf. Pelikan's observation, *Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, 285-86, "Despite their fundamental differences, the theory of the hypostatic union and the theory of the indwelling Logos both concentrated on death rather than on sin."

[95]Basil *Epistle 261*, in *The Letters*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari and Martin R. P. McGuire, LCL [1934], 4:80. "τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ κακίας πάθη, ὅσα τὸ καθαρὸν τῆς ζωῆς ἡμῶν ἐπιρρυπαίνει."

[96]Ibid., "ταῦτα ὡς ἀνάξια τῆς ἀχράντου θεότητος ἀπωσάμενος."

[97]Ibid., 82, "ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὁ θάνατος, ὁ ἐν τῇ σαρκί, διὰ τοῦ Ἀδὰμ εἰς ἡμᾶς παραπεμφθείς, κατεπόθη ὑπὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ·"

[98]Ibid. "ὥστε ἡμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει ἀπολαβεῖν τὴν σάρκα, μήτε ὑπόδικον θανάτῳ μήτε ὑπεύθυνον ἁμαρτίᾳ."

Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 335–ca. 394) represents M2 with his strong emphasis on divinization. This transformation by *praedicatio idiomatum* is clear when he says the humanity in Christ "does not remain in its own properties" (οὔτε . . . ἐν τοῖς ἑαυτῆς ἰδιώμασιν) after union with "the heavenly impassibility" (οὐρανούς ἄνοδον).[99] The assumed humanity is deiform, "transformed into divine power" (τὴν θείαν δύναμιν μεταστοιχειώσας), with power which specifically blocks the sin that normally arises in the human will (ἐξ ἁμαρτίας γινομένην τῇ προαιρέσει).[100] The deification continues in a progressive exaltation of Christ's humanity by "absorption in the divinity" (ἀπαρχὴ ὑπὸ τῆς παντοδυνάμου θεότητος), illustrated by the well-known image of a drop of vinegar mixed in an endless ocean.[101] Gregory's primary concerns are to defend the completeness of Jesus' humanity and the union of two natures in Christ,[102] just as he defends Jesus' full humanity because he has temptations to sin (among other human markers).[103] Nonetheless, this union cannot take place unless by transformation that eclipses the human passibility with divine impassibility because of the tendency of πάθος to sin.[104] Therefore, Gregory's view of Christ's impeccability, temptation, and sinlessness expresses the deified humanity model as the divine impassibility and purity that divinizes

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[99]Gregory of Nyssa *Antirrheticus Adversus Apollinarem* 42 (ed. J. -P. Migne, PG 45 [1858]: 1253B). "οὔτε μετὰ τὴν εἰς οὐρανούς ἄνοδον ἔτι ἡ σὰρξ ἐν τοῖς ἑαυτῆς ἰδιώμασιν."

[100]Gr. Nyss. *Epistola III ad Eustathia et Ambrosia* (PG 46:1021A). "Ὁ οὖν τὴν φύσιν ὑμῶν πρὸς τὴν θείαν δύναμιν μεταστοιχειώσας, ἄπηρον αὐτὴν καὶ ἄνοσον ἐν ἑαυτῷ διεσώσατο, τὴν ἐξ ἁμαρτίας γινομένην τῇ προαιρέσει πήρωσιν οὐ προσδεξάμενος."

[101]Gr. Nyss. *Ad Theophilum Adv. Apoll.* (PG 45:1276CD). "Ἡ δὲ προσληφθεῖσα τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἀπαρχὴ ὑπὸ τῆς παντοδυνάμου θεότητος, ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις εἰκόνι χρώμενος, οἷόν τις σταγὼν ὄξους ἀπείρῳ πελάγει κατακραθεῖσα, ἐστὶ μὲν ἐν θεότητι." Wolfson notes that this image was not original with Gregory, but came from stock usage by the Stoics, as in Stobaeus *Ecologae* 1.17, and was common of the theory of union that Wolfson calls Stoic mixture of two things that can be unmixed. The mixture is not a *tertium quid*, but there is reciprocal corruption of each component (*Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, 381-82, 398). This seems to fit Gregory's view of the union and explains why he used the vinegar drop image so frequently as he did.

[102]Srawley, "Gregory of Nyssa on the Sinlessness of Christ," 434.

[103]Ibid., 435. Other markers of his true humanity are Jesus' ignorance, growth in knowledge, fearing death, and having a sense of abandonment by God.

[104]Gr. Nyss. *Contra Eunomium* 6.3 (PG 45:721B). "ὅτι οὐδὲν κατὰ ἀλήθειαν πάθος ἐστὶν ὃ μὴ εἰς ἁμαρτίαν φέρει."

the human nature to live on earth impeccably.[105]

Cyril of Alexandria (378–444) gives many examples of M2 because of his soteriological concern for the divinization of a universal humanity in Christ, similar to the Cappadocians.[106] The need for deification of Christ's humanity in relation to sin shows as he writes, "As God he wished to make that flesh which was held in the grip of sin and death evidently superior to sin and death."[107] This example fits M2 closely by affirming that the divine nature of the Logos enhances his assumed humanity to make it naturally impeccable. Cyril insists on Jesus' impeccability as a man who is not subject to sin as others are,[108] and that his temptations were given by God's love for the sake of other humans who are tempted and need to know how to resist these dangers.[109] Cyril argues that the union of the divine nature with the human nature in Christ was a transformation that he likens to dyeing textiles: the Logos effectively immersed his human soul in the divine "immutability" (ἄτρεπτον) as wool that is set in a bath of dye.[110] The purpose of

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[105]Grillmeier's assessment, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:376, says as much: "Christ's humanity, then, is not simply dissolved in the Godhead. It has reality, but no longer its earthly *idiomata*. Everything that makes the 'universal human physis' the human hypostasis or the human individual or the 'person' is done away with and replaced by the divine characteristics, wisdom, power, holiness, impassibility. As there are only divine *idiomata* in Christ (i.e. in the humanity of Christ), there is no longer any cause to speak of two Sons. The human element in Christ is no longer shown in natural properties. . . . All is filled with the glory of the Godhead."

[106]McGuckin, *St Cyril*, 35, observes, "Cyril understands that the incarnation of God as man is not a static event, but rather the pattern and archetype of a process. He points to the seamless union of God and man in the single divine person of Jesus, truly God and man at one and the same time, founded on the single subjectivity of Christ, as not merely a sacrament of the presence of God among us, but a sacrament of how our own human lives are destined to be drawn into his divine life, and transformed in a similar manner. In short, for Cyril the manner of the incarnation is analogous to the manner of the sanctification and transfiguration of Christ's disciples."

[107]Cyr. *ΟΤΙ ΕΙΣ Ο ΚΡΙΣΤΟΣ* 718.28-32, in *Cyrille D'Alexandrie, Deux Dialogues Christologiques*, ed. and trans. G. M. de Durand, Sources chrétiennes [SC] 97 (Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 1964), 316; trans. McGuckin, *St Cyril*, 55. "'Ηθέλησε γάρ, ὡς Θεός, τὴν θανάτῳ καὶ ἁμαρτίᾳ κατεχομένην σάρκα, καὶ θανάτου καὶ ἁμαρτίας ἀποφῆναι κρείττονα."

[108]Ibid., 744.37-39 (402). "καὶ ἐν ὁμοιώματι γέγονε τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς, πλὴν οὐ μεθ' ἡμῶν ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν, ἀλλ' ἐπέκεινα τοῦ εἰδέναι πλημμελεῖν."

[109]Ibid., 754.22-26 (434). "'Ην οὖν ἀναγκαῖον ἀναμαθεῖν, πειρασμοῦ καταθέοντος καὶ τοὺς τῆς εἰς Θεὸν ἀγάπης ἕνεκα κινδυνεύοντας, ὁποίους τινὰς χρὴ τοὺς τὴν εὐκλεᾶ καὶ ἐξαίρετον πολιτείαν καὶ ζωὴν κατορθοῦν ᾑρημένους."

[110]Cyr. *De Incarnatione unigenitii* 691.27-30, in *Cyrille D'Alexandrie, Deux Dialogues Christologiques*, SC 97:230. "ψυχὴν δὲ ἰδίαν τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ποιούμενος, ἁμαρτίας αὐτὴν ἀποφήνῃ κρείττονα τῆς ἰδίας φύσεως τὸ πεπηγός τε καὶ ἄτρεπτον, καθάπερ τινὰ βαφήν, ἐγκαταχρώας αὐτῇ;"

this deification was to make the humanity of Christ more powerful than sin by means of the divine immutability.[111] In light of this view of Christ's humanity as enhanced by his divinity to be impeccable, Cyril was shocked to hear that some people thought sin was a possibility for him, since it was so obvious from his sinlessness that no danger existed for him in being tempted to sin.[112] Instead of peccability, Cyril's view was that salvation required that Christ be impeccable, and explained it in terms of M2.

Leo the Great (?–461) represents M2 in the Latin West. In his influential *Tome*, Leo is ambiguous when he affirms that the "inviolable nature" of divinity (*inviolabilis naturae*) was "united to passible" humanity (*unita passibili*), causing an "increase to the humanity" (*humana augens*), possibly explained in context as the way Christ was protected to remain "without inborn sin" (*sine sorde peccati*).[113] Leo's view is that temptations did not assault Christ in his purified humanity,[114] just as the two "natures were mixed with each other" (*ut naturae alteri altera misceretur*)[115] for this incarnational result. As with Cyril, Leo's view of Christ's temptations is that they were merely permitted for the sake of those who needed an example.[116] Leo affirms a true, full humanity in Christ; however, this is a humanity that has been perfected by communion with Christ's divinity. The result is that Christ's human temptations are minimal because

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[111]Cyr. *Oratio Ad Theodosium* 54.26-30, ed. Eduardus Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* [*ACO*] (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1927), 1.1-4:54. "ψυχὴν δὲ ἰδίαν τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ποιούμενος ἁμαρτίας αὐτὴν ἀποφήνηι κρείττονα, τῆς ἰδίας φύσεως τὸ πεπηγός τε καὶ ἄτρεπτον, οἷαφ περ ἐρίωι βαφήν, ἐγκαταχρώσας αὐτῆι;"

[112]Cyr. *Adversus Anthropomorphitas, epistola ad Calosyrium* 18 (ed. J. Auberti, PG 76 [1859]: 1120D). "Εἰ δὲ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσιν πεφόρηκεν, ἵνα, ὡς ἐν Ἀδὰμ ἀσθενήσασαν, ἐν αὐτῷ δείξει δυνατωτάτηνκαὶ ἁμαρτίας κρείττονα, τί μάτην περιεργάζονται ὃ δύναται οὐχ εὑρεῖν; πῶς δὲ λέγοντος αὐτοῦ ἐπελάθοντο."

[113]Leo Magnus *The Tome of Pope Leo the Great*, ed. E. H. Blakeney, Texts for Students 29 (London: S.P.C.K., 1923), 24.

[114]Leo Mag. *Ep.* 35.3 *ad Julianum* (ed. Petro Fratibus Ballerinis and Hieronymo Fratibus Ballerinis, PL 54 [1865]: 809A). "Nihil enim carnis suae habebat adversum nec discordia desideriorum gignebat compugnantiam voluntatum. Sensus corporei vigebant sine lege peccati, et veritas affecionum sub moderamine Deitatis et mentis, nec tentabatur illecebris, nec cedebat injuriis."

[115]Leo Mag. *Sermo* 23.1 (PL 54:200A).

[116]Leo Mag. *Sermo* 39.3 (PL 54:264C). "Quia ob hoc Dominus se tentari a tentatore permisit, ut cujus munimur auxilio, ejusdem erudiremur exemplo."

his divine impeccability is maximal. Therefore, Leo's theology supports M2.

A final representative of M2 is Leontius of Jerusalem (?–538).[117] Leontius argues that only the *idiomata* of the two natures are transformed; the natures themselves remain unmingled.[118] This is the way he explains the divinization of human nature as a universal assumed and elevated in Christ.[119] By the incarnational union, the unassailable Logos divinizes the human nature to protect it from the devil, sin, and death.[120] This "divinization" (ἐκθεώσεως) is a fulfillment and re-creation of the humanity by sharing in the divine nature.[121] Moreover, Leontius sees the actual sinlessness of Christ as a proof of his divinity,[122] which also means that his impeccable divinity has caused his human sinlessness. Though different from some others in his formulation, Leontius expresses M2 while maintaining the integrity of the natures—particularly the freedom of Christ's humanity.[123]

M3: Sinless by Divine Hegemony

Description. The question asked in M3 is this: How does his operation in two natures result in his sinlessness as a man? The answer given is that the divine Logos

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[117]Some have identified Leontius of Byzantium with Leontius of Jerusalem (Leontius H.), but I agree with Grillmeier, *Christ*, 2.2:274, and David Beecher Evans, *Leontius of Byzantium: An Origenist Christology,* Dumbarton Oaks Studies 13 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1970), 1-2, 141-42, that the two should be distinguished. Evans seems right to mark the similarities in their thought and language as from Leontius H. having responded to Leontius B. as among his opponents in *Adversus Nestorianos* (long attributed to Leontius B., as in Migne), replicating Leontius B.'s arguments to refute him.

[118]Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2.2:295-297.

[119]Leontius of Jerusalem *Adversus Nestorianos* 1.6 (ed. Migne, PG 86 pt. 1 [1860]: 1425D).

[120]Ibid., 1.47 (1505D). "ἥ ἐστι φύσει τῷ τε διαβόλῳ καὶ τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ καὶ τῷ θανάτῳ ἀνεπιβατος·"

[121]Ibid., 1.18 (1468C). "εἰς τὴν ἰδικὴν φύσιν αὐτοῦ, τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς ἐκθεώσεως, ἐκ τῆς πρὸς Θεὸν συμφυΐας·" (cited by Gray, "Leontius of Jerusalem's Case," 152). Gray comments that this passage tells "a sharing in the essence of the Word as well as a sharing in His being." Gray notes that this is a rare term for divinization, but not one that is unattested elsewhere (ibid., 153).

[122]Ibid., 4.37 (1705C). "τὸ ἰδικώτατον Θεοῦ γνωριστήριον ἐν τῷ κατ' αὐτὸν ὅλῳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐν τῷ ἑνὶ μόνον μέρει θεωροῦμεν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ ἀναμάρτητον·" (cited by Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2.2:300).

[123]The development of emphasizing Christ's human freedom is noted by Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition,* 2.2:300, who takes this as extremely important in the progress of doctrine. He lauds this emphasis as particularly harmonious with modern Christological reflections.

directs his humanity sinlessly in all the actions of his human experience. Like M2, M3 explains Christ's impeccability and temptation as the predominance of his divinity over his humanity. Different from M2 is the way that M3 explains this predominance as volitional or personal hegemony, not natural. The predominance is the divine personal direction of the Logos in his human experience to resist human weaknesses sinlessly. Christ's sinlessness is not a necessity of his human nature; it is a necessity of his divine will.[124] The Logos is the efficient cause of his human sinlessness, and the divine nature is the material cause. The impeccable Logos directs his assumed humanity in sinless action, not by natural necessity, but by his prevailing divine will. Jesus can be tempted as a man, but he cannot sin because he is the divine Son who will never choose in his humanity to sin. His human will is subordinate and submitted to his divine will.[125] The divinization of Christ's humanity is important to M3 as the way he can have elevated, deiform operation. The single-subject predication of all Christ's attributes to his person secures the unity of the incarnation. In contrast to M2, M3 has no room for a transformation of Christ's humanity. Emphasis on the recapitulation of a human victory over Satan and temptation demonstrates the godly life of Jesus as a human example for Christians to follow. Emphasis on the integrity of the two natures in action by the divine person prevents a change of the human nature to become divine. Instead, the hegemony of the Logos over his humanity leads to the communication of divine attributes without changing human nature. M3 pictures an *enabling* communication instead of the *transforming* communication of M2. Important to advocates of M3 are the likeness of Jesus' humanity to common humanity, the example Jesus demonstrates for others, and his achievement of sinlessness as a human accomplishment in the face of temptations. Some representatives of M3 suggest the idea that Christ's humanity is instrumental in the redemptive program,

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[124]The question of whether the will is personal or natural faculty cannot be resolved here, but at least we can question the adequacy of the dyothelite position of orthodox tradition. The divine hegemony model seems to be more consistent if the will is personal, so it is Christ's divine personal will directing his humanity in terms of agency, not natural causation.

[125]Cf. Dupuis, *Who Do You Say*, 114. "Constantinople III affirmed in Jesus an authentic human will and action not contrary to, but perfectly submitted to, the divine will."

and he directs his manhood as his tool. Moreover, Jesus' incarnational action occurs without his human nature becoming different from the nature in which other human beings must struggle against temptations to sin. Figure 3 summarizes M3.

Key Question:	- How does his operation in two natures result in his sinlessness as a man?
Answer:	- The divine Logos directs his humanity sinlessly in all the actions of his human experience
Concerns:	- Protection of divine immutability by the divine will - Providing a redemptive pattern for others to follow by obeying God, submitting to his will - The Logos is the leading principle in the incarnation - Human nature is the instrument of redemption by the Son - Harmony of operation between the natures - His human will is subservient to the divine will - Human operation is elevated by enabling divine direction - The likeness of Jesus' humanity to common humanity
Influential theories:	- Salvation is the divinizing elevation of humanity by divine direction from corruption to glorification - Recapitulation is Jesus' renewal of humanity by stages in victory over Satan and providing an example to follow
How tempted?	- He was tempted as a man - He suffered human weakness
Why tempted?	- He provided a redemptive example for others to follow - He provided a model of obedience - He became sympathetic to the struggles of others - He demonstrated what is possible in human flesh
How triumphed?	- He achieved victory as a man by fasting and abstinence - He conquered temptation as God
Relation to M1:	- M3 specifies the necessity of his sinlessness as the volitional or personal necessity of the divine person in union with his human nature
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a necessity of his divine will

Figure 3. Summary of M3: Sinless by Divine Hegemony

Representatives of M3. The earliest theologian to suggest M3 is Irenaeus (130–200). He insists on the divine use of the assumed humanity in an instrumental way, which fits his view of Jesus' whole life as a redemptive recapitulation as the second Adam.[126] Irenaeus opposes the Gnostics' docetic conceptions of Christ to argue instead for the likeness of "the Lord's flesh" (*Domini carnem*) with "our flesh" (*nostra carne*).[127] This claim of the essential likeness suggests that Irenaeus also opposes the idea of M2 that Christ's humanity was deiform. Irenaeus has a concern to be able to affirm Jesus' sinlessness without setting that moral achievement as a marker of his natural difference from the rest of sinful humanity.[128] In his view, the Logos aided Christ's assumed humanity to conquer his temptations to sin.[129] Irenaeus writes, "The Logos remained quiescent during the process of temptation, crucifixion and death, but aided the human nature when it conquered, and endured, and performed deeds of kindness, and rose again from the dead, and was received up into heaven."[130] M3 shows in Irenaeus's insistence on Christ's human victory that reverses the human defeat of Adam. Jesus obeys the law as a man, and answers Satan's temptations in the wilderness through nothing else but by quoting Scripture, thus demonstrating the example for others to follow.[131]

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[126]Irenaeus *Adversus haereses* 5.24.4 (ed. Migne, PG 7 [1857]: 1188C). "Omnium artifex Verbum Dei, per hominem vincens eum, et apostatam ostendens, e contrario subjecit eum homini." Irenaeus's view of recapitulation is helpfully summarized by M. Steiner, *La Tentation de Jésus dans L'Interprétation Patristique de Saint Justin a Origéne* (Paris: Libraire Lecoffre, 1962), 201, "La récapitulation est la restauration de l'humanité perdu en Adam, le dénouement des liens dans lesquels Adam s'est laissé enserrer par Satan. Mais Irénée développe le thème. Comme l'opposition unclut un paralleélisme, il pense pouvoir déduire des trois tentations du Christ trois aspects principaux dans la faute d'Adam, tout comme il déduit le jour de la mort d'Adam de celui de la mort du Christ."

[127]Iren. *Haer.* 5.14.3 (PG 7:1162C).

[128]Ibid.

[129]"In the *recapitulatio* the conflict which Jesus waged as a man was as necessary a part as His birth or Incarnation" (Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation: A Study in the Biblical Theology of Irenaeus*, trans. Ross Mackenzie [Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959], 119).

[130]Iren. *Haer.* 3.19.3 (PG 7:941; trans. Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 2, trans. Neil Buchanan [Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1897], 284). "Requiescente quidem Verbo, ut posset tentari, et inhonorari, et crucifici, et mori; absorpto autem homine in eo quod vincit, et sustinet et resurgit, et assumitur."

[131]Iren. *Haer.* 5.21.1 (PG 7:1179BC). A similar emphasis on Jesus' triumph over Satan in the wilderness by biblical logic shows in Justin Martyr *Dialogus Cum Trypohone* 125.4 (ed. Miroslav Marcovich [Berlin: Walter De Guyter, 1997], 286). Justin (ca. 100-165) sees Jesus' human resistance to Satan as the typological fulfillment of Jacob's struggle with God, *Isra El*, and the parallel between Jacob's

Tertullian suggests M3 when he writes that Jesus struck down his temptations by abstinence, possibly meaning a volitional mastery of the weak cravings of the flesh.[132] Christ's flesh is a necessary instrument for the redemptive work of the Son, so Tertullian emphasizes the similarity of Christ's flesh to common humanity.[133] In his opposition to the Gnostics, Tertullian argues for the reality of Christ's sinless humanity in essential likeness to the sinful flesh of Adam and others.[134] Harnack observes that Tertullian "distinguished what Christ did as man from what he did as God in order to prove that he was not a *tertium quid*,"[135] which is consistent with the M3 emphasis on the integrity of the natures. Accordingly, Tertullian matches other trends of thought that constitute M3 because he insists on the human example and the likeness of Christ's flesh to other human beings. Nonetheless, Tertullian's alignment with M3 is not as clear as some others are.

Apollinaris of Laodicea (300–392) is overtly representative of M3 and shows the danger of going too far with M3.[136] More than many others, Apollinaris forms his Christological model in response to the problem of Christ's passible, temptable humanity: "The sinlessness of Christ derived from his being a vehicle of the divine nature, which *could not* sin. Unity and sinlessness were the main props upon which the Apollinarian

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injury and Christ's death. Justin does not have more material that indicates his part in one model of Christ's impeccability and temptation or another (from what I could find).

[132]Tert. *De Baptismo* 20.20-24 (*Tertullian's Homily on Baptism*, ed. and trans. Ernest Evans [London: S.P.C.K., 1964], 42-43).

[133]Tert. *Adversus Marcionem* 5.14.1-2 (*Against Marcion*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. Ernest Evans [Oxford: Clarendon, 1972], 597-99). "Ob hoc igitur missum filium in similitudinem carnis peccati, ut peccati carnem simili substantiaredimeret, id est carnea, quae peccatrici carni similis esset, cum peccatrix ipsa non esset. Nam et haec erit dei virtus in substantia pari perficere salutem."

[134]Tert. *De Car.* 16.780-81 (ed. J. -P. Migne, PL 2:826).

[135]Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 2:283. This seems to indicate that he would be opposed to a transformation model. Unfortunately, Harnack does not give a reference as the basis for his assessment.

[136]Despite the similarity between Apollinarianism and Eutychianism, it would seem that Eutyches would have agreed more with M2 on the basis of the type of relation between the divine and human natures as completely mingled. For Apollinaris, the issue in his formulation is human liability to sin, so I include him here despite his denial of a full humanity in Christ. Eutyches does not seem to have a similar concern for the impeccability and temptation of Christ, do I did not pursue him.

picture of Christ rested."[137] Thus, Apollinaris explains that in Christ the unconquerable divine mind *directs the flesh* and actions in a sinless human life.[138] This is an instrumental view of the humanity in Christ, driven in a divine way by the Logos as the "leading" or "guiding" principle (ἡγεμονικόν) of the assumed humanity.[139] Therefore, Apollinaris views the incarnational union as a displacement of the human *nous* by the divine *nous*, thereby securing the human sinlessness of Christ and salvation by the principle of M3.

Gregory of Nazianzen (ca. 325–389) is a Cappadocian representative of M3. Gregory asserts that Christ was tempted as a man, but he triumphed as God, thus giving full due to the reality of each nature in double predication.[140] Gregory emphasizes Jesus' human struggle and victory over temptations in context with Paul's struggles, marking Jesus' fast as important in his victory over temptation.[141] Gregory combines this emphasis on Jesus' human experience in weakness with the clear affirmation that Christ's divinity was unassailable,[142] which fits M3. Frederick Norris observes, "Nazianzen develops thematically the dominance of Jesus Christ's divinity."[143] Gregory stresses the unity of the two natures in Christ, and a view of salvation as divinization, but his

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[137]Meredith, *Cappadocians*, 111-12 (italics his). Cf. the comment by Spoerl, "Apollinarius and the Response," 427), "Apollinarius specifically constructed his heterodox tripartite Christological model, in which the Saviour is composed of divine (and thus necessarily ἄτρεπτος) Word, a human animal soul and human flesh, to make it respond more adequately to the early Arian positing of a created, τρεπτός Word incarnate in Jesus Christ, who was theoretically, if not actually, vulnerable to sin."

[138]Apollinaris of Laodicea *Η ΚΑΤΑ ΜΕΡΟΣ ΠΙΣΤΙΣ* 30.13-16 (in *Apollinaris von Laodicea und Seine Schule I*, ed. Hans Lietzmann, Texte und Untersuchungen [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1904; reprint: Hildesheim, New York: Georg Olms, 1970], 178). "νοῦς ἀήττητος . . . τὰς σαρκικὰς κινήσεις θεικῶς τε καὶ ἀναμαρτήτως."

[139]Apollinar. L. *ΛΟΓΟΙ* 152.16 (ed. Lietzmann, 248). "σὰρξ καί τό σαρκός ἡγεμονικόν ἓν πρὸσωπον." Lietzmann notes that this fragment is collected from a citation by Leontius Byz. *Timotheus*.

[140]Gregory of Nazianzen *Oratio* 29.20 (PG 36 [1858]: 100C). "'Επειράσθη ὡς ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ' ἐνίκησεν ὡς Θεός·"

[141]Gr. Naz. *Oratio* 14.3 (PG 35 [1857]: 861B). "καὶ 'Ιησοῦς αὐτὸς νηστεύων, καὶ πειραζόμενος, καὶ νικῶν τὸν πειράζοντα."

[142]Gr. Naz. *Oratio* 24.9 (PG 35:1180B). "καὶ πεῖραν προσάγει τῷ ἀπειράστῳ (ἐπειδὴ δεύτερον 'Αδὰμ εἶδε τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ φαινόμενον), ὡς καὶ τοῦτον καταπαλαίσων. 'Ηγνόει γὰρ, ὅτι περιπεσεῖται θεότητι, προσδραμὼν ἀνθρωπότητι."

[143]Frederick Norris, *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning: The Five Theological Orations of Gregory Nazianzen*, intro. and comm. Frederick W. Norris, trans. Lionel Wickham and Frederick Williams, SVC 13 (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 156.

comments on Jesus' temptations suggest that the Logos achieves the victory of human sinlessness as the leading principle in the incarnation, an M3 formula.

John Chrysostom (344–407) suggests M3 when he considers Christ's temptations. Chrysostom writes that Jesus' sinlessness must be a demonstration of what is possible in human flesh as the example of victory over temptation.[144] For Jesus to be a true human example for and truly sympathetic to other humans without compromising his divine immutability, he must suffer the human weaknesses and predominate over them by his divine will. Chrysostom writes using the device of Christ's first person perspective:

> I [Jesus] have never left the assumed humanity unharmonized with the divine operation, (acting) now as man, now as God, both indicating the nature, and bringing faith to the economy; teaching that the humbler things are to be referred to the humanity, and the nobler to the divinity, and by this unequal mixture of actions, interpreting the unequal union of the natures, and by (my) power over sufferings, declaring that my own sufferings are voluntary; as God, I curbed nature, supporting a fast for forty days, but afterwards, as man, I was hungry and tired; as God I calmed the raging sea, as man, I was tempted by the devil; as God, I expelled devils, as man, I am about to suffer for men."[145]

Camilus Hay explains Chrysostom's picture of divine-human operation in the terms of the Aristotelian theory of predominance that we saw earlier: "The unequal mixture of actions – the humble and the sublime – point to the unequal union of natures – the human and the divine. Christ acts as a man, but these human actions are controlled by the Divine Person in such a way that they bring faith to the economy without overshadowing the divine nature."[146] In his method of harmonizing the divine and human actions of Jesus, Chrysostom protects his soteriological commitments to divine immutability and Christ's human example in temptation by means of M3.

Jerome (ca. 347–420) is not as clear on this topic as we would like,[147] but he

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[144]John Chrysostom *In Epist. Ad Hebraeos. Cap. IV. Homil. VII* (ed. D. Bern de Montfaucon, PG 63 [1860]: 63.75).

[145]Chrys. *In quat. Lazarum* (PG 50 [1859]: 643.647; trans. Hay, "St John Chrysostom," 310).

[146]Hay, "St John Chrysostom," 310. Hay also concludes that Chrysostom "nowhere affirms the presence of a human will in Christ" (ibid., 309) because of the divine predominance.

[147]Cf. Grillmeier's comment (*Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:402): "Jerome did not treat christology in such detail and depth as Hilary. There is still no consideration of the way in which God and man are one in Christ."

indicates his tendency to the M3 explanation of Christ's temptation in his homily on Psalm 16 (15 in LXX).[148] Jerome interprets verse seven as a prophetic type of Christ's anguished temptation in Gethsemane, explaining that the "kidneys" (νεφροί) in the passage "metaphorically represent the innermost thoughts of the self, which the divine Word controls, enabling Christ to anticipate and endure his suffering without emotional disturbance."[149] Jerome suggests that Jesus was tempted in his humanity as a redemptive pattern for others, but when he discusses the wilderness temptations, he is unclear about how the Lord's won his victory in his humanity.[150]

Augustine represents M3 when he describes the human will of Christ as subservient to the divine will during the Gethsemane temptation.[151] Similarly, Augustine acknowledges a human mind in Christ, but this too is taken up and supervened by the Logos, [152] which hegemony is necessary to protect him from the human ignorance that many believed would entail sin. Augustine thus suggests the divine hegemony model, and opposes the transformation concept of M2. He affirms, "Divinity is not changed into the creature, so as to cease to be Divinity; nor the creature into Divinity, so as to cease to be creature."[153]

Another Latin theologian, Leo the Great, represents M3 because he insists on

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[148]Jerome *Tract. psal. XV* (in *Opera Pars II: Opera Homiletica,* ed. G. Morin, CCSL 78 [1953], 376-77). "Vel certe sic: erudierunt me renes me, interiorem diuinitatis sapientiam possidentem, per quam edoctus sum imminente passione terrore crucis humanae fragilitati non cedere. Porro quis alius (quia uita Saluatoris exemplum est) asserit eum non solum uigilantem sed etiam dormientem omni caruisse peccato, et ab uniuerso carnis fantasmate mansisse purum."

[149]Richard A. Layton, "From "Holy Passion" to Sinful Emotion: Jerome and the Doctrine of *Propassio*," in *In Dominico Eloquio, In Lordly Eloquence: Essays on Patristic Exegesis in Honor of Robert Louis Wilken*, ed. Paul M. Blowers et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 286-87, his translation.

[150]Jerome *Homily* 76 (II), in *Homilies of Saint Jerome*, vol. 2, trans. Marie Liguori Ewald, FOC 57 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1966), 132.

[151]Aug. *2 Enarratione In Ps.* 32 (1).2 (in *Enarrationes in Psalmos I – L*, ed. E. Eligius Dekkers and Johannes Fraipont, CCSL 38 [1956]: 248).

[152]Aug. *Enarr. In Ps.* 3.3 (*Enarrationes in Psalmos I – L*, CCSL 38:8).

[153]Aug. *De Trin.* 1.7.14 (ed. W. J. Mountain, CCSL 50:46; trans. Arthur West Haddan, NPNF[1] 3 [1956]: 24). "Neque enim illa susceptione alterum eorum in alterum conuersum atque mutatum est ; nec diuinitas quippe in creaturam mutata est ut desisteret esse diuinitas, nec creatura in diuinitatem ut desisteret esse creatura."

the integrity of the two natures in Christ. Leo can account for the full humanity in Christ only by subordinating it to the ruling divine will especially in terms of sin and passibility. Leo writes: "For he had no opposition in his flesh, nor did the strife of desires give rise to a conflict of wishes. His bodily senses were active without the law of sin, and the reality of his emotions being under the control of his Godhead and his mind, was neither assaulted by temptations nor yielded to injurious influences."[154] Despite the evidence for Leo's alignment with M2, this example shows the ambiguity of his writing by which he also suggests M3.

Leontius of Byzantium (485–543) defends Chalcedonian Christology while suggesting M3. For Christ to be an example to follow, his humanity could not be transformed, but had to be weak like other human beings.[155] Since passibility normally entails liability to sin, Christ kept himself from sin by the will of the Logos, as Leontius says:

> When the flesh bears the sufferings that are natural to it, the Logos with many others sends it control over the passions. For the 'physical bond' of the Logos with the flesh is inseparable and absolutely insoluble. To be free from suffering was not possible for the body in every respect. For it [his humanity] had this freedom from suffering not from the union as such, but from the will of the one united (Logos), who disposed of this according to the moment and the need.[156]

Grillmeier notes that this is Leontius's way of guaranteeing the sinlessness of Christ by the divine volition in the union.[157] The hegemony of the divine will with the assumed humanity preserves the integrity of the weaker nature by leading it to fulfillment. Leontius writes, "Supernatural [powers] do not abrogate natural ones; rather, they lead it onwards, and set them in motion to be able to do those things [proper to them], and to

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[154]Leo Mag. *Ep.* 35.3 *ad Julianum* (ed. Ballerinis, PL 54 [1865]: 809A; trans. in Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition,* 1:535). "Nihil enim carnis suae habebat adversum nec discordia desideriorum gignebat compugnantiam voluntatum. Sensus corporei vigebant sine lege peccati, et veritas affecionum sub moderamine Deitatis et mentis, nec tentabatur illecebris, nec cedebat injuriis."

[155]Leontius B. *Contra Aphthartodocetas* (PG 86 pt. 1:1348D-1349D). "Καὶ πῶς ἄν τις, ἐκεῖνος ἔφη, δυνησηται την τοῦ Κυρίου μιμεῖσθαι ζωήν;"

[156]Ibid., (PG 86 pt. 1:1332B; trans. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2.2:218).

[157]Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 2.2:218.

receive in addition the power to do what lies above them."[158] Therefore, Leontius holds up single-subject predication that does not change either nature in M3.

The final representative of M3 is John of Damascus (ca. 675–754). The Damascene argues that Christ's human will followed his divine will, willing in "subordination" (ὑπετάσσετο) to the divine will.[159] By this volitional divine hegemony, Christ could assume natural passibility for a full humanity without allowing his *pathe* to be "controlling influences" (προηγεῖτο) on his divine will, and hence liable to sin.[160] In his humanity, Christ could suffer all the pains of reported in the Gospels of hunger, thirst, grief, fear of death, and agony in suffering, and conquer them on others' behalf—along with conquering the Devil's temptations to sin.[161] Jesus could conquer in his weak, passible humanity because of an asymmetrical enrichment from his deity—deification without transformation, a communication for elevated, deiform, "divine operation" (θείας ἐνεργείας) without mingling the natures—just as fire heats steel to burn without changing the nature of the steel.[162] The Damascene resists the idea of transformation to protect the integrity of the natures and to emphasize the value of Jesus as a model of obedience for believers because he became what they are to restore their obedience by his own exemplary life.[163] John of Damascus therefore suggests M3 by relating the divine strength and human weakness through the dominance of divine will over his humanity to live sinlessly as a man.

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[158]Leontius B. *Contra Aphthartodocetas* (PG 86 pt. 1:1333B; trans. in Brian E. Daley, "'A Richer Union': Leontius of Byzantium and the Relationship of Human and Divine in Christ," in Studia patristica 24, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone [Leuven: Peeters, 1993], 263 fn100). "τὰ ὑπὲρ φύσιν τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ἀναιρετικὰ, ἀλλὰ παράγωγα καὶ παρορμητικὰ, εἰς τὸ κἀκεῖνά τε δυνηθῆαι, καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὰ ὑπὲρ ταῦτα δύναμιν προσλαβεῖν."

[159]John of Damascus *De Fide Orthodoxa* 3.18 (in vol. 2 of *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, ed. P. B. Kotter, Patristische Texte und Studien, Band 12 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973], 158). John of Damascus's dyothelite position is clear in 3.13, 14.

[160]Ibid., 3.20 (163). "οὐ γὰρ προηγεῖτο ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ τῆς θελήσεως τὰ φυσικά."

[161]Ibid., 3.20 (162).

[162]Ibid., 3.17 (156). "Ἡ δὲ τοῦ κυρίου σὰρξ τὰς θείας ἐνεργείας ἐπλουφτησε."

[163]Ibid., 3.1 (108).

Thus, M3 explains Christ's sinlessness as having been secured by his divinity. Both orthodox and heretical forms of the model were developed to explain the evidence for Christ's impeccability and temptation.

M4: Sinless by Empowering Grace

Description. The question asked by M4 is this: How is Jesus sinless as a man in a way that he can be an example for others? The answer given is that divine grace empowers Jesus to live sinlessly in his humanity. Representatives M4 explain Christ's sinlessness as the result of cooperation between divine grace and the human will to choose right in the face of temptation. The divine nature of the Logos keeps Christ from sin (as in M1), but Christ keeps himself from sin as a man who has learned to obey God. Impeccability is true of him as the Logos, but impeccability is not a factor in his actual sinlessness. The grace that empowers Christ's humanity by the Holy Spirit preserves the integrity of the natures, the example of Jesus' action in his humanity, and the moral reality of his actions as a human achievement. This follows from an emphasis on the moral growth in Christ (Luke 2:52; Heb 5:8) to be a true example for other humans in their sanctification by grace through faith (1 Pet 2:21-24). The moral reality of Christ's human life was proven by facing temptations and resisting them in a way that can be followed by others (Heb 4:15). Because of his experiences, Christ can sympathize with others in their temptations. Neither the divine Logos nor the divine nature directly causes Christ's sinlessness by communication of impeccability. Instead, divine grace works with the human will to enable Christ to obey God perfectly. This grace is the divine help given to Christ by the Holy Spirit. Other models picture a relation of divine transformation or domination of Christ's humanity, but here it is the divine grace which *empowers* Christ without altering or overriding his human will. Contrary to the view of salvation in M2 and M3 as an elevation or leading of humanity into a divine mode of being (divinization), the empowering grace model emphasizes salvation as progress by grace toward perfect human life. Donald Fairbairn explains this view of divine grace-as-assistance in contrast

to the other prevailing view of divine grace as presence:

> God gives people those gifts (power, aid, and cooperation) that they will need in order to advance from the age of mortality [incl. mutability, corruption, sin] to that of perfection [immutability]. The relation between the assumed man and the Logos is a special case of the grace by which God interacts with people in general: God the Logos gives that man the power and co-operation he needs to be our pioneer in the march to the perfect age.[164]

M4 emphasizes Christ as an example and archetype of God's work in salvation according to the biblical evidence for his ignorance, weaknesses, struggles to obey, dependence on divine help, and the exhortations that Christians must imitate him.[165] Central to M4 is an emphasis on the integrity of the two natures. On the divine side, this means protecting the transcendence of the Logos in his immutability and impassibility, uncorrupted by the union with the mutable, passible humanity. On the human side, this means a temptable humanity in which Christ must struggle to resist sin (or may even be able to sin).[166] Because of the struggle, Christ's victory was a real moral achievement of merit in a way not possible if he had relied upon his impeccability as the Logos. Accordingly, proponents often reject the *communicatio idiomatum* out of preference for double predication: the attributes of each nature are predicated to the two subjects of attribution in Christ's person. Also, proponents draw a parallel between the empowering grace in Christ and the elect, though with due regard to the uniqueness of Christ's special identity as the Logos. Figure 4 summarizes the main elements of M4.

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[164]Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology*, 28.

[165]Polycarp (ca. 72–ca. 158) emphasizes Christ as an example for us in resisting temptation, but he does not give more indications about how Christ achieved his sinlessness, *The Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians* 5.3; 8.1, in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, ed. and rev. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 214-15.

[166]Obviously, patristic theologians are reluctant to affirm this controversial statement, but at least Theodore of Mopsuestia does not flinch from ascribing peccability to Christ in his humanity. Joanne M. Dewart, *The Theology of Grace of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity 16 (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1971), 75-76, writes, "Yet Christ was not sinless without effort. Theodore was insistent on the reality of his temptations, and that it was possible for him to sin. A man with no chance of making a truly moral choice is less than a man in Theodore's eyes." Dewart gives no citation for this affirmation of Christ's peccability (also noted by Isaac Dorner and W. G. T. Shedd without citation), but I could not find it.

Key Question:	- How is Jesus sinless as a man in a way that he can be an example for others?
Answer:	- Divine grace empowers Jesus to act sinlessly in his humanity, just as grace is given to empower others
Concerns:	- Protection of the divine transcendence of the Logos - Protection of the passibility and mutability of his humanity - The example of Jesus' life for other humans to follow - The integrity of his human and divine natures - Christ's humanity as a particular example of humanity - His divine impeccability is not a factor in his sinlessness - Grace in his human life is an analogy for grace in others - His sinlessness is an analogy for sanctification in others - His real human freedom makes his merit possible
Influential theories:	- The human will cooperates with empowering divine grace - Salvation is progress in grace toward perfect human life
How tempted?	- He had true human weaknesses that made him vulnerable - He struggled in real human freedom, not an empty show
Why tempted?	- His temptations proved the moral reality of his life - He was tempted to instruct others to live as he did
How triumphed?	- He resisted temptations in a way that others can follow - He resisted in his humanity alone by long-suffering, patient endurance, and human wisdom - He did not resist by his own divine power or miracles - He relied on the Holy Spirit to instruct and empower him
Relation to M1:	- M4 affirms the necessity of his sinlessness by divine impeccability, but qualifies this impeccability as not having been the factor in causing his sinlessness
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a human achievement by cooperation with the help of divine grace

Figure 4. Summary of M4: Sinless by Empowering Grace

Representatives of M4. Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 352–428) is the earliest clear representative of M4; others preceding him in the Antiochene school may have

contributed to the formulation also.[167] Theodore agrees with most others that Christ was impeccable and immutable as a man, but he uniquely holds that Christ did not become so until after the resurrection when the Logos predominated over his humanity.[168] Before the resurrection, Christ needed the empowering grace from the Holy Spirit to resist temptations and struggle for moral virtue;[169] as Theodore says, "Christ had need of the Spirit in order to defeat the devil, to perform miracles and to receive (divine) instruction as to the activities he should undertake."[170] Theodore continues to assert that if Christ did not need this help of divine grace (because he was all-sufficient in his humanity), then the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was superfluous (*superflua*) for him. In keeping with Acts 2:36 and 10:38, Theodore sees a necessary role for the Holy Spirit in Christ; he explains that other theologians have overlooked this role[171] because an acknowledgment seemed to imply that the Holy Spirit was greater than the Logos.[172]

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[167]Possibly Diodore of Tarsus (?–394) is another early proponent of M4, but what remains of his writing does not have explicit discussion of our topic. His agreement with other Antiochene priorities (such as double predication and the integrity of the humanity in Christ that is not changed by the union certainly) implies that he would agree with this model more than the others. Rowan A. Greer, "The Antiochene Christology of Diodore of Tarsus," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 17 (1966): 329, notes that Diodore was influential for Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius by his emphasis on two subjects of attribution in Christ's person.

[168]Theodore mentions impassibility and immutability that are Christ's after the resurrection: "Post resurrectionem autem ex mortuis et in caelos ascensum inpassibilis factus et inmutabilis omnino et ad dexteram sedens Dei," *Treatises Against Apollinarius*, 3, frag. 10 in vol. 2 of *Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Minor Epistles of S. Paul,* ed. H. B. Swete (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882; reprint, Westmead, U.K.: Gregg, 1969), 317-18. For patristic thinkers, impeccability is entailed by impassibility and immutability. It is likely that Theodore must have published the his claim of Christ's post-resurrection changes because Theodore is specifically anathematized for it by the Fifth Council (Constantinople II, 553): Canon 12: "Theodorum Mopsuestenum qui dixit . . . post resurrectionem immutabilem cogitationibus et impeccabilem omnino factum fuisse," in *Concilium universale Ephesenum,* ed. Eduardus Schwartz, *ACO* 4.1 (1971): 219.

[169]The Fifth Council (Constantinople II, 553) anathematized anyone who defends Theodore's doctrine that Christ progressed in good works by means of the grace of the Holy Spirit to become immutable and impeccable after the resurrection (Capitula of the Council, 12, NPNF^2 14:315).

[170]Theodore of Mopsuestia *Fragmenta Dogmatica, ex libris contra Apollinarium* (PG 66 [1859]: 996B; trans. Boris Bobrinskoy, "The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ: 'Pneumatic Christology' in the Cappadocian Fathers," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 28 [1984]: 61).

[171]Basil is an exception because of his defense of the Spirit's role in the redemptive economy. Basil *De Spiritu Sanctu* 16.39; trans. Bobrinskoy, "Indwelling of the Spirit," 61: "Every operation was accomplished (in Christ) with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit."

[172]G. J. Reinink, "Quotations from the Lost Works of Theodoret of Cyrus and Theodore of Mopsuestia in an Unpublished East Syrian Work on Christology," in Studia patristica 33, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 565. The quotations noted here are from Theodore's *De Incarnatione* 5 and 12. Reinink does not give the text, reference, or translation.

Theodore affirms that by grace the Logos always kept the assumed man from sin (M1, M3), but this enrichment of impeccability is in the background and not an active factor in Christ's achievement of sinlessness until the resurrection.[173] Accordingly, Theodore emphasizes that in the wilderness temptations Jesus had to struggle as a man, not as God, and is therefore an example for others:

> If as God Jesus overcame the devil, it was no great accomplishment for him to defeat the apostate angel whom he himself had made. Nor is this victory to be ascribed to his humanity alone. But by long-suffering, he prevailed over him as man, teaching us that it is not through miracles but by long-suffering and patient endurance that we must prevail over the devil and that we should do nothing merely for show or for notoriety's sake.[174]

Theodore seems to say that the grace of God as *given by the Logos* is quiescent to allow for the grace *given by the Holy Spirit* in cooperation with the grace-empowered human will. Thus made vulnerable to the contest, Christ's human will merited virtue.[175] The freedom of Christ's human will is important for Theodore because this gives moral reality to Jesus' choices for the good instead of evil.[176] Theodore develops his idea of grace as *power* or *aid* given to Christ that is analogous to the way God empowers other human beings.[177] Still, Theodore distinguishes Christ from other humans as uniquely gifted with grace in a degree of "operation more than" all others (μείζονα . . .

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[173]Thdr. Mops. *Catechetical Homilies* 7.13 (*Les Homélies Catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste*, trans. and intro. Raymond Tonneau in collaboration with Robert Devreesse, Studi e Testi 145 [Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1949], 181); cited by Francis A. Sullivan, *The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*, Analecta Gregoriana 82 (Rome: Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1956), 252.

[174]Thdr. Mops. *Fragment* 20, in *Mattäus-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, ed. Joseph Reuss (Berlin: Akademi-Verlag, 1957), 103; trans. in Manilo Simonetti, *Matthew 1-13*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament, vol. 1a (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 60.

[175]"The perfect man, the man Christ surpassed all other men. He was absolutely free from sin, and His life was a continual progress from one stage of virtue to another, a meritorious course of which the end was victory over death and an entrance into the immortal and immutable state," H. B. Swete, "Theodorus (26)," in *A Dictionary of Christian Biography and Literature: To the End of the Sixth Century A.D., with an Account of the Principal Sects and Heresies*, ed. Henry Wace and William C. Piercy (London: John Murray, 1911), 970.

[176]Thdr. Mops. *De Incarnatione* 14 (PG 66:989D); cited by Dewart, *Theology of Grace*, 76. Dewart notes that for Theodore, a truly moral choice and the reality of Jesus' temptations entail the possibility of sinning.

[177]Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology*, 52. Fairbairn notes that the usual patristic view of grace was God's giving of the divine life, or fellowship.

συνέργειαν) because of the incarnational union.[178] Jesus' exemplary life is the result of grace in a way that has not transformed Christ to be superhuman,[179] but he is a perfect human unique in virtue because of the special operation of grace in his life.[180]

This view of grace as divine assistance is the distinctive element of M4 as the empowerment of Christ's human will to grow, progress, and obey in freedom to be a relevant example for others to follow. Theodore emphasizes Christ's human struggle in cooperation with divine grace as an achievement that is relevant for the rest of humanity:

> The Lord was more troubled, and struggled harder, with reference to the passions of the soul than with reference to those of the body. He mastered the pleasures by a more powerful rational process, while the Deity manifestly mediated and assisted him towards righteousness (κατόρθωσιν). So it is that the Lord is perceived to open war against these [passions of the soul] especially. Undeceived by the lust for riches and untempted by the desire for fame, he conceded nothing to the flesh. It was not for him to be overcome by such as these.[181]

Theodore clarifies the concern of M4, how could Jesus be an example if he triumphed simply as God? Instead, the value of his life as an example is that Jesus struggled to his obedience as a man, according to the same scale of life as believers have:

> However, if he had not possessed a soul, but (rather) it is the Deity which was victorious—none of the things accomplished would have been to our profit. (For what likeness is there between Deity and the human soul with respect to perfection of activity?) And the Lord's struggles would appear not to be of profit for us, but to

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[178]Thdr. Mops. *De Incar.* 7 (ed. Swete, *Theodore*, 2:298). A problem with Theodore's view is that he the man assumed for incarnation was foreknown by God to live virtuously, making God's grace contingent κατὰ πρόγνωσιν of human action, which resembles adoptionism in a superficial way. As partial explanation for this strange view, Greer argues that Theodore relied on a stock meaning of the relation between grace (providence) and freedom that appears commonly in patristic thought (e.g., Gregory of Nyssa and Origen) that God gives grace to those who seek to do good (Rowan A. Greer, "The Analogy of Grace in Theodore of Mopsuestia's Christology," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 34 (1983): 92. Dewart defends Theodore against adoptionism by saying that "there is no hint in his teaching that the man, Jesus, was adopted by the Word as a reward for merit at some point during the course of his lifetime (*Theology of Grace*, 79). The incarnation was a union, ἕνωσιν, with the assumed man from the beginning, in the womb (*De Incar.* 7 [PG 66:976D]).

[179]"Moreover, the grace given the Man does not change his nature, however much it affects the capacities of his nature," Thdr. Mops. *De Incar.* 2 (ed. Swete, 291-92; trans. Greer, "The Analogy of Grace," 94).

[180]Greer, "The Analogy of Grace," 96, "The exceptional character of this grace explains the Man's constant choice of the good. And it accounts for peculiar gifts given the Man, gifts which render him different from all other human beings. His sinlessness, his virtual omniscience and omnipotence—these remain human, but they differ radically from moral and prophetic gifts bestowed upon others. The unique operation of God's grace explains the unique humanity of the Man."

[181]Thdr. Mops. *De Incar.* 15.3 (ed. Swete, 2:311; trans. R. A. Norris, Jr., *Manhood and Christ: A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1963], 206).

> have taken place for the sake of (empty) show. And if it is impossible to say this, it is certain that those things were done for our sakes, and (that) he instituted a greater battle against the passions of the soul, a lesser against those of the flesh.[182]

Therefore, Theodore of Mopsuestia represents M4 by his emphasis on the example, need for grace, and struggle of Christ in his humanity to resist sin and obey perfectly. Theodore sees a role for the Holy Spirit as mediator of divine help in a way that is analogous to the grace promised by Christ to others in the midst of their temptations (Heb 4:16).

Already noted as a representative of M1 and M3, Augustine also suggests M4.[183] Augustine presents four important aspects of his idea of divine grace, in addition to the empowering grace of M4.

First, Augustine argues for the unique and original sinlessness of Jesus at his conception. Against the Pelagian claim that Christ was sinless as an infant because all infants are sinless, Augustine counters that grace caused sinlessness in Christ's case alone, because he had "singular grace" (*gratia singulari*).[184] The motive here is to exclude all ideas of human merit as something that precedes God's initiative of grace.[185] This exclusion rules out Origen's idea of merit by the preexistent human soul that clung to the Logos before incarnation.

Second, Augustine claims that the Holy Spirit secured Jesus' sinlessness by a virginal conception. The virginal conception was a work of grace to preserve Christ from the sinfulness of a sexual appetite that normally passes on to infants by sexual

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[182]Thdr. Mops. *De Incar*. 15.3 (2:311; trans. Norris, *Manhood and Christ*, 206).

[183]Joanne McWilliam Dewart, "The Christology of the Pelagian Controversy," in Studia patristica 17.3, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 1241, observes that Augustine was unaware of the "christological storm brewing in the east" where Cyril of Alexandria rallied the orthodox against the ideas of grace in Christ: "If Augustine's christology had been recognized as one of grace would the chances of this christological model being perceived as an acceptable alternative (at least in the west where the confusion of natures had been traditionally rejected) have been enhanced? But finally, would Augustine's christology of grace have survived Ephesus? . . . Could he, at that bitterly divided meeting, have remained faithful to his conviction that Christ the man was mediator and saviour, the paradigm of grace received? Such a christological stance would not have been well received by Cyril and his followers."

[184]Aug. *Contra Duas Epistulas Pelagianorum* 4.2.2 (ed. Karl F. Urba and Joseph Zycha, CSEL 60 [1913; reprint: New York: Johnson Reprint, 1962], 521).

[185]Dewart, "Christology of the Pelagian Controversy," 1239.

procreation.[186] Jesus' start in human life was purified by grace of the Holy Spirit in a way that protected him from sinful desires and even sexual desires.[187]

Third, Augustine notes the differences and similarities of empowering grace in Christ and other human beings. Comparing Adam and Jesus, Augustine writes that Jesus was given greater grace that made him able to overcome the "will of the flesh" (*carnis voluntatem*) by the "will of the spirit" (*voluntate spiritus*).[188] But when comparing Christ to the elect, Augustine affirms that this empowering grace is "the same grace in the man Christ" (*eandem gratiam . . . homo Christus*) as the grace that is in the elect. The difference is that in Christ the result was impeccability—"having no ability to sin" (*nullum posset habere peccatum*).[189] Therefore, the empowering grace that enabled Jesus to continue sinlessly throughout his human life is the same grace that is available to others by the Holy Spirit for similar results.[190]

Fourth, because of the similarity of empowering grace for Christ and the elect, Augustine can preserve Jesus' impeccability (cf. M1) alongside affirming Jesus' value as an example for others. Because Jesus lived by empowering grace to achieve his sinlessness in the face of temptations, he can be an example and "through giving help" (*per adiutorium*), assist those who struggle with temptations to sin.[191] Augustine emphasizes that grace enhanced Christ's freedom of will in his humanity by making him unable to serve sin.[192]

Augustine thus sees the twofold operation of grace in Christ as specially

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[186]Aug. *Contra Julianum Pelagianum* 5.15.57 (ed. J. -P. Migne, PL 44 [1865]: 793).

[187]Dewart, "Christology of the Pelagian Controversy," 1233. "His enduring conviction, certainly manichean rather than christian [*sic*], of the intrinsic evil of spontaneous sexual desire and therefore of sexual activity forbade him attributing even the former to Christ."

[188]Aug. *De Correptione et Gratia* 31 (PL 44:935). He may mean the Holy Spirit.

[189]Aug. *Enchiridion* 11.36 (CCSL 46 [1969]: 70).

[190]Ibid., 12.40 (CCSL 46:72). Grace is defined as the gift of the Holy Spirit that became natural to Christ in his humanity so that sin could not be admitted.

[191]Aug. *De Trin.* 4.13.17 (CCSL 50:183).

[192]Aug. *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum* 15.30 (PL 44:982).

securing his sinlessness at birth, and then empowering him in the face of temptations as a man. Therefore, the way Augustine explains grace in Christ, securing and empowering his human sinlessness, fits M4 as an analogy for the grace God gives to believers.[193]

Nestorius (?–451) represents M4 as he follows his teacher Theodore of Mopsuestia on this topic as elsewhere.[194] Nestorius affirms that Christ was impeccable: "he was in that [divine] nature which sins not." However, Nestorius claims that Christ, in his humanity, "kept himself without sin."[195] *How* Christ kept himself from sin is less clear. Nestorius affirms that it was not by natural impeccability that Christ did not sin (*contra* M2). Instead, he claims that Christ "took a nature which had sinned, lest in taking a nature which was not subject unto sins he should be supposed not to have sinned on account of the nature and not on account of his obedience."[196] Since Nestorius emphasizes Jesus' obedience as a man, the communication of impeccability from his divine nature would compromise that obedience and Christ's work to give a pattern of life by his own example. James Bethune-Baker explains Nestorius's moral concern for Jesus' relevance for the obedient living of Christians: "To Nestorius it seems that the moral purpose of the Incarnation is frustrated unless the incarnate Word of God underwent a genuine human experience, and he argues against every doctrine of His Person which seems to debar Him from being a real Example and Pattern of a genuinely human life."[197]

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[193]Greer notes that the Pelagian controversy "provokes Augustine to redefine grace and freedom" in a predestinarian framework of God's election ("Analogy of Grace," 96).

[194]Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology*, 61, concludes, "The similarity of Nestorius' starting point to that of Theodore, the congruence between what he does write about salvation and Theodore's idea of the two ages, and the consistency of his technical christology with Theodore's all suggest that Nestorius was operating from the same basic understanding of grace."

[195]Nestorius *Liber Heraclidis* 2.1.295-298, in *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, ed. and trans. G. R. Driver and Leonard Hodgson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925), 213. Notice that this is a translation from the Syriac original.

[196]Ibid., 1.1.68 (63).

[197]James Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching: A Fresh Examination of the Evidence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 123.

Nestorius was criticized severely for these M4 views. John Cassian accuses Nestorius of saying that Christ was assisted in his humanity by the Holy Spirit: "The whole of your blasphemy then consists in this: that Christ had nothing of himself: nor did he, a mere man, as you say, receive anything from the Word, i.e., the Son of God, but everything in him was the gift of the Spirit."[198] Cassian adds: "You will have it that the Holy Ghost gave assistance to the Lord Jesus Christ as if he had been feeble and powerless: and that he granted those things to him, which he was unable to procure for himself."[199] A similar attack on Nestorius's Spirit-Christology appears in Cyril of Alexandria's ninth anathema.[200]

Of course, these are attacks by Nestorius's critics, and so perhaps they are not the best basis for reconstructing his theology. Nonetheless, Nestorius suggests M4 by his own words about Christ's neediness in the integrity of his humanity: "While he was poor in everything and was violently drawn away by the opposite, he in nothing deviated from the purpose of God, although indeed Satan made use of all these things to remove him far from the purpose of God."[201] Nestorius has not been clearer than this. A summary of Nestorius's central idea suggests that he likely held to the same the solution of grace as his teacher Theodore. John McGuckin explains this central idea: "The Logos binds himself to the man Jesus in an unassailably intimate union, without destroying any of the free capacities of the human life he graces with his unlimited power and presence."[202] Nestorius is less conclusive a representative of the empowering grace model than others,

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[198]John Cassian *De Incarnatione Domini Contra Nestorium* 7.17 (ed. Michael Petschenig, CSEL 17 [1888]: 373, trans. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:471). Grillmeier notes that Cassian did not comment on Christ's humanity significantly: "Cassian draws a very empty picture of the humanity of Jesus." Fairbairn (*Grace and Christology*, 166) confirms this with his view of Cassian's idea of grace and Christology: "It is significant that he discusses co-operation or divine aid only when considering the monk's efforts to strive after virtue; he never mentions these ideas when discussing Christ."

[199]Cass. *De Incar.* 5.12 (321-22, trans. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 1:471).

[200]Cf. Bobrinskoy, "The Indwellling of the Spirit," 61, makes the broad critique that Nestorius allowed too great a role for the Holy Spirit in Christ, but does not give examples to substantiate his censure.

[201]Nest. *Lib. Her.* 1.1.70 (63).

[202]John A. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria The Christological Controversy: Its History, Theology, and Texts*, SVC 23 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 161.

but he shows affinities for M4 alongside Theodore and Augustine.

Like Nestorius, Theodoret of Cyrrhus (ca. 393–ca. 455) follows Theodore of Mopsuestia's teaching in a way that suggests M4, but less explicitly than we would like. Theodoret opposes the *communicatio idiomatum* by predicating attributes of each nature, not the subjective Logos, to protect both the divine impassibility and the human weakness.[203] Theodoret argues that it was not as God that Jesus fought against and defeated the devil in the wilderness, but as a man.[204] Christ's moral triumph was by human wisdom, not by divine power.[205] The same trend to preserve the integrity of Christ's humanity shows in Theodoret's commentary on Hebrews. Frances Young writes: "The person is divided but the real humanity given the chance to prove itself without being overridden by the all-embracing power of the Divinity."[206] Nonetheless, Theodoret is not specific that Jesus had divine assistance of grace to enable him to conquer temptation. He mentions the power of the Holy Spirit, however, which suggests his affinity for the principle of empowering grace in M4. Moreover, Theodoret shows his agreement with Theodore of Mopsuestia by writing that Jesus progressed in his human experience until he suffered death "without God" (χωρὶς Θεοῦ).[207]

Furthermore, Theodoret seems to favor M4 when he defends Nestorius against

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[203]Joseph M. Hallman, "The Communication of Idioms in Theodoret's *Commentary on Hebrews*," in *In Dominico Eloquio, In Lordly Eloquence: Essays on Patristic Exegesis in Honor of Robert Louis Wilken*, ed. Paul M. Blowers et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 373.

[204]Theodoret of Cyrrhus *De Incarnatione* 15 (PG 75: 1444A), cited in Klaus Peter Koppen, "The Interpretation of Jesus' Temptations by the Early Church Fathers," *Patristic and Byzantine Review* 8 (1989): 43. Migne has mistakenly attributed this to Cyril of Alexandria.

[205]Thdt. *De Providentia, Oratio* 10 (ed. J. L. Schulze, PG 83 [1859]: 752C-753A, cited in Klaus-Peter Köppen, *Die Auslegung der Versuchungsgeschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Alten Kirche*, 4, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1961], 79-80).

[206]Young, "Christological Ideas," 158.

[207]Ibid. Young explains that Theodoret argues in his *Interpretatio Epistolae Ad Hebraeos* 2.9 (ed. Migne, PG 82:692D-693A) that copyists of Hebrews, unable to think that Paul would write χωρὶς Θεοῦ in Heb 2:9, changed the phrase to indicate that Jesus suffered by "the grace of God" (χάριτι Θεοῦ). Theodoret's rationale is that χωρὶς Θεοῦ fits the context better, and the substitution of χάρις does not fit with Paul's normal usage. Here would have been an opportunity for Theodoret to affirm the note of God's grace that was operative in the life of Christ, in accordance with M4. Instead, Theodoret proposes the questionable and disturbing textual emendation because of his commitment to a divisive Christology that protects the integrity of the natures, and especially the immutability and impassibility of God.

Cyril's ninth anathema by affirming the role of the Holy Spirit in Christ's humanity. The anathema addresses the role of the Holy Spirit as an external power used by Christ to work divine signs of miracles and exorcisms. In response, Theodoret quotes three messianic passages that tell the Holy Spirit's role of empowerment for Christ to proclaim and deliver God's saving rule, and Jesus' own testimony that he cast demons out by power of the Holy Spirit.[208] Therefore, Theodoret represents M4 because of his emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit as an external power in the life of Christ, and his insistence on the integrity of Christ's human achievements in the struggles of temptation.

A final representative of M4 is Leontius of Jerusalem. Leontius explains that the impeccability of Christ is caused by the coordination of his human "will" (αὐτεξουσίου), and the Logos, described as "the divine nature being given through the Holy Spirit in Christ."[209] In this way, Leontius preserves the human freedom of Christ that participates in the divine grace so that Christ can be a model for other humans. He understands divine grace not in terms of aid or power, but as "the leading principle" (ὁ ἡγεμονικὸς) that gives freedom to Christ's humanity.[210] Leontius's formulation resembles M2 and M3 because of the way he sees a closeness of operation between the divine and human aspects in Christ, just as Leontius's Nestorian opponents objected to this move as a denial of Christ's human achievement of sinlessness because it was a victory of the divine nature.[211] Nonetheless, Leontius's innovation that aligns him with M4 is the way he sees grace as the hypostatic union of Christ's humanity to the Logos that protects him from Satan, sin, and death.[212] The effect of the union is Christ's human

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[208]The passages are Isa 11:1-2; 42:1; 61:1-3; Luke 4:18-21; Matt 12:28. Theodoret of Cyrrhus, quoted by Cyr. in *Apologeticus contra Theodoretum pro XII capitibus* (PG 76 [1859]:429D-431D; trans. NPNF^2 14: 215-16). We will consider some of the biblical evidence for the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Messiah in chapter 4.

[209]Leontius H. *Adversus Nestorianos* 19 (PG 86 pt. 1:1484D). "τὴν θείαν φύσιν διὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος ἐν Χριστῷ εἶναι δεδώκατε;"

[210]Ibid., 1485A.

[211]Ibid., 1505AB.

[212]Ibid., 1505CD.

sinlessness, but this is a result coordinate with Christ's human freedom as necessity of grace, not of nature (cf. M2). Leontius is different from the Antiochene proponents of M4 in that his meaning of grace is the presence of the divine nature, not simply the power or aid given by God.[213] Despite this difference, Leontius suggests M4 Christ's human need and the corresponding grace to choose obedience perfectly as he did, in full freedom.

Conclusion

The patristic period yields four models of Christ's impeccability and temptation. Common presuppositions—the Nicene faith, soteriological requirements, opposition to heresies, theories of physical union, and the philosophical setting—influenced the development of these models; thus, they overlap on two-nature Christology, deification, divine impassibility, and theories of physical union. M1 is the baseline affirmation of Christ's human sinlessness because of his innate divine impeccability. M2 is the natural predominance explanation of the relation between Christ's divine impeccability and his human temptability and sinlessness as caused by an elevated, divinized humanity. M3 is the hypostatic predominance explanation of the Christ's human temptation and sinlessness as the personal direction of the Logos over his human nature. M4 is the empowering grace explanation of how Jesus could be an example in his temptations and sinlessness as a man who was helped in an external way by divine grace through the Logos and the Holy Spirit. These four models are the foundation for our formulation of a contemporary restatement of Christ's impeccability and temptation. The resources that the patristic theologians passed on are rich in the different ways of explaining Christ's impeccability and temptation as a subset of the interaction of divinity and humanity in the incarnational union. We will see that few advances will be made beyond what the patristic thinkers developed in these four models. We will consider these advances in the medieval, Reformation, and modern periods.

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[213]Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology*, 166, sees the usual patristic view of grace as God's gift of himself, as here in Leontius, in contrast to Theodore of Mopsuestia's view of grace as divine aid or power given as some*thing*.

CHAPTER 3

MEDIEVAL, REFORMATION, AND MODERN MODELS OF CHRIST'S IMPECCABILITY AND TEMPTATION

Patristic theology provides the broad and deep foundation for theology in the subsequent periods of the Church. Theologians in the medieval, Reformation, and modern periods construct their models of Christ's impeccability and temptation using the foundational models of the patristic period.[1] These later models show the ways theologians re-use patristic concepts in new settings. Later models also combine elements from the patristic models to form modified versions that explain the biblical and philosophical data more adequately for new settings. In the medieval period, the aggregate formulation is M5, Sinless by Created Grace. In the Reformation period, a renewed emphasis on Scripture yields M6, Temptable by the Human Eclipse of Divine Power. In the modern period, theologians stretch the trend of M6 to form M7, Humanization of Divinity. As with the patristic models, we seek building blocks in these later periods for constructing a contemporary model of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

Background to the Medieval Model

The medieval theologians repeat the main patristic conclusions about Christ: one person in two natures, fully human and fully divine, and without confusion, change, division, or separation of the natures. Most theologians agree that the subsistence theory of union is the right one (the divine person subsists in two natures and from two natures)[2]

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[1]I do not include the Eastern tradition beyond the patristic period because this is not a historical theology dissertation and I am interested in the most important contributions as building blocks, not merely as matters of historical development of the doctrines, however valuable such a historical study would be.

[2]Walter Henry Principe, *William of Auxerre's Theology of the Hypostatic Union*, vol. 1 of *The*

despite continued consideration of the *assumptus homo* theory (the Word assumed a certain man) and the *habitus* theory (God became man according to *habitus*, as putting on clothing).[3] What dominates the medieval discussion are the attributes of humanity and divinity that were present in Christ in view of his status as the divine Son and his work as the savior of humanity.[4] All agree that he had to be sinless and could not have sinned because he was God, and such sin would have voided his work as savior. This agreement repeats M1, Sinless by Innate Impeccability, from the patristic period. All agree that for his work as savior, he had to be capable of dying and experiencing the weaknesses and suffering common to all (but not sinful desires). Medieval theologians maintain the distinction between Christ's two natures by carrying forward from Augustine the M4 idea of created grace that filled in divine knowledge for Christ's humanity. Such knowledge seems fitting for medieval theologians because Jesus was God, his divine knowledge enabled him to fulfill his work as savior, and his divine knowledge did not compromise his role as a human savior.

Medieval theologians have less concern than patristic writers do about the biblical tensions of Christ's impeccability and temptation (partly because these writers diminish the force of the temptations). The philosophical simplicity of M1 continues to be satisfying as an explanation of Jesus' sinlessness, but problems arise with the medieval

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Theology of the Hypostatic Union in the Early Thirteenth Century, Studies and Texts 7 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1963), 10. Principe notes Albert the Great, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas as examples of the general acceptance of the subsistence theory.

[3]Walter H. Principe, *Alexander of Hales' Theology of the Hypostatic Union*, vol. 2 of *The Theology of the Hypostatic Union in the Early Thirteenth Century*, Studies and Texts 12 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967), 206. Abelard favored the *habitus* theory to preserve the immutability of God in the hypostatic union with the assumed humanity as accidental to the Son. This view was also called nihilianism because many thought it entailed that the humanity of Christ was *non-est-aliquid* apart from the union.

[4]Isaak Dorner, *The History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, trans. W. L. Alexander and D. W. Simon, Clark's Foreign Theological Library, third series (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878) I, 1:83-84. "The *second* period [after the first four centuries] advances to the problem for which the first has furnished the data, and works on these data. These are: the elements which belong to the concept of the Divine, and the elements which belong to the concept of the human, whose difference is comprised in the duplicity of the Natures. Setting out from this distinction, it has to investigate the *How* of the unity of both in the Person of Christ; for the *That*, or the actual existence of this unity, remains the first presupposition, always present, as vouched for by faith." Notice that "duplicity" here means "twofold," not "double-dealing" in the sense of deception.

elaboration about the nature of God.

The troubles that come to the forefront in the medieval period are how to account for Christ's merit in terms of his human freedom, and how much of the normal human defects he possessed in his assumed human nature. These troubles seem to follow the medieval emphasis on Christ's divinity in wide metaphysical distinction from, and in contradiction to, his finite humanity. Consequently, their problem is how to account for Christ's humanity in terms of the strong affirmation of his divinity. Even so, they recognize the necessity that Jesus' humanity had the normal human freedom that is requisite for earning merit, and he had the normal human weaknesses that are necessary for redemptive tasks of satisfaction and providing an example in resisting temptation.

