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# Coram Deo et Coram Mundo: The Two Kinds of Righteousness as a Normative Framework for the Description, Interpretation, and Healing of Shame

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CORAM DEO ET CORAM MUNDO:  
THE TWO KINDS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR  
THE DESCRIPTION, INTERPRETATION, AND HEALING OF SHAME

by

BARSON LAHIVELO MAHAFALY

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

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In Partial Fulfillment of

The Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

2016

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Title of Thesis: Coram Deo et Coram Mundo: The Two Kinds of Righteousness as  
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## ABSTRACT

*Coram Deo et Coram Mundo: The Two Kinds of Righteousness as a Normative Framework for the Description, Interpretation, and Healing of Shame*

by

Barson Lahivelo Mahafaly

Contemporary pastoral theologians, though describing and interpreting shame from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing both from theology and psychology, tend to propose healing for shame only from a theological perspective. Transposing Martin Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness into an interdisciplinary framework, this work proposes that pastoral theologians need to describe and interpret shame as well as suggest strategies for its healing from both theological and social-scientific perspectives.

Luther distinguishes between two kinds of righteousness, one passive and the other active. Passive righteousness is the righteousness of Christ bequeathed to us through the Word and the Sacraments (baptism and Holy Communion), which we receive through faith alone, a total trust in God and God's promise. This righteousness justifies us before God (*coram Deo*) and is salvific. Active righteousness, on the other hand, is what we do to serve and to care for the well-being of the self and the neighbor. It justifies us before the world (*coram mundo*), but is *not* salvific.

The two kinds of righteousness can be associated with theology and sciences. Also, the conditions of the relationship between the two kinds of righteousness can determine the conditions of the relationship between theology and sciences. The two kinds of righteousness are inseparable, distinct, and asymmetrical in order, with passive righteousness having primacy over active righteousness. Theology and sciences are also

inseparable, distinct, and asymmetrical in order, with theology having logical priority over sciences.

The two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework therefore recommend that pastoral theologians approach pastoral issues such as shame from the perspectives of both theology and sciences. Indeed, the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework recommend that pastoral theologians address shame from both theological and scientific perspectives, not only at the descriptive and interpretive levels, but also at the pragmatic level.

Hence, while chapters two and three of this work develop Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework, chapter four interprets shame from both psychological and theological perspectives, chapter five describes the personal, social, and theological dynamics of shame among Malagasy, and chapters six and seven suggest strategies for the healing of shame from social-scientific and theological perspectives, respectively.

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Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me,  
bless his holy name.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and do not forget all his benefits—  
who forgives all your iniquity,  
who heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the Pit,  
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
who satisfies you with good as long as you live  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's (Psalm 103:1-5, NRSV).

I did not accomplish this work alone. The Malagasy Lutheran Church (MLC) endorsed me to pursue my Ph.D. degree at Luther Seminary. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and Luther Seminary granted me and my family a full scholarship for my study. I am grateful to the MLC, the ELCA, and Luther Seminary. Likewise, I am grateful to the ELCA Global Mission personnel, Tammy Jackson, Cindy Zamora, Kaleb Sutherland, and Luther Seminary Office of International Student and Scholar Affairs (ISSA) personnel, Marie Hayes, and Chenar Howard, for their kind support throughout our (my and my family's) journey at Luther Seminary.

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I dedicate this work to my late father, Thomas Lahivelo (1936-October 13, 2013).

