

In what sense, if any, can I affirm the so-called double gratuity?

1. I can affirm gratuitous creation of all concretes other than God in the sense that, while God could not be God without some concretes other than God—God's own concreteness, like any concreteness, involving real internal relations to other concretes—no concrete to which God has a real internal relation is necessary to God's being or existence as God, but is necessary only to a particular de facto state of God. Thus while any concrete other than God could not be at all but for God, God could and would be God without any other concrete whatever, provided only that there were some concretes but for which God could and would not be God.

2. But beyond this, I can affirm gratuitous redemption of all concretes other than God in the sense that, while God could not be God without somehow relating Godself adequately to any other concrete as and when it becomes real, and that no other concrete could itself be real but for God's thus somehow relating Godself to it, the specific act of self-relation by which God relates Godself to each and every concrete is not essential either to God or to the concrete itself and, in this sense, is even more gratuitous than God's creation of the other concretes, which is essential to the other concretes, even if they are not essential to God. God need not create any concrete other than God, provided only that God creates some concretes other than God, although any concrete other than God needs to have been created by God, since otherwise it would not be concrete at all. But not only does God not need to redeem any other concrete in just the way in which God in fact does redeem it, but no concrete needs to be redeemed by God in just the way in which it is redeemed, provided only that there is some way in which God does redeem it.

24 June 1987