The human weaknesses or defects—suffering, ignorance, temptation to sin, bodily weaknesses, and death—are a problem because they are contradictory to divinity as understood in medieval theology.[5] The medieval solution is to use the savior's job description as the criterion for discerning which defects Jesus needed and which ones he did not.[6] By this criterion, medieval theologians can elevate the humanity of Jesus in a way that satisfies metaphysical concerns about compossibility with divinity. Such maximizing of Christ's humanity also minimizes his resemblance to common humanity in the problematic ways of sin. Therefore, instead of the patristic maxim, *the unassumed is the unhealed*, the dominant medieval presupposition seems to be that Christ's humanity must be *high enough for incarnation and low enough for redemption.*[7] In this statement,

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[5]Dorner, *History*, I, 1:83-84, observes the medieval and patristic emphasis on Jesus' divinity: "Now it is a feature of the dogmatic thinking of the time before the Reformation, that in it the Divine element had a onesided preponderance."

[6]Marilyn McCord Adams, *What Sort of Human Nature? Medieval Philosophy and the Systematics of Christology*, The Aquinas Lecture 1999 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1999), 96-97. In her view, the soteriological tasks that define Jesus' job description are "for making satisfaction, for earning merit, for conquering the devil, for furnishing an inspiring role model."

[7]Ibid., 95: "Such "top-down" pressure to endow Christ's humanity with maximal perfection is reinforced by the "bottom-up" thrust of soteriological considerations." Dorner, *History*, I, 1:83-84, notes that in the first four centuries of the church, theologians wrestled with the question of *how* the divine and human natures in Christ are related. As reflection continued through the medieval period, theologians predominantly worked out the question of *what* elements belong to Christ's divine and human natures. This work tended to prejudice the divinity in Christ over his humanity until the Reformation theologians regained a place for speaking fully about Christ's humanity.

high denotes the glorified features of Christ's humanity to make it as fitting for union with the divine Son as possible (e.g., perfect knowledge), and *low* denotes the defects necessary for redemption (e.g., passibility for satisfaction and temptability for giving an example of obedient humanity).

The medieval model of Christ's impeccability and temptation is an aggregate of the patristic models with some elements selected among the others according to the new setting with new soteriological concerns. The new setting for medieval theologians includes feudal ideas of justice and the penitential discipline of a Church constituted by a priestly hierarchy that mediated salvation through the sacraments, especially confession and the mass.[8] Also part of the new setting is the charge from Jewish and Muslim philosophers that a divine incarnation is impossible and blasphemous because of the metaphysical distance between the infinite Creator and a finite created nature.[9]

Medieval theologians correlated their new soteriological concerns to Christ's person and work as redeemer. On one side is the necessity of Christ's sinlessness for him to make satisfaction for sins, paying a debt of humanity that only God can pay. Because God made satisfaction by means of an assumed human nature that is peccable, that nature had to be reconstituted *im*peccable to protect the Logos from predication of a moral failure by *communicatio idiomatum* with his human nature.[10] On the other side of Christ's work is the concept of merit as a reward for some good action.[11] Jesus' death is the supreme act of merit that earned humanity's salvation as the reward of eternal life. For merit earning to be possible for an impeccable Christ, medieval theologians stress the

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[8]Sydney Cave, *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner's Son's, 1925), 128.

[9]Adams, *What Sort of Human Nature*, 95.

[10]Ibid., 96. "Because God is not, cannot be a sinner, neither can there be any insubordinate defection of will in the human nature God assumes."

[11]Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. Neil Buchanan (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1899), 6:190, 277. Harnack notes that Peter Lombard brought merit into the foreground and reproduced Augustinianism with a semipelagian view of free will with regard to merit (*Sententiae* 2.24 C, 27 G, 26 G, 27 J, 41 C).

reality of his temptation and his freedom of choice. They open up space for this freedom and temptation by recycling the concept of empowering grace in Christ's humanity (from M4). Medieval use of this concept in Christological models expands M4 grace into two sorts of grace: the grace of union and created grace (infused, or *habitus*), to be explained below.

With this background in mind, we will describe M5 with a view to its contributions to a contemporary restatement. This presentation of one model for the medieval period does not mean that all contributors agree on all the details of their Christological affirmations (indeed, they do not). Nonetheless, the diversity of opinions about Christological details and our topic is not wide enough to constitute a diversity of models of Christ's impeccability and temptation.[12] Therefore, we have only M5.

M5: Sinless by Created Grace

The medieval model is distinct from the patristic models as a harmony of them, using materials developed in the earlier period to construct a model for the medieval setting and concerns. Classified in our study as M5, Sinless by Created Grace, the medieval construction resembles the patristic models in specific ways. M1, Sinless by Innate Impeccability, continues as the umbrella presupposition for M5 that Christ, being God incarnate, is impeccable because God is impeccable.[13] From M2, Sinless by Divinization, M5 develops the concept of Christ's elevated, deiform humanity, though in the medieval context this means the glorification of his human soul. The glorification of Christ's soul, or the fullness of grace and the beatific vision, is the medieval equivalent of the patristic emphasis on divinization that continues in the Eastern Church. M3, Sinless

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[12]Perhaps the reason for uniformity is the powerful Church hierarchy during this period. Another factor in the doctrinal uniformity is the practice of using Lombard's *Sentences* as the framework for theological training in a way that restricted innovation by giving a primary place to patristic ideas through repetition, collection, and interpretation instead of freshly investigating Scripture.

[13]E.g., Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2.10, in *Opera omnia ad fidem codicum recensuit*, vol. 2, ed. F. S. Schmitt (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1946), 106. "In quo peccatum esse non poterit, quia deus erit." Peter Lombard *Sententiae* 3.12.3.1, in vol. 2 of *Libri IV Sententiarum,* 2nd ed. (Grottaferrata: College of St. Bonaventure, 1916), 602: "Ergo si potuit peccare, potuit non esse Deus; quia esse Deum et posse velle iniquitatem simul nequeunt esse."

by Divine Hegemony, has a place in M5 as the harmony of divine and human wills in Christ, a harmony by which his human will submits to his divine will in a way that preserves Christ's freedom and the possibility of merit. Medieval theologians have several ways of harmonizing the two wills in Christ, but M3 is a popular way to secure his impeccability. M4, Sinless by Empowering Grace, contributes the idea of divine grace as given to Christ's humanity to be the means of transformation for his human nature. Such elevation is necessary for his humanity to be sufficiently deiform for incarnation and as an instrument of redemption. While the patristic idea of grace in M4 is empowerment throughout the process of Christ's life, the medieval construction uses the grace concept as an initial infusion of godliness (created, finite grace appropriate to finite human nature) and as the *means* to the *end* of the transformation affirmed in M2. In other words, M4 tends to use grace as divine assistance; M5 uses grace as a divine gift in a way tantamount to the divine presence with all its transforming effects. As the aggregate, eclectic re-appropriation of patristic models, the medieval model also includes an emphasis on merit as initiated and enabled by grace in a way that preserves both human freedom for merit and divine initiative to give the necessary help that is the source of all merit. Figure 5 summarizes M5.

In brief, M5 pictures Christ's humanity as transformed by grace and ruled by the divine will to live sinlessly in a way that Jesus can earn merit by his freedom and be an example for others. Christ demonstrates how human life should be lived with the help of divine grace. The question asked by M5 is this: How could Christ's humanity be deiform in impeccability and still temptable for redemption? The answer given is that grace given in the soul secures impeccability while the body remains an avenue of temptation. We will explore the two parts of this model for its contribution to a contemporary statement. The first part has the three ways of explaining Christ's impeccability, stressing created grace at the core of the medieval contribution. The second part explains Christ's temptability in terms of his freedom, merit, and example.

Key Question:	- How could Christ's humanity be deiform in impeccability and still temptable for redemption?
Answer:	- Grace given in the soul secures impeccability while the body remains an avenue for temptation
Concerns:	- Protection of Christ's divinity from human frailties - Only those human defects necessary to redemptive tasks: being able to die, hunger, thirst, feel pain and fatigue - No defects of soul because these are not fitting to the Son or necessary to redemption - Empowerment of divine grace in the soul insures purity - Preservation of Christ's human freedom to earn merit - Grace preserves the integrity of his human nature - The analogy of created grace in Christ and in others
Influential theories:	- The human will cooperates with empowering divine grace - The beatific vision is enjoyed by glorified humanity - The wide metaphysical distance between God and man
How tempted?	- Only externally by the world and the devil; not internally by the flesh - The body is the avenue of his innocent temptations - He was tempted by a voluntary choice to suffer
Why tempted?	- To give an example of fighting the devil with Scripture - To earn merit for his choices as a man - To prove his true humanity - To strengthen others against temptation - To give others confidence in his mercy to help them
How triumphed?	- Grace in his soul made him trebly impeccable
Relation to M1-4:	- Christ's glorified soul as M2 elevated humanity - Christ's submission of his human will to the divine will as the M3 leading principle in the incarnation - Empowering grace compensates for weak humanity (M4) - Christ's purity from original sin by the Holy Spirit (M4)
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is the result of his glorification in soul through infusion of divine grace

Figure 5. Summary of M5: Sinless by Created Grace

First Part: The Impeccability of Christ

In expansion of M1, medieval theologians develop three ways that Jesus was impeccable and thereby did not sin. The three lines of argument that secure Jesus' sinlessness are transformation by grace, hegemony of the divine will, and the moral necessity of his person and work. These arguments deal with the medieval question about *how high* Jesus' humanity had to be for divine incarnation, with the answer that his human nature must be trebly impeccable.

Transformed by grace. Medieval theologians combine ideas of divinization (M2) and empowering grace (M4) to explain Christ's humanity as partly glorified by grace at the start of its existence. The medieval concept of grace, however, is different from the patristic formulations in M4. One explanation for this difference is the shift from Neoplatonic philosophy in the background of Augustine's thought to the increasing use of Aristotelian categories in medieval theology.[14] In medieval theology, this means a shift from the M4 meaning of *grace as empowerment* in a continual way to M5 meaning of *grace as a created disposition* in the human soul. A related idea is the medieval emphasis on grace as the source of merit. Medieval theologians take the idea of grace-as-empowerment from M4 and develop this concept into (1) the grace of union, (2) created grace, and (3) the grace of the beatific vision.

With this development of grace as a multifaceted concept, medieval theologians can affirm the two natures of Christ in their integrity while also satisfying the problems of a metaphysical distance between his infinite (divine) and finite (human) natures. Grace is the way that Christ's humanity can be appropriately elevated to be deiform (e.g., omniscience as befits God) while remaining plausibly human (albeit

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[14]J. Patout Burns, "Grace," in *Augustine Throughout the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 391. Burns gives helpful summary of this conceptual shift: "Augustine's reliance on Neoplatonic philosophy [particularly the emanationism by which being, power and operation are continuously communicated from the highest to lowest levels in the hierarchically ordered universe], however, meant that the conceptual foundations of his teaching were significantly different from the Aristotelian categories used in the scholastic elaboration of his thought and the self-conscious biblicism of the Reformers' rejection of that medieval development."

glorified in some aspects). Also, grace is the way to satisfy the Chalcedonian requirements—two natures without *confusion*, *change*, division, or separation—and at the same time satisfy medieval requirements that Jesus' humanity be as deiform as possible. By these three developments, the medieval M5 forms three factors of Christ's impeccability that, in turn, cause his sinlessness as a man.[15]

The (1) *grace of union* is the gratuitous honor and access to divine grace given to the human nature by virtue of its union to divinity.[16] Medieval theologians relate the grace of union to other graces in Christ as the basis for his human nature to receive the fullness of created grace and the beatific vision.[17] Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) describes the created grace in Christ as the effect of the grace of union, just as the sun causes light in air.[18] Moreover, the grace of union has an effect in Christ's life to prepare his humanity to be pure from original sin for union with the Son (viz. conception by the Holy Spirit; Luke 1:35).[19] Impeccability for his human nature is one effect of the union, giving moral fortitude and moral perfection from the first moment.[20]

By the grace of union, Christ's humanity is also prepared in purity to bear the further grace needed to make his humanity a receptive nature. Unlike the earlier formulation of M2, M5 maintains a distinction of the human nature from the divine.

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[15]Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Christ the Savior: A Commentary on the Third Part of St. Thomas' Theological Summa*, trans. Bede Rose (St. Louis and London: Herder, 1950), 411. "The Thomists and other theologians generally assign three causes for Christ's absolute impeccability."

[16]A. B. Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ: In Its Physical, Ethical, and Official Aspects*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 77. Bruce has Aquinas in view here. W. H. Principe, "Some Examples of Augustine's Influence on Medieval Christology," in *Collectanea Augustiniana: Mélanges T. J. Van Bavel*, ed. B. Brunin, M. Lamberigts, J. Van Houtem (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990), 963, notes that Augustine's idea of the grace of union is that Jesus did not merit the incarnation in an adoptionistic sense, but that God initiated and accomplished the incarnation wholly by grace, in parallel with the way a person becomes a Christian by grace. Medieval theologians developed this idea into "a starting point for their speculations about the grace of union in Christ."

[17]Principe, "Some Examples of Augustine's Influence," 964. Principe cites Lombard, *Sent.* 3.4.2 as an example of abundant medieval reliance on Augustine, e.g., *Enchir.* 12.40, 13.41.

[18]Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theologiae* [ST] 3.7.13.c, in *The Grace of Christ*, ed. Liam G. Walsh, *ST* 49:50.

[19]Principe, "Some Examples of Augustine's Influence," 965.

[20]Principe, *Alexander of Hales*, 169-70. Principe cites *Glossa* 1.8.14 as an example.

Christ's human soul does not become divinized by the union with the Logos, as in M2. Instead, as a recipient of grace in the same way as other humans receive grace, Christ's human nature becomes deiform, worthy and usable for the Logos without violating the distinction of his humanity from his divinity as an authentic human nature.[21] Instead of receiving divinization as the communication of divine attributes directly to the humanity in a natural transfer (M2), medieval theologians posit created grace.

The (2) *created grace* or habitual grace is the infusion of grace into Christ's human soul. God creates grace in the human soul, so this grace is a finite gift in proportion to Christ's finite human nature.[22] Created grace is distinct from the personal presence of the Holy Spirit.[23] Jesus had this gift of grace as the divine empowerment in his humanity to the greatest degree because of his proximity to the source of grace (the grace of union) and because of his role as the fount of grace for the rest of humanity (a life-giving spirit, 1 Cor 15:45).[24]

Aquinas follows Augustine and John of Damascus to deny the communication of idioms between the human and divine natures in Christ. Aquinas claims that the attributes proper to each nature are predicated of Christ in those natures.[25] Consequently, created grace is necessary as an alternate way to inform and elevate Jesus' humanity for divine use in redemption. Created grace disposes Christ's human will to conform to the divine will, which insures his impeccability, since the divine will cannot sin (cf. M3).[26]

Created grace also gives Christ complete knowledge, protecting him from the

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[21]Aquinas ST 3.7.1, reply 1 (ed. Walsh, *ST* 49:8).

[22]Ibid., 3.7.11 (*ST* 49:38-42).

[23]Walsh, comment in *Grace of Christ*, 49:6.

[24]Aquinas ST 3.7.9 (trans. Walsh, *ST* 49:33). "For the soul of Christ received grace so that it could be passed on, as it were, from him to others. Hence he required the maximum grace; just as fire, which makes things hot, is itself the hottest thing of all."

[25]Ibid., 3.16.4-5, *The One Mediator*, ed. Colman E. O'Neill, *ST* 50 [1965]: 16-22).

[26]Adams, *What Sort*, 30. Adams cites Bonaventure *Sententiae* 3.13.1.2, c; ad 2, 3, 5.

ignorance that entails or at least leads to sin.[27] Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) affirms that Jesus was omniscient in his humanity from the beginning of his earthly existence.[28] Aquinas agrees, but he allows for growth in Christ's human knowledge (cf. Luke 2:52).[29] This growth is the progress of his learning by normal human perception and reasoning alongside his infused knowledge that was given in full (impossible to increase) as created grace from the beginning of his existence.[30] Aquinas explains the twofold knowledge as knowing the same things in two ways.

According to the concept of created grace, medieval theologians picture Christ's human soul as effectively divinized (cf. M2).[31] They add the nuance that this grace comes indirectly to Christ's humanity as a created act of God in the same way as for all in the Church (cf. M4). The result is his impeccability because he had this gift of grace in a maximal way. Similar to this parallel relation of created grace for Christ and others is the beatific vision.

The (3) *beatific vision* is the second effect of the grace of union that makes Christ impeccable. The beatific vision is the unending, relational experience of seeing God in heaven that the redeemed will have as part of the final, glorified state of humanity.[32] The medieval theory is that Christ enjoyed this beatific vision from the

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[27]Principe, "Some Examples of Augustine's Influence," 964. "With respect to Christ's human knowledge, Augustine's most profound influence on western theology was through his viewing ignorance as the cause and also the result of sin. . . . Following his lead, theologians in the west rejected ignorance in Christ and by the same token found it difficult to see any growth in Christ's human knowledge other than by his concrete experience of what he already knew." Exceptions to this trend are Aquinas and Scotus, who affirm both Christ's omniscience as the Logos and his progressive growth to omniscience in his humanity (see below).

[28]Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2.13 (ed. Schmitt, 2:112, 26-27).

[29]Aquinas ST 3.9.1 (ed. Walsh, *ST* 49:82-86); 3.12.2 (*ST* 49:138-40). Cf. Kevin Madigan, "Did Jesus "Progress in Wisdom"? Thomas Aquinas on Luke 2:52 in Ancient and High-Medieval Context," *Traditio* 52 (1997): 191. Aquinas's argument is that the normal human capacity to abstract knowledge from experience would not be denied Christ's full humanity, and he eventually attained omniscience on this order of his knowing, in addition to his infused omniscience.

[30]Aquinas ST 3.21.1, ed. O'Neill, *ST* 50:120-22.

[31]David F. Wells, *The Person of Christ* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1984), 119-20.

[32]Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus*, Great Medieval Thinkers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 150.

beginning of his human experience, in advance of his glorification and return to heaven. John Duns Scotus (1266-1308) writes: "Christ, in the first instant of his union with God was beatified, and beatitude removed from him all the ability to sin."[33] The beatific vision cancels the need for Jesus to have faith and hope while providing him with maximal empowerment and gifts by the Holy Spirit.[34] The glorified status of Jesus' human soul entails his impeccability as a man since the only way to lose the beatific vision is to sin. Just as God prevents this possibility for saints in glory, so also God prevents Christ from sinning.[35] Two ideas relevant to the model of Christ's impeccability and temptation follow from the view that he had the beatific vision.

First, the beatific vision is a glorified aspect of Christ's humanity, touching his soul but not his body. Christ's beatific vision allows him to be tempted and earn merit for right actions because his human soul is the medium between the divinity and the body of Christ, where *propassiones* remained despite the beatific vision.[36] *Propassiones* are the natural desires that do not sway the will to choose sin; they are an experience before the onset of real instability and struggle between desires and the will. Influential here is the patristic idea of M3 that Christ recapitulates all the states of humanity, and the beatific vision is Christ's share in glorified humanity.[37]

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[33]John Duns Scotus *Ordinatio* 3.12, q. unica (fol. 152vb); text and trans. Allan Wolter, "John Duns Scotus on the Primacy and Personality of Christ," in *Franciscan Christology: Selected Texts, Translations, and Introductory Essays*, ed. Damian McElrath, Franciscan Sources 1 (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Fransciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University, 1980), 143.

[34]Aquinas ST 3.7.3-5, 7, ed. Walsh, *ST* 49:12-20, 24-26.

[35]Adams (*What Sort*, 76-77) explains this as Duns Scotus's view, citing *Quaestiones in Lib. III. Sententiarum* 3.12, q.u,n.2, in *John Duns Scotus: Opera Omnia*, vol. 7, part 1, ed. Luke Wadding (Lyon: Laurence Durand, 1639; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1968), 254. Cross (*Duns Scotus*, 149) explains the general medieval view: "According to Catholic doctrine, the saints in heaven enjoy the beatific vision for ever, such that they cannot lose this vision. One way in which—if it were possible—the beatific vision would be lost would be if such a saint were to sin. So the saints in heaven must be impeccable." Scotus's explanation for how this works is that God removes the opportunity for the will to choose to refrain from loving God. Cross continues, "Retaining the *power* for opposites—even without the opportunity for exercising this power—is sufficient for freedom. Because the determining agent is metaphysically superior (God) So a metaphysically superior agent can affect the actions of an inferior agent without interfering with the inferior agent's nature—and thus without interfering with its causal powers. And this, according to Scotus, is how we explain the impeccability of the saints enjoying the beatific vision in heaven" (150-51).

[36]Alexander of Hales *Glossa* 3.18.2, cited in Principe, *Alexander of Hales*, 207.

[37]Adams, *What Sort*, 18. Adams notes that Peter Lombard takes this concept of Christ's

Second, the medieval reasoning about Christ's impeccability by way of grace and the beatific vision means that his humanity, though glorified, remains like common humanity, and there is no contradiction between his human freedom and impeccability. Scotus has a minority opinion, but he expresses the general view that the work of divine grace in Christ's humanity is logically possible for other humans also to enjoy grace and the beatific vision: "God in his absolute power can confer such grace on another nature [other than Christ's], whether assumed or perhaps not assumed."[38] This preservation of Jesus' human freedom by means of an *indirect* divine work of grace secures both his full humanity and his ability to earn merit—despite his impeccability. This is in contrast to a simply *direct* transfer of impeccability from his divine nature to his human nature, *communicatio idiomatum in abstracto*.

Therefore, the beatific vision, created grace, and the grace of union elevate Christ's deiform humanity to be impeccable on the same terms (though in greater degree) as God is thought to do for the elect in grace and final glorification.[39] The use of the patristic M2 and M4 is to relate them as ends and means, the transformation of Jesus' humanity by grace that secures his sinlessness. Other aspects of Christ's transformation by grace are the elevations of his human nature to have some but not all the defects of normal humanity.

Grace and normal human weaknesses. The elevation of Christ's humanity by grace has "top-down pressures" in medieval theology.[40] These pressures are the requirements of what medieval theologians think are fitting for divine incarnation in

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recapitulation of human history from Boethius (without citation) in four aspects: (1) pre-fall immunity from sin, (2) post-fall punishment and defects for sin, (2) redeemed fullness of grace, (3) glorified inability to sin and direct contemplation of God. Lombard *Sent.* 3.15.2 (2:622.106).

[38]Duns Scotus *Ord.* 3.13.4, n.8, ed. Wadding, 7.1:267; trans. Cross, *Duns Scotus*, 124.

[39]Garrigou-Lagrange, *Christ the Savior*, 411. "The Thomists and other theologians generally assign three causes for Christ's absolute impeccability. These are: (1) the grace of union; (2) fullness of inamissible habitual grace by reason of its connection with the grace of union; (3) the beatific vision by which even the rest of the blessed are confirmed in good, and are no more capable of sinning, or turning away from God clearly seen, or ceasing from the act of loving God."

[40]Adams, *What Sort*, 95.

human nature and the so-called unfitting defects that follow from either finitude or sin, or both. The formulation of Christ's transformed humanity by grace is the attempt to explain Jesus' humanity as *high enough* for incarnation. As noted above, ignorance is one normal human defect that medieval theologians consider unfit for Jesus' humanity (Aquinas allows that Christ grew to his human omniscience). They agree that Jesus' knowledge was complete (omniscience), and indications in the biblical evidence for his ignorance and growth in knowledge meet with elaborate explanations to make them consistent with the affirmation of his omniscience (whether divine or human).

Another normal human attribute that transforming grace must eclipse in Christ is original sin with its corruptive effects on desires.[41] Christ's humanity could have no sinful desires.[42] His temptations could only have been external appeals, and not at all from internal desires or sinful lusts as is the case for the rest of humanity.[43] His human freedom was limited to choosing between many good options because he could never desire evil.[44] This means that Jesus was determined by grace to choose only the good, but not specifically *which* good among many possibilities, giving him freedom in principle (consistent with impeccability), not freedom for opposites (good and evil). These affirmations about his temptations and freedom protect Christ's sinlessness and explain the specific ways of how grace transformed his humanity to be impeccable.

By contrast, Christ had other normal human weaknesses that enabled him to merit redemption because they did not contradict the fullness of his virtue by grace or endanger his sinlessness. Medieval theologians repeat this category of natural defects

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[41]Lombard *Sent.* 3.15, c.1, (Grottaferatta ed., 2:613.96); Aquinas *ST* 3.14.1, 3 (ed. Walsh, 49:170-176, 180-182); *ST* 3.15.2 (ed. Walsh, 49:194-196).

[42]Lombard *Sent.* 3.15, c.2, secs. 1-3 (Grottaferrata ed., 2:614.98-99).

[43]Aquinas ST 3.15.2, c (ed. and trans. Walsh, *ST* 49:196-197). "Furthermore, although he [Christ] did not have to cope with attacks from within due to the spark of sin, he did undergo attack from outside, both from the world and the devil. In conquering these he merited the crown of victory."

[44]Aquinas ST 3.18.4, c (ed. and trans. O'Neill, *ST* 50:76-77). "Although Christ's will is determined towards what is good, it is still not determined to this or that particular good thing. Thus for Christ, as for the blessed in heaven, choice meant use of a free will confirmed in good."

from the patristic period—death, hunger, thirst, and bodily weakness—that are consequences of sin that Jesus assumed voluntarily.[45] Notice that these are bodily defects; the transforming grace in the soul of Christ precludes defects in his soul. Peter Lombard (ca. 1110-1160) notes that even the *propassiones* that characterized Christ's emotional experience could not divert him from the beatific vision and right choices the way that normal, sinful passions can.[46] Therefore, Christ's human nature had the defects of normal humanity that fit with a divine incarnation, but grace transformed his humanity to be free of all other defects in a way that constituted him naturally impeccable, as in M2.

Impeccable by hegemony of the divine will. The medieval model takes up M3 from the patristic period to secure Christ's sinlessness by the rule of the divine will over his human will. As an example, Anselm accounts for Jesus' human freedom together with his impeccability by saying that Jesus has both the ability to sin (e.g., the power to speak the words of a lie) and the inability *to will to sin* (by the hegemony of his divine will, and his moral integrity).[47] Adams explains: "Anselm seems to hold that Christ's Divine will causes His human will always to uphold justice for its own sake. Such obedience still qualifies as self-determined and spontaneous, however, because of the hypostatic union: it is *Christ's own* Divine will that controls *His own* human will."[48] Anselm argues that Jesus' obedience is the act to conform his human will to the divine will as a free movement of his human will (freedom *for* God, not freedom *from* temptation and sin), which merits redemption.[49]

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[45]Aquinas ST 3.14.4 (ed. Walsh, *ST* 49:184). Following John of Damascus, Aquinas explains that Christ assumed only those defects necessary for making satisfaction for sin. The categories of defects are: (1) natural defects from original sin that are compatible with the perfection of knowledge and grace, (2) natural defects that are incompatible with perfection, such as ignorance, inclination to evil, moral inability to do good, (3) personal defects caused by people in particular cases, such as leprosy, epilepsy, blindness, and obesity.

[46]Lombard *Sent.* 3.15, c.2, secs. 1-3 (Grottaferrata ed., 2:614.98-99).

[47]Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2.10 (ed. Schmitt, 2:106-07).

[48]Adams, *What Sort*, 13 (her italics).

[49]Dániel Deme, *The Christology of Anselm of Canterbury* (Aldershot, U.K., and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 190. Deme explains how Anselm sees Christ's freedom: "He does have the power to

Aquinas allows that Christ willed against the divine will in his desire to avoid the pain overshadowing him in Gethsemane. However, this non-sinful discord occurs at the level of desires, not choice (and only momentarily). Jesus' human *sensual will* naturally shrank back from imminent pain, but his *rational will* always conformed to the divine will. This active conformity is the choice to will in relation to the will of another, which Aquinas observes is what commonly happens when two friends agree: each one wills something in relation to the will of the friend.[50] Moreover, Jesus' human will was determined to accord with the divine will because this human will was in a divine hypostasis.[51] Aquinas explains that human willing is normally a natural relationship between body and soul, "But in Christ this natural relationship lay under the control of his divine will."[52]

The problem that Aquinas and Anselm are solving is the freedom of Jesus' human will in concert with his divine will (dyothelitism is presupposed). The patristic view of divine volitional *hegemony* is set in the background while the medieval theologians set human volitional *conformity* in the foreground. Thus, the medieval way allows for Christ to earn merit by his active choice of a particular good in line while obeying the divine will. Nonetheless, neither Anselm nor Aquinas allows that Jesus could will humanly against the divine will as regards sin. The conformity of his human will to the divine may be something that Christ chose freely, but he also chose to submit necessarily, just as God's own freedom of necessity is to will his goodness and he can never will to sin. The Thomistic view is that Christ and God alike have *psychological liberty* (real freedom to choose among several good options without being determined to

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go astray, yet he has from himself another power which makes him incapable of committing something inappropriate. Anselm rightly concludes that an incapability to act and will sinfully, if it is possessed as a result of an earlier act, or even if it is possessed form eternity but independently on other factors – that is, *a se* – can be regarded as an act of justice, a wilful resistance of the power to sin" (ibid., 191).

[50]Aquinas ST 3.18.5-6 (ed. O'Neill, *ST* 50:76-84).

[51]Ibid., 3.18.1, d (*ST* 50:68).

[52]Ibid., 3.14.1, b (ed. and trans. Walsh, *ST* 49:175).

any one in particular) without having *moral liberty* (the unconditioned freedom to choose among good or sinful options).[53]

A stronger affirmation of divine hegemony is clear in Scotus, who points to the hegemony of wills in Christ as parallel to the divine hegemony over all the elect. God is a superior agent who determines the contingent, created wills of both the elect and Christ while preserving their self-determination.[54] The difference between the elect and Christ is that his human will is always conformed to his divine will in a way that the elect will only experience when they are glorified.

Scotus and the other examples show that the medieval model retains the patristic M3 by which the humanity of Christ is an instrument moved by the divine will. The medieval adjustment in assembling M5 is to explain Christ's impeccability alongside his freedom of will, all the while holding to divine volitional hegemony that secures Jesus' indefectible and meritorious human willing.

Impeccable by moral necessity. The third way that M5 secures Jesus' impeccability is by the moral necessity of (1) his personal union and (2) his redemptive work. These two ways secure Jesus' moral liberty impeccably as the freedom *for* God, exclusive of all sin.

First, the moral necessity that he be impeccable by his personal union to the impeccable Logos is a related point to both the grace of union and the divine hegemony noted above (cf. M1). Anselm allows that Jesus had the power to sin, but he was unable to sin because such act would have contradicted the holiness that he has in his humanity from his divine nature.[55] This consequent necessity for Jesus, as for the righteous angels, is because he and they *initially* chose holiness, thus deserving praise. As in M1, Christ, being the divine Logos who is impeccable, is unable to sin in his humanity that otherwise

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[53]Garrigou-Lagrange, *Christ the Savior*, 458.

[54]Cited by Adams, *What Sort*, 77.

[55]Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2.10 (ed. Schmidt, 107-08).

is capable of sin. M5 develops the person-nature distinction so that the possibility of sin for Jesus' human nature as abstracted from the personal union is bound by the moral or personal necessity of his divine impeccability.[56]

Second, M5 explains Christ's impeccability in terms of the moral necessity of his work in redemption. Aquinas uses the criterion of the savior's job-description to rule out sin in Christ in three ways. (1) Jesus could not make satisfaction for the sins of others if he owed a debt for his own sins, because God does not approve of gifts of the wicked (Eccl 34:23). (2) Sin is unnecessary for proving the truth of human nature, so Jesus had to be without sin to prove his true humanity (humanity is the creation of God, but according to John of Damascus, *De Fide Orth.* 3.20, sin was sown in humanity by the devil). (3) Jesus could not be an example of virtue if he sinned (1 Pet 2:22).[57]

Therefore, the necessity of Jesus' sinlessness by his moral impeccability and his redemptive work is a third explanation in M5 for his impeccability. This affirmation is part of the answer to the medieval question about his assumed human nature being *high enough* for divine incarnation. Alongside the threefold argument for Christ's impeccability, M5 develops four questions related to his temptability. This second part deals with the medieval question about Jesus' humanity being *low enough* for his redemptive tasks (cf. the defects assumed, above).

Second Part: The Temptability of Christ

Medieval theologians recognize Jesus' true human experience of temptation as told in the Gospels. Furthermore, they understood that these accounts of his temptation entailed that Jesus was tempted despite his impeccability and divine immunity to all temptation. Seeking to reconcile this problem, M5 explains Jesus' temptability in terms of his freedom, merit, and example for others.

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[56]Adams, *What Sort*, 19, 40, 76-77, notes that Abelard, Lombard, and Scotus each recognize Christ's impeccability by his person, despite his otherwise peccable human nature.

[57]Aquinas ST 3.15.1 (ed. Walsh, *ST* 49:190). Aquinas does not give biblical warrants other than 1 Pet 2:22.

Freedom: Two sorts of temptation. Aquinas gives an example of the typical distinction between temptations that arise internally, from sin, and temptations presented externally by the world and the devil.[58] From this he argues that Jesus was only tempted in an external way by the world and the devil, but not at all by the flesh, which entails internal, sinful desires.[59] The natural defects such as weakness, death, hunger, and thirst do not appear in the medieval model as occasions of Jesus' temptations.[60] Furthermore, Aquinas gives four reasons for Jesus' temptations by the devil: strengthening people against temptation, warning people that temptations come to all, teaching by his example how to overcome the devil's temptations (by quoting Scripture), and giving people confidence in his mercy to help them (Heb 4:15).[61] In M5, Christ merely submitted to being tempted as a redemptive task, just as the suffering he experienced throughout his life on earth was voluntary.[62] The likeness of Jesus' temptations to common humanity is that he was tempted in principle with only the innocent, external sort of temptations, and those only by his choice to suffer them.

Freedom: Abstract peccability. A medieval move not considered in the patristic models is to wonder about the peccability of Christ's humanity in abstraction from the hypostatic union. Anselm raises this question as a mark of Christ's human freedom.[63] Peter Abelard (1079-1142) goes further to claim that the ability to sin (*posse peccare*) and the ability not to sin (*posse non peccare*) are essential to human nature. His view is that Christ's humanity, apart from the union (*in abstracto*) was *posse non*

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[58]Ibid., 3.41.1, c (*The Life of Christ*, ed. Samuel Parsons and Albert Pinheiro, *ST* 53 [1971]: 72).

[59]Ibid., 3.15.2, c (ed. Walsh, *ST* 49:196).

[60]Instead, these are occasions for his merit and example of virtue, as part of his redemptive task. Anselm, 2.11 (ed. Schmitt, 2:11); Aquinas ST 3.14.4, b (ed. Walsh, *ST* 49:184-86).

[61]Aquinas ST 3.41.1 (ed. Parsons and Pinheiro, *ST* 53:72).

[62]Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2.12 (ed. Schmitt, 2:112).

[63]We may question if this notion of peccability is not better understood as *afreedom* or bondage to sin in consequence of the fall from the grace of God that upholds people in freedom to obey God.

peccare, a condition which is necessary for virtue. However, because of the incarnational union he was humanly *non posse peccare*.[64] Likewise, Bonaventure (ca. 1217-1274) affirms that Christ had the freedom to choose opposites (a freedom that belongs to pre-fall humanity), but concluded that Christ's simultaneous possession of the glorified humanity elevates his freedom to be exclusively *for* God, making him *non posse peccare*.[65] On a different tack, Scotus boldly admits that Christ's humanity was *posse peccare* but became transformed to be *non posse peccare* as an effect of the beatific vision (not simply by the incarnational union):

> I say that the nature which he assumed was of itself peccable and able to sin, because it was not beatified by reason of its union and it had free will, and thus was able to choose in either of two ways. But it was because of beatitude that it was confirmed in the first instant so that it became impeccable in the same way as the other blessed are impeccable.[66]

The medieval recognition in these examples is that Christ's humanity was low enough to be like that of common humanity in having the ability to sin when tempted, but beatification raised his humanity to be impeccable. Thus, in M5 the likeness of Christ's humanity to common humanity in susceptibility to temptation is only the same freedom *in abstracto*, and theoretically separated from the Logos and the benefits bestowed upon his human soul by divine grace. Jesus demonstrates the highest possibilities of a glorified humanity endowed with transforming grace, but his humanity was enriched far beyond the normal human experience.

Merit: A possibility despite impeccability. A major medieval concern is that Christ was able to merit humanity's salvation despite his inability to disobey the Father or do other than live a perfect human life. Adams summarizes the medieval view that causes

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[64]Abelard *Ep. ad Roman.* 1, cited in Augustus Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, 1st American ed., trans. Joseph Torrey (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1851), 4:496.

[65]Bonaventure *Sententiarum Librum* 3.12.a.2, q.2,c ad 2, 3, 4, *Commentaria in Quaturo Libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi,* in *Opera omnia* (Quaracchi: College of St. Bonaventurae, 1887), 269. Cited by Adams, *What Sort*, 40.

[66]Scotus *Ord.* 3.12, q.u. (fol. 152vb); text and translation in Wolter, "John Duns Scotus," 182.

a problem for Christology: "Beatitude normally closes an agent's merit-earning career."[67] For Scotus, the possibility of Christ's merit is simply a divine exception in the divinely-mandated code of salvation, since all salvation is a free divine act and God could accept whatever he determined as meritorious (the *acceptio* theory).[68] Thus, according to Scotus, Christ could merit rewards by fasting, watching, and prayer.[69] Generally, medieval theologians mark Christ's death as the main meritorious act that earns justification and eternal life for the elect.[70] Anselm's solution to the problem of Christ's impeccability and merit-earning (which entails his human freedom) is to argue that Christ made a human choice for holiness and conformity to the divine will in advance of his subsequent choices. According to Anselm, this is the same principle by which the righteous angels earned merit by a first choice that determined all subsequent choices.[71]

The example for humanity. Like M4, M5 emphasizes Jesus' purpose as an example of how to live, and to do so as a model of grace-assisted humanity in all the God-given capacities.[72] As part of this modeling role, Christ assumed some so-called normal defects or weaknesses as a way to demonstrate humility and patience for others.[73] He demonstrated a pattern of resisting temptation and obeying God to the fullest. Anselm explains that this demonstration was part of Jesus' job-description:

> For who can say how necessary and wise a thing it was for him who was to redeem mankind, and lead them back by his teaching from the way of death and destruction

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[67]Adams, *What Sort*, 78.

[68]Scotus *Ord.* 3.12, q.u, n.2 (ed. Wadding, 7.1:254). By the *acceptio* theory, God has, by his accepting will, set the terms autonomously for what he would accept as a meritorious work worthy of a reward.

[69]Reinhold Seeberg, *History of Doctrines in the Middle and Modern Ages*, in vol. 2 of Text-Book of the History of Doctrines, trans. Charles E. Hay, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1905), 154. Seeberg notes further that Scotus specified that Christ's merit was finite in keeping with his finite human nature.

[70]Cross, *Duns Scotus*, 129. E.g., Aquinas ST 3.48.1 (*The Passion of Christ*, ed. Richard T. A. Murphy, *ST* 54 [1965]: 74.

[71]Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2.10 (ed. Schmitt, 2:106-7).

[72]Adams, *What Sort*, 42.

[73]Bonaventure *Sent.* 3.15.1, q.1, d (Quaracchi ed., 3:331). Cited by Adams, *What Sort*, 41.

> into the path of life and eternal happiness, when he conversed with men, and when he taught them by personal intercourse, to set them an example himself of the way in which they ought to live? But how could he have given this example to weak and dying men, that they should not deviate from holiness because of injuries, or scorn, or tortures, or even death, had they not been able to recognise all these virtues in himself?[74]

The medieval emphasis on Christ's grace-enhanced humanity (from M4) makes his value as the example of virtuous living relevant despite his wide differences of enjoying the maximal perfection in grace that does not occur for the elect until they enter glory.

In M5, Christ exemplifies a mode of human life that was low enough to need transforming grace and resemble the suffering of common human experience to encourage others' obedience after his pattern. Anselm shows this point with reference to the way Jesus' obedience in a death he assumed voluntarily (a true self-sacrifice because his death was undeserved, unlike martyrs) is an example of the obedience to God that others should have when faced with persecution and suffering:[75] "Do you not perceive that when he bore with gentle patience the insults put upon him, violence and even crucifixion among thieves that he might maintain strict holiness; by this he set men an example that they should never turn aside from the holiness due to God on account of personal sacrifice?"[76] Part of Anselm's point here is that obedience to God is possible because Jesus demonstrated this way of life for others to the utmost. The example he gives of perfect obedience is a life given for others in self-sacrifice to endure all his voluntary suffering that culminates in death, and all from a motivation of love.[77]

Therefore, the picture of Christ in M5 is that his glorified humanity is adjusted to be just *low enough* to satisfy these requirements indicated by the biblical data. His

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[74]Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2:11 (ed. Schmitt, 2:111-112); trans. Sidney Norton Deane, *St. Anselm: Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo* (Chicago: Open Court, 1903), 259.

[75]Deme, *Christology of Anselm*, 198.

[76]Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* 2.18 (ed. Schmitt, 2:127); trans. Deane, *St. Anselm*, 279-80.

[77]Deme, *Christology of Anselm*, 205. "This suffering and dying humanity is to be followed and imitated for no other reason than that these are the sufferings of a free love. Thus, what is exemplary in Christ's passion is the love it springs from, and this is also what is to be imitated by the Christian for no other reason than love itself."

humanity must be such that he could be tempted externally, suffer pains and death, sympathize with others in their temptation, and be the model for others to imitate.

Conclusion to M5

The medieval synthesis of patristic models is important for its reformulation of the earlier concepts in a new setting to meet new concerns. Medieval theologians wrestle with the questions of how high and how low Jesus' humanity had to be for divine incarnation and human redemption. Their answer is M5 that draws from each of the patristic models in a complicated explanation of Christ's sinlessness by grace. M5 explains Jesus' sinlessness as a gracious transformation of his humanity to be trebly impeccable and yet be able to earn merit, be tempted, and provide an example of right living.[78] These medieval contributions will prove valuable for our contemporary restatement of a relational model of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

Background to the Reformation Model

The Reformers critically received the traditional affirmations and arguments about Christ's impeccability but without adding proofs of their own.[79] In addition, the Reformers argue repeatedly for the severity of Christ's temptations. In doing so, they are careful to reflect on Christ's person and work within the traditional boundaries of the Chalcedonian Definition.[80] Moreover, Christological formulation during the Reformation

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[78]This is also the conclusion of Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 2nd ed., trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 358-59. "This question was hotly discussed in twelfth-century Latin Scholasticism, especially with respect to the meritorious character of Jesus' sinless obedience. They came to agree on his impeccability as a gracious sinlessness, not attributed to the human nature or derived directly from the hypostatic union or the hegemony of the divinity over the humanity in Christ. The scholastic view was of a community of natures within the hypostatic union, by which gracious sinlessness left the ability to be tempted and the meritorious capacity of Jesus' human will untouched."

[79]Carl Ullmann, *The Sinlessness of Jesus: An Evidence for Christianity*, trans. R. C. Lundin Brown, 6th ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1858), 19. "We find this dogma enunciated by them [the Reformers]: only we discover in their writings no minute discussion of it, or attempt to demonstrate its truth; for to them it appears to have been not a position requiring proof, but an immediate certainty, an irresistible intuition, something far above mere logical demonstration."

[80]Wells, *Person of Christ*, 122. "Luther and Calvin as biblical theologians affirmed a Christology which was in full accord with Chalcedon; indeed, the Chalcedonian Definition became an important element in the creedal literature of most of the Reformation churches."

continues to be interwoven with soteriology, as in earlier theology.

Nonetheless, the new setting of the Reformation period raises some new concerns for its theologians. In general, the Renaissance humanists' emphasis on classical sources facilitates theological renewal by the Reformers' attention to Scripture (above all) and the writings of the patristic Fathers. In Christological formulation, the Reformers react to the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation in a dramatic reassertion of Christ's humanity. As a concern among themselves, Reformation leaders set out their theology of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper with disproportionately more attention here because of the clash between Luther and Zwingli. This disagreement causes the development of two main streams of Christology in the sixteenth century, following the lead of Luther and Calvin.[81]

Despite this doctrinal schism, the towering contributions of Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-1564) hold in common a sixth model of Christ's impeccability and temptation. The primary distinction of the Reformation model is a renewed and emboldened emphasis on the humanity of Christ as the locus of human salvation.[82] The prominence of Jesus' human nature is a foremost concern for the Reformers. This and other differences from earlier models flow from the innovations of Luther and Calvin that correspond to the new setting and concerns of the Reformation period. Additionally, as with M5, the Reformation model draws much material from earlier models. We will describe M6, note the repetition of earlier models, and explore its innovations as part of our goal to collect building blocks for a contemporary restatement.

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[81]Bruce, *Humiliation of Christ*, 82. Of course, a thorough historical study would include much more than just Luther and Calvin as representative of the Reformation model. Since primary concern of this study is to discover building blocks for a contemporary restatement, Luther and Calvin will be taken as representative.

[82]"Taught by Scripture, the Reformers attached great significance to the humanity of Christ because it relates so plainly and categorically to his mediatorial work." Geoffrey W. Bromiley, "The Reformers and the Humanity of Christ," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. Marguerite Shuster and Richard Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 86. Bromiley cites evidence of this special emphasis on Christ's true humanity in the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican confessions (88). Dorner, *History*, I.1:84, "[The Reformation was] a real transition-point in the history of the world, inasmuch as it, by resuming the truth taught in the old time, opened a free course for the right knowledge of the human side [of the doctrine of Christ]."

M6: Temptable by the Human Eclipse of Divine Power

Description of M6. M6 asks this question: How is Christ able to be in redemptive solidarity with us in our temptable weaknesses? The answer given is that he voluntarily stooped to the limits of a weak humanity, wracked with the consequences of sin, and veiled his divinity with that redemptive humanity. The divine power upholds his experience in human weakness. The divine Son's ability to stoop in humiliation is itself an expression of the divine power, and M6 thus recognizes a larger role for the Holy Spirit to facilitate Jesus' experience in his weak humanity. Two perspectives are offered. With Jesus' divinity in the *background*, both accomplishing the incarnation and underlying his humanity, Jesus can be tempted as a man in all sorts of ways (Heb 4:15) while not being able to sin (cf. M1). With his humanity in the *foreground*, M6 can explain Jesus' actual ignorance, growth in knowledge, fears, anxiety, and other temptation and suffering in his soul that most patristic and some medieval theologians thought impossible for the God-man. Christ's relevance as an example, brother, and ally for other human beings suffering temptations in a fallen world is a primary concern. Jesus' solidarity is as a brother with common humanity in his own humanity that he offered for the world, a comradeship made possible by the eclipse of his divine majesty that is covered with his human weakness.

M6 follows the biblical statements about Christ's voluntary humiliation to take on a second mode of existence as a temptable, passible man while remaining fully God. The Reformers find this doctrine of divine humiliation as a biblical theme taught plainly in Philippians 2:6-7, John 1:14, and elsewhere. The logic of this humiliation to allow his true humanity a full expression in divine incarnation is that the majesty of the divine nature had to move behind his humanity, out of view, so that God the Son could meet the requirements of redemption. As a man he had to live, suffer pains and temptations, and die for the sins of the world. By this logic of Christ's humanity eclipsing his divinity in a soteriological formula, the Reformers' explanation of the biblical evidence implies that

his divine impeccability is in the background to his human temptability. Metaphors for describing this logic are that the divinity of Christ is veiled or concealed by the humanity, laid aside from being used, and quiescent or reposed to allow the full expression and experience of the Son in his humanity.

By contrast with the concern of M5 to protect the *divinity* of Christ from the indignities of human frailty, M6 reverses this concern to protect his *humanity* from divine interference. In the medieval theology of M5, the concern was how God could deign to come so *low* to be incarnate in a human nature with the defects shown by Christ because of the metaphysical distance and all the indignity of created frailty. The pressing M5 question of *how low did God stoop in incarnation* is replaced in M6 by the recognition from the biblical data that *thus did Christ do it, a true humanity borne and suffered for others*. The Reformers explain that this descent to the likeness of sinful humanity took place with no detraction of the Son's dignity and power, but as an expression of godliness motivated by his love and pity for the lost.[83] A true, temptable, weakened, and afflicted humanity in Christ is upheld as the necessary equipment for Jesus to be a human mediator between sinful humanity and righteous God.

In short, M6 affirms Christ's temptations as part of the redemptive necessity that Christ be fully human in solidarity with humanity to save humanity. His divine nature did not dilute the force of his suffering within the limits of his human nature. His impeccability, divine will, and other divine attributes did not prevent him from feeling the strain of his temptations to sin. He was so weak that he needed divine support to hold him up. His human sinlessness was a condition grounded in his purity from original sin, but he lived obediently by the divine support of grace and the Holy Spirit. He never ceased to be impeccable in his divinity, but this attribute did not interfere with his ability to be fully temptable in his humanity, for those he saves. M6 explains these facts in terms of the human eclipse of the divine power.

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[83]John Calvin, *Institutio Christianae religionis* 2.16.12, in vol. 3 of *Joannis Calvini Opera Selecta* [*OS*], ed. P. Barth and W. Niesel, 2nd rev. ed. (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1959), 497.31-33.

Recycled Elements

M6 borrows three elements from earlier models. These are Christ's innate impeccability as God the Son (M1), the divine assistance of empowering grace (M4), and the purity of Jesus' human nature from original sin (M5).[84] Examples of each of these from Luther and Calvin show their dependence on tradition despite the renewal that the Reformers introduce.

Innate impeccability. M6 continues the traditional recognition of M1 as the philosophical deduction from Christ's divinity that he is impeccable. Luther affirms this when he writes in *Christian Liberty* that because Christ is God and man in one person, he cannot sin.[85] Commenting on John 1:10, Luther marks Jesus' sinlessness as the only difference between the savior and us, with the explanation that Christ was free of sin because he was very God.[86] In his comments on Hebrews 7:26, Luther explains that Christ is fit to be a priest because he is untainted, having no inner filth (sin) of his own as believers do, and so their sins do not contaminate him when he redeems them.[87]

Calvin gives a similar explanation by saying that Christ's sinlessness is a requirement for him to be a mediator before God for humanity, with the biblical proof given that Jesus sanctifies his own humanity (John 17:19) for the sake of others.[88] This implies that holiness is an innate attribute for him because Calvin clarifies that Jesus does not need sanctification for his divinity.[89] Calvin similarly explains John 17:19 as

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[84]Luther also recycles M2 as part of his assertion of the ubiquity of Christ's humanity, but we will treat this separately (New Elements in Luther) because it contradicts both M6 and Luther's own formulation. As for M3, the divine hegemony concept was already muted somewhat in the medieval model that changed it to more of a volitional harmony. In Luther and Calvin the idea does not appear in connection with Jesus' sinlessness (as far as I could tell).

[85]Martin Luther, *Tractatus de libertate christiana*, WA 7 (1897): 55.

[86]Luther, *Auslegung des ersten und zweiten Kapitels Johannis in Predigten 1537 und 1538,* 1.10, WA 46 (1912): 598.

[87]Luther, *Commentariolus in epistolam divi Pauli Apostoli ad Hebreos* 7.26, WA 57.3 (1939): 194.

[88]Calvin, *Inst.* 2.15.6, *OS* 3:480, 1-3; 481, 6-10.

[89]Ibid., 2.13.1 (*OS* 3:450, 4-6), 2.13.4 (*OS* 3:457, 16-20).

indicating the innate sense of Christ's holiness because his sanctification is for others and not acquired for himself.[90] Calvin's suggestion of M1 is less forceful compared to Luther's overt declarations, yet both indicate that M1 is a background presupposition for M6.

Empowering grace. The Reformers borrow the idea from M4 that Jesus needed the grace of gifts from the Holy Spirit to enhance his weak humanity. The multiform concept of grace in M5 is not repeated in M6 as the surety of Jesus' sinlessness because the Reformers seem to be more concerned about Christ's vulnerable humanity than with his divinely-empowered immunity to sin. Luther affirms the continual work of the Holy Spirit in Christ from his conception onward, moving Christ from time to time in an increasing way throughout his life (Luke 2:40).[91]

Calvin mentions the gift of the Holy Spirit to Christ as a mark of his true humanity because the divinity of Christ does not need the divine enrichment and equipping that the Holy Spirit gave him to fulfill his mediatorial office as teacher.[92] In Calvin's comment on Acts 10:38, he identifies Christ's miraculous powers with the power of the Holy Spirit, who was given to Christ as his anointing from the Father.[93] Calvin has taken the concept of empowering grace and closely identified it with the Holy Spirit as a personal operation hinted at in the pneumatological Christology of M4.

Purification from original sin. Medieval theologians had embraced Augustine's idea about original sin and the operation of grace in Christ's humanity (M4), and M6 likewise affirms that the Holy Spirit purified Jesus' humanity from original sin at his conception. For the Reformers, this purity at conception is Jesus' single difference

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[90]Ibid., 2.17.6, *OS* 3:514, 30-34.

[91]Luther, *Evangelium am Sonntag nach dem Christtage, Luk. 2, 33-40*, WA 10.1.1 (1910): 446.

[92]Calvin, *Inst.* 2.13.1 (OS 3:450, 1-5), 2.15.2 (*OS* 3:473, 17-22), 2.15.5 (*OS* 3:477, 3-14).

[93]Calvin, *Commentarius in Acta Apostolorum,* 10.38, CO 48 (1892): 245.

from the rest of humanity.[94] The Reformers frequently comment on Jesus' initial purity from original sin as a work of the Spirit and the initial ground of his sinlessness. Luther connects Jesus' purity with the virgin birth as the work of God to purify both Mary and Jesus.[95] Calvin affirms Jesus' purity from original sin but denies that Mary had the same purity.[96] Calvin further denies that Jesus' innocence from original sin resulted from the virginal conception as the means of his purity, arguing instead that the special action of the Holy Spirit alone is the means of Jesus' purified human nature.[97] Nonetheless, the significant point is the Luther-Calvin agreement that Jesus' sinless life was established at the outset by his having been miraculously purified from original sin.

M6 draws these three elements from earlier models. New elements added by Luther and Calvin are important contributions that constitute a distinct model of Christ's impeccability and temptation. These innovations culminate in the two Reformers' common support for a dominating new Christological element: the divine power is in the background to allow the full demonstration of Jesus' humanity in the foreground. The relevance of this point to our topic is that Jesus' divine impeccability is in the background while his human temptability is in the foreground. For his humanity to be true and full in

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[94]E.g., Luther, *Auslegung des ersten und zweiten Kapitels Johannis in Predigten 1537 und 1538,* 1.14, WA 46:634.

[95]Marc Lienhard, *Luther: Witness to Jesus Christ,* trans. Edwin H. Robertson (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982), 118. "Luther establishes this innocence [by nature] in the traditional way, explaining it by the virgin birth of Jesus." Luther, *Evangelium in der Christmess, Luk. 2, 1-14*, WA 10.1.1:68, 2; trans. Lienhard, *Luther*, 191 fn 35. "Nature in him and in his mother was pure in all their members, in all the working of their members." Luther, WA 10.1.1:69.1; trans. Lienhard, *Luther,* 169, continues to affirm the connection between Jesus' purity and the virgin birth as accomplished by the work of God: "[Christ] derives from this birth chastity and purity, as can be seen as soon as one contemplates it and recognizes there the work of God."

[96]Calvin, *Inst.* 2.13.4, *OS* 3:457, 8-20. Bromiley, "The Reformers," 85, comments on Calvin's view: "Calvin, perhaps, had something similar in view [to Barth's idea that Jesus sinlessly bears the burden that we should bear as sinners] when he traced Christ's sinlessness to the sanctifying of the Spirit and emphasizes that his purity calls for notice in the Bible precisely because it is the purity of his true human nature. Like the Fathers, however, Calvin gave the sinlessness a broader reach when he acutely pointed out that since human nature is intrinsically good as created, and only accidentally vicious, it is no wonder that he "through whom integrity was to be restored, was exempted from common corruption.""

[97]Richard A. Muller, *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins*, Studies in Historical Theology 2 (Durham, NC: Labyrinth, 1986), 28. "He rejects any explanation of sinlessness as a result of the virgin birth: the central issues for Calvin is that Christ is a true man, 'in the likeness of sinful flesh,' but sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

all the aspects as reported in the Gospels and required for redemption, his actual sinlessness in the face of temptations had to be grounded on something other than the force of his divine attributes. In other words, M6 explains Jesus' suffering in weakness and temptation as the veiling of divine power as a factor that otherwise would have prevented such suffering. Always in the background, his divinity was eclipsed (unchanged but obscured) to allow the possibility of temptation without allowing the possibility of sin. We will see this and other new elements in Luther and Calvin that combine to constitute M6.

New Elements in Luther

Luther develops three new Christological elements in contribution to M6. (1) Luther repeats the patristic idea of *communicatio idiomatum* in a way that extends the use of this concept in M2 and resembles the deiformity of Christ's humanity in M5. (2) Luther boldly affirms the temptation experience of Christ as including weaknesses and suffering in body and soul. (3) Luther explains the true and fully human experience of Christ as having occurred by means of setting his divine power in the background.

Communicatio idiomatum. Luther's battle to defend the real presence of Christ's ubiquitous humanity in the Lord's Supper brings out his claim that by the incarnational union, Christ's two natures exchange attributes. In the particular application to the Eucharistic controversy, this means that the real presence of Christ's humanity is hypothetically possible in terms of the ubiquity of his humanity as communicated from the divine nature.[98] Patristic formulations of the *communicatio idiomatum* between the natures had been an asymmetrical exchange to divinize the human nature without degrading the divine nature. In contrast to earlier theology, Luther's innovation is to affirm a fully symmetrical and reciprocal exchange by which even the suffering of the

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[98]Luther, *Sermon von dem Sacrament des leibs und bluts Christi, widder die Schwarmgeister* (1526), WA 19 (1897): 491.18-20. "Ist nicht allein nach der Gottheit sondern auch nach der menscheit ein herr aller din, hat alles ynn der hand und ist uberal gegenwertig." Cf. Luther, *Sermon von dem Sacrament des leibs und bluts Christi, widder die Schwarmgeister* (1526), WA 19 (1897): 491.18-20.

human nature is ascribed to the divine nature.[99] This move is unprecedented in medieval and patristic theology.[100] Luther also contradicts his own innovation by arguing that Christ's humanity was not transformed by sharing the divine attributes, as in the Roman Catholic teaching of transubstantiation.[101]

The complexity of Luther's views, and the Lutheran developments of them in two schools of thought following Johann Brenz and Martin Chemnitz, are less relevant to our topic than the implications of Luther's claims for Christ's impeccability. According to Luther's position on the *communicatio idiomatum*, Jesus' human nature possessed the divine attribute of impeccability at birth.[102] This explanation for Luther's affirmation of M1 and M2 shows his paradoxical way of putting together Christ's impeccability with the Reformer's insistence on the extent and intensity of Christ's temptations in body and soul.

Temptation in body and soul. Luther affirms that Jesus' temptations were not merely in his body (by natural weaknesses of hunger, thirst, fatigue, and death) but that he also suffered temptations in his soul, like the rest of humanity. Christ's only difference was that he was sinless, not that he suffered less than other people do or only partly what

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[99]Alasdair Heron, "Communicatio Idiomatum and Deification of Human Nature: A Reformed Perspective," *Greek Orthodox Review* 43 (1998): 372. "*Genus tapeinoticon*: the attributes of the human nature are ascribed to the divine nature."

[100]Ibid., 375.

[101]Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), 197. "The contradiction between Luther's understanding of the *genus majestaticum* [the doctrine that Jesus, according to his human nature, possessed all divine power and attributes at his birth] as the presupposition of Christ's emptying himself within history remains for the most part in contradiction to the genuine picture of the man Jesus." For Luther's denial of a transformation of Christ's human nature, see Luther, *De captivate Babylonica ecclesiae praeludium*, WA 6 (1888): 511, 34-36. In fairness to Luther, his affirmation of the ubiquity of Christ's humanity was a proposal to explain the possibility of the real presence in the Lord's Supper. Without the Eucharist Controversy, he may not have proposed it at all.

[102]This resembles the beatification of Christ's soul from M5 (which Luther gives no indication of accepting). The mainstream Reformation exclusion of the medieval doctrine of Christ's glorified *ante mortem* humanity did not prevent the Anabaptists from picking up on a version of this idea. Kaspar von Schwenkfeld, Melchior Hoffman and Menno Simons all affirmed a monophysite view of Christ's humanity as heavenly "celestial" or divine flesh that Christ either transformed by his divine nature or brought it as the glorified humanity from heaven, not taken from Mary. Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen, "Christology," trans. Robert E. Shillenn, in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1:321.

others suffer.[103] On the contrary, Luther claims that Jesus' temptations were much stronger, and more lethal than the common human experience in every way.[104] Jesus had to endure these psychological temptations in order to be a substitute for sinners, the one punished with God's wrath against sin; thus, he had to feel the guilty sense of their terror with a conscience stricken by the accusation of the Law.[105] Luther writes, "In Christ there coexisted both the highest joy and the *deepest sorrow*, the *most abject weakness* and the greatest strength, the highest glory and the *lowest shame*, the greatest peace and the *deepest trouble*, the most exalted life and the *most miserable* death."[106] Luther infers that on the cross, Jesus "felt in his conscience that he was cursed by God,"[107] and this experience of abandonment provoked Jesus to be tempted to blaspheme God for it.[108] This intensity of his temptation is a level of suffering in Christ's soul that medieval theologians denied because of their view of the beatific vision, but Luther praises Christ for suffering on behalf of sinners in his own despairing sorrow. Moreover, Luther argues that this suffering against the torment and temptations could not have been possible for Christ unless he deprived himself of the divine power that would have precluded his human experiences in pain.

Human experience in the foreground. Luther is able to emphasize Christ's full humanity and the ferocious reality of his temptations by setting the divine power in

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[103]Luther lists Christ's natural human frailties in his comment on John 1:10 (Luther, *Auslegung des ersten und zweiten Kapitels Johannis*, WA 46:598). Luther does not comment specifically on Heb 2:18 or 4:15 in his lectures on Hebrews, but in his *Sermon on St. Matthias' Day* (1525) he explains Matt 11:29 in terms of Heb 4:15: "And Christ makes a special point of saying here that he is gentle. It is as though he were saying: I know how to deal with sinners. I myself have experienced what it is to have a timid, terrified conscience (as the letter to the Hebrews [4:15] says, he "in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning"). Luther, *Am tage Matthie des hailigen Apostels Euangelion Mathei*, WA 17.2 (1927): 396, 15-18; trans. John W. Doberstein, *Sermons I,* LW 51 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1959), 131.

[104]Luther *Psalmus XXII* (21), WA 5 (1892): 635, 27.

[105]Ibid., 603, 14, trans. in Lienhard, *Luther*, 116. "The blows with which God strikes because of sins are not only the pain of death, but also the fear and the terror of a troubled conscience, which feels the eternal anger and behaves as though it were eternally abandoned and rejected from the face of God."

[106]Luther, *Ps. XXI* (22), WA 5:602, 22-25; trans. Lienhard, *Luther*, 119. Emphasis added.

[107]Ibid., WA 5:603, 34; trans. Lienhard, *Luther*, 118.

[108]Ibid., WA 5:604, 32; 605, 9; 610-13. Cited in Lienhard, *Luther*, 118.

the background with Christ's experiences as a man in the foreground.[109] Luther focuses on Christ's struggle in his humanity against the temptation to blaspheme God when Jesus was cursed and abandoned in the cross. In his dereliction, Christ suffered his lethal vulnerability to the devil, death, hell, and the consequent temptations to curse God for abandoning him to these horrors (Ps 22:1; Matt 27:46).[110] Luther declares bluntly that Christ was deprived of God's help in the cross.[111] This deprivation was a necessity of redemption; Luther writes that Christ had to be unassisted by divine power to be able to take up the full consequences of sin in his humanity and reverse the devil's conquest of Adam: "And in fact He was forsaken by God. This does not mean that the deity was separated from the humanity . . . but that the deity withdrew and hid. . . . The humanity was left alone, the devil had free access to Christ, and the deity withdrew its power and let the humanity fight alone."[112]

Moreover, the human eclipse of the divine power in Christ's life as a man was not only in the cross; this eclipse occurred normatively throughout Jesus' life. Luther affirms that Jesus was ignorant of some things in his humanity, just as the Gospels report but so many theologians had denied or avoided with complicated explanations.[113] Luther writes that the incarnation was a humiliation and full entrance into a temptable human experience that was made possible by Christ's having put off the form of divine majesty:

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[109]"From the inner contemplation of an assailed faith, the reformer has realized the true humanity of Jesus more profoundly than all the theologians that were before him and apparently also those who have come after him, without sacrificing the divinity of Christ." Albrecht Peters, "Luthers Christuszeugnis als Zusammenfassung der Christusbotschaft der Kirche, II. Teil," *Kerygma und Dogma* 13 (1967): 96; trans. Lienhard, *Luther,* 147 fn 54.

[110]Luther, *Epistel auss den Palmtag. Philippen. 2*, WA 17.2:244, 19. "In which he submitted himself not only to human beings, but also to sin, death, and the devil and bore all this for us." Trans. Lienhard, *Luther,* 192 n. 48.

[111]Luther, *Ps. XXI* (22), WA 5:601, 14.

[112]Luther, *Predigten des Jahres 1537, Nr. 40* (Ps. 8:5), WA 45 (1911): 239, 32-40; trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, in *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1955), 12:126-27.

[113]Luther, *Predigten Luthers gesammelt von Joh. Boliander* (1519-1521), *De Centurione*, WA 9 (1893): 556, 30-32, trans. in Lienhard, 191 n. 28. "It must be admitted that he was a man who did not know certain things." Cf. Luther, *Epistel am Christtag, Hebr. 1, 1-12*, WA 10.1.1:149, 6-7; trans. Lienhard, *Luther,* 170: "The humanity of Christ did not know all things."

> [The form of a servant] means that Christ divested or emptied himself, that is, acted as though he laid his Godhead aside, and would not use it. . . . Not that he removed it or could put it off or remove it, but that he put off the form of the divine majesty, and did not behave as God, which he truly was. Just as he did not put off the form of God so that one would not feel or see it, for then there would be no form of God there, but did not make use of it, did not make a display of it against us, but much rather served us with it.[114]

Luther's explanation is that Christ's emptying is in terms of the exclusive action, use, behavior, and display of his human weakness, without ceasing to be divine in any way.

Because Calvin comes to a similar conclusion, the two Reformers together distinguish M6 primarily at this point of their agreement about the restraint of divine power to allow a place for Jesus' human experience in the foreground. This point is especially relevant for a model of Christ's impeccability and temptation because by means of it the Reformers discern a way to affirm fully both truths without diminishing either one. They affirm the full weight of the biblical data about Jesus' weakness in temptation alongside the full power of Jesus' impeccable divinity. He could and had to be tempted in every way as common humanity, though he could not sin as others do.

New Elements in Calvin

Calvin develops three Christological contributions that (along with Luther's) constitute M6. Most important is the point (noted already with Luther) in Calvin's affirmation that (1) Christ's human experience was made possible by the quiescence or veiling of the divine power in the background to display his humanity in the foreground. Two other contributions support this main point. (2) Calvin (like Luther) emphasizes the integrity and example of Jesus' humanity that is temptable and weak in body and soul. (3) Calvin explains a greater role of the Holy Spirit to keep Christ's human nature pure through all his temptations as a pneumatological operation of divine power in the life of the Messiah.

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[114]Luther, *Epistel auss den Palmtag. Philippen. 2*, WA 17.2:243, 2-11, trans. Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development*, trans. and ed. Roy A. Harrisville (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 229.

Human experience in the foreground. Calvin explains that Christ's temptation was only possible by a voluntary eclipse of divine power in the background to demonstrate his human weakness in the foreground.[115] Calvin mentions this idea frequently as the *veiling* of the divine power with the human nature, which included Jesus' weaknesses and emotions. One example is in Calvin's comment on Philippians 2:7—"Christ, indeed, could not renounce His divinity, but He kept it concealed for a time, that under the weakness of the flesh it might not be seen. Hence He laid aside His glory in the view of men, not by lessening, but by concealing (*supprimendo*) it."[116] He repeats this veiling idea in the *Institutes* when discussing the same text, explaining the *kenosis* as "the concealment of Christ's divine majesty with the veil of his humanity" ("*carnis velamine suam divinitatem abscondi passus est*").[117]

Calvin sharpens his use of the veiling concept as the explanation for how Jesus could be tempted to sin. In his comment on John 12:27, Calvin writes that the divine nature had to be restrained so that Christ could suffer even his anticipatory emotions of fear about the punishment he would experience in the cross. Calvin explains the restraint as the suppression of the divine nature so as not to exert its force.[118] As the result of this restraint or veiling, Christ enabled his temptable humanity to suffer in the face of his greatest trial fully within the vulnerability and pains of his humanity, and without

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[115]E. David Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology: The Function of the So-Called Extra Calvinisticum in Calvin's Christology,* Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), 80. "This full humanity was enabled by the Eternal Son's emptying himself in the sense of freely concealing himself and withholding the exercise of his powers through the flesh to which he was fully joined. The *kenosis* was the concealment, not the abdication, of the Eternal Son's divine majesty."

[116]Calvin, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Philippenses,* 2.7, CO 30 (1895): 26, trans. T. H. L. Parker, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians,* Calvin's Commentaries, vol. 11 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 248.

[117]Calvin, *Inst.* 2.13.2 (*OS* 3:450, 20-451, 1), cf. 2:14.3 (*OS* 3:461, 17-19), "Sed quo modo sub carnis humilitate delituit, et seipsum exinanivit accepta servi forma, depositaque maiestatis specie." In 2.16.17 (*OS* 3:504, 27-31), Calvin also uses this veiling idea for the present status of Christ's kingdom as a humiliated form that will give way to its full demonstration of majesty and power on the last day.

[118]Calvin, *Commentarius in Evangelium Ioannis*, 12.27, CO 47 (1892): 291. "Divinitas enim occulta, neque vim suam exserens, quoammodo quievit ut locum expiationi faceret." Calvin *Commentarius in Evangelium Ioannis*, 12.27, CO 47 (1892): 291.

retreating to his divine immunity.[119] Similarly, Calvin explains the wilderness temptations (and Christ's temptations throughout his life) as an opportunity allowed only by the temporary desertion of the angels, "when God's grace, though present, lay hidden from Him, according to the perception of the flesh."[120] This means that Calvin connects the veiling concept specifically with the means of putting Christ's temptability in the foreground and suppressing the help from his divine power by putting it in the background.

The greatest temptation culminated in Christ's suffering in the cross, and for this (as well as in other temptations) the divine power had to be set in the background to allow Jesus' human experience in all weakness to be in the foreground. He both fully experienced inwardly and fully displayed outwardly his authentic humanity. Calvin affirms that in the cross, the divine power of the Spirit "veiled itself" (*occultavit*) to allow a place for Christ's human weakness to suffer the "temptation out of pain and fear" ("*tentationem ex doloris et metus*").[121] The suppression of divine power allowed him to fulfill his redemptive role of suffering, and necessarily so because "the mystery of our salvation could not have been fulfilled otherwise."[122] Clearly, this divine concealment must occur for the God-man to die in his humanity, but Calvin extends the necessity of

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[119]Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology,* 79.

