

## THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN: III \*

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If the notion of *sarx*, flesh, is an important anthropological reality and clearly has ethical and religious value, the same is true of the notion of *pneuma*, spirit or mind. We have already had occasion to define *pneuma* in the metaphysical sense, where it designates one of the constitutive elements of a being. We have also defined its psychological sense, which designates the manifestations of intellectual life, or the human spirit conceived as intellect. Now biblical teaching also opens the way to a still more profound notion of the spirit, when this word is used to designate the manifestation of the power of God in man.

In the Bible a radical distinction is made between the spirit as a *human spirit*—a passive intellect incapable of conceiving anything as deriving from itself<sup>1</sup> or of accomplishing by itself the good that it conceives<sup>2</sup>—, and the Spirit as indeed the Spirit of God—promised by Jesus to His disciples as the power to make them capable of being His witnesses, as He Himself had been of God. This Spirit the biblical writers call indifferently “the Spirit of God,” “the Holy Spirit,” “the Spirit of the Lord,” “the Spirit of Christ,” “the Spirit of Jesus,” or simply “the Spirit,” but always in a clearly divine sense. This Spirit is brought to men by Him who was sent from heaven to be mediator between men and God—Jesus Christ. By the incarnation and by a life victorious over sin, as well as by the resurrection from the dead, He

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor 3: 5.

<sup>2</sup> Rom 7: 24, 25.

made possible the outpouring of the Spirit, without which the work of Christ could not follow in the heart of man.

Put in another way, it can be said that by the work of Christ, the Spirit of God has become an effective anthropological reality, because it communicates to man the power of becoming a child of God, first in freeing him from slavery to sin and then in causing him truly to participate in the nature of God. This is why Christian anthropology not only stands in reference to God, but also and in the first place in reference to the God of Jesus Christ. For the knowledge of alienated and fallen man and then of man regenerated by the Spirit comes to us only in the knowledge of Christ, the perfect measure of complete man.<sup>3</sup> In Him, the reality of our existence appears as in the mirror of that which we should be. Even more, in Him we can see ourselves in the perspective of a new life made possible by the help of the Spirit. Finally, in Him we come to know the new situation of men whose existence has been determined by the call of the Spirit.

1. *Jesus Christ, Bearer of the Spirit, or the Participation of God in Human Nature.* It is surprising to discover that the work of Christ has rarely been considered from an anthropological point of view. In theology the objectives of the incarnation are generally related to soteriology: Christ came to reveal God to man, to reunite God and man, to bear the sin of humanity, to die in place of man as an expiatory sacrifice, and finally, to annihilate the author of evil and evil itself. All these reasons explain the *why* of God's redemptive action through Jesus. We should like to understand the *how* by considering the incarnation of the Word of God as an anthropological necessity without which redemption itself could not have been realized.

An analysis of the plan of salvation shows clearly that the salvation of man can be realized only through a double participation: that of God in human nature and that of man

<sup>3</sup> Eph 4: 13.

in the divine nature. From a philosophical point of view many answers have been given to the problem of this participation, but Christian anthropology proposes only one—Jesus Christ. “Starting with Jesus Christ and with Him alone, we must see and understand what in the Christian sense is involved by the mighty relationship, to which we can only point again and again in sheer amazement, about which we cannot help being in danger of great error, when we say, *God and man.*”<sup>4</sup>

The participation of God in the nature and life of man in Jesus Christ in order to liberate him from slavery to sin and make him really free constitutes the fundamental teaching of the Gospel. The doctrine of the incarnation is of such importance that it is the doctrine of all doctrines, the key point of the Christian faith, the touchstone of authentic Christianity. “Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist . . .”<sup>5</sup> Here then is the criterion of all theology: “Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.”

In the eyes of John this truth is so essential that he places it at the beginning of his gospel. The Word which was “in the beginning with God,” and by whom all things were created, “was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”<sup>6</sup>

Pressing this analysis of the incarnation yet further, Pauline theology teaches us that Jesus Christ, “being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

<sup>4</sup> Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (New York, 1959), p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Jn 4: 2, 3; cf. 1 Ti 1: 15.