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESV	English Standard Version
IPNB	Interpersonal Neurobiology
IRB	Institutional Review Board
<i>LW</i>	<i>Luther's Works</i> . American edition. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehman. 54 vols. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955-1967.
MLC	Malagasy Lutheran Church
NVC	Nonviolent Communication
OFNR	Observation, Feelings, Needs, Request
PLATO	Person, Location, Action, Time, Object

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This work came out of personal experiences with shame, the divine act of justification, the process of communication known as Nonviolent Communication (NVC), developed by Marshall Rosenberg,<sup>1</sup> and Martin Luther's theology. When I entered the Ph.D. program at Luther Seminary in 2011, I had no specific topic of interest for my dissertation. I came only with the general idea that I would explore something that resonates with me personally. I had known before I came to the program that I have a temper. Thus, in my first year (September 2011-August 2012), in addition to the reading assignments for the classes I was taking, I read books on anger. All the books I read on anger, however, did not resonate with my experience with it.

As a result, I stopped reading on anger in my second year (September 2012-August 2013), and read instead on grief. I thought that my anger might have something to do with grief. My older brother died at the age of two and half, when my mom was pregnant with me, and I speculated that my mother's grief over the death of my brother might have been transferred to me. Later, my younger sister died when she was only six months old. I was six years old at the time. So I remember her death and I remember I felt sad for the loss. Again, books on grief did not resonate with what I longed for.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Marshall B. Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, 2nd ed. (Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 2003).

Then, on Sunday afternoon, September 8, 2013, I randomly picked up Lewis Smedes' book *Shame and Grace: Healing the Shame We Don't Deserve*,<sup>2</sup> and read through it. When I was reading through part one, "The Heaviness of Shame," I kept nodding my head and saying to myself: "Aha! This is it! It is shame! I have a shame-prone personality! Now I know!" When I finished reading this part of the book, I went to my wife and told her "Now I have a name for what has bothered me for so long! It is shame!" My interest in shame started that Sunday, three years ago.

Shame is the painful feeling or experience that one is unworthy and therefore unacceptable. Through different factors, this experience can, at any time in the lifespan, become part of one's personality. I do not know when shame began to be part of my personality, but I remember I started feeling uncomfortable with myself at about the age of ten. I have a vivid memory of the following experience: One day, I was walking to school. I was in sixth grade. A good friend of my dad, who happened to be on the way to my school, saw me and accompanied me. He talked to me along the way about the importance of education and gave me some advice on what to do if I want to succeed at school. He was friendly. But as I listened to him, a strange emotion rose up in my body. I felt that I did not deserve his wise advice and kindness. I said to myself: "I am just a kid, so why is he so kind and nice to me? He should not spend his time talking to me! I don't deserve it!"

Shame had controlled my life at different levels (such as personal, interpersonal, familial, social, educational, marital, parental, pastoral, and spiritual, just to mention a

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<sup>2</sup> Lewis B. Smedes, *Shame and Grace: Healing the Shame We Don't Deserve* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993).

few) until September 8, 2013, when I could name it and become aware of its presence in my life. Daniel Siegel, a pioneer in the field of interpersonal neurobiology (IPNB),<sup>3</sup> asserts that “the shame-based conviction that we are defective, which often goes underground, beneath our cortical consciousness, can sabotage us if it remains unconscious.”<sup>4</sup> But then he notes, “In our shame . . . if we own the truth of what has happened, not only can we begin to repair the damage—which can be quite toxic to ourselves as well as to others—we can also actually decrease the intensity of such events and the frequency with which they occur.”<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, scholars of shame agree that becoming aware of and acknowledging one’s shame weakens its power. Stephen Pattison states, “It is commonly agreed that shame must be acknowledged and owned if it is to be healed. Without insight and knowledge into the nature of shame a person will be unable to get rid of, or dissipate it.”<sup>6</sup> Brené Brown writes, “If we’re going to build shame resilience, we have to start by recognizing and identifying shame.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Siegel defines IPNB as follows: “IPNB is not a branch of neuroscience, but a broad field drawing on the findings from a wide range of disciplines that explore the nature of what it means to be human. Based on science, IPNB seeks to create an understanding of the interconnections among the brain, the mind, and our interpersonal relationships.” Daniel J. Siegel, *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*, 2nd ed. (New York: Guilford Press, 2012), 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel J. Siegel, *Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation* (New York: Bantam Books, 2010), 25.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen Pattison, *Shame: Theory, Therapy, Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 166.