[120]Calvin, *Commentarius in Harmonim Evangelicam*, Matth. 4.11, CO 45 (1891): 137; trans. A. W. Morrison, *A Harmony of the Gospels Matthew, Mark and Luke*, Calvin's Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 1:143. "Interdum Dei gratia, quamvis praesens esset, eum secundum carnis sensum latuit."

[121]Calvin, *Inst.* 2.16.12, *OS* 3:499.2-5. "Quanquam autem sese ad momentum occultavit divina divina vis spiritus, ut locum infirmitati carnis cederet." Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 84, notes that Calvin is equivocal about the divine power displayed in Jesus' life: "There is no clear indication as to the identity of the divine power of Jesus to which Calvin gives so much weight. Is that power the efficacy of the Second Person which makes itself experienced beyond the confines of Christ's flesh, or is it in fact the Holy Spirit himself: Calvin has no set phrase for denoting the divine power at Jesus' disposal. He usually restricts his descriptions to the effect of that power, sometimes calling it the divine Spirit of Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ's divine or secret power, or Jesus Christ's spiritual power."

[122]Calvin, *Comment. in Harm.,* Matth. 26:37, CO 45:719; trans. Morrison, *Harmony,* 3:147-48. "Imo quum dicitur divina Christi virtus quasi abscondita ad tempus quievisse, ut partes redemptoris patiendo impleret, adeo en eo nihil est absurdum, ut aliter salutis nostrae mysterium impleri nequiverit." Calvin *Comment. in Harm.,* CO 45:719; trans. Morrison, *Harmony,* 3:147-48.

"his divinity resting" (*quiescente divinitate*) in the background even for Jesus to experience the grief and psychological torment that he endured along with death.[123]

The integrity of his temptable humanity. Calvin preserves the integrity of Christ's human nature from the elevating, transforming effects through union with the divine nature so that Christ could suffer temptations on the same terms that is common to other human beings. Calvin reverses the typically Antiochene, patristic motive of distinguishing the two natures to protect Christ's divinity from degradations (especially passibility). Instead, Calvin's motive is to protect Jesus' human temptability from divine interference.[124] This distinction supports Jesus' relevance as an example and help for other humans suffering temptations (Heb 2:17).[125] Calvin affirms that Jesus' integrity meant that he was so vulnerable to temptation in his human weakness that he prayed for divine support to resist the temptations within the limits of his humanity.[126]

As part of preserving the integrity of Christ's humanity and his suffering in temptation, Calvin affirms an ancient teaching that the divine Logos was not limited to his assumed human nature (*Logos extra carnem*).[127] By this re-appropriation of a traditional idea, Calvin can affirm that Christ is fully human without giving up any of

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[123]Calvin, *Comment. in Harm.,* Luc. 2.40, CO 45:104. "Salutis nostrae interfuit divinam suam potentiam quasi occultam tenuit Dei filius." Calvin quotes Irenaeus, "Quiescente divinitate passum fuisse."

[124]Stephen Edmondson, *Calvin's Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 119-120. "The separation of natures is what ensures the lowliness of this flesh – Christ's humanity is fragile, weak, and anxious only as it remains separate from his divinity and can experience reality in a human manner. Christ knows our weaknesses only because his human nature is truly and fully human, not safeguarded from the travail of human experience by his divinity, but immersed in such travail as his divinity refuses to exert any ameliorating influence over him. Calvin emphasizes the separation of the two natures in Christ primarily so that Christ can share our condition."

[125]Calvin, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Hebraeos*, 2.17, CO 55 (1896): 34-35.

[126]Calvin, *Comment. in Harm.*, Matth. 26.46, CO 45:728.

[127]Calvin, *Inst.* 2.13.4, *OS* 3:458.5-13. Heiko Augustus Oberman, "The 'Extra' Dimension in the Theology of Calvin," in *The Dawn of the Reformation*, ed. Heiko Augustus Oberman (Edinburgh: T.&T.Clark, 1986), 249, summarizes Calvin's view of the so-called extra calvinisticum: "The *extra calvinisticum* serves to relate the eternal Son to the historical Jesus, the Mediator at the right hand to the sacramental Christ, in such a way that the 'flesh of our flesh' is safeguarded. Rather than hiding secret divine resources, which mark a divide between the incarnate Christ and fallen man, the *extra calvinisticum* is meant to express both the reality of the *kenosis* and the reality of the Ascension." Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 60, demonstrates that the so-called *extra calvinisticum* was taught almost universally in patristic and medieval theology, as shows in abundant examples from Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine, Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and Gabriel Biel.

Christ's divinity. Calvin's use of the *Logos extra carnem* formula allows him to explain how the divine nature could be in the background to Jesus' human experience without being a factor that makes a superhumanity that would have been irrelevant as an example in life and sacrificial substitute in death for others. Calvin argues that Christ's human temptability was kept vulnerable because the Reformer maintains a continuing distinction of the human from the divine nature that was *extra carnem*. This construction is Calvin's way of protecting the divinity in the traditional way and also preserving the human vulnerability, as noted here: "[Christ] was struck with fright and seized with anguish, and so compelled to shift (as it were) between the violent waves of trial [*tentationum*] from one prayer to another."[128] Accordingly, Calvin counters any move to diminish the depth and severity of Christ's temptations in body or soul because he affirms Jesus' full and true humanity: "People who exempt Him from feeling temptations make Him Victor without a fight. And it is quite forbidden to suppose that He made a pretence, when He complained of mortal sadness in His soul. The Evangelists do not lie when they recorded that He was overcome with sorrow and in great fear."[129]

Therefore, Calvin, like Luther, affirms the intensity of Christ's suffering in temptation because of the biblical evidence, and he does so in a way that protects the integrity of his human nature. Unlike Luther, Calvin accepts only the *communicatio idiomatum* of the natures to the person.[130] Calvin's alternative to Luther's version of the *communicatio* and to the medieval move of elevating Christ's humanity by created grace is to discern the role of the Holy Spirit assisting Jesus in his humanity.

The help of the Holy Spirit. Calvin emphasizes Holy Spirit's role of helping Christ to remain pure from sin in all his temptations.[131] This emphasis adds a trinitarian

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[128]Calvin, *Comment. in Harm.*, Matth. 26.39, CO 45:721; trans. Morrison, *Harmony*, 3:149.

[129]Ibid., CO 45:724; trans. Morrison, *Harmony*, 3:152.

[130]Calvin, *Inst.* 2.14.1-3, *OS* 3:458-62.

[131]Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology*, 82-83, comments on Calvin's view of the Holy Spirit in Christ: "One of the strengths of Calvin's Christology and of his Pneumatology is his representation of

dimension to Christ's impeccability and temptation. Jesus' life as Messiah is a trinitarian operation of divine power, not simply God the Son fulfilling an incarnational task. Calvin explains that in the Synoptic account of Jesus' wilderness temptations, Luke's special reference to Jesus' fullness of the Holy Spirit means that Jesus was given grace and power to face Satan's temptations. Calvin then compares Jesus to Adam. Like Adam, Jesus had the same human weakness in temptability that made him needy for the Holy Spirit. Unlike Adam, who was merely "able not to sin" (*posse non peccare*), Jesus was "so defended by the power of the Spirit, that Satan's darts could not reach him."[132] This explanation of empowering grace given by the Holy Spirit is tantamount to impeccability, because Jesus had Adam's same weakness but the Holy Spirit was a new unconquerable factor guaranteeing Jesus' sinlessness and the salvation of sinners. In considering Jesus' temptations on the eve of his death, Calvin notes again the divine factor of empowerment supporting Jesus in an external way and not from within himself as the God-man: "With prayers and tears He gained new strength from heaven: not that lack of strength had ever made Him waver, but in the weakness of the flesh, which He had freely assumed, He wished to wrestle in anguish, in painful and hard combat, that in His own person He might win the victory for us."[133]

By contrast with Jesus' enriched ability to withstand his temptations in Gethsemane, Calvin explains that the disciples failed "because they are not yet sufficiently possessed of the power of the Spirit."[134] Jesus prescribed prayer for help to resist temptation, just as he has himself been praying and received the visible form of

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the person and work of Christ in constant reference to the Spirit, and the reality and work of the Spirit in constant reference to Christ. Calvin's Christology is of course a "Spirit-Christology" in the sense that it is so much a *Filioque-Christology* he never loses sight of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Incarnation. . . . Part of the force of the "extra Calvinisticum" in Calvin's thought is that it makes Pneumatology integral to Christology and so affords a Christology more properly Trinitarian than would otherwise be the case."

[132]Calvin, *Comment. in Harm.*, Matth. 4.1, CO 45:130-31; trans. Morrison, *Harmony*, 1:136. "Atqui scimus, ea spiritus virtute munitum fuisse Christum, ut Satanae telis penetrabilis non esse."

[133]Ibid., Matth. 26.46, CO 45:728; trans. Morrison, *Harmony*, 3:156.

[134]Ibid., Matth. 26.41, CO 45:725; trans. Morrison, *Harmony,* 3:153.

divine aid. Calvin explains that the angels generally represent visible divine aid, and especially so for Christ in Gethsemane: "Though it is the Spirit of God alone who supplies courage, there is no objection to God using His angels as servants. We may infer the enormity of suffering that Christ endured, when God had to give Him aid in visible form."[135]

Therefore, Calvin supports his picture of Christ as temptable despite his impeccability by emphasizing the role of the Holy Spirit as a gift from the Father to empower Jesus in his humanity through all his temptations. Calvin's insistence on the integrity of Christ's human nature in its weakness unmitigated by the greatness of the Son's divine power further explains the ferocity of Jesus' temptations. The Calvin-Luther agreement as an overall explanation of Jesus' impeccability and temptation is M6, emphasizing the veiled divinity that allowed Christ's full humanity. Calvin additionally stresses the Holy Spirit who provides divine support for Jesus' true humanity.

Conclusion to M6

Luther and Calvin contribute their emphasis on the full, weakened, and temptable humanity of Christ and their explanation that this extreme temptability became possible by the eclipse of the divine power with human weakness. Their innovations that constitute M6 are distinctive among the earlier models while drawing several useful elements from them. M6 reverses the trend of earlier theology that emphasizes Jesus' divinity by asserting bold conclusions from fresh exegesis of the biblical evidence for Jesus' humanity. M6 offers two new solutions to old problems. First, the M6 principle of Christ's veiled divinity explains the difficulty of how to relate his two natures in view of the evidence for his temptations and weakness. Second, M6 deals with the problem of Christ's humanly-achieved sinlessness in terms of the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit. Figure 6 summarizes M6.

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[135]Ibid., Matth. 26.42, CO 45:726; trans. Morrison, *Harmony,* 3:154.

Key Question:	- How is Christ able to be in redemptive solidarity with common humanity in temptable weaknesses?
Answer:	- He voluntarily stooped to the limits of a weak humanity, wracked with the consequences of sin
Concerns:	- Christ's relevance as an example and ally for others - Protection of the integrity of his humanity to suffer and be tempted without the help of his divine powers - His solidarity with weak, temptable humanity - His sinlessness as a human achievement to be imitated - An afflicted humanity to make him a proper mediator - The authenticity of his temptation in body and soul
Influential theories:	- Christ's humanity is the locus of human salvation - The incarnation is a divine self-humiliation - Suffering was necessary for him to bear the full consequences of sin as a man to reverse the devil's conquest of Adam without divine help
How tempted?	- The eclipse of divine power allowed human weaknesses
Why tempted?	- To suffer within the limits of true humanity to save others - To be able to give help to others when they are tempted - To provide an example for others to follow by resisting sin
How triumphed?	- Divine empowerment by the Holy Spirit supported him
Relation to M1-5:	- Christ's purity from original sin by the Holy Spirit (M4) - Empowering grace is support by the Holy Spirit (M4) - His impeccability as the divine Son is innate (M1)
Rationale:	- Jesus' human temptation was possible by veiling his divine power; his sinlessness is a grace-empowered achievement that others can follow

Figure 6. Summary of M6: Temptable by the Human Eclipse of Divine Power

Background to the Modern Model

Theologians have been busy in the time from the Reformation to the present day. Theology in the modern period is a confrontation between the Enlightenment and traditional orthodoxy. The clash is between new and old, between the anthropocentric and

theocentric worldviews.[136] Whereas the Christology that is formulated up to and throughout the Reformation period revolves around the Chalcedonian definition of two natures in Christ, many theologians in the modern period reject the traditional definition outright.[137] The modern theologians subject traditional Christology to the new canons of authority raised by the Enlightenment. One result of this situation is the modern model of Christ's impeccability and temptation: Temptable by Humanization (M7). In opposition to the patristic emphasis on the divinization of Jesus' humanity, M7 explains Jesus' divinity as humanized for a true incarnation. Modern theologians are most concerned about Jesus' experiences of suffering and temptation as reported by the biblical evidence. Theologians reconsider these experiences in light of normal human experience. The contrast of this model from earlier theology shows in one medievalist's observation of the modern shift in the approach to Jesus:

> By contrast [with medieval theology], early twentieth century theologians were eager to read the Gospels as an historical record. Many of them preferred to establish their Christological baseline with the Synoptic career and passion narratives, and Hebrews 4:15; to make "like us except for sin" their first approximation; and to design for Christ as normal an *ante-mortem* human nature as possible given that sin must be taken away. In effect, they reversed the Anselmian burdens of proof, placing the onus instead on any who wish to assign Christ's human nature special advantages or perfections that would lift Him out of the rough and tumble of our *post-lapsum* world.[138]

We will consider briefly the developments of the Enlightenment and two evangelical responses that are the background influences to M7 in the modern period. Then we will consider the two approaches in M7 that exemplify the confusion and fragmented ambiguity of modern Christology.

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[136]*Die Aufklärung*, the Age of Enlightenment, or the Age of Reason developed a rationalistic worldview during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and continues as the so-called modern period. Major shifts in thought about political theory, nature, education, theology, and science followed from the Enlightenment exchange of epistemology based on revelation and tradition for rationalistic epistemology.

[137]Donald Macleod, "The Christology of Chalcedon," in *Jesus the Only Hope: Yesterday, Today, Forever*, ed. Mark Elliott and John L. McPake (Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2001), 77.

[138]Adams, *What Sort of Human Nature*, 99.

Enlightenment Darkness

The new setting of the modern period raises new concerns for Christology. As many scholars have expressed it, the main new concern is the emphasis on the subject, or the independence and autonomy of the individual person who perceives and experiences life. From the perspective of Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The main difference [of the Enlightenment] was the *independent* use of reason free from church authorities, divine revelation, and other people's tutelage. That was the essence of the Enlightenment."[139] In the evaluation of Colin Brown, "The Age of Enlightenment was characterized by the desire for a superior, more rational view of everything. It was a desire that contained within itself the seeds of its own destruction."[140] This perilous exaltation of reason as independent from divine revelation and traditional church orthodoxy is a turn from a theocentric worldview to an anthropocentric one.[141] Traditional Christology is assumed to be no longer tenable in the rationalistic worldview because the empiricists believe that the traditional statement about Jesus as the Son of God is irrational. The abandonment of the theocentric, revelation-dependent, and tradition-oriented worldview yields new possibilities for Christologies that are rationalistic (Immanuel Kant), humanistic (Friedrich Schleiermacher), idealistic (Georg Hegel), and kenotic (Gottfried Thomasius).[142]

A result of the turn to an anthropocentric worldview is the emphasis on Jesus' humanity, continuing the Reformers' discovery.[143] This emphasis is developed as people

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[139]Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Christology: A Global Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 86. His emphasis.

[140]Colin Brown, "The Enlightenment," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 379.

[141]H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 247-49.

[142]John Macquarrie, *Jesus Christ in Modern Thought* (London: SCM, 1990), 235. "The classical christology that had stood so long . . . was increasingly subject to criticism. Both its historical content and its doctrinal formulations were now in doubt. . . . Jesus Christ was being humanized."

[143]David G. A. Calvert, *From Christ to God: A Study of some Trends, Problems and Possibilities in Contemporary Christology* (London: Epworth, 1983), 3-5. Calvert notes four influences on the modern attention to Jesus' humanity.

studied Jesus as a self-conscious human individual with a biography and experiences like any other culturally- and historically-conditioned human being.[144] Scholars presupposed that Jesus was a man much like themselves and interpreted the evidence of Jesus' life in terms of their own observations and experiences.[145] Many of the lives-of-Jesus biographies present Jesus as merely a man like others, minimizing the accounts of his miracles and claims for his sinlessness and divine nature.[146] Other biographers of Jesus doubt that the Gospels are reliable historical sources for reconstructing Jesus and his psychology. As the result of this skepticism, interest in the social and cultural world of Jesus' life flourishes in the modern period.[147]

The modern trend of emphasizing the humanity of Christ flows directly out of the Reformation re-discovery of his solidarity with humanity in temptable weakness and suffering to redeem sinners. However, the anthropocentric worldview of modern theology upsets the Reformers' balance of Jesus' likeness and difference from the rest of humanity. With some exceptions, the trend in modern theology is to erode Christ's divinity and remake him as merely a great man.[148] As never before, some modern

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[144]Ibid. Calvert notes that Marxist scholars have been particularly influential for reconstructing Jesus' biography in terms of socio-historical forces.

[145]This concern continues in the present day with the popular interest in historical fiction based on Jesus as a common man like anyone else, though he had remarkable ethical teachings. In *The Da Vinci Code*, Dan Brown presents Jesus Christ as merely a mortal man, not the Son of God, who married Mary Magdalene and fathered a daughter by her. Similar is Nikos Kazantzakis's *The Last Temptation of Christ*.

[146]Fisher H. Humphreys, "The Humanity of Christ in Some Modern Theologies," *Faith and Mission* 5 (1988): 5. The critical approach is that the gospels do not give us access to the historical Jesus because the stories are just myths to convey religious ideals. An example is D. F. Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, 4th ed. [1835], trans. George Eliot, ed. Peter C. Hodgson, Lives of Jesus Series (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 238-39. Strauss claims that Jesus did not have a sinless development from childhood and confessed his own sins at the Jordan baptism (Strauss cites a statement from the Gospel of the Hebrews that Jesus confessed his own sins). Straus reasons that Jesus must have sinned and made his confession because, "According to Matt. iii.6, John appears to have required a confession of sins previous to baptism; such a confession Jesus, presupposing his impeccability, could not deliver without a falsehood."

[147]E.g., Ernest Renan, *The Life of Jesus* (1863). Humphreys, "The Humanity of Christ," 6-7, summarizes the anthropological interest of the lives-of-Jesus projects: "Yet it was characteristic of the writers of the lives of Jesus that they often made the case of Jesus' historicity and humanity at the expense of his deity."

[148]Calvert, *From Christ to God*, 3-5, notes that the traditional description of Jesus as the Second Person of the Trinity is unintelligible to many because of the rising antipathy for traditional God-language in an increasingly secular age.

theologians question Jesus' sinlessness and deny his impeccability.[149]

In response to these critical assertions, some evangelical theologians retrieve the pre-modern orthodoxy of old. Other evangelical theologians respond to the critical approach with innovations for a rapprochement alongside of the commitment to remain within the Chalcedonian boundaries of orthodoxy. We will review both evangelical responses as part of the background to M7.

Evangelical Retrieval[150]

Among the many theologians that could be cited, the representatives included here both maintain the traditional formulations and take up the modern emphasis on the full, true humanity of Jesus together with his real condescension to human ignorance, temptability, and weakness. This emphasis comes from the M6 reversal of the tradition in M5 to glorify Christ's humanity. Those included here in chronological order represent the conservation of the traditional models throughout the modern period. Each of the six models remains in circulation, and many representatives mention more than one model. We briefly review these examples to illustrate the continuing presence of earlier models in modern theology.

M1. The general connection between Jesus' impeccability, sinlessness, and temptation is the innate impeccability of God expressed in the human life of God incarnate. John Owen (1616-1683) grounds Jesus' sinlessness in the innate goodness of the Son of God. Discussing the life and ministry of Jesus, Owen writes that the divine

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[149]G. C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, trans. John Vriend, Studies in Dogmatics (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 255. "On the basis of the intensity of the temptation people whittled away at the absoluteness of Christ's sinlessness." Millard Erickson is a prominent evangelical peccabilist (see below). Theodore of Mopsuestia affirms that Jesus only became impeccable at his resurrection, but to say Jesus may have actually sinned is a new thing not even considered by Theodore. For evangelical peccabilists, see the Critical Approach in M7, below.

[150]Included in this survey are representatives from the Protestant tradition only, and mostly on the Reformed side. Doubtless many Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox theologians in the modern period could be shown to have repeated earlier models if we widened the scope of this study. I only give dates for theologians living before the twentieth century; thereafter, I give the publication dates for a rough chronological context.

nature is the immediate principle of all the outward acts of God,[151] and that Christ exercised the holy properties of the divine nature "in moral duties of obedience," including the property of infinite goodness.[152] Loraine Boettner (1943) writes along the lines of M1 that Christ could not sin because "in His essential nature He was God, and God cannot sin."[153] A more recent proponent is Donald Macleod (1998), who affirms M1 exclusively, "the impeccability of Christ . . . rests not upon his unique endowment with the Spirit nor upon the indefectibility of God's redemptive purpose, but upon the fact that he is who he is."[154] Clearly, M1 remains a suitable formula for these modern theologians to explain Christ's impeccability and temptation to sin.

M2. Modern theologians repeat the principle from M2 that Jesus' divinity supported and enabled his humanity to be sinless by natural necessity.[155] Lutheran theologian John Adam Scherzer (1628-1683) affirms M2 as one of several proofs for Jesus' impeccability: "Christ never sinned, nor was He even able to sin. We prove the statement that he was not even able to sin, or that He was impeccable . . . he who is both holy by His origin, and is exempt from original sin, who can never have a depraved will, and constitutes one person with God Himself is clearly impeccable."[156] William G. T. Shedd (1820-1894) affirms M2 in his explanation of Jesus' impeccability as having been

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[151]John Owen, *The Glory of Christ*, ed. William H. Goold, vol. 1 of *The Works of John Owen* (London: Johnstone & Hunter: 1850-53; reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 225.

[152]Ibid., 175.

[153]Loraine Boettner, *The Person of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943), 125.

[154]Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 229-30.

[155]Two important mediating theologians, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and Isaak Dorner (1809-1884), also affirm the M2 principle of impeccability by the hypostatic union with Christ's divine nature. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928), 413, 415. Schleiermacher also denies that Christ was really tempted at all, calling the temptation accounts unhistorical (ibid., 382). Isaak A. Dorner, *System of Christian Doctrine*, in *God and Incarnation in Mid-Nineteenth Century German Theology*, trans. and ed. Claude Welch, A Library of Protestant Thought (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 267.

[156]John Adam Scherzer, *Systema Theologiae*, 389. Cited in Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,* trans. Charles A. Hay and Henry A. Jacobs, 3rd rev. ed. (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1899; reprint, Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961), 302.

supported by his divine omniscience, omnipotence, immutable holiness, and the divine aid provided for Jesus' human nature in all his temptations.[157] Louis Berkhof (1939) argues for M2 that sin was impossible for Christ because of "the essential bond between the human and divine natures."[158] Wayne Grudem (1994) agrees with M2, explaining simply that the union of Christ's two natures prevented the possibility of sin.[159] In each of these examples, the M2 idea of the natural necessity of Jesus' divine nature secures his impeccability despite his incarnation and temptations of all sorts.

M3. The divine hegemony model continues in modern theology as the idea that Jesus remained sinless by subjecting his human will to the divine will. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) repeats M3 when he argues that Christ's human will was "conformed to the will of the Father" and was thus "infallibly, unalterably and unfrustrably determined to good, and that alone."[160] Shedd's support for M3 shows in his claim that "impeccability depends upon the will." He applies this principle to Christ, explaining that the divine will fortified Christ's human will so that "no conceivable stress of temptation could overcome Jesus Christ."[161] Donald Bloesch (1997) mimics M3 as he writes that Jesus' human nature "is subordinate to his divine nature" in a submissive relation that gives him "true freedom" and grounds "the purity of his commitment" which totally excludes conquest by temptation.[162] These examples show that Christ's impeccability is a volitional

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[157]William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, ed. Alan W. Gomes, 3rd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2003), 660-62.

[158]Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939), 318.

[159]Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 539.

[160]Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, ed. Paul Ramsey, in vol. 1 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* [Works] (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 289-90. Edwards gives special attention to the topic of Christ's impeccability, offering eleven proofs.

[161]Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, 662-63. Cf. Gerald O'Collins's aversion to the view that Christ was impeccable by nature. O'Collins prefers an M3-type account of Jesus' impeccability as a divine person in his incarnate state ("The Incarnation: The Critical Issues," in *The Incarnation: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Incarnation of the Son of God*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002], 15).

[162]Donald G. Bloesch, *Jesus Christ: Savior and Lord,* vol. 4 of Christian Foundations, (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster, 1997), 73.

necessity of his divine hegemony over his human will and temptable nature.

M4 (and M5).[163] John Owen, noted above, also affirms the M4 principle: empowering grace enriched and enabled Christ's humanity in moral action. Owen writes that the "fulness of grace was necessary unto the human nature of Christ . . . as unto his own obedience in the flesh."[164] Similarly, Jonathan Edwards mimics the M4 principle in the first of his eleven proofs for Christ's impeccability. He argues that the work of the Holy Spirit is to support Christ in impeccability as a man. Edwards's proof is that the Holy Spirit was promised to uphold the Messiah (Isa 42:1-8), and this was applied to Jesus in Matthew 12:18, implying "a promise of his being so upheld by God's spirit, that he should be preserved from sin . . . and from being overcome by any of the temptations."[165] More recently, Richard Sturch (1991) shows the continuing modern acceptance of M4: "I can see no reason to doubt that grace, the work of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' life, was the direct source of His sinlessness."[166] These examples represent a fraction of the modern popularity for pneumatological Christology along the lines of the M4 explanation for Christ's sinlessness by means of the Holy Spirit's influence in his life.

M6. The emphasis on the Holy Spirit in the Reformation model is partly represented by those noted above as repeating M4. However, the specific insistence of Luther and Calvin on the divine concealment with humanity to allow Jesus' temptations is less attested in modern theology. G. C. Berkouwer (1955) defends the principle of M6

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[163]The distinctives of M5 do not show in the Protestant tradition, but the main principle of M5 is in continuity with M4 and M6 that Jesus' sinlessness is by grace as the divine aid for his human nature, including the gift of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, Roman Catholic theologians have maintained the created grace idea of M5, e.g., Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[164]Owen, *Works*, 1:170. Cf. Scherzer, *Systema Theologiae*, 389, "He to whom the Holy Ghost has been given without measure, is also holy and just without measure, and therefore cannot sin." Cited in Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, 302.

[165]Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, Works, 1:281-82.

[166]Richard Sturch, *The Word and The Christ: An Essay in Analytic Christology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 261.

in light of the modern concern for Christ's true humanity: "when Reformed theology spoke of concealment, it was always thought of in reference to the darkness of the way of suffering. Hence Reformed exegesis or dogmatics did not, by speaking of concealment, cast a shadow upon the confession of Christ's true humiliation."[167] Bloesch affirms the traditional Reformed idea of M6 against kenotic theories: "The divine attributes are not renounced by Christ but are concealed in the humiliated Christ." Bloesch also connects Jesus' sinlessness with the presence of the Holy Spirit from his conception.[168] As with the other models, these examples show that modern theology has retained M6 to explain Jesus' temptability and impeccability in terms of veiling his humanity with his divinity. Alongside this evangelical retrieval that upholds and defends the earlier models in modern theology, other evangelicals make innovations.

Evangelical Rapprochement

The innovation of the evangelical rapprochement is to say that Jesus' humanity is fallen and sinful just like the rest of humanity. The evangelical innovators take notice of the critical approach to Jesus and adjust their Christological formulations in response to it. Consequently, the innovators argue for Jesus' fallen human nature as part of the modern concern to narrow the distance between Jesus and the rest of humanity. To meet this concern, evangelicals extend the M6 emphasis on the severity of Christ's temptations and suffering in terms of his fallen human nature. However, the evangelical innovators are careful to affirm that because Jesus was God and not merely a fallen man, he won redemption for sinful humanity by means of that fallen flesh. Influential proponents throughout the period are Edward Irving (1792-1834), Karl Barth (1956), and Wolfhart Pannenberg (1977).[169]

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[167]Berkouwer, *Person of Christ,* 361.

[168]Bloesch, *Jesus Christ*, 61, 73.

[169]These three are only representative. Many more throughout the modern period to the present day could be cited.

Like the evangelical retrievers, most innovators maintain a Chalcedonian, two-natured Christology and the sinlessness of Christ. However, not all affirm Jesus' impeccability.[170] Unlike the retrievers, the innovators argue for Jesus' fallen humanity (cf. Rom 8:3, "in likeness of sinful flesh").[171] This difference is also a divergence from the unanimous formula of earlier orthodoxy. The traditional consensus is that the Logos assumed a human nature with the consequences of sin (physical defects assumed for redemption: weaknesses and vulnerability to death and pain). This assumed nature was not sinful in any sense of being guilty or morally corrupt, unlike the post-fall humanity that is both guilty and corrupt in Adam.[172]

Possibly the difference of the evangelical innovation from earlier theology is unduly exaggerated by the use of the term *fallen* that is normally associated with original sin. The motive for using the term seems to be to affirm Jesus' solidarity in a weakened, suffering humanity with those he saves, and not merely having a deiform or divinized humanity as many patristic and medieval theologians affirm (cf. M2, M5).[173] Innovators use the term *fallen* to emphasize the inwardness of Jesus' temptations, in solidarity with the rest of fallen humanity.[174] They argue that Christ enters the human stage in a vitiated condition and conquers sin in his own person on the way to winning redemption for all.

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[170]Edward Irving is not clear on Christ's impeccability, only his sinlessness. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* [*CD*], trans. G. T. Thomson and Harold Knight, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, vol. 1, pt. 2, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), 158; idem, *CD*, trans. G. W. Bromiley, vol. 4, pt. 2, *The Doctrine of Reconciliation* (1958), 91-93, affirms Jesus' impeccability in terms of M1, M2, and M3. Barth is especially clear to affirm Christ's impeccability in his response to a specific question on this point, as recorded in *Karl Barth's Table Talk*, ed. John D. Godsey, Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers 10 (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963), 68-69. Pannenberg, *Jesus*, 349, affirms impeccability in terms of M3.

[171]Oliver Crisp, "Did Christ have a *Fallen* Human Nature?" *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 6 (2004): 270, observes that several Eastern Orthodox theologians have taken this position on Christ's humanity.

[172]Thomas G. Weinandy, *In the Likeness of Sinful Flesh: An Essay on the Humanity of Christ* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), disputes this interpretation of a traditional consensus and gives historical argument from patristic and medieval sources to support his claims. Nonetheless, Weinandy himself specifically denies that Jesus had original sin or concupiscence (ibid., 98-99).

[173]Mackintosh, *Person of Jesus*, 276-77.

[174]Barth, *CD* 1.2, 158.

Their claim is that Jesus battled in his sinful flesh to accomplish his sinlessness and holiness as a tremendous, exemplary, and human moral achievement.[175]

Evangelical innovators are ambiguous in their definition of Christ's *fallen* human nature.[176] Some affirm that Jesus' fallen humanity was purified from original sin by the Holy Spirit at conception as in traditional theology (cf. Luke 1:35).[177] Most innovators suggest that the meaning of Jesus' fallen human nature is his redemptive significance for the rest of humanity, recalling the traditional soteriological maxim: "The unassumed is the unhealed." The new affirmation is that he was tempted both outwardly and inwardly, and he conquered sin in his own fallen nature. His was a spoiled humanity, one wrecked by sin like the rest of humanity.[178] His human nature was fallen because this is the only sort of human nature that exists.[179] By incarnation in fallen human nature, Jesus has racial solidarity with the rest of humanity in Adam, but without having become a sinner himself. In this way, the evangelical innovators affirm both the traditional claims and adjust them for a rapprochement with the modern emphasis on Christ's sameness with common humanity.

Summary of the Modern Background

Taken together, the Enlightenment darkness, evangelical retrieval and the evangelical rapprochement constitute the background of the modern M7. Empiricism and

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[175]Edward Irving, *The Orthodox and Catholic Doctrine of Our Lord's Human Nature, Tried by the Westminster Confession of Faith* (London: Baldwin and Craddock, 1830), 66-67, cited by Graham W. P. McFarlane, *Christ and the Spirit: The Doctrine of the Incarnation According to Edward Irving* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster, 1996), 147.

[176]Crisp, "*Fallen* Human Nature," 271, notes this problem. According to McFarlane, *Christ and the Spirit*, 142-43, Irving defines fallen humanity as solidarity in Adam and "participating collectively in Adam's fall" and "solidarity in humanity under the power of sin."

[177]E.g., Edward Irving, *The Opinions Circulating Concerning Our Lord's Human Nature* (Edinburgh: John Lindsay, 1830), 6-7; cited by McFarlane, *Christ and the Spirit*, 140. Weinandy, *Likeness of Sinful Flesh*, 98-99. Barth, *CD* 1.2, 156. An exception is Pannenberg, *Jesus*, 362, who asserts that the idea of a purified humanity in Christ contradicts the New Testament.

[178]Weinandy, *Likeness of Sinful Flesh*, 18.

[179]Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving in Five Volumes*, ed. Rev. G. Carlyle (London: Alexander Strahan, 1864), 5:115, cited by McFarlane, *Christ and the Spirit*, 141.

the critical approach to Jesus suggest that theologians must replace or at least adjust the traditional Chalcedonian Christology in light of modern historical and psychological research. One result is an erosion of the differences between Jesus as a man and the rest of humanity. Modern theologians redefine Christ's temptability in terms of their own perceptions and experience of temptability. Whereas earlier theology emphasizes the divinity of Jesus, modern theology expands and specifies the Reformation emphasis on the humanity of Jesus. Consequently, modern theology tends to diminish or set aside the traditional affirmation of Jesus' impeccability because this seems to contradict the claim that he genuinely suffered temptation as a man.[180] The growing modern skepticism about his divinity (cf. the higher-critical empiricism) and the modern emphasis on Jesus' psychology (cf. the lives-of-Jesus studies) combine in M7 to focus on his relevance as a man.

M7: Temptable by the Humanization of Divinity

Description of M7. The concern in M7 is to emphasize more than earlier models the internal, psychological, and serious moral struggle that Jesus experienced in his temptations.[181] For many modern theologians, this struggle seems to necessitate that he had the so-called freedom to sin (*posse peccare*), just as is experienced by the rest of humanity. Jesus' distinction is that he remained sinless by his consistent exercise of the ability not to sin (*posse non peccare*). For this accomplishment of unique sinlessness, Jesus is a morally praiseworthy savior and a proper, authentic example for humanity. His relevance as an example depends upon the closeness of his human experience to that of other human beings.

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[180]T. A. Hart, "Sinlessness and Moral Responsibility: A Problem in Christology," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 48 (1995): 40. "The traditional christological insistence upon the *non posse peccare* appears in effect to rob Jesus of that moral freedom which allows his temptation to be viewed as genuine."

[181]Marguerite Shuster, "The Temptation, Sinlessness, and Sympathy of Jesus: Another Look at the Dilemma of Hebrews 4:15," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. Marguerite Shuster and Richard A. Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 199, observes the inadequacy of defining Jesus' temptation either as merely an external testing that touches no internal struggle.

If he had relied on divine impeccability overtly or even in the background during his time on earth, then his advantaged position nullifies the reports of his struggle against temptation to sin. The explanation given is that impeccability entails a foregone conclusion of sinlessness, which, on such advantaged terms, is not an achievement worthy of praise.[182] No contest or struggle against sin means no victory. By contrast with traditional models, M7 explains how Jesus' contest was real, keeping with the biblical evidence of Christ's real struggles in temptation.

The question asked and answered in M7 is this: how was the divine Logos able to suffer temptations truly and relevantly as an exemplary man? The answer given is that Jesus humanized either (1) his divine impeccability or (2) his divine knowledge to be tempted relevantly as a man. Humanization of the divine attributes is Christ's noble humility to condescend to a condition of existence that is beneath his rights as the Son of God. He descended to the role of a servant within the human limitations that were necessary for redemption. M7 praises Christ for limiting himself to reveal God and redeem lost humanity at great personal risk and cost.

All proponents of M7 agree that Christ had to humanize something of his divinity to allow for his real temptation. Without some sort of humanization to make him vulnerable to sin's appeals, Jesus' temptations cannot be relevant for the rest of humanity. Proponents assume that being impeccable necessarily reduces the force of his temptations because Jesus never would have had to struggle against them. If he could not fail when tested by the appeals of sin, then his having passed the tests is irrelevant for the rest of humanity. In response, M7 explains his temptations as real and relevant contests because either he could have failed the test or he was unaware of his immunity to failure.

M7 has two approaches—(1) critical and (2) self-limitation—that agree on the basic idea that Jesus was temptable by the humanization of his divinity. The (1) critical

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[182]David Werther, "The Temptation of God Incarnate," *Religious Studies* 29 (1993): 49-50, argues that Jesus cannot be praiseworthy and possess necessary goodness (impeccability) because his divine nature always prevented him from forming wrong intentions.

approach to Jesus in M7 resolves the perceived contradiction between divine impeccability and human temptability by canceling the divine attribute because impeccability is incompatible with true human experience. The (2) self-limitation approach resolves the dilemma of impeccability and temptation by temporarily canceling Jesus' self-conscious awareness of his impeccability. This means that what Jesus does not know about himself does not interfere with his moral struggle. We will explore the theories and representatives of each approach in M7. Despite the wide differences between the two approaches, the principle common to both that distinguishes the pair from earlier models is that Jesus' divinity was humanized.

M7 in the Critical Approach

On one side of M7 are those with a critical approach who affirm that Jesus humanized his divine impeccability to normal human peccability. They argue that only in this way could his humanity be true and his temptation real. By humanizing his divinity to become peccable as a man, Christ could be tempted and achieve his sinlessness through long and difficult moral struggle. Having fought a real struggle, he can be the example for other human beings who contend with temptation. Jesus remains fully God, but he humanized his divine impeccability to make possible his true humanity.

Proponents follow an empirical approach to Christ's humanity based on what can be observed and experienced by the rest of humanity. Empirical observation yields the result that essential humanity and temptation must be *posse peccare*, so this must also be true of Christ.[183] Hints of this trend show in M5 with the suggestions of Anselm and Abelard that in abstraction from the incarnational union, Jesus' human nature was

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[183]Hart, "Sinlessness of Jesus," 38. The critical approach also parallels the trend among many modern philosophers of religion to argue that God is *posse peccare*: Nelson Pike, "Omnipotence and God's Ability to Sin," in *Divine Commands and Morality*, ed. Paul Helm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 68; Bruce Reichenbach, *Evil and a Good God* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982); Stephen Davis, *Logic and the Nature of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983); Vincent Brümmer, "Divine Impeccability," *Religious Studies* 20 (1984): 203-14; W. R. Carter, "Impeccability Revisited," *Analysis* 44 (1985): 52-55; Keith E. Yandell, "Divine Necessity and Divine Goodness," in *Divine and Human Action: Essays in the Metaphysics of Theism*, ed. Thomas V. Morris (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 313-44; Robert F. Brown, "God's Ability to Will Moral Evil," *Faith and Philosophy* 8 (1991): 3-20.

peccable. Nonetheless, and despite the earlier emphasis on the human moral struggle (cf. M4, M6), never before in the tradition did theologians reject M1 and affirm Christ's actual peccability, as does the critical approach.

True humanity is peccable. Breaking away from tradition, proponents of the critical approach affirm that Christ was peccable because of his true humanity. To maintain the orthodoxy of the Chalcedonian definition and the validity of the biblical evidence for Jesus' humanity, many accept the presupposition that his freedom to sin is a necessary entailment of true humanity. He was both *posse peccare* and *posse non peccare*. Examples of moderns who affirm this are Lutheran mediating theologian Carl Ullmann (1796-1865), American Charles Hodge (1797-1878), and, more recently, John Macquarrie (1990).[184] These proponents clearly affirm Jesus' sinlessness, but they deny the traditional affirmation of his impeccability in preference for the affirmation of his true humanity (as empirically defined). Their empirical definition of humanity stipulates what must be true for Christ, as Hodge notes simply: "If He was a true man He must have been capable of sinning."[185] Ullmann's dependence on the empirical definition shows even more clearly, as he argues: "On the assumption that Jesus was a true, a real man, it cannot of course be denied that it was possible for Him to sin. This possibility is directly involved in the nature of man as a being who is made subject to moral laws, and who is therefore free."[186] The presupposition that the two affirmations of Christ's divine impeccability and human temptability are mutually exclusive is one of the modern Christological dilemmas. The solution given in the critical approach of M7 is to humanize Jesus' divinity with the freedom to sin that his true humanity entails.

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[184]Ullmann, *Sinlessness of Jesus*, 196. Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Co., 1873; reprint, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), 2:457. John Macquarrie, *Jesus Christ in Modern Thought*, 397. A premodern proponent during the Reformation period is Remonstrant theologian Simon Episcopius (1583-1643), whose position is noted disapprovingly by Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, Works, 1:289.

[185]Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:457.

[186]Ullmann, *Sinlessness of Jesus*, 196.

True temptation requires peccability. Likewise, the critical approach in M7 includes the affirmation that Christ's real temptations entail his peccability.[187] This is the presupposition that Jesus' temptations as reported in the NT are valid if and only if he could have sinned. Actual temptation for all other human beings has the perilous possibility of sin (*posse peccare*); as for all others, so it must have been for Jesus. This is especially so because Scripture says he was "tempted in all ways as we are" (Heb 4:15). For some, the full extent of Jesus' temptation in likeness to others includes the appeals to his sexual desires.[188] His difference is that he did not sin because he never misused that freedom to sin, but instead always chose in accordance with his freedom not to sin (*posse non peccare*). This actual temptation with the vulnerability to actual sin is the basis for his true sympathy with the rest of humanity. Examples of modern theologians who affirm Jesus' peccability because of his actual temptation and real sympathy are Ullmann, Hodge, Hans Windisch (1931), John Knox (1967), and Thomas Sullivan (1993).[189] This is the second modern dilemma that real temptation and the traditional affirmation of Christ's impeccability are mutually exclusive. The solution, as before with Christ's true humanity, is to humanize his divinity with the *posse peccare* that his true temptation entails.

Finally, two other proponents of the critical approach in M7 give other reasons for Christ's peccability in view of his true humanity and temptation. First, Millard

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[187]Hart, "Sinlessness of Jesus," 38, is representative of this common presupposition: "[If we] remove from Jesus all possibility of sinning, are we not thereby precisely robbing him of the experience of being 'tempted in all things as we are'? Is the genuine potential for sin not analytic in some way in the very notion of temptation? Certainly it would seem to be basic to human temptation as we know and experience it."

[188]E.g., John Macquarrie, "Was Jesus Sinless?" *Living Pulpit* 8 (1999): 14-15, affirms Jesus' sexual temptability. Nikos Kazantzakis's novel, *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1960), and Dan Brown's mystery novel, *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), both start from this presupposition that Jesus had normal sexual desires. This assumption is in contrast to the traditional answer of Augustine, who explicitly denies that Jesus experienced the sexual sort of temptations. Augustine's rationale is that sexual desire is transmitted by conception through sexual procreation, which, of course, Jesus lacked (see chap. 2).

[189]Ullmann, *Sinlessness of Jesus*, 196. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 457. Hans Windisch, *Hebräerbrief*, 39, cited and trans. in Berkouwer, *Person of Christ,* 253. John Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ: A Study of Pattern in Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 47. Thomas P. Sullivan, "On The Temptation of Jesus" (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1993), ix. Sullivan is a philosopher and approaches the Christological topic as an irresolvable philosophical dilemma for Christian orthodoxy.

Erickson (1991) suggests that Jesus could have sinned, but would not: "There are conditions under which he could have sinned, but that it was certain those conditions would not all be fulfilled. Thus Jesus really could have decided to cast himself from the temple pinnacle, but it was certain that he would not."[190] Erickson's way of protecting Jesus' real struggle in temptation as unhindered by the influence of his divine impeccability is part of the explanation of the incarnation. Erickson employs the theory that Jesus restricted the independent exercise of some of his divine attributes. Since Erickson discusses a veiling of Jesus' omniscience as one example of voluntary self-restriction of divine powers, it seems that part of his affirmation of Jesus' peccability is at the level of how his abilities and opportunities appeared to Jesus at the time.[191] However, Erickson dismisses Thomas Morris's proposal that Jesus could have had the epistemic possibility of sin by means of a two-minds view of his working knowledge.[192] Instead of the epistemic possibility of sin, Erickson prefers the affirmation that while Jesus would not have sinned (*posse non peccare*), Jesus could have sinned (*posse peccare*); he then speculates about what would have happened if Jesus had done so.[193] Erickson's affirmation of peccability is especially significant because, like Charles Hodge, he is otherwise an evangelical defender of orthodoxy.[194]

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[190]Millard J. Erickson, *The Word Became Flesh: A Contemporary Incarnational Christology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 563. Erickson clearly affirms the peccability of Christ (ibid., 562): "The thrust of the passage [Heb 4:15] is that he is able to intercede for us because he has completely identified with us; this seems to imply that his temptation included not only the whole range of sin, but the real possibility of sinning."

[191]Ibid., 549.

[192]Ibid., 562. We will consider Morris's proposal and others like it more fully below.

[193]Ibid., 563-64.

[194]Another prominent evangelical who seems reluctant to affirm Christ's impeccability is James Leo Garrett, Jr., *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 1:572. "It is not necessary, in order to defend or protect the sinlessness of Jesus, to affirm that Jesus could not have sinned." Garrett adds that one of the traditional formulations of Christ's impeccability based on the personal union of his humanity with the Word (cf. M3) is Apollinarianism. Another contemporary evangelical peccabilist—less prominent, but no less disturbing—is Michael McGhee Canham, "*Potuit non peccare* or *non potuit peccare*: Evangelicals, Hermeneutics, and the Impeccability Debate," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 11 (2000): 114, who argues, "To deny Jesus' peccability is to deny His full humanity and the reality of His temptations." Canham's claim is that Jesus was temporarily peccable, just as he was ignorant and impotent, because his human attribute of peccability limited in *kenosis* his divine attribute of peccability.

Second, another recent contributor to M7 is Marilyn Adams, who concludes her study of the medieval discussion about Christ's human nature with critical observations and suggestions. Adams expresses several modern trends as she suggests that theology dispense with Christ's impeccability and unfallen human nature in preference for defining soteriology in terms of empirical, sinful humanity. She commends this move as a way of increasing the relevance of Jesus' human experience to common human experience:

> From a systematic point of view, if satisfaction is optional for God (as Aquinas and Scotus believed), were it forgone, why would God's human nature need to be so innocent? What if God's soteriological task is to redeem by making even horror-filled human lives meaningful? What if God's principal strategy were to sanctify them by metaphysical identification? Wouldn't Incarnation into a human nature that not only suffers but perpetrates horrors fill that bill? Which would furnish more hope: the appearance of a God-man Whose human nature represents our lost past and promised future? or Divine identification with our present misery, God's taking human being in all of its uncleanness into hypostatic union with Godself?[195]

Modern theologians construct their model of Christ's impeccability and temptation as a way to explain and understand the data of Scripture, theology, and experience. The critical approach in M7 takes up the presuppositions supplied by the modern concerns for the relevance of Jesus' true human experience in close likeness to the rest of humanity, as the comments from Adams demonstrate. The modern taste for a humanized divinity in Jesus solves the modern dilemma of his impeccability and temptation in a way never affirmed by earlier orthodoxy.

M7 in the Self-Limitation Approach

On the other side of M7 are those who argue that Jesus humanized his awareness of his divine, innate impeccability to the stature of normal human ignorance; this is a self-limitation that allows temptability in spite of impeccability. Proponents agree with the basic idea of the critical approach that Christ's divinity had to be humanized so he could experience true temptation. Instead of proposing Christ's

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[195]Adams, *What Sort*, 98. Cf. Ronald Williamson, "Hebrews 4:15 and the Sinlessness of Jesus," *Expository Times* 86 (1974): 4-8, argues that Christ's sinlessness was achieved, not innate, as a gradual moral development from sin to obedience to God so his help could be truly relevant to others.

peccability, proponents of the self-limitation approach affirm Christ's impeccability. Christ's full divinity is reconciled with his full temptability because he limited himself so as to be ignorant of his impeccability. By humanizing his divine knowledge to the confines of human knowledge, he was prevented from knowing that he was impeccable. Without awareness of his innate impeccability, Jesus could be truly human and experience real temptation while remaining impeccable. At the level of his confinement to human awareness, the temptations seemed to him as real opportunities to sin. He remained impeccable, but his divinity did not protect him from suffering the strain of real temptations. He was truly tempted as others are; consequently, he is a relevant human example in resisting sin (cf. 1 Pet 2:21-22).

As in earlier M4, M5, and M6, proponents of the self-limitation approach in M7 address the concern that intensifies during the modern period for Jesus' true, weakened humanity. Also repeated here is the emphasis on empowering grace that aided Christ in his weakened humanity. Jesus possessed fully, but did not live by, his divine attributes for the sake of his redemptive tasks. He could be fully tempted but resisted sin within the limits of his humanity as an example for others. Here the need for grace and the Holy Spirit is real to support Christ in his self-limited condition. In the modern setting, the materials of these earlier models are combined with the developing kenotic theories and theories of human psychology for application to Jesus. The result is two sorts of proposals for Jesus' self-limitation as the way his divinity was humanized in M7.

Kenotic self-limitation. Kenotic theory follows the principle that in light of the incarnation, the traditional ideas about the divine attributes must be redefined.[196] In the kenotic proposal of Gottfried Thomasius (1802-1875), this means a self-limitation of the so-called relative divine attributes (omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience) that are

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[196]Ronald J. Feenstra, "Reconsidering Kenotic Christology," in *Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement*, ed. Ronald J. Feenstra and Cornelius Plantinga Jr. (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1989), 135.

incompatible with true human experience (as empirically defined).[197] Similarly, Charles Gore (1853-1932) argues that God the Son chose to limit his divine consciousness to allow his true human experience.[198] A limitation of Jesus' omniscience is widely assumed based on the Gospel evidence that Jesus did not know certain things (e.g., Mark 13:32), with similar arguments given for the limitation of his omnipresence and omnipotence. The basic inference from the biblical data is that Jesus gave up the independent exercise of his relative divine attributes during his time on earth; he could only exercise his divine powers in conjunction with the Father's will.

The relevance of kenotic proposals to M7 is that proponents affirm that Jesus was able to be fully tempted while remaining impeccable[199] because he humanized the knowledge of his impeccability. P. T. Forsyth (1909) gives a clear example of this proposal:

> The infinite mobility of the changeless God in becoming human growth [*sic*] only assumes a special phase of itself. Had the myriad-minded creator of souls no power to live perfectly in the personal and growing form of the souls he made?
>
> But sin? There, indeed, we do read a limit. *Non potuit peccare.*
>
> But, then, it is at once said, his personality and manhood were not real.
>
> But what if it were thus? What if his kenosis went so far that though the impossibility was there he did not know of it? The limitation of his knowledge is indubitable—even about himself. He was not perfectly sure that the cross was his Father's will till the very last. "If it be possible let it pass." Did that nescience not extend to the area of his own moral nature, and so provide for him the temptable conditions which put him in line with our dark conflict, and which truly moralise and humanise his victory when *potuit non peccare*? He knew he came sinless out of each crisis; did he know he never could be anything else? How could he?[200]

Forsyth's use of the self-limitation approach to explain Jesus' temptability while remaining impeccable has echoes in another representative kenoticist, H. R.

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[197]Gottfried Thomasius, *Christ's Person and Work,* in *God and Incarnation*, ed. and trans. Welch, 70.

[198]Charles Gore, *Dissertations on Subjects Connected with the Incarnation*, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1896), 211. Donald G. Dawe, *The Form of a Servant: A Historical Analysis of the Kenotic Motif* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 91, writes that Gore used the kenosis idea in 1889 initially to explain how Jesus merely held the views of his day about the authorship of OT books, and other historical inaccuracies in the OT, because he had limited his divine omniscience to human knowledge.

[199]Thomasius, *Christ's Person,* in *God and Incarnation*, ed. and trans. Welch, 67-68.

[200]P. T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ* (Boston: Pilgrim, 1909), 300-01.

Mackintosh.[201] Mackintosh and Forsyth are careful to avoid the problems of earlier kenotic theories that redefine the divine attributes.[202] Both affirm the full divinity of Christ with no renunciation of divine attributes (neither the so-called absolute nor relative attributes). Instead, they describe the humanized condition of divine attributes as latent or potential (which resembles Calvin's idea of quiescent divinity in M6). What the twentieth century kenoticists represent is the divided concern in the self-limitation approach of M7 to explain the full divinity and full humanity in Christ, especially with respect to his real temptation, and in spite of his impeccability.[203]

Gerald F. Hawthorne (1991) is a recent proponent of this so-called modified kenoticism of Mackintosh and Forsyth. Hawthorne agrees that Jesus humanized his divinity by limiting himself from exercising his own divine attributes while on earth.[204] Hawthorne's contribution is to supplement the self-limitation idea with an increased awareness of the empowering role of the Holy Spirit. Jesus worked miracles and achieved the moral triumph of his sinlessness entirely by the Spirit and not at all by his innate divine attributes.

This emphasis on the Holy Spirit appeared earlier in M4, M5, and M6. More recently, A. B. Bruce (1831-1899) anticipates Hawthorne's proposal. Bruce explains Jesus' psychological experience in temptation as a self-limitation of innate power with

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[201]H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*, 2nd ed. (1913; reprint, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 480-81. Cf. Feenstra, "Reconsidering Kenotic Christology," 135-36. Feenstra does not state the matter exactly. He writes that Jesus had omnipotence and was unaware of it, and that Jesus was not omniscient, which together suggest that Feenstra would likely agree with Mackintosh and Forsyth that Christ was unaware of his impeccability.

[202]E.g., Mackintosh, *Person of Christ*, 267-78, disavows the proposals of W. F. Gess and F. Godet to reassign the roles of the Trinity so that the Father carries on the Son's preservation of creation during the humiliation.

[203]Dennis E. Johnson, "Immutability and Incarnation: An Historical and Theological Study of the Concepts of Christ's Divine Unchangeability and His Human Development" (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1984), 218. Johnson observes that one of the main values of kenotic Christology is to explain Jesus' humanity more adequately in view of the evidence from modern study of the Gospels than the traditional Chalcedonian versions yielded.

[204]Gerald F. Hawthorne, *The Presence and the Power: The Significance of the Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus* (Dallas: Word, 1991), 208-09. Hawthorne explicitly identifies with Forsyth and Mackintosh (ibid., 207).

corresponding reliance on support from the Holy Spirit.[205] The step beyond Bruce that Hawthorne makes is the degree of self-limitation and corresponding reliance on the Holy Spirit: "Jesus met and conquered the usurping enemy of God not by his own power alone but aided in his victory by the power of the Holy Spirit."[206] The emphasis here is on Jesus' own power as a man and the necessary, supplemental power of the Holy Spirit to enable his triumph over temptation. Hawthorne's argument is that Jesus lived dependently on the Holy Spirit in a complete way of self-limited humanization of his divinity. He even needed the Holy Spirit to give him knowledge of his identity and mission.[207] Influenced by the modern concerns, Hawthorne perpetuates the twentieth century kenotic explanation that also incorporates the modern developments in psychology. However, others take the psychological explanation without kenoticism.

Psychological self-limitation. The self-limitation approach in M7 has advocates who disclaim kenotic theory in a trend summarized as the psychological self-limitation. Unlike kenoticism, proponents of Jesus' psychological self-limitation claim that Christ lays aside nothing divine to latent or potential status. Instead, Christ's knowledge of his impeccability is present as a subliminal self or locked in his subconscious and thus hidden from his conscious awareness as a man. A precursor to this proposal is William Sanday (1911), who applies modern psychology to Jesus' incarnational experience.[208] Sanday explains Jesus' divinity as subliminal to his human consciousness, on analogy with the religious and psychological experience of other human beings.

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[205]Bruce, *Humiliation of Christ*, 268-72. Cf. Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), 5:80.

[206]Hawthorne, *Presence and the Power*, 139.

[207]Ibid., 208.

[208]William Sanday, *Christologies Ancient and Modern*, in *Christology and Personality* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911), applies the modern psychology of subliminal self (subconscious) from William James and F. W. H. Myers to divine action in the human soul for us as for Christ, the locus of Deity.

William Lane Craig (2003) mimics Sanday with similar reliance on William James's psychology to solve the modern temptation dilemma.[209] Craig applies the conclusions of contemporary depth psychology to Christ, explaining that he was both temptable and impeccable because he did not know he was immune to sin. Jesus had to struggle genuinely against the enticements of sin because of his limitation. He remains innately impeccable, but this attribute is subliminal to his human experience (his knowledge is humanized).[210] Craig can thus affirm both traditional truths of Jesus' impeccability and temptation by means of psychological self-limitation.

This psychological, non-kenotic explanation is similar to the self-limitation proposal of Thomas Morris (1986).[211] Morris suggests that Christ had a divine mind and a human mind with an asymmetric accessing relation between the two minds. When limited in the incarnation to his human range of consciousness, Jesus was unaware that he was impeccable. This self-limited condition is sufficient for temptation because Jesus gains the epistemic possibility of sinning while retaining the metaphysical impossibility of sin.[212] The humanization of Jesus' knowledge by his limitation to a human mind preserves his temptability without canceling his impeccability.

Similar to Morris and Craig, Donald Macleod (1998) disavows the kenotic proposal while suggesting a similar theory of psychological self-limitation. Macleod affirms Christ's impeccability in terms of M2 and then reconciles this with the temptations by explaining that Jesus had a humanized point of view:

> It does not follow [from impeccability and sinlessness], however, that when Christ was tempted he was always aware, at the human level, that the Tempter could never conquer him. We know that the devil could, on occasion, put a big *if* against his consciousness of sonship (Mt. 4:3). He would have found it equally easy to question

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[209]William Lane Craig, "The Incarnation," in J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 610.

[210]Ibid., 612.

[211]Thomas V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 92-102, explicitly rejects kenoticism because of two serious defects. Morris affirms and defends Chalcedonian Christology (ibid., 17-18).

[212]Ibid., 148-49.

> his sinlessness. It would certainly be unwise to conclude that at every single point Jesus was in full possession of the whole truth about himself.[213]

Macleod warrants this explanation with the observation that Jesus' struggles against temptation give no suggestion that he relied on his impeccability. Instead, Christ seems to have relied on the resources that are generally available to all Christians facing temptation. Macleod notes three of these resources: "the company of his fellow-believers (Mk. 14:33), the word of God (Mt. 4:4) and prayer (Mk. 14:35)."[214] Therefore, the humanization of Jesus' knowledge as a self-limitation is the means of his temptability in solidarity with the rest of humanity.

Conclusion to M7

Influences of the Enlightenment darkness and evangelical responses form the modern setting for the M7 explanation of Christ's impeccability and temptation. The rise of empiricism draws theologians' attention to an empirical definition of Jesus' humanity and a critical approach to his divinity. Evangelical proponents maintain the traditional affirmation with various ways of self-limitation. Some of these evangelical formulations are offered apologetically in defense of the orthodox teaching and countering the charges that Chalcedonian Christology is logically incoherent. The diversity within M7 expresses the fragmentation of theology in the modern era, even among evangelicals. Therefore, M7 in its critical and self-limitation approaches is the formulation that Christ was temptable by the humanization of his divine impeccability or of his knowledge of it. The chief concerns are to protect his true humanity and real temptation for their relevance to the rest of common humanity. Figure 7 summarizes the main elements of M7 with its critical and self-limitation approaches.

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[213]Macleod, *Person of Christ*, 230 (his emphasis).

[214]Ibid.

Key Question:	- How was the divine Logos able to suffer temptation truly and relevantly as an exemplary man?
Answer:	- Jesus humanized either his divine impeccability or his knowledge to be tempted as a man despite his divinity
Concerns:	- Jesus' experience of suffering and temptation in light of the common human experience of these afflictions - Jesus' experience as a self-conscious human individual - His full, true humanity with relevance for other humans - His real, true temptation unmitigated by his divinity - The internal, psychological, and real moral struggle of his temptations, even with sin as a real or perceived option - His moral praiseworthiness for victory over temptation - Impeccability and temptability seem mutually exclusive
Influential theories:	- The necessity of limiting his divinity for a true humanity - The necessity of narrowing the distance between Jesus as a man and the rest of common humanity - Psychological (or epistemic) possibility of sin is sufficient for an impeccable person to experience temptation - Empirical humanity is definitive for Christ's humanity
How tempted?	- He humanized his divine impeccability to be vulnerable - He humanized his divine knowledge of his impeccability
Why tempted?	- To give an example for others for how to resist temptation - To be tempted is essential to true humanity
How triumphed?	- He used the resources that are available to all Christians - He was helped by the support of grace by the Holy Spirit
Relation to M1-6:	- Empowering grace is support by the Holy Spirit (M4) - Emphasis on the reality of his temptation (M6) - Explains the M6 principle as humanization
Rationale:	- Jesus had to limit his divinity in some way to be able to experience authentic human temptations as an example

Figure 7. Summary of M7: Temptable by Humanization of Divinity

Conclusion to Medieval, Reformation, and Modern Models

The two models formulated in the medieval and Reformation periods are both the culmination of the patristic models and the expansion of them in new directions. The medieval concern in M5 for the deiformity of Christ's humanity as a metaphysical problem for the union with the divine nature was reversed drastically by the soteriological concern of M6. While M5 emphasizes the glory of Christ's humanity as enriched by grace in the way that medieval theologians thought would befit a divine incarnation, M6 emphasizes the humiliation of Christ's humanity as sharing in all common human temptations and weaknesses except original sin.

The reversal from the emphasis on Jesus' divinity to his humanity continues perilously on the trajectory established by M6; indeed, many theologians in the modern period complete the eclipse of Christ's impeccability with his actual ability to sin. M7 completes the spectrum of the models with an emphasis on Jesus' humanity and temptability—countering the early emphasis on Christ's divinity and impeccability.

CHAPTER 4

BIBLICAL EVIDENCE FOR CHRIST'S TEMPTATION AND SINLESSNESS

The different explanations given in the seven models of Christ's impeccability and temptation partly follow from divergent interpretations of the biblical texts related to Christ's human moral life, and partly from weighing some texts more heavily in relation to others in systematic formulation (e.g., M7 emphasizes the evidence for Jesus' humanity). The models are explanations of the biblical data in light of each historical period's setting and concerns. The models appeal to six sorts of biblical texts. These Christological passages tell his (1) divinity, (2) humanity, (3) temptation, (4) sinlessness, (5) the relevance of his human experiences for redemption, and (6) the empowering grace by the Holy Spirit. The orthodox tradition has established the interpretation of the first two sorts of biblical texts by affirming that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. In agreement with this tradition, we will bypass the first two sorts of biblical texts in our study and take a fresh look at the remaining four sorts of the biblical evidence for Jesus' moral life (temptation, sinlessness, the relevance of each for salvation, and the role of the Holy Spirit). This study of the biblical data will provide a framework for evaluating the seven models in chapter five. This study will also supply material for construction of a contemporary restatement of Christ's impeccability and temptation in chapter six. Therefore, the conclusions reached here are foundational.

Biblical Evidence for Jesus' Temptations in His True Humanity

The central term denoting Jesus' temptation is πειράζω, used in two senses by the NT and Greek writings at that time in general. The positive sense of πειράζω is the

action to test or discover the truth about something or someone by affliction (e.g., 2 Cor 13:5; 1 Pet 1:6). The negative sense of πειράζω is to tempt someone to sin, to solicit to evil (e.g., Mark 1:13; 1 Cor 10:13).[1] Determination of the sense depends on context.[2] Some NT occurrences of πειράζω contain both senses as two sides of one experience: God *tests* Jesus to prove his obedience while Satan simultaneously *tempts* Jesus to draw him into sin.[3] We will consider the clearest temptation texts from Hebrews and the Gospels, and then an assortment of other examples from the Gospels.

Hebrews 2:17-18

(17) ὅθεν ὤφειλεν κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι,
ἵνα ἐλεήμων γένηται
καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν
εἰς τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ.
(18) ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθείς,
δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις βοηθῆσαι.

(17) Hence he was obligated to be made like [his] brothers in all respects,
so that he might become merciful
and a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God
to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
(18) For in what he himself has suffered he was tempted,[4]
he is able to provide help to those being tempted.

The broader context of the epistle to the Hebrews demonstrates Jesus Christ's priestly superiority to the mediation of angels (1:1—2:18), Moses (3:1—4:16), and the Aaronic priesthood (5:1—10:25). Within this context, Hebrews 2:17-18 connects Jesus' purpose as a mediatorial priest with his entrance into humanity. The passage focuses on

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[1]Raymond E. Brown, *Death of the Messiah, from Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1:159. Cf. Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature,* ed. and trans. William F. Arndt, F. Wilber Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker, rev. and ed. F. W. Danker, 3rd ed. [BDAG] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. "πειραζω"; "πειρασμος."

[2]W. J. Foxell, *The Temptation of Jesus: A Study* (London: S.P.C.K., 1920), 48-49.

[3]Theological determinations about the impossibility that Jesus could be tempted to sin must be submitted to the contextual use of the term. One example of not having done this is H. P. Owen, "The Sinlessness of Jesus," in *Religion, Reason and the Self*, ed. Stewart R. Sutherland and T. A. Roberts (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989), 123, who objects to the idea that Jesus was tempted to do evil and thus prefers the translation of "tested" or "tried" in every instance despite traditional translations of "tempted."

[4]NIV, NASV, ESV, NLT, NKJV, and AV have "tempted." NRSV and NEB have "tested."

Jesus' superior priesthood in two priestly tasks of dealing with the people's sins and compassionately giving help to people who are faced with temptations to sin.[5]

Incarnation and human life experience are the constitutive means by which Jesus became a priest. To be a priest, he was obligated (ὤφειλεν, 17a) to become a man. His incarnation equipped him with the full range of human experiences sufficient to be merciful towards the people as their priest. The writer emphasizes the total identification between Jesus and the readers in terms of their humanity.[6] The relevant sign of Christ's merciful character from having been made like his brothers is his experience of suffering (18a). This vulnerability to suffering formed the context for his temptations (2:18; cf. 4:15; 5:7-9; 12:2-3).[7] Furthermore, his experience of temptation is the basis for his ability and compassionate inclination to give help to those suffering temptations just as he did.[8]

The parallel between Jesus' temptations and the readers' temptations specifies his likeness to them in the way that is most relevant to their pressing concern: temptation to apostasy as a way to avoid suffering because of the Christian confession.[9] This parallel implies that Jesus was not merely tested for a positive outcome of his faithfulness to God but, like the readers, he was also tempted to turn away from God's will and thereby avoid the suffering he faced in life. Jesus' relevance to them is based on his experience of withstanding temptation to sin. His suffering to the ultimate extent of his death in the cross is compared *a fortiori* with the readers' suffering (cf. 12:1-4), so his offer of

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[5]Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary [NIGTC], vol. 53 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993; reprint, 2000), 186.

[6]William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8,* Word Biblical Commentary [WBC], vol. 47A (Dallas: Word, 1991), 64.

[7]Ibid., 66. "The incarnation exposed the Son to the conflicts and tensions of human life, which were climaxed by the suffering of death in a final act of obedience to the will of God."

[8]Notice the ἵνα clause in 17b. Geerhardus Vos, "The Priesthood of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *Princeton Theological Review* 5 (1907): 582, observes the relation between Jesus' suffering and compassion: "Because Christ's sufferings were not sufferings in general, but specifically temptation-sufferings, sufferings which became for him a source of temptation, therefore He can succor those who are in an analogous situation, *i.e.*, tempted to sin by their sufferings. The aorist participle πειρασθείς has a causal force and assigns the temptation-aspect of His sufferings as the ground for His ability to succor."

[9]Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 80.

compassionate aid to resist their temptations is substantial. He is able to help other people because he has experienced the human situation of suffering and temptation. He was truly tempted, and because of this he can truly offer help to others being tempted. Therefore, Jesus' experience of temptations to sin in likeness to their temptation to sin constitutes his priestly sufficiency to lend divine aid to human beings.

Hebrews 4:15

οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ἀρχιερέα
μὴ δυνάμενον συμπαθῆσαι
ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν,
πεπειρασμένον δὲ
κατὰ πάντα καθ᾽ ὁμοιότητα
χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας.

For we do not have a high priest
who is unable to empathize
with our weaknesses,
but one who has been tempted[10]
in all the same ways,
without sin (as the result).

Hebrews 4:15 develops the earlier theme of 2:17-18 about Jesus' likeness to the people he saves. As in 2:17, κατὰ πάντα in 4:15 denotes the sameness or likeness of Jesus' solidarity with the readers in a common experience of human suffering and temptation.[11] Oscar Cullmann notes the relation between Jesus' true humanity and his temptation: "This statement of Hebrews, which thus goes beyond the Synoptic reports of Jesus' being tempted, is perhaps the boldest assertion of the completely human character of Jesus in the New Testament."[12] Cullmann is right since 4:15 deepens the claim of 2:17-18 that Jesus' empathy as a compassionate priest is based on his fully human experience of temptations. Hebrews 4:15 adds depth with two further points that specify the likeness of Jesus' temptation to the readers' experience.

First, Jesus' solidarity with the readers' common humanity includes his ability

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[10]NASV, NIV, ESV, NKJV, NLT, and AV.

[11]Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 269.

[12]Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall (London: SCM, 1959), 95.

to empathize with their "weaknesses" (ἀσθενείαις). The author seems to intend a correspondence between ἀσθενείαις and the "sameness" of temptations (ὁμοιότητα). Jesus understands the readers' experience by his own experience of the human weaknesses that are common to all: vulnerability to physical, emotional, and relational suffering.[13] Jesus himself describes the weakened human condition as susceptible to temptation this way in Gethsemane: "the flesh is weak" (ἡ σὰρξ ἀσθενής, Matt 26:41; Mark 14:38).[14] The weaknesses are most likely the general, non-sinful, frail, and passible human condition shared by Jesus and the readers.[15] Hebrews 5:7 reiterates Christ's share in this general human condition of weakness "in the days of his flesh" (ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ) with special focus on Christ's experience of weakness in his passion.[16]

The weaknesses are most likely not the sinful weaknesses of a propensity to sin because such meaning would set a difference between Jesus and the readers when the author's emphasis is on Jesus' likeness to them. The difference of Jesus' not having these weaknesses would contradict the emphasis in 4:15 (and 2:17) on his likeness to the readers and ability to sympathize with them because of a common experience.[17] If the weaknesses are sinful in the sense of the readers' weakness in sin that Jesus does not

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[13]Cullmann, *Christology*, 95. "The author of Hebrews really thinks of the common temptations connected with our human weakness, the temptations to which we are exposed simply because we are men. 'In every respect as we are' refers not only to form but also to content." Also in view may be the common human susceptibility to sickness, grief, and death, the emotional and physical suffering of life, all of which are likely consequences of the Fall.

[14]Notice that the main force of the Synoptic meaning of σὰρξ is not the ethical depravity as in some of Paul's usage because the contrast here is with "spirit" in terms of power versus susceptibility, not moral depravity. The meaning here is perhaps more in line with Paul's description in 1 Cor 15:38-57 of the power of the resurrection mode of life in contrast with the weakness and mortality of the present mode. Cf. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 287, agrees that σὰρξ in Hebrews 5:7 is not ethically pejorative as in Paul.