<sup>6</sup> Jn 1: 1-14.

but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”<sup>7</sup> Thus God “has condemned sin in the flesh,” sending, because of sin, “his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh . . . that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”<sup>8</sup> For indeed, since men participate in flesh and blood, it was necessary that He Himself should participate equally in order to destroy by His death “him which had the power of death . . . and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. . . . Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”<sup>9</sup> That is why, having been “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,” He can “be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” having learned “obedience by the things which he suffered,” although He was the Son, “and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”<sup>10</sup>

All these texts show clearly that through Jesus Christ God has joined himself to man by participating not only in the test involved in a life of temptation and suffering, but also in human nature, “in flesh and blood,” “in the likeness of sinful flesh.” Fully to understand and explain this perfect union of divinity and humanity in Christ will never be possible. Paul himself affirms that the mystery of this union is great. Yet this does not hinder him from emphasizing in detail the way in which it is realized: “Without controversy great is the

<sup>7</sup> Php 2: 6-8.

<sup>8</sup> Rom 8: 3.

<sup>9</sup> Heb 2: 14-18.

<sup>10</sup> Heb 4: 15; 5: 8, 9.

mystery of godliness! God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”<sup>11</sup>

The interminable discussions of councils and theologians through the centuries are proof at once of the importance of the problem and of the incapacity of the human mind perfectly to resolve it. From this we must take fair warning. However, we may be permitted to affirm that under the influence of dualistic philosophy, which constantly opposes human and divine, Christ too often has been made a hybrid being, half man and half God, without the gulf between these two natures ever really being bridged. This, in our view, is the classic error of that traditional theology which has spoken and still speaks of divine nature and human nature as if they were two fundamentally different, and even opposite, essences. Consequently, to explain their union in Christ, Jesus Himself is made to walk the tightrope, His divinity being emphasized where the salvation of man is concerned, His humanity accepted when His own life is considered.

Some theologians, not always having known how to maintain a balance between the two natures, have placed the accent so strongly on divinity that they have presented a Christ whose basic nature is entirely separate from ours. Others, on the contrary, have emphasized humanity to the extent that their Christ is quite indistinguishable from men. Thus in one way or another, salvation through Jesus becomes incomprehensible: although He was sent to bridge the gulf between God and man caused by sin, yet because of the difference between the opposing natures of which He is thought to be constituted, a hiatus persists at the very center of mediation. We find here again, in relation to the nature of Christ the problem of the union of two substances. Now, if *a priori* they are contrary and mutually exclusive, there is no possible solution and salvation itself, as the reconciliation of men with God through Jesus Christ, becomes inexplicable,

<sup>11</sup> 1 Ti 3: 16.

since contact between divine and human cannot be established.

But "the doctrine of the Incarnation," as Reinhold Niebuhr declares, "the belief that God has become man and the hope that man can become divine, is asserted *against* the dualism of non-Christian and Platonic Hellenism, according to which a great gulf is fixed between the flux of nature and history and the perfection and calm of the eternal order."<sup>12</sup> Thus the problem appears quite different when viewed from the standpoint of Biblical monism and of the synthesis characteristic of Biblical authors. If God sent His Son in a nature similar to ours, it was not to condemn the flesh, but the sin which rules over it. The Word has not been made flesh in order to oppose human nature as such and to destroy it, but rather to free it from the power of sin, to sanctify it and to restore it to its original perfection. Human nature, as such, is the work of God and "every creature of God is good."<sup>13</sup> "I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made," exclaimed the Psalmist. The evil in man is the principle that dominates his fleshly nature, "sold under sin," and which deprives him of freedom to act.<sup>14</sup> The incarnation is precisely God's means of freeing man from the power of sin and giving back to him his liberty as a creature of God.