<sup>7</sup> Brené Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn’t): Making the Journey from “What Will People Think?” to “I Am Enough”* (New York: Gotham Books, 2007), 69.

Moreover, as Jill L. McNish claims, shame, when owned, “holds many gifts for the development of authentic spirituality.”<sup>8</sup> My awareness of my shame has made me realize the authenticity of God’s gift of justification. I grew up Lutheran and I became acquainted with the doctrine of justification early in my life. But I could not make sense of this invaluable doctrine until after I had become aware of my shame and acknowledged it. Now in my deep experience of unworthiness and unacceptableness, i.e., shame, I go back again and again to God’s unconditional love and acceptance of me, “[f]or I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate [me] from the love of God in Christ Jesus [my] Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).<sup>9</sup> Justification is God’s unconditional “yes” to me. It is God’s unconditional love and acceptance of me. I am worthy of being God’s child because of what God has done for me in Jesus Christ, not because of what I do.

It is important to note here that because shame has led me to experience the authenticity of justification, I have become interested in drawing connections between shame and the law within the Lutheran law-and-Gospel framework.<sup>10</sup> In the Lutheran tradition, one function of the law is to reveal our sins and to prepare us to receive the Gospel. My awareness of my shame has prepared me to receive and to genuinely experience the gospel of justification.

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<sup>8</sup> Jill L. McNish, *Transforming Shame: A Pastoral Response* (New York: The Haworth Press, 2004), 43.

<sup>9</sup> Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

<sup>10</sup> See the section “A Theological Interpretation of Shame” in chapter four for my first attempt to draw connections between shame and the law.

My awareness of my shame, furthermore, has convinced me to welcome the practice of NVC. I was introduced to NVC during the second semester of my first year in the Ph.D. program. Though subsequently, I attended an NVC workshop in the summer of 2012, followed by an online NVC training during the fall of the same year, and another NVC workshop in the summer of 2013, I was reluctant to practice NVC. I came to embrace the practice of NVC only after I had acknowledged my shame.

Embracing justification and the practice of NVC at the same time, however, presented a theological struggle to me, mainly at the theoretical level. I normally practice NVC when I am overwhelmed by an experience of shame, and it works. NVC dissipates the grip of shame. Yet I used to be uncomfortable with the practice of NVC because I pictured it as works-righteousness. In other words, I struggled theologically with the use of NVC.

Fortunately, given my interest in the doctrine of justification, I have been reading Luther's theology. My interest in Luther's theology led me to his doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness.<sup>11</sup> And this doctrine solved my theological struggle with the use of NVC. Now I know that the practice of NVC belongs to what Luther calls "active righteousness," whereas justification belongs to what he calls "passive righteousness." NVC becomes works-righteousness when it is used to justify oneself before God (*Coram Deo*), for only God's justification can justify a person before God. Active righteousness, such as the practice of NVC, aims to serve the well-being of the self and the neighbor.

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<sup>11</sup> I discuss Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness in chapter two.

Besides, the two kinds of righteousness, according to Luther, are distinct, yet inseparable.<sup>12</sup> This means, for me, that the doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness suggests that human phenomena such as shame can and need to be addressed from the perspective of passive righteousness and active righteousness inseparably, though distinctively. And since Luther associates passive righteousness with theology, and active righteousness with philosophy and sciences,<sup>13</sup> I came to conclude that shame can and needs to be addressed from both theological and social-scientific perspectives.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Therefore, I find it problematic when pastoral theologians, though describing and interpreting shame from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing upon both the social sciences and theology, propose strategies for the healing of shame only from theological perspective. Smedes, in *Shame and Grace: Healing the Shame We Don't Deserve*, interprets the experience of shame as follows:

The feeling of shame is about our very *selves*—not about some bad thing we *did* or *said* but about what we *are*. It tells us that we *are* unworthy. Totally. It is not as if a few seams in the garment of our selves need stitching; the whole fabric is frayed. We feel that we *are* unacceptable. And to feel that is a life-wearying heaviness. Shame-burdened people are the sort whom Jesus had in mind when he invited the “weary and heavy laden” to trade their heaviness for his lightness.<sup>14</sup>

Smedes comes to this interpretation of shame by drawing upon the works of prominent scholars of shame, such as Gershen Kaufman, Helen Block Lewis, Michael

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<sup>12</sup> See chapter three, section one, “An Interdisciplinary Framework,” for more details on the nature of the relationships between the two kinds of righteousness.

<sup>13</sup> See the section mentioned above for more details on my interpretation of Luther’s association of justification or passive righteousness with theology, and of active righteousness with philosophy and sciences.

<sup>14</sup> Smedes, *Shame and Grace*, 6. Emphases in the original.

Lewis, Donald L. Nathanson, Carl D. Schneider, among others, and upon the works of renowned theologians, such as John of the Cross, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Reinhold Niebuhr.

Robert H. Albers, in his book *Shame: A Faith Perspective*,<sup>15</sup> drawing upon the works of Kaufman, Léon Wurmser, Susan Miller, Nathanson, and many others, and upon the works of Paul Tillich, and of Eberhard Jüngel, notes that shame should be described in an interdisciplinary way. He writes, “Much can be learned from the descriptive analysis provided by researchers and counselors in the psychological disciplines, but in order to deal holistically with people, the spiritual dimension must also be factored into total equation.”<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, Smedes states that grace heals shame. “The good news,” he writes, “is that shame can be healed. I believe that the healing of our feelings of shame gets its best start with a spiritual experience—specifically, an experience of amazing grace.”<sup>17</sup> While he brings only one theological resource to address shame, Albers recommends several, such as grace, the creation, baptism, theology of the cross, church community, and justification.<sup>18</sup>

This attitude of describing and interpreting shame from an interdisciplinary perspective, but proposing healing for its healing only from a theological perspective, is true not only at the academic level, as noted above, but also at the grassroots level. Most

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<sup>15</sup> Robert H. Albers, *Shame: A Faith Perspective* (New York: Haworth Press, 1995).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Smedes, *Shame and Grace*, “To the Reader.”

<sup>18</sup> Albers, *Shame*, 86-108.

of my interviewees, when asked about the origin of their shame, answered that shame is both natural and from the devil. However, when asked about how shame should be healed, they responded, “through prayers, exorcism, and the hearing of the Word of God.”

I do not doubt the power of prayer and exorcism to heal shame. God promises to listen to our prayers and to grant us what we ask for, healing of shame included. The New Testament narratives show that Jesus and the apostles performed healing through exorcism. Also, I do believe that divine actions such as grace, re-creation, and justification, which God bequeathed through the death and resurrection of Christ, and imparts through the proclamation of the Word and the distribution of the Sacraments (baptism and the Holy Communion), are the ultimate ground for the healing of our shame. Moreover, I am aware of the “psychological captivity” of pastoral theology, which has fueled reactions from some pastoral theologians to exclusively use theology as a normative framework for pastoral care ministry.<sup>19</sup>

However, I believe with Luther that reality consists of two realms, one heavenly, and the other earthly.<sup>20</sup> The heavenly realm is the realm of the creator, i.e., the realm of God. The earthly realm is the realm of the creation. A person exists in these two realms simultaneously. In the heavenly realm, God does everything. No human action is needed. In the earthly realm, however, both divine action and human action are at work. Shame

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Thomas Oden, *Classical Pastoral Care* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994); Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982); Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); Andrew Purves, *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004).