[15]Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 114. "The emphatic statement . . . implies that he was susceptible to all the temptations that are connected with the weaknesses inherent in the frailty of humanity." Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews,* Hermeneia, vol. 53 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 140, identifies the weaknesses as general human weakness and especially those that make people susceptible to sin.

[16]Attridge, *Hebrews*, 149, agrees that σαρκὸς denotes the general conditions of his humanity in common weakness, including vulnerability to death.

[17]Vos, "Priesthood of Christ," 583. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 268, notes that other occurrences in 5:2; 7:28; and 11:34 indicate the ineffectiveness of the OT priests.

have, then the qualifier that he was tempted "without sin" (χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας) would have to mean that his temptations were of a different sort than those the readers experienced. Instead of marking Jesus' difference from the readers, the author's argument depends upon the common human experience shared by Jesus and the readers (cf. 2:17).

Being able to empathize with their weaknesses is a specific mark of Christ's similarity of being made like human beings in all respects, as was declared earlier in Hebrews 2:17 (ὁμοιωθῆναι).[18] Christ's ability to empathize with the readers' weaknesses that make them vulnerable to temptation depends upon his having been tempted "in all the same ways" as they are (κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα). The parallel relation shows that he was tempted like them because he had weaknesses as they do. Despite his being the Son of God, he is yet a priest who endured a full human experience in temptability. This solidarity in temptations is set emphatically with a double negative (οὐ . . . μὴ . . .) against the background of his greatness as the Son of God (4:14).[19] The description of his temptations in relation to the readers' includes both the extent of his lifelong temptations, "in all the ways" (κατὰ πάντα), and the similarity of those temptations to what other humans normally experience (καθ' ὁμοιότητα). The extent of his temptations matches the extent of theirs.

A second point added in 4:15 is that Jesus' temptations were "without sin" (χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας). The unqualified use of κατὰ πάντα in 2:17 is qualified when it appears in 4:15 by the addition of χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας. This qualifier restricts the likeness of Jesus' temptations to the readers' temptations in one respect. One interpretation of this restriction presupposes that there are two sorts of temptations: some inwardly generated by sin, and some externally generated without sin. This interpretation is that Jesus' temptations did not originate from inward sin; his likeness to others is only in the

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[18]Cf. Rom 8:3, Paul writes that Christ was sent in the likeness (ὁμοιώματι) of sinful flesh; in Phil 2:7, he was made in the likeness (ὁμοιώματι) of men.

[19]Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 114. Cf. Vos, "Priesthood of Christ," 582-83. "The γάρ at the opening of verse 15 is intended to guard against the mistaken inference, as if the exalted nature and position of the heavenly high priest detracted in any way from His sympathy with men in their miserable state as sinners."

external, non-sinful sort of temptations.[20] This interpretation undermines the main emphasis of 4:15 and 2:17 that Jesus' ability to empathize and give help is because of his likeness in temptations.

The other interpretation of χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας is that for all Jesus' likeness to the readers in being tempted in all the same ways, his distinction is that he never sinned as the result of temptation.[21] According to this second interpretation, Jesus' empathy with the readers' experience is based on his close solidarity with them by his own experience of all the same sorts of temptations. This view fits with the movement of 4:14-16 to resolve the paradox that despite his dissimilarity as the Son of God, Jesus is superior as a compassionate priest because of his human similarity to the readers.[22] Moreover, the author's exhortation to seek help in temptation (4:16, cf. 2:18) depends on understanding χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας as his perfect result after having endured all the same kinds of temptations. Jesus is able to help because he has succeeded against the same temptations in his own life as a man. He continues to be a compassionate priest eager to offer his help because he knows the struggle of temptation by having lived through it himself. Moreover, his sinlessness (cf. 7:26) is the proof of his success and ability to give help to those being tempted as he was.

In Hebrews 2:17-18 and 4:15, Jesus' temptation to sin is essential to the author's argument to reassure the readers of his ability to help them as the all-sufficient priest. The author exhorts the fearful audience to continue trusting in Christ because he understands their needs by his past personal experience of what they presently experience

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[20]John Calvin, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second epistles of St. Peter*, trans. William B. Johnston, ed. David F. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 56; B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1892), 107; Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948) 5:83; James O. Buswell, Jr., *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 2:59.

[21]Elllingworth, *Hebrews*, 269; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*; 114; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 140.

[22]On the first interpretation of "without sin" as originating temptation, the paradox would be deepened by Jesus' difference from the readers in the way he was tempted, only externally, but not internally from sinful desire.

in weaknesses, suffering, and temptations.

Temptation in the Wilderness

The three temptations addressed to Jesus by Satan at the onset of his messianic ministry are the first cases mentioned. However, these are not the only temptations to sin that he experienced. The wilderness temptations receive special treatment in the Synoptic tradition because of their redemptive-historical significance. Matthew and Luke's accounts tell the same three temptations as a prologue to Jesus' ministry. Mark, who omits the details of the temptations, elaborates on the three wilderness temptations in the context of Jesus' ministry as the paradigmatic challenges of opposing forces that continually assailed him.[23] The effect of Mark's presentation is to demonstrate Jesus' progressive struggle against temptations, a struggle that did not cease with his return from the desert but characterized his entire ministry from start to finish.

The Synoptic accounts emphasize the significance of Jesus' temptations in the wilderness with Satan as both a type of Adam's trial in the Garden of Eden and Israel's forty years of wandering between Egypt and the conquest of Canaan.[24] Luke's emphasis seems to be the typology in line with Adam because he inserts his genealogy account between the Jordan baptism and the temptations. Matthew and Mark point additionally to the Israel-Christ typology.[25] In contrast to both types, Jesus succeeds where his precursor failed; he is the new head of the race, the second Adam and true vine of God's people

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[23]Richard Dormandy, "Jesus' Temptations in Mark's Gospel: Mark 1:12-13," *Expository Times* 114 (2003): 187, argues persuasively that Mark's careful use of πειράζω in the wilderness account and then only three other times (8:1-13; 10:1-12; 12:13-17) in events that match the wilderness temptations shows the key temptations throughout Jesus' ministry. Mark avoids using πειράζω in other triple tradition accounts where Matthew and Luke have it.

[24]In addition to Satan's direct address with temptations regarding food and power to be had by disobeying God, Mark's reference to the wild beasts suggests a parallel with Adam, though reversed as a hostile setting compared to the paradise of Eden. The forty days and quotations from Deuteronomy suggest the parallel with Israel in the wilderness. An allusion to the preparations of Moses and Elijah with forty-day fasts may also be in view.

[25]The Adam-typology is clear in Mark's reference to the wild animals, reminiscent of Adam in Eden. Interpreters noting the Israel-typology are D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Regency Reference Library, 1984), 111; and G. H. P. Thompson, "Called-Proved-Obedient: A Study in the Baptism and Temptation Narratives of Matthew and Luke," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 11 (1960): 7-9.

who brings the eschatological salvation that renews the fallen creation.[26]

As with Israel's wilderness experience and Adam's temptation, Jesus is confronted primarily in his relationship as the messianic Son to God as his Father. Gerhardsson makes a good case for this covenantal theme in all three temptations as the background of Israel's wilderness trial told in Deuteronomy 6-8.[27] However, notwithstanding their redemptive-historical significance, Jesus' temptations in the wilderness are also the same kinds of temptations that befall all people who seek to follow God: temptations that challenge human fidelity to God with the enticement to turn away in sin.[28] God's intention is to test Jesus as proof of his faithfulness; Satan's intention is to tempt Jesus into ruin, as happened previously with Adam and Israel.

The first temptation (Matt 4:3-4; Luke 4:3-4) occurs when Satan exploits Jesus' hunger for food.[29] Jesus is especially temptable because he is a true man embodied with bodily needs for food. Satan tempts Jesus to provide bread for himself miraculously. Underneath this surface of the temptation is the enticement to be discontented with what God had provided for Jesus (cf. Israel's discontentment with manna). Had Jesus succumbed to this temptation, his discontentment and self-reliance would have been a lack of belief and covenantal trust in God who led him into the wilderness. To accept an

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[26]Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 537. "In these temptations in the wilderness and in the various temptations that faced him through the thirty-three years of his life, Christ obeyed God in our place and as our representative, thus succeeding where Adam had failed, where the people of Israel in the wilderness had failed, and where we had failed (see Rom. 5:18-19)."

[27]Birger Gerhardsson, *The Testing of God's Son: (Matt 4:1-1 & Par) An Analysis of Early Christian Midrash*, trans. John Toy (Lund, SWE: CWK Gleerup, 1966), 26. He notes that the term for test is a covenant word normally used within the covenant relationship in the OT. The contextually defined meaning is "a testing of the partner in the covenant to see whether he is keeping his side of the agreement." I do not agree with Gerhardsson's assumption that the biblical temptation accounts are midrash.

[28]Ibid., 79. "We note here [Heb 4:14-16] the epithet "Son of God" and the fact that the temptations of Jesus are not specifically messianic ones but are of the same kind as ours (the people of God), and the phrase "in every respect". . . . The passage in Hebrews is a significant witness to the way in which an early Christian "author" thought of the temptations of Jesus; and we know that his thought follows the same lines as those of the synoptic author (M): Jesus was tempted in everything, as we are, yet he was without sin." Gerhardsson designates merely the author of Matthew, not a personal reference.

[29]G. H. Twelftree, "Temptation of Jesus," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 823, notes that Matthew's order of the second and third temptations could be his redaction to fit the climax of his Gospel on the mountain in 28:18, but Luke's redaction is more likely to reverse the order (Q?) and fit his emphasis in Luke-Acts on Jerusalem and the temple. We will follow Matthew's order as the slightly more plausible historical pattern.

attitude of discontentment as Satan proposed would have been to rebel against the regulation of God's word and the leadership of the Holy Spirit who led him into the wilderness. A misuse of Jesus' powers to provide miraculously for himself is part of the temptation, but the primary element is a sin in Jesus' relationship to God.[30]

The second temptation is to test God's protection by recklessly imperiling himself with a leap from the temple heights (Matt 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12). Satan tempts Jesus to confirm his identity as the Son by forcing God to fulfill his covenantal pledge to protect his own, just as he pledged to Israel (Deut 8:14ff.).[31] The temple locale especially emphasizes the proximity of God's presence and his promise of protection.[32] Protection from bodily harm and provision of existential assurance of Jesus' special identity combine as the settings for Satan's provocation. Against this temptation, Jesus sets all of these questions back in the proper perspective of his relationship to God in total obedience.[33]

The third temptation is to seize power to rule on his own, independently of God's promise and provision, simply by the condition that he worship Satan (Matt 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-8).[34] This temptation directly pulls at Jesus to forsake God for the power, possessions, and honor of the world kingdoms. Satan tempts Jesus with the reward of power by means of forsaking God to gain the world through idolatry. Jesus surmounts the temptation by reaffirming his proper place as a man in relation to God by the obligation of exclusive worship owed to the Creator by his human creatures.

In each case, the temptations that Satan presented to Jesus are enticements to sin in terms of his mode of life as a man in relationship to God. God's purpose in the

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[30]Gerhardsson, *Testing of God's Son*, 44-52. Carson, *Matthew*, 113. Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, NIV Application Commentary, vol. 37 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 158.

[31]Wilkins, *Matthew*, 160.

[32]Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50,* Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [BECNT], vol. 39, pt. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 380.

[33]Ibid., 382.

[34]Ibid., 376.

wilderness was to test Jesus by means of Satan's temptations.[35] The wilderness accounts are important markers of Jesus' triumph over Satan in redemption. The redemptive-historical implication of Jesus' reversal of Adam's Fall is that Jesus begins a new start for humanity that is victorious over temptation to sin.[36] Instead of failing as Adam did, Jesus relied on Scripture to refute Satan in each case. The three wilderness temptations are also typical of the appeals that Jesus experienced throughout his years of ministry.[37] The wilderness accounts also demonstrate Christ's true humanity in which he experienced temptations to sin in ways that constituted him to be the compassionate priest noted in Hebrews 2:17 and 4:15. The conclusion from these accounts is that Christ was truly tempted to sin.

Moreover, these accounts indicate the human limitations within which Jesus was both tempted and responded to his provocateur. Christ replied to Satan's temptations with the words of Scripture as a man living under the authoritative word of God. The importance of this is that Satan intended that Jesus respond by first a display of divine power and then a deed that would precipitate a divine rescue. The text is silent about whether these divine displays were possible for Jesus. Instead, Christ's response in ways proper to his manhood tells that he resisted these temptations within his human limitations. These paradigm examples of his temptations at the onset of his public ministry further suggest (especially in the absence of any evidence to the contrary) that all of his resistance to temptation was fought within his limitations as a man. The separate theological question of whether or not he could have resorted to other, divine means of resistance should not distract from the suggestion that by all appearances indicated in the temptation accounts, Jesus did not resort to innate divine powers.

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[35]R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, NIGTC, vol. 38 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 85. Wilkins, *Matthew*, 155.

[36]Wilkins, *Matthew*, 157.

[37]Dormandy, "Jesus' Temptations," 183-87.

Temptation in Gethsemane

All of the earlier struggles throughout Jesus' life and ministry (cf. Luke 22:28, "all my trials") prepared him for the final temptation and test of his obedience in the events of his passion. Christ was tempted in Gethsemane to abandon his role as savior, to save himself instead, and to avoid the supreme suffering of bearing the world's sin.[38] The temptation to avoid this imminent, vicarious punishment was a choice to disobey his Father's will. This temptation brought together conflicts of desires in Jesus' relationships with God, the created world, other people, and his own desire of self-preservation.[39]

The four Gospels give a varied picture of Jesus' temptation in Gethsemane. Luke's account is textually uncertain but adds an important element to be discussed below. John's account gives another impression entirely distinct from the Synoptics. In John, Jesus briefly experienced intense inner turmoil, but he was resolute to the exclusion of any temptation or serious struggle against disobedience. Mark and Matthew's accounts are close to each other at the relevant points in this discussion about Gethsemane as a temptation for Jesus.[40] We will follow the double tradition in Mark's gospel (Mark 14:32-

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[38]E. David Willis, *Calvin's Catholic Christology: The Function of the So-Called Extra Calvinisticum in Calvin's Christology,* Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), 90, thinks this was Jesus' greatest temptation: "His temptation in the Garden of Gethsemane was all the greater than any temptation we know; for we do not have such dominion and our routes of escape are more limited. Our disobedience rests in our use of what power of escape we do have; Christ's obedience rested in his refusal to use the unlimited powers of escape at his disposal in order to take up what we have attempted to evade."

[39]Wilkins, *Matthew*, 841, represents a common view that Satan tempted Jesus at Gethsemane to avoid the cross, as at earlier times in his ministry. This does not seem right because there is no clear or implicit mention of Satan's presence in Gethsemane to deter Jesus, and, quite the opposite, Satan was involved in Judas' motivation to betray Jesus that same night (Luke 22:3, 21; John 13:26-30). Luke 22:3 clearly connects Satan with Judas, and Judas is not present in Gethsemane; Luke 22:31-32 presents Jesus' continuing power over Satan's destructive intentions concerning the "sifting" of Peter. Thus, contrary to the prevailing opinion, an argument can be made for the lack of Satanic temptation in Gethsemane. Moreover, Paul explains in 1 Cor 2:8 (cf. Ps 2:2; Acts 2:26) that the rulers of the world (demonic and human) would not have crucified Jesus had they understood the wisdom of God to accomplish redemption by means of his death. Instead of saying he was tempted by Satan, a canonical approach suggests that Jesus was tempted in the context of his fear of suffering, not because Satan was there to tempt him. Satan seemed to be more concerned with destroying the disciples than deterring Jesus from the cross. An advocate of the common view is Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:160-61, identifies "the power of darkness" noted at the arrest of Jesus (Luke 22:53) as evidence of Satan's activity. However, this contradicts the idea that Satan was just earlier tempting Jesus to avoid the cross. Surely, Brown would affirm that some temptations occur by means of the world and the flesh without Satan's direct or indirect involvement.

[40]If Markan priority is right, then it appears that Matthew's redaction is slight. He replaces Mark's ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι ("shocked distress," Mark 14:33) with λυπεῖσθαι ("full of sorrow," Matt 26:37). Matthew seems to have a problem with Jesus' fearful distress because it seems to be too low a view of

42 // Matt 26:36-46).

Mark presents Gethsemane as an explicit account of Christ's temptation. Jesus warns the three disciples with him to "pray that you may not enter into temptation" (Mark 14:38). Christ's explanation of the danger reflects his own struggle against temptation in the weakness of his flesh, as he says, "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is *weak*" (ἀσθενής; cf. Heb 4:15).[41] This is explicit evidence for Jesus' struggle against temptation within the limits of his humanity. The probability that Christ is describing his own struggle against the temptation to avoid the vicarious punishment for sin is increased by the description in Mark 14:33 of his experience as "shock" (ἐκθαμβέομαι) and "intense distress" (ἀδημονεῖν).[42] According to Mark 14:34, Jesus laments that he is "distraught to the limit of death" (περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου ἕως θανάτου) in his distress at his impending suffering.[43] The cause of Jesus' dread is not specified.[44] Nonetheless, it is probable that Jesus was aware at this point that his suffering would include his death and having to bear the curse for sin (cf. Matt 20:17-19; Isa 53). Jesus speaks of "death" as his internal experience of such sorrows that threaten to tear him apart.[45] His shocked and distressed anticipation of the suffering in connection with death and judgment for the world's sin is also the likely cause of those emotions that threatened to destroy him.[46]

Jesus, so Matthew doubles the sorrow-emotion from Mark 14:34 (περίλυπος). There is a clear trend in Matthew and Luke (again, assuming Markan priority) to minimize Mark's presentation of Jesus' emotions.

[41]Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:198-200. "Jesus himself is in turmoil, while praying and facing *peirasmos*; he wants their watching and praying to accompany him. An interpretation of "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" should not exclude Jesus." Cf. Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, WBC, vol. 33B (Dallas: Word, 1995), 783. "The lesson of Jesus' experience is thus applied to the disciples." Notice also that Luke repeats this warning against entering temptation twice in 22:40, 46, but without mentioning the weakness.

[42]France, *Mark*, 582, translates the terms this way.

[43]Ibid., 582-83. France uses the phrase "being stretched to the limit." Matthew has the same.

[44]Hagner, *Matthew*, 782.

[45]John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, Sacra Pagina Series [SPS], vol. 2 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2002), 407.

[46]France, *Mark*, 583. Cf. Wilkins, *Matthew*, 841. "His overwhelming sorrow reveals a heart broken almost to the point of death itself, because he knows that he will experience his Father's forsakenness." Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:155, suggests both options of (1) the deathly provocation of his sorrow and (2) the intensity of sorrow that brought Jesus close to death, cf. Ps 55:5.

Jesus' initial prayer is that his Father would spare him from the vicarious punishment symbolized by the cup (Mark 14:36).[47] Then Christ reaffirms his desire for his Father's will instead of and above all of Jesus' own wishes to avoid the suffering.[48] In the context of this fear that is provoked by the anticipation of his suffering, Mark and Matthew depict Jesus as tempted to turn away from his Father's plan; ultimately, however, he submitted his will to the Father's will.[49]

Luke 22:43-44 is textually uncertain and the pericope differs from Mark and Matthew.[50] Strangely, Luke omits their account of Jesus' suffering when elsewhere Luke's two volumes emphasize Jesus as the Suffering Servant through allusions to Isaiah and a direct quote of Isaiah 53:12.[51] Nevertheless, Luke's choice to depict a different perspective of Jesus' struggle includes the presence of angelic support to strengthen him for the task. Christ's need for support and the description of profuse sweat generated by his exertion in prayer surely entail an intense emotional turmoil as a mark of Jesus' suffering humanity that is consistent with Matthew and Mark.[52] The note of warning—

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[47]Hagner, *Matthew*, 783.

[48]Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53,* BECNT, vol. 39, pt. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1759. Bock explains that the closing affirmation of the prayer makes "it clear that Jesus' request is less significant than his desire to do God's will."

[49]Wilkins, *Matthew*, 841. "Jesus is facing a real temptation, the most severe of his life."

[50]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke (X-XXIV)*, Anchor Bible [AB], vol. 28A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 1444. Fitzmyer prefers the shorter reading over the longer because there is no Synoptic parallel, it is against Luke's tendency to note emotions, and the longer text is absent from the oldest copy, P^{75}. Darrell Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1764, counters each of Fitzmyer's objections to defend the longer reading: "The angel's ministry looks like evidence of the original text since it is hard to explain why a copyist would insert these verses. The absence of a parallel and the issue of Christology raised in the remark makes inclusion the more difficult reading, though the decision is not absolutely clear." Joel Green, "Jesus on the Mount of Olives [Luke 22.39-46]: Tradition and Theology," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26 (1986): 37, argues that vv. 40-44 are inexplicable as a redaction; instead, Luke had some other source besides Mark.

[51]Green, "Jesus on the Mount of Olives," 42; Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Absence of Jesus' Emotions–the Lucan Redaction of Lk 22,39-46," *Biblica* 61 (1980): 154. Neyrey argues that Luke's omission is according to the Stoic view of grief (λύπη) as an evil passion that leads to fear and defeat. On Neyrey's view, Luke's version instead portrays Jesus with the virtue of obedience wrested forcefully in his combat against temptation, which he overcomes through "sweat-like blood of exertion." Green, "Jesus on the Mount of Olives," 32-33, 38, disagrees, saying that Jesus' struggle was not against λύπη, but against satanic opposition, and the objectionable Stoic term is not in the text anyway (περίλυπος is the term in the parallels, not λύπη). Green points to Luke's tendency of avoiding doublets as a better explanation for omitting Mark 14:33-34 in preference for another tradition that expresses Luke's emphasis on prayer (Luke 22:43-44).

[52]Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53,* 1761-62. Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:185, agrees that the

that the disciples pray so as not to succumb to temptation—is repeated twice in Luke's account (22:40, 46). This doubling of the warning heightens the tension of Jesus' struggle to obey in the face of his desires to shrink back. Despite all the differences, Luke's account agrees with the emphasis in Mark and Matthew that Gethsemane was an intense event of temptation for Christ.

Hebrews 5:7-8

(7) ὃς ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ
δεήσεις τε καὶ ἱκετηρίας
πρὸς τὸν δυνάμενον σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου
μετὰ κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων
προσενέγκας καὶ εἰσακουσθεὶς ἀπὸ τῆς εὐλαβείας,
(8) καίπερ ὢν υἱός,
ἔμαθεν ἀφ ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν

(7) In the days of his flesh
prayers and supplications
to the one who was able to save him out of death
with great sobs and tears
he offered and he was heard because of his reverence,
(8) although he was a Son,
he learned by the things he suffered obedience

In relation to Gethsemane, Hebrews 5:7-8 gives further explanation about Jesus' struggle to obey in the face of his temptation to avoid suffering by disobeying God.[53] The description in Hebrews broadly includes the entire passion sequence and other suffering in Christ's life, not simply the single event of his anguish in Gethsemane. However, the Gethsemane experience is surely included as one of the events within the broad description in Hebrews 5:7-8 of Jesus' true and relevant human experience that constitute him a high priest (ἀρχιερεὺς, v.10; cf. 2:17; 4:15).

Hebrews 5:7-8 introduces the theme of Christ's suffering in relation to his progress in obedience with the generalizing statement "in the days of his flesh." This

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sweat was not bloody, but only resembled the free flow of blood.

[53]Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:231-33, agrees that Heb 5:7-10 corresponds to both Gethsemane and the crucifixion. Ellingworth, *Hebrews,* 286, is skeptical about 5:7-10 as a biographical reference to a specific event in the passion sequence. He thinks the description more likely relates to the broader pattern of Christ's life in humiliation and exaltation that culminated in the crucifixion. France, *Mark*, 581, thinks Gethsemane probably does lie behind Heb 5:7-10.

statement draws together his entire human life while the passage also alludes to the specific suffering in his passion. The emotional distress and struggle to submit his wishes to the Father's will are at least reminiscent of his Gethsemane prayers if not directly parallel to those offered with "great sobs and tears" (κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων). For the readers of Hebrews, having been told about Christ's empathy for them in being tempted (2:17-18; 4:15), they receive a vivid reminder from his earthly life that his experience of suffering was not minimized nor mitigated by his divinity. Christ's successful, obedient struggle against temptation is set before the readers as the example and motivation for their own struggle against the temptation to apostasy (cf. 12:1-4). Just as for them now, obedience to God was a call to suffer; *a fortiori,* obedience to God for Christ entailed the call to suffer the crucifixion and punishment for sin.[54] Hebrews 5:7-8 recalls the severe degree of his temptation despite his Sonship.

Jesus' development in obedience through suffering—"he learned obedience from what he suffered" (v.8; ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν)—is his progress throughout his life experiences to be constituted for the official role of priest.[55] The suffering and struggle to obey was constitutive for him to become the compassionate priest who can empathize with his people in terms of their temptation (cf. 2:17; 4:15). The suffering that sets a context for temptation in Jesus' life and the readers' lives is purposeful. This means that even Jesus' prayer offered to the one who could "save him out of death" (σῴζειν αὐτὸν ἐκ θανάτου) was that he would be rescued with divine support in the midst of his death, not that he be protected entirely from peril.[56] The

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[54]Vos, "Priesthood of Christ," 584. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 121-22.

[55]Ibid., 589. Vos is right that the development is official, not ethical, *contra* Susan R. Garrett, *The Temptations of Jesus in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 107, who claims that Mark's account of Jesus shows that he developed morally from double-minded struggle to eventual single-minded commitment; and *contra* Ronald Williamson, "Hebrews 4:15 and the Sinlessness of Jesus," *Expository Times* 86 (1974): 4-8, who argues that Jesus achieved perfected obedience of sinlessness only at the end of his life, not that he had it innately from the beginning.

[56]Vos, "Priesthood of Christ," 585. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 150. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 288. The foreshadowing of this rescue is in Luke's account of Gethsemane that includes the strengthening support of the angel in response to Jesus' prayer (Luke 22:43).

difference of this prayer from Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, where he asked for another way besides his imminent death ("if possible"), is not a contradiction because Hebrews underscores his plea for help to endure the suffering.

Also distinct from the Gethsemane accounts are the "great sobs and tears" of Hebrews 5:7. This description certainly reflects the anguish of his prayers on the night before his death, but "sobs and tears" refer more precisely to his suffering on the cross. The Gospels tell of no loud cries and tears in Gethsemane, but the Gospels bear clear evidence that Jesus screamed with loud shouts and cries at Golgotha.[57] Furthermore, Jesus' final prayer of surrender into the Father's hands (Luke 23:46) seems to fit the Hebrews 5:7 prayer for support as he entered into death.[58] As was the case throughout his life, Christ's suffering during the crucifixion was likely a context for his temptation in a severe, maximal degree. This possibility of his temptation while dying on the cross is reinforced by the way Hebrews 5:7-8 functions as an exhortation for the readers in context of their temptation.

Therefore, Hebrews 5:7-8 corresponds to both Jesus' suffering in Gethsemane and Golgotha. Gethsemane is clearly a context of temptation because of the way the Gospels note Jesus' warnings about temptation to his disciples. Golgotha is a likely context for his temptation because of the way Hebrews 5:7-8 employs his suffering there as an example of his having experienced concrete temptation in a maximum degree that makes him able to sympathize with the troubled audience. Moreover, Martin Luther and John Calvin mark the crucifixion as the scene of Jesus' greatest temptation (however, contemporary interpreters do not see Golgotha this way).

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[57]Wilkins, *Matthew*, 894-95, has a plausible list of seven cries of Jesus from the cross. Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:232, notes the likeness between the cries of Heb 5:7-8 and Golgotha.

[58]Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:230. Brown's observation is helpful. "The emphasis that Hebrews places on Jesus' blood and sacrifice means that being saved from death cannot mean that he was spared dying. Rather Jesus was spared from being conquered by death, as in 2:14."

Temptation during the Crucifixion

The obvious temptation during the crucifixion is the threefold mockery of Jesus by passersby, priests and soldiers, and the two criminals dying alongside him (Mark 15:29-32 and parallels).[59] The mockers deride Jesus with taunts that he should save himself and prove his claims that he is the Messiah and Son of God. These taunts are of the same sort that Jesus heard earlier as Satan's first temptation in the wilderness that Jesus comfort himself by transforming stones into bread. Certainly this derision during the hours of Jesus' suffering under divine wrath for sin and the pains of crucifixion was an invitation to turn away from his Father's will and give himself relief. Nonetheless, Luther and Calvin infer a much more serious temptation during the crucifixion than the common taunts and mockery of disbelief that Jesus had heard for years, if not his whole human life.

Luther affirms that Jesus was tempted to blaspheme when he felt cursed and abandoned by God during the crucifixion.[60] Calvin similarly affirms that a temptation was presented to Christ when he felt the opposition of God as Judge against him.[61] Both Reformers have in view the intensity of Jesus' anguish, dread, and horror in bearing the sin of the world while the torture of crucifixion wrenched his life. However, these affirmations are impossible to verify. Scholars are at least willing to agree that Jesus' cry in the vernacular Aramaic of Psalm 22:2 (MT) expresses his feeling of having been abandoned by God.[62] This pain of abandonment, as with all suffering, is plausibly the context for temptation to sin. Raymond Brown explains the meaning of Jesus' cry:

> Darkness has covered the earth; there is nothing that shows God acting on Jesus' side. How appropriate that Jesus feel forsaken! His "Why?" is that of someone who

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[59]Ibid., 2:985-1000.

[60]Martin Luther, *Psalmus XXI* (22), WA 5:611, 33; 5:612, 19. Cited by Marc Lienhard, *Luther: Witness to Jesus Christ,* trans. Edwin H. Robertson (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982), 118.

[61]John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists*, trans. William Pringle, Calvin's Commentaries, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 318.

[62]Wilkins, *Matthew*, 902. Hagner, *Matthew*, 844. France, *Mark*, 652. Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 450-51.

> has plumbed the depths of the abyss, and feels enveloped by the power of darkness. Jesus is not questioning the existence of God or the power of God to do something about what is happening; he is questioning the silence of the one whom he calls "My God". . . . Feeling forsaken as if he were not being heard, he no longer presumes to speak intimately to the All-Powerful as "Father" but employs the address common to all human beings, "My God."[63]

Another possibility is the correspondence between Jesus' cry of "why?" and Hebrews 5:7-8.[64] This text points along the course of Christ's lifelong progress in obedience to God within the context of suffering. His obedience culminates with his suffering in the crucifixion and simultaneous bearing of the punishment for sin. Because Hebrews 5:7-8 is set in a context to commend Jesus as an example in resisting temptation, it may be that the writer pictures Jesus still struggling to obey during the crucifixion. Jesus had been strengthened to face and succeed in this final, ultimate test by the collective experiences of tests throughout his life. Therefore, the cry that echoes Psalm 22:2, if considered among the "strong sobs and tears" in the prayer for ultimate deliverance out of death (Heb 5:8), is more plausibly indicative of the temptation that Luther and Calvin infer. Some of the many martyrs in redemptive history have no doubt felt this same sort of temptation as they endured violence at the hands of sinners as Jesus did (Heb 12:3-4). Nonetheless, the evidence does not sustain the claim beyond being a plausible speculation about this last, greatest temptation of Jesus.

The Relational Setting of Jesus' Temptations

In addition to the specific cases of Jesus' temptations, his experience as a man in relationships with others constituted many other temptations that are common to humanity. Examples from the Gospels are the Jews' demand for a sign from heaven,[65]

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[63]Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 2:1046.

[64]Ibid., 1:230-32; 2:1047.

[65]Mark 8:1-13; Matt 12:38-39 // Luke 11:16, 29; Matt 16:1-2a, 4. These and the subsequent references of listed in this sentence are drawn from the study by Jeffrey B. Gibson, *The Temptations of Jesus in Early Christianity*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series [JSNTSS] 112 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 21-23. Dormandy, "Jesus' Temptations," 185, argues that this temptation is Mark's way of elaborating on the first of Jesus' three temptations in the wilderness, here

Peter's opposition to Jesus for talking about suffering while at Caesarea Philippi,[66] the Pharisees' trap about the legitimacy of divorce,[67] the malicious query about paying taxes to Caesar,[68] the test question about the requirements for attaining eternal life,[69] the loaded question about the greatest commandment,[70] and the treacherous demand for a verdict on the woman caught in adultery.[71] Many of these examples use the specific term for temptation (πειράζω) in some form. In each case, the negative sense of temptation to sin is right because the context for each of the examples shows that these are enemies attempting to waylay Jesus to cause his failure, not helping him prove his success and identity.

These frequent traps, though different from the challenges to sin that were offered by Satan, are all relationally-conditioned challenges to his sense of identity and significance. Jesus stands in relationship to these opponents as a man among others in the interlaced layers of his social interaction. All of the examples represent the voices of skepticism and hostility that entice Jesus to doubt and prove his identity and, in these ways, to take matters into his own hands instead of following the will of his Father. In this way, the examples of temptations in Jesus' human relationships with his critics echo Satan's temptations as the subversive suggestions that Jesus does not stand in special relationship to God and that he is not who he thought he was.

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transposed as the temptation to fulfill the people's demands and confirm his identity. This occurs in proximity to the theme of a miraculous provision of food.

[66]Mark 8:27-33; Matt 16:13-23.

[67]Mark 10:1-12 // Matt 19:1-12. Dormandy, "Jesus' Temptations," 185, argues persuasively that the temptation in Mark matches the second wilderness temptation to prove his messiahship by recklessness in the face of Herod's recent divorce. John the Baptizer was arrested and executed for the very offense of criticizing Herod's divorce and remarriage.

[68]Mark 12:13-17 // Matt 22:15-22 // Luke 20:20-26. Dormandy, "Jesus' Temptations," 186, explains Mark's version as corresponding to the third wilderness temptation by the same theme of worshipping God or Satan in context of the relationship to Rome.

[69]Luke 10:25-26.

[70]Matt 22:34-40.

[71]John 7:53-8:11. Note: the textual evidence does not support an affirmation that this is a Johannine account, but the passage should probably be accepted as historically authentic while its absence from the first several centuries of the manuscript tradition and several placements make it mysterious.

Jesus faced other temptations within the context of his human relationships. In the social context of his home life at Nazareth, people who knew Jesus while growing up tempted him to think of himself as merely Joseph and Mary's son, the unimportant brother of his sisters and brothers who were among them, and certainly not a prophet of God.[72] The temptation to perform several miracles to awaken their faith in him and prove himself to them may have had continuing appeal beyond the case of Mark 6:5-6.[73] This temptation to prove himself to people who disbelieved his claims may have been typical throughout his ministry, since even during the crucifixion the crowd called for him to save himself and come down off the cross (Matt 27:40).

Jesus had no refuge from critics in his hometown or in his home. Jesus' brothers mocked his vocation and tempted him to make a public relations gala in Jerusalem at the very time that his enemies in Judea were seeking to kill him (John 7:1-9). Setting their doubts against his own confidence about who he was and what relationship he had with God, Jesus' treatment by his brothers likely provoked him to the further temptation that he deviate from his Father's guidance, doubt his identity and mission, and shrink back entirely from his mission.

This temptation suggested by the relationship with his brothers was echoed by the crowds who wanted to make him king according to the Jewish hope of a political deliverer, just as Jesus himself was aware that he was fulfilling those same OT promises (e.g., Matt 5:17) that fueled the mob's enthusiasm.[74] Van Iersel's observation is helpful to point out the relational dynamics of these trials that were repeated throughout his ministry:

> It is evidence how common and normal these temptations were. Jesus, like other people, was usually led into temptation by his surroundings – in fact by his relatives, his followers and his adversaries. The main feature of these temptations was . . .

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[72]Luke 4:22; Matt 13:55-57; cf. John 6:42.

[73]Ralph A. Letch, *Temptation and Freedom: The Temptations of God* (Harrow, U.K.: Eureditions, 1978), 47-48.

[74]Ibid., 50. John 6:15 (after feeding the 5,000); John 12:13-15 (during his final entry to Jerusalem).

> a question of method. They simply asked Jesus to act as they expected the Messiah, whom he pretended to be, to act.[75]

More examples of his temptations to sin could easily be multiplied from the accounts of Jesus' intense anger and frustrations in his relationships with people. His wrath burned against their misuse of the created world to exclude worshippers at the Temple, their sham use of the sacrificial system to give themselves license for sin, their hard hearts that valued Sabbath regulations above caring for people, and his own disciples' exclusion of children from getting near to him.[76] In all this and more, Jesus clearly restrained himself from sinning in his anger (cf. Eph 4:26).

In his relationship with God, Jesus likely faced many temptations to disobey God's written requirements from the time of his early childhood to the end of his earthly life. Christ likely faced the temptation to be frustrated and anxiously fearful about his Father's plans that imperiled him from the start with Herod's wrath at his birth. He could have been tempted to be resentful and doubtful of God's care because his family had to flee to Egypt and then limp along without Joseph after some years in Nazareth.[77]

In his relationship with the created world, he likely had to face temptations of greed and gluttony, even as he was accused of being a glutton and a drunk (Matt 11:19), in addition to the prospect of stealing things he needed or wanted for himself or others. Satan's suggestion in the wilderness that Jesus turn stones into bread to satisfy his hunger implies a sort of stealing as the misuse of powers to satisfy his bodily hunger, even though the existential hunger to confirm his special identity may have been more acute.

In relationship to women, Jesus likely faced temptations to his sexuality because this is a normal need for humans, as shown in Paul's instructions to some

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[75]B. Van Iersel, *The Bible on the Temptations of Man,* trans F. Vander Heijden (De Pere, WI: St. Norbert Abbey Press, 1966), 50.

[76]Mark 11:15-18; 3:1-5; 10:14.

[77]It seems that Joseph died some time before Jesus' ministry began, perhaps when Jesus was a teen since there is no mention of him during Jesus' ministry and Jesus had the responsibility for his mother that he passed off to John (John 19:26-27).

ascetic-leaning Christians about sex in marriage (1 Cor 7:1-9). Jesus' record of sinlessness—despite the devoted attention of several married and unmarried women (Luke 8:2-3)—indicates that he had the gift of celibacy that Paul mentions, but this does not mean that the gift entails no internal struggle. Instead, Jesus (as Paul and others) likely had the gift of a special desire for God that he could set against his natural desire for full bodily-relational union with a woman and have the ability to choose devotion instead of temptation.

Also, he was probably tempted to please people by performing for them in ways that deviated from his Father's plan.[78] This was repeated in Satan's well-chosen offer of the kingdoms of the world, in Pilate's query about Jesus' kingship (John 18:35-37), and in the excited anticipation of Jesus' disciples after his resurrection (Acts 1:6).[79] This sort of people-pleasing temptation in many varieties seems to have been present throughout his life. The frequent disappointment of disciples and the crowd in his failure to bring in the political dimensions of the eschatological kingdom probably corresponds to Jesus' frequent temptation to be disappointed in them. He may have been tempted to the point of feeling disdain and unbounded frustration with his followers, and hatefully despising those who mocked him out of fear, envy, and unbelief.

Finally, in relationship within himself he possibly felt the temptations to disbelieve what he had been told about who he was (audibly confirmed from heaven at his Jordan baptism)—that the Scriptures he studied really referred to him uniquely and that he was God-incarnate, God the Son who had been sent in mission to be the Savior.[80]

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[78]An illustration of this sort of situation is the wedding in Cana (John 2:3-4) when Jesus clearly did not want to get involved, but his mother implored him to fix the problem. This occasion was not a temptation to sin; however, the example shows the way people may have appealed to him at other times to do something that would have been against his Father's plan.

[79]Letch, *Temptation and Freedom*, 80-81.

[80]The matter of Jesus' self-consciousness is very speculative. Clearly, by age twelve he was aware of his unique identity and significance (Luke 2:41-51). It seems that his awareness developed (in a non-adoptionistic sense) so that even though he was fully God the Son always, he came to understand this progressively in his consciousness as a man. How that awareness was regulated may have been by the Father and the Spirit's influence, but we are beyond the limits of verification here. Mark 13:32 and Matt 24:36 are often raised as evidence of Jesus' incomplete or limited human knowledge, especially since the objectionable phrase in Matthew's version (οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός) was omitted in many early copies and patristic

As for the audience of Hebrews 10:36-39, who needed warning against shrinking back from faithfulness in enduring suffering, Jesus too may have been tempted at times to ignore God's call and shrink back to self-preservation. The existential struggle of having to trust God for defining his identity and direction in life entails a temptation to recoil from faith as the unknown, unseen, and humility-requiring dependence on the invisible God. He may have felt the pull to back away from God to reliance on self or others who are seen and known tangibly. Jesus' struggle to entrust himself to God in Gethsemane and again on the cross do not seem to have been the first occasions of such struggle; probably these were just the greatest in a pattern of having to do so repeatedly throughout his life (cf. Heb 5:7-8).

Conclusion

Jesus' temptations are evidence of his true humanity in likeness to others whom he saves. He was tempted as a man and he resisted his temptations as a man. In no NT example of his temptation is Jesus' divine power indicated as the means of his resistance to temptations. Of course, this silence does not mean that he was unable to use innate divine powers to enhance his weakened humanity or that he never did so, but none of the evidence indicates that he ever did. Being the God-man, Jesus may have been able to rely on his divinity at some point, but the NT portrayal of him throughout his temptations does not support that theological inference. To the contrary, the only means of Jesus' resistance noted clearly in the accounts are Scripture (in the wilderness) and (in Gethsemane) his open communication with his father through prayer, the support of angels, and the (potential) assistance of his closest friends. Based on the available evidence for his life, the conclusion must be that Jesus experienced and resisted his temptations within the limits of his humanity.

The biblical evidence for Jesus' temptations to sin in context of his true

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citations. Nonetheless, R. T. France, *Mark*, 544, is right that the subject of the pericope is eschatology, not Christology. The emphasis of the statement is on the unpredictability of the time of Jesus' return since it is the Father's plan, not on the specifications of Jesus' intellectual capacities.

humanity is varied. The temptations recorded in the Gospels at the beginning and the end of Jesus' public ministry bracket the entire range of other temptations that he experienced. The Gospels relate certain temptations and suggest others in the setting of his relationships in a true human existence. Hebrews 2:17 and 4:15 clearly affirm these specific and general references to Jesus' temptations as the similar kinds and extent of temptations that Jesus experienced. Hebrews 5:7-8 further recalls the intense, maximum degree of psychological hardship that Jesus endured. The intended readers of that letter are similarly tempted and therefore need the assurance that the Savior is both sufficient and ably compassionate to aid them in holding to a dangerous confession of faith in Christ who suffered to the same extent and degree as they do. Taken together, the evidence of Hebrews and the Gospels for Jesus' many temptations to sin is set forth clearly. Unless skeptics are willing to admit that Jesus only pretended to suffer and be tempted, theologians must recognize the reality of his temptations and the varied forms and forces of them in Jesus' experience.

Biblical Evidence for Jesus' Sinlessness

Even with the claims of some theologians that Jesus was able to sin, only very rarely has any theologian questioned Jesus' sinlessness to say that he actually sinned.[81] Empirical demonstration from Scripture of the contrary claim—that he was sinless—would not likely be convincing since the biographical data available for scrutiny in the Gospels are incomplete, especially about the early years of his life.[82] Nonetheless, the NT evidence grounds Christ's sinlessness in the soteriological claims about him as the holy,

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[81]An example of this egregious claim is Nels Ferre, *Christ and the Christian* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), 110-14. The supposed sin is Jesus' anxiety and lack of trust in the Father, which Ferre counts as the sin of unbelief.

[82]David G. A. Calvert, *From Christ to God: A Study of Some Trends, Problems and Possibilities in Contemporary Christology* (London: Epworth, 1983), 44, observes, "There is simply not the [historical] evidence available – neither a list of sins Jesus did not commit, nor a description of his human goodness in such detail that would enable the historian to draw the probable conclusion of his sinlessness." Nonetheless, as a mediating theologian, Carl Ullmann, *The Sinlessness of Jesus: An Evidence for Christianity*, trans. R. C. Lundin Brown, 6th ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1858), has tried to do just this by using Jesus' ethical record in the Gospels as an apologetic argument for his divinity.

perfect, and righteous Son of God who can deal with sins because he is sinless. These data are uncontroversial because of the clarity of their presentation. However, we briefly consider a representative portion of the NT evidence because of the relationship between the claims of Christ's sinlessness and his temptation. Orthodoxy has traditionally required that both claims be true. The difficulty formed by affirming both claims is part of why a model is needed to explain all the data related to Jesus' temptation.

Evidence for Sinlessness in the Gospels

Luke 1:35. The angel told Mary that her holy child would be called the Son of God. The child would be born as the result of the creative power of God in divine conception.[83] The Holy Spirit conceived Jesus in Mary's womb as a holy child. The attribute of holiness (ἅγιος) indicates two aspects. Jesus is set apart for special service. Also, because he is the Son of God, the emphasis is on his character as divinely pure in the sense of separateness from sin and complete righteousness.[84] Luke repeatedly includes references to Jesus as the holy or righteous one (Acts 2:27; 3:14; 4:27; 7:52; 13:35). This attribute of holiness (positively) entails his sinlessness (negatively). Luke 1:35 is representative of the many NT passages that assert Jesus' moral purity from sin as part of declaring his holiness or righteousness.

The Gospel of John.[85] John retells Jesus' own claims to sinlessness. In 8:29, John gives a statement by Jesus that the Father is continually present with him. The proof of this presence is Jesus' actions that are always pleasing to the Father. This claim that he always does what pleases God entails Jesus' sinlessness in the same way that holiness or

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[83]Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 123.

[84]Ibid.

[85]While acknowledging the controversies about authorship, composition history, and audience for Fourth Gospel, the traditional view seems most compelling that the author is John, the beloved disciple, the son of Zebedee, writing independently of the Synoptics in the locale of Ephesus at a late date in the 90s. Similar controversies about the authorship of 1 Peter and 1 John notwithstanding, the traditional view of the authors as the apostles Peter and John seem most reasonable and has been ably defended by others.

purity does.[86] Within the narrative, Jesus strengthens his declaration of sinlessness by challenging his opponents to convict him of sin (8:46). John records no response from Jesus' opponents, implying that they who were most eager to find some fault with Jesus could not answer his challenge. One apparent exception to this is in John 9 when the Pharisees' dim view of Jesus as a sinner (9:24) is presented in context of their blindness. The man whom Jesus had healed from lifelong blindness is the one who refutes the Pharisees by citing the proof of the miracle that gave him sight (9:31-33). In terms of John's presentation of Jesus and the Pharisees, their claim against him fails obviously in a way that exaggerates their own blindness and sin in contrast to Jesus' sinlessness that is attested by his ability to perform the special miracle (9:40-41). Jesus' claim stands out unopposed as the bold revelation of his sinlessness and mark of both his clear conscience and innocence of all sin before God.[87]

Later in the narrative (14:30-31), Jesus again tells about his purity from sin when he explains that Satan has no power over him: "in me he has nothing" (ἐν ἐμοὶ οὐκ ἔχει οὐδέν). The implication is that because Christ has never sinned, he is not vulnerable to Satan's influence through sin.[88] Instead of being swayed by the ruler of the world, Jesus remains free to do "just what my Father commands."[89] Jesus' distinction from others who are under Satan's sway through sin entails his sinlessness, just as he declared this about himself in third-person reference earlier, "unrighteousness is not in him" (ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν, 7:18). Therefore, Jesus' own statements represent the Evangelist's plain evidence for Jesus' sinlessness.

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[86]Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, rev. ed., New International Commentary on the New Testament [NICNT], vol. 40 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 402.

[87]Ibid., 412.

[88]The intended meaning here could be even stronger that Jesus is unable to sin, but we cannot be sure of that claim by this statement alone.

[89]Morris, *John*, 585.

Evidence for Sinlessness in the Epistles

2 Corinthians 5:21. Paul argues a common NT theme that Jesus' sinlessness was a requirement to justify sinners by his self-sacrifice; Christ's ability to bear the sins of others depends on his sinlessness. Paul declares that Jesus is the one "who knew no sin" (μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν). He never gained the knowledge of sin by personal experience of sinning at any time in his life before, during, or after his earthly life.[90] Being free of sin himself, Jesus could be "made sin" (ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν) for others in the substitutionary, vicarious sense that he bore the punishment for their sins.[91] Other NT passages reiterate this theme of Jesus' sinlessness as a necessity for making reconciliation between humanity and God.[92]

Hebrews. As argued earlier, the phrase "without sin" is added in Hebrews 4:15 to distinguish Jesus' only difference in having experienced temptation in all the same ways as those common to humanity. Hebrews exhorts the readers to resist sin as Jesus has by pointing to him as the model of having been tempted as they are, yet he never gave in. He is the object and pattern of faith for them.

His example of sinlessness in the face of numerous temptations is also the ground of his superiority as a priest (7:26-28) who does not need to offer sacrifices for himself as Levitical priests do. Jesus is "separated from sinners" in both senses. He is separate in the qualitative, moral sense of separation by his sinless purity despite his intercession (denoted by the three adjectives of purity that precede this: "holy, innocent, undefiled"). He is separate in the spatial sense of his removal from the sphere of sinners to his exaltation in heaven. Together, both senses support Jesus' superiority as a priest for

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[90]Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC, vol. 43, pt. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 450, notes that the meaning of γνόντα follows the classical Greek usage for "knowledge gained by personal participation." Harris also observes that the articular aorist participle is timeless, denoting not merely Jesus' pre-existent condition, but also his earthly and continuing condition.

[91]Even critical scholars recognize that 2 Cor 5:21 alludes to the OT sin offering (e.g., Lev 4:8, 20-21). Hans-Josef Klauck, "Sacrifice and Sacrificial Offerings," trans. Reginald H. Fuller, in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:888.

[92]E.g., John 1:29; Gal 3:13; Heb 7:26-28; 9:14; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 John 3:5.

the readers.[93] Therefore, because he is sinless, Christ can offer himself (9:11-14) as the definitive, sinlessly pure, and all-sufficient sacrifice for the sins of others.

Hebrews 5:7-8 has seemed to some as telling a progress to sinlessness and not simply greater feats of obedience.[94] On the contrary, Hebrews 10:5-10 tells that he began his human life in this pattern of sinless fidelity to God, having come into the world to do God's will.[95] His progress and completion as the obedient Son and priest do not constitute moral development; this would contradict the earlier assertion of his sinlessness (4:15). Instead, the progress is in terms of his becoming equipped to function as a compassionate priest. Moreover, the idea of progress from being a sinner to becoming a sinless savior is self-contradictory in terms of the main theme of assurance argued in Hebrews. Jesus' superiority and sufficiency as the priest who can mediate for others depend upon his complete sinlessness. He himself can mediate for others because he stands righteous in relation to God. Any sin early in life or later would compromise this standing and his consequent ability to mediate for others.

1 Peter. Isaiah 53 supplies the metaphor of the Suffering Servant as an unblemished, spotless lamb that Peter applies to Jesus. As in Hebrews, 1 Peter 1:18-19 underscores that Christ's moral perfection is necessary to his sufficiency as a substitutionary sacrifice.[96] His sinless purity also supports the exhortation that the readers strive to be similarly flawless and faultless in a way consistent with the holy God who called them (1:15-16) and the Holy Spirit who sanctifies them (1:2).[97]

Peter goes on to emphasize Jesus' sinlessness as part of being the pattern his

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[93]Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews*, AB, vol. 36 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 367.

[94]E.g., Williamson, "Hebrews 4:15," 4-8.

[95]Koester, *Hebrews*, 283-84, notes that Hebrews portrays sinlessness as obedience to God, even when God calls his sons to suffer innocently. Sin is apostasy that must be resisted by the obedience of faith. Jesus' exemplary obedience (5:8) is his faithfulness to do God's will (10:5), and thus his sinlessness.

[96]Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, NICNT, vol. 56 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 73.

[97]John H. Elliott, *1 Peter*, AB, vol. 37B (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 355.

readers should follow closely (2:22), copying his righteous response as the Suffering Servant (Isa 53:9). Jesus' sinlessness indicates his perfect innocence. His suffering was undeserved, just as that unjust suffering that Peter's readers are called by God to endure (2:21). Even when suffering his unjust trial and crucifixion, Jesus continued to demonstrate his sinlessness by entrusting himself to God instead of sinfully taking revenge by his speech or action (2:23-24).[98]

First Peter 3:18 repeats the sacrificial theme of 2:21-24 that Christ is the righteous one who died for the unrighteous (δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων). Therefore, the familiar NT theme of Jesus' sinlessness as a redemptive necessity is expanded to exhort readers to follow the example of his sinlessness even when suffering innocently as he did to the utmost.

1 John. The redemptive necessity that Jesus must be sinless to deal with the sins of others is repeated in 1 John 3:5. John demonstrates this in a way that resembles two statements in the Fourth Gospel. Like the Baptizer's declaration in John 1:29 about the lamb "who takes away the sins" (ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν), 1 John 3:5 similarly describes Jesus as the one who "takes away sins" (τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἄρῃ). Like Jesus' statement in John 14:30 that Satan has nothing in him, 1 John 3:5 grounds Jesus' efficacy to save from sin by saying emphatically that "sin is not in him" (ἁμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν). First John also emphasizes Jesus' sinlessness with the positive claims that he is righteous (2:29; 3:7) and pure (3:3).[99]

Conclusion

This summary of representative NT evidence for Jesus' sinlessness shows the emphatic, varied, and clear presentation of the claim. More could be said to connect the

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[98]Ibid., 529.

[99]Stephen S. Smalley, *1,2, 3 John*, WBC, vol. 51 (Waco, TX: Word, 1984), 157.

NT affirmations with OT predictions and typology that the Messiah must be sinless.[100] No exhaustive data of Jesus' life is available for study to test the claim of Jesus' sinlessness positively or negatively. Instead, the clear declaration of his sinlessness by the NT is the necessary and sufficient ground for the traditional theological claim. As with the traditional claim that Jesus was truly tempted, so also the claim that he was sinless must not be denied in light of the NT evidence reviewed here. Furthermore, the biblical evidence suggests that Christ did not have what subsequent theology has termed original sin because the Holy Spirit specially wrought the Son's incarnation as a virginal conception.[101]

Despite the clarity, one question not addressed by Scripture in an obvious way is *how* Jesus achieved sinlessness, whether by his innate divinity, the Holy Spirit, a combination of these, or some other means. This question requires the models presented in chapters two and three. Models attempt to explain what remains unclear in Scripture. One place where Scripture comes near to this question is Luke 1:35, but this applies narrowly to Jesus' start in human life. Moreover, Jesus' purity at conception is attributable to the involvement of the Holy Spirit, who similarly effected a miraculous conception for Jesus' cousin John (though without purity as the result). Notwithstanding the clear indication of Jesus' holy uniqueness in relation to John and the rest of humanity, the subsequent evidence for his sinlessness stresses the praiseworthiness and exemplariness of his achievement. As we saw with the evidence for his temptation, the evidence for his sinlessness does not indicate that divine necessity is the active cause of his sinlessness. Of course, his divinity could have been the actual factor determining his

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[100]Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, ed. Paul Ramsey, vol. 1 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 281-89, gives eleven proofs for the impeccability of Christ, most of which are based on a redemptive necessity that if he could sin, the promises and plans of God would be voided. Howard C. Zabriskie, "The Impeccability of Christ" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1938), 160-89, argues much the same way as Edwards for the necessity of Christ's impeccability because of Christ's person, the OT promises, and the redemptive necessity that the Messiah be sinless forever.

[101]The concept of original sin is intended here to include original guilt and the consequent original corruption as members of Adam (Rom 5:12-21). Cf. Oliver Crisp, "Did Christ have a *Fallen* Human Nature?" *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 6 (2004): 278.

sinlessness, but the NT examples stress the humanness of his purity. His sinless purity is to be imitated by other humans. His sinlessness is the humanly achieved result after having been tempted and resisted within human limitations.

Biblical Evidence for the Relevance of Jesus' Temptations and Sinlessness

In this section, we will return to several passages discussed above because they tell of Christ's sinlessness and temptations in terms of their soteriological value for human beings. Scripture supplies three topics of his soteriological relevance: empathy, example, and a sufficient sacrifice. The first two points of relevance depend on the authenticity of Jesus' temptation; the third depends on the truth of his sinlessness.

Empathy and Help

The author of Hebrews 2:17-18 and 4:15 stresses the relevance of Jesus' experience for the readers' immediate situation of temptation. In 2:17-18, Jesus' entrance into a vulnerable human mode of life and his temptations were the necessary equipment to constitute him as a compassionate priest for the people. Because he has endured the suffering and temptation in all the ways that the readers experienced them (4:15), Jesus can offer help to others as the priest who understands their situation and is thus able to provide effective support.

The relevance of Jesus' temptations also shows in the two Hebrews passages as persuasive power to win the readers' trust in Jesus as priest, despite the suffering that accompanies their continued faith in him. He is uniquely sufficient (he is the divine Son compared to the angels) and specially and humanly compassionate (he is a perfect man compared to Moses and the Levites). Christ's exaltation as the Son of God does not remove him from being able to empathize compassionately with the readers' situation. On the contrary, he has totally identified with them in their situation of suffering and temptation in relation to obeying God. Therefore, the relevance of his temptation

experiences is the way these render him compassionate and able to help others endure their own temptations.

If Christ's temptations are diminished or denied, then his compassion and help as priest are lost. His temptations are necessary to convince suffering believers like those first addressed by the letter to the Hebrews that obedience to God is possible even in the midst of severe suffering and temptation. Hebrews 5:7-8 recalls the actual, lived example of Jesus' persistence to obey despite his suffering. Christ's obedience demonstrates his success against temptations, and for all time his experience constitutes his ability to help others (2:18; 4:16). He is also inclined to help because he knows from experience what others suffer. He is able to help because he is the God-man who relied upon divine support provided to all faithful followers. The evidence for the role of the Holy Spirit will show that Christ was dependent on God for guidance, provision, and protection, even as the readers are. The evidence of Jesus' confrontation with Satan's temptations in the wilderness showed that Christ relied on the Scriptures and prayer as a true man trusting God. He suffered and resisted temptations on the same terms as others—within his human limitations. Therefore, Jesus' temptations are necessary to his relevance of supplying help to others when they are tempted in any way.

The Pattern to Copy

Hebrews also refers to Christ as the pattern to copy in resisting temptations to sin. Hebrews 4:15 and 5:7-8 display Jesus' obedience as a real possibility for others who suffer the temptation to turn away from God's will. Hebrews 12:1-3 (below) builds on the earlier argument for Christ's superiority as priest to commend him as the readers' exemplary leader to follow in resisting temptation. A similar argument that emphasizes Jesus as a human pattern of sinlessness in the midst of suffering and temptation is in 1 Peter 2:21-25. We will consider both passages for their contribution to the biblical theme of Jesus as the pattern to copy in resisting temptation.

Jesus: The pattern to copy in Hebrews 12:1-3. The chiasmus of Hebrews 12:1-3 functions to exhort the readers to persist in faith with endurance, but not without finding strength, hope, and inspiration in the endurance of Jesus.

(1) Τοιγαροῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων,
ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν,
δι᾽ ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα
(2) ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν
Ἰησοῦν,
ὃς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς
ὑπέμεινεν σταυρὸν αἰσχύνης
καταφρονήσας ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκάθικεν.
(3) ἀναλογίσασθε γὰρ τὸν τοιαύτην ὑπομεμενηκότα
ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀντιλογίαν,
ἵνα μὴ κάμητε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν ἐκλυόμενοι.

(1) Consequently, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses around us,
we must put off every weight and the entangling sin,
so that we must run with endurance the race set before us
(2) by focusing on the founder and completer of faith,
Jesus,
who because of the joy set before him[102]
endured a cross disregarding the shame
and he has sat down at the right hand of God's throne.
(3) For think of such a one as he who has endured hostility
by sinners in himself,
so that you may not become weary, fainting in your souls.

Based on the prior argument that Christ is superior to Judaism and that the heroes of Israel's history endured in faith (towards Christ), the readers are exhorted to endure their suffering by getting rid of all opposition to their faith so that they do not become weary or fainthearted in their diligence to live by faith. Beginning with the strong summary indicator—"Consequently" (Τοιγαροῦν, 1a)—Hebrews 12 brings the argument of the entire book to a climax. This climactic exhortation is the answer to the readers' implicit question: "What shall we do about the persecution that we are about to suffer?" Structurally, the author marks off this passage by reinforcing the initial summary marker (Τοιγαροῦν) with the purpose clause (ἵνα) of 12:3b. The author reminds the readers to

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[102]The sense of ἀντὶ is controversial in this passage. William L. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, WBC, vol. 47B (Dallas: Word, 1991), 413, argues for a substitutionary sense: "instead of" the joy of heaven, he came to die. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 641, Koester, *Hebrews*, 524, and most modern translations take it as temporal: "because of" the joy of the salvation of believers, as a prize in the race. On either view, Jesus is still the example for remaining faithful to God in the face of suffering and temptation.

consider their own situation within the broader scope of history and the examples of faithfulness in Israel's history, the life of Jesus, and the work of God to sustain his people through worse perils than the readers currently experience.

The argument proceeds by first comparing the faith of the witnesses of Hebrews 11 to the readers' faith that is hindered with "weights" (ὄγκον, 1b).[103] The "cloud of witnesses" is evidence that many others have endured far worse suffering than the readers have, but these ancestors persisted in faith. The point is that the readers also can endure, but they must do as others have by ridding themselves of their own weighty distractions and the sin of unbelief by which they hinder themselves from faithfulness.[104] Such weights will cause them to "become weary" and "faint in your souls" (ἵνα μὴ κάμητε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν ἐκλυόμενοι, 3b). The athletic imagery conveys the obvious problem of running a race while bearing weights. Similarly, the readers' continued faithfulness to Christ becomes increasingly difficult when they look back to the distractions of Judaism instead of looking to Jesus as the object of their faith.

Then the author exhorts the audience based on the example of Jesus' faithful endurance on the cross. The readers must persevere in their God-given circumstances by looking to the model of endurance and considering his inspiring example of faithfulness.[105] The author argues *a fortiori* by comparing the audience's life of faith to the life demonstrated by Jesus. The letter earlier alluded to Christ's suffering and obedience (2:17; 4:15; 5:7-8), then brings these to culmination (12:2-3) with reference to

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[103]In terms of the broader argument of the book that suggests the readers are Jewish Christians tempted to return to Judaism as a way to avoid persecution for a confession of Christ, these "weights" are most likely the tempting alternative of salvation through the cultic rites and Mosaic law of Judaism.

[104]Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 409, disagrees that "the sin" is specific as apostasy, but refers to all sorts of sins that cause problems for Christians. However, Heb 3:13 seems to focus on this as the particular sin causing trouble for the readers. Either way, the force of Jesus as an example in turning away from sin to faith remains central.

[105]That Christ is the completer of the life of faith implies God's sovereign ordering of events that contribute to the sanctification of believers. This is harmonious with Paul's statement in Rom 8:28-30. T. E. Pollard, *Fullness of Humanity: Christ's Humanness and Ours*, The Croall Lectures 1980 (Sheffield: Almond, 1982), 81, argues persuasively that the "faith" of Heb 12:2 is Jesus' faith. As a real man, Jesus had to exercise faith in the tradition of the examples of faith in chap. 11. This interpretation strengthens the emphasis of the passage on Jesus as the example of faithfulness in the face of temptation.

Jesus' ultimate act of faithfulness in his crucifixion (cf. 12:4, "not yet to blood," μέχρις αἵματος). The readers must contend with their "weights" of the temptations to sin; Jesus had to contend with the sinners who betrayed, arrested, falsely accused, and executed him. The author uses nearly identical terms for the readers' entangling "sin" (ἁμαρτίαν, 1b) and the "sinners" (ἁμαρτωλῶν, 3a)[106] who afflicted Jesus, using the wordplay to create the impression that Christ is their example for resisting sin—and he experienced much more severe persecution and attendant temptations than what the readers face. Jesus, having endured not only all that they have in temptations (4:15), and on the same terms of human limitation in their weaknesses (2:17), has endured so much more suffering as the ultimate model for endurance in faith.[107] He demonstrates that obedience is possible for them just as it was for him; therefore, the readers must persist in faith with endurance by finding their strength, hope, and inspiration in Jesus.

Structurally, several features reinforce the emphasis on Jesus as the model of faithfulness. The author places Jesus' name in the final, emphatic position of the second clause (1c-2b).[108] "Endurance" (ὑπομονῆς), appearing three times in 1c, 2c, and 3a, is the repeated, thematic key to the exhortation to endure as Jesus did. This pattern follows the chiastic pattern of the passage and serves to direct the readers to Jesus as the model for endurance.

The readers must persevere by looking to Jesus both because he is the inspiring model who pioneered and triumphed in the life of faith for them, and because he is the empowering goal of their faith. The main exhortation to obedience comes in the form of an athletic metaphor, "we must run" (τρέχωμεν, 1c),[109] and is grounded on Jesus' example of faithfulness. This imperatival urgency is reinforced by the command to "think

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[106]A dual reference for "sinners" is likely to include not only the Romans and Jews who actually crucified Jesus, but also the readers of Hebrews because his punishment was for their sins too.

[107]Ibid., 405. Ὑπομονῆς and cognates are repeated in 12:1c, 2c, 3b; cf. 10:32, 36; 12:7.

[108]Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 641.

[109]The mood of the verb is subjunctive, but it has the force of an exhortation in context of warnings and the mounting intensity of life-and-death urgency in the letter.

of" or "set in your minds on" Jesus' example (ἀναλογίσασθε, 3a). The structural marker—"For" (γὰρ, 3a)—that accompanies this imperative to focus their attention on Jesus makes the transition between a focus on the ascended Christ, seated in ultimate authority (2d), and returns the readers' attention to considering his endurance of suffering (3a). Looking at what Jesus endured in his obedience with suffering, the readers must take inspiration and motivation for the purpose of enduring their own suffering of smaller proportions—"so that you do not become weary" (ἵνα μὴ κάμητε, 3b).[110] Since Christ has already gone ahead of them and completed the course of faithfulness (1c), the readers can find encouragement by continuing to follow him, despite their temptations to turn away. Jesus is not only the object for righteous faith; he is also the human-scale model of ultimate endurance in it, demonstrating a choice of obedience to God despite the cost.

The author also provides God's perspective on the suffering and sanctification that the readers fear to endure: Jesus has already made their endurance a possibility and success by his own endurance in their stead. While the readers are concerned about being able to continue forward in the race, the author assures them that the entire race belongs to Christ who is the "founder" (ἀρχηγὸν, 2a) and "completer" (τελειωτὴν, 2a) of faith. Their success in perseverance does not depend upon their efforts alone or even primarily, but upon the surety of Christ's salvation of them and the help he offers to them.

If Jesus had not been tempted in the severe ways depicted in the Gospels and Hebrews, then his value as an example for obeying God would be lost. Hebrews 12:1-3 makes use of Christ as the ultimate model of faithful obedience to God within the context of his lifelong suffering and temptation that culminated in the crucifixion. Without his likeness to the readers in temptations to sin (2:17; 4:15), the exhortation to follow Jesus' example in obeying God within human limitations loses its force. Christ's relevance as an example in 12:1-3 depends on his experience of temptation as the struggle to obey God instead of disobey in the context of suffering (cf. 5:7-8). Therefore, to diminish or deny

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[110] ἵνα + subjunctive indicates the purpose of looking to Jesus for results in their own struggle.

the severity and reality of Jesus' temptations undermines his value as an example in faithfulness. First Peter echoes the principle of Jesus' relevance as the pattern for resisting sin when believers are tempted to retaliate against unjust suffering. This special application of Jesus' suffering to the readers' situation specifies his pattern for a response in the setting of temptation.

Jesus: The pattern to copy in 1 Peter 2:21-25. Peter sets forth Jesus' life as the basis for Christian ethics, presupposing that Jesus' ethical actions are paradigmatic.

(21) εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ἐκλήθητε,
ὅτι καὶ Χριστὸς ἔπαθεν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν
ὑμῖν ὑπολιμπάνων ὑπογραμμὸν
ἵνα ἐπακολουθήσητε τοῖς ἴχνεσιν αὐτοῦ,
(22) ὃς ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν
οὐδὲ εὑρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ,
(23) ὃς λοιδορούμενος οὐκ ἀντελοιδόρει,
πάσχων οὐκ ἠπείλει,
παρεδίδου δὲ τῷ κρίνοντι δικαίως·
(24) ὃς τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν
ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον,
ἵνα
ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι
τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ζήσωμεν,
οὗ τῷ μώλωπι ἰάθητε.
(25) ἦτε γὰρ ὡς πρόβατα πλανώμενοι,
ἀλλὰ ἐπεστράφητε νῦν ἐπὶ τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν.

(21) For to this you have been called,
because Christ also suffered for you
leaving an example for you
so that you may follow in his footsteps,
(22) who did not sin
nor was found deceit in his mouth,
(23) who when being insulted he did not return insults,
when suffering he did not threaten,
but gave up to the one who judges righteously
(24) who our sins he himself bore
in his body on the cross,
so that
to sins we might die
to righteousness we might live,
for by his wounds you were healed.
(25) For you were like sheep going astray
but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.[111]

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[111]This structural layout is adapted from Elliott, *1 Peter*, 511.

Peter begins his letter by writing about salvation that is secure in the midst of life's troubles. In the second chapter, Peter reminds the readers of their value to God as the basis for exhorting their ethical conformity to Christ who bought them. Their imitation of Christ has several implications for Christian suffering and submission in social, political, and domestic relationships. Peter continues in chapters three and four to repeat both the references to Jesus' suffering and the exhortations to follow his course of righteous conduct despite suffering (3:8-18; 4:1-6, 12-19). Peter's final chapter continues the theme of ethical instruction for elders and young men in fulfillment of the salvation to which they have been called in Christ.

In 2:21-25, Peter points to Christ's conduct as one who suffered innocently as the pattern of life for domestic slaves (2:18-20) and the entire Christian community (2:13-17) in the context of their unjust suffering. The principle is that God calls his people to suffer things they do not deserve. God also honors his people when they bear undeserved suffering (2:19-20) and readily speak for him in spite of their mistreatment (3:13-16). Peter especially applies the principle to slaves, writing that they are called by God to suffer unjustly in the setting of their particular vulnerability to undeserved harsh treatment. Nonetheless, Peter's appeal to the Jesus as the pattern of such a call universalizes the principle for all Christians.[112] Peter stresses that all Christians who follow Jesus have been called by God "to this" (εἰς τοῦτο, 21), that is, called to suffer unjustly while responding honorably in spite of their suffering, just as Jesus did.[113] Such suffering is part of their identification with Christ.

Christ is the preeminent case of someone who suffered innocently.[114] He is the

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[112]In Peter's view, all Christians are slaves of God (θεοῦ δοῦλοι, 2:16). Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter,* BECNT, vol. 56 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 192, notes that Peter joins ethics to theology by using Christ as the paradigm for Christian conduct. Slaves in the ancient world were particularly vulnerable to beatings, false accusation, being deprived of children and the opportunity to marry, and wrongful death because they had no rights.

[113]Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, New American Commentary, vol. 37 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2003), 141.

[114]An OT parallel of the righteous sufferer is Job. Jesus' difference is that he alone was perfect in respect to sin and obedience to God, cf. the stress on his perfection in 1 Pet 1:19.

