

The two distinctions between God's gift and demand, on the one hand, and between our trust and loyalty, on the other, do not parallel but rather cut across one another. God's demand is the demand for trust as well as for loyalty, so that it is misleading to speak, as I have, of "trusting acceptance of the *gift* of God's love" and "loyal obedience to the *demand* of God's love" ("Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread": 42; cf. *The Point of Christology*: 68 f., where "faith" is said to refer to "the innermost act of the person whereby he or she trusts in the gift of God's love and on the basis of such trust is also loyal to the demand of the same love." Cf. also, however, 118 f., where "the will of God" is said to be "nothing other than the demand that one trustingly accept the gift of God's love and then live loyally in returning love for God and for all whom God loyally loves.")

The importance of recognizing this is that "obedience" can then be given its due, along with "trust" (or "confidence" = "*fiducia*") and "loyalty" (or "faithfulness" = "*fidelitas*") in analyzing the meaning of "faith." "Faith" is rightly analyzed as the acceptance of the gift of God's acceptance that as such complies with God's demand, i.e., the demand that the gift of God's acceptance be accepted. But, then, faith can only be precisely "obedience," for to comply with God's demand is to obey God, and Paul's phrase, "the obedience of faith," or "the obedience that faith is" (ὕπακοη πίστεως [Rom 1:5]) proves to be an exact description of what faith is.

Of course, the faith that is obedience to God has two essential moments: a first, relatively more passive moment of accepting God's acceptance by *trust in* it; and a second, relatively more active moment of accepting God's acceptance by *loyalty to* it. Thus one can speak as appropriately of the trust and loyalty of faith, or the trust and loyalty that faith is, as of the obedience of faith, or the obedience that faith is. Even so, it is important to understand that trust in God's acceptance and loyalty to it are but two distinguishable moments in the obedience that God demands in demanding that the gift of God's acceptance be accepted through faith.

9 December 1997