In Christ, then, the divine and the human no longer are separated. On the contrary in Him are realized perfectly the union of the divine and human natures. Even though the explanation remains a mystery, the necessity of this union in Christ impresses itself on us as an unquestionable anthropological condition. "The completeness of His humanity, the perfection of His divinity, form for us a strong ground upon which we may be brought into reconciliation with God . . ."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (New York, 1941), I, 147. (Italics are mine.)

<sup>13</sup> 1 Ti 4: 4.

<sup>14</sup> Ps 139: 14; Rom 7: 14.

<sup>15</sup> E. G. White, Letter 35, 1894, in *Questions on Doctrine* (Washington, D. C., 1957), p. 691.

Indeed, if "the Word was made flesh," "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." <sup>16</sup> "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," this first because He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and also because He received the fullness of the Spirit.<sup>17</sup> In spite of His humanity, the divine is fully in Christ, and thus He is the perfect and living representation of God among men.<sup>18</sup> It is thanks to the Spirit of God working powerfully in Him that Christ triumphs over the power of sin dwelling in the flesh, so that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."<sup>19</sup> For, just as by the disobedience of one man all have participated in the bondage of sin, even so by the obedience of one all now have part in the power of the Spirit of God, manifested in Jesus Christ, so that they no longer walk "after the flesh, but after the Spirit."<sup>20</sup>

If therefore through the incarnation God participates directly in human nature in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, by the death and resurrection of Jesus He opens the way to contact with all men, individually. Christ having completed His work, tells His disciples that it is now better for them that He go away, so that He may send them the Spirit. "For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment . . . when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."<sup>21</sup> Then, on the evening following the resurrection, Jesus tells them to "wait for the promise of the Father, which . . . ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."<sup>22</sup> "Ye shall receive

<sup>16</sup> Jn 1: 14; 2 Cor 5: 19.

<sup>17</sup> Col 2: 9; Lk 1: 35; Jn 3: 34; 1: 32; Lk 4: 14.

<sup>18</sup> Jn 14: 9-11; Heb 1: 3.

<sup>19</sup> Rom 8: 2; cf. Jn 8: 34-36.

<sup>20</sup> Rom 5: 12, 17-21; 8: 4.

<sup>21</sup> Jn 16: 7-11, 13.

<sup>22</sup> Acts 1: 5.

power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." <sup>23</sup>

It is thus that from Pentecost until our own day, and until the end of time, the witness of the Christian has been and will always be first of all a witness of the Spirit. It is thus that God accomplishes in the heart of man "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."<sup>24</sup> Thanks to the gift of the Spirit, man in turn has become a participant in the divine nature. For by the incarnation, the death and the resurrection of Jesus, the Spirit has become an anthropological reality which places its mark on the whole being. "By partaking of the Spirit of God, conforming to the law of God, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ brings His disciples into a living union with Himself and with the Father. Through the working of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind, man is made complete in Christ Jesus."<sup>25</sup>

2. *The Gift of the Spirit or the Participation of Man in the Divine.* The image of man, according to Christian anthropology, would of necessity be incomplete if one did not take into account the anthropological reality of the Spirit. Because of the redemptive act accomplished by Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God is available. Henceforth God gives the Spirit to him who asks,<sup>26</sup> and he who receives the Spirit, in him the Spirit is embodied, and through the Spirit, Christ. For even as God is incarnate in Christ by the Spirit, in the same way,

<sup>23</sup> Acts 1: 8.

<sup>24</sup> Col 1: 26, 27.

<sup>25</sup> White, Manuscript III, 1903 in *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C., 1953-57), V, 1148.

<sup>26</sup> Lk 11: 13.

by the Spirit, Christ comes to dwell in man. That is why the *pneuma* of God is at the same time the *pneuma Christou*, the Spirit of Christ. Through His work, Christ has thus opened the way to the Spirit and given birth to a new humanity, regenerated by the Spirit.