"unblemished and spotless lamb" (ὡς ἀμνοῦ ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου, 1:19) who bought them in salvation.[115] Peter applies Isaiah 53:9 to Jesus to demonstrate that he, though sinned against, had not sinned in word or deed to deserve what he suffered (22).[116] Peter then reminds his readers that when insulted and afflicted Jesus did not retaliate, but instead entrusted himself to God (23c; cf. 20). Peter emphasizes Christ as the paradigm of faith for when people suffer unjustly, even to the extent of the crucifixion and bearing punishment for the sin of the world as he had (24). The reference to the crucifixion in 2:24 confirms the prophecy in Isaiah that corresponds to the Gospel accounts of Jesus' silence before his abusers.[117] Jesus' refusal to lie as a way of avoiding suffering—"nor was found deceit in his mouth" (οὐδὲ εὑρέθη δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ, 22b)—contrasts starkly with Peter's regrettable lies by which he avoided the possibility of suffering for having known Jesus.[118] Peter reiterates this exhortation in the specific way of not telling lies after having warned his readers to turn away from "deceit" in 2:1 and then he reminds them again in 3:10. Jesus' example of innocence cited in 2:22 is central to Peter's repeated charge that the readers follow that pattern despite their unjust suffering.

Moreover, Jesus' innocence in contrast to the normal human response and Peter's own failure is that Christ's suffering was not only undeserved, but he also suffered vicariously for what others deserved—"for you" (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, 21b). The use of

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[115]Davids, *1 Peter*, 73, notes that the combination of OT terms indicates the complete purity of Christ as a sacrifice.

[116]Jobes, *1 Peter*, 194, notes four clear quotations and four allusions to Isa 53 in 2:21-25 as the clearest identification of the suffering servant with Jesus in the NT. Peter has his own translation of Isaiah's "violence" (חָמָס), which has the moral meaning of *doing wrong*. The LXX has "lawlessness" (ἀνομίας). Peter's translation of חָמָס as "sin" (ἁμαρτίας) emphasizes the innocence of Jesus in a way that is consistent with the meaning in Isa 53. The Servant is undeserving by his actions and words of the punishment he suffered. Jesus' fulfillment of this point of the prophecy depends on his sinless, unjust suffering.

[117]Elliott, *1 Peter*, 530. E.g., Mark 14:61; 15:5 and parallels.

[118]The Gospel tradition about Peter's three denials that he knew Jesus, and his later three-fold restoration after the resurrection would have been well-known to Peter's readers (e.g., Mark 14:66-72). Peter's denial is one of the few pericopae common to both the triple tradition and John's Gospel. Peter was likely closely involved with the early translation of the Gospel accounts into Greek for the Jerusalem Hellenists, and likely insisted on the inclusion of his denials.

Jesus as the example of this righteous response contradicts the normal human response of feeling justified for self-defense to retaliate when people have been mistreated unjustly.[119] Against this desire for retaliation, Peter points to Christ as the definitive model of one who went a different way. By his death, Christ makes others able to follow him in this different way as they copy his conduct in faithfulness to God.[120] Therefore, Peter reminds his readers that since they have been spared the suffering that they deserve for their sins, they must not tell lies to dodge the lesser suffering to which God calls them as his witnesses.

Christ's suffering was efficacious to heal the readers from their own sinful corruption (2:24) so that they can now copy his pattern by making his attitudes and actions their own. As the "pattern" (ὑπογραμμὸν, 21c) for their attitudes and actions, the readers must learn the forms and motions of righteous living by tracing over Jesus' attitudes and actions with their own.[121] Peter's metaphor of the ὑπογραμμὸς refers to the models that children used to learn to write letters and draw basic forms, tracing over the patterns as guidelines.[122] Similarly, Peter exhorts his readers to imitate Christ's actions as the guidelines for their own actions—especially when they are tempted to sin because of unjust suffering and persecution (cf. 4:1-6). The relevance of Jesus' suffering is thus twofold, constituting both their redemption by which they have returned to God (vv. 24-25) and the "pattern" or paradigm for them to copy by not sinning even when they are mistreated.

Christ's suffering wrought their salvation from sin for the purpose (ἵνα) that they "live to righteousness" (τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ζήσωμεν, 24c). He not only gives them the guidelines by his own life, but Jesus enables them for the purpose (ἵνα) that they "follow

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[119]Elliott, *1 Peter*, 531. People stop bullies by standing up to them, sometimes forcefully.

[120]Ibid., 528.

[121]Ibid., 527. Vv. 22-23 are epexegetical to explain that Jesus' actions are guidelines established for them to learn his responses despite unjust suffering.

[122]BDAG, s.v. "ὑπογραμμός."

in his steps" (ἐπακολουθήσητε τοῖς ἴχνεσιν αὐτοῦ, 21d).[123] Jesus' faithfulness in suffering to accomplish salvation makes possible the readers' faithfulness after his pattern. Peter thus answers the possible objections from his audience that mere sinners cannot possibly surmount the common response to injustice by responding instead with a blessing (cf. 3:8-12).[124]

The relevance of Jesus as the pattern for Christians is that instead of sinning when he suffered unjustly, Jesus gave himself into God's care (cf. the exhortation that the readers do the same, 4:19).[125] If Jesus had not suffered and experienced the temptation to respond in self-defense or take revenge, then he could not be the pattern as Peter commends him for Christians who suffer the insults and unjust abuse by others. Jesus' value as a paradigm of sinlessness in the midst of all sorts of suffering even to the extreme degree of his passion is relevant because he really endured that suffering. Jesus' temptations that are implied by the reminder in this account are to return insult for insult, to threaten those who tortured him, and to lie as a way of avoiding pain. Certainly, the readers of 1 Peter were tempted to do these things, but against that common human impulse for self-preservation Peter commends the pattern that Jesus laid down for them in his own conduct. To diminish or deny Jesus' temptations to retaliate against his abusers or avoid pain by lying that are implicit in his suffering would diminish his relevance as the pattern for Christians to copy.

The Sufficient Sacrifice

The soteriological relevance of Christ's sinlessness is that his ability to make the sacrifice depends upon his purity as the offering and intercessor. In the NT

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[123]Ibid., 528. Elliott gives the helpful analogy of a father walking ahead of his son in the deep snow so the boy can follow by stepping into the packed footprints.

[124]This claim that the readers' ability to endure their suffering patiently and even respond to insults and evil with a blessing entails the important point that is elaborated by the author of Hebrews: Jesus' solidarity with common humanity makes him a peer among them who enables others to live as he did.

[125]Jobes, *1 Peter,* 197.

perspective, Jesus' ability to take away sin requires his sinlessness. This was evident in the discussion of 2 Corinthians 5:21 (above). This necessity of his purity is also suggested in Hebrews 7:26-28, where Christ's difference from the Levitical priests is applied to the difference of his service for others. The other priests must offer sacrifices for their own sins before they can intercede for others.[126] Jesus, being "holy, innocent, undefiled" (ὅσιος ἄκακος ἀμίαντος, 7:26), can by his death "offer himself once for all" (ἐφάπαξ ἑαυτὸν ἀνενέγκας, 7:27; cf. 9:12, 28; 10:10) as the only effective priest with a truly sufficient sacrifice to redeem others.[127] Plainly, the relevance of his sinlessness is that such purity is essential to his priestly role in redemption. Without it, he cannot save.

This redemptive requirement that Hebrews makes explicit is in continuity with the OT promises about the necessary sinlessness of the Messiah. An example is the way Jeremiah 23:5-6 connects the Messiah's righteousness with his kingly rule in justice and righteousness. David's descendant is called the "righteous branch" (צֶמַח צַדִּיק) who will "do justice and righteousness" in the land (וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה). Jeremiah 33:15-16 repeats the same relation between the righteous character of David's branch and the righteousness and justice that he will accomplish worldwide. A similar idea is in Isaiah 9:7 and 11:1-5.

Similarly, Isaiah 53:9-12 connects the Messiah's righteous sinlessness to his efficacy as a sinless sacrifice that redeems the people from sin.[128] As the guilt offering that takes away the guilt of the people (Isa 53:10b), the Messiah had to be the righteous one who could justify others (Isa 53:11b, יַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק). Although he was innocent and righteous, the Messiah "bore the sin of all" (Isa 53:12e, חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא). In OT context,

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[126]Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, 194, notes that the daily offerings were not the annual Day of Atonement service of the high priest. The point is the contrast between the efficacy of a sinless priest and those others who cannot even come before God to intercede for others without frequently offering sacrifices for their own sins.

[127]Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 727. The offering is his death, cf. 9:11-14; 25; 10:1-15.

[128]The identifications of the Suffering Servant of Isa 53 with the promised Messiah and the fulfillment by Jesus Christ are controversial. However, the clear identification of Jesus with the Servant by quotations and allusions to Isa 53 in 1 Pet 2:21-24 is abundantly authoritative for this interpretation.

the purity of a Passover sacrifice and sin offering is established by the requirements given, for example, in Exodus 12:5 and Leviticus 22:17-25, with reaffirmation by Yahweh's censure in Malachi 1:6-14. To be acceptable to God, the offerings must be spotlessly "perfect" (תָּמִים) and "complete" in the sense of "unblemished" and "without defect" as a metaphor for moral purity and blamelessness.[129] In the divinely ordained sacrificial mechanism of the temple cult, the physically pure animals were accepted as a metaphorically pure substitutes and coverings for the sins of the people. Christ's sinlessness fulfills this OT typology and the promises of a sinless and righteous Messiah who saves the people.

Therefore, in canonical perspective, Jesus' sinlessness is doubly relevant for his role as the self-sacrifice of redemption and for his role as the righteous king establishing justice throughout the earth. Any model that diminishes or denies Christ's sinlessness also gives up these essential points of his soteriological relevance.

Conclusion

The biblical evidence for the relevance of Jesus' temptation and sinlessness confirms that each is soteriologically necessary. Jesus' relevance in empathizing with and giving help to others who struggle against temptations to sin depends on his lived experience of the same degree and extent of temptations as they experience. Jesus' relevance as the pattern for other people to copy in resisting temptation to sin likewise requires that he had to be tempted as they are. Jesus' sinlessness achieved within his limitations as a man is also redemptively necessary for him to offer a sufficient sacrifice for the sin of the world. The biblical evidence for his true temptation, sinlessness, and the relevance of each for salvation are mutually implicative.

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[129]Cf. the moral sense in Gen 6:9, where Noah is called "righteous, blameless" (צַדִּיק תָּמִים). 1 Tim 6:14 and Jas 1:27 are examples that demonstrate the way the NT explains the OT metaphor of physical perfection and bodily wholeness as moral purity.

Biblical Evidence for the Ethical Role of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Messiah

M4-M7 describe Jesus' sinlessness in terms of some sort of empowering grace by the Holy Spirit. We will consider this evidence for the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Messiah, both in the OT prophecies and the NT fulfillment in Jesus' life. The evidence for the role of the Holy Spirit is controversial[130] and diverse.[131] In the OT prophecies, the Spirit primarily equips the Messiah to rule for God while also fulfilling a prophetic task of proclamation. In the NT fulfillment of Jesus' life, the Spirit is associated with Jesus directly and indirectly. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), he was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan (Mark 1:12), he performed miracles of healing by the Holy Spirit (e.g., Luke 5:12-13), he cast out demons by the Spirit of God (Matt 12:28), and Jesus' general activity of "doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil" is associated with his possession of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38). Among these diverse pneumatological data, we will focus on the ethical aspect of the Spirit's role in the life of the Messiah because of the way this role corresponds to our topic of Jesus' temptation and sinlessness.

Old Testament Promise

OT pneumatology emphasizes the way the Spirit of God equips individuals for the prophetic and ruling tasks in Israel (including judicial, legislative, executive, and

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[130]The main issue is whether or not Jesus' experience of the Holy Spirit is archetypal for others who receive the Spirit from Christ. Pentecostal interpreters argue that Jesus was empowered by the Holy Spirit primarily to preach the gospel and perform miracles, in parallel to the Spirit's empowerment of Christians to do the same. See Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984); idem, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series [JPTSS] 16 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Robert P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts*, JSNTSS 54 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); Roger Helland, "The Hypostatic Union: How Did Jesus Function?" *Evangelical Quarterly* 65 (1993): 311-27. For a survey and critique from a self-proclaimed charismatic perspective, see Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts*, JPTSS 9 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); idem, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: In the New Testament Church and Today*, rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998). For critique from a critical, British evangelical perspective, see James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (1975; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

[131]Interpreters are divided about the Spirit's role to empower for preaching and miracles, commission, guide as a tutor, or merely be distributed by Jesus. The similarity and differences of the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christ and believers are also cause for disputes.

military tasks). The Spirit equips the Messiah for his prophetic task of proclamation by putting the words of God in his mouth (Isa 59:21). Other prophetic tasks of performing miracles should not be excluded from the Messiah because of Jesus' many miracles that obviously resemble the antecedent miracles of Israel's prophets, particularly Elijah and Elisha (cf. Jesus' self-designation as a prophet in Luke 4:25-27). Parallels are controlling nature, raising the dead, multiplying food, and healing leprosy. Moreover, the Messiah of Isaiah is a prophet like Moses, leading the people in a new Exodus of salvation.[132]

However, OT messianic pneumatology focuses on the Spirit's provision of equipment for the Messiah to govern for God as the eschatological king. This kingly role is prominent in Isaiah, announced first in Isaiah 11:1-10 and reiterated in 42:1-9 (applied to Jesus in Matt 12:17-21), 50:4-11, and 58:6. Isaiah 61:1-11 expands the kingly theme with a prophetic task to proclaim and establish a comprehensive vision of eschatological salvation, which is important because Jesus identifies himself and his ministry with this pneumatological, messianic passage (Luke 4:16-21). Isaiah 61 combines the prophetic and kingly tasks in the single mission of bringing divine salvation.

Nonetheless, we will focus on Isaiah 11:1-5 because of the emphasis on the ethical equipping of the Messiah to establish the righteousness of Yahweh as the faithful king and prophet. In this passage, the cause for hope in the promise of a Messiah who will establish Yahweh's justice and righteousness is the pneumatological ground of that righteous government in the personal, ethical formation of the Servant by the influence of the Spirit of God.[133]

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[132]Turner, *Holy Spirit*, 33.

[133]The identification of the Servant with the Messiah in Isaiah is controversial. Most critical scholars reject the idea. In Isaiah, the Servant refers alternately to Israel, an individual (such as Cyrus), and the Davidic Messiah. In Isa 61, as in Isa 11:1-10 and 42:1-4, the Servant is an individual who represents Israel since the mission is directed to Israel, and the speaker's voice is singular—"upon me" (עָלַי, 1a). Jesus applies Isa 61:1-3 and 58:6 to himself in Luke 4:16-21, making the interpretation of a Servant-Messiah synthesis clear. Isaiah develops both the Servant and Messiah themes and combines them in Isa 61; the Servant-Messiah is the eschatological prophet-king who both proclaims and establishes the salvation depicted in Isaiah 58-61.

Isaiah 11:1-5[134]

(1) וְיָצָא חֹטֶר מִגֵּזַע יִשָׁי
וְנֵצֶר מִשָּׁרָשָׁיו יִפְרֶה׃
(2) וְנָחָה עָלָיו רוּחַ יְהוָה
A רוּחַ חָכְמָה וּבִינָה
B רוּחַ עֵצָה וּגְבוּרָה
C רוּחַ דַּעַת וְיִרְאַת יְהוָה׃
(3) C` וַהֲרִיחוֹ בְּיִרְאַת יְהוָה
B` וְלֹא־לְמַרְאֵה עֵינָיו יִשְׁפּוֹט
A` וְלֹא־לְמִשְׁמַע אָזְנָיו יוֹכִיחַ׃
(4) B`` וְשָׁפַט בְּצֶדֶק דַּלִּים
A`` וְהוֹכִיחַ בְּמִישׁוֹר לְעַנְוֵי־אָרֶץ
D וְהִכָּה־אֶרֶץ בְּשֵׁבֶט פִּיו
D` וּבְרוּחַ שְׂפָתָיו יָמִית רָשָׁע׃
(5) E וְהָיָה צֶדֶק אֵזוֹר מָתְנָיו
E` וְהָאֱמוּנָה אֵזוֹר חֲלָצָיו׃

(1) Then a branch will proceed from the trunk of Jesse,
and a sprout from his roots will bear fruit.
(2) And the Spirit of Yahweh will remain upon him,
A the Spirit of wisdom and understanding
B the Spirit of counsel and strength
C the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh.
(3) C` And he will delight in the fear of Yahweh,
B` and not by seeing with his eyes will he judge
A` and not by hearing with his ears will he decide;
(4) B`` but he has judged the poor with righteousness
A`` and he has decided for the afflicted of the earth with equity
D and he has struck the earth with the scepter of his mouth,
D` and with the breath of his lips he has slain the wicked.
(5) E And righteousness is the belt around his waist,
E` and faithfulness [is] the belt [around] his mid-section.

In Isaiah, the promise of a Messiah-Servant first appears in 7:14 and becomes clearer as the chapters unfold to depict the Messiah as a ruler and prince of peace in 9:1-7. The cause for hope in his rule appears in 11:1-10, where Isaiah writes that the Spirit of God will specially equip the Davidic descendant for his task of ruling for Yahweh in

[134]The Hebrew text for this and all subsequent OT quotations is from the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, ed. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, 5th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1997).

righteousness and justice.[135] In each of the three pairs of pneumatic endowments of 11:2, the synthetic parallelism of the two terms constitutes one quality (*hendiadys*). The results of these three endowments are the Servant's ruling actions of 11:3-5. The global effect of the Servant's ruling actions is the restoration of the world order, signified by the peaceful relationships among the wild and domestic animals (11:6-7), between animals and people (11:8), and peace among people in Jerusalem and throughout the world (11:9) that looks to the Messiah in his glory of a righteous reign (11:10). Our concern is specially the three-fold pneumatological endowment and results in the Servant's actions (11:2-5).

The first two pairs in 11:2 are qualities for two governing tasks that are closely related: decision-making and judging. In the first pair, "wisdom" and "understanding" (וּבִינָה חָכְמָה, A) are the Servant's endowments to enable his righteous decision-making in civil and military matters for the benefit of the people.[136] This decision-making task is reiterated in 11:3 (A`) and 11:4 (A``). In the second pair of 11:2, "counsel" and "strength" (עֵצָה וּגְבוּרָה, B) are the king's equipment for his task as judge. The judicial task is reiterated by the descriptions of the Servant's judging actions in 11:3 (B`) and 11:4 (B``). Both tasks are pneumatological in the endowments and the unusual manner of the Servant's decision-making and judging according to a transcendent standard of righteousness and equity (11:4; B``, A``), not simply according to what he sees (11:3; B`) or by what he hears (11:3; A`). Therefore, the Servant's decisions and judgments are righteous and just because the Spirit who remains upon him specially bonds the Servant in relationship to Yahweh.

Pneumatic empowerment for ruling by uncommon wisdom and leadership was also the case for Saul (1 Sam 10:10) and David (1 Sam 16:13) when each had been

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[135]Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, AB, vol. 19 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 265. "It seems that all the charismatic endowments listed converge on the tasks of the equitable administration of justice (3-5). That this was viewed throughout the Near East and beyond as the primary responsibility of the ruler is abundantly in evidence."

[136]Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 122. John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, WBC, vol. 24 (Waco: Word, 1985), 172.

chosen by God to be king. The Spirit equipped them to be leaders of the people for God. This pneumatic equipment was evident in David's life even before he came to the throne. People recognized the effect of the Spirit's presence in terms of his valor, prudence, and the general sense that God was with him in a special way (1 Sam 16:18). A similar case of pneumatic equipping for a governing role occurred in the life of Moses and Solomon.[137] In the case of the Messiah-Servant of Isaiah 11, the Spirit of God equips him in specific ways to assure people of his reliability and competency as God's eschatological king.

The third pair of pneumatic endowment in 11:2 points to the religious-ethical life of the king who obeys God above all other considerations.[138] The third gift is the most important in the passage because, as Solomon and Saul proved by their sinful folly, without the ethical formation of conformity to God's heart, the king might still turn away despite his gifts of wisdom and strength. Structurally, this gift is emphasized at the chiastic center of the passage (11:2; C; 11:3; C`). The king will serve Yahweh faithfully because of his firsthand, relational "knowledge" of Yahweh and his reverential, religious "fear of Yahweh" (דַּעַת וְיִרְאַת יְהוָה:, C). The two terms in the pair point to the single quality of the king's ethical formation to be the righteous servant able to accomplish the righteous rule and justice of God. The second term of his "fear" confirms that the "knowledge" is the relational, devotional, and personal "knowledge-of" God, which includes the objective and merely theological "knowledge-about" God. The Servant's action of *doing* justice is dependent upon his *being* as a man conformed to God's will.[139]

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[137]Moses had several ruling functions as God's leader of the people: judging their disputes, ordering their lives with laws for every area of life, and commanding them in battle. When the Moses motif is taken up and applied to Jesus in the NT accounts and commentary, these additional functions must be included, even as Jesus' foretelling of his return shows generally that his primary function will be to rule (cf. 1 Cor 15:24-28; Rev 20:6). The pneumatic means of the ruling endowment for Solomon is implicit in the statements that God gave him uncommon wisdom to rule the people for God (e.g., 1 Kgs 4:29-34; 5:12).

[138]In OT perspective, religion and ethics are integrated so that devotion to God is obedience to him in all attitudes and action towards God, the world, and other people.

[139]Cf. Ps 40:7-8, "I have come . . . to do your will, O God"; Heb 10:5-7 applies this OT text to Jesus.

Isaiah 11:4-5 elaborate Servant's righteousness and faithfulness (E, E`) that are the ethical basis for his righteous action (D, D`). The shift to perfect tense (D, E, E`) expresses the completed action of these verbs as the surety of Yahweh's righteousness established on earth by his pneumatologically-endowed Servant.

Because of the presence of the Spirit to equip the Servant with the ethical formation necessary for righteous rule, the promised king would be conformed to God in obedience. This ethical quality is what Saul lacked in his regrettable reign by which he lost his kingship through repeated disobedience to God. By contrast, David's most notable distinction and singular greatness was his ethical formation to become a man who obeyed God: David was "a man after [God's] own heart" (1 Sam 13:14).[140] As David's descendant, the Servant-Messiah of Isaiah 11 bears this religious-ethical resemblance in a surpassing way because the Spirit of God causes this ethical conformity to God's will.

Ethical action in faithfulness to God is the preeminent quality that Yahweh values in his king. This importance shows in the emphatic final position of this third pair of attributes in Isaiah 11:2.[141] In the OT wisdom tradition, the "fear of Yahweh" is the precondition and basis for wisdom—the practical knowledge of how to successfully accomplish tasks and, most of all, to live well.[142] The importance of the Servant's ethical formation under the influence of the Spirit also shows in the context of Isaiah 11:1-10, which forms a chiasm that emphasizes Yahweh's righteousness and justice that the Servant has been equipped to bring about for Israel.[143] Isaiah 42:1 reiterates the Spirit's ethical role in the life of the Servant-Messiah to "uphold him" (אֶתְמָךְ־בּוֹ) for the result that he will rule with justice. Isaiah 50:4-5 tells details of Yahweh's empowerment of the

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[140]Stephen's application of this passage to David in his speech in Acts 13:22 confirms the identification.

[141]The ethical dimension is the single condition of the covenant in the repeated promise of blessing should the king obey Yahweh's law (e.g., Ps 89:30-32). The priority of ethical formation shows in the way that Solomon's wisdom without sufficient the ethical formation failed him as he turned to idolatry.

[142]Job 28:28; Ps 111:10; Prov 1:7; 9:10; 15:33.

[143]Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, 171.

Servant in ethical fortitude "not to disobey" (לֹא מָרִיתִי; 5b) and shrink back from facing his humiliation and suffering. Sinclair Ferguson makes a similar observation about the ethical orientation of Isaiah 11:1-3; 50:4-5; and 42:1 in his synthetic interpretation: "The convergence of these various strands of the Old Testament suggests that the ministry of the Spirit to Jesus during the 'hidden years' was intimately related to his understanding of God's word and his sensitivity and obedience to it as he came to recognize its significance for his own life."[144]

The ethical emphasis of the Spirit's work had become primary in the developing pneumatology as revelation progressed in the developing canon of the OT. John Oswalt comments on this trend in Isaiah 11:2: "To say that God's spirit was upon someone became almost a code phrase for saying that the person was acting out of a capacity which was more than merely human. This phrase came to be applied supremely to capacity for ethical behavior."[145] Oswalt notes Ezekiel 36:25-27 as proof of this trend, where the main effect of the indwelling Holy Spirit in the new covenant is the new heart by which God's people will finally obey him.

Moreover, the centrality of the heart in God's assessment of human life and in the theological explanation for human action is an abundant biblical theme that integrates religious and ethical life in the single concept of obedience to God.[146] Accordingly, the Servant promised in Isaiah 11 will be a great king because of the Spirit of God who remains upon him for his ethical formation to be a man after God's own heart, as David had been—and in a way greater than David was. Because of God's Spirit remaining upon him, the Servant will be a man who knows and obeys Yahweh, thus assuring the people that his righteousness and justice is well-founded in a God-formed ethical life. In NT fulfillment of Isaianic prophecy, Jesus' pneumatic purity (Luke 1:35b) and development

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[144]Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 44.

[145]John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: 1-39*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 20 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 279.

[146]E.g., Gen 6:5; Prov 4:23.

in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men (Luke 2:40, 52) are based on the pneumatological righteousness of Isaiah 11:1-4 and confirm the ethical orientation of the Spirit's role.[147]

Therefore, the promise in Isaiah is an assurance to the people because the means by which the Servant will accomplish God's righteousness and restoration is the Spirit who forms him ethically.[148] When we consider this evidence in light of our topic and the NT fulfillment of Jesus' experience of temptations, we can see that the Holy Spirit's ethical role is important to guide and influence Jesus' ethical development and resistance to sin as a man.

New Testament Fulfillment

The NT is clear that the Spirit was pervasively involved in the Messiah's early life, particularly for his religious-ethical formation to be the man who was tempted yet remained sinless. Jesus' birth, growth, and ministry are each associated with the special action of the Holy Spirit. We will limit the discussion to the ethical aspect of the Spirit's action.

Birth and early life. Matthew and Luke tell of the Spirit's role in the special births of Jesus and John the Baptizer, signaling by the flurry of pneumatic activity surrounding these two births that the eschatological fulfillment of the promised salvation has begun.[149] Jesus' conception is distinct from John's as the two Gospels show the Holy Spirit as the creative agent that brings about the Son's entrance into human existence by means of Mary's formless seed and void womb, recalling the Spirit's similar creative role

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[147]Turner, *Holy Spirit*, 24. Cf. Ferguson, *Holy Spirit*, 43, "Luke 2:52 is the fulfillment and application of Isaiah 11:1-3a."

[148]Ferguson, *Holy Spirit*, 52, comes to a similar conclusion: "The fact that Jesus was the Man of the Spirit is, therefore, not merely a theological categorization; it was a flesh-and-blood reality. What was produced in him was fully realized human holiness. He was the incarnation of the blessed life of the covenant and of the kingdom-beatitudes which are its fruit."

[149]Ibid., 22. Zacharias, Mary, Elizabeth, and Simeon are all filled by the Spirit to prophesy about Jesus and John, besides the many angelic visitations and star in the night skies that drew the Magi.

in the formless and void world of Genesis 1:2.[150] Despite Jesus' difference from John, Luke's comparison of the two boys' development suggests that the divine Son was not only brought into his Incarnation by the Spirit in purity, but that he was accompanied by the Spirit from his conception onward in the same or a greater way than John was filled by the Spirit (Luke 1:15).[151] This *a fortiori* comparison of the two boys is clear when Luke notes Jesus' development twice (2:40, 52) but mentions John's growth only once (1:80). Luke's note that Jesus was filled with wisdom and had the grace of Yahweh upon him (2:40) suggests the spiritual or religious-ethical growth in Jesus' awareness of Yahweh and an experience of God's presence with him in some sense. This recalls the wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge and fear of Yahweh that are the pneumatic equipment of the Servant in Isaiah 11:2.[152] Geerhardus Vos also observes this emphasis on the pneumatic influence for religious-ethical formation in the Isaianic prophecies and the fulfillment in Jesus: "The Spirit furnishes the official equipment of the Messiah (Isa 11:2, 28:6, 42:1, 59:21), in which the Spirit affects the Messiah's subjective religious life, and what the Spirit through Messiah comes to be for the people: the Spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahweh."[153] Luke's use of a passive participle in Luke 2:40 tells that Jesus was "being filled with wisdom" (πληρούμενον σοφίᾳ). This is likely a divine passive for the unnamed Holy Spirit who was continuously with Jesus.[154] Luke strongly implies the pneumatic aspect by adding, "and the grace of God was upon him" (καὶ χάρις θεοῦ ἦν ἐπ' αὐτό). The two statements of wisdom and grace indicate Jesus'

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[150]Raymond E. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 314.

[151]Gerald F. Hawthorne, *The Presence and the Power: The Significance of the Holy Spirit in the Life and Ministry of Jesus* (Dallas: Word, 1991), 89. "When Luke says that John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit before his birth, we should assume that this was true of Jesus also." This interpretation is consistent with the Isa 42:6b promise that Yahweh would hold the Servant's hand and watch over him.

[152]Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 274. Bock thinks that reference to the grace of God indicates his moral growth.

[153]Geerhardus Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 161.

[154]Hawthorne, *Presence and the Power*, 99. Hawthorne's interpretation of Luke 2:40-52 is that "God was even then in the process of graciously fitting Jesus out with those special powers requisite for the unique role he was to play in redemptive history" (ibid., 101).

growth in his understanding of God's will, spiritual growth along with his physical growth.[155] Luke 2:40 and 2:52 allude to the promise in Isaiah 11:1-2 that the Holy Spirit would form the ethical life of the Messiah. This promise is fulfilled as Jesus developed under the influence of the Spirit of God (χάρις θεοῦ, Luke 2:40b).

Baptism. At Jesus' Jordan baptism the Holy Spirit descended to him in a visible way (Mark 1:10 and par.) to indicate that his entire ministry is under the influence of the Holy Spirit and in obedience to his Father. The event is clearly eschatological since John the Baptizer recognizes Jesus as the Servant of Isaiah because of the Spirit that rests upon him (John 1:33).

The question is disputed as to whether the Spirit descends upon Jesus to empower him, to commission him, or merely to confirm for him and John that Jesus is the Messiah.[156] The occasion of the baptism, a significant metaphor of spiritual purification, guides our interpretation of the event to connect the Spirit with the eschatological salvation of cleansing (Ezek 36:25-27). This is the same subject that John preached about in his call for a baptism of repentance and his prophecy of the Greater One who was to come and bring a greater baptism by means of the eschatological Spirit (Mark 1:7-8).[157] Moreover, in Luke's account, Simeon has already recognized Jesus as the Messiah (Luke 2:26-32), so the descent of the Spirit and the word of affirmation from heaven must mean something else than that Jesus became the anointed one at the Jordan. Instead of merely the empowerment that came by the Spirit to others anointed in the past, it seems that the Spirit and the voice signify primarily an endorsement and confirmation of Jesus for his mission as the Messiah sent from heaven.[158] This sign is especially

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[155]Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 254.

[156]Pentecostals who find evidence for a two-stage experience of the Holy Spirit typically count Jesus' Jordan baptism as his reception of pneumatic empowerment for ministry, having already received the Spirit for relationship.

[157]Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, WBC, 34A (Dallas: Word, 1989), 25, 33.

[158]Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 344.

important in Mark's account because he has no infancy narrative to establish Jesus' relation to heaven as Matthew and Luke do.[159]

Wilderness. The triple tradition tells that the next step after the Spirit's descent and the voice from heaven is that the Spirit directed Jesus into the wilderness (Mark 1:12 and par.). This agreement on the Spirit's initial role as a guide for Jesus should count as an additional clue for the interpretation of the Spirit's overall role from this point in Jesus' life forward. Under the Spirit's direction, Jesus faces temptations by the devil in the wilderness by responding with Scripture. The Holy Spirit's ethical role to test Jesus by subjecting him to temptation as preparation for his public ministry is implicit.

Interpretations of the Spirit's role as limited to commissioning for official ministry or empowerment for preaching and miracles are inadequate in light of this emphasis on the Spirit's guidance by which he "drove" Jesus into the wilderness (ἐκβάλλει, Mark 1:12). An interpreter nearer to the event is Peter (Acts 10:38) who explains Jesus' action throughout his life with a pneumatological emphasis.[160] Peter's summary of Jesus' ministry in Acts 10:38 connects the Holy Spirit with the entire range of Jesus' work in power, from his "doing good" to his "healing all who were oppressed by the devil," adding the explanation, "for God was with him." The ethical orientation of the Spirit's role seems to be in view here since the last phrase of 10:38 is a Septuagintal idiom for God's guidance and protection.[161]

Conclusion

The OT and NT evidence for the role of the Holy Spirit in the Messiah's life

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[159]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-IX)*, AB, vol. 28 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 229.

[160]Ibid., 230. Fitzmyer takes Acts 10:38 as Luke's interpretation of the baptism by Peter's statement. Clearly, Luke has abbreviated the speeches in both volumes of his account to convey his messages, but this does not mean that he is misrepresenting what Peter said.

[161]Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, SPS, vol. 5 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992), 193. He notes these examples: Gen 21:20, 22; 39:2; Exod 3:12; Isa 58:11.

are fully harmonious and mutually illuminating as the promise and initial fulfillment.[162] Isaiah 11:1-5 shows that the Holy Spirit is an enabling associate of the Servant-Messiah for both his roles as prophet and king.[163] The ethical-religious aspect of the Servant's pneumatic equipment indicates an important role that corresponds to Jesus' sinlessness despite his many temptations. Gospel evidence for the ethical aspect of the Holy Spirit's involvement with Jesus is important data for Jesus' moral life that fulfills the OT promises with Jesus' concrete experiences of temptation and righteous action.

Conclusion to the Biblical Evidence

The biblical evidence for Jesus' temptation, sinlessness, the relevance of each for salvation, and the ethical role of the Holy Spirit is clear. Christ experienced temptations in the context of his earthly human life, within his human limitations, and especially as reported during the years of his ministry. He struggled against temptations in a way that made him credibly compassionate towards others who experience the same struggles. Jesus' difference from others is that he never sinned in all his temptations.

Furthermore, the biblical evidence warrants the traditional theological inference that Christ did not have original sin because the Holy Spirit specially wrought the Son's incarnation as a virginal conception. As the result, Jesus is holy from the moment of conception (Luke 1:35), and yet he battled temptations within his human limitations to emerge sinless from each conflict. His sinlessness is relevant to his efficacy as priest who can completely deal with the sins of the people. Despite his difference of being sinless, Scripture commends Christ to others as the pattern to copy in resisting temptation to sin. Scripture is also clear that Jesus himself offers help for people to

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[162]Some details of this interpretation of promise and fulfillment in the already-not yet scheme are disputed by some interpreters who do not see OT promises of a messianic kingdom on the earth that is distinct from the progress of the Gospel in the present ministry of the Church.

[163]The two vocations here are additional to the third role as priest (Mark 10:45; Heb 9:14); however, this priestly role was not clear in the Isaianic passages that connect the Spirit with the Servant's work. Moreover, the priestly vocation is certainly implicit in light of Jesus' ministry and the testimony of Hebrews that he offered himself *through the eternal Spirit*. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 240, agrees that because this section in Hebrews alludes to Isaiah, the unique reference to the Spirit in connection with Jesus' self-sacrifice is a reference to the Holy Spirit and his sustaining empowerment in the deed.

imitate his pattern of obedience.

Moreover, Scripture tells of an ethical aspect of the Holy Spirit's role in Jesus' life. This role is announced in the OT promises as the equipment of the eschatological king who establishes divine righteousness and salvation. This role is concretely fulfilled in the conception, development, and adult life of Jesus even before he comes to his throne. Figure 8 summarizes eight conclusions from the biblical evidence.

1. Full Extent of Human Temptations
2. Human Limitations
3. Full Degree of Human Temptations
4. Sinlessness
5. Empathy
6. The Pattern to Copy
7. The Sufficient Sacrifice
8. Ethical Role of the Holy Spirit

Figure 8. Eight Points of the Biblical Evidence

Scripture does not resolve the difficulties that arise when theologians affirm the conclusions of Jesus' temptation and sinlessness together with the Christological conclusions that he is fully God and fully man. One difficulty is that, being divinely impeccable and untemptable, Christ's experience of true temptation to sin seems impossible. In light of the evidence for his divinity, the evidence for his temptation seems less credible. He could not have faked the temptations because such deception was impossible for him. Moreover, if he had merely pretended to wrestle against temptations that were otherwise unreal for him, then the relevance would be lost. He could be neither a compassionate priest nor an example from his having struggled within a human frame of life as others do. His relevance depends upon the authenticity of his temptations. Any satisfactory model of Christ's impeccability and temptation must reconcile his full

divinity with the authenticity of his temptations to sin.

Another difficulty is that, being divinely unable to do otherwise than good, Jesus' example for resisting temptation to sin seems diminished. Divine impeccability (necessary goodness) seems to make Jesus no more realistic of a pattern to copy than God himself. Of course, God is an example to be emulated by his people as the ideal (e.g., Matt 5:48; Eph 5:1), but the special relevance of Jesus' example in sinlessness is that in him people have a peer with a human scale of life to copy.[164] In Christ, God has demonstrated the possibility and pattern of an obedient life in the midst of suffering and temptation to sin. Any satisfactory model of Christ's impeccability and temptation must reconcile his full divinity with the exemplary value of his sinlessness as a peer-level human achievement.

We have passed over the biblical data for Jesus' full divinity and humanity by assuming the interpretation of Scripture as reached by the orthodox tradition. The claim for his full humanity is implicit in the evidence for his temptation, sinlessness, and the relevance of each, reviewed above. However, the claim for his full divinity must be included among the conclusions from the biblical evidence because this assertion is what causes difficulties of his praiseworthiness, ability to be an example for humans, and the compossibility of his impeccability and temptations. Accordingly, the orthodox interpretation of the biblical evidence for his divinity becomes a ninth condition for an adequate model of Christ's impeccability and temptation.

Theologians have formulated seven models for reconciling these biblical data for Jesus' divinity, humanity, temptation, sinlessness, the relevance of his moral experiences for salvation, and the role of the Holy Spirit. We will evaluate these models in light of the conclusions from the biblical evidence. This evaluation will be the basis for constructing a contemporary statement in view of the biblical theology and historical theology.

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[164]Richard Sturch, *The Word and the Christ: An Essay in Analytic Christology* (New York: Oxford, 1991), 188-90.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF SEVEN MODELS

We will evaluate each model in view of how each one handles the biblical evidence and other doctrines in a systematic theological formulation. Our evaluation acknowledges the contextualization of each model on the way to assembling a statement that is relevant today. Two ever-present risks in theology are (1) to make a statement that is either irrelevant to the contemporary concerns and mindset, or (2) to make a statement so relevant that it is bound to one or more currents of the contemporary worldview (e.g., philosophy, psychology, anthropology, historiography, etc.) in a way that supplants the biblical source. Theology must truthfully explain the biblical data in terms that are comprehensible to the contemporary mind. The culture-specific and time-bound characteristics of theology sometimes make formulations inadequate for other times and cultures while being essentially correct as explanations of the biblical data.[1]

Theologians writing about Christ's impeccability and temptation in earlier periods of the Church have developed different models that reflect the changes of concerns in each successive period. Each of the seven models is essentially correct, emphasizing this or that aspect of the problem. We will review the development and distinctive aspects of these models with a summary of each on the way to evaluating them. Table 1 summarizes each model with the key question, answer, and some primary concerns that shaped each model as a solution to its perceived problems and needs.

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[1]Sydney Cave, *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), 234. Cave gives an evaluation of the patristic Christological models, but the principle is the same for early models of Christ's impeccability and temptation. "These classic formulae are too inconsistent and too obscure, too embedded in ways of thought which have lost for us their meaning, to save us from the trouble of thinking for ourselves on the highest of all themes."

Table 1. Summary of M1-M7 Key Questions and Concerns

Model	*Key Question*	*Answer*	*Primary Concerns*
M1: Sinless by Innate Impeccability	How was Jesus sinless?	God is impeccable, and Jesus is the divine Son, so Jesus is impeccable	Jesus is divine despite having become a man for salvation
M2: Sinless by Divinization	How does the union of Jesus' divinity with his humanity make him sinless?	His divine nature divinizes his human nature to bear the divine attribute of impeccability	The union of his two natures; impassibility; salvation as a healing; the powerful effect of the divine nature
M3: Sinless by Divine Hegemony	How does Jesus' operation in two natures result in his sinlessness as a man?	The divine Logos directs his humanity sinlessly in all the actions of his human experience	Protect divine immutability; human nature is the instrument used in redemption; Jesus' likeness to others
M4: Sinless by Empowering Grace	How is Jesus sinless as a man in a way that he can be an example for others?	Divine grace empowers Jesus to act sinlessly in his humanity, just grace is given to empower others	Protect divine transcendence and human passibility and mutability; integrity of each nature; human freedom and example
M5: Sinless by Created Grace	How could Christ's humanity be impeccably deiform and yet temptable?	Grace given in the soul secures his impeccability while the body is an avenue for his temptability	Protect his divinity from human frailties; human freedom to earn merit; he only assumed bodily defects for redemption
M6: Temptable by Human Eclipse of Divine Power	How is Christ able to be temptable in redemptive solidarity with humanity?	He voluntarily stooped to the limits a weak humanity that was a veil concealing his divine power	Protect his ability to be tempted as a man; sinlessness is a human achievement for others to follow; temptations were real
M7: Temptable by Humanization	How was the Logos able to suffer temptation truly and relevantly as a man?	Jesus humanized either his divine impeccability or his knowledge of it so he could be tempted as a man	Jesus' experience of human life in terms common human experience; his true temptation unmitigated by divinity

As a general description of the historical development, the earlier models emphasize Christ's impeccable divinity and the later models emphasize his temptable humanity. Figure 9 displays this progression from impeccability and to temptability.

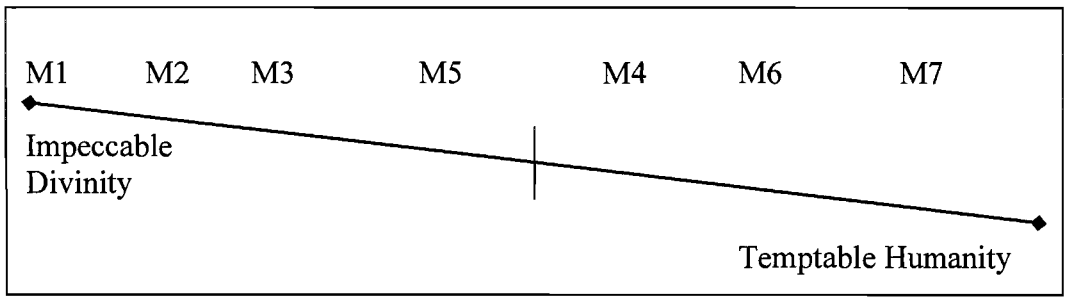

Figure 9. The Range of Emphases in M1-M7

We can interpret the data broadly by recalling that the earliest needs in theology were to declare and defend the impeccable divinity of Christ as part of the Nicene faith. NT soteriology also required the full deity of Jesus. With M1-M3 having established this implication of Nicene theology for Jesus' impeccability, M4 emphasizes the biblical evidence of Jesus' temptable humanity and the exemplary relevance of his life for believers to follow. However, the historical trend is uneven. Collecting all of the patristic models for re-use in the medieval setting, M5 retrenches the earliest emphases on protecting Christ's impeccability while diminishing his temptations. M6 reverses this medieval retrenchment in the trajectory of M4 that M7 takes to the extreme. The needs changed with the times until the modern period when the interest in Jesus' temptable humanity became primary. Across the two millennia of development, the models balance each other to affirm both Jesus' divine impeccability and his human temptability. The contextual concerns of the setting for each model required each formula that explains the biblical data in each particular way. With this array of theology as background, a contemporary restatement can draw valuable aspects from each of the models.

Figure 10 displays the historical relationships between the seven models according to how they have drawn from and contributed to other models in each period. Prominent connections are the way that M2 and M3 specify the necessity of M1 as volitional and natural necessity, and the way M5 collects elements from M2-M4.

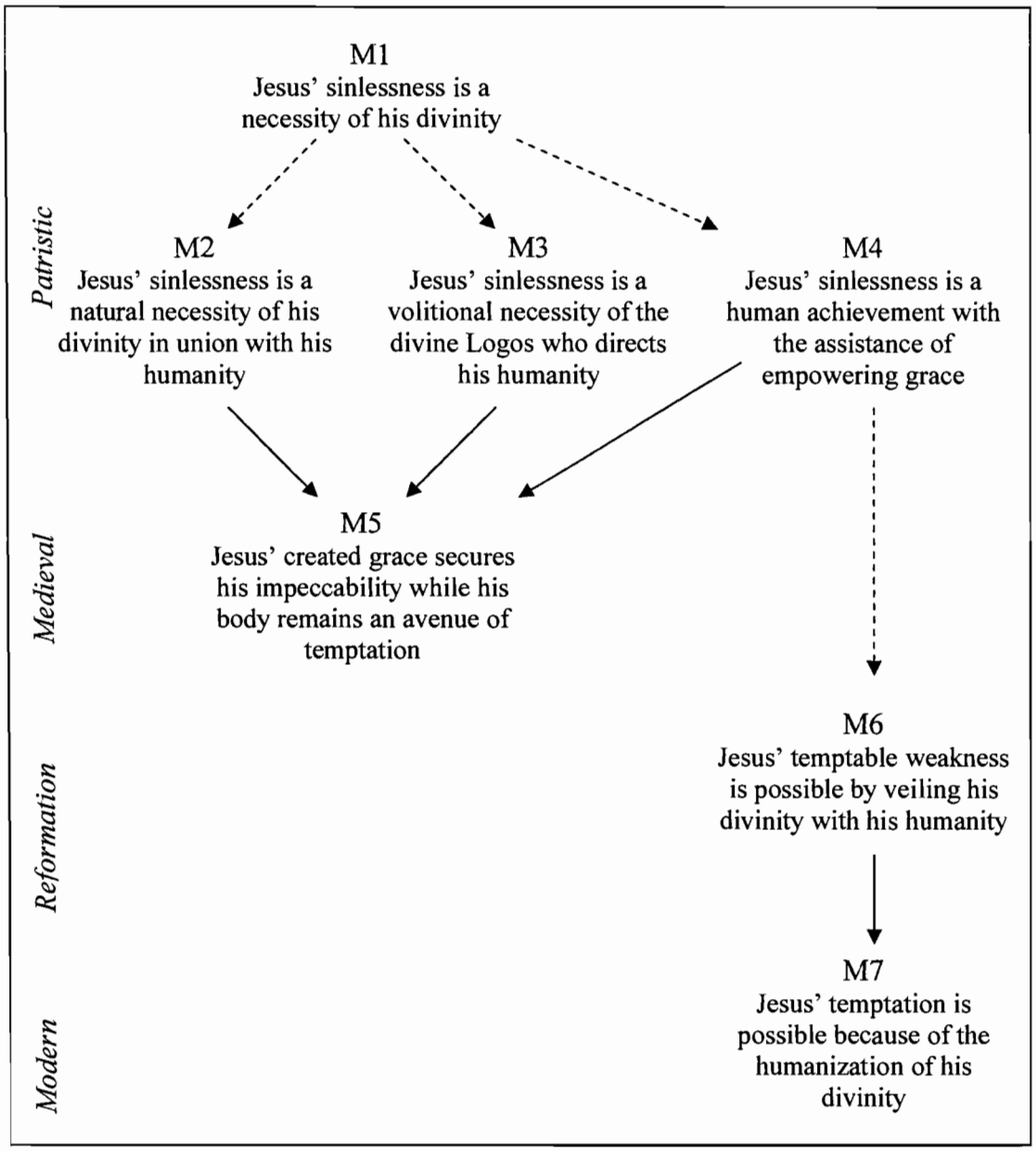

Figure 10. Historical Relationships of M1-M7

Another prominent connection in Figure 10 is the direct flow in M4, M6, and M7 of repeated emphasis on Jesus' humanity. M6 is also independent of M5, which reflects the Reformation trend to renew theology in distinct ways by returning to the patristic writings and Scripture while ignoring or rejecting medieval formulations. Dashed lines indicate influence of a reduced degree; solid lines indicate a strong influence

The same historical relationships can be displayed in a different arrangement that shows the ideological developments more clearly. Figure 11 repeats the umbrella or central background role of M1 for all the models as the basic theological starting point.

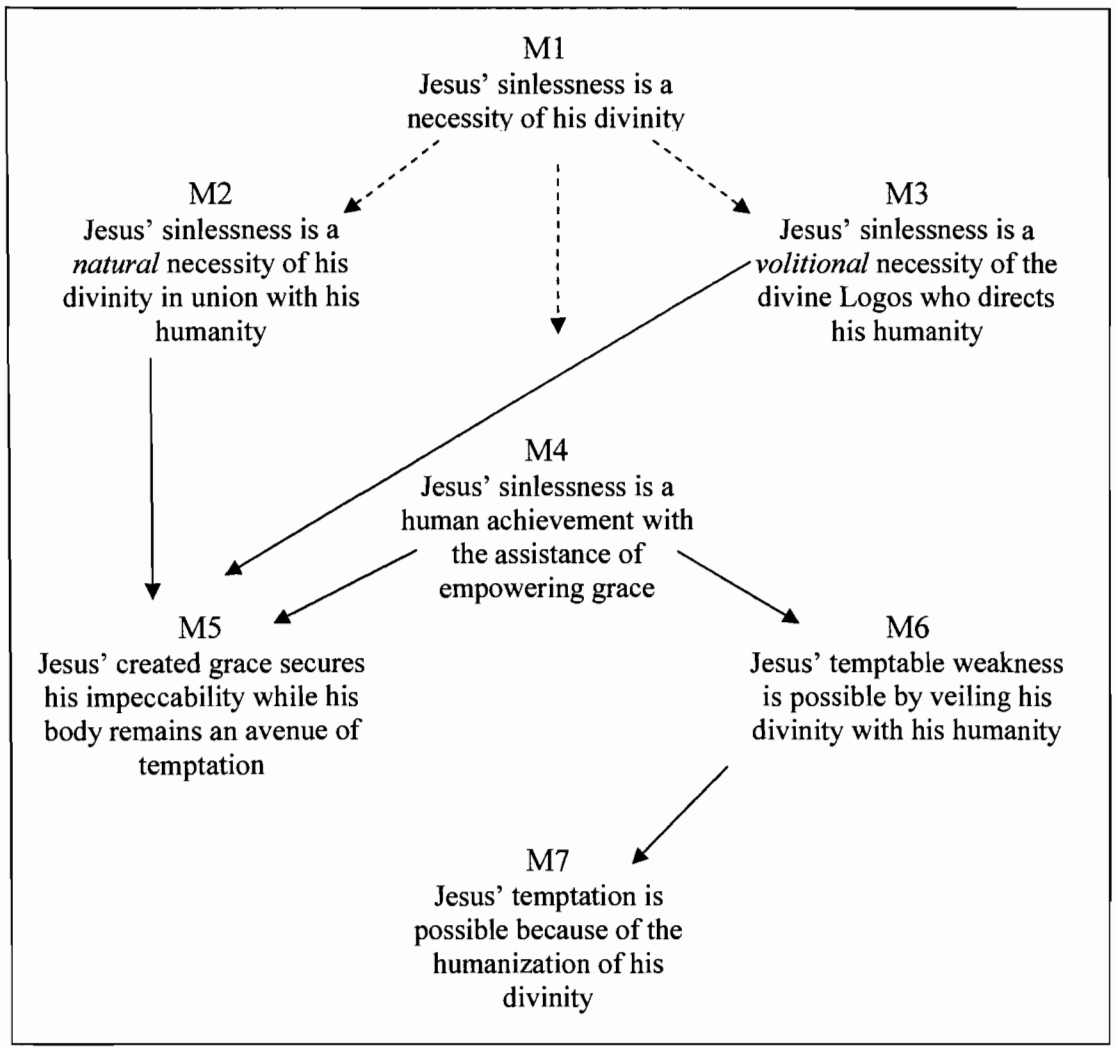

Figure 11. Ideological Relationships of M1-M7

The emphasis on necessity in M1 is divided by M2 and M3. M4 is in the center to show the prominence of this model throughout all four periods. The central importance of M4 is due partly to Augustine's strong influence in western theology. M5 draws directly from M2, M3, and M4. M6 reverses the M5 emphasis on Jesus' divine impeccability to strengthen the M4 emphasis on Jesus as a temptable, suffering example. In the setting of the apologetic-oriented patristic theology that so forcefully defended the deity of Christ, M1, M2, and M3 leave some unfinished business of explaining the ways and means of Christ's temptable humanity as an example for human obedience to God. M4 fills that gap. While M5 repeats the earlier emphasis on Jesus' divinity with less to say about his humanity that is relevant and held in common with the rest of humanity, M6 represents a similar theme to M4 by stressing the full, temptable humanity of Jesus in solidarity with common humanity. This theme continues in M7, which is also theologically opposite M1.

Table 1 and Figures 9, 10, and 11 summarize M1-M7 in different ways for the sake of evaluating the models in view of the biblical evidence summarized in Figure 12.

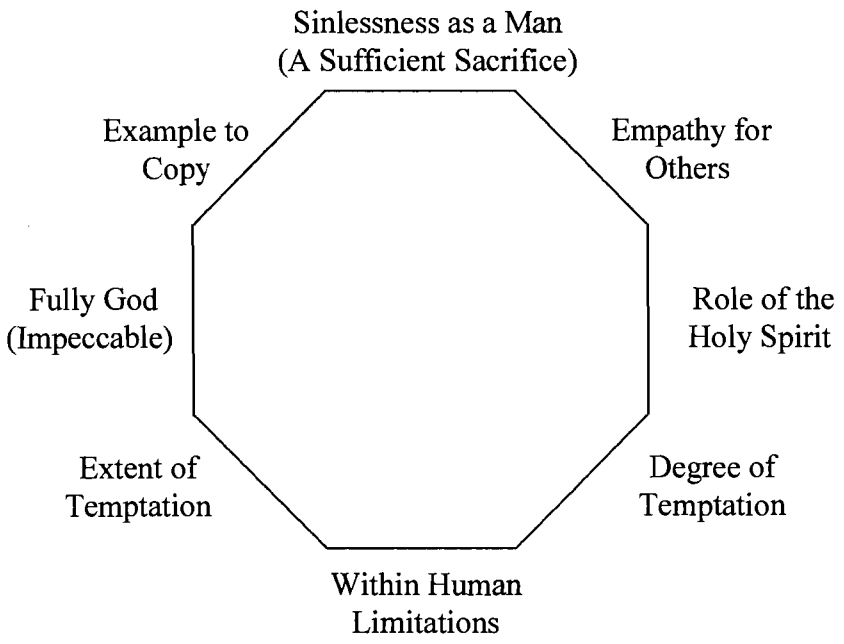

Figure 12. Boundaries of the Biblical Evidence

For our evaluation of each model, we will review the key question, concerns, influential theories, explanation for Jesus' temptations, and rationale. Then, we will consider the merits and problems of each model in view of the biblical evidence and theological system (particularly soteriology, Christology, and pneumatology).

Evaluation of M1

The primary concerns of M1 are related to upholding the full divinity of Christ. Soteriology and Christology are bound together with the doctrine of God. The theological deduction of M1 connects Christ's divine impeccability to his human sinlessness as the necessary cause and effect. Figure 13 summarizes the main elements of M1.

Key Question:	- How was Jesus sinless?
Answer:	- God is impeccable, and Jesus is the divine Son, so Jesus is impeccable
Concerns:	- The preexistence of the divine Son before his incarnation - Jesus' divinity is necessary to salvation - Jesus is eternally divine despite becoming a human being - Protection of the divine impassibility - Protection of the divine immutability
How tempted?	- He was tempted as a man
How triumphed over temptations?	- He conquered temptation because he is almighty God - He is innately immune to sin as God incarnate
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a necessity of his divinity

Figure 13. Summary of M1: Sinless by Innate Impeccability

M1 is primarily a theological deduction with a few important biblical merits. M1 explains that sinlessness must be the case for Jesus as a man because he is divine.

Therefore, M1 rightly affirms the clear biblical evidence for Jesus' sinlessness and his divinity. M1 also supplies a plausible explanation for Jesus' success in all his temptations. He could not be defeated because of his divine impeccability, so in every temptation he must emerge victorious and sinless, just as the NT reports. Finally, M1 acknowledges the evidence that as a man, Jesus was truly tempted to sin.

Theologically, M1 has much to commend it. M1 fits well with soteriology in at least two ways. First, M1 provides assurance that salvation wrought by Christ can never be voided by the possibility that he sometime sinned. M1 conveys the assurance that redemption was never contingent in a way that Christ might have failed to become a perfect high priest and self-sacrifice by having sinned some time in his earthly life. The basic soteriological implication of M1 is that salvation is secure in Christ because he is divine. Second, M1 is a good soteriological fit because it carries the basic assurance about the sure fulfillment of all God's promises that are contingent on Christ. The savior who is necessarily sinless by his divine impeccability will not fail to fulfill God's promises to the people he saves.

M1 fits well with Christology in at least four ways. First, M1 correctly affirms Christ's impeccability as an entailment of his divinity. This affirmation is the necessary background claim that sin is ultimately impossible for Christ just as it is impossible for God because Christ is fully God. Second, M1 affirms the two natures of Christ by explaining Jesus' unique sinlessness from his divinity despite his humanity. Third, M1 is consistent with the claim that Jesus is fully God, with a rationale that claims neither too much nor too little about his divinity as a two-natured person. Fourth, M1 gives a theological boundary statement to sort orthodox formulas from heterodox formulas. According to the rationale of M1 and the traditional orthodoxy of the Nicene and Chalcedonian creeds, if any formulation is to be counted as orthodox teaching about Christ, then that statement must affirm Jesus' impeccability. Therefore, M1 is correct and useful in many ways.

Despite the usefulness of M1 as an explanation of biblical data, the model has several problems biblically. M1 raises at least four problems that make the model inadequate as an explanation for all the evidence for Jesus' moral life. First, M1 is insufficient to explain the temptations as reported in Scripture. M1 explains Christ's sinlessness as the effect of his impeccability. This causal relation raises the difficulty of explaining his temptations. Jesus' temptations involved him in a struggle in the context of his suffering and conflicting desires. By contrast, the causal relation of M1 diminishes (if not rules out entirely) the plausibility of these temptations as real battles to choose obedience and right instead of sin. M1 undermines the biblical reports of Jesus' struggle and revisions them as theatrical performances by affirming impeccability as the unseen but causal factor that brought Jesus through his temptations successfully. The causative role of his divine impeccability not only would have discounted the degree of his struggle in temptation, but causative impeccability would have precluded the battle entirely. Therefore, the M1 explanation does not satisfy the evidence for his temptation.

Second, M1 undermines the force of biblical statements that Jesus is an example to follow in resisting temptation within his human limitations. M1 requires that these texts must be reinterpreted as idealized calls to live in a way that no human has done before. M1 explains that Jesus achieved his victory over temptation on an innately divine basis of his impeccability, which is unavailable to common humanity. He can be the ideal example for others, but not their peer.

Third, M1 undermines Jesus' empathy for others enduring temptation experiences. By the M1 explanation, Jesus' experience of temptations was mitigated by his divine impeccability in a way never possible for others who are not divine as he is. While the Scripture tells that Jesus' experiences constituted him to be compassionate for others who suffer as he did, M1 removes the constitutive experiences and cuts off his empathy. According to M1, Jesus is less so the compassionate high priest resembling common humanity in weaknesses and temptations, and much more a divine theophany in

human garb reminiscent of the OT appearances of the fearsome Angel of Yahweh.

Fourth, M1 does not explain the evidence of the Holy Spirit's role in the life of Christ. For an incarnate Son who resists temptations purely by his innate divine impeccability, the ethical role of the Holy Spirit is superfluous and unnecessary to Jesus in his humanity. Therefore, M1 is correct to support the evidence for Jesus' sinlessness, but inadequate to explain the additional details of his temptation and the relevance of his experiences for salvation.

Despite the advantage of M1's theological simplicity, the model has theological problems. Soteriologically, M1 does not fit well with Jesus' moral victory. M1 renders implausible the idea that Christ achieved a moral victory over the devil. On the M1 explanation, Jesus' victory was caused by his divine impeccability so that no room for a struggle and contest remained when Satan tempted him. Jesus' supposed moral achievement of reversing Adam's defeat by the devil is minimized (if not nullified) by the override of his divine impeccability. The marvel of God's rout of his enemy the devil is that the Son regained lost ground on the same terms within the limitations of his frail humanity, just as Adam. The victory of the Second Adam is hollow if M1 is the fullest explanation we may give for Jesus' triumph over Satan's temptation.

Christologically, M1 has several problems. M1 weakens Jesus' mediatorship as head of a new humanity. He functions in a way fundamentally different from the rest of common humanity because he could not have had the moral tension as they do. The causal, impeccable necessity of M1 precludes Jesus' freedom in his humanity to choose and obey God. M1 is simplistic and overly general to affirm a causal relation between Jesus' human sinlessness and his divine impeccability without specifying the causality in terms of his divine nature, his divine will, or by some sort of *communicatio idiomatum*.

Pneumatologically, M1 raises the difficulty of explaining the Word-Spirit relationship. This conjunction of the work of the Son and the Spirit in redemption shows in the life of Christ and the lives of believers for ethical formation and empowering grace.

M1 suggests that Christ had no need of the Holy Spirit to guide or strengthen him in his human life because his innate divine impeccability was determinative for his sinlessness.

Despite the biblical and theological problems of M1, several aspects should be retained. M1 is an ultimate theological deduction of Christ's impeccability that in no case could he have sinned because he is the divine Son. M1 is important because of the clear way the formula expresses a theological truth in the plain logic of a syllogism. As a background theological affirmation and corollary to the biblical evidence for Jesus' divinity, M1 serves as a valuable limiting statement: sin was impossible for Jesus. Therefore, we retain M1 as a boundary statement and seek to avoid the problems that follow when M1 is applied as an explanation for Jesus' sinlessness.

Evaluation of M2

The primary concerns of M2 are to protect the unity of Christ's divinity and humanity despite the disparate and possibly contradictory attributes of each nature. Of particular concern is the impassibility of the divine nature that seems endangered by the passibility of the human nature. Consequently, M2 formulates a transforming, elevating union between the two natures in Christ. The incarnational union is a paradigm for human salvation in Christ's own person because he unites human nature to divinity for the results of sanctifying, renewing, and empowering that lower nature for all believers. Christ's human nature is healed by participation with his divine nature; his healing is a paradigm for the salvation of all by a redemptive relation to the divine nature through Christ. Moreover, M2 emphasizes soteriologically the divinity of Christ as the necessary power brought into union with his humanity to save all human nature that had fallen into ruin because of sin. Figure 14 summarizes the main elements of M2.

M2 rightly affirms the biblical evidence for Christ's temptations and success in them as a pattern for others to copy. M2 supplies a plausible explanation for Jesus'

sinlessness by specifying the causal relation in the union. M2 emphasizes the divinizing, natural necessity of Jesus' divinity (cf. M1). M2 rightly emphasizes the relevance of Jesus' temptations as an example for others.

Key Question:	- How does the union of Jesus' divine nature with his human nature make him sinless as a man?
Answer:	- His divine nature divinizes his human nature to bear the divine attribute of impeccability
Concerns:	- The union of Jesus' divine and human natures - The powerful effect of the divine nature on human nature - The completeness of each nature with all their predicates - Protection of the impassibility of the divine nature - The union of natures in Christ is a paradigm for human sanctification in Christ by divinization - Salvation as healing of human nature through union to the divine nature that cleanses and elevates human nature
Influential theories:	- The mode of union by natural predominance of a powerful nature over a weak nature when the two are united - Christ assumes human nature as a universal to save for all - Divinization is a re-creation of humanity by sharing in the divine nature by a transforming communion in Christ
How tempted?	- He was tempted as a man - He is the subject of all of his human predicates
Why tempted?	- For the instruction of humanity to show how to resist sins - Permitted for the sake of those needing an example - For a sign of his true human nature
How triumphed?	- He triumphs by his impeccable divine nature that empowers his temptable human nature
Relation to M1:	- M2 specifies the necessity of his sinlessness as the natural necessity by the union; the impeccability of the divine nature elevates the human nature to be sinless
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a necessity of his divine nature

Figure 14. Summary of M2: Sinless by Divinization

His experiences are didactic and paradigmatic for others who face temptations as he did. Moreover, M2 correctly affirms the full humanity of Christ as proven by his temptations, and the full divinity of Christ as proven by his sinlessness.

Theologically, M2 has several merits. M2 corresponds to the patristic soteriological maxim—"the unassumed is unhealed"—by affirming Christ's incarnation as a redemptive taking of human nature to heal humanity. This divinization concept fits the broad redemptive program by which all of creation will be renewed through Christ (cf. Eph 1:9-10). M2's emphasis on divinization is a plausible model of salvation as healing by communion with the divine nature through Christ. The divinization in Christ's humanity corresponds analogously to the sanctification of believers. M2 grounds salvation in the impeccable divine nature of Christ as the sure and powerful resource to inspire hope and faith.

Christologically, M2 has a strong emphasis on the incarnational union of two complete natures with all the predicates proper to each. The M2 explanation of the relation between the two natures protects Jesus' divinity in accordance with the patristic concern for divine impassibility. M2 explains reasonably the clear expression of divine powers in Christ's miracles, supernatural knowledge, defeat of the devil, and sinlessness as the expression of his divine nature. Finally, M2 has the merit of overall simplicity to correlate soteriology with Christology in terms of divinization and Christ as a microcosm of salvation. Therefore, M2 rightly exalts Christ as the focal point of salvation.

Despite the merits of M2, some biblical problems are apparent. M2 resembles at least three of the problems noted above with M1. First, M2 gives only a slim basis for Christ's empathy because the model undermines the authenticity of his temptations. This twofold problem comes from the explanation that Christ's sinlessness was achieved virtually by means of his divine impeccability in natural necessity. Accordingly, M2 diminishes Jesus' temptations to effortless experiences devoid of struggle so that it is difficult to see how these could make him compassionate for others who struggle in the

weakness of fierce moral turmoil. Instead of being constitutive of his compassion and paradigmatic examples for believers to emulate, M2 suggests that Jesus' temptations were slight and limited experiences that served merely to demonstrate methods for others to use in resisting them while Christ himself used the power of his divine nature in full.

Second, M2 sets Jesus' experience and victory over temptations in a different category uncommon to what other human beings endure, which affects his value as an example. M2 weakens the force of biblical exhortations to copy Jesus' example because his divinized human likeness is so remote to the common believer's experience in sanctification. Contrary to the biblical indications that Jesus fought temptations within his human limitations, M2 seems to divinize him with superhuman powers by divine enrichment.

Third, the M2 explanation of the transforming power of his divine nature energizing his human nature allows little room for him to struggle in learning obedience or receive assistance from the Holy Spirit. Pneumatological enhancement for his humanity is unnecessary in M2 because of the divinizing flow of power from his divine nature.

In addition to biblical problems, M2 has theological problems. M2 gives no explanation for the pneumatological dimension in the life of Christ and believers. In Christ, the M2 emphasis on natural divinization of his humanity relegates the role of the Holy Spirit to superfluity. In believers, the M2 analogy of divinization redefines the life in the Spirit narrowly and vaguely as divinization through participation in the divine nature (cf. 1 Pet 1:1-10).

Soteriologically, the M2 natural divinization of Jesus' humanity as an analogy for sanctification of believers seems mechanical and impersonal. This is in contrast to relational growth that is implied by biblical teaching of the believer abiding in, knowing, and trusting Christ in an I-Thou relational life of faith. Moreover, the M2 use of divinization pictures salvation as living derivatively in a divine mode of being

(superhuman), not in a perfected human mode of being.

Christologically, M2 depicts a different humanity in Jesus. His humanity is transformed before the resurrection as functionally divinized to be superhuman. This elevation of his humanity tends to dissolve the integrity of his humanity in the union and undermines the praiseworthiness of his achievement of human sinlessness.

Despite the problems, several aspects of M2 should be retained. M2 rightly emphasizes the analogy between Jesus' moral life and the sanctification of believers, as shows in the NT stress on Jesus' example of obedient conduct. The way M2 grounds Christ's impeccability in his divine nature is appropriate as the boundary statement of his inability to commit sin; thus, the entire redemptive plan is secure because of Christ's full divinity. M2 also emphasizes the completeness of each nature in the union with natural predicates of divine impeccability and human temptability that the union does not undermine.

Evaluation of M3

M3 gives much more of a dual account to affirm the truths of both natures in Christ with the unifying aspect of the divine will driving his humanity. The primary concerns are to explain Jesus' life as a soteriological pattern by his recapitulation and volitional submission to the divine will as an example for believers to follow. M3 strongly emphasizes the unifying, dominating role of Jesus' divine will as part of affirming the close likeness of Jesus' humanity to common humanity. Figure 15 summarizes the main elements of M3.

M3 has several biblical merits to commend it. M3 rightly affirms Jesus' true temptations as a man who suffered in human weaknesses. M3 connects the reasons for the temptations closely to the biblical reasons of providing an example for resisting sin, becoming sympathetic to others, and demonstrating human life submitted to God. M3 stresses the extent and degree of Jesus' temptations. This means of resistance within

human limitations supports the M3 emphasis on Jesus' empathy and example for others to copy his pattern of life. M3 also explains Jesus' victory over temptation as a human achievement by abstinence in general and fasting in particular.

Key Question:	- How does his operation in two natures result in his sinlessness as a man?
Answer:	- The divine Logos directs his humanity sinlessly in all the actions of his human experience
Concerns:	- Protection of divine immutability by the divine will - Providing a redemptive pattern for others to follow by obeying God, submitting to his will - The Logos is the leading principle in the incarnation - Human nature is the instrument of redemption by the Son - Harmony of operation between the natures - His human will is subservient to the divine will - Human operation is elevated by enabling divine direction - The likeness of Jesus' humanity to common humanity
Influential theories:	- Salvation is the divinizing elevation of humanity from corruption to glorification by divine direction - Recapitulation is Jesus' renewal of humanity by stages in victory over Satan and providing an example to follow
How tempted?	- He was tempted as a man - He suffered human weakness
Why tempted?	- He provided a redemptive example for others to follow - He provided a model of obedience - He became sympathetic to the struggles of others - He demonstrated what is possible in human flesh
How triumphed?	- He achieved victory as a man by abstinence and fasting - He conquered temptation as God
Relation to M1-2:	- M3 specifies the necessity of his sinlessness as the volitional or personal necessity of the divine person in union with his human nature
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a necessity of his divine will

Figure 15. Summary of M3: Sinless by Divine Hegemony

Theologically, M3 has several advantages. M3 has at least four ways of fitting well with soteriology. First, M3 satisfies the patristic maxim—"the unassumed is unhealed"—by affirming a true human nature taken by the Son and restored to right operation in harmony with the divine will. Second, M3 argues that Christ's distinctness of human conduct in sinlessness is personal, not natural, so he can be a paradigm for others as a peer, not merely as an ideal or theophany. Third, M3 provides a reasonable analogy for sanctification by which human beings submit their wills to the divine will in a similar way to how Jesus' human will submitted to the divine will. Fourth, M3 firmly grounds the redemptive plan in the impeccable person of the Logos despite Jesus' weaknesses and temptations as a man.