<sup>20</sup> I will elaborate more on Luther’s doctrine of the two realms or two kingdoms in chapter two.

permeates these two realms of human existence. That is, a person may experience shame before God (*Coram Deo*) and before the world (*Coram mundo*). Therefore, to heal shame holistically, pastoral theologians need to address it from the perspectives of both divine action or passive righteousness, the primary subject of theology, and human action or active righteousness, the primary subject of social sciences.

In fact, the experience of shame is a complex human phenomenon. It has multiple functions both within the individual personality and for the communities of individuals.<sup>21</sup> That is, shame affects the personal and the social life of an individual. Indeed, shame affects the personal and social as well as the spiritual or theological life of an individual. Helen Merrell Lynd writes, “Experience of shame may call into question, not only one’s own adequacy and the validity of the codes of one’s immediate society, but the meaning of the universe itself.”<sup>22</sup> Questioning the meaning of the universe is a deep theological struggle, for “[t]he heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork” (Psalm 19:1, ESV). Again, to holistically address the issue of shame, one needs to approach it with both theological and social-scientific perspectives.

This dissertation shall therefore propose that pastoral theologians need to address shame from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing upon both theology and the social sciences, not only at the descriptive and the interpretive levels, but also, and most importantly, at the pragmatic level,<sup>23</sup> i.e., the healing of shame.

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<sup>21</sup> Susan B. Miller, *Shame in Context* (Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, 1996), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Helen Merrell Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity* (New York: Harcourt, 1958), 57.

<sup>23</sup> For more details about the descriptive, interpretive, and pragmatic tasks of practical theology, see the section entitled “Methodological Framework” below.

### Research Question

The main question this dissertation answers is: What faithful normative framework allows an interdisciplinary approach for the healing of shame? As the dissertation unfolds, it will become clear that Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness is the faithful framework that permits the healing of shame from both theological and social-scientific perspectives.

As mentioned *en passant* above, Luther distinguishes between two kinds of righteousness, one passive and the other active. Passive righteousness is the righteousness of Christ bequeathed to us through the Word and the Sacraments, which we receive through faith alone, a total trust in God's Word and promise. This righteousness justifies us before God (*coram Deo*), i.e., in the heavenly realm, and is salvific. Active righteousness, on the other hand, is what we do to serve and to care for the well-being of the self and the neighbor. It justifies us before the world (*coram mundo*), i.e., in the earthly realm, but is *not* salvific. The two kinds of righteousness, however, are inseparable; that is, they are not alternatives. We cannot have one without the other. Yet they are distinct and cannot be confused. Passive righteousness has primacy over active righteousness. This doctrine of Luther is faithful in that it is biblically grounded, as it "recognizes and rests upon Christ's observation that human life consists of two kinds of relationship, one with the author and creator of life, the other with all other creatures (Matt. 22:37-39)."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness: Reflections on His Two-Dimensional Definition of Humanity at the Heart of His Theology," *Lutheran Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1999): 452.

According to Luther, passive righteousness is the subject matter of theology, and active righteousness is where reason plays an important role. Luther associates reason generally with philosophy and sciences. In other words, the two kinds of righteousness can be transposed into an interdisciplinary framework where the relationship between theology and other fields of inquiry, such as philosophy and sciences, is defined by the features of the relationship between the two kinds of righteousness. That is, theology and other disciplines are inseparable. They go hand-in-hand. Yet they must be distinguished, with logical priority assigned to theology.

Addressing pastoral issues, such as shame, from the perspective of the two kinds of righteousness therefore means that pastoral theologians, to borrow the words of Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger,

must learn to become “bilingual.” They must learn to be as skilled in the language or symbol system of theology as they are in that of [the social sciences]. They must be equipped to interpret and experience themselves and their world in theological as well as in [social-scientific] terms. They must become linguistically competent in the one discipline as in the other, interiorizing by practice and training two very different sets of skills. They must learn how to feel, act, and think in conformity with two different modes of thought.<sup>25</sup>

The bilingual capacity of the pastoral theologians needs to be applied at the descriptive, the interpretive, and the pragmatic tasks of the practical theological interpretation.