However, in order that man may enter into the new existence made possible by Jesus Christ, he must be called by God. This call originates the new life in Christ, inviting each man individually to enter into a new lineage of which Jesus Christ is the "firstborn," the "head," the "finisher," the perfect model of the complete man, the image *par excellence* of the spiritual man.<sup>27</sup> And the special work of the Spirit is to awaken man's sleeping conscience, giving witness of Christ that will both convict him of sin and bring to birth in him the desire to be freed from servitude to sin. (This witness of the Spirit to the spirit of man is, in a sense, the anthropological transposition of the doctrine of election in dogmatics.) It is in this way that God calls man.<sup>28</sup>

In calling man by the Spirit, God makes it possible for him to change the course of his existence. The choice of the first Adam decided the destiny of the entire human race, but through the work of the second Adam each man is anew led to choose his own destiny, in acquiescing to the call of the Spirit or rejecting it, in deciding for or against God. Human reality, entire, in all its manifestations, depends in the last analysis on the way in which each man uses on his own account the possibility thus offered him. Even in his condition of slavery, he can still decide what he wishes to be—to become free or to remain a slave, to abandon himself or to affirm himself in opposition, to seize eternal life or to remain eternally in nothingness. From this choice a man's image receives its contours and definitive form.

<sup>27</sup> Rom 8: 29-30; Col 1: 18; 1 Cor 15: 20; Heb 12: 2; 1 Cor 11: 1; Eph 4: 13; 1 Cor 15: 45, 49.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (London, 1951), pp. 220 f.; cf. Rom 8: 16; 9: 1.

To the extent that a man has not responded to the call of the Spirit, he does not know true life. "Except a man be born again," explains Jesus to Nicodemus, "he cannot see the kingdom of God." In order to become a new creature, he must be born into the life of the Spirit, for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."<sup>29</sup> Without the Spirit it is impossible to know the things of God, "because they are spiritually discerned." "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." They are "partakers of the divine nature."<sup>30</sup>

As soon as man responds to the call of God, to the witness of the Spirit, the rupture between God and man is no more, the condemnation which weighed on the sinner is lifted; the power of sin no longer has an unshakable hold on him, absolutely constraining him, "for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" has made him "free from the law of sin and of death." That which was impossible until then even with the knowledge of the law of God, "in that it was weak through the flesh," becomes realizable for the one who avails himself of the work of Christ, receiving in Him the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ. From that moment all the chains which held man captive fall; his personality, repressed and alienated in servitude, is freed. The portals which stood closed to the future open. And because the Spirit dwells in him, man can again decide in full perspicacity, in complete disposition of himself, to live no longer "after the flesh, but after the Spirit."<sup>31</sup>

Let no one think, however, that the new life, the life according to the Spirit, is a kind of static state, a state of ecstasy or of human nature metamorphosed by the mysterious

<sup>29</sup> Jn 3: 7, 3, 8, 6.

<sup>30</sup> I Cor 2: 11-15; Jn 6: 63; I: 12; 2 Pe 1: 4.

<sup>31</sup> Rom 8: 1-4, 9-11.

and seemingly magical power of the Spirit. "The spiritual man" is not an established essence which can be, so to speak, miraculously given by the Spirit to "the psychic (or psychophysical) man."<sup>32</sup> Even if certain expressions having juridical color might lead to such a conclusion, numerous others prove that this is not so. The new man serves "in the new life of the Spirit," he walks "in the Spirit," he is "led by the Spirit of God."<sup>33</sup> So many formulas indicate that the new existence is "an appeal to God for a clear conscience," a new orientation, the beginning of a new history in which "old things are passed away," where "all things are become new."<sup>34</sup> So many terms indicate the characteristic action of the Spirit's life in man: an uninterrupted walk, a persevering course, a victorious combat, a belief which perseveres to the eventual attainment of the perfection of Christ Himself, the perfect stature of man.<sup>35</sup>

Let us now return to what we have said regarding the essence of the "soul" or the "psychic man." The "spiritual man" is never an established being; he is constituted each day of his existence. Having "put on the new man," "the inward man is renewed day by day," "in knowledge after the image of him that created him."<sup>36</sup> And this renewing touches the totality of human personality, as is the case with each of the other anthropological notions already studied. The Spirit speaks to the entire man and calls for his total participation. As soon as he abides in man, the Spirit acts, creating, transforming and sanctifying the entire being. This action is manifested with equal fullness in the life of the spirit, of the soul, and of the body.<sup>37</sup>

This work of regeneration begins by renewing the intelligence. After having been enlightened by the witness of the

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *AUSS*, II (1964), 162-164.