Christologically, M3 fits with at least three aspects. First, the divine hegemony model preserves the integrity of Jesus' humanity from transformation by affirming an elevated mode of operation that Scripture prescribes analogously for all believers. Second, M3 effectively explains the duality and unity of the two natures in Christ by harmonizing the operation in a volitional hegemony. Third, M3 includes the theory of Jesus' recapitulation of all the states of humanity. According to this theory in M3, Jesus demonstrates his true humanity in a relevant pattern of reversing the Fall by his personal human action as the Second Adam. Therefore, M3 has much that is valuable in the ways the model explains the biblical evidence and fits with Christology and soteriology.

Despite the advantages, M3 has problems biblically—some of which are the same problems noted in M1 and M2. M3 explains Jesus' operation in his humanity as an instrumental relation of his divine person directing his human action in his life as a man. This instrumental or mechanical operation undermines his empathy and example for others because he uniquely directs his action by an immutable divine will. M3 raises the difficulty that Jesus' unique sinlessness results from his unique and superior fixedness of divine perspective and volition in the midst of his temptations. This seems implausible when compared with NT reports of the intensity and extent of Christ's temptations. M3

honors the difficulty of the Son's task to undertake demonstrating an example of obedient humanity, but his direct action as a divine person in human garb makes his example less easy to follow. M3 affirms that Jesus resisted temptation using the human means of abstinence, but the stress on his conquest as God detracts from the humanness of his achievement. Moreover, M3 seems to exclude any explanation of the evidence for the ethical role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christ.

Theologically, M3 has several problems. M3 raises at least two problems soteriologically. First, despite the M3 view of the Logos's personal involvement that determines his human sinlessness, the instrumental relation still seems to make him an example in the sense of an ideal, and only minimally as a peer. Compared to Jesus' total, steadfast submission to the divine will, believers struggle daily to submit their wills to the divine will. Second, the M3 use of divinization pictures salvation as a superhuman mode of being through sharing derivatively in the divine nature, not as a restored and perfected human mode of being.

Christologically, the instrumental concept of M3 is impersonal and mechanical, resembling a puppeteer and puppet in a way not far from a theophany. This resemblance suggests a less than full humanity because the human will is effectively replaced by the divine will to choose impeccably in all the moments of human decision. The result seems like a sort of divine hypnotism to control his human will. Moreover, the dyothelite explanation of Christ's wills as proper to his two natures raises further problems. How can a double-willed person proceed in unitary action without canceling one of his wills? How can a two-willed person choose between his double volition if the will is natural faculty, not a personal faculty?

Pneumatologically, M3 contains the divine element in Christ's earthly life within his two natures in a way that seems to make the leading role of the Holy Spirit superfluous. The Holy Spirit functions analogously in Christ and believers to lead, empower, and facilitate life in obedience to God. M3 reserves this function for the

hegemony of the Logos, causing the difficulty of how to explain the Word-Spirit relation during Jesus' life and ministry. Therefore, despite the advantages, M3 presents some difficulties theologically and biblically.

Despite the biblical and theological problems, M3 has several aspects that should be retained. Notwithstanding the problems of the M3 emphasis on the personal action of the Son in his incarnation, this stress is valuable to protect the integrity of his human nature and the experiences of his earthly life from transforming influence by his divine nature. M3 rightly makes the exemplary value of Jesus' human nature a consequence of his likeness to common humanity in constitution and experience of temptation and weaknesses. Therefore, the M3 distinctive of Jesus' unique human sinlessness as a personal achievement is important.

Evaluation of M4

In contrast to the emphasis on the unity and divinity in M2 and M3, M4 stresses the integrity of Jesus' two natures despite the union. Consequently, the primary concerns in M4 are to protect the divine nature from being diminished and to protect the human nature from being enriched. Jesus' weak humanity requires the aid of divine grace by the Holy Spirit. Related to this concern is the interest in Christ's sinlessness as an example that others can imitate by similar help of empowering grace. M4 affirms both that Jesus was impeccable and that he resisted temptation as a man in a way that others can follow his example. Figure 16 summarizes the elements of M4.

M4 follows the biblical evidence for Jesus' temptations closely in a way that strengthens the model's explanation of four points in the biblical evidence. First, M4 affirms that Jesus experienced and resisted his temptations within his human limitations. He was vulnerable to true human weaknesses and exercised real human freedom to choose obedience instead of sin. M4 explains that Jesus' sinlessness was assured by his divine impeccability, but he actually accomplished his perfect obedience as a man by his

effort as a man. M4 is consistent with the biblical evidence that Christ endured moral struggle as a man without the help of his divine nature.

Key Question:	- How is Jesus sinless as a man in a way that he can be an example for others?
Answer:	- Divine grace empowers Jesus to act sinlessly in his humanity, just as grace is given to empower others
Concerns:	- Protection of the divine transcendence of the Logos - Protection of the passibility and mutability of his humanity - The example of Jesus' life for other humans to follow - The integrity of his human and divine natures - Christ's humanity as a particular example of humanity - His divine impeccability is secondary to the primary factor of empowering grace that causes his sinlessness - Grace in his human life is an analogy for grace in others - His sinlessness is an analogy for sanctification in others - His real human freedom makes his merit possible
Influential theories:	- The human will cooperates with empowering divine grace - Salvation is progress in grace toward perfect human life
How tempted?	- He had true human weaknesses that made him vulnerable - He struggled in real human freedom, not an empty show
Why tempted?	- His temptations proved the moral reality of his life - He was tempted so as to instruct others to live as he did
How triumphed?	- He resisted temptations in a way that others can follow - He resisted in his humanity alone by long-suffering, patient endurance, and human wisdom - He did not resist by his own divine power or miracles - He relied on the Holy Spirit to instruct and empower him
Relation to M1-3:	- M4 affirms the necessity of his sinlessness by divine impeccability, but qualifies this impeccability as not having been the factor in causing his sinlessness
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is a human achievement by cooperation with the help of divine grace

Figure 16. Summary of M4: Sinless by Empowering Grace

Second, M4 explains Christ's battle with temptations as an exemplary moral effort that others can imitate. The biblical evidence for Jesus as an example of sinlessness fits in M4 because he gained his victory over temptation in a way that others can follow, not by his unique possession of divine power. M4 counts empowering grace by the Holy Spirit as the important factor in Jesus' sinlessness, and this is similarly available to others who can find analogous divine aid to resist temptation. M4 thus supports the biblical presentation of Jesus as a peer to be followed in his obedience to God, not simply as an ideal to be honored.

Third, M4 reflects the evidence for Jesus' empathy with others because of his own temptation in the similar extent and degree of others' temptations. M4 preserves the integrity of Christ's human experience from mitigation by his divine nature. The stress on the grace offered to his humanity by the Holy Spirit is divine aid that he also offers to believers. M4 provides an explanation for evidence of the Holy Spirit's role in Jesus' life so that he can achieve sinlessness while still experiencing temptation in a way that constitutes his empathy and provides an example for others.

Fourth, M4 rightly insists upon the evidence for Jesus' sinlessness as grounded by his divinity as the Logos but actually achieved by his struggle as a man. M4's novel formula is that empowering grace—not Christ's divine nature—was the determinative factor in his sinlessness. This novelty was officially eschewed in the East but Western theology following Augustine embraced it despite conciliar objections to the formulations of M4's Antiochene proponents.

Theologically, M4 has several merits. M4 fits well with soteriology in at least two ways. First, M4 depicts salvation as a progress in grace toward perfect human life. This is consistent with NT theme of the role of the Holy Spirit to empower people to become like Christ in their love towards others (Gal 5:22-24). Salvation is entirely God's unmerited favor to work in the lives of those whom he saves and make them like Christ

(Rom 8:28-30). M4 supports this idea of growth in grace to a perfected humanity that Christ demonstrates.

Second, M4 reinforces the analogy of grace in the life of Christ and the believer. Jesus is the goal of human sanctification in conformity to his image. M4 emphasizes both Jesus' demonstration of what is possible as a godly human life and the means of divine grace to imitate him. The stress on Jesus' dependence on grace is an analogy for the believer's need to rely similarly on God's aid. M4 explains Jesus' divine action and sinlessness not by means of his divine nature, which would excessively distinguish him from common humanity to the point of irrelevance, but by means of the empowering grace supplied by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Jesus' solidarity with common humanity in weaknesses and dependence on divine grace by the Holy Spirit clarifies the way that he is an example for believers to copy in their progressive sanctification.

Christologically, M4 strongly affirms the full divinity and humanity of Jesus while explaining how the natures remain distinct in their integrity during his earthly operation. The difficulty of understanding the incarnation is partly relieved by the way that M4 explains the superhuman elements in Jesus' authentic human experience as by empowering grace instead of by his divine nature. He did not display his divine splendor and power in a way that people normally feared and revered him. On the contrary, many disregarded him as a mere man of no account. M4 explains this fullness and authentic weakness of Jesus' humanity in a consistent way alongside his superhuman actions by divine grace. Instead of expressing his divine and human attributes (some of which are contradictory, such as omnipotence and weakness) in an intermittent way, M4 maintains the continuity of Jesus' human life by means of adding in divine empowerment alongside his human experience. This way, by means of empowering grace, Jesus expresses his true humanity to be the Second Adam and new head for humanity.

Pneumatologically, M4 fits well with the economic role of the Holy Spirit to apply the benefits of redemption to recipients. The M4 explanation that Christ

experienced empowering grace by the Holy Spirit preserves this role as an analogy for the way the Holy Spirit empowers and conforms believers to be like Jesus in character. Moreover, the pneumatological dimension that M4 emphasizes in the life of Christ allows a fully trinitarian explanation of the incarnation by which the Son obeys the Father with the assistance to his humanity given by the Holy Spirit.

Despite the advantages, M4 has some problems biblically. M4 has the danger of emphasizing Jesus' humanity and the action of divine grace so much that the model obscures evidence for Jesus' divinity.[2] M4 explains his unique sinlessness in terms of grace that is similarly operative in other people. In the same way, the M4 principle of empowering grace could be used to explain away all the divine aspects of Jesus' earthly life with the result of a dynamistic interpretation of Christ. For all the M4 emphasis on Jesus' temptations, example for others, and operation within the limits of his humanity, the model remains weak in fully accounting for the evidence that he is also the divine Son.

Theologically, M4 has some problems. If simplicity (Occam's razor) were regarded as authoritative for evaluation, then a major weakness of M4 is that the model is complicated theologically, especially by comparison to the simplicity of M1, M2, and M3. Nonetheless, the complex reality of the incarnation may require a complicated explanation—Occam's razor notwithstanding. M4 affirms Jesus' impeccability by his divinity, but sets this aside as not having been the primary factor in his sinlessness. This formula allows for empowering grace as a moral factor in Christ; however, the formula raises the question of how the force of divine impeccability was not a factor in Christ's temptations. M4 affirms that Christ was always divinely impeccable, but the failure to attach any causative significance to Christ's divine will or nature for overcoming sinfulness is a weakness. M4 does well to explain some aspects of the phenomena of

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[2]This perceived danger was the impression of the church councils held at Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451), and Constantinople (553) that repeatedly condemned the eastern proponents of M4: Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, and Theodoret of Cyrrhus.

Jesus' sinlessness while this other aspect—how his divinity was restrained or replaced as a factor by empowering grace—remains unaddressed.

Christologically, M4 tends to a divisive explanation of the incarnation that makes his two natures more distinct than seems plausible. This excessive distinction shows especially in the Antiochene formulas of M4 that repeatedly describe Christ's humanity as "the assumed man." One of the most prominent representatives, Theodore of Mopsuestia, contributes the egregious Christological problem that the man assumed for incarnation was foreknown by God to progress to impeccability and thus merited selection for incarnation. This resembles adoptionism. In addition, M4 tends dangerously in the direction of dynamism of the sort condemned in formulations by Paul of Samosata and Arius. Moreover, the careful disclaimers by M4 proponents (e.g., Theodore and Augustine) that the grace empowering Christ's sinlessness was unique keeps the charge of dynamism at bay without silencing criticism. On the one hand, if Christ's sinlessness was due to empowering grace, then God could have made any man sinless. This diminishes Christ's value as an example.

On the other hand, soteriologically, the M4 emphasis on Christ's human freedom to cooperate with divine grace seems near to a Pelagian concept of human nature. As a synergistic view of salvation, the Pelagian view is that human nature is not disabled by the Fall and needs only divine grace (defined as human freedom, the Law of Moses, and Christ's teaching) to resist sin, just as Jesus did. M4 proponents avoid this association with Pelagian synergism only by arguing for Christ's uniqueness as having been purified from original sin at conception (Augustine) and as having a unique experience of empowering grace throughout his life. Nonetheless, the problem in M4 is that the distance between Christ and common humanity—particularly considering the prophets and apostles—is so slight that the M4 commonality of nature and empowering grace in Christ and others easily overshadows the distinction between him and others.

Finally, M4 is silent about the meaning and mode of empowering grace in

Christ and believers. Of course, definition and concrete explanation of pneumatological operations and experiences are difficult. M4 raises the problem of explaining how such empowerment works in Christ and others. Without such clarification, the inability to transpose the model into the practical benefits of lived experience following Christ's example as promised by M4 diminishes the model's merits.

Despite the biblical and theological problems, M4 has several aspects that should be retained. M4 contributes a valuable explanation of the biblical data for Jesus' temptation, sinlessness, and the role of the Holy Spirit to supply empowering grace. The M4 emphasis on Christ's full empathy from his full experiences of temptation is important as the relevance of Jesus' temptations for salvation. The explanation of his sinlessness as a human achievement empowered by grace is a good way to preserve Christ's relevance as a human example for others. M4 also opens up a significant role for the Holy Spirit to provide grace to Christ's humanity in a way that satisfies the biblical evidence for the Spirit's involvement in his earthly life and the analogous role in the lives of believers.

Evaluation of M5

The primary concern of the medieval model is to reconcile the metaphysical distance between Jesus' two natures in view of what was necessary for redemption and what human attributes were suitable for divine incarnation. M5 is a complicated restatement of earlier models. Two prominent emphases are the medieval idea of created grace and the preservation of Christ's ability to earn merit despite enjoying the beatific vision. Figure 17 summarizes the main elements of M5.

Biblically, M5 rightly affirms Christ's temptations as real experiences instigated by the devil and the world. His temptations are the basis for his mercy towards others and the demonstration of his example of fighting the devil. M5 explains the evidence for Jesus' sinlessness in terms of his three-fold impeccability by grace, divine

hegemony, and moral necessity. M5 emphasizes both Jesus' divinity and humanity.

Key Question:	- How could Christ's humanity be deiform in impeccability and still temptable for redemption?
Answer:	- Grace given in the soul secures impeccability while the body remains an avenue for temptation
Concerns:	- Protection of Christ's divinity from human frailties - Only those human defects necessary to redemptive tasks: being able to hunger, thirst, feel pain and fatigue, be tempted, and die; defects of soul are not fitting - Empowerment of divine grace in the soul insures purity - Preservation of Christ's human freedom to earn merit - Grace preserves the integrity of his human nature - The analogy of created grace in Christ and in others
Influential theories:	- The human will cooperates with empowering divine grace - The beatific vision is enjoyed by glorified humanity - The wide metaphysical distance between God and man
How tempted?	- Only externally by the world and the devil; not internally by the flesh - The body is the avenue of his innocent temptations - He was tempted by a voluntary choice to suffer
Why tempted?	- To give an example of fighting the devil with Scripture - To earn merit for his choices as a man - To prove his true humanity - To strengthen others against temptation - To give others confidence in his mercy to help them
How triumphed?	- Grace in his soul made him trebly impeccable
Relation to M1-4:	- Christ's glorified soul as M2 elevated humanity - Christ's submission of his human will to the divine will as the M3 leading principle in the incarnation - M4 idea of empowering grace to compensate for humanity - Christ's purity from original sin by the Holy Spirit (M4)
Rationale:	- Jesus' human sinlessness is the result of his glorification in soul through infusion of divine grace

Figure 17. Summary of M5: Sinless by Created Grace

Theologically, M5 has several merits. Soteriologically, M5 grounds redemption in Christ's three-fold impeccability by grace. Salvation will never fail because Jesus is unable to sin and thus unable to nullify all the promises that are fulfilled by him. M5 develops the concept of grace for application to Christ's impeccability, guaranteeing his pure sacrifice. M5 draws an analogy between the created grace in Christ and believers. This analogy supports his role as example and priest who assists others in the way of salvation. M5 gives a plausible explanation for the operations of grace.

Christologically, M5 strengthens the earlier emphasis of M4 on Christ's purity from original sin. M5 fits the traditional doctrine of Christ's two natures and preserves the integrity of his humanity by means of grace. By appealing to grace, M5 can explain Jesus' elevated modes of operation in knowledge, power, and sinlessness within the frame of his human limitation so that he remains an example for others. M5 also affirms Christ's human freedom to choose obedience in a way that is praiseworthy (meritorious) despite his enjoyment of the beatific vision of God. On the one hand, Christ's uniqueness among common humanity is never in doubt in M5 because of the glorification of his human soul by grace. On the other hand, M5 strongly affirms many features of Jesus' full humanity (e.g., growth in knowledge and physical weaknesses) so his true incarnation is never in doubt as merely a theophany.

Despite the biblical and theological advantages, M5 has some problems when compared to the biblical evidence. M5 limits the extent and degree of Jesus' temptations as only external, from the world and the devil, but not internal from his flesh (as is common to others). This means that Jesus' experience of temptation is only partly similar to the common human experience. His temptations were demonstrated didactically but were not experienced severely.

M5 also diminishes Christ's struggle in temptation by emphasizing so strongly the three-fold force of his human impeccability. Undermining his struggle and the similarity of his temptations decreases Jesus' relevance as an example for others and as a

priest who can empathize with them based on his own experience of temptation.

M5 emphasizes Christ's sinlessness by his impeccability so strongly that the causative grace minimizes the human aspect of his moral achievement. His experience with the enrichment of uncommon grace that glorifies his soul sets his human experience so distant from common human experience that M5 reduces his value as example and ability to empathize with others. Jesus' human differences in M5 are so great that his human limitations are really superhuman limitations after the infusion of created grace. His embodiment may resemble common humanity, but M5 revisions his human soul as nearly divine.

Theologically, M5 has soteriological and Christological problems. M5 weakens the connection between Christ and believers as an example for their sanctification because of the differences of his humanity and theirs. His glorified human soul makes him much less of a peer example and much more of the ideal to be worshipped. His demonstration of perfect obedience to God shows what is possible with created grace, but M5 has elevated Jesus' unique endowments so much that the actual relevance of his pattern is minimized.

Christologically, M5 has adjusted Jesus' human nature to make it superhuman (deiform) in a way that strains the traditional doctrine of his authentic human nature. Also questionable in M5's description of Christ's humanity is the beatific vision. This vision of God that belongs to glorified humanity is difficult to reconcile with Jesus' occasional emotional distress and especially his experience of being forsaken by God during the crucifixion.[3]

Despite the biblical and theological problems, M5 has several aspects that should be retained. M5 contributes a valuable stress on Christ's uniqueness in his experience of grace and being pure of original sin. M5 specifies that Christ resisted the

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[3]Jacques Dupuis, *Who Do You Say I Am?* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), 118. Even Dupuis, a Jesuit, argues with three reasons that Jesus did not possess the beatific vision.

devil's temptation by using the Scriptures. M5 strengthens the claim of M4 that grace, not innate divinity, was the determinative factor in Jesus' accomplishment of human sinlessness. Moreover, M5 affirms that Christ's choices in obedience are praiseworthy despite his impeccability.

Evaluation of M6

The Reformation model compensates for some problems in M5 by addressing the primary concern for the authenticity of Jesus' human experience as a mediator in redemption. M6 reverses the earlier emphasis of some models on Jesus' divinity to stress his full humanity in solidarity with the weaknesses and temptations of common humanity. M6 focuses on Christ's humanity as the locus of human salvation. Figure 18 summarizes the main elements of the Reformation M6.

M6 closely follows the biblical evidence to emphasize Jesus' humanity and temptations as his equipment to be a merciful mediator and example to follow. Accordingly, M6 correctly affirms that the extent and degree of Jesus' temptations are comparable to others' temptations. Because Jesus became merciful and a pattern to copy by his own experiences, M6 affirms that Jesus struggled within human limitations without relying on his divine powers. His empathy depends on his weakness that required a role for the Holy Spirit in his earthly life. M6 stresses Jesus' experience as that of a man among others; he is a peer example for them as one who understands their struggles. The strong emphasis on Jesus' humanity is balanced by the M6 affirmation of his full divinity and impeccability—the ultimate ground of his sinlessness.

Theologically, M6 has much to commend it. Soteriologically, M6 has at least three strong points. First, the stress on Christ's role as mediator in solidarity with the people's weaknesses and temptations supports his pattern for sanctification. The same Holy Spirit who assisted Jesus in his humanity enables Christian sanctification in conformity to Christ.

Key Question:	- How is Christ able to be in redemptive solidarity with common humanity in temptable weaknesses?
Answer:	- He voluntarily stooped to the limits of a weak humanity, wracked with the consequences of sin
Concerns:	- Christ's relevance as an example and ally for others - Protection of the integrity of his humanity to suffer and be tempted without the help of his divine powers - His solidarity with weak, temptable humanity - His sinlessness as a human achievement to be imitated - An afflicted humanity to make him a proper mediator - The authenticity of his temptation in body and soul
Influential theories:	- Christ's humanity is the locus of human salvation - The incarnation is a divine self-humiliation - Suffering was necessary for Christ to bear the full consequences of sin as a man to reverse the devil's conquest of Adam without divine help (redemptive history is the setting for Jesus' temptation)
How tempted?	- The eclipse of divine power allowed human weaknesses
Why tempted?	- To suffer within the limits of true humanity to save others - To be able to give help to others when they are tempted - To provide an example for others to follow by resisting sin
How triumphed?	- Divine empowerment by the Holy Spirit supported him
Relation to M1-5:	- Christ's purity from original sin by the Holy Spirit (M4) - Empowering grace is support by the Holy Spirit (M4) - His impeccability as the divine Son is innate (M1)
Rationale:	- Jesus' human temptation was possible by veiling his divine power; his sinlessness is a grace-empowered achievement that others can follow

Figure 18. Summary of M6: Temptable by the Human Eclipse of Divine Power

Second, M6 emphasizes Jesus' achievement of salvation by means of his suffering the full consequences of sin and reversing the devil's defeat of Adam. This emphasis sets Jesus' weakened, temptable state in the setting of redemptive history. Third, M6 explains

how Christ's effort as a man is praiseworthy and motivational for those who follow his example; they are kept from despair by knowing that he suffered as they suffer. M6 affirms that Christ was not insulated from the strains of human temptations, so his example is that much more credible and hope-generating for obedience after his pattern.

Christologically, M6 rightly affirms both natures fully. The Reformers explain the relation between Jesus' two natures in terms of veiling of the divine to display the human. The emphasis on Jesus' susceptibility to temptation is part of the M6 formula that protects the integrity of his natures from corruption and enrichment, in alignment with the Chalcedonian definition.[4] Calvin's appropriation of the traditional doctrine of the Logos *extra carnem* is helpful to resolve problems of the M6 stress on Jesus' full humanity that does not limit his full divinity.

Pneumatologically, M6 explains the role of the Holy Spirit in Christ's earthly life as the mode of divine support for his weak, temptable humanity. This role fits together with the analogous presence of the Holy Spirit in believers for sanctification.

Despite the way M6 declares the extent and severe degree of Jesus' temptations in faithfulness to the biblical evidence, M6 has an important problem biblically. Calvin untypically limits the extent to external temptations only. In his comment on Hebrews 4:15, Calvin interprets the qualifier—"without sin"—to mean that Jesus' temptations did not have sin as their source. This interpretation distinguishes the extent of Christ's temptations from those experienced by others.[5]

M6 has theological problems. The difficulty of M6 is that the mode of veiling remains unclear. How does the veiling of Jesus' divinity with his humanity work?[6]

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[4]Luther is equivocal on this point because of the Eucharistic controversy. He affirms the integrity of Jesus' humanity in opposition to transubstantiation; but denies the integrity of the natures by his peculiar view of the *communicatio idiomatum*. Luther's emphasis on Jesus' suffering within the limits of his humanity during his temptations seems to show a concern for maintaining the integrity of the natures.

[5]John Calvin, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews*, trans. William B. Johnston, ed. David F. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 56.

[6]Cf. the critique of the veiling idea by Vincent Taylor, *The Person of Christ in New Testament*

Unexplained by M6 is how Christ's self-consciousness can be fully divine and human while the divine power is veiled to allow for display and experience of the human. The principle of veiling is broadly helpful, but more needs to be explained for this principle to be helpful. The model does not explain how Jesus could fully display the prominence of his human nature in a way that avoids the apparent contradiction of his quiescent or veiled divinity (i.e., ignorance, weakness, local presence, temptability). The M6 principle of veiling Christ's divinity (in the background) so as to display Christ's humanity (in the foreground) begs the question of how this humiliating display was accomplished. Moreover, Luther's insistence on the ubiquity of Jesus' humanity is a problem of transforming the human nature.

Despite the problems, M6 has several aspects that should be retained. M6 contributes the mediatorial solidarity of Jesus in his human limitations. The M6 principle of the prominence of his human nature in redemption is a good starting point to resolve the dilemma. The M6 stress on the severity of Christ's temptations and real experience of dereliction in the crucifixion are corrective components of his full humanity. M6 is helpful to distinguish Christ's purity from original sin from the fallen condition of guilty common humanity. Finally, M6 maintains the tension between Jesus' impeccability and human mediatorial functions by affirming the support of the Holy Spirit as the actual cause of his sinlessness alongside of Jesus' innate impeccability.

Evaluation of M7

M7 extends the M6 emphasis on the full humanity of Christ with a limitation of his divinity. M7 explains the M6 principle of veiling by the mechanics of

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Teaching (London: Macmillan and Co., 1958), 288: "While we must hesitate to say, with Calvin, that Christ *concealed* His divinity, we may agree with his submission that the splendour of His glory penetrated through the weakness and concealment of the flesh. It is better, however, to speak of His divine powers as 'latent' rather than as 'concealed', since the idea of concealment introduces a duality into His earthly life which is not reflected in the Gospels. 'Concealment' is a term better applied to the pre-existent act of surrender on the part of the Son of God rather than to the conditions of His existence upon earth, true though it is that in His association with His disciples His glory breaks through His words and deeds."

humanization. The primary concern is to affirm the authenticity of his humanity and temptation unmitigated by his divinity. M7 follows an empirical approach to Jesus' psychological self-consciousness. M7 completes the range of models as the opposite emphasis from M1 in a way that threatens the traditional affirmation of Jesus' divinity out of a primary concern for his true humanity. Figure 19 summarizes the main elements of M7.

The modern model rightly emphasizes the biblical evidence for the full extent and degree of Jesus' temptation. M7 affirms his sinlessness and the human limitations of his achievement. This stress is consistent with the biblical evidence for Jesus' empathy for others based on his likeness of human experience. Accordingly, M7 puts Jesus' relevance at the forefront of the model so that Christ is an example to follow by having used the same resources of the Holy Spirit that are available to all Christians. M7 affirms the evidence for Jesus' true humanity. M7 rightly elaborates the biblical stress on Jesus' likeness to common humanity; M7 affirms this closeness between Jesus and others as necessary for his relevance as a merciful savior whose manner of life is a relevant example.

Theologically, M7 has much to commend it. Soteriologically, M7 makes a strong connection between Jesus' achievement of an exemplary human life and the progressive sanctification of Christians. Because of Jesus' real humanity that was unmitigated by his divinity in weakness, others can imitate his obedience with the help of the Holy Spirit. Christ's closeness to common humanity in M7 makes his humility a relevant example for others to submit to God and serve others just as Jesus did. This stress on his true humanity satisfies the patristic maxim—"the unassumed is unhealed."

Christologically, M7 rightly affirms Jesus' full humanity in solidarity with common humanity. This affirmation specifies the Chalcedonian boundary as an incarnation that included the strain and struggle for Christ as a man among others. The full emphasis on his temptation in M7 upholds his role as compassionate mediator.

Key Question:	- How was the divine Logos able to suffer temptation truly and relevantly as an exemplary man?
Answer:	- Jesus humanized either his divine impeccability or knowledge to be tempted as a man despite his divinity
Concerns:	- Jesus' experience of suffering and temptation in light of the common human experience of these afflictions - Jesus' experience as a self-conscious human individual - His full, true humanity with relevance for other humans - His real, true temptation unmitigated by his divinity - The internal, psychological, and real moral struggle of his temptations, even with sin as a real or perceived option - His moral praiseworthiness for victory over temptation - Impeccability and temptability seem mutually exclusive
Influential theories:	- The necessity of limiting his divinity for a true humanity - The necessity of narrowing the distance between Jesus as a man and the rest of common humanity - Psychological (or epistemic) possibility of sin is sufficient for an impeccable person to experience temptation - Empirical humanity is definitive for Christ's humanity
How tempted?	- He humanized his divine impeccability to be vulnerable - He humanized his divine knowledge of his impeccability
Why tempted?	- To give an example for others for how to resist temptation - To be tempted is essential to true humanity
How triumphed?	- He used the resources that are available to all Christians - He was helped by the support of grace by the Holy Spirit
Relation to M1-6:	- Empowering grace is support by the Holy Spirit (M4) - Emphasis on the reality of his temptation (M6) - Explains the M6 principle as humanization
Rationale:	- Jesus had to limit his divinity in some way to be able to experience authentic human temptations as an example

Figure 19. Summary of M7: Temptable by Humanization of Divinity

M7 dissolves the difference between Jesus and common humanity so that he is not so distinct from others that his example is irrelevant. Also, the M7 principle of humanization explains the mechanics of the M6 principle of human veiling of the divine power.

Pneumatologically, M7 explains the role of the Holy Spirit in Christ and Christians as a parallel or at least analogous operation. This emphasis recognizes the trinitarian complexity of the redemptive plan by recognizing properly the Holy Spirit's role in the life of the Messiah and the application of salvation in the Church.

Despite the advantages, M7 has some problems when compared to the biblical evidence. As a reversal of M1, the M7 stress on Jesus' humanity undermines the biblical evidence for his full divinity. Indeed, some proponents deny his impeccability, while others deny his divine knowledge. M7 proponents depict a Christ who is diminished in his divine operations.[7]

The M7 emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit is uneven. Sometimes proponents ascribe so much of Jesus' divine powers to the Holy Spirit that the traditional biblical evidence for his divinity no longer remains (e.g., Hawthorne). Other M7 proponents say nothing about the role of the Holy Spirit, ignoring the biblical evidence entirely (e.g., Hodge, Morris, and Erickson).

Moreover, the M7 speculations about Jesus' psychology as a self-conscious subject are not warranted biblically.[8] Despite the clarity of Scripture, Jesus' psychology is not stressed in the Gospels. The M7 formula depends upon modern psychology in a way that departs from Jesus' uniqueness as fully divine and fully human to reduce him to the proportions of a self-conscious subject comparable to empirical humanity.

Theologically, M7 has several problems. Soteriologically, M7 has at least three problems. First, the kenotic limitations on Jesus' divinity may be incoherent. In what sense can the divine nature and attributes be limited, made latent, retracted, or not used?[9]

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[7]Dennis E. Johnson, "Immutability and Incarnation: An Historical and Theological Study of the Concepts of Christ's Divine Unchangeability and His Human Development," (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1984), 225. In his evaluation of kenotic Christology, including Forsyth and Mackintosh, Johnson notes that kenoticists imply that the Son ceased to be God as an entailment "in the various ways in which they spoke of the limitation of the Son's divine attributes and consciousness."

[8]Ibid., 226-27. Johnson observes that the Gospel data are insufficient to reconstruct Jesus' human consciousness in the way that M7 proponents (especially on the self-limited side) suggest.

[9]Kenotic formulations are also suggestive of tri-theism to say that the Father and the Holy

As with the principle of veiling in M6, the kenotic principle seems promising but proponents have not explained the mechanics and coherence of how such a principle operates.

Second, proponents of the critical approach in M7 give up the certain ground of redemption in Christ's impeccability. Because he could have sinned, or may yet sin according to his humanized ability to sin, a possible implication is that all the promises of God that depend upon him could have been or yet may be voided by a Christ who becomes sinner.[10]

Third, the M7 emphasis on Jesus' temptable humanity as necessary to achieving salvation is right, but his impeccable divinity as the eternal Son must be emphasized as well. The importance of Christ's temptations is not merely that he suffered to the same extent and degree as common humanity, but that he was the divine Son who suffered in his humanity to save others as the second Adam come from God to return the human race to God. M7 undermines Jesus' full divinity by humanizing divine attributes of impeccability or knowledge to human proportions.

Christologically, M7 raises at least four problems. First, the peccabilist version of M7 is inconsistent with orthodox Christology. M7 erodes the distinction of Jesus' uniqueness among common humanity in ways that make him more plausible as an example but less so as a divine-human savior.

Second, the M7 speculation about the psychology of Jesus misses the uniqueness of his sinless and God-man experience compared to others who are merely human. The plausibility of even an analogical comparison between a divine-human consciousness and the common experience that defines modern psychology is thin. The

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Spirit carried on the Son's functions during his earthly life. This move reduces the Son's experience to his life as a man. A better way is to see two levels of his experience in two natures.

[10]M7 proponents do not clearly affirm or deny the possibility that Jesus may yet sin. However, the commitment to Christ's peccability during his earthly life is based on the presupposition that authentic humanity entails peccability; thus, because Christ continues to be fully human—on their view—he continues to be peccable.

way that M7 defines Jesus' humanity in terms of empirical humanity does not account sufficiently for the uniqueness of his experience either as a sinless man or as a man who is also the divine Son.

Third, the M7 speculation about Jesus' temptability by means of the psychological (or epistemic) possibility of sin is speculative and unverifiable.[11] Scholars have no way of knowing Jesus' awareness in relation to his ability to sin. One critic has noted that the formula of epistemic possibility as a sufficient condition for temptation raises a new dilemma: either Christ remains able to commit the sins of intention, or his necessary goodness precludes these intentions in a way that denies his praiseworthiness.[12] Moreover, the psychological theories seem to depend upon a libertarian view of freedom (the liberty of indifference) that is questionable.[13]

Fourth, the kenotic and psychological proposals in M7 entail that Christ was possibly mistaken in his belief about his ability to sin. For the temptations to be a struggle for him, Jesus had to believe he was able to sin. Since proponents of the self-limited approach in M7 affirm Jesus' impeccability, the two affirmations imply that Christ held false beliefs about himself. According to the M7 proposal, Jesus would have had to believe the lie that he was able to sin if he was to endure temptation in a relevant way. Moreover, the theory lacks plausible explanation for how the self-limitation at the level of his awareness occurred and instead relies upon speculation in a way that does not solve satisfactorily the dilemma.

In view of theology proper, the denial of Jesus' impeccability raises problems

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[11]We can appreciate the apologetic value of theories such as Morris's and others who go this way instead of saying nothing or merely asserting antinomy. Theories generated like this one for apologetic purposes to demonstrate the coherence of the incarnation should not be supplied as material for dogmatics. Too easily have speculation and theories that are dependent on contemporary philosophy, psychology, historiography, and other disciplines tended to supplant Scripture in theology.

[12]The critique is directed at Thomas Morris's formulation by David Werther, "The Temptation of God Incarnate," *Religious Studies* 29 (1993): 47-50.

[13]Cf. the eighteen points of critique by John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God*, A Theology of Lordship (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2002), 137-45.

related to at least three other divine attributes. Sin in Christ would contradict his omnipotence because he would not have fulfilled salvation and sin would have conquered him. Peccability contradicts his immutability as the ethical fixedness and constancy as the source and standard of goodness, holiness, and righteousness. The possibility that Jesus could ever sin contradicts the divine truthfulness because the unconditional promises of God about the certainty of salvation in Christ (e.g., Eph 1:9-12) would be twisted into false statements (and foreknown to have been lies, because God is omniscient).

Despite the biblical and theological problems, M7 has several aspects that should be retained. M7 contributes a strong emphasis on Christ's weaknesses in close likeness to common humanity. M7 also strengthens the emphasis of earlier models on Jesus' life as a real pattern to copy as a peer example, not simply a theophanic ideal to be worshipped. M7 accents the true temptation that Christ experienced despite his divinity. Moreover, M7 calls attention to the modern concern for the relevance of Christ's true human experiences in correspondence to the biblical evidence.

Summary of the Evaluations

We have seen that M1-M7 each has strengths and weaknesses when evaluated in view of the biblical evidence in chapter 4 and some relevant theological categories.[14] We will sum up the aspects to be retained and problems that remain unresolved. Figure 20 shows the contributions of the seven models in comparison to the nine conclusions from the biblical evidence. Asterisks in the summary of the theological models in Figure 20 show how the biblical evidence has been interpreted in theological formulation. Two elements have been added. These interpretations and additions that were developed theologically from the biblical evidence reflect the difficulties that the models addressed by explaining the biblical data for Christ's impeccability and temptation in seven

[14]We must admit the fallibility of the evaluation as influenced by a modern perspective and theological concerns. No doubt a similar evaluation of the same models from other contemporary and historical theological positions would vary. The goal here is to be as near to the truth as possible, despite the modern biases and myopia inherent in any human project of theological evaluation.

particular ways.

Biblical Evidence	Summary of Theological Models
1. Full Extent of Human Temptation	1. Full Extent of Human Temptation
2. Human Limitations	2.* Prominence of His Human Nature
3. Full Degree of Human Temptation	3. Full Degree of Human Temptation
4. Sinlessness	4.* Human Achievement of Sinlessness
5. Empathy and Help	5. Empathy and Help
6. The Pattern to Copy	6.* Relevance as a Peer Example
7. The Sufficient Sacrifice	7. Sufficient Sacrifice
8. Ethical Role of the Holy Spirit	8.* Empowering Grace of the Holy Spirit
9. Full Divinity	9.* Impeccability
	10. Uniqueness of His Humanity
	11. Integrity of His Two Natures

Figure 20. Summaries of Biblical Evidence and Theological Models

Each of the models contributes some aspect. Many of the models overlap by their agreement on elements. We will briefly consider each of the eleven theological contributions listed in Figure 20.

Aspects of M1-M7 to Be Retained

Full extent of human temptations. Theological development of the biblical evidence for the extent of Christ's temptations became more important in the later models because of increasing emphasis on his human nature. M7 especially stresses the claim that Jesus' temptations, to be truly human and sufficient for his relevance in empathy and example, had to match the full extent of temptations that are common to humanity.

Prominence of his human nature. M6 and M7 continue the trend begun in M4 to give a major place to the biblical evidence for Jesus' human limitations. The theological development of these data is to explain Jesus' operation as an exemplary, empathetic, and temptable man like others by veiling his divine power with human

weakness so as to display his humanity for redemption. As a metaphor from the theater, Christ's divinity was set in the background to his humanity in the foreground of the stage. M6 and M7 explain the evidence for Jesus' human limitations throughout his weak and temptable earthly life by means of the principle of veiling (M6) or *kenosis* of the divine power with his human weakness (M7). The claim that his human nature was prominent in his incarnate experience answers the question of "How was this two-natured incarnation possible?" that the biblical evidence for Christ's human limitations suggests.

Full degree of human temptations. The biblical data for Jesus' temptation does not seem to become a theological concern in the models until the Pelagian controversy forced a sharpening of the doctrine of sin. Subsequently, M4-M7 bear the concern for the severity of Jesus' temptations. Some representatives of M5-M7 distinguish Jesus' temptability from common temptability because of his purity from original sin. Nonetheless, M6 and M7 insist on the biblical evidence for the intense degree of his temptations and emphasize this data prominently among the other relevant biblical evidence in the formulation of the models. This prominence is because of the empathy, example, and human achievement of his sinlessness that correspond to his true humanity. As was shown in Figure 1, the later models stress Jesus' temptable humanity.

Human achievement of sinlessness. M4-M7 define the biblical evidence for Jesus' sinlessness as not only a personal accomplishment (as in M3) but the result of his human effort. The ideas of merit and Jesus' relevance as an example for others are related to this definition. The development from the biblical evidence is that the models explain the biblical data in connection with the evidence for the role of the Holy Spirit, Jesus' empathy and example, and the indications that he resisted temptations within his human limitations. This claim distinguishes Christ's divine impeccability from the actual factor of his human achievement. His divinity could have been the cause of his sinlessness (as in M1-M3), but because of other considerations his divinity was not the actual cause of

his sinlessness (M4-M7). This claim explains Jesus' unique sinlessness in a way that is coherent with the evidence for his empathy, example, and the extent and degree of his temptations. The claim explains that Jesus' sinlessness is a praiseworthy moral achievement and pattern for others to imitate despite his divine impeccability.

Empathy and help. M4 and M6-M7 emphasize the biblical evidence for Christ's empathy with others' temptations and his ability to help others because of his own similar experiences. The models do not develop the biblical stress on this relevance; however, some models (e.g., M4, M6-M7) count this evidence as a larger component of the formulation than others do. This point depends upon points 1-4 because only by the validity of Jesus' temptations and his experience of them can he have become empathetic with others. Moreover, the credibility of his empathy—in view of his possible advantages as the impeccable God-man—requires that he experienced temptation without recourse to those advantages.

Relevance as a peer example. M2-M7 stress the biblical evidence for Jesus' life as a pattern for others. Some models explain his exemplary role as an analogy for Christian sanctification (i.e., M2). His likeness that was necessary for him to be a substitutionary sacrifice is also the ground for his relevance as a model of human attitudes and actions (M3-M4, M6-M7). These models agree that Jesus' pattern of a sinless life in the face of temptations must be relevant to others who are merely human and not divinely impeccable as he was. This point depends upon the validity of points 1-4 (cf. empathy) because Jesus' example is only reasonable if he was a weakened man who triumphed within the limits of his human nature. Had he relied upon his divine advantages to lessen the force of his temptations, then his relevance as a pattern to be copied by others—who are not the God-man as he is—diminishes by an inverse relation. By giving an example of human life, the models emphasize that Jesus does so as a peer with common humanity. Formulations that portray Jesus simply as an ideal example of

human conduct are not relevant in the same way.

The sufficient sacrifice. The necessity of Christ's sinlessness for his sacrifice as redeemer is not emphasized in the models the way that other elements of the biblical evidence are. Since most models affirm the impeccability of Christ, and all models uphold the sinlessness of Christ, the sinless purity of his sacrifice is an obvious entailment. Consequently, after the M5 emphasis on impeccability, this point seems only to have been emphasized in response to those who deny Christ's impeccability.[15]

Empowering grace of the Holy Spirit. M4-M7 interpret the biblical evidence for the role of the Holy Spirit as empowering grace. The Holy Spirit empowered Christ in his humanity to live above his human weakness and limitations not only performing miracles, but also in his ethical fortitude of resisting temptations to sin. By recourse to the role of the Spirit, the models can preserve the integrity of Christ's humanity and divinity. These models also emphasize the analogy of the Spirit's role in the life of believers as resembling Christ's life in the Spirit.

Impeccability. M1-M6 (and the proponents of the self-limited side of M7) develop the theological claim of Christ's impeccability based on his full divinity. Until recent centuries, this entailment has been recognized unanimously. Various ways of affirming this claim range from the divine nature, will, created grace, and empowering grace. The inference of impeccability from the biblical evidence for Jesus' divinity raises the dilemma in conjunction with the evidence for his true temptation. The unity of the two natures in the person of the ethically immutable Logos requires his human impeccability.

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[15]An example is Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, ed. Paul Ramsey, vol. 1 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 287-88. Edwards argues his tenth proof for Jesus' impeccability by the claim that redemption was contingent upon the death of Christ as a sinless savior.

Uniqueness of his humanity. Models that stress the likeness of Christ and his empowerment by the Holy Spirit developed the claim for Jesus' uniqueness among other human beings in both ways. Despite the affirmation of Jesus' solidarity in human weakness, M5 and M6 especially had to clarify Christ's unique purity from original sin. Despite affirming a real role for the Holy Spirit in his life as a man, proponents of M4, M6, and M7 add the qualifier that Jesus was endowed with the Spirit *par excellence*. This theological claim of his uniqueness became necessary to disclaim adoptionistic and ebionitic Christologies.

Integrity of his two natures. A related theological claim became necessary to protect the two natures from confusion. M3-M7 met the concern that Jesus had to remain truly human to be priest and mediator, and truly divine to be savior. M2 and M5 stress the completeness of each nature, but risk elevating his humanity to a superhuman mode of operation. The concern to maintain the integrity of his humanity was met by M4-M7 by recognizing the factor of empowering grace to enhance his life as a man. Moreover, M2-M6 protect Christ's divine nature from corruption by his human weakness. Just as the human nature should not be said to have been divinized (as in M2 and M5), so also the divine nature should not be said to have been humanized (as in M7).

Remaining Problems

Each of the models explains the biblical evidence in a way that either limits or undermines one or more of the nine conclusions from the biblical evidence. For example, the critical approach in M7 diminishes Jesus' divinity and gives away his impeccability. The self-limited approach in M7 gives away Jesus' full self-awareness and suggests that he could have held false beliefs about himself. M1-M3, and M5 diminish Jesus' authentic humanity by divinizing his human nature or his human operation. M4 diminishes the evidence of the divine power in his life and ministry, attributing all that is divine to the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. M5 and M6 diminish the extent of Jesus' temptations

by denying that he his flesh was an internal avenue of temptation. M1-M3 diminish the degree of his temptations by setting divine causation in the forefront so that the temptations are merely didactic performances without the pressure and strain that the biblical evidence tells. Thus curtailing Jesus' likeness in temptations, M1-M3, M5, and M6 undermine the relevance of Jesus' experiences in temptation and sinlessness.

The relation between Jesus' two natures remains a problem in two ways. First, for models that explain Jesus' sinlessness as having been caused by his divine nature or person (M1-M3), the problem is how to explain the relevance of Jesus' human experiences for others. Second, for models that explain Jesus' sinlessness as having been accomplished within his limitations as a man, without divine necessity playing a factor (M4-M7), the problem is how to explain the restraint of divine causation.

For M4-M7 that affirm Jesus' sinlessness as a human accomplishment despite his being divine, the problem remains how to explain such perfection in a way that he is both a reasonable pattern for others and a reliable savior who is sinless forever. These models deny that Jesus' divine nature was a causal factor in his sinlessness, but the problem remains how to explain Jesus' sinlessness without compromising his uniqueness among others who are merely human. M5 employs the concept of created grace, but the ascription of the beatific vision to Jesus is implausible. M6 provides the veiling principle as a possible explanation, but does not give adequate explanation. M7 solves the problem of M6 by means of peccability, and limitations that depend on speculative psychological and kenotic formulas.

A model that is completely balanced to fit the biblical evidence and the concerns of each era may be impossible. Nonetheless, our goal is to construct a model that has the least problems and most adequately explains the biblical evidence in a way that is coherent with other doctrines. The conceptual key to this goal is the concept of relationality that we will consider in chapter 7 as a response to the biblical and theological evidence.

CHAPTER 6

A RELATIONAL MODEL OF CHRIST'S IMPECCABILITY AND TEMPTATION

The earlier models are correct and helpful in many different ways, but they are individually inadequate to explain all the biblical and theological data related to Christ's impeccability and temptation. In response to the evaluation of M1-M7, the proposed relational model (M8) will take up and weave together the eleven aspects from the earlier models. Similar to the way M5 drew eclectically from M1-M4 and shaped the borrowed aspects around the unifying concept of created grace, M8 draws eclectically from M1-M7 and forms these aspects around the unifying concept of relationality. We will consider a brief description of M8 and then proceed to an exposition of the three main claims.

Description of the Relational Model

As an overall explanation of the evidence for Jesus' impeccability and temptation, M8 draws together the disparate biblical and theological elements centered around a relationality concept. M8 has three main claims that are interdependent.

First, Jesus' impeccability was natural, personal, and relational. M8 affirms the natural and personal impeccability of Christ in his divine condition of existence. This affirmation supports the evidence for Jesus' uniqueness as the God-man who cannot sin despite his real human nature. However, the integrity of his two natures and his redemptive tasks as a relevant human savior required that God the Father sovereignly orchestrate Jesus' impeccability within his human condition of existence. The Father arranged the conditions for Christ's choices so that the God-man would always freely choose obedience despite his temptations to sin. The Holy Spirit preserved the integrity and fullness of the Son's humanity and divinity by displaying the prominence of his

human nature in his earthly life as a man. M8 proposes that this relationship between his two natures and the two frames of reference was a work of the Holy Spirit to veil Jesus' divinity with his humanity in his earthly condition of existence. In that prominent, full humanity, Jesus' sinlessness was guaranteed by the Father's specific and meticulously sovereign orchestration of relational grace to support him in the face of temptations despite his human weakness. Therefore, Jesus' impeccability by his divinity was always true, but because he had to function fully on earth in his human weakness for redemption, he chose instead to rely upon the security of relational grace in his human frame of reference. Despite being divinely impeccable, Jesus was humanly temptable; despite being humanly temptable, he was humanly sinless and impeccable by relational grace that is available to all believers.

Second, Jesus' temptation was a relational experience. Because of the pneumatological veiling of his divine power with his human weakness, Jesus was subject to the common human temptability that is essentially relational. Jesus was tempted in the way that all humans are—in the setting of his four relationships as a man. His temptation was an internal-external struggle among his desires, will, and beliefs within a setting of relationships and involving the prospect of sin. The relationality of temptation as a problem for humanity is countered by the relationality of Jesus' solution.

Third, Jesus' sinlessness was a relational accomplishment. Jesus could have relied upon his innate divine impeccability to resist his temptations to sin. Nonetheless, he chose to rely on the means of relational grace—provided by God the Father within the human condition of existence—for the purposes of becoming empathetic with others who struggle against temptation and for demonstrating the reasonable pattern of his sinlessness for others to copy. By relying on relational grace instead of his divine impeccability, Jesus' accomplishment of sinlessness is praiseworthy and relevant for others. Thus, M8 incorporates the conclusions from the biblical and theological evidence for Christ's impeccability and temptation in its three primary claims, as in Figure 21.

Key Question:	- How did Jesus resist temptation in a way that is also possible for others?
Answer:	- Jesus resisted temptation by the relational grace that God also provides for believers to copy Jesus' sinlessness
Concerns:	- The relevance of Jesus' life for others to copy his pattern - His empathy as a priest who understands others' struggles - His impeccability as the sufficient sacrifice in redemption - The encouragement of his life for others' struggles - The divine provision of relational grace in both the incarnation and Christian sanctification - Jesus' praiseworthiness for accomplishing sinlessness within the limits of his human condition of existence
Influential theories:	- Compatibilism - Pneumatological Christology - Empowering grace (M4) - The prominence of Christ's human nature (M6) - The relationality of personal existence
How tempted?	- He was susceptible by the redemptively necessary human weaknesses in the setting of his relationships as a man - His particular life circumstances were the setting for the specific, person-variable temptations that appealed to him
Why tempted?	- Temptations were necessary by virtue of his real humanity - To demonstrate the pattern of his reliance on relational grace - To constitute him as empathetic for others - To fortify him to be faithful in his messianic tasks
How triumphed?	- He freely chose obedience to God with the assistance of the ethical involvement of the Holy Spirit and (at least five aspects of) relational grace
Relation to M1-M7:	- Background affirmations of divine impeccability (M1-M3) - Empowering grace (M4) - Praiseworthiness for his human accomplishment (M5) - Prominence of his human nature (M6) - Full extent and degree of his temptation (M7)
Rationale:	- Jesus' perfectly obedient manner of life as a sinless man is archetypal for Christian living by the same relational grace

Figure 21. M8: Temptable by Pneumatological Veiling; Sinless by Relational Grace

Exposition of the Relational Model

Jesus' Impeccability Was Natural, Personal, and Relational

Despite his humanity, Christ could not have sinned in any circumstances or state of affairs in any possible world because of his divinity (M1).[1] Traditional affirmations of his natural impeccability (M2) and his personal impeccability (M3) are correct. However, Jesus cannot be empathetic and a reasonable pattern of human resistance to temptation if his natural and personal impeccability as the divine Son had been factors in his actual human sinlessness. Thus, the traditional affirmations of Jesus' impeccability by his divinity (M1-M3) are included in M8 as the background to the foreground affirmation of his impeccability by the relational involvement of the Holy Spirit (M4) and God the Father. The continuing value of these background affirmations will be shown below.

By contrast with the traditional affirmations, M8 proposes that Jesus' relational impeccability was the actual cause of his sinlessness. Relational grace preserves his relevance for others and the integrity of his two natures. The biblical and theological data imply that a restraint or veiling of Jesus' divinity was necessary to allow for the prominence of Jesus' human nature (M6). Instead of his natural and personal divine impeccability, the actual factor that secured his sinlessness was the relational grace provided by the Father through the Holy Spirit.[2] In this manner of his relational impeccability, Jesus achieved sinlessness as a man using the resources that are commonly available to Christians. The Holy Spirit's two-fold role is the best explanation of the data: the pneumatological restraint or veiling of the divine impeccability to allow prominence of Jesus' human nature, and the pneumatological formation of Jesus ethically to become

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[1]"A possible world is a way the world might be. One can think of a possible world as a maximal description of reality; nothing is left out." J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 50. The point of referring to Jesus' impeccability in all possible worlds is to affirm that this is a necessary truth.

[2]Others who recognize the relational influence of the Father and the Holy Spirit that is decisive in Jesus' resistance to temptation are Gerald F. Hawthorne, *The Presence and the Power* (Waco, TX: Word, 1991), 139, and Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 539.

the Messiah who fears Yahweh and obeys perfectly despite his weaknesses and temptations to sin. Thus, Jesus is divinely impeccable, but he chose instead to rely on relational impeccability for the sake of becoming an empathetic example for others.

Natural impeccability. Affirming the natural impeccability of Christ (M2) is important to preserve the uniqueness of his humanity. Despite his need for the Holy Spirit to empower him in sinless action, Jesus is not simply a divinely-empowered human, as if he were merely a man and nothing else. Jesus is uniquely and fully human because he is the eternal, preexistent Logos and Son of God who assumed human nature at the incarnation.[3] Jesus is not merely a human being because his human nature exists in a unique relationship to his divinity that protects him from the danger of normal human peccability. Thus, whatever we affirm about Jesus' similarity to common humanity, we must maintain his uniqueness among other human beings as the person who is also eternally divine before he became human. He is also uniquely impeccable because of his divine nature.

Moreover, the subjective experience of such a unique man will remain a mystery for merely human observers interpreting Jesus' psychological experience in terms of their own.[4] Despite the parallels that are apparent between Jesus' experience of empowering grace and the experience that other people have, Jesus' life can never be explained in terms of being merely a man who enjoyed a greater degree of the Holy Spirit quantitatively. Jesus' human experience was qualitatively unique as the God-man despite

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[3]The helpful distinction of *merely* and *fully* as applied to Christ's humanity are from Thomas V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 65-67.

[4]The uniqueness of Jesus' divine-human experience is also recognized by Herbert M. Relton, *A Study in Christology: The Problem of the Relation of the Two Natures in the Person of Christ* (London: S.P.C.K., 1917), 192-93: "The God-Man, Who, however truly human His earthly life may have been, was none the less God Incarnate; and, as such, presents us with a unique phenomenon in the history of psychology, viz. a unique consciousness, a unique and sinless personality. If we allow ourselves to dwell exclusively upon the truly human life of the God-Man we are inevitably tempted to read into that life traits and characteristics which we know to be normal in our own lives, and which we infer therefore from our *a priori* psychological presuppositions must have existed in His life. The analogy is pressed beyond anything justified by the differences between Him and ourselves. The consequence is that whilst our faith would accept Him as the sinless Son of God, our psychology bids us reduce Him to our own level, and endow Him with a 'human personality' such as we are conscious of possessing but such as He never had. His personality, human and Divine, was and is unique."

his similarities with common humanity. His natural impeccability, though not a factor in his actual sinlessness, is one marker of his uniqueness as a man. Corollaries to this point are the soteriological tasks—revealing God, reconciling humanity to God, and giving the Holy Spirit to the church—that depend on Jesus' uniqueness as a person who is both a man and the divine Son.

Affirming Jesus' natural impeccability as the God-man also preserves the integrity of his two natures. The problem with M2 is that divinization of Jesus' human nature would have compromised the prominence of his human limitations that were necessary for redemption (e.g., for empathy and being a peer example). The incarnation preserved the integrity of the natures. Instead of divinization, Christ fully displays his humanity in the incarnation with all the limitations and weaknesses reported in the NT (M6). Christ's human weaknesses, limitations, and temptations that make him relevant as a priest do not nullify the corresponding divine attributes (e.g., omnipotence, infinity, immunity to temptation); his divine nature does not override or compensate for his human weaknesses. The integrity of his divine nature, with impeccability, is preserved and veiled in the human condition of his existence to preserve and display the integrity of Jesus' human nature, with temptability. The integrity of his natures entails that his human temptability and abstract fallibility[5] do not degrade his divine nature or his incarnate existence to be peccable, because peccability would violate the essential divine attribute of impeccability (necessary goodness).[6]

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[5]Peccability or fallibility is not essential to human nature (see the following note); the resurrected Christ and the saints in glory are no longer able to sin, yet they remain human. Jesus was not peccable in his human nature because of the relation of his humanity to his divine person, nature, and the influences of God through the Holy Spirit. We can say with M5 that Jesus' human nature in abstraction from the incarnational union was fallible, but in the concrete existence of his humanity we cannot affirm that he was humanly peccable.

[6]*Essential* or *necessary* attributes are those that an individual must possess if he is to qualify as a member of a particular kind. In this case, God is the only member of the kind, and to be God he must possess all the essential attributes to count as God. For example, if God possesses impeccability as an essential attribute, then Jesus—if he is to count as a divine person—must possess impeccability in his divine nature. By contrast, *contingent* or *accidental* attributes are those that an individual may possess or lose with no bearing on his membership in a particular kind. For example, if God had chosen not to create the universe, and thereby never possessed the attribute of Creator, then God would continue to be God. Jesus lacked the accidental attributes of being blonde-haired and fair-skinned, but he was fully human nonetheless. Morris gives a reasonable defense of the traditional claim for God's necessary goodness in

Peccability is a unique human predicate because sin is morally transcendent. Other common human limitations that contradict divine attributes are problematic and seem unfitting for God, but only sin is part of a moral dimension of reality. Morality is a dimension of human reality that overlaps with God's moral goodness. Thus, human sin always has a reference point in the divine standard of moral goodness that sin violates. Human sin takes place in the setting of this relationship and has ramifications beyond the human sphere of action. The unique transcendence of sin shows in the way that God is morally obligated to punish human sin and cannot simply ignore evil acts (e.g., Hos 9:9).

When we consider Jesus, sin, and impeccability, we can adopt the helpful distinction that he exists as fully divine and fully human in two frames of reference.[7] The two frames of reference—or categories of experience, or conditions of existence—are ontologically distinct, with different attributes and rules governing Jesus' action in each setting, frame, or sphere of his action.[8] Among all his possible experiences in his divine and human frames of reference, sin uniquely transcends the distinction of his two natures in such a way that were Jesus to commit sin as a man, he would implicate his divinity with sin. Thus, sin is impossible for a divine person to experience sin even in an incarnate frame of reference because sin is morally transcendent. Moreover, the possibility that Jesus could sin is a self-contradiction; for God incarnate to rebel against God is

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Logic of God Incarnate, 108-36.

[7]The idea is that contradictory attributes may be predicated of Jesus coherently *qua* his humanity and *qua* his divinity. Gerald O'Collins, *Christology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 234: "It would be a blatant contradiction in terms to attribute to the same subject at the same time *and under the same aspect* mutually incompatible properties. But that is not being done here. With respect to his divinity Christ is omniscient, but with respect to his humanity he is limited in knowledge. Mutually exclusive characteristics are being simultaneously attributed to him but not within the same frame of reference." The similar idea is stated as "two conditions of existence" by Brian Hebblethwaite, *The Incarnation: Collected Essays in Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[8]The traditional affirmation of the *Logos extra carnem*, or the *extra Calvinisticum* gives the same basic idea of an ontological distinction between Jesus' existence in two conditions of existence, according to his divinity and according to his humanity.

incoherent for the same reason that God cannot sin:[9] sin is a violation of God's standard for the conduct of moral agents.[10]

A further problem with and difference of sin from other common human weaknesses attributed to the divine Son in his humanity is that sin is improper and impure for humanity. For example, when we compare peccability with finite knowledge, it is possible for God incarnate in a human condition of existence to possess human intellect because discursive, finite knowledge is proper and pure by God's design for human beings. Sin (entailed by peccability) is neither proper nor pure by God's design.[11] Perfect humanity as demonstrated in Christ is pure from sin; glorified humanity is unable to sin.[12] Sinfulness became a common human predicate historically with the sin of the first man; this initial sin (and all subsequent sin) was a rebellion against God's design. By contrast, attributes such as limited knowledge and passibility are not morally culpable because

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[9]For a recent account of divine impeccability, see John S. Feinberg, *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 288-92. Even proponents of the argument that the statement—"God cannot sin"—is a *de dicto* and not a *de re* logical necessity affirm that if the person who is God should sin, he would cease to hold the office of "God." Most scholars agree that part of the definition of "God" is his moral purity; some (such as Feinberg and Morris, with whom I agree) go further and affirm that God is morally pure essentially in the *de re* sense, and not just in the *de dicto*, official sense that to remain "God," Yahweh must never sin.

[10]The similar ideas of sin as disobedience, rebellion, transgression, and missing the mark are included here. A helpful definition is given in Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 13: "All sin has first and finally a Godward force. Let us say that *a* sin is any act – any thought, desire, emotion, word, or deed – or its particular absence, that displeases God and deserves blame. Let us add that the disposition to commit sins also displeases God and deserves blame, and let us therefore use the word *sin* to refer to such instances of both act and disposition. Sin is a culpable and personal affront to a personal God."

[11]The same conclusion is recognized by Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), 5:78. "The contention that Christ *could*, but *would not*, sin is far removed from the contention that Christ *could not* sin. The former either denies his Deity or else dishonors God with the calumnious averment that God is Himself capable of sinning. Again, it must be declared that Christ's human traits which did not involve moral issues could be exhibited freely. The idea might be admitted with certain reservations that he was both omnipotent and impotent, omniscient and ignorant, infinite and finite, unlimited and limited; but it could never be allowed that He was both impeccable and peccable. There are no God-dishonoring elements in human weakness, human pain, human hunger, human thirst, or human limitations with respect to various capacities—even human death may be admitted as a death undergone for others, but not for Himself." Chafer's qualifier on death is important because death is not proper for humanity, but death as a vicarious sacrifice is praiseworthy and is obviously predicable of God in his humanity. Christ's experience of these weaknesses, pains, and death is voluntary and vicarious to redeem a fallen creation, not deserved for personal sin or a share in original sin.

[12]In the new heavens and earth, sin will be abolished, as indicated by the abolition of the consequences of death, grief, and pain that stem from original sin (Rev 21:4). Unlike the present state of affairs in a fallen creation, the new creation will be characterized by the absence of these consequences because of the absence of sin. This eschatological promise implies the impeccability of glorified believers who will never sin and bring about the conditions of a world wracked with death, grief, and pain.

they are the normal, created characteristics of finite, contingent creatures. Thus, God the Son may condescend in humility to experience finite knowledge in his human frame of reference, but he may not condescend to experience sin. Righteous human existence is compatible with a divine incarnation, but sinful human existence is not . God cannot tolerate sin, either in a second condition of existence by incarnation or by his relationship with the human beings he has created. The distinction between the two natures and their distinct frames of reference prevents the contradiction between God's divine omniscience and his human limitation, but no resolution of the contradiction of sin is possible.[13]

Therefore, because of the uniqueness of sin among all the other attributes that are compossible for a God-man, M8 affirms the natural impeccability of Christ as God incarnate with a unique existence as a man among others, and the integrity of his two natures. Jesus could not sin in his human intentions and actions because he is the divine Son, but his human nature is unchanged by this relationship with his divine nature. He remains impeccable in his humanity as God incarnate without divinizing his human nature to become different as a superman.

However, a divine incarnation that does not result in superhumanity by divinization is difficult to avoid without a special explanation for maintaining the integrity of his two natures. A divine restraint is necessary to preserve the integrity of his humanity as an authentic humanity in Jesus' condition of existence as a man. Specifically, his natural impeccability had to be restrained for him to become relevant for other human beings in his empathy and pattern for their experience in temptation. M8 proposes that the Holy Spirit may have facilitated the prominence of Jesus' human nature and preserved the integrity of his two natures. Some sort of divine action—most plausibly by the Holy Spirit (as we will see below)—was necessary to prevent both the divinization of his humanity to be impeccable and the degradation of his divinity to be peccable.

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[13]Similar contradictions between non-moral divine and human attributes (e.g., omnipotence and impotence, omnipresence and local presence) prove to be only apparent conflicts if the integrity of the two natures in two frames of reference is maintained.

Personal impeccability. Jesus' impeccability as the God-man was also personal because he is the divine Son in action, despite his incarnation (M3). His volition as a man remained perfectly conformed to his volition as the divine Son. Thus, the unity of his person in two conditions of existence requires that all his actions must be righteous. For many of the same reasons noted above in connection with his natural impeccability, Jesus' sinless action as a perfect person in his human nature is necessary (impeccability).

Nonetheless, the advantages of personal divine impeccability for the God-man contradict his tasks to demonstrate a perfect human life in a way that makes him both empathetic and the pattern for others who do not possess personal divine impeccability as he does. Therefore, M8 affirms Jesus' personal impeccability, but denies that this was a causal factor in his human achievement of sinlessness. Jesus' praiseworthiness and relevance as a sinless God-man must be grounded on another basis than his personal impeccability because such an advantage would strip him of both. Instead, M8 proposes that the Holy Spirit facilitated the prominence of Jesus' humanity and veiling of his divinity to preserve the human achievement of Jesus' sinlessness and his relevance for others.

Pneumatological restraint on Jesus' divinity. The problem of Jesus' divine impeccability and his human weaknesses and redemptive tasks has been resolved by the M6 principle that in Jesus' life, his humanity was displayed and his divinity was veiled. M8 suggests that the best explanation of this principle is that the Holy Spirit was the agent who veiled Jesus' divine impeccability and displayed his humanity. Thus, the pneumatological intervention preserved the integrity of Jesus' two natures and the authenticity of his human experience (with all the attendant points of relevance for other human beings). With his weak, limited humanity thrust fully into prominence by the Holy Spirit, Jesus can achieve sinlessness, become empathetic, and demonstrate his life as the pattern for others. A similar idea was suggested in M5 that the Son could choose a mode

of human existence that was weakened in particular ways that were necessary for redemption.

Veiling by the Holy Spirit allows the divine Son to enter a weak human experience. This pneumatological veiling is similar to kenotic formulations that suggest Jesus limited his divine exercise or expression of powers to the limits necessary for a real human experience. However, pneumatological veiling surmounts two difficulties of kenoticism.

First, kenotic formulations entail that Jesus loses his humanity after his resurrection because he regains the full exercise of his divine powers that had been temporarily contracted to the scope of human limits. The problem is that kenoticism constrains the Logos to his human experience as on a Procrustean bed[14] for the temporary trimming away from Jesus all that is not compossible with being a man. When he is glorified, Jesus regains his full powers but loses his humanity. Instead, pneumatological veiling preserves the distinction between Jesus' two natures in two conditions of existence as Jesus the man and as the *Logos extra carnem*. This veiling was not for the Son to *become* a man but to *experience* the weaknesses necessary for redemption. When Jesus is raised and glorified, he continues to exist as a man and as the divine Logos; the only change is that he now displays his divine glory as the Son in his humanity for people to see (cf. John 1:14; 17:5). He retains his human limitations alongside his divine perfections; he is forever the God-man with a glorified humanity constituted by the Spirit in display of the resurrected new humanity (cf. 1 Cor 15:20-28).

Second, kenotic formulations are incoherent to suggest that the Son's contraction of divine powers to the human scope of his earthly existence was a self-limitation. A common example is that Jesus self-limited his divine omniscience to be ignorant as a man, which means that he chose to be ignorant of what he knows by not using his omniscience. This is incoherent. Moreover, the suggestion that divine attributes

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[14]In Greek mythology, Procrustes is a giant in Attica who invites travelers to stay in his home, ties them to a bed, and either cuts off their legs or stretches them to fit the bed (thereby killing them).

can be latent or limited is incoherent in terms of the definitions of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence that, if such attributes are possessed, cannot conceivably be reduced in a degreed way because they are threshold properties.[15] Instead, pneumatological veiling is a trinitarian divine operation in Christ that supports his self-consciousness as the Son in his *opera ad extra*, acting in two levels of his existence. Analogy for this double capacity is the way a bilingual speaker can speak in two languages for two audiences, or a computer can run a game on the internet and as an off-line application.

An analogy for the pneumatological veiling of Christ's divine nature from his human condition of existence is the way that God's work in the church is veiled by the weak humanity of the people (cf. Calvin's observation that the kingdom of God is presently veiled by the weakness of the flesh in the similar way to how Christ's divine power was veiled).[16] Like the divine action in the church, the Holy Spirit regulates Jesus' human experience from conception and throughout his growth and messianic action, supplying what he needs (e.g., guidance, illumination, comfort, power) for his redemptive tasks. Some may object that we ought to allow that Jesus possibly used his own divine power to perform miracles and know things that others were thinking; and the objection would continue that Jesus depended upon his innate impeccability in the most intense moments of his temptation. However, because his pattern for resisting temptation depends upon his having done so within his human limitations—or, better, with assistance by the power of the Holy Spirit to his humanity—Jesus cannot have resisted temptations based on his divine necessary goodness. The distinction that may be helpful here is that the pneumatological veiling of Jesus' divinity prevents the Son from expressing his divine power in his human level of experience. The divine power that is

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[15]Threshold properties are those that one either possesses or does not possess, without any greater or lesser degree, e.g., existence, embodiment. By contrast, degreed properties are those that one may possess in greater or lesser degrees or amounts, e.g., artistic skill, physical fitness.

[16]John Calvin, *Institutio Christianae religionis* 2.16.12 (*OS* 3:504, 27-31).

prominent in his ministry by the Holy Spirit is still properly Jesus' divine power as the divine Son; this is in keeping with the traditional affirmation that the external works of the trinitarian persons are undivided. As a divine person acting in a human condition of existence, when Christ exercises divine powers these are not alien to him as they were for Elijah. The divine powers are the Son's divine powers. However, Jesus' exercise of divine powers in his earthly life is pneumatological, and thus consistent with his human nature.

The pervasive role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Messiah suggests the pneumatological veiling of Jesus' divinity. We saw in chapter 4 that the NT confirms the OT prophecy that the Holy Spirit would have a role of ethical formation in Jesus' life. The Synoptic Gospels tell that the Holy Spirit guided Jesus into the wilderness to be tested by God with the temptations of Satan (Mark 1:12-13 and par.). Jesus attributes his ability to drive out demons (Matt 12:28) and his work of messianic preaching and healing to the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:16-21). Luke also repeatedly describes Jesus' entire ministry as under the empowering influence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38; cf. 4:27; 2:22). Thus, the biblical evidence for pneumatological ethical formation, guidance, and empowerment suggests the propriety of a pneumatological role to veil Jesus' divinity from compromising the integrity and prominence of his human nature.