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<sup>25</sup> Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling: A New Interdisciplinary Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 5.

## Methodological Framework

I have chosen to use Richard Osmer's model of practical theological interpretation<sup>26</sup> as an overarching framework to guide my work. Osmer's model has four tasks:<sup>27</sup> the descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic. The descriptive-empirical task, according to Osmer, is a spirituality of presence or priestly listening through informal, semiformal, and formal attending.<sup>28</sup> Informal attending includes active listening and attentiveness as we interact with others in everyday interpersonal communication. Semiformal attending "involves the use of specific methods and activities that provide structure and regularity to our attending."<sup>29</sup> This may include journaling, and discussion with friends and colleagues. Formal attending encompasses investigation of specific episode, situation, or context, using scholarly empirical research.<sup>30</sup> Osmer defines episode, situation, and context as follows:

An *episode* is an incident or event that emerges from the flow of everyday life and evokes explicit situation and reflection. It occurs in a single setting over a short period of time. . . . A *situation* is the broader and longer pattern of events, relationships, and circumstances in which an episode occurs. It often is best understood in the form of a narrative in which a particular incident is located within a longer story. . . . A *context* is composed of the social and natural systems in which a situation unfolds.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Richard R. Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008).

<sup>27</sup> Scholars who have used Osmer's model of practical theological interpretation have come up with different terminology such as "function" and "move" to denote what Osmer calls "task." I will interchangeably use "task" and "move" throughout my dissertation.

<sup>28</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 31-39.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 41-58.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 12. Italics in the original.

The descriptive-empirical task, in sum, aims to answer the question “What is going on?” and gathers data that help determine dynamics and patterns in a particular episode, situation, or context.<sup>32</sup> To fulfill this task, I have explored the patterns and dynamics of shame among Malagasy by conducting in-depth interviews. The overall goal of this dissertation is to suggest faithful and effective pastoral care practice, which is distinctly Lutheran, in relation to the problem and pain of shame in the Malagasy context.

The interpretive task of practical theology is a spirituality of sagely wisdom that “is characterized by three qualities: thoughtfulness, theoretical interpretation, and wise judgement.”<sup>33</sup> Thoughtfulness includes striving for insight into an individual’s circumstance in order to treat both the person and the circumstance with consideration and kindness. Theoretical interpretation is the ability to use theories from the arts and sciences in order to understand a particular situation, episode, or context and to thoughtfully respond to it. Wise judgment is the capacity to interpret a particular situation, episode, or context with recognition of its particularity, discernment of the ethical ends it might involve, and determination of the most faithful and effective ways to approach it.<sup>34</sup>

The interpretive task, in other words, answers the question why something is happening in a given episode, a situation, or a context by drawing on theories of the arts and sciences.<sup>35</sup> I have drawn upon shame theories from both theological and social-

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 82-86.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 4.

scientific perspectives in order to explain and understand patterns and dynamics of shame among Malagasy, that is, to interpret the findings of my descriptive-empirical task as mentioned above.

The normative task is a spirituality of prophetic discernment. It engages in interdisciplinary thinking by drawing upon theological concepts, ethical norms, and/or good practice in order to interpret specific episodes, situations, or contexts. It answers the question “What should be going on?”<sup>36</sup> To meet this task, I have developed Luther’s doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework for pastoral care in general, and for the description, interpretation, and healing of shame in particular.

The pragmatic task is a spirituality of servant leadership which seeks to answer the question “How should we respond?” and looks for strategies that might influence a particular episode, situation, or context.<sup>37</sup> To fulfil this task, I have proposed, from a social-scientific perspective, that empathy heals shame. In addition, I also have proposed, from a theological perspective, that the gospel of justification heals shame.