<sup>33</sup> Rom 7: 6 (RSV); Gal 5: 16; Rom 8: 14; Gal. 5: 18.

<sup>34</sup> I Pe 3: 21 (RSV); Rom 6: 3-6; 2 Cor 5: 17.

<sup>35</sup> I Jn 2: 6; Heb 12: 1; Php 3: 13; I Ti 6: 12; Col 1: 28; Eph 4: 13.

<sup>36</sup> Col 3: 10; 2 Cor 4: 16.

<sup>37</sup> I Th 5: 23.

Spirit, then transformed by the knowledge that it gains of the Saviour, the intelligence becomes capable of discerning the will of God, that which is "good, and acceptable, and perfect," and ends by submitting itself captive "to the obedience of Christ."<sup>38</sup> From then on, nothing escapes the sanctifying action of the Spirit: thoughts, feelings and desires, all are purified. The body itself is not excluded: It is called to become the temple of the Holy Ghost. So Paul can declare, "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."<sup>39</sup>

Thus the entire man is affected by the action of the Spirit. At times this action may be manifested in an extraordinary and miraculous manner; these exceptional phenomena are then called *pneumatika*, manifestations of the Spirit, or *charismata*, gracious gifts.<sup>40</sup> Yet more often the operations of the Spirit are imperceptible and secret, though no less real. As Jesus explained, like the wind one hears the sound but does not know from whence it comes or whither it goes; "so is every one that is born of the Spirit."<sup>41</sup> Thus, even if we cannot analyze the action of the Spirit by psychological introspection, effects of an anthropological order are incontestable. On the individual level, each one is aware of this action since "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Seen in others, the changes are unmistakable: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." But when the Spirit has begun His regenerating action, these fruits are manifest: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Rom 12: 2; 8: 16; Col 3: 10; Eph 4: 23; 2 Cor 10: 5.

<sup>39</sup> Eph. 2: 3; 4: 17; Col 1: 21; Php 4: 8; 1 Cor 6: 19, 20; 3: 16, 17.

<sup>40</sup> 1 Cor 12: 1; 14: 1; Rom 12: 6; 2 Cor 12: 4, 9, 28; 1 Ti 4: 14.

<sup>41</sup> Jn 3: 8.

<sup>42</sup> Rom 8: 16; Tit 3: 3; Gal 5: 22, 23.

Let us note, finally, that the secret and progressive action of the Spirit does not counter the will of man. The Spirit does not operate in a magical and irresistible way, reducing man to the passivity of an automaton. Its role is essentially to free man from "the law of sin and death," rendering him capable of walking "in newness of life," after the example of Jesus Himself.<sup>43</sup> But it is clear that at all times man can "resist" the heavenly call, the will of God, the action of the Spirit.<sup>44</sup> Even when man does submit to the influence of divine power, it acts only in accordance with his will. The Spirit does only that which man has decided to do. "For freedom Christ has set us free. . . . You were called to freedom," declares the apostle Paul, and it could not be otherwise, for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." He who has been freed from the power of sin is thus not to make of this liberty a pretext for living according to the flesh, but to speak and act in conformity with a law which itself is "a law of liberty."<sup>45</sup>

Man's part, then, is to exercise the divine power that he has received in order to accomplish works worthy of the Spirit, for now the good which he conceives he can also accomplish. That is why he is required to work indefatigably for his own salvation, being confident that "he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."<sup>46</sup> It would be false, however, to think that this work of sanctification is effected without resistance, without struggle and without suffering. On the contrary, if Christ attained perfection only by the things which He suffered, how much more can we be "partakers of His holiness" only at the price of actual combat. Each one on his own account must achieve victory over sin in his flesh, with the alpowerful aid of the Spirit of Christ. "I am crucified with

<sup>43</sup> Rom 8: 2; 6: 4; 2 Cor 3: 17, 18.