Therefore, M8 proposes that the Holy Spirit prevented Christ's divine impeccability (and other divine powers that might have compromised his authentic human experience) from overriding his human susceptibility to temptations of all sorts common to humanity. The biblical data for the extent and degree of Jesus' temptations (along with his other weaknesses, including death) indicate that an unusual divine intervention was necessary to make this experience possible for the divine Son. The proposed pneumatological restraint to regulate an authentic human experience fits well with Christ's relevance to open the way for him to be an exemplar in the life under divine grace (M4-M7). The restraint is a negative work of the Holy Spirit to allow the

redemptive state of affairs of the Son's humanity. The restraint corresponds to the positive work of the Holy Spirit to contribute ethical formation, guidance, and empowerment.

In support of this proposal of pneumatological veiling, we must consider some additional biblical evidence. Acts 16:6-7 indicates an analogy of the Spirit's work to restrain action in the human sphere. Luke writes that during the second missionary journey, Paul, Silas, and Timothy experienced a restraint by the Holy Spirit in two ways. They were "prevented" (κωλυθέντες, v.6) by the Spirit from preaching in Asia, and the Spirit "did not permit" (οὐκ εἴασεν, v.7) them from traveling further northward in Asia (to Bithynia). These examples allow the plausibility of a similar sort of restraint of Christ's divinity throughout his earthly life to preserve his full human experience.

Several advantages commend the proposal of pneumatological veiling or restraint of Jesus' divinity from becoming a factor in his earthly, human experience. First, this proposal explains Jesus' action as a trinitarian economic operation to coordinate the Father's plan, the Son's mission, and the Holy Spirit's intervening role facilitating the Son's mission. The Gospels indicate trinitarian relations in the incarnation by the distinct emphases of the Synoptics and John's Gospel. In the Synoptics (especially Luke), Jesus' dependence on the Holy Spirit for guidance and power to fulfill his mission of preaching and healing is presented as a model for the church in Acts. In the Gospel of John, Jesus' dependence on the Father for guidance and power is modeled for the church.[17] Second, this proposal avoids a divisive Christology by the unitary action of the Son as regulated by the Holy Spirit in his human condition of existence. Jesus has a real, limited humanity without the incoherence of a self-restriction of his divine attributes. Third, this proposal

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[17]One scholar who recognizes the parallel of trinitarian operations (i.e., the involvement of the Spirit is attributed to the Father) in the Synoptics and John is Gary M. Burge, *The Anointed Community: The Holy Spirit in the Johannine Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 99. "We noticed in our examination of Jesus' works of power that the Johannine Christ is not a pneumatic. His miracles are revelatory and make glory evident rather than power. Thus they are christological in that they express who Jesus is instead of what he bears. In addition this Johannine theme serves a oneness christology in which we can say that the works of power do not reveal the power of the Spirit but the presence of the Father. . . . It appears that the role of the Spirit is somewhat preempted by the presence of the Father in Johannine christology."

upholds Christ's uniqueness. M8 explains the exercise of his own power in ways coincident with normal human operation in conjunction with the Holy Spirit. M8 avoids the M4 problem of explaining Jesus' power as entirely from the Holy Spirit (as is possible for any human being assisted by divine grace). Finally, the proposal of pneumatological restraint follows the theology of M4, M6, and M7 that emphasize a major role for the Holy Spirit in the life of the Messiah.

Relational impeccability. Having proposed that Christ's natural and personal impeccability were restrained by pneumatological veiling of his divinity from display on earth, M8 follows the M4-M7 explanation that Christ's sinlessness was actually an achievement with the pneumatological assistance of empowering grace. This relational impeccability is the guarantee of Jesus' sinlessness as a man in relationship with God. The ethical role of the Holy Spirit is primary in this relationship to preserve Jesus from sin at his conception, and then form him with guidance, assurance, illumination, and tests throughout his development until his death. This formation is analogous to the New Covenant work of the Holy Spirit in the church to sanctify believers in Christ and under the Father's sovereignty with guidance, assurance, illumination, and tests. The Gospels indicate this relational dimension to Jesus' life in the way they give abundant evidence of Jesus' close relationship as a man with God as his Father. Furthermore, they commend the same closeness for his followers (e.g., John 17:3).

We will consider Jesus' relational impeccability in detail below in connection with his sinlessness as a relational accomplishment; in advance of that discussion, we anticipate at least three advantages of this proposal. First, relational impeccability is consistent with the prominence of Jesus' human nature. M5 proposed created grace for the same reason of preserving the human setting for Jesus' moral perfection so he could remain relevantly empathetic and exemplary for others, and praiseworthy for his sinlessness.

Second, by explaining his human impeccability as relational instead of natural or personal, M8 retains the impeccability that is necessary to ground his sinlessness as a sufficient sacrifice—without the problems. M8 minimizes the problems (noted in M7) of affirming impeccability: the loss of his human relevance as empathetic and exemplary for others. M8 maximizes the analogy of Jesus' relational resources as a relevant paradigm for sanctification in the church (M4).

Third, relational impeccability preserves the severity and extent of Jesus' temptations in the same setting of weakness, contingency, and relationships that other humans experience.[18] Relational impeccability allows the explanation that Jesus had the significant freedom to act in accordance with his will and human nature to resist temptation to sin; he was not coerced by relational, natural, or personal impeccability. However, God the Father's sovereign ordering of events and provision of relational resources guaranteed that Jesus could not sin when he was tempted (cf. Eph 1:11).[19] Scripture is clear that God prevents people other than Jesus from committing sins that do not suit his ultimate purposes (e.g., the frequent attempts of Jesus' enemies to capture and kill him).[20] This compatibilism between divine sovereignty and human freedom suggests that a similar operation is reasonable in the case of God's use of relational resources to secure Jesus' inability to sin without constraining him to do right. This suggestion of relational, divine involvement of the Father in Jesus' actions is corroborated by the evidence that Jesus attributes all his words and actions to his Father (e.g., John 5:19, 36; 10:18, 32-38; 12:49-50), and that all people must credit God as the ultimate cause for any good that they do in life (cf. Eph 2:10).

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[18]We will explore human temptations in this setting of relationships below.

[19]A contemporary case for compatibilism and specific divine sovereignty is given in Feinberg, *No One Like Him*, 677-734.

[20]John 7:30 is most revealing of the divine sovereignty that restrained the people's evil actions (without coercing them) because the time had not yet come in God's plans for Jesus to be taken and murdered (cf. Luke 4:28-30; Mark 14:1; John 7:44; 8:58-59; 10:31-39).

Therefore, M8 affirms that Jesus' impeccability was natural, personal, and relational in a way that preserved his ability to be tempted. Scripture is clear that (1) Jesus was tempted to the full extent and degree that is common to humanity, (2) Jesus is the divine Son, and (3) God cannot sin. The M8 proposal of relational impeccability draws these data together as the explanation that Jesus could be relevantly tempted in his human condition of existence, achieve sinlessness as a model for others, and remain impeccable throughout his earthly life by the relational resources provided by his Father. We will explore the relational resources that are suggested by the Gospel evidence, but first we must consider the relationality of Jesus' temptation.

Jesus' Temptation Was a Relational Experience

With few exceptions, most theologians recognize that Christ was tempted to sin despite his untemptable divinity.[21] M8 proposes that Jesus' temptation was a relational experience in his human condition of existence. The capacity for relationship is essential to human nature,[22] and human relationality is partly constitutive of human temptability. Thus, human temptability is a relational state of affairs that always engages a person in one or more of that individual's relationships with God, the world, other people, or the self. M8, in accordance with M4, M6, and M7, emphasizes the authentic humanity of Jesus and his temptability.

This relational concept for understanding Jesus' temptation is key for this: the problem of temptation is a relational situation matched by the relational solution of Jesus' human accomplishment of sinlessness. Temptation was a problem for Jesus because, *qua*

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[21]An exception is Richard Swinburne, *The Christian God* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 205-07, who argues that Jesus could only be tempted to a lesser good, but never to a wrong act.

[22]Robert Saucy, "Theology of Human Nature," in *Christian Perspectives on Being Human*, ed. J. P. Moreland and David M. Ciocchi (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 25-26: "The image [of God in human beings] thus involves an essential human nature which includes the attributes of existence entailing relationships. These may not be fully developed, but they are nonetheless endowments of the essence of humanity in the image of God even in their potentiality. A person may not be fully expressing the concept of the image while asleep, but he is as such still fully human."

his humanity, he experienced the stresses normal to human life so that he could become empathetic and exemplary for others. By living his earthly life in the prominence of his human nature, Jesus was weak and vulnerable to the relational circumstances that constitute temptations to sin. Thus, temptation was a problem for Jesus because of his human temptability within the setting of normal human relationships. We will consider the relationality of Jesus' temptation as a problem of human temptability, and a problem of human suffering. Following this we will offer three aspects of a definition of temptation.

Human temptability. In contrast to God, who cannot be tempted (Jas 1:13), human beings are temptable because of their creaturely weakness, finitude, contingency, and liability to suffering.[23] As the result of this creaturely condition, human temptations to sin arise within the matrix of a person's real and imagined needs and desires that correspond to real and imagined satisfaction in relationships with (1) God, (2) the external world, (3) other people, and (4) the self. These four areas of an individual's relationships are spheres of human action that allow different sorts of temptations to afflict people. Even for the monk in seclusion, temptation is intrinsically relational—not only in terms of the settings of human relationships that make temptations possible—because the mechanics of temptation are an interaction of relational factors.[24]

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[23]We must recognize that sinfulness—both from original sin and personal sins—exacerbates the problem of temptability in at least two ways. First, sin is corruptive in a way that weakens the sinner to be more susceptible to further sins. Second, sinners have corrupt desires leading to more sins in addition to the legitimate or innocent desires that lead to sins by satisfaction with the wrong means. Jesus' difference in this respect is that, lacking original and personal sin, he had neither the corruption nor the corrupt desires. His likeness is that he had legitimate desires leading to sin that he had to renounce in favor of desires leading to obedience and righteousness. As we will see below, this difference is not of categories of temptations distinguishing Jesus from others, but a difference of person-variability in relation to particular temptations that appeal differently to different people. The point is that human temptability is not from sinfulness (just as Adam, Eve, and Jesus were each tempted without prior sin), but from the factors noted in relation to being a creature, which Jesus fully shared.

[24]The relationality of the human experience of being tested (which may include temptation) is also observed by the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, ed. Leland Ryken et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), s.v. "Test Motif": "If we recognize the centrality of the test motif to narrative itself, it becomes virtually impossible to classify the things that test a person. All of life tests us. The external world of nature and weather tests us. Specific people, as well as the entire social environment, test us. Personal relationships test our identity and loyalties, bringing out character traits in the process. It is true, of course, that the Bible tends (as does literature in general) to show characters in extraordinary or unusual situations that test them—a journey, for example, instead of a routine day at home, or a controversial encounter with a

First, with respect to God, every temptation to sin is an enticement to be torn away from God.[25] Moreover, every sin has an ultimate setting within a person's creaturely relationship to God as Creator and Judge.[26] The prospect of turning against God by following a temptation to sin arises from the human condition as finite beings with freedom and imagination (but this is no excuse for sin). Reinhold Niebuhr argues that creaturely finitude and freedom constitute human temptability:

> The situation of finiteness and freedom in which man stands becomes a source of temptation only when it is falsely interpreted. But what is the situation which is the occasion of temptation? Is it not the fact that man is a finite spirit, lacking identity with the whole, but yet a spirit capable in some sense of envisaging the whole, so that he easily commits the error of imagining himself the whole which he envisages?[27]

Human beings (and presumably angels also, but not God) can be tempted because creaturely finitude and freedom seem to form a tension within the experiencing subject. Niebuhr notes that the tension or anxiety resulting from the paradox of human freedom and finitude is an internal description of the state of temptation.[28] Without the freedom and imagination that allows individuals to consider tempting possibilities, people see no possibility of turning away from God. However, endowed with freedom and imagination to transcend their divinely ordained limitations, people may consider the untested prospect of another way of life apart from God as independence from the Creator. Moreover, as finite beings under God's command, human beings are constantly temptable by varied ways of escaping or transcending their limitations through gain to support their independence—adding to themselves and seeking to enlarge themselves

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personal enemy rather than a conversation with a spouse or friend. Still, the Bible's thoroughgoing realism gives us to understand that our essential identity consists our responses to the events that make up our lives in the world."

[25]Helmut Thielicke, "The Great Temptation," in *Our Heavenly Father* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1960); reprint, *Christianity Today* 29, no.10 (1985): 28.

[26]Plantinga, *Not the Way*, 12-13.

[27]Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), 1:180-81.

[28]Ibid., 1:182. Niebuhr acknowledges Søren Kierkegaard for the idea of anxiety.

beyond the constraints of finitude—for the sake of self instead of living for the glory of God as they were made. Thus, finite beings can imagine their personal transcendence as the temptation to become great and move beyond their divinely-ordered status.

Creaturely finitude is one aspect of human temptability in relation to God; the created condition of being contingent may be an even more accurate description of human temptability in relation to God.[29] As contingent creatures with an acute sense of their dependence on God, the temptation to turn away from the Creator by a rebellious grasp at independence appeals to the desire for autonomy.[30] The desire may be inexplicable as the dream for life apart from the Source of all goodness and life. At least we can say the desire for autonomy is irrational, just as all sin is fundamentally irrational.[31] These temptations to independence from God may take both the direct form of forsaking God for independence and autonomy through idolatry, and the indirect form of violating the limits that God has established for his creatures' relationships within the natural order.[32]

Humans in the world are bound by their contingency to recognize God's authority in a relationship of submission to him. From the beginning, God obligated the human race to serve him as viceroy on the earth (Gen 1:26), mediating God's rule over the creation in protective and regulative ways that was briefly evident in Adam's work of caring for the garden (Gen 2:15) and naming the animals (Gen 2:19-20). Indeed, the first

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[29]Paul Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), 133-46, critiques the traditional explanation of finitude and argues for the non-necessity of being instead. Ricoeur's proposal that contingency is the condition for fallibility seems more accurate to experience and biblical revelation. Cf. the summary statement that sin is a grasp at autonomy from the Creator; Saucy, "Theology of Human Nature," 46: "Scripture consistently sees the origin of sin, whether in the angelic or human realm, in terms of the unexplained use of created freedom to turn against its source in exceeding the limits which the Creator has established for the benefit of the creature (cf. Ezek 28:15)."

[30]Cf. the emphasis on the desire for autonomy in the description of temptation given by Wayne E. Oates, *Temptation: A Biblical and Psychological Approach* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 103: "Temptation is the testing ground between the strivings of the image of God in us and the strivings of our desires to be the masters of our fate, the captains of our souls."

[31]The inexplicable nonsense of sin is the thesis of G. C. Berkouwer, *Sin,* trans. Philip C. Holtrop, Studies in Dogmatics (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971).

[32]Norman H. Snaith, *Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (London: Epworth, 1944), 60-61, notes the double sense of sin in OT theology as primarily rebellion against God and secondarily the transgression of God's code for human ethical conduct. Cf. Saucy, "Theology of Human Nature," 46.

temptation for humanity came in the setting of relationship with God when Satan suggested his lie in place of God's clear declaration that Adam and Eve must obey the ban on the fruit of a single tree. This ban was God's design and limitation for how humans should act in their relationship to a particular tree. Having failed there, humanity needed further obligatory restrictions for their relationships to all created things. Thus, humans are temptable in the setting of their relationship with God because they are weak in every way, ontologically contingent upon him, and owe him the obedient conduct that he rightly demands as their Creator. Without this special relationship to God, human beings would have much less temptability.[33] As a real human being, Jesus also shared in this human temptability in his relationship as a man to God.

Second, in relationship to the created world, the individual human as a bodily being has needs—the natural human weakness as creatures requiring the perpetual, externally-supplied life support of food, drink, clothing, shelter, possessions, and more. The temptations that correspond to bodily needs and desires in relationship to the external world afflict humanity constantly, despite the original goodness of both the created world and the human creatures inhabiting it. The lack of some needed thing, such as food, is the occasion of suffering and pain for the individual. This need corresponds to the promise of comfort and peace when the needs are satisfied by eating the food, clothing the body, or whatever.

The temptations in this relationship are of two sorts: (1) to satisfy a legitimate desire in the wrong way (e.g., hunger satisfied by stolen bread), and (2) to satisfy a corrupt (illegitimate) desire (e.g., greed satisfied by wealth). Both sorts of temptations are internal experiences of a struggle about desire for things in the world environment.[34] As noted above, the variety of temptations in this relationship exists because God has set

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[33]However, human beings without a relationship of obligation to God would be greatly impoverished of their greatest dignity of existing in special relationship to God.

[34]Notice that these are the normative temptations for fallen humanity; we will see below that Jesus was only susceptible to the first sort of temptations because he did not possess the corrupt desires that fallen humans possess.

bounds and prescriptions for human conduct in relation to the created order around them. For example, bestiality is forbidden, gluttony is censured, greed is ruled out, intoxication is prohibited, and even the exploitation of the animals is limited (e.g., Exod 23:12, as part of Sabbath regulations). While the world is a habitation designed for humans in a way that corresponds perfectly to their embodiment, the divinely-ordered relationship for the ways human beings use the world is the setting for a multitude of temptations to violate that order. Being a real man, Jesus was also temptable as an embodied being in relationship to the created world, just as others are.

Third, the social setting of person-to-person relationships constitutes an array of human temptations.[35] In addition to bodily needs, humans have the relational needs for the interpersonal dynamics of love, affection, respect, honor, friendship, companionship, nurture, protection, encouragement, and more. People are tempted to sin in the sphere of their relationships with others both by seeking the wrong means of satisfying legitimate or right desires (e.g., hunger satisfied with stolen bread) and by trying to get satisfaction for their corrupt desires (e.g., revenge satisfied by slandering an enemy). Examples of these temptations are commonplace in the ways people abuse and mistreat others instead of respecting and serving them as God has ordained. Much of the social or interpersonal evil to which people are tempted combines both relationships of human-to-things and of humans-to-humans. Examples include coveting, greed, theft, property damage, sexual misconduct, persecution, extortion, and violence using objects as weapons. These make for misusing things of the natural world in harmful relation to other people. Thus, the needs that people have for other people draw them into relationships with others by God's design, but this social setting is also the theater for many temptations to sin against that design in relationship to others. Living his earthly life as a real man, Jesus also bore

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[35]The interpersonal, social relationality of temptation is also recognized by Oates, *Temptation*, 77: "[The psychodynamics of temptation] all move on the assumption of the inner self as opposed to the outer self, as opposed to other people. Yet they all assume an interpersonal field of interacting selves. Temptations or inner conflicts arise out of this field of interpersonal relationships, not merely between the personal world and the material world. They are essentially social in nature."

the common temptability in his relationship to people.

Fourth, in relationship to the self, individuals have the habitual dynamics of character, moods, emotions, self-concept, and self-consciousness. There is opportunity for temptations to pride, distorted body image, despair, happiness, safety, power, achievement, comfort, worth, and more. Many of these temptations are simply the appeals to recapitulate the first human sin of clamoring for one's independence from God. Often self-referential temptations are based on the problem of seeking the wrong means of satisfying the appropriate desires (e.g., using plastic surgery to boost one's self-concept). Corrupt desires can form self-referential temptations also (e.g., presenting oneself as a sex object by attitude and surgery). The issue of temptation in relationship to the self is to see oneself wrongly, according to some false image that is other than God's making, order, and specific call. A human being faces multiform temptations to autonomy for the self and sinful pride that violate the proper order of one's dependence and total submission to God.

While this relationship of the outer self and inner self or self-consciousness always has a setting in another of the three relationships above, the questions of identity and significance make for virulent temptations at this relational level because these have to do with a person's self-awareness. Internal states of being may be either untouched or greatly determined by external relationships, whether these are relations with people, the weather, or chemical substances (e.g., drugs, medications, hormones). At every prospect of sin that contributes to the further distortion of self-awareness or the self-concept, there is access for self-referential temptation (e.g., to view oneself as superior to other people for having accumulated more money than them; to view oneself as inferior to others because of being ugly, ignorant in some ways, or financially poor). This sort of human relationship is difficult to analyze with respect to temptations to sin because no analysts can escape their subjectivity. Nonetheless, the general principle illustrated by the other three relationships seems appropriate here as well—temptation to deviate from God's

order for the self-referential relationship. Thus, at every level of human relationship, temptation to sin is that pull on people to act against God's order for human relational existence.[36] These acts may be merely unvoiced intensions and thoughts, or the more overt speech-acts and bodily actions that are observable. As an authentic human being, Jesus also shared in the normal human temptability in the setting of his relationship within himself.

Thus, temptation was a problem for Jesus because of human temptability in his relationship with God, the external world, other people, and himself. But it was also a problem for Jesus because of human suffering to which he was susceptible.

Suffering. Alongside these four aspects of human life is another general category of human temptability: the liability to feel pain that ranges from mere discomfort to intense, excruciating pain.[37] The prospect of suffering in a fallen world creates the possibility of temptation in the form of promise of relief from or possible evasion of pain.[38] Human beings are vulnerable to suffering of many sorts (emotional and physical) because of their creaturely contingency and weakness. People are thus tempted to sin by avoiding pain through the wrong means of satisfying their desire for comfort (e.g. stealing bread to escape the pain of hunger; turning away from Christ to escape persecution). Suffering intensifies the occasion for temptation to sin because sometimes suffering creates the prospect of evading pain by committing sin as a way of escape from peril (e.g., telling a lie to avoid punishment). A biblical example is the book of Hebrews, which addresses the situation where the temptation to turn away from Christ and return to

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[36]Cf. the observation of George S. Painter, *The Philosophy of Christ's Temptation* (Boston: Sherman, French, and Co., 1914), 136: "The realm of possible temptation, therefore, is almost infinite, and the impulse to anything whatever, outside the sphere of the right, may lead to evil."

[37]Notice that Latin-derived English sense of the common adjective *excruciating* refers to the mental and bodily suffering in the crucifixion; Jesus' crucifixion is probably the concrete image.

[38]The conjunction of suffering and temptation is also noted by Marguerite Shuster, "The Temptation, Sinlessness, and Sympathy of Jesus: Another Look at the Dilemma of Hebrews 4:15," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. Marguerite Shuster and Richard A. Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 205: "Temptation comes when the possibility presents itself of escaping or avoiding suffering (albeit temporarily) *in the wrong way* and with the knowledge that refusing evil will often lead to the increase of earthly suffering."

Judaism has been thrust upon the readers because of their impending persecution for being Christians.[39]

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, well-acquainted with suffering under the Nazi regime, writes that the temptation to sin as occasioned by suffering (whether serious sickness, poverty, pain, or persecution for Christ) is the temptation by a desire for relief from suffering, albeit relief by sinful means of abandoning God or committing some other crime to alleviate one's troubles.[40] The one who is tempted only resists sin by renouncing the reasonable, natural desire to escape from suffering. Such desire for self-preservation is often good, but it can become evil if one chooses self-preservation over the competing desire of clinging to God even when suffering is involved. Thus, trials of all kinds strain people specifically because of embodiment and the relational contingency upon life-support and other needs that make them liable both to pain and to the temptation to avoid suffering by committing sin. As a real human being who suffered emotionally and physically, Jesus was also temptable in relation to his human liability to pain; he was especially tempted to avoid his imminent suffering in his crucifixion but overcame that desire to choose instead the desire to obey his Father (Mark 14:36).

In summary, Jesus experienced temptation both because of his human temptability in four areas, and his human susceptibility to suffering. We will now set this discussion of Jesus' temptations in the context of a definition of temptation with specific attention given to three aspects of human temptation. These are: (1) the dual teleology of temptation, (2) person-variability, and (3) the factors involved in temptation.

First aspect: The dual teleology of temptation. The dual teleology of temptation is that a state of affairs may be both a temptation to sin and a test for sanctification. From a demonic perspective, the situation of a person's struggle between

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[39]Ibid., 203-07.

[40]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall. Temptation*, trans. Kathleen Downham, ed. Eberhard Bethge (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 134.

desires and an enticement to sin is for the purpose of moral failure and corruption in the tarry morass of sin. From God's perspective, the same situation is a test for the purpose of moral triumph and fortification in righteousness and faithfulness. For example, God guided Jesus into the wilderness to test his faithfulness; but the devil's malicious temptations constituted the divine test (Matt 4:1). Positively, God's purpose in allowing the setting for Jesus to face Satan's temptations to sin was to strengthen Jesus by the test at the onset of his public ministry.[41] Negatively, Satan's purpose in suggesting sins to Jesus was so that Jesus would sin just as Adam had in the Garden (Gen 3:1-6).

God's positive purpose of a testing circumstance that can become a temptation shows frequently as a biblical theme (e.g., Abram's sacrifice of Isaac, Gen 22; Israel in the wilderness). God's positive purpose in allowing the circumstances of temptations as the purifying, formative tests of faith is clear in James 1:2-4. The readers are told that "whenever various trials may beset you" (ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις, v. 2) their "trials" are positively "the testing of your faith" (τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως, v. 3) to strengthen them by forming endurance as part of their progressive maturity in perseverance (Jas 1:12).[42] In these tests, God positively uses negative pressures of persecution, deprivation, and other troubles to challenge a person to stretch beyond limitations in faith and act like God in opposition to sin.[43] God uses the pressures of difficult circumstances to purify his people from sinful ways and to transform them to be faithful and righteous.[44] The frequent biblical metaphor for this transformation is the

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[41]Karl Georg Kuhn, "New Light on Temptation, Sin, and Flesh in the New Testament," in *The Scrolls and the New Testament*, ed. Krister Stendahl (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 96, makes the unusual claim that temptation only applies to believers whom Satan tempts to tear them away from God. By contrast, because unbelievers are already in Satan's power, they are not in the state of temptation.

[42]Notice that the shift between positive and negative purposes is contextual, not lexical, since πειρασμός is the term in each case.

[43]Kees Waaijman, "Temptation: The Basic Theological Structure of Temptation," trans. S. Ralston, *Journal of Empirical Theology* 5 (1992): 89, 92.

[44]Notice the positive, ethical outcomes of testing noted by the author of "Test Motif" in the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, ed. Ryken et al.: "While this [motif of God's testing the people] is explicitly stated only a dozen times, it is impossible to read the stories of the Bible without interpreting the events that test the human characters as from God, to determine characters' moral and spiritual standing."

heat-intensive process of smelting precious metals to purify them of the slag, as in the summary statement of Proverbs 17:3: "The crucible for silver, and the furnace for gold, and Yahweh's testing for hearts."[45] George Painter observes the positive purpose of difficult, tempting circumstances for ethical-religious development:[46]

> It must be evident to all . . . that trial and a proving of ourselves are the absolutely essential conditions of every moral nature for its normal unfolding and development. Life is a warfare, and a survival of the fittest. The giant oak has become strong through the withstanding of the lightning's blast and the winter's storms; so likewise we grow strong in all the relations of our lives by a process of overcoming, and this is peculiarly emphatic in the moral nature.[47]

The "trials" of James 1:2-4 are viewed in a different way in James 1:13. These same trials are negatively the occasions of "being tempted" to sin that are not attributable to God (Μηδεὶς πειραζόμενος λεγέτω ὅτι ἀπο θεοῦ πειράζομαι). Furthermore, James warns against blaming God for circumstances in which people find themselves enticed to sin. On the contrary, God's purpose is only positive for ethical-religious fortification (Jas 1:12, 16-18).[48] Thus, James assures his readers that while they have wrongly construed their difficult circumstances as the occasion for sin (to the readers' own fault), the audience ought to take courage from the reassurance of God's purpose and joyfully see their hardships as the opportunity for growth in ethical-religious maturity.

Moreover, the example in James also shows that at least some (if not most) temptations do not originate with the devil; thus, temptation is not simply a demonic interaction but primarily involves other agents and relationships of the tempted subject.[49]

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[45]מַצְרֵף לַכֶּסֶף וְכוּר לַזָּהָב וּבֹחֵן לִבּוֹת יְהוָה׃ (cf. Isa 1:24-26; Mal 3:1-3; 1 Pet 1:6-7).

[46]"Ethical-religious" corresponds to the right attitude and actions of obeying God faithfully.

[47]Painter, *Philosophy of Christ's Temptation*, 142-43.

[48]Notice that James does not allow his readers to blame the God or the devil for their temptation, but focuses on the individual's response to the circumstances.

[49]The demonic factor in human temptations is thus secondary and partial, always contingent upon one of the four human relationships. Even for those relatively few temptations that involve a demonic agent, his role and malicious power are contingent upon the prior conditions of human temptability in four relationships. This partial, contingent role does not constitute a separate category or relationship of human temptability, despite the way that some Christians blame the devil for their temptations and sins. By comparison with Satan's temptations of Adam and Jesus, the Pauline account of temptation in 1 Thess 3:5;

Regardless of the presence or absence of a demonic tempter, the dual teleology of temptation shows the negative purpose of sinful alignment with opposition to God and the positive divine purpose of allowing or orchestrating negative pressures to bring about righteous, faithful growth by testing. Both purposes overshadow human beings as they stand in relationship to God, whether choosing against him by their sin or aligning with him in their faithful obedience. Both purposes are demonstrated in Jesus' experience in the wilderness and probably occurred many times before and after that specially-recorded occasion.

Second aspect: Person-variability.[50] Temptations to sin are person-variable, or relative to the specific and subjective particularity of an individual person. Different states of affairs in the world are the setting for temptations that vary in force to be subjectively more intense for some people than for others. Some people may be tempted in ways that for others present no temptation at all. For example, heroin and the criminal means to obtain heroin by prostitution, theft, or drug dealing are powerful temptations for a heroin addict, but these same temptations are innocuous if not repulsive to others who are inexperienced with heroin and substance abuse. Most people never even think about heroin, much less consider the temptation to use the drug. Thus, all temptations vary in their subjective appeal relative to the life circumstances of particular individuals.

Person-variability suggests that temptations are relationally contingent upon an experiencing subject's historical-cultural embeddedness, gender, socio-economic status, age, beliefs, and life experience to have force for a person. This contingency shows in the special messianic appeal of Jesus' wilderness temptations that were cunningly forceful and coherent for Jesus expressly because of his status as the Messiah; for others, the

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Gal 4:8-9; and Eph 2:1-3 is that Satan works to re-enslave people in sin by exploiting the desires of the flesh. Clinton E. Arnold, *Power of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul's Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 127-28.

[50]This concept of person-variability is an adaptation from George I. Mavrodes, *Belief in God* (New York: Random House, 1970), 40, where he uses the concept for the subjective value of arguments for the existence of God that may function as proofs for some people but not for others. As with arguments, the subjective force of particular temptations may vary from person to person.

temptation to turn stones into bread would seem nonsensical. Thus, the person-variability of temptations indicates that temptations depend as much on the experiencing subject as they do on the subject's relationships to God, the world, other people, and the self.

We can suggest some general categorical groupings of temptations in a way that can help us compare the force of particular temptations. One taxonomy is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16); another example is the temptation from the world, the flesh, and the devil. These categories, one must recognize, merely describe the main avenues of human temptation. Instead of developing categories of temptation, a more promising route is to see that the person-variability of temptation indicates that in principle all temptation varies in the many concrete applications experienced by individuals.[51]

In principle, temptation is the interaction of a subject's desires, will, and beliefs within a particular setting of human relationships and the prospect of sin. The same core or essence of temptation persists in all the multiform applications that appeal to different individuals. The subject's sensitivity to temptation is similar to what others have observed about human sensitivity to beauty and taste for food.[52] We may also consider the analogy of temptation to obedience: to be tempted in one particular way is to experience the essence of all temptation, just as Scripture tells that to sin against the Law in a single way makes one guilty of the whole (Jas 2:10), or, conversely, to keep the greatest two commandments is to obey the whole Law (Matt 22:36-40).

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[51]Two books sort what the authors consider to be particularly male and female temptations, with chapters devoted to each. Mary Ellen Ashcroft, *Temptations Women Face: Honest Talk about Jealousy, Anger, Sex, Money, Food, Pride* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991). Tom L. Eiseman, *Temptations Men Face: Straightforward Talk on Power, Money, Affairs, Perfectionism, Insensitivity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990). The point here is not to pit genders or age groups against each other, but to show the recognizable diversity that follows one's place in life, whether gendered or by age and culture, that is not disparate to entirely different sorts of temptation experiences with which Jesus cannot sympathize.

[52]Two clichés express this common idea of subjectivity: "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"; "One man's food is another man's poison."

Therefore, when Hebrews 4:15 affirms that Jesus "was tempted in all ways" that are common to humanity, the person-variability of temptation is a helpful concept to explain that this is true because Jesus experienced the core or essence of temptation in a variety of concrete manifestations. For example, Jesus did not need to become a heroin addict and feel those particular temptations for him to be able to empathize with heroin addicts. Jesus' particularity even as the God-man does not count against his ability to empathize with any other human being suffering temptations. What matters most is that Jesus was thoroughly tempted to the extent and degree sufficient to constitute him empathetic and exemplary for all others in their temptations. The person-variability of temptations implies that no one can feel another person's temptation in the sense of an identity of experience ("I feel your pain"). Nonetheless, the similar core or essence of all temptation joined with varying intensity and subjective manifestations of concrete appeals makes Jesus' varied, lifelong experience of temptations more than sufficient for his ability to feel empathy, give help, and be the example for others.

Third aspect: The factors of temptation. Simply stated, temptation is the enticement to evil. Factors involved are the tempted person and the tempting prospect of sin. However, temptation is also an inner conflict of desires in the interaction between desires and the will. Moreover, temptation involves an interaction with one's beliefs about what sinful prospects are imaginable or possible in relation to the external state of affairs, as Bernard Ramm observes: "The essence of seduction in temptation is to present the evil as a good."[53] Thus, temptation involves a deception about reality that yielding to temptation, or sin, is desirable in place of righteousness. To be tempted, a person must be capable of imagining the change effected by choosing the proposed sin.[54]

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[53]Bernard L. Ramm, *An Evangelical Christology: Ecumenic and Historic* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 81.

[54]Cf. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, 1:181-82, explains that the conditions for temptation involve the tension between finitude and freedom, the human power to imagine beyond the current circumstances.

We must expand a definition of temptation to include the internal conflict of desires, will, beliefs, and the interaction with the external state of affairs. The expanded working definition of the core or essence of temptation is as follows: *Temptation is the internal-external struggle among a subject's desires, will, and beliefs within a setting of relationships and involving the prospect of sin.*

Internally, the will must choose between desires that lead to sin (D1) and desires that lead to obedience (D2). D1 desires may be corrupt or legitimate desires that lead to sin. Fallen humanity has both; Jesus has only legitimate desires that lead to sin by seeking a sinful means of satisfaction (e.g., to confirm his sonship by throwing himself from the temple). The struggle in any temptation is the choice between D1 and D2 desires. This internal struggle takes place in conjunction with the struggle of one's scale of values in relation to a belief about the situation at hand. The belief may be supplied internally or externally as part of the sinful prospect to justify the sin (e.g., the belief that revenge is an appropriate response to an insult). These internal factors are dynamically related to external factors.

Externally, the choice presented to the will is between the actual state of affairs and the proposed or possible state of affairs that could be actualized by means of choosing the desire leading to sin (D1). Interrelated with this external situation is the correspondence of the sinful prospect inherent in the possible state of affairs that appeals uniquely to the tempted individual's person-variability (e.g., a heroin addict who finds a wallet loaded with cash will be strongly tempted to keep it as a means to getting dope). The person must face the sinful prospect according to the tension between the sinful and non-sinful states of affairs. The situation also supplies the material for a sinful prospect in relation to an individual's person-variability. Part of the intensity of the temptation to a particular sinful prospect depends on the struggle between the person-variability and the state of affairs. For example, an honest man will experience a low appeal of temptation to the sinful prospect of greed when he discovers a wallet that someone has dropped in the

parking lot; the same man may have great difficulty resisting the temptation to slander his co-worker later that day because, according to his scale of values or beliefs, the belief that getting revenge is justified was more important to him than the ramifications that accompanied his sin. By comparison, Jesus' first wilderness temptation to make bread for himself had a high appeal to him because the proposed state of affairs appealed to his hunger in the actual state of affairs.[55] His person-variability as the Son of God made the sinful prospect plausible.

According to the definition of temptation, we can trace an example as follows: in Gethsemane, Jesus desires both to avoid the punishment for sin (D1) and to obey his Father (D2). Despite his high priority for self-preservation and the possible belief that evading pain may be possible, he makes the choice for D2 to obey his Father according to his highest value and belief of pleasing his Father. This internal choice occurred dynamically in relation to the external factors. Jesus' state of affairs—with the imminent prospect of having to drink the cup of wrath—is countered by the possible state of affairs in which he does not drink the cup of wrath. The sinful prospect of disobeying his Father out of a desire to avoid pain is uniquely fitted to his person-variability. No one else could have felt this temptation, or experienced the intensity the way he did because the factors that constituted it a temptation for him were both internal and external, and particular to his relationship to God, his special role, and his special awareness of the prospect of his suffering. His ultimate choice of D2 to obey his Father entailed his ultimate renunciation of these factors: D1, the false belief that evading obedience is good for him, and the possible, imagined state of affairs in which he does not drink the cup of wrath.

In exposition of this definition, we will consider four aspects of the basic temptation principle separately. These aspects are (1) the relational struggle between internal and external factors, (2) the internal conflict of desires, (3) the choice to be made between conflicting desires, and (4) the role of beliefs about reality.

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[55]Nonetheless, we saw in chapter 4 that Jesus' wilderness temptations primarily had to do with his relation to God, and not simply his hunger for bread. The example is multi-layered.

First, all temptation is a relational struggle with both internal and external factors. Contrary to the distinction that some have made between internal and external temptations,[56] the case seems to be that all temptations form a bridge between an internal desire and the prospect of satisfying that desire in an external state of affairs. Ted Peters observes that temptations do not simply arise internally but press upon the person from the outside: "There is no question that temptation to sin comes to us from beyond ourselves. It is not just an internal affair. Evil is bigger than we are."[57] Temptation seems to be constituted by the correspondence between the external circumstances of life in the world and the internal, subjective awareness of those circumstances in relation to desires. The correlation between an internal desire of the experiencing subject and an external state of affairs can also be compared to a visitation that comes from the outside.[58]

Moreover, the proposal that this struggle is internal in correspondence to external relationships that occasion the appeals of sin is confirmed by the way the author of Hebrews warns against the straying and hardness of hearts that the disobedient in Israel exemplified (3:7-10). The Israelites are an example to avoid by their internal response to the external conditions of their wilderness circumstances. The internal-external factor in the definition also has support in Jesus' exhortation to his disciples that they pray and watch so that they would "not enter into temptation."[59] The temptation is there objectively, but the disciples and Jesus have the internal struggle either to refuse or to enter into temptation.

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[56]E.g., Donald G. Bloesch writes in *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), 1:96, that internal temptation presupposes sin, indicating that temptation has roots within the man himself. Bloesch represents a common view that was also voiced by John Calvin based on an interpretation of "without sin" in Heb 4:15 to mean that Jesus' temptations did not originate from internal sin (see chapter 3). Also, we saw in chapter 3 that Thomas Aquinas claims Jesus was only tempted by the world and the devil, but not by the flesh.

[57]Ted Peters, *Sin: Radical Evil in Soul and Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 25.

[58]B. Van Iersel, *The Bible on the Temptations of Man*, trans. F. Vander Heijden (De Pere, WI: St. Norbert Abbey, 1966), 5, proposes the analogy of a visitation.

[59]Mark 14:38, μὴ ἔλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν; cf. the way Matthew's (likely) redaction intensifies the internality of the temptation struggle by adding a prepositional prefix εἰσ- to the verb to double Mark's single εἰς; Matt 26:41, μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν.

Therefore, temptation to sin is always an internal experience that is produced by the agent's relational interaction in the external world. The external world that provides the material for temptations may be an imaginative and impossible state of affairs (e.g., fantasizing about assassinating a world leader) or material constituted by the real and possible (e.g., lying to avoid paying the taxes one owes). If this description of the struggle in temptation as an internal-external relation is right, then we can explain the description of Jesus' temptations in Hebrews 4:15 as truly similar to the temptations commonly experienced by others; all temptations are internal-external, and Jesus experienced temptation in this way.[60]

Second, temptation is an internal conflict of desires.[61] The role of desire in temptation is that a desire—whether appropriately desiring but with sinful means (e.g., to satisfy hunger with stolen bread) or sinfully desiring (e.g., to satisfy sinful pride by boasting)—is the internal touch point for the external appeal of temptation to affect the subject. The external state of affairs forms the appeal of a temptation that touches an internal desire with the promise of satisfaction. Internally, at the level of conflicting desires, temptation occurs as a visitation or external intrusion recognized by the self, and the person always chooses (whether consciously or not) to fulfill one desire while denying the other. The conflict occurs between the desire (D1) occasioned by the temptation for a sinful prospect and a non-sinful competing desire (D2) that must be renounced if the choice for sin is chosen (e.g., desire to please God). Either the agent must choose D1 for the tempting state of affairs that entails a proposed sin, or the agent must renounce D1 in the choice for D2. For example, Jesus renounced the D1 desire to avoid the suffering of punishment for sin and chose instead the D2 desire to obey his

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[60]Some may object to this dissolution of the distinction between internal and external types of temptations based on the common interpretation of Jas 1:13-15 as teaching that sinners tempt themselves by their corrupt desires. We will consider and answer this objection in chapter 7.

[61]André Godin, "Temptation: The Psychology of Temptation," trans. G. J. Schlesselmann, *Journal of Empirical Theology* 5 (1992): 83, gives a psychological definition: temptation is "a conflict in the desire" which entails "a *change*, which prepared the way for a *decision to be made*, influenced by a modification of the external *realities* . . . along the path of *desire-pleasure*."

Father's will. Commonly, the case in temptation is that many competing motivations complicate the experience with perhaps several D1 and D2 desires, generating what Paul Ricoeur calls the "dizziness" of human temptability.[62]

Nonetheless, the experience of temptation is not sinful. Adam and Eve before the Fall and Jesus throughout his earthly life experienced temptation as the moral struggle between right and wrong actions (whether in thought, word, or deed) apart from the prior presence of sin; moreover, Jesus remained sinless throughout all of his temptations. Instead of a sinful interaction of desires, the will, and the world, temptation is primarily the struggle within the self between D1 and D2 desires that correspond to an individual's relational experience in the world. Secondarily, temptation may be the struggle between the self and an external object or action (e.g., the D1 desire for heroin alongside the D2 desire to avoid prison).

Desires may be entirely corrupt (as in fallen humanity apart from grace), mixed (as in redeemed humanity during earthly existence), or entirely appropriate (as for Adam and Eve before the Fall, Jesus, and glorified believers). This means that Jesus could have appropriate, legitimate, and sinless D2 desires to which external temptations appealed internally, and these D2 desires were conjoined with sinful means of satisfaction to appeal to him as D1 desires (e.g., to preserve his life by avoiding the cross).[63] Though not so with Jesus, the rest of humanity also has corrupt D1 desires to which temptations appeal (e.g., Judas Iscariot's greed satisfied by stealing money and betraying Jesus). In both cases, the internal-external relation and the principle of a conflict between internal desires are the same. Despite his difference from sinful humanity, Jesus, having no corrupt desires, was tempted to the same wide extent and intense degree by the pull at his sinless desires. Jesus still had to choose between D1 and D2 desires—between sin and

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[62]Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, 139.

[63]Cf. Shuster, "Temptation," 199, agrees that it is inadequate to define Jesus' temptation as merely external testing that touches no internal struggle because the internality of his suffering and inner conflict of desire is evident in Gethsemane and implied by his cry of dereliction from the cross.

obedience—despite being a sinless man. Thus, Jesus' qualitative distinction from humanity as one who did not share in corrupt desires stemming from the total depravity of fallen humanity does not disqualify him from experiencing and triumphing over temptation relevantly as the sinless, empathetic exemplar for others.

Third, temptation entails a choice to be made by the will between D1 and D2 when a person faces a temptation to sin. Temptation always entails a choice by the will,[64] even if this ability is impaired by original sin, earlier personal sins (e.g., self-destructive, will-bending addictions), or the temptation has come into view as the result of an earlier sin (e.g., stealing bread and then needing to lie as a cover-up).[65]

Ronald Nash uses the analogy from economics of a personal scale of values that is influential at the moment of choice; values are constantly shifting and re-sorting within the decision-making process so that people always choose according to the most important value—expressed as a concrete desire—that they have at the moment of decision.[66] This scale of values varies from person to person, but the principle of choosing voluntarily according to the highest value remains the same for everyone. Jesus may have had a superior stability of his scale of values than what is common for other people, but he still exercised his will as a man to choose D2 and renounce D1.

Some might object that since Jesus did not have a fallen will, he does not share an important category of temptations common to others who tempt themselves by a corrupt will that generates desires for sin.[67] In response, the principle of interaction between the will and desires with a view to sin is the same regardless of one's fallen or unfallen volitional condition. Jesus had to choose between D1 and D2 desires in the same way that all others do. Jesus' qualitative difference as a man apart from fallen humanity's

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[64]Ralph A. Letch, *Temptation and Freedom: The Temptations of God* (Harrow, U.K.: Eureditions, 1978), 42.

[65]Plantinga, *Not the Way*, 53.

[66]Ronald H. Nash, *Life's Ultimate Questions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 334-38.

[67]This objection is commonly given as the interpretation of Jas 1:12-15. We will consider this interpretation and the objection in detail in chapter 7.

total depravity and total inability to please God does not disqualify him from relevantly achieving human sinlessness. On the contrary, we will see below that in a case-by-case comparison of Jesus' temptations with those of some fallen person, the special severity of Jesus' temptations far outweighs the supposed advantages that he had over sinners; indeed, comparison will show that Jesus was in a far worse position to resist temptation than others are (i.e., believers).[68]

Fourth, temptation is an interaction with beliefs about reality. Seduction and deception are often the means by which people are able to choose a D1 desire that leads to sin because of a lie that has lodged in the top rank of a personal scale of values. In the paradigmatic temptation in Eden, Satan proposed a lie about the fruit that Adam and Eve had to believe as true for them to choose the D1 desire of eating the fruit. Similarly, Paul's exposition of human depravity emphasizes the centrality of beliefs in the pattern of human sinfulness because people suppress the truth about God (Rom 1:18) and exchange the truth for a lie (Rom 1:25). For any temptation to be successful, the subject must accept (whether consciously or not) some rationalizing deception as the cognitive basis for the choice made by the will (cf. Nash's scale of values).

Jesus' wilderness temptations especially demonstrate the factor that beliefs play in temptation. In each temptation, Satan proposes a sinful course of action supported by a lie and a false interpretation of Scripture that he has construed as a valid truth-claim. Jesus' responses are counter interpretations of truth-claims that restrict his actions in particular ways and rule out the sins proposed by Satan. Thus, we can say that Jesus never sinned in response to these or any of his temptations because he was never deceived to believe lies as the truth. Jesus never embraced the false beliefs about God,

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[68]We must distinguish here between regenerate and unregenerate humanity. Regenerate humanity is specially delivered by Christ from the power of sin (Rom 6:1-23). By contrast, unregenerate humanity, being totally depraved and totally unable to choose D2 desires, cannot finally resist temptations to sin, but manage at best to sin less egregiously than they might have otherwise (e.g., perhaps not actively destroying others by crimes and violence, but all the while living solely from a selfish, rebellious resistance to God that tarnishes all the appearance of their moral virtues). Jesus was certainly in a better position than unregenerate humanity, but he remains in a position in relation to temptation that is similar enough if not much worse than regenerate humanity—for whom he is an example of sinlessness.

himself, or the world in ways that allowed him to choose freely against his highest values. Therefore, the factor of beliefs in temptation coordinates the cognitive human faculty with volition and desires as an internal relationship interacting with the external state of affairs that gives rise to temptation to sin.

The definition of temptation given here—the internal-external struggle among a subject's desires, will, and beliefs within a setting of relationships and involving the prospect of sin—includes temptation for all five states of humanity: Adam before the Fall, fallen humanity, redeemed humanity, the humanity of God-incarnate, and glorified humanity.[69] The advantage of an inclusive definition allows us to draw direct lines of correspondence between Jesus' temptations and the temptation experiences of believers, according to the claim of Hebrews 4:15 that Jesus' empathy is based on the direct similarity of his experience. This advantage also allows us to draw a direct line between Jesus' resistance to temptation and the possibilities for believers, according to the claims of Hebrews 12:1-3 and 1 Peter 2:21-25 that Jesus is a reasonable model for human sinlessness. Thus, the definition allows a reasonable explanation of the biblical data for Jesus' relevance in terms of the relationality of human temptation.

The relationality of Jesus' temptations. In chapter 4, we saw in the biblical evidence for his temptation that Jesus was tempted in the setting of all four human relationships. Furthermore, his temptation in relation to liability to pain is also clear. The relationality of human temptability is clearly a problem that Jesus shared so that the relevance of his solution could be direct and reasonable for others. Three issues connected with Jesus' temptability remain to be considered: the prominence of his human nature, the full extent of his temptations, and the full degree of his temptations. Modern scholars have been particularly attentive to these three issues.

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[69]The case may be argued that the glorified humanity of believers is the same as Jesus' pre-glory humanity, but the traditional view is that glorified believers are no longer temptable. We will consider an alternative to this traditional view as one of the implications of M8 in chapter 8.

The prominence of his human nature. We saw that some representatives of the self-limitation approach in M7 explain Jesus' temptability in terms of the humanization of his knowledge. Unlike M7, however, M8 does not limit Jesus' knowledge about his divine impeccability as the sufficient condition for his temptation. We cannot know what Jesus precisely knew or did not know about himself on the question of his abilities in relation to sin. Moreover, this aspect of M7 seems unhelpful because the sufficient condition of epistemological peccability entails the claim that Jesus held false beliefs about himself (i.e., that he was able to sin).

Nonetheless, in response to M7, we must consider if epistemological peccability is necessary to supply a sufficient condition for the impeccable God-man to experience temptation. M8 explains the prominent display of his humanity in temptable weakness by the pneumatological veiling of Jesus' divinity with his human nature. M8 follows the principle of M6 that Jesus' human temptability is possible in all the ways necessary for his relevance because of the prominence of his human nature in his earthly sphere of action, as attested in the NT. Within that pneumatologically-facilitated human condition of existence, Jesus could be tempted because his real humanity is the sufficient condition of his temptation, despite his inability to sin. This is so because many human beings experience temptations to sinful acts that are logically impossible for them to carry out. Two examples demonstrate the real temptation of a state of affairs despite the logical or metaphysical impossibility of the tempted individuals having the opportunity to commit the specified sin.

One example is that many aspiring lottery participants are tempted by the D1 desire of greed to become billionaires. Some people do become billionaires, but most—if not all—of those who aspire to that level of wealth face the logical impossibility of ever attaining their desire because of personal, historical, economic, political, and possibly divine factors (e.g., one would have to win the lottery several times to become a billionaire). Thus, these people are tempted and sin by their choice to lust after wealth

that they know is logically impossible of ever becoming a reality—whether by means of multiple lottery winnings, diligent business productivity or corruption, or otherwise.

Another example is that many men have enslaved themselves to pornography as part of the temptation to a sin of sexual misconduct that they cannot actually commit. The basis of their lust in connection with leering at actual women or photographs and video is the fantasy of some sort of sexual misconduct with the women in view. The fantasy is objectively impossible in most cases because the men will never be able to meet the specific women to concretize their fantasies. The men know this but are tempted to fantasize by their lusting imagination anyway, thereby committing the sin of an intention that can never by actualized. Thus, this crude example shows a second way that people are frequently tempted to sin in relation to a sinful action that is logically impossible for them to commit. By comparison to Jesus, M8 affirms that none of his temptations appealed to him with sins that he could have actualized because he was impeccable. Nonetheless, our examples demonstrate that the ability to sin is not a necessary condition for temptation; Jesus' impeccability should not be counted against his temptability. We need not make recourse to epistemological peccability as a sufficient condition for temptability.

A third example illustrates a related point about Jesus' impeccable temptability by comparison with a sort of normal human temptability in spite of psychological or moral impeccability. Various objections have been made that the orthodox view of Jesus' impeccability and temptation is incoherent. One form of the objection is that Jesus was able to sin because, as a man, he possessed the physical capacity to form the words to tell a lie, fornicate, and commit other sins; thus, he was peccable.[70] In response, we may observe that the logical possibility or physical capacity to commit sin is frequently nullified in practice by the subjective factors of an individual's belief structure and will.

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[70]Thomas P. Sullivan, "On the Temptation of Jesus" (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1993), 45-54. Sullivan ultimately calls God's necessary goodness into question as the most promising way forward to resolve the dilemma.

The result is that such possible sins are plainly impossible for certain individuals because of the strong stability of the will and nature or belief structure; thus, people may be tempted in relation to these sins but these individuals are functionally impeccable. For example, every loving mother is functionally impeccable in relation to the sin of torturing her children.[71] The action is logically possible but functionally, subjectively, and practically impossible because of the stable structure of the mother's character and her relation to the children, including all her beliefs, will, and commitments that will restrain her from carrying out the act. No state of affairs exists in which a loving mother in her right mind tortures her young children to death.[72] Such an act can never be justified and perpetrated by a loving mother. Nonetheless, her functional impeccability does not nullify her temptability and struggle against D1 desires to torture her children, just her practical ability to do so. Many mothers may be exasperated with their children and sin by their intention to commit some harm, but they would never be able to act upon the intention.[73] Similarly, Jesus may have had the physical capacity to commit certain sins such as telling a lie, but he was functionally impeccable because of the strong stability of his beliefs, his will, and other relational factors that prevented him internally from committing those sins—all within his human frame of reference and without recourse to his divine impeccability. Thus, we can demonstrate that Jesus' impeccable temptability was unusual, but not exceptional. He was unable to sin in every way, but many people are normally unable to sin in several ways. In one case, a man's fortitude of character may prevent him from adultery (though not from lust); in another, a woman's fear of retaliation may prevent her from stabbing an enemy (though not from relishing the

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[71]Likewise, loving fathers are functionally impeccable in relation to the same sin.

[72]Some may object that the mother may succumb to the temptation if torturing her children was a necessary condition to save her own life or the world, as in the barbarous, cannibalistic women of northern Israel who devoured their own children during an enemy siege (2 Kgs 6:28-29). Nonetheless, these unusual exceptions do not disprove the rule in practice that can be multiplied with examples of the way many people do not and will never perpetrate specific evils that are logically possible for them but functionally impossible because of other considerations that are subjective.

[73]Sadly, some mothers do abuse their children, but doing so would mean the mother had ceased to be both a loving mother and one in her right mind.

wicked wish and hating the other woman). The principle is that impeccability in relation a specific sin does not disqualify a human being from experiencing temptation to sin.

Moreover, Jesus' sinlessness in the negative sense includes his never intending to commit sin. As we have seen, the intention to sin can be arranged in a state of affairs as the sufficient condition for temptation without the actual possibility of being able to commit the action beyond the intention to act sinfully.[74] We must affirm that Jesus was unable to commit even the sins of intention or imagination (e.g., lust). Nonetheless, as a man, Jesus could have been fully aware of his objective or metaphysical inability to sin and yet face the struggle of overcoming D1 desires in preference for D2. We see exactly this sort of struggle in Gethsemane, where Jesus is no doubt aware that he cannot do otherwise than obey his Father's will, and yet he feels the press of the temptation with the D1 desire to avoid the punishment for the world's sin. Even intending to choose the impossible D1 course of action was closed to Jesus, but he was tempted subjectively and had to struggle to choose D2 instead. Therefore, we can conclude that the proposal of epistemological peccability (entailing a false belief in Christ's human mind) is not a helpful reconstruction because Jesus could be tempted relevantly—just as others are—even when the sins of intention or action were closed to him metaphysically.

At this point, we must acknowledge that we cannot know exactly how Jesus was tempted in terms of the dynamics of his cognitive and volitional interaction in a given state of affairs that constituted a given temptation for him. We can simply affirm that he was tempted on many occasions, and Scripture must be our guide to affirm that he was divinely unable to sin, humanly able to be tempted, and resistant of sin based on his human ability empowered by grace (see below). We have no evidence that Jesus was

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[74]Morris, *Logic of God Incarnate*, applies several examples in which the individual is significantly tempted despite the metaphysical impossibility of carrying out the evil deed. Morris calls this epistemological peccability. David Werther, "The Temptation of God Incarnate," *Religious Studies* 29 (1993): 47-50, argues that that epistemological peccability proposals fail as a sufficient condition for temptation because these allow the sin of intention despite precluding the main sin related to the temptation.

constrained to do right, in parallel with the way that Christians are not constrained to believe. However, in each case of the comparison, God is sovereign over Jesus' righteousness and a Christian's belief while allowing for the significant freedom of human beings.[75]

We should also note the differences between Jesus and common humanity because he is the God-man, but this allows for the important similarity that Jesus had to live by faith to some extent because faith is the epistemological orientation of human beings to truth.[76] Even scientific certainty depends ultimately upon the basic beliefs such as logic and the accuracy of human perception that cannot be verified by an empirical method—these are faith claims. Thus, faith is the intrinsic human mode of knowing, and Jesus had to exercise faith as a man in some sense that is comparable to the faith that others must exercise.

The full extent of his temptations. Moving away from speculation, Scripture is clear that Jesus' temptation was real in the full extent that is sufficient for him to empathize with all others who are tempted and be the example for them to resist as he did (M6, M7). We have seen that human beings commonly can be tempted to want to do things that are impossible for them; thus, all the same categories of temptation that we could possibly generate are potential temptations for Jesus at the level of his intentions (despite his impeccability). Jesus could still have legitimate desires and temptations in

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[75]Cf. Brian Hebblethwaite, *Philosophical Theology and Christian Doctrine* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 70: "Significant freedom is not always a matter of choice between good and evil. God's freedom is not like that, nor is the freedom of the blessed in heaven who have passed beyond the sphere of temptation. Christ's freedom to act in ways that were always good is to that extent like the freedom of the blessed in heaven. But, unlike theirs, it was exercised on earth and thereby subject to temptation to go astray. Where the rest of us are concerned, there is no guarantee that temptation will always be resisted. . . . But Christ's being who he was, the incarnate Son of God, did guarantee that temptation, however acute, would be resisted. But that did not make him less than human, any more than the absence of temptation makes the blessed in heaven less than human. To suppose that incarnation involves the real possibility of succumbing to temptation is no more theologically plausible than to suppose that sin belongs to the essence of being human."

[76]Cf. T. E. Pollard, *Fullness of Humanity: Christ's Humanness and Ours*, The Croall Lectures 1980 (Sheffield: Almond, 1982), 81-82. "Jesus is one who lives by faith in God." Hebrews shows this by referring to OT texts such as Isa 8:17, "I will put my trust in him"; and the description of Jesus in Heb 12:2 as the pioneer of faith. Jesus' obedience brings his faith to perfection. Pollard claims that "faith" in Heb 12:2 is Jesus' faith, cf. the faith of the heroes of Heb 11, not "our faith."

relation to D1 desires for sinful satisfactions. Jesus still had to respond by overcoming D1 desires without intending or wanting to sin. Therefore, M8 affirms the biblical evidence for the variety of Jesus' temptations that is sufficient to support the claim of Hebrews 4:15 that Jesus was tempted to the same extent that is common to all.[77] Jesus' differences of having no corrupt desires or a fallen will do not preclude him from sharing in the common temptation experience of humanity. Temptations related to corrupt desires are person-variable, and do not constitute a distinct set or category of temptations in which Jesus could not share (e.g., internal temptations).

The full degree of his temptations. Similarly, Scripture is clear that Jesus experienced the full degree of temptations in his relationships as a man (M7). We have seen that the person-variability of temptation makes comparisons between individual experiences difficult; nonetheless, M8 affirms that the relational conditions of Jesus' experiences constituted the greatest possible degree of human temptation and made his temptations much more intense than the rest of humanity's for at least three reasons.

First, in his special role as Messiah, Jesus had the responsibilities and authority of inaugurating the kingdom of heaven and, as a rule, greater temptation follows closely on greater power.[78] The pressures he bore as a man because of his role likely made his daily experience in opposition to personal, social, and cosmic evil much more present and pressing. Human history has abundant examples; one that illustrates this point is from Lord Acton, popularized by Shakespeare: "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." By contrast, Jesus bore the immense intensity of his temptations as the Messiah by consistently renouncing all D1 desires that afflicted him as a man.

Second, the pressures of temptations that Jesus suffered were compounded because Satan himself was directly provoking him in the wilderness (and possibly at

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[77]Ibid., 80. "Hebrews emphasizes that Jesus was tempted *in every respect as we are*; he is thinking of the common temptations connected with our human weakness, the temptations to which we are exposed simply because we are men."

[78]Letch, *Temptation and Freedom*, 44-46.

other times). His temptations were uniquely set in relation to the cosmic war between God and Satan.[79] Few other humans are directly afflicted by so cunning an opponent as Satan. The exceptional case of Satan's special attention to Job emphasizes Job's exceptional virtue in a way that prefigures Satan's direct attacks on Christ. No person can claim to have faced a more difficult temptation experience than what is clearly detailed about Jesus' wilderness temptations in direct contest with the devil.

Third, Jesus uniquely exhausted his temptations in every case by his total resistance and never feeling the relief that comes with surrender.[80] By never giving in, Jesus alone has felt the fullest intensity and duration of being tempted to sin, whatever the type and texture of someone's experience that we might compare to his. This means that even though he was in a better position than redeemed humanity because he lacked corrupt desires, Jesus was in a much worse position because of his special particularity of mission, as an object of attack, and his complete resistance. Therefore, what availed him is sufficient for the extremely intense experience of the heroin addict and the persecuted Christian—and anyone else—to choose D2 against the temptations with D1 desires besetting them.

Jesus' Sinlessness Was a Relational Accomplishment

With few exceptions, most theologians recognize that Jesus was sinless despite his humanity.[81] His solution to the problem of temptation in his experience could have

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[79]The unique intensity of Jesus' temptations is also noted by Sinclair Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 48-49: "His temptations [in the wilderness] constitute an epochal event. They are not merely personal, but cosmic. They constitute the tempting of the last Adam. True, there is a common bond between his temptations and ours: he is really and personally confronted by dark powers. But the significance of the event does not lie in the ways in which our temptations are like his, but in the particularity and uniqueness of his experiences. He was driven into the wilderness as an assault force. His testing was set in the context of a holy war in which he entered the enemy's domain, absorbed his attacks and sent him into retreat (Mt. 4:11, and especially Lk. 4:13). In the power of the Spirit, Jesus advanced as the divine warrior, the God of battles who fights on behalf of his people and for their salvation (*cf.* Ex. 15:3; Ps. 98:1). His triumph demonstrated that 'the kingdom of God is near' and that the messianic conflict had begun."

[80]Letch, *Temptation and Freedom*, 43.

[81]E.g., John Macquarrie, "Was Jesus Sinless?" *Living Pulpit* 8 (1999): 14-15. Macquarrie's claim that Jesus may have been guilty of ethnic prejudice is typical of those who charge Jesus with unbelief

been his natural and personal impeccability *qua* his divinity; nonetheless, M8 proposes that Jesus chose instead to employ the solution of empowering grace meditated relationally to his humanity. Moreover, M8 proposes that relational grace was the means by which Jesus not only avoided sin, but the means by which he aggressively pursued righteousness in his consistent faithfulness to teach, challenge wrongs, and put himself in harm's way for the sake of redemption. We cannot prove that Jesus did not rely on his divinity, or that he in fact relied on relational grace to resist temptation; we can only indicate the implausibility of one explanation and the reasonable plausibility of the other in connection with clear evidence from Scripture. We will consider both inferences in relation to the evidence of Jesus' earthly life and his relevance for others.

The implausibility that Jesus relied on innate divine power. Jesus' earthly life shows the prominence of his human nature in a way that suggests he did not rely upon his own divine power as the eternal Son to resist his temptations (*contra* M1-M3). The human prominence shows in his human weaknesses that seem impossible without some sort of veiling or restriction of his divinity from his human frame of reference. We cannot say that his display of weakness was a sham (which is impossible because this would mean he committed a deception), so we must accept his weaknesses as authentic. Evidence that he did not know certain things, was hungry, fatigued, thirsty, tempted to sin, and he felt physical pain and died excludes the possibility that his divine power was always expressed in his human condition of existence in a continual and full way.

One possible explanation is that Jesus' humanity was only intermittently prominent, and the veiling of his divine power temporarily allowed his human weaknesses to be expressed. As part of this explanation, Jesus' miracles, supernatural display of knowledge, and evasions of capture until the time of his surrender are attributed to his exercise of innate divine powers. However, temptations remain a problem because, unlike an intermittent relation between his two natures to allow his

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towards God, unbounded anger, or a progressive development toward an eventual state of sinlessness.

human hunger, the restraint or veiling of divinity to allow temptation cannot explain his perfect sinlessness. No temptation could have occurred for him if his divinity had been veiled in one moment, and then unveiled in the next to resist the temptation impeccably. Moreover, other evidence in his life indicates a pervasive role for the Holy Spirit, to whom Jesus and the NT attributed his miraculous demonstrations. The Gospels emphasize the continuity between Jesus' ministry and the earlier ministry of OT prophets by the same Holy Spirit who was to characterize the Messiah (e.g., Luke 4:16-27).[82] Thus, the supposed indications of Jesus' divine nature by his supernatural works are pneumatological in a special way that indicates the basic Christological claim that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God.[83]

The combined evidence for his human weakness and the pneumatological dimension of his experience suggests that a constant or intermittent expression of his divine power in his human condition of existence did not happen. This suggestion of implausibility does not exclude all innate expression of Jesus' divine power during his earthly life. Such expression certainly could have been the case (e.g., Jesus' post-resurrection ability to vanish at will; Luke 24:31). Nonetheless, the NT theme of the divine Son's humiliation (e.g., John 13:3-15; Phil 2:5-11, Heb 2:9-18) and the NT emphasis that Jesus entered the frailty of humanity in a fallen world (cf. Rom 8:3; Heb 4:15) fit better with the affirmation that such divine advantages were not part of his human experience. This fit is especially clear in contrast with the poor fit of this evidence with the explanation of M1-M3 that Jesus relied on his divine power to resist temptation—which is the precise human weakness that is at issue. On the contrary, if Jesus had resorted to his divine power to resist temptation as in M1-M3, then he could not have become the empathetic exemplar of sinlessness for others who struggle against

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[82]Luke especially emphasizes Jesus' pneumatological likeness to others, beginning with John the Baptizer.

[83]This is the Synoptic emphasis; John's Gospel makes a connection that ignores the pneumatological continuity between Jesus and the OT prophets to emphasize Jesus' unique communion with the Father instead.

temptations. Therefore, the evidence for the prominence of Jesus' human nature in his earthly life and the relevance that the NT ascribes to him as the hope-inspiring priest who can offer real help for others to follow his own pattern indicates the implausibility that he relied upon his divine power to resist his temptations. This implausibility suggests that we consider other explanations that fit better with the biblical and theological evidence.

The plausibility that Jesus relied on relational grace. The evidence of Jesus' human weaknesses suggests the plausibility that he relied on relational grace to achieve his exemplary and praiseworthy sinlessness as a man.[84] We have seen that the evidence for his life suggests the prominence of his human nature in his earthly life, and M8 proposes the explanation for this relation between his two natures as a pneumatological veiling of his divine power. The evidence that suggests the implausibility that he relied on his innate divine power does not suggest that he relied on relational grace. Instead, we must consider the suggestion that he relied on relational grace in relation to four lines of evidence: (1) the ethical role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Messiah, (2) the evidence that he relied on relational grace in five ways, (3) the provision of nearly the same relational grace for Christians, and (4) Jesus' relevance for others as the pattern to follow in sinlessness by relational grace.

The ethical role of the Holy Spirit. We have seen that the OT promises and the NT fulfillment in the life of Jesus indicate that the Messiah was endowed with the Holy Spirit for ethical-religious results. This pneumatological endowment was especially clear in Isaiah 11:1-10; the Messiah would be equipped with the Spirit so he may serve faithfully as God's king. The righteousness and faithfulness characterizing his eschatological reign is transcendently guaranteed by the Messiah's pneumatological-ethical formation for a life of obedience to God—"He delights in the fear of Yahweh"

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[84]Cf. Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 220: "Deploying no resources beyond those of his Spirit-filled humanness, he faced the foe as flesh and triumphed as man."

(Isa 11:3). This pneumatological role is demonstrated at the onset of Jesus' ministry (at his baptism in the Jordan); however, the Holy Spirit was most likely constantly indwelling Jesus from his conception (*a fortiori* by comparison with John the Baptizer).[85] As with Jesus' test in the wilderness, the Holy Spirit seems to have guided Jesus throughout his early life and ministry, providing illumination, fostering his ethical-religious development through other internally-fortifying tests similar to the wilderness temptations, and giving the comfort and assurance that Jesus needed to pursue the radical faithfulness by which he wrought redemption.[86] In Peter's retrospect, Jesus' entire ministry was pneumatological in terms of both empowerment for miracles and the relational presence of God with him (Acts 10:38).

By comparison, the Gospel of John describes the ministry of the Holy Spirit to believers in terms of guidance and assistance in a way that may be similar to Jesus' experience of the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-17 tells Jesus' promise of "another helper" (ἄλλον παράκλητον)[87] who will be with believers continually to teach and remind them of Jesus' teaching (14:26), to motivate believers to preach about Jesus (15:26-27), and guide them into all truth (16:13-15).[88] The Spirit's presence and empowerment described here is consistent with the Spirit's role in the life of the Messiah, if not explicitly a role of ethical formation. Nonetheless, the ethical orientation is clear in the description of the

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[85]Cf. Hawthorne, *Presence and the Power*, 89. Despite Jesus' difference from John, Luke's comparison of the two boys' development suggests that the divine Son was not only brought into his Incarnation by the Spirit, but that he was accompanied by the Spirit from his conception in the same or a greater way than John was filled by the Spirit (Luke 1:15). The similarity of Jesus' endowment of the Spirit to John's and (subsequently) to Christians does not entail a dynamistic adoptionism, because the endowment is in terms of Jesus' assumed humanity within his earthly condition of existence, yet all the while he remained fully divine as the Logos and eternal Son in his divine or heavenly frame of reference.

[86]Cf. Luke's presentation of Jesus as having been led by the Holy Spirit in juxtaposition with the devil's temptations throughout the forty days, after which time the three temptations are reported as the final strokes in the conflict; Luke 4:1-2.

[87]John's special term παράκλητος remains a difficulty because there is no clear Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent. The only appearance in the LXX is παράκλητος in Job 16:2, rendered "supporters" מְנַחֲמַי. Kenneth Grayston, "The Meaning of PARAKLETOS," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 13 (1981): 79-80, argues persuasively for a general meaning of "supporter," "sponsor," or "patron" that is broader than the application to a legal context, as in "advocate."

[88]The interpretation that these are general promises for all believers is controversial (cf. Burge, *The Anointed Community*, 214-15), but at least even a narrow interpretation limited to the apostles illustrates the Spirit's role of guidance, assistance, and teaching.

Spirit's work to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (16:7-11).[89]

While clearer descriptions and parallels between the Spirit's work in Jesus and others would be desirable, the biblical descriptions are at least consistent with and suggestive of an ethical role as proposed in M8. The evidence warrants some speculation about the empowering grace mediated by the Holy Spirit (as proposed by M4-M7), but we cannot be sure of this beyond affirming the significant role of the Spirit as prophesied in the OT, demonstrated in Jesus' life, and promised analogously for believers. Therefore, the ethical role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Messiah suggests the plausibility that he relied on relational grace for the specific strength necessary to resist his temptations within his human frame of reference.