Osmer notes, concerning the four tasks, that “the normative and pragmatic . . . are central to practical theology as an academic discipline.”<sup>38</sup> In this dissertation, therefore, both the normative and the pragmatic tasks cover two chapters respectively, whereas the descriptive-empirical and the interpretive moves are given one chapter each. Furthermore, Osmer conceptualizes the four tasks as a hermeneutical circle; that is, they interpenetrate one another, allowing the interpreter to start with any of the tasks, yet

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 11.

weaving the interpretation of this specific task with the other ones.<sup>39</sup> For instance, if an interpreter chooses to start with the descriptive-empirical, he or she must describe in relation to the interpretive, normative, and pragmatic tasks. In other words, Osmer's model suggests that each task shapes the contents and course of the others.

This dissertation begins with the normative task—the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework. I start with the normative task because it establishes a theoretical framework ahead of time for the interpretation (interpretive task), the description (descriptive-empirical task), and the healing (pragmatic task) of shame. The four tasks indeed interpenetrate one another, with the normative as the overall framework that ties them all together.

### **Chapter Overview**

This dissertation has seven chapters in total. Chapter one, this introduction, tells how I become interested in shame, states the problem I address, and explains what my research question is, and what my overall methodology for the entire work is.

Chapters two and three undertake the normative task. Chapter two discusses the nature and dynamics of Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness and argues that this doctrine is a dialectical principle which is linked with his doctrine of the two kingdoms—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. A person is made righteous passively in the kingdom of God and actively in the kingdom of the world. Chapter two therefore concludes that the two doctrines—the doctrine of the two

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 10-11.

kingdoms and that of the two kinds of righteousness—form Luther’s view of reality and his anthropology.

Chapter three takes this conclusion further and argues that the two kinds of righteousness can be transposed into an interdisciplinary framework that delineates the relationship between theology and other disciplines. The two kinds of righteousness are inseparable, distinct, and asymmetrical in order. So are theology and other forms of human knowledge. The two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework therefore operate within the Chalcedonian model of interdisciplinarity developed by James E. Loder and Hunsinger.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, chapter three provides a critique of the African understanding of personhood. The purpose of this critique is to explain why the two kinds of righteousness, compared to the African understanding of personhood, is a better normative framework for pastoral theology in general, and for the description, interpretation, and healing of shame in particular.

Chapter four functions as the interpretive task and interprets shame from both social-scientific and theological perspectives. The chapter demonstrates that shame has three forms—discretion, disgrace, and internalized. Discretion shame, a sense of shame before an act, is integral to being human and needs to be nurtured. Disgrace shame, the experience of being ashamed, is painful and disintegrative, and thus needs to be healed. Moreover, disgrace shame can be internalized and creates what is called “a shame-based identity.” Discretion shame, disgrace shame, and internalized shame all have personal, social, and theological dynamics.

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. James E. Loder and W. Jim Neidhardt, *The Knight's Move: The Relational Logic of the Spirit in Theology and Science* (Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard, 1992). James E. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998). Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*.

Chapter five serves as the descriptive-empirical task and presents new findings on the patterns and dynamics of shame in the Malagasy context. It shows that shame among Malagasy has three patterns—*fahalalana menatra*, *fahafahambaraka*, and *hasaronkenatra*. The three patterns correspond respectively with the three patterns of shame described in the interpretive task—discretion shame, disgrace shame, and internalized shame. Chapter five, furthermore, describes the personal, social, and theological aspects of the three patterns of shame among Malagasy.

Chapters six and seven take on the pragmatic task. Chapter six, suggesting healing for shame from a social-scientific perspective, claims that empathy is the best antidote for shame. Moreover, chapter six argues that empathy generates not only healing for shame, but also integration, the heart of well-being. Chapter six concludes with the suggestion that what is needed for the cultivation of empathy is NVC.

