

Where do I depart from the kind of position that Maurice sets forth?

(1) Where I most seriously depart from Maurice, I'm confident, is in christology, insofar as his is, in its own way, a speculative christology having to do with the being of Jesus in himself rather than an existentialist christology consistently explicating the (decisive) meaning of Jesus for us. No doubt, one reason for this is that, while Maurice was certainly willing to allow that things previously taken for history must now be regarded as dubious or as quite legendary (Faith of the Liturgy: 77), he could nevertheless treat the gospels as historical in a way that is quite impossible for us today. But I suspect it is also due to his having appropriated the picture of Jesus as the prototype, or archetype, of our humanity as well as the event of God's explicit self-disclosure. Of course, provided he would have been willing to recognize this picture for what it, in fact, is--a certain kind of christological formulation, rather than an account of the history whose decisive significance all christological formulations seek to express, one could accept even his speculative christology as precisely that. Even so, it's one thing to recognize the conditions under which this kind of christology could be affirmed, or re-affirmed today, and something else, again, to affirm such a christology as credible and appropriate in our situation. Perhaps if Maurice were not as clear as he seems to be (and as Christiansen so effectively argues he is) that the Incarnation is not constitutive of our salvation but, at most, ^{of} ~~of~~ the decisive re-presentation of our salvation, one would feel that the departure from his position that now seems to be called for is greater than it is. But since the bottom line for Maurice is not different from the bottom line for me, the departure does not seem to be very great. It involves simply consistently applying to all claims about Jesus' own love, obedience, etc. what Bultmann says about Paul's way of

understanding such claims--namely, they, too are ways of expressing Jesus' decisive significance for us as the one through whom the gift and demand of God are decisively re-presented to us.

(2) This first important difference would lead to others--most notably, no doubt, an interpretation of the immanent trinity that was less tritheistic and more ~~modalistic~~ ^{monotheistic} in its essential structure than Maurice's. If the New Testament does not talk about the faith of Jesus, much less does it warrant holding that the relation between the Father and ^{the} Son is a relation of grace accepted in faith, etc. At best, all such talk is analogical and is necessary at all only because of the peculiar structure of theistic religion and of the meanings of its constitutive concept-term "God." Once this concept-term comes to function more to ask the religious question than to answer it, it becomes possible and, it would seem, necessary to talk of someone or something through which the question is, in fact, answered. At the same time, "subordinationism" in any form threatens to undermine the whole point of such talk to begin with. Therefore, while the distinction between primal source of authority and primary authority can be used analogically to talk about God in relation to who or what decisively represents God, it cannot be used univocally without undermining the very purpose of using it at all. Thus, e.g., talk of the Father's love for the Son or of the Son's love for the Father is all simply an analogical way of saying that the implicit primal source is one and the same with the explicit primal source of authority. The Father loves the Son by giving the Son everything belonging to the Father, while the Son loves the Father by giving the Father everything belonging to the Son. But none of this is justified talk except its strictly analogical, nonunivocal character is kept clearly in mind--more clearly in mind than

Maurice seems to have managed. It is indeed true that the universal individual is relative to itself as well as to everything else, so that there is a strictly metaphysical basis for the threefold distinction between (1) the universal individual as self-related; (2) the universal individual as related to by itself; and (3) the universal individual as relating to itself. But none of this can be made to yield the kind of trinity of which Maurice characteristically speaks.

(3) Perhaps yet another difference is my insistence that relation to others is as necessary to God as self-relation, even though all of the others to whom God can be related are themselves contingent rather than necessary. I say "perhaps," however, not only because Maurice invariably insists that the creation of the world and its redemption derive from the eternal decision of God, but also because of his teaching that "self-sacrifice" is the very being of the triune God. He may very well have meant by this, of course, simply the "self-sacrifice" involved in the mutual love of Father and Son in the trinity. In that case, my departure from his kind of position is not in question. For "self-sacrifice" can be meaningfully affirmed of God only insofar as one can talk about God's relation to others beyond Godself being constitutive of God. Conversely, how could one better affirm that the very being of God is self-sacrifice than by affirming that God is not accidentally but essentially Creator and Redeemer of some world of creatures?

(4) Yet another point of difference, I suspect, is in my treatment of the question of miracles and subjective immortality. With whatever restraint and realism, Maurice seems to have allowed for divine miracle, while there can be no reasonable question that he affirms survival of death and the immortality of the human subject. I, for my part, would wish to allow for

both miracles and subjective immortality without taking either to be necessitated by faith in God. Hartshorne says: "I know of no proof that God's influence upon the creatures is only that expressed by the natural laws giving order to worldly happenings. From the unsurpassable power and wisdom of God I deduce that if the divine influence would produce better results for the beauty of the world by going beyond the mere ordering in question, then the influence does go farther. But I doubt our human wisdom to know if this further limiting of [sc. creaturely] freedom would produce better results" (OOTM: 119; cf. 126). I accept this reasoning as not only pertinent to any dealing with the question of miracles, "special providence," and the like, but as also indicating the correct way to deal with the question of subjective immortality. Because, in Hartshorne's words, "as a theist I accept on faith the infallible wisdom and ideal power of God," I infer that if the possibilities of goodness in the world were to be increased without any corresponding increase in the possibilities of evil by subjective survival of death, then God's love would undoubtedly see to it. But I doubt our human wisdom to know if this would indeed be the case.

Correction of p. 2

On p. 2 I say: "talk of the Father's love for the Son or of the Son's love for the Father is all simply an analogical way of saying that the implicit primal source is one and the same with the explicit primal source of authority." Given my reconsideration of the distinction between "implicit" and "explicit," so as to correspond with Wesley's distinction between the "divine" and the "human" natures as both the image of God, I should rather say: "talk . . . is all simply an analogical way of saying that the meaning of

God for us made explicit through Christ as the decisive representation of this meaning is the meaning of God for us implied by the structure of God in itself." It is true that any meaning of God for us necessarily implies a certain structure of God in itself. But it is just as true that the structure of God in itself implies a certain meaning of God for us. Talk about the love of the Father for the Son and the love of the Son for the Father is an analogical way of saying this, as becomes clear from the fact that the Father's love for the Son consists in the Father's giving the Son everything that belongs to the Father, while the Son's love for the Father consists in the Son's giving the Father everything that belongs to the Son.