Five signs of relational grace. Evidence in Jesus' life suggests that he relied on relational grace because of five aspects of help that the Gospels report in the circumstances of his temptations. These five signs of relational grace are plausibly constitutive of Jesus' sinlessness in coordination with or perhaps by the constant ethical role of the Holy Spirit. The case may be that these aspects are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for Jesus' sinlessness.[90] We must not casually ignore the significance of how each is mentioned by the Gospel writers in the context of Jesus' experiences of temptation, and then each is likewise commended elsewhere in Scripture as part of the ethical-religious life of believers (sometimes as the antidote to sin).

First, Jesus was a man of frequent prayer, often for long duration.[91] His special communication with God through prayer seems to have been qualitatively different from what others experience, judging by the frequency, duration, and substance of his prayer

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[89]The identity of both the subjects and objects in this passage continue to be disputed, cf. D. A. Carson, "The Function of the Paraclete in John 16:7-11," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 98 (1979): 547-66.

[90]The case may be that these five aspects are not equal in force for Jesus or for believers, e.g., prayer may be more important for resisting sin than community support. Moreover, just as with the person-variability of temptations, the aspects of relational grace may vary in proportional importance in a person-variable way also.

[91]E.g., Luke's emphasis on this by his frequent reference to Jesus' prayer life in Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28; 11:1; 22:32, 41.

life. The substance seems to have been much more conversational than what others commonly experience because when God spoke audibly to Jesus from heaven (e.g., Luke 3:22; John 12:28-30), this seems to be an interaction with which Jesus is familiar. His receptivity to God through conversational prayer also shows in the way God gave him specific instructions as the basis for Jesus' teaching and actions, and his bold assurance that God always hears him.[92] This close relationship through prayer indicates that Jesus enjoyed the relationship of mutual indwelling with his Father that he prayed for his own followers to enter at the end of his ministry (John 15:4; 17:21). As relational grace that assisted Jesus in facing temptation, we find that in his struggle in Gethsemane to obey his D2 desire for the Father's will, Jesus is praying. Moreover, he secludes himself from the twelve, guards himself with the three, and even distances himself from them to gain help from God through prayer. We can only guess, but the suggestion that Jesus similarly resorted to the divine help of relational grace through prayer at other times when he was tempted is reasonable.[93]

At this point we may consider how relational grace through prayer or otherwise was beneficial to Jesus in resisting temptation. According to the definition of temptation explained above, the struggles among desires and beliefs provide the opportunity for transcendent assistance. For example, in Gethsemane, Jesus struggled between his natural D1 desire to avoid the punishment for the world's sin, and the D2 desire to obey his Father and drink the cup of divine wrath. A sovereign God can readily respond to pleas for help by restricting the circumstances of the temptation so that the strain does not become too great, by providing internal and external reminders that God knows will be effective to strengthen the will or fortify the scale of values, or by countering the appeal of escape with the appeal of obedience (cf. Heb 12:2—"for the joy

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[92]E.g., John 5:30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge"; John 7:16, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me"; John 11:42 "I knew that You always hear Me" (all NASB).

[93]Cf. the observation of Macleod, *Person of Christ*, 230: "Never once, as we observe him struggle with temptation, do we see him deriving comfort from the fact of his own impeccability. All that we see is his having recourse to the very same weapons as are available to ourselves: the company of his fellow-believers (Mk. 14:33), the word of God (Mt. 4:4) and prayer."

set before him, he endured the cross"). In Jesus' case, we can say that relational grace surrounded him in temptation experience, giving the inclination and support to pray in his time of need, and reminding him of the deception inherent in the temptation (in this case, perhaps the lie that God should provide some other way of redemption that was less painful). Therefore, relational grace is the divine assistance to provide what is needed to renounce D1; at one time the grace is given through a word of assurance in prayer, at another time, the grace is given through a recollection of Scripture and the pneumatological confirmation that Scripture is true (cf. Jesus' responses with Scripture in the wilderness). The five aspects of relational grace suggested here are the reported means of divine assistance.

Second, on at least two occasions of temptation, Jesus received relational grace through the special presence of angels (M6). In Gethsemane, an angel arrived to strengthen Jesus after his first petition (Luke 22:42-43). The account is textually suspect because early manuscripts do not have this, but the concept fits well with other biblical accounts of angelic assistance in times of trial, and the arrival of angels to care for Jesus in the wilderness. Immediately after Satan left him in the wilderness, angels arrive to care for Jesus. This is after his contest with Satan, but not necessarily after all of his temptations. Jesus resisted the direct D1 appeals provoked by Satan, but his temptability apart from Satan remained after the devil's departure. For that time of extreme weakness, as at Gethsemane (if vv. 42-43 are authentic), the angels' assistance was the relational grace ordered by God to preserve Jesus in the midst of his temptations. As an aspect of relational grace for resisting temptation, angelic assistance may be a rarer occasion in the life of Jesus and Christians than other aspects, but extreme circumstances perhaps require the rare forms of relational grace.

Third, Jesus seems to have relied on the relational grace given through knowing Scripture.[94] In his three wilderness temptations, Jesus responds in each case by

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[94]Ibid.

relying exclusively on the truthfulness of Scripture as God's authoritative word. Scripture seems to have defined Jesus' teaching, action, and his orientation to God, the natural world, other people, and himself. His frequent quotations indicate his deep and continual immersion in the written word of God to shape his own thoughts and action. Jesus' receptivity to God's word likely formed the basic content for his understanding of and communion with God. We see this in the way he quoted, clarified, and relied upon Scripture so much in his teaching about God and himself.[95] Even his cry from the cross echoes the words of Psalm 22:2. Moreover, because temptation involves beliefs and deception, Scripture can function as an important bulwark of truth to sustain a person against temptation—as was the case for Jesus in the wilderness. Christ's replies to Satan are suggestive that the Messiah relied upon the truth of Scripture as the relational grace and transcendent assistance to resist the D1 desires and hold fast to D2 in each case. Jesus' demonstration of Scripture illustrates the principle taught in Psalm 119:11 of treasuring God's word as a valuable resource in the fight against temptation to sin.

Fourth, Jesus relied upon the relational grace of assistance from the community of his fellow believers.[96] In the accounts of his ministry, he is seldom reported to be alone (except to pray), but is normally depicted in close relationships with his chosen disciples and many others. The people who revered him as their teacher were likely an encouragement for Jesus' own continued faithfulness to God, most notably in their confessions of faith in him that he solicited at least once (Mark 8:27-29 par.). Moreover, the devotion showed to Jesus by women on two occasions seems to have been especially important for his own resolve to stay his course despite the growing opposition of his enemies, the defection of his followers, and his own temptations to quit his march to the cross (Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-8, cf. 11:2). At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus entered the wilderness for forty days bereft of human companions; however, when his

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[95]E.g., in Luke's account, Jesus forecasts entire ministry in the terms of a mixed quotation of Isaiah 58:6 and 61:1-2 that he applies to himself as the fulfillment of OT prophecy (Luke 4:16-21).

[96]Cf. Macleod, *Person of Christ*, 230.

final struggle came in Gethsemane, he bade his closest three friends to come and keep watch with him during his time of turmoil (Matt 26:37-46). These various examples of support may be what Jesus had in mind when—in the context of discussing service in the kingdom and temptation by Satan—he acknowledges that his disciples have contributed some help for him, as he says in Luke 22:28, "You are the ones who have remained with me in my temptations" (ὑμεῖς δέ ἐστε οἱ διαμεμενηκότες μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς μου).[97] Therefore, the support of other believers seems to have been an important means of assistance for Jesus to resist his temptations. As aspects of the Father's sovereign orchestration of all the circumstances of Jesus' life, the help of relational grace offered by the Holy Spirit through Jesus' fellow believers may have been decisive, however slight.

Fifth, Jesus had the stable structure of habitual obedience to God that he learned over time (cf. Heb 5:7-9).[98] This aspect of relational grace is the internal formation of Jesus' habits, values, desires, and ethical-religious reflexes in conformity to God by long practice. Jesus had submitted so regularly to obeying God that by the time of his ministry he describes his own action in words and deeds as completely contingent upon his Father's will.[99] According to John's Gospel, Jesus nearly always defines himself and his mission in relation to his Father as the primary Christological claim, with the result that *Father* as a reference to God occurs 124 times in John, mostly in Jesus' statements. This constant emphasis in Jesus' consciousness of himself as the Son shows in his lived obedience to his Father.[100] Jesus' obedience had no bounds, as he followed

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[97]Most modern translations use "trials" instead of "temptations" here, but the AV and ASV use "temptations." Perhaps both senses of πειρασμοὶ are in view, cf. the way that NASB, NKJV, and ESV translators include a cross-reference to Heb 2:18 and 4:15.

[98]I am indebted to Bruce A. Ware for this observation.

[99]John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 7:28; 8:26, 29; 10:32, 37; 12:49.

[100]Cf. the observation of John A. T. Robinson, "Use of the Fourth Gospel for Christology," in *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 68-69: "Reading the Gospel through at a sitting, one is left with the overwhelming impression of a man whose life was lived in *absolutely intimate dependence* (stressing all three words) upon God as his Father. Everything Jesus was and said and did has its source in this utter closeness of spiritual relationship which he describes as sonship or 'sent-ness'."

even to point of the facing the horror of death and punishment for sin on the cross (Phil 2:8). He described his mission in terms of glorifying his Father,[101] speaking the Father's words, and doing the Father's works.[102] Such radical obedience was Jesus' active conformity to God's will that enhanced the relationship; testimony is borne to this in God's repeated declarations of his pleasure with his Son (e.g., Matt 3:17 and 17:5). This habit of obedience may have been orchestrated by the Father and Holy Spirit through progressive tests and life circumstances to use the other aspects of relational grace to fortify Jesus' character in fulfillment of Isaiah 11:3—so that "He delights in the fear of Yahweh" above all else. Thus fortified by relational grace, Jesus was relationally impeccable in the face of all his temptations.[103]

Therefore, Jesus' sinlessness was a relational accomplishment because (most plausibly) he relied upon relational grace to sustain and fortify him in his resistance to temptation. The issue in each aspect of relational grace is that the assistance is transcendent as the anchor that enables the tempted one to hold fast against the deception and struggle of desires, will, and beliefs. Jesus relied on the means of relational grace in a maximal way; consequently, the results in his life were maximal in perfect sinlessness despite the severity and unique pressures of his temptations. Nonetheless, despite his achievement of sinlessness and his impeccability, he remains relevant and praiseworthy because he relied upon relational grace that is available to others who are merely human.

The provision of relational grace. The plausibility that Jesus relied on relational grace increases when we compare the examples from his life to the provision of

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[101]John 12:28; 13:31; 14:13; 17:1, 4.

[102]John 14:10, 24; 17:8. Notice that the revealed names of Son and Father indicate the trinitarian relationship *ad intra*, and not merely the *ad extra* economic trinity. Expressed in Jesus' mission is the eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father in a relationship of authority and submission of the Son to his Father.

[103]But Jesus' development was not in the mixed way argued by Susan R. Garrett, *The Temptations of Jesus in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 107, who claims that Mark's account of Jesus shows that he developed morally from double-minded struggle to eventual single-minded commitment. Also unhelpful on this point is Ronald Williamson, "Hebrews 4:15 and the Sinlessness of Jesus," *Expository Times* 86 (1974): 4-8, who argues that Jesus achieved perfected obedience of sinlessness only at the end of his life, not that he proceeded in purity impeccably from the beginning.

relational grace for Christians. Though the parallel support of angels in time of temptation is not developed, the other aspects are roughly similar to the relational grace evident in Jesus' life.

First, God's plan in redemption includes the promise of life in the Holy Spirit, by which God produces in the believer a life that is conformed ethically to God's own character as exemplified in Christ (Gal 5:16-26; Rom 8:13-14, 28-29). Life in the Spirit is part of the new covenant promise, that emphasized the interior working of God on the heart, presumably the ordering of an individual's desires in line with God's will. This life in the Spirit may be synonymous with the new covenant promise of an internal renewal for Christians by God, placing his law within them, and writing on their hearts (Jer 31:31-33) that are newly given by God (Ezek 36:26-27). This interior renovation is also described as a new source of eternal life from Christ, given within the redeemed person by the Holy Spirit who brings about a new birth (John 3:5-8) that is likened to a fountain of living water (John 4:14; 7:37-39). God's love is active within believers to change them to love him and others (1 John 4:7-21). This means God's love has an ongoing influence on the desires of those who belong to him, converting them from D1 desires for selfishness and sin to appropriate D2 desires that he has ordained. By comparison with believers, Jesus lived as a man endowed with the Holy Spirit in demonstration of this life of ethical conformity to God's will.[104]

Second, the provision of relational grace through prayer is clear from the repeated emphasis on this biblical theme. Believers are to pray constantly about everything (1 Thess 5:17). Scripture tells a general theme that God will work in the individual who commits himself to God's care.[105] The pattern for prayer that Jesus gave his disciples includes a petition about temptation and the devil's deceptions (Matt 6:13). Peter gives his readers motivation to pray in the midst of temptations by assuring them

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[104]Though in an analogical sense to the gift of the Holy Spirit for his followers, and without their need for sanctification with respect to sin's corruption.

[105]E.g. Prov 3:5; Ps 21:2; 37:4; Rom 8:28-29; 2 Cor 10:5; Phil 2:12-13.

that God can rescue them especially from temptation (2 Pet 2:9). Hebrews 4:15-16 exhorts the readers to seek God's help in prayer specifically in relation to temptation, and the ground for assurance is Jesus' own empathy and success in his own experience of temptation.

Third, the promise of angelic assistance for believers is lacking and it is not specifically found at all in relation to resisting temptation. However, Scripture tells that God frequently employed angels to assist believers with warnings, guidance, encouragement, and rescue (e.g., Gen 19; Heb 1:14). Presumably, God would employ the assistance of an angel for a believer facing a fierce temptation (perhaps martyrdom) if that form of relational grace would be effective in God's purpose to uphold the Christian against temptation to sin.

Fourth, Scripture had an important role in Jesus' ethical fortitude and direct counterstrike to Satan's temptations that were based on deception. Likewise, Scripture promises to renew a reader's perception (e.g., Pss 1; 19; 119) and guard specifically against sin (Ps 119:11). As a relational struggle involving beliefs, temptation depends upon some sort of deception that can be routed by the truth given in Scripture. As a transcendent counter-claim to the lies that D1 sinful desires and sinful means of satisfying legitimate desires are good for the tempted one, Scripture is abundantly available to stabilize the believer's scale of values and lay bare the deception of evil. Positively, Peter commends Scripture for the believer's growth in maturity as part of developing a "taste" for the goodness of God—strengthening the attractiveness of D2 desires against D1 (1 Pet 2:1-3).

Fifth, many biblical exhortations indicate that people should find support in the believing community to help each other practice the habits of obedience that were significant for Jesus in his own struggles against sin (e.g., Gal 6:2; Heb 12:12-15). Paul's example was to pray for others in respect to their maturity as Christians that has ethical results in their attitudes and actions (e.g., Col 1:9-12). Paul compares the self-discipline

of athletes to the diligence that Christians must practice on the way to becoming stable in virtuous and obedient character (1 Cor 9:24-27; 1 Tim 4:7-8; Heb 10:24-25).

Therefore, we see that God commends the same the resources that were significant in Jesus' fight against temptation to Christians for progressive sanctification. The difference is that Jesus did not need renewal from the corruption of sin; the likeness is that in the weakness of his assumed humanity, he needed the same relational grace to vanquish temptations to evil that assaulted him directly throughout his life. For both Christ and Christians, relational grace is not the divine constraint or coercion of individuals to resist temptation. Relational grace seems to be the divine means of enabling and facilitating the voluntary choice of individuals for D2 desires. The special, unique result of Jesus' sinlessness reflects his special status as the impeccable, eternal Son who received the assistance of relational grace in a maximal way coincident with his role and his personal character as the God-man.

Jesus' relevance for others. The relationality of Jesus' sinlessness makes him relevant for others. Jesus' reliance on relational grace is more plausible because this explanation fits the NT evidence for his relevance as the empathetic exemplar for others. Because Jesus has redeemed the church from slavery to sin, believers stand in nearly the same relation to temptation as Jesus had with the same relational grace available to enable a choice against sin. Thus, the relational grace that was effective for his victories over temptation seems to be the same help of relational grace that is promised for believers. Relational grace supports this relationship between Jesus and believers by correlating the experiences of the exemplar and his followers. God's provision of relational grace for Jesus allowed him to experience temptation impeccably in a way that constituted him empathetic for others who must struggle in the same human terms that he did. The model of his life for others is as a peer, not merely as the ideal because he availed himself of the relational resources that God likewise makes available to them. His empathy is credible because the transcendent security of his sinlessness was not an

automatic immunity, but the same divine orchestration of relational grace and the circumstances of particular temptations by which others can resist temptations.

Furthermore, Jesus' sinlessness by relational grace is relevant in a third way: he remains the sufficient sacrifice guaranteed throughout his earthly life and forever. Ultimately, Jesus' relevance as the savior is that he makes sinners' reconciliation with God possible by his pure sacrifice and continual intercession as a perfected priest who will never fail to accomplish the redemption of humanity. The specific and meticulously sovereign operation of relational grace in his life guaranteed his ability to be the sufficient sacrifice for sins. Therefore, the evidence of Jesus' life and relevance suggest the reasonable plausibility that he relied on relational grace to achieve sinlessness.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the relational model of Christ's impeccability and temptation incorporates many contributions from M1-M7 and a fresh appraisal of the relevant biblical evidence. The claims of M8 form these contributions around the concept of relationality. We have seen that Jesus' impeccability involves a relation between his divine and human natures regulated by the Holy Spirit. Jesus' temptation was a relational experience of his setting in four relationships as a real human being. Jesus' sinlessness was most plausibly a relational achievement by his maximal reliance on relational grace provided by the Father and Holy Spirit in a sovereign, trinitarian accomplishment of the redemptive plan by distinct and unified roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 7

EVALUATION OF M8, OBJECTIONS, AND REPLIES

M8 explicitly employs the eleven conclusions from the biblical and theological evidence to avoid the problems of M1-M7. The difficulty in constructing theological models is to give appropriate weight to all the evidence. For example, M1-M3 acknowledge the evidence for Jesus' humanity and relevance as a pattern for others, but M1-M3 so heavily weigh the evidence for Jesus' divinity that this acknowledgement was muted. Thus, as theological reflection continued, other models were needed to balance the early emphasis. This discussion leads to the following main questions for evaluating M8: (1) Does M8 give an adequate explanation of the biblical and theological data? (2) Does M8 weigh the eleven elements appropriately? (3) Does M8 coherently and satisfactorily solve the problems of M1-M7? Moreover, at least five specific objections may be raised about the claims and definitions used in M8: (1) pneumatological veiling, (2) the definition of temptation, (3) pneumatological empowerment, (4) Jesus' impeccability and moral freedom, and (5) Jesus' impeccability and moral praiseworthiness. We will consider the three questions and the five objections in turn.

Evaluation of M8 in View of the Problems in M1-M7

First, M8 gives an adequate explanation of the biblical and theological data. The three main claims of M8 include the eleven conclusions from the biblical and theological evidence. Claim 1 (Jesus' impeccability was natural, personal, and relational) incorporates five conclusions: impeccability, uniqueness of his humanity, integrity of his two natures, prominence of his human nature, and sufficient sacrifice. Claim 2 (Jesus'

temptation was a relational experience) emphasizes the full extent and full degree of his human temptations. Claim 3 (Jesus' sinlessness was a relational accomplishment) includes four elements: the human achievement of his sinlessness, his empathy and help, his relevance as a peer example, and the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the model is complete and—if the underlying exegetical conclusions from chapter 4 are accurate—the model correctly includes the necessary biblical components. The additional theological elements that relate these components may be subject to criticism; we will consider these specific objections below.

Moreover, the adequacy of M8 may vary depending on competing concerns. For example, M8 may lack apologetic value because the model does not address critical and philosophical concerns. M8 may lack ecumenical value because the model does not include theology beyond the Western Protestant tradition, and the insights of Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Pentecostals, and others are left out. M8 may lack a popular appeal because the model has a complicated explanation of Jesus' real impeccability juxtaposed with his real achievement of sinlessness. The definition of temptation is analytical and likely beyond the interest of many non-theologians in the church. Also, M8 has some novel elements, and novelty is always rightly suspected in theology, having been the badge of inadvertent heresy more often than not.

Nonetheless, M8 integrates the disparate elements of Christ's impeccability and temptation by means of the concept of relationality. This concept is appealing in view of the contemporary emphasis on community and relationality in theology and philosophy.[1] The conjunction of M8 with this emphasis commends the model's adequacy

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[1]Examples of this emphasis are James E. Loder and W. Jim Neidhardt, *The Knight's Move: The Relational Logic of the Spirit in Theology and Science* (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1992); Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994); the manifesto for reforming Christian counseling as a community task in Lawrence J. Crabb, *Connecting: Healing for Ourselves and Our Relationships* (Nashville: Word, 1997); F. LeRon Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology: After the Philosophical Turn to Relationality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003),and the church leadership curriculum by Michael Lindsey et al., *Friendship: Creating a Culture of Connectivity in Your Church* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2005). The current emphasis on community may be a valid correction of excessive individualism in the West. Nonetheless, the extreme claims made for the community as authoritative are not helpful, e.g., Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001).

for contemporary concerns for community, Jesus' solidarity with humanity in suffering and weakness (cf. liberation theology), and the desire for relational connectivity that many in the church in the U.S. seem to be expressing.

Most of all, the adequacy of the model shows in the way M8 clarifies and illuminates the biblical and theological data. Relationality and relational grace are not biblical terms that appear in any of the relevant evidence for the topic. However, if true, the central concept of M8 is implicit throughout the data. By making this concept explicit, M8 brings the clarity and light for improved theological understanding of divine revelation.

Second, M8 appropriately weighs all the evidence. The propriety of the arrangement of the data in any model may be difficult to judge, but at least M8 weighs the individual elements in relation to each other. M8's unifying concept of relationality balances and connects some elements that in other models are otherwise opposed in ways that overshadow one element or another element (e.g., impeccability overshadows temptability, or peccable temptability cancels impeccability). M8 correlates elements to weigh them appropriately in at least three ways.

The first way of appropriate interrelation of the data is that M8 explains Jesus' impeccability in conjunction with the counter affirmations of Jesus' temptations, human achievement of sinlessness, empathy and example for others, and pneumatological empowerment. M8 removes divine causation by the Son's choice to exercise agent causation within his human limitations. This preserves both sides of his (qualitative) divine otherness and his human relevance. Another way of juxtaposing disparate elements is to posit relational impeccability. M8 proposes relational impeccability as a guaranteed form of immunity to sin that allows moral freedom and vulnerability to temptation. Thus, Jesus remains impeccable while he becomes empathetic and exemplary for others who are not impeccably divine as he is.

The second way of appropriate correlation of the data is that M8 explains Jesus' relevance as a peer example and his empathy arising from his human experiences in terms of the human achievement of his sinlessness, the empowering grace by the Holy Spirit, the prominence of his human nature, and the full extent and degree of his temptations. The likeness of Jesus' experience in the prominence of his human nature secures his empathy; he felt what others feel in terms of their temptability to the same extent and in the same degree (if not more, as was probably the case). The relevance of Christ's example for others is secured by the means he chose to use for resisting temptations by the empowering grace of the Holy Spirit (relational grace). This choice has implications for his relevance for others because his achievement of sinlessness took place within his human limitations that others share. Jesus' temptations in likeness to others' experiences are constitutive of his empathy and pattern for others; thus, these are necessary to his role as priest.

The third way that M8 integrates the data is that the model explains Jesus' uniqueness and the integrity of his two natures in a way that balances the likeness of his experience to others. His similarity to others as an empathetic and exemplary priest does not cancel his uniqueness. His difference from others as the impeccable, eternal Son of God does not nullify his relevance for mere human sinners who follow him. His two natures allow him to experience two conditions of existence—a person who is fully man while remaining fully God—and thus meet all the requirements for redemption. God, who cannot die, must suffer the death for sin as a human substitute and create a new humanity after his pattern.

Therefore, M8 interrelates the evidence in a unified explanation. The important aspects of both the divine and human evidence are balanced throughout the model. The result places weight on God's glory. This glory is the Father's sovereign orchestration of the messianic redemption to secure the Son's human impeccability and his achievement of sinlessness. God's glory is also shown in the Son's exemplary humility, love,

obedience, and triumph over evil within the frame of his humanity. God's glory is manifest in the Holy Spirit's close involvement to form the Son's perfect life and functions as the Spirit of Christ for similar involvement in the lives of believers.

Third, M8 offers a coherent and satisfactory solution to the problems of other models. In chapter 5, M1-M7 were evaluated for their theological fit with three major doctrines. How does M8 fit with these same doctrines in a systematic theological system? We will consider M8 in terms of the soteriological, Christological, and pneumatological problems of M1-M7.

Soteriologically, M8 integrates Jesus' redemptive tasks and relevance for others in a good fit. Unlike M1, M8 underscores a real moral victory over Satan because Jesus fought as the second Adam on the same terms that had earlier resulted in the human failure of the first Adam. His victory was moral and human because Jesus relied on relational grace within his human condition of existence instead of relying on his innate divine powers to overwhelm the devil. M2 and M3 had the problem of undermining Jesus' example for others because these models defined his perfection as a divinized, superhuman mode of life. Instead, M8 upholds Jesus as a peer example of a perfected human life that is the goal for all the church. The M4 emphasis on the simple solution of empowering grace to resist sin suggested a Pelagian view of humanity, but M8 clarifies Jesus' qualitative uniqueness as exceptionally pure from sin—not merely as a typical man empowered by grace to avoid sins. M8 affirms regeneration that all humans except Jesus need before they can resist temptation by grace. However, the M8 distinction between Jesus and other human beings does not prevent him from being an example, as in the M5 depiction of Jesus' enrichment in soul by grace that glorifies him beyond being a peer example. M6 proved to be a good fit soteriologically, despite Luther's insistence on the ubiquity of Jesus' humanity, and M8 draws on the soteriological strengths of M6. One of these strengths from M6 that is retained in M8 is the full affirmation of Christ's impeccability; both models rightly affirm impeccability as necessary for Jesus to be the

sufficient sacrifice that deals with human sin. By contrast, the critical approach in M7 misses this strength by giving up Jesus' impeccability. M8 also avoids the apparent incoherence of the M7 kenotic self-limitation by explaining the distinction of Jesus' natures pneumatologically.

Christologically, M8 solves earlier problems primarily by affirming the reality of Jesus' human nature and experiences (cf. M7). M1-M3 undermined Jesus' human freedom, praiseworthiness, and likeness to other human beings. M8 upholds Jesus' real humanity by explaining that the Holy Spirit preserved the integrity of the two natures. This M8 development of the M6 idea of veiled divinity solves the Reformers' problem by personalizing the veiling role as a work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, M8 preserves the full expression of each nature in two conditions of existence experienced by the eternal Logos simultaneously. The Holy Spirit's involvement is to protect the fully human experience and prominent display of weakness in Christ's earthly frame of reference—and this without any limitation of the Logos in his continuing condition of existence as the divine Son. Moreover, M8 upholds the full humanity and uniqueness of Christ among others without adopting the M7 humanization of his divinity to be peccable or possibly mistaken about his abilities. M8 can explain the compossibility of Jesus' humanity and divinity as being fully temptable despite his impeccability because of his choice to rely on the relational grace that God provides him and his church.

M4 also had the problems of implying a divisive Nestorian Christology and a description of Jesus' humanity that is not distinct enough from others who are merely human. In response, M8 upholds the unity of the incarnation as the continual, personal experience and action of the eternal Son, without separation or division. The Son's incarnational reality can be fully, authentically human with common human limitations and weaknesses because of the Holy Spirit's involvement to preserve the integrity of Christ's two natures. The Son does not express any of his divine power in his earthly condition of existence unless such expression is consistent with the display of his human

nature and his redemptive tasks that require him to operate within that limited human frame of reference. Pneumatological empowerment is consistent with human nature (cf. the specially-gifted prophets, leaders, and artisans in the OT, and the gift of the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant). Despite the likeness and fullness of Jesus' humanity to that of others, M8 also preserves his qualitative distinction as the God-man—he is naturally and personally impeccable, but he chose to rely on relational grace for the sake of becoming an empathetic example for others.

In contrast to the Nestorian problems of M4, M2 had the problem of emphasizing the unity of Christ's natures in a way that resembles Eutychianism. In response, M8 avoids the problems of this heresy by emphasizing the integrity of Christ's two natures and the prominence of his human nature. These emphases fulfill the Chalcedonian definition that Christ is *in* two natures (not "from" two natures, as Monophysites preferred) that are without confusion and change. The divine nature is not diminished, the human nature is not enhanced. In his two conditions of existence, Jesus continues to be fully God and fully man.

Similarly, M3 had the problem of resembling Apollinarian Christology by emphasizing the dominance of the personal Logos. In response, M8 avoids the problems of this heresy by upholding the full humanity of Christ. His temptability and experience of common human weaknesses are requirements for his empathy and example for others. He relied on relational grace to achieve human sinlessness because his assumed humanity was full in its weakness and temptability. M8 does not depict Christ as an embodied divine person or theophany; instead, M8 explicitly develops the implications of his real humanity by upholding the full extent and degree of his temptations. Such temptations were only possible for a God-man who became a man in a complete way, with a rational human soul and human body. The M8 definition of temptation depends on Christ's rational human soul with beliefs, will, a scale of values, and desires.

Pneumatologically, M8 upholds a prominent role for the Holy Spirit to explain

the biblical evidence for the Messiah as the anointed one. The Spirit's role to facilitate the incarnation and guide Jesus' human development is a prominent aspect of the model. M1-M3 lacked an explanation for the role of the Holy Spirit, implying that such a role was superfluous. M4 emphasized the pneumatological role but did not explain the details of the Spirit's empowerment in Christ or others. M5 affirms the Spirit's role but minimizes its importance by emphasizing the infused, created grace instead. By contrast, M8 explains the pneumatological operation in Christ analogously with the Spirit's role in the church. Christ's demonstration of life in the Spirit is the pattern for believers to live increasingly approximate to Christ's life by means of the same empowering Spirit. The possibilities that M8 provides are rich for believers to draw hope, encouragement, and exhortation from Christ's example. His obedient life was enabled by the same divine assistance that is available pneumatologically to others in the New Covenant.

In summary, M8 attempts to explain the evidence for Christ's impeccability and temptation in a way that is consistent with soteriology, Christology, and pneumatology. We must recognize that proving the coherence of a model is difficult because this criterion implicates the entire web of an individual's system of beliefs. At least M8 is an endeavor to resolve the problems of earlier models in connection with other doctrines. Nonetheless, some may object that M8 raises new problems. One of these is its proposal of pneumatological veiling.

Objection: Pneumatological Veiling

Three objections related to the M8 proposal of pneumatological veiling are as follows. (1) The proposal is speculative to say that the Holy Spirit was the agent regulating Jesus' human experience; no clear evidence indicates this role. (2) This veiling role is novel in the history of theology. (3) The construction may be unnecessary to explain the two conditions of existence for the Son.

In response to the objection that (1) the proposal is speculative and lacks clear

evidence, M8 is a proposal formed by reasoning to the best explanation of the data; this is retroduction, or abduction. The veiling or restraining role is suggested by the evidence for the Holy Spirit's role in the life of the Messiah to give empowerment and ethical formation (positively) from the moment of the Messiah's conception (Luke 1:35) through his death on the cross (Heb 9:14).[2] In light of the evidence for this comprehensive involvement in Jesus' human life, some explanation must be formed. The M8 theory of a negative, restraining role is at least plausible because, were such a role necessary, the Holy Spirit would be the most likely candidate for the job. We have inferences and suggestions that allow this role; certainly, no evidence contradicts it.

In response to the objection that (2) the veiling role is novel, we must recall that the concept of veiling Jesus' divinity is not novel (cf. M6); the novelty is the ascription of this role to the Holy Spirit. Aquinas claimed a similar idea of the special restraint that preserved Christ's human weakness: a miracle was necessary to obstruct the natural tendency of created grace in Christ's glorified soul from perfecting his body. Because of such restraint, Christ was glorified in his soul (deiform) while remaining physically weak, temptable, and mortal—as was necessary for his redemptive tasks.[3] By comparison, the M8 proposal simply personalizes the M6 veiling concept as a restraint in the incarnation to preserve the integrity of Jesus' humanity. This restraint is analogous to Aquinas's claim while improving upon it.

Moreover, robust pneumatology is a recent emphasis in the history of theology; the response to twentieth-century Pentecostalism has brought many new insights as theologians in many traditions have reconsidered the evidence for the Spirit's

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[2]William L. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, WBC, vol. 47B (Dallas: Word, 1991), 240, agrees that the unique formulation of Heb 9:14 is a reference to the Holy Spirit and his sustaining empowerment of Jesus. Lane argues that this section in Hebrews alludes to Isaiah. We have already considered the reference to the Spirit's role in Luke 1:35 (see chapter 4).

[3]Noted by Marilyn McCord Adams, *What Sort of Human Nature? Medieval Philosophy and the Systematics of Christology*, The Aquinas Lecture 1999 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1999), 61.

person and work.[4] Therefore, while theological novelty is always dangerous, pneumatology has been treated less thoroughly in the tradition than most other doctrines. Furthermore, nothing in this underdeveloped tradition contradicts the insights of M8.

In response to the objection that (3) pneumatological veiling may be unnecessary to explain Jesus' two conditions of existence, this may be true. The role of the Holy Spirit may be superfluous to accomplish what we observe in the life of Jesus. However, the M8 explanation works and represents an important distinction between Jesus' two natures and the integrity of each. No better explanation is forthcoming for how the veiling of divinity works. M7 proposed a humanization of divine attributes; embarking on a better course, M8 preserves both the human and divine attributes by recourse to the Holy Spirit's role. Moreover, when modern alternatives say too little (M6) or too much (peccability in M7) about how the two natures are related in a way that preserves a real human experience, contemporary theology should at least continue trying to give some explanation that does not cause other problems (as in M7). M8 could stand without this sub-claim of pneumatological veiling, so we could simply disown the point and affirm the model without this part. Nonetheless, in view of the overall fit between pneumatology, Christology, and soteriology, the suggestion of pneumatological veiling is at least satisfying until some better explanation can be found.

Objection: Definition of Temptation

Some may object that the M8 definition of temptation has at least two problems: (1) The M8 definition of temptation dissolves the distinction between sinful temptations (or internal, by the flesh) and innocent temptations (or external, by the world and the devil). James 1:12-15 and Hebrews 4:15 indicate this distinction. (2) The internal-external distinction has been applied traditionally to set Jesus' sinless experience

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[4]Pentecostalism has many problems stemming from an over-emphasis on pneumatology, but many evangelical responses to the Pentecostal claims have provided a needed correction.

apart from believers. Such an interpretation with traditional support as in this case should not be set aside so blithely and without sufficient exegetical warrant.

In response to the first objection that M8 dissolves the internal/sinful-external/innocent distinction, we must allow the model to drive a reconsideration of James 1:12-15. A more robust interpretation of James can clarify the meaning of temptation and move beyond the common interpretation that people sinfully tempt themselves to sin (below). In chapter 4 we considered the traditional view of some (e.g., Calvin) that Hebrews 4:15 teaches Jesus' temptations are distinguished from common, sinful temptations by not having arisen from internal sin. The conclusion reached in that discussion was that the best interpretation is that Hebrews 4:15 emphasizes Jesus' perfect result despite being tempted in all the same ways as others are. James 1 must be interpreted canonically in a way that fits with Hebrews 4:15 and does not undermine or reverse the argument of that letter.

The context in James 1 is God's progressive sanctification of the readers by means of tests of their faith (1:2-4, 12, 17-18). These tests present the choice of life with God as the alternative to death. In 1:12, James explains that God's tests are part of a process for the believer: (A) the test, (B) God's approval, and (C) the result of life. This process of sanctification is set in contrast to the process of sin: a destructive movement from (A) desire (D1, leading to sin), (B) sinful action, and (C) the result of death (1:15).[5] James explains his readers' sin as the process by which desire carries them away once temptation has been presented (1:14). James's fishing image is that tempted Christians are caught as fish on the barb of a hook and subsequently dragged away to death.

James then changes his metaphor from fishing to birth (1:15-18). He describes how both death and life result from the process of conception, gestation, and birth. Death is the result when (1) desire, in response to (2) temptation, (3) conceives and (4) gives birth to sin (1:15). Life is the result when (1) God's will (3) conceives of believers by

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[5]Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, NIGTC, vol. 55 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 85. Davids sees this process of 1:12 in contrast to the process of desire-sin-death in 1:15.

(2) the word of truth, and then there is (4) the beginning of a new creation, or, a renewal of life (1:18; cf. the crown of life result in 1:12). Therefore, James describes the general process of sin and death that involves temptation and D1 desires. People succumb to temptation when they choose their D1 desire that leads to the sinful prospect in the proposed state of affairs. The testing state of affairs and the individual's person-variability are the setting for a sinful prospect and the corresponding D1 desire that leads to it. By one's choice for a D1 desire, whether D1 is corrupt or legitimate with illegitimate means of satisfaction, the tempted person chooses to engage with and follow the temptation into the proposed sin. Desire is the person's internal susceptibility to an externally occasioned temptation.[6] James tells how sin develops out of the context of temptations by placing the focus on *personal responsibility* for sins that result from temptation,[7] not on a fatalistic *process of temptation*. These temptations to sin may coincide with the trials by which God produces a believer's endurance in the choice for life (1:2-4); alternatively, they may be the temptations that afflict people as part of normal life in the fallen world.

On this view, the experience of temptation is not sinful; James only implicates those who sin as the result of temptation that arises in the state of affairs of a test. The problem is not the objective temptation to sin, but the subjective, active choice for the D1 desire to sin (but this may be an internally habituated choice that no longer feels like active volition, as in addictions). Driven by M8, this interpretation suggests that James does not say that all temptation entails or arises from inward sinfulness, as some

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[6]M8 drives a reappraisal of the way the term for "strong desire" (ἐπιθυμίας, v.14) is commonly translated negatively as "lust" (AV, ASV, NASB) and "evil desires" (NIV, NLT). Cf. Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James*, Pillar New Testament Commentary, vol. 55 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 74, who argues for the negative sense from the context. However, some modern translations leave the term without a negative cast as simply "desire" (ESV, NRSV, NKJV). NT usage and other Greek writing uses ἐπιθυμία as the positive sense of "desire for good things" (e.g., Phil 1:23; Luke 22:15; 1 Thess 2:17), the neutral sense of "strong desire" (Mark 4:19; Rev 18:14), and the negative sense of "desire for something forbidden" (Rom 7:7; 2 Pet 1:4; Col 3:5; 1 Thess 4:5; Gal 5:24; 1 Pet 4:3). This range of meaning is similar to the range of senses for the English term "desire"; BDAG, s.v. "ἐπιθυμία."

[7]Moo, *James*, 75.

interpreters have concluded.[8] Instead, temptation occurs as the perilous opportunity for sin and death that is similar to how testing is the fortifying and enriching opportunity for endurance and life (Jas 1:3-4).[9] This also means that James explains temptation as a generally human experience of the interaction in a particular state of affairs between desires, the will, beliefs, and the prospect of sin. Sharing in this experience are human beings in all five states of existence: Adam and Eve before the Fall, unregenerate humanity, Jesus, regenerate humanity, and (possibly) glorified humanity.

A similar NT comment on temptation as an experience common to all is Paul's reminder in 1 Corinthians 10:13. This affirmation of the general, common experience of temptation is not a comfort offered to those afflicted by temptation. Paul counters those among his readers who claimed they were especially bad off in their particular temptations to idolatry.[10] The assurance of God's provision for a way to escape temptation minimizes the supposed fatalism that the readers at Corinth share with the readers of James's letter. In each case, Christians are reminded of their responsibility to turn away from sin. In each case, Christians are assured of God's help to resist the temptation. Moreover, Hebrews 4:15-16 adds the further assurance that Jesus empathizes with tempted Christians in the struggle and offers them relevant help to resist sin.

In response to the second objection that the traditional interpretation of a distinction between internal/sinful and external/innocent temptations should not be set aside, this may be wise because novel interpretations are rightly to be suspected.[11]

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[8]Ibid.; John Calvin, *The Epistle of James*, trans. and ed. John Owen, Calvin's Commentaries, vol. 22 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 289.

[9]W. R. Baker, "Temptation," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, ed. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 1166-70. Baker notes the possible background of Sir 15:11-20 for Jas 1:13-18, indicating that the *yetzer hara* in OT perspective (cf. Gen 6:5; 8:21) is a "buffer between humans' capacity for sin, which comes from being made in God's image, and humans' responsibility for sin, which comes from their own choice to follow their *ye* [inclination]. *Yetzer* may be the vehicle for sin, but it is not sin itself." The resemblance in the text of Sir 15:11-20 to Jas 1 is startling.

[10]Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC, vol. 43 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 749.

[11]Examples of the internal-external distinction that separates Jesus' experience from sinful

Nonetheless, James 1:12-15 is not precisely on the topic of temptation and is less clear of a statement when compared to Hebrews 4:15. The traditional interpretation of James 1:12-15 should not control the interpretation of Hebrews 4:15, but each must be interpreted in its own context and then worked together in a canonical interpretation, despite the difficulty of doing so. When we consider the M8 explanation of the data for Jesus' temptation, the model suggests an improvement of the traditional view of James 1:12-15 to include all five states of human existence. The question of the temptability of glorified believers has been closed throughout the tradition, but opening it for good reasons requires a reconsideration of the traditional view that internal, sinful temptations ought to be distinguished from external, sinless temptations.

Moreover, the traditional view of a distinction stops short of defining the core of temptation as a moral struggle. Furthermore, it causes the problem of defining some temptations as sinful experiences—a prior sin of tempting oneself by a sinful desire, in addition to the sinful prospect entailed in the temptation. Sinfully tempting oneself is not what James 1:12-15 teaches even though the traditional view says as much. If, with the traditional view, one's internal desire to sin initiates temptation to act sinfully (a second sin), then the temptation produced by inward sinfulness is itself a sin. James's meaning would be that people tempt themselves, not that when they are tempted, people commit sin and cannot blame someone else for that sin. Seeing the emphasis on the inwardness of temptation seems to eclipse the larger problem of sin: sin, not temptation, is the main problem. Temptation is problematic as the relational setting and factors that provide the conditions for sin.

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humanity are common today: Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), 1:96. He says that internal temptation presupposes sin since it indicates that the temptation has roots within the man himself. Similarly, William L. Banks, *The Day Satan Met Jesus* (Chicago: Moody, 1973), 48, writes, "For Him, temptations could come only from the outside, not from the inside. His holiness then is that which signifies a total absence of any inner fleshly motions of a sin nature." Also, Graham H. Twelftree, "Testing," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 814. "Testing, or the temptation to be unfaithful to God, arises from internal enticement to sin and from external afflictions."

Furthermore, if *all* temptation occurs *because of* the inner presence of sin or inclination to sin (concupiscence), then it would be the case that Jesus either had sin or he had no temptation. Clearly, Jesus had temptation but he did not have sin; this means that at least some temptation is not from sin. In other words, the traditional view of temptation in James 1:12-15 requires that there are two sorts of temptation, internal and external, that are subsets of the general category of temptation. Nonetheless, the question remains whether James 1:12-15 depicts *only* one sort of temptations that arise from within the sinful person (excluding another sort of temptations that arise externally), or whether James describes temptation to sin in *general*; in this latter case, ἐπιθυμία is *not* the cause of the temptation but a frequent answer of the sinner to it. Theologically, both options are reasonable because, on the one hand, Jesus was tempted to sin, and on the other hand, there may be temptation that Jesus did not experience because it arises inwardly from sin.

The traditional view sets apart two sorts of temptations (internally sinful, externally sinless); the resolution of M8 is to explain the differences as different sorts of D1 desires (corrupt desires and legitimate desires leading to sin) that are person-variable. Thus, Jesus' temptation experience is relevantly similar to the temptations that sinful people experience, with variation only according to the person-variability of temptations and the particular desires involved. As noted in chapter 6, the greater intensity of his temptations because of his special role, circumstances, and Satanic opposition more than compensates for any differences of his not having had corrupt D1 desires.

Objection: Pneumatological Empowerment

Some may object to the Spirit-Christology developed in M8. If relational grace by the Holy Spirit was a decisive factor in Jesus' sinlessness, then what was his uniqueness of having lived sinlessly in a way that could have occurred for others by the same relational grace?

In response to the objection that relational grace diminishes Jesus' unique sinlessness, we must recall that sinlessness is defined as absolute moral purity of all sin—personal and original. This absolute purity is only possible for Jesus because of his entrance into humanity from outside the race and the special action of the Holy Spirit to bring about his conception without the guilt and corruption of original sin as a legal status before God. Thus, only Jesus (and Adam and Eve, had they been upheld by grace) can be sinless in the absolute sense. By contrast, John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit from before birth and yet was not sinless. Theoretically, others could be sinless with the assistance of relational grace in the sense of committing no personal sins. This possibility is exactly the state of affairs for the eternal state of sinners who become saints and sin no more. M8 also recognizes Jesus' qualitative difference from common humanity because he is the eternal Son and Logos.

Objection: Jesus' Impeccability and Moral Freedom

Medieval and modern theologians have been concerned to preserve Jesus' moral freedom that in earlier models seems to be limited or diminished by the affirmation of his impeccability. Philosophers of religion are particularly troubled about the compossiblity of these two affirmations of impeccability and freedom concerning Jesus and God. For example, Keith Yandell writes about Jesus, "*Being necessarily good* precludes any such scope of freedom."[12]

In response, M8 upholds both Christ's moral freedom and his impeccability. Jesus was not constrained from doing evil (choosing D1) but chose what he most wanted to choose within the setting of his will, nature, and influences in his state of affairs (arranged by the Father's sovereignty). Jesus' choice of D2 in every temptation was

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[12]Keith E. Yandell, "Divine Necessity and Divine Goodness," in *Divine and Human Action: Essays in the Metaphysics of Theism,* ed. Thomas V. Morris (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 333 (his italics). Cf. David Werther, "The Temptation of God Incarnate," *Religious Studies* 29 (1993): 47-50; Trevor A. Hart, Sinlessness and Moral Responsibility: A Problem in Christology," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 48 (1995): 37-54.

always free despite his inability to choose or intend to choose D1. M8 includes the view of Jesus' freedom as the significant moral freedom (not the liberty of indifference) that is compatible with the specific, meticulous divine sovereignty over human events.[13] Jesus was not constrained or coerced to do right (choose D2), but he always chose freely what he most wanted to do according to his will, nature, and assistance of divine grace in relation to his circumstances. The Son of God was not even constrained to become incarnate, but freely chose the entire set of D2 desires as part of his free choice to redeem humanity as the second Adam.

Moreover, the compossibility of Jesus' freedom and impeccability is no different from the problem of freedom and impeccability for God; we will consider the objection and arguments that are valid for theology proper as applicable to Christology. Critics claim that God is not significantly free if his impeccability restrains him from doing other than the good he does and prevents him from doing evil. For example, Vincent Brümmer charges: "[An impeccable God] would then be more like an infallibly 'constituted' machine, only able to behave in accordance with the way it is made, than like a person freely deciding what to do or not to do."[14] Reichenbach agrees: "If God's goodness is predicated on the basis of his nature, then the notion of good as applied to God loses its ethical dimension."[15] Nonetheless, this supposed conflict between God's nature and freedom is misleading because God's moral action is what he wills freely in a way that expresses and defines his moral nature.[16] Antonie Vos argues that God has

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[13]The question of human freedom is controversial. Compatibilism seems the best explanation of the biblical data and common experience of freedom in relation to God's sovereign control over events in daily life. For a contemporary defense, see Bruce A. Ware, *God's Greater Glory* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), and John S. Feinberg, *No One Like Him* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001).

[14]Vincent Brümmer, "Divine Impeccability," *Religious Studies* 20 (1984): 212-13.

[15]Reichenbach, *Evil and a Good God*, 138. Cf. Robert F. Brown, "God's Ability to Will Moral Evil," *Faith and Philosophy* 8 (1991): 13.

[16]Carl F. H. Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 213: "It is obvious enough that unless there is an ultimate ethical tension in the being of God, the Divine nature and will cannot be thought of as in competition with each other, but as morally identical. From this standpoint the good is conformity to God's being and to his will. But the nature of God must not be regarded as necessarily good in the sense that it gains its goodness independently of his will, nor that his good nature determines his will so that the will bows to the good by a sort of pantheistic inevitability. The good is what

freedom with regard to many things—including morality and goodness—despite his impeccability:

> Nevertheless, from God's essential being as the ultimate moral standard it does not follow that He cannot will and act freely nor that his character works as a constraint. From the infinite set of his real synchronic alternatives only the sinful ones are precluded by the necessary elements of his goodness. On the contingency level of good things and divine commands some goods are synchronically variable and some are diachronically variable too, as the history of the observance of the Sabbath and Sunday shows. So there is no constraint and no lack of freedom; the essence of divine goodness constitutes the value of divine acts and presents marginal conditions by the intrinsic preclusion of God's being unreliable or his being simply evil.[17]

Morris notes that most theists favor a libertarian (liberty of indifference) view of freedom such that God is only free (e.g., to keep a promise) if he could have done otherwise (e.g., to fail to keep a promise). Morris argues that God has *significant* freedom—even in a libertarian sense—both when God chooses to make a promise (e.g., to give Abraham an heir), and when God fulfills the promise (e.g., he could have given Abraham another son than Isaac).[18] The point is that God is free to have done otherwise than as he did in respect to creation because all things that he wills are contingent upon his free decision to create, to sustain, to promise, and to redeem.[19] While all these free choices could have been otherwise, they are consistent with but not necessarily caused by God's goodness. Thus, even on a libertarian view of divine freedom, the case seems to be that God has freedom to choose from among several moral actions while evil actions are unavailable to him.

God wills, and what he freely wills. The good is what the Creator-Lord does and commands. He is the creator of the moral law, and defines its very nature. . . . The moral activity of God is a closer definition of his nature."

[17]Antonie Vos, "The Possibility of Impeccability," in *Christian Faith and Philosophical Theology: Essays in Honor of Vincent Brümmer*, ed. Gijsbert van den Brink, Luco J. van den Brom, and Marcel Sarot (Kampen, NL: Kok Pharos, 1992), 237.

[18]Thomas V. Morris, *Anselmian Explorations: Essays in Philosophical Theology* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 27-29.

[19]According to Gordon Clark, this point is observed by Duns Scotus that God's external acts (but not his acts *ad intra*) contain the possibility of a different choice that might have been made and was not caused by his necessary goodness. Gordon H. Clark, *Thales to Dewey: A History of Philosophy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), 287-88.

Those who object that freedom and inability to sin are inconsistent, betray an assumption that the freedom to will evil is a good thing to have, but few (if any) will admit that the counterexample of freedom to will one's non-existence is a desirable thing to have. Instead, God is greater for his impeccability and not diminished by his inability to do the things that finite creatures can do (such as to will evil, forget thoughts, or scratch his left ear) because the fullness of God's perfection precludes these deficiencies.[20] Thus, God's freedom to do many things otherwise than to will evil is consistent with his perfection and essential goodness. The inability of God—and God incarnate—to do otherwise than good does not count against his real freedom to choose good immutably.

Objection: Jesus' Impeccability and Moral Praiseworthiness

Philosophers of religion have also objected that Jesus' impeccability precludes his praiseworthiness for right actions (choices of D2). If Christ is impeccable, then what merit or praise is due him for choosing D2 when he was unable to choose D1?[21]

In response, the same arguments for Jesus' freedom and impeccability also support the claim of his praiseworthiness and impeccability. Jesus' choices of D2 instead of D1 are praiseworthy because he chose freely in every case of temptation. He was not constrained to obey. He chose freely both to renounce D1 and to choose D2 every time he experienced temptation. For example, in Gethsemane, Jesus was not forced to choose D2 that entailed drinking the cup of divine wrath. His struggle to renounce his D1 desire to preserve himself from pain (negatively) was just as real as his struggle to obey (positively; cf. Heb 5:7-9). The temptation entailed his freedom to make a choice; having

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[20]Cf. the Anslemian intuition of God's maximal perfection in all great-making properties, elaborated by Morris, *Anselmian Explorations*.

[21]Anselm of Canterbury raised and answered this objection in *Cur Deus Homo* (chapter ten) by comparing Christ's praiseworthiness with God and the righteous angels' praiseworthiness despite their inability to sin. His solution is that Christ voluntarily chose holiness, not having been bound by necessity, but maintains his holiness by infinite immutability.

chosen D2 freely, Jesus is praiseworthy. Scripture attests Jesus' worthiness of praise for the entire course of his redemptive mission (Phil 2:5-11); within that course the Father praises him from heaven for taking the first decisive step to fulfill that mission within his human biography (Mark 1:9-11).

As with freedom, some philosophers question if even God can be both praiseworthy and impeccable, much less Christ. For example, Brümmer writes: "If Yahweh is in this way [by his necessary impeccability] powerless to deviate from his character, he could hardly be praised for not doing so."[22] Stephen Davis agrees: "If God's nature causes or determines him to do good in such a way that doing evil is not in his power, I would conclude that he is not a free and responsible moral agent and thus is not a fit object of the praise and thanks of his people."[23] Nelson Pike suggests that God's goodness is contingent upon divine freedom because otherwise God would not be morally praiseworthy.[24] Pike's intuition that God is indeed praiseworthy for his goodness requires that God must have been able to do otherwise (evil). Thus, Pike concludes that because God cannot be both praiseworthy and impeccable, he must be peccable.

In response, we may recall that a necessarily good God who condescends to create, sustain, and redeem people is morally praiseworthy for doing all of this freely because he could have done either none of it at all, or all of it differently, and this is compossible with his essential goodness. Thus, God is praiseworthy for the good things he freely chose to do because nothing obligated him to do any one of them.

Moreover, God is also praiseworthy as a model for others who do not share his maximal perfection.[25] He is the ideal of goodness and all else that is worth praising. This second type of praise due to God despite impeccability is readily apparent to Paul Helm:

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[22]Brümmer, "Divine Impeccability," 213.

[23]Stephen T. Davis, *Logic and the Nature of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 95.

[24]Nelson Pike, "Omnipotence and God's Ability to Sin," in *Divine Commands and Morality,* ed. Paul Helm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 68-69. Pike attributes this argument to C. B. Martin, *Religious Belief* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1964).

[25]Joshua Hoffman, "Can God Do Evil?" *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 17 (1979): 218.

"There could clearly be the praise of admiration and recognition to a God for whom it is logically impossible to do evil. For such a God can be praised for what he is, by analogy with the way in which certain human feats or achievements, in art of warfare, or athletics, might be praised quite irrespective of the causal history of these feats."[26]

Thus, it is inappropriate both (1) to withhold praise from God because he is necessarily good (or, essentially impeccable), and (2) to withhold ascribing him as necessarily good for the sake of being able to praise him. Both impeccability and praiseworthiness are appropriate and compossible for God, just as his freedom is consistent with impeccability.

As for God, so also we should affirm the appropriateness of praise for an impeccable Christ. M8 includes the emphasis on Christ as the ideal, perfected humanity who is also a peer to be copied by others. His praiseworthiness is two-fold for the great acts he accomplished in redemption (D2) and his greatness as the perfect man, head of the new humanity.

In view of this evaluation and address of objections, M8 is a plausible model of Christ's impeccability and temptation. The tests used here show M8 as superior to M1-M7 (though greatly indebted to them) as adequate, coherent, and illuminating of the biblical and theological evidence. We will explore the contemporary value of M8 as we consider several implications of the model for other areas of theology in the conclusion.

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[26]Paul Helm, "God and the Approval of Sin," *Religious Studies* 20 (1984): 220.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

According to Scripture, Jesus is tempted despite his impeccability and in a way that he can empathize with others. Moreover, Jesus is the pattern for others to follow in resisting temptation, and Jesus seems to have resisted temptations within his human limitations—not by his divine impeccability. How is the biblical evidence for his impeccability, temptation, and sinlessness consistent with the biblical claims that he is empathetic and the example for others who are tempted to sin? The traditional claim of Christ's impeccability and temptability implies several problems that require a model to clarify and explain the evidence. The traditional answers of M1-M3 have proven to be inadequate to explain all the evidence. The contemporary answer of M7 that Jesus was temptable by means of having become peccable or by his false belief that he may possibly sin is inadequate. M4-M6 have also proven to be inadequate as a contemporary explanation of the evidence in terms of Christology, pneumatology, and sanctification. Thus, the problem of Christ's impeccability and temptation requires a fresh contemporary model. In response, we have formulated the proposal of M8. The relational model explains that the evidence for Jesus' impeccability, temptation, and sinlessness is consistent with his relevance as the empathetic example for others. M8 proposes that Jesus relied on relational grace to resist temptation as a man.

To formulate M8, we have followed a methodology based on historical theology and biblical exegesis. We uncovered and evaluated seven historical models of Christ's impeccability and temptation. These models have been valuable to gain a clearer understanding of the topic in relation to the biblical evidence and contemporary concerns. Our goal was to learn from historical theology by careful and critical study of the main

models, and these models provided important starting points for the key questions and problems for the topic; they also pointed out some relevant biblical data. Our goal in doing biblical exegesis was to gain a framework for evaluating the theological models and formulating a contemporary model. Through this methodology, we have discovered the valuable theological formulas of M1-M7 that have served the Church in each historical period to the present. Nonetheless, by comparison with the biblical evidence and the theological fit with other doctrines, M1-M7 proved to be inadequate to the need of explaining Christ's impeccability and temptation in the contemporary setting. In response, M8 has been proposed, explained, and defended as an eclectic model that includes the best elements of M1-M7 while seeking to avoid their problems.

M8 is distinctive for the way the model unifies, clarifies, and illuminates the biblical and theological data with the concept of relationality. While weaknesses do remain, these have been minimized. According to the explanation of M8, Jesus' perfect manner of life as a sinless man is archetypal for Christians to live by relying on the same relational grace that enabled Christ. Specifically, his impeccability was natural, personal, and relational; his temptation was a relational experience; and his sinlessness was a relational accomplishment. By relying on relational grace to resist temptation, Jesus became empathetic and exemplary for others. Thus, his pattern of life is set forth for Christians to copy: they are to rely upon the same relational grace that Jesus relied upon during his earthly life.

If the biblical exegesis, theological formulation, and replies to objections are correct, then M8 is consistent with the Chalcedonian Christology that has so helpfully clarified the orthodox interpretation of the biblical teaching about Christ. Moreover, if M8 is true and helpful as a model of Christ's impeccability and temptation, then M8 implies at least five important clues for improving evangelical understanding of related questions in three doctrinal areas: Christology, soteriology, and eschatology.

Implications for Christology

First, M8 clarifies four points that are affirmed by the Chalcedonian definition. Specifically, the orthodox statement may be summarized by these four affirmations that constitute specific limits in reaction to heretical proposals. The M8 clarifications of these four points suggest the possible implications for M8 to illuminate other Christological formulation beyond the specific topic of Christ's impeccability and temptation. Figure 22 displays these four affirmations as the limits of orthodox Christology in italics; the clarifying contributions of M8 accompany each affirmation.[1]

One Person
Natural, personal, and relational impeccability of the God-man is expressive of his unified personal and moral action in two natures

Fully Human
His real human weakness required the divine support of relational grace

Chalcedonian Christology

Fully Divine
Pneumatological veiling of his divinity preserved an earthly life within human limits

The Natures are Distinct
Human temptability of the God-man is unmitigated by his impeccability and does not implicate his divinity with peccability

Figure 22. M8 and the Chalcedonian Box

[1]I am indebted to Alan W. Gomes for this conceptual summary of the Chalcedonian definition. These four affirmations with the specific language of the definition are as follows: (1) *one person*—"the property of each nature being preserved and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son"; (2) *the natures are distinct*—"unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of the natures being by no means taken away by the union"; (3) *fully human*—"perfect in manhood . . . truly man, of a reasonable soul and body . . . consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin . . . born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood"; and (4) *fully divine*—"perfect in Godhood . . . truly God . . . consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhood . . . begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhood . . . God the Word." The English translation of these excerpts from the Chalcedonian definition is given in Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 1169-70.

Second, if true, then M8 suggests a reappraisal of the question about two wills in Christ. The traditional view from the patristic period has prevailed that Christ has two wills, one for each of his two natures (dyothelitism). This view was confirmed at the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople III, 681-82) that also anathematized the competing patristic proposal that as one person, Christ exercises his single will *through* his two natures as the causal powers according to each condition of his existence as fully God and fully man (monothelitism). Proponents on both sides of the debate used the same passages from the Gospels, but the biblical evidence underdetermined the doctrine—hence the dispute. The decisive arguments for the dyothelite view were (1) the soteriological requirements that the Christ had to assume a human will to redeem it, and (2) the trinitarian unity that seemed to require a single will of the Godhead.

Despite the conciliar anathema and subsequent tradition of dyothelitism, the Chalcedonian definition does not exclude monothelitism. Clearly stipulated by the orthodox definition were that Christ has two natures, being fully divine and fully human, and that the two natures are united in Christ's person but unconfused with each other. Nonetheless, what Chalcedon did not specify were the details about Christ's divine and human properties (other than that he had a rational human soul and body), and this became important as the silence of Chalcedon on the will(s) of Christ meant theologians had yet to explain these aspects of the Incarnation according to the limitations established by the Fourth Council.[2] These shortcomings allowed the monothelite controversy that followed Chalcedon because it seemed that "the doctrine of one will equally with that of two wills would have been in harmony with the decisions of the Fourth and Fifth Councils."[3] Thus, the possibility remains that monothelitism is a viable Christology.

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[2]Sarah Coakley, "What Does Chalcedon Solve and What does it Not? Some Reflections on the Status and Meaning of the Chalcedonian 'Definition,'" in *The Incarnation*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 161-62. Coakley presents eight Christological issues that Chalcedon does not solve.

[3]Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. Neil Buchanan, 3rd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1898), 4:254.

M8 supports the contemporary interest in a reappraisal of monothelitism—Christ has only one will, and his volitional action is a personal operation in his two natures, not simply a natural faculty in each of his two natures.[4] M8 emphasizes Jesus' personal struggle in his human condition of existence to obey the will of his Father. This setting for his temptation is an interpersonal state of affairs that persists throughout his life; he must obey God as a factor or requirement that is in some sense external to Jesus as a man, and in a way analogous to other believers.

The M8 explanation of this interpersonal struggle—not an intrapersonal struggle between Jesus' human and divine wills, as in dyothelitism—supports the union of the incarnation. His personal choices of D2 are choices by the Logos in his condition of existence as a man. His D1 and D2 desires are human, not a conflict between his human (D1) and divine (D2) desires. The Holy Spirit facilitates the God-man's unified operation in his limitations of a human frame of reference. Jesus' self-consciousness as a man is not alongside his self-consciousness as the eternal Son, but integrally related as a single volitional system applied in two conditions of existence. Moreover, M8 supports the relationality of the trinity in the dynamic and interpersonal economic operation of redemption in Christ.

Thus, M8 supports a contemporary reformulation of the patristic monothelite proposal and the social analogy of the trinity. Nonetheless, M8 is not contingent upon the viability of the monothelite interpretation because M8 also works with a dyothelite interpretation (however, the dyothelite interpretation is much more complicated and much less satisfying). On either view, M8 can be helpful to clarify issues in Christology.

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[4]Examples of contemporary proposals that commend monothelitism are Garry DeWeese and Klaus Issler, "Is the Two-Wills / Two-Minds View of the Incarnation Coherent? A Reexamination of the Condemnation of Monothelitism" (paper presented at the national meeting of Evangelical Theological Society, Toronto, 20 November 2002); and William Lane Craig, "The Incarnation," in J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 597-614. This interest in monothelitism seems coordinate with the popularity of the social analogy of the trinity, which heads off the patristic objection to monothelitism that a single, personal will in Christ entails three personal wills in the trinity. The social analogy affirms the real interpersonal relations as volitional agents, so the correspondence to the monothelite proposal is welcomed.

Implications for Soteriology

If right, M8 suggests possibilities for understanding the human role and the human goal in sanctification. First, M8 suggests that divine provision of relational grace (logically subsequent to regeneration, reconciliation, and justification) is an explanation of sanctification and the life in the Spirit with room for a human role. M8 suggests that the Holy Spirit was involved in Jesus' earthly life and is involved in believers' lives for ethical formation, in conjunction with the relational grace provided by God through Scripture, prayer, community interdependence, and internal habits of obedience. Relational grace explains the divine work to sanctify believers by the multiple means that are coordinate with Christians' ongoing receptivity. The divine work of sanctification is especially evident with respect to resisting sin by fortifying believers against the deception that is inherent in temptation, and the appeal of D1 desires. M8 suggests that God's work in sanctification is partly to strengthen subjectively the appeal of D2 desires for believers, and continually support them in an obedient life of copying Christ.

Second, M8 presents Jesus as the goal and example for Christian responsiveness to God in progressive sanctification. Compatibilism affirms God's sovereignty over the believers' sanctification by grace while upholding the believers' responsibility to comply with God's will. According to M8, Christ's example was to resist temptation within his human limitations so that he could be fully empathetic and exemplary for others. This manner of his exemplification entails that others can copy his life to greater or lesser degree; furthermore, this coincides with the doctrine of individual rewards for faithfulness (cf. Luke 19:26; 1 Cor 3:12-15). God's sovereign provision of relational grace for believers is the dynamic relationality of Christian life in the Spirit: community with God, the created world, others, and re-integration of the self in right relationship to God. The result is that Jesus' pattern is a credible and encouraging call to follow him, just as God has ordained to conform believers to Christ in renewed attitude and action (Rom 8:28-29).

An Implication for Eschatology

M8 suggests and supports the possibility that temptation will continue for believers forever, to the glory of God.[5] The traditional view is that believers will become impeccable when they are glorified. The earliest known proponent of this was Origen, whose view was reformulated by Augustine in this claim: the eternal state is a condition of inability to sin because glorified believers behold the full reality of heaven. Augustine also claimed that the devil fell from a probationary state in which he was both able not to sin and able to sin (cf. Adam and Eve before their fall), and he was not in a state of the full reality of heaven that is so wonderful that no one would or could defect from it.[6] The inference that believers will possess the beatific vision of God in heaven has supported the view that glorified believers will be impeccable and thus beyond temptation.[7] Many today assume rightly that the present struggle against sin will cease when believers die and enter Christ's presence in heaven. The related assumption is that the present struggle against temptation will also cease at death. The impeccability of glorified believers is consistent with the doctrines of eternal security and God's promises to abolish sin in the new heavens and earth.

Nonetheless, philosophers and theologians favoring a libertarian view of freedom (liberty of indifference) may aver that temptability and temptation will continue in the eternal state because contracausal freedom is essential even to perfected human nature. The example of Jesus' perfect earthly life with temptations indicates the

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[5]I am indebted to Bruce A. Ware for this suggestion.

[6]Simon Francis Gaine, *'Will There Be Free Will in Heaven?': Freedom , Impeccability and Beatitude* (London: T & T Clark, 2003), 10.

[7]Ibid., 11. "That impeccability belongs to the orthodox Christian concept of heaven is thus beyond any doubt. It emerged in patristic and medieval times as the consensus position and it did not become a bone of contention at the Protestant Reformation. The 'eternity' or 'perpetuity' of heaven was taken to be a matter of faith, and impeccability was an aspect of how theologians explained the fact that heaven could never be lost and so remained forever." Gaine's conclusion is that glorified believers will be impeccable intrinsically by grace, not by nature, and could otherwise be able to sin. The freedom that the blessed will have in heaven is a share in divine freedom, which is impeccable. This freedom is greater than earthly freedom because it is the inability to depart from the ultimate end and supreme good. Accordingly, humans will never turn away from their ultimate good and perfect happiness because God will continually enable them to choose it freely (ibid., 134-36).

possibility of such continuing temptability for perfected believers.

M8 suggests the plausibility of eternal temptation in a compatibilist framework as well. Just as Jesus was able to be tempted despite his impeccability, so also glorified believers may continue to have opportunities to choose D2 desires as a continual expression of their faith in God, to his glory. They will not be constrained by glorification, but all will freely and eternally want to choose D2 desires because of God's goodness. God thus upholds them by his grace forever, analogously to the way he upholds believers by his grace presently. The perfected state of affairs in the new heavens and earth will likely have much fewer relational provocations to the D1 desires that are necessary for temptation (e.g., no situations will provoke the D1 desire for revenge). Possibly, the believers' continual dependence on God will supply material for the D1 desire for autonomy, as may have been the case for Satan. The devil's opportunity for sin may have been connected with the probationary state of affairs, as Augustine (and those who follow him) have supposed. Nonetheless, his fall from grace at least suggests that he had the ability to be tempted despite his setting with no prior events of sin. The direct culpability for all sin, angelic and human, rests ultimately with sinners—irrespective of the situation or tempting influences that beset them internally and externally. Thus, on analogy with Jesus' impeccable temptability, M8 suggests the eschatological possibility that glorified believers will eternally have the opportunity to affirm their trust in God by freely choosing D2 desires to please him. All the while, God, in his great love, wisdom, and power, will secure them from ever wanting to choose D1 desires that lead to sin. Eternal, glorified life will include the fully free volition that Christ had as a man whom God upheld by relational grace, and God's glory will be magnified by the free choices of believers who will continue to trust and obey him forever.

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ABSTRACT

A RELATIONAL MODEL OF CHRIST'S
IMPECCABILITY AND TEMPTATION

John Elton McKinley, Ph.D.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2005
Chairperson: Dr. Gregg R. Allison

This dissertation explores the biblical and theological evidence for Christ's impeccability and temptation with the goal of formulating a contemporary model. Three specific problems of affirming both Christ's impeccability and temptation are (1) how Christ could be temptable despite his impeccability, (2) how Christ could experience temptation in a way that makes him empathetic for others, and (3) how Christ could resist temptation in a way that others can follow his example? The proposal of a relational model seeks to avoid the problems and maximize the advances of earlier theology by centering the relevant evidence around the concept of relationality.

The proposed relational model incorporates the biblical and theological evidence. Historical theology unveils four models of Christ's impeccability and temptation in the patristic period, and three models specific to the medieval, Reformation, and modern periods. Biblical theology yields several conclusions for testing the historical models and constructing a contemporary model.

The basic claim of the proposed relational model is that Christ was impeccable, but that he actually resisted temptation by means of the empowering grace. God provides empowering grace for all believers to resist temptation; thus, believers can copy Jesus' pattern of resisting temptation to sin. A prominent role of the Holy Spirit in the earthly life of Jesus is emphasized, following the recognition of this role in patristic and contemporary theology. Special attention to the relationality of temptation is included.

VITA

John Elton McKinley

PERSONAL

Born: August 4, 1971, Seattle, Washington
Parents: Clark and Alice McKinley
Married: Rebecca Suzanne Striegel, December 21, 1996

EDUCATIONAL

Diploma, Rio Americano High School, Sacramento, California, 1989
B.A., California State University, Sacramento, 1996
M.A., Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, 2001
M.Div., Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, 2001

MINISTERIAL

Youth Staff, Christ Community Church, Carmichael, California, 1993-1995
Staff Missionary, Campus Crusade for Christ, Los Angeles, California, 1996-1998
Minister to Youth, Cornerstone Community Church, Floyds Knobs, Indiana, 2002-2005

ACADEMIC

Teaching Assistant, Talbot School of Theology, 1999-2001
Garrett Fellow, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003-2005

ORGANIZATIONAL

Evangelical Theological Society