Chapter seven, proposing healing for shame from a theological perspective, asserts that God heals our shame through the gift of justification. Since justification is received through faith alone, and faith comes through the Word of God, chapter seven claims that preaching plays an important role for the healing of shame, and that the gospel of justification, the subject matter of preaching, should be proclaimed and heard as addressing both our guilt and our shame.

### **Significance of this Study**

This work is important at least on three levels. Academically, this work, as far as I know, is the first to explicitly transpose Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework for pastoral theology in general and for the description, interpretation, and healing of shame in particular. Moreover, it is the first

to explicitly interpret the conditions of the relationship between the two kinds of righteousness using the Chalcedonian language.

Pastoral theology is interdisciplinary in nature. It draws from theology and the social sciences. By establishing the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework, this work provides pastoral theologians with lucid description of the nature of the relationship between theology and social sciences. It describes the relationship between these two fields as inseparable, distinct, and asymmetrical in order, with theology having logical precedence over social sciences.

This Chalcedonian language has also been used to describe the relationship between the divine act of justification and theology, shame and guilt, shame because of our sinful nature and internalized shame, and faith and empathy. Each duo is described as inseparable, distinct, and asymmetrical in order. Faith and empathy, for instance, are understood as inseparable, yet distinct, with faith having primacy over empathy.

This work, furthermore, interprets shame from the vantage point of the two kinds of righteousness as a framework, while at the same time interpreting the framework from a perspective of shame. This is academically important because practical theologian Pattison, in his book *Shame: Theory, Therapy, Theology*, suggests that theologians should interpret shame from specific theological ideas while also interpreting specific theological ideas from the perspective of shame.<sup>41</sup> This work, in a sense, is a response to Pattison's request. The result of the interpretation is that this work provides a new language for the understanding of shame, law, and justification. Specifically, it describes shame as an experience of disintegration both *coram Deo* and *coram mundo*; law as a

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<sup>41</sup> Pattison, *Shame*, 220-28.

sense of shame, on the one hand, and as a generator of shame, on the other; and justification as a divine gift that addresses both our guilt (what we do) and our shame (who we are).

Personally, this work establishes the ground of my theological reflections as a Lutheran pastoral theologian. First, the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework provides me with a faithful and effective normative framework, not only for the description, interpretation, and healing of shame, as I focus on in this particular work, but also for the description, interpretation, and healing of other pastorally-related issues, such as addiction, trauma, mental illness, depression, etc., which I am likely to address in my future works as a scholar. In other words, as a pastoral theologian, I will use the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework as the basis for my theory and practice of pastoral care.

Second, guilt has been the main lens Christian theologians have used to interpret salvation in general and justification in particular. Interpreting justification from a guilt perspective is inadequate, however. Guilt is behavioral. It is partial. Shame is ontological. Hence, it is global, involving the whole self. For the interpretation of salvation and justification to be adequate, shame has to be considered. I will focus my theological reflections on interpreting shame theologically, but also on interpreting justification from a shame perspective, without neglecting the importance of guilt. Theology, to some extent, is autobiographical; thus, my theological reflections are shaped and influenced by my personal experience with shame.

On the ecclesial level, I believe this work provides both the lay and ordained ministers in the Malagasy Lutheran Church (MLC) with an awareness and understanding

of the patterns and dynamics of shame among the *toby* shepherds, which is, according to John Patton, “essential for doing pastoral [care and] counseling.”<sup>42</sup> I also believe that reflecting theologically from a shame perspective, especially out of an awareness of my own shame-proneness and my knowledge of the dynamics of shame among the Malagasy, helps me as a teacher of theology to better train my students, the future *doctor ecclesiae*, for their pastoral care and counseling ministry.

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<sup>42</sup> John Patton, *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?: A Pastoral Care Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1985), 40.

CHAPTER TWO  
CORAM DEO ET CORAM MUNDO: MARTIN LUTHER'S DOCTRINE OF THE  
TWO KINDS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

As aforementioned in the introductory chapter, Richard Osmer