<sup>44</sup> Acts 26: 19; Rom 9: 19; 1 Th 5: 19; Eph 4: 30.

<sup>45</sup> Gal 5: 1, 13 (RSV); 2 Cor 3: 17; Jas 1: 25; 2: 12.

<sup>46</sup> Gal 5: 22, 23; Php 2: 12; 1: 6 (RSV).

Christ," concludes Paul, "nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." <sup>47</sup>

Though man now possesses the capability of vanquishing the power of sin which acts in the flesh, this power has not ceased to act. It does not abdicate when the Spirit is given to man. The flesh has not been relieved once for all of the power and threat of seduction. This will continue to manifest itself in the entire being throughout "the rest of his time in the flesh." But the one "who walks in the Spirit" no longer fulfills "the lust of the flesh." Sin has no more power over him. The Spirit in man has triumphed over the power of sin. "The life which I now live in the flesh," writes Paul, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." <sup>48</sup>

Do we then after all find ourselves in the presence of a certain dualism between the Spirit and the flesh? We think not. Classical dualism is perfectly balanced: it supposes an equal and endless conflict between two contrary substances, body and soul, matter and spirit. Nothing of that is here. Though the conflict between *sarx* and *pneuma* is real, it is a conflict in which the Spirit triumphs. And this victory, based on that already achieved by Christ, guarantees the victory that one day will be gained over death. In this sense the Christian possesses in his heart "the earnest of the Spirit," having been "sealed with that holy Spirit" which is a pledge of redemption. <sup>49</sup>

Thus as far as one penetrates into the Christian concept of man, he finds not the slightest trace of an anthropological dualism. The Spirit of God does not oppose the flesh except as the latter refuses to submit to His action. God does not say, "I will contend with the flesh," but rather, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Nothing is placed under interdict, but all is transformed, elevated and sanctified. God does

<sup>47</sup> Heb 5: 8, 9; 12: 3, 4, 10; Gal 2: 20.

<sup>48</sup> 1 Pe 4: 2; Gal 5: 16; Rom 6: 12-14; Gal 2: 20.

<sup>49</sup> 2 Cor 1: 22; Eph 1: 13, 14; Rom 8: 23.

not desire the death of the sinner, but "that he should return from his ways, and live." To this end He has given him everything which contributes to life and piety, that by His Spirit man might become partaker of the divine nature and, through it, of eternal life.<sup>50</sup>

In the end all Christian anthropology is a question of existence, of life, and of life eternal. Triumph over fleshly powers is not only a victory over sin, but also over death. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."<sup>51</sup> Having received the "seal of God," and possessing "the earnest of the Spirit," signifies that the mortgage of sin, which ends in death, has been paid. A new future opens before the man who partakes of the perfect liberty of God's children. "All things are your's; whether . . . the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."<sup>52</sup> Henceforth, the horizon of life lifts the eyes far beyond death and the resurrection into the kingdom of eternity. Even if death is not instantly wiped out as with a stroke of the pen, the Christian is no longer subject to it, and it now has a new meaning. From this time forward he partakes of eternal life and Jesus Christ will raise him at the last day. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." For "your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."<sup>53</sup>

The gift of the Spirit is not only the anthropological reality *par excellence*, which gives to the image of man its definitive contours and to human nature all its ethical value; the Spirit is also an eschatological gift on which the eternal destiny of man finally depends.

<sup>50</sup> Acts 2: 17 (RSV); Eze 18: 23, 32; 2 Pe 1: 3, 4.

<sup>51</sup> Rom 6: 23.

<sup>52</sup> 1 Cor 3: 21-23.

<sup>53</sup> Rom 8: 11; Col 3: 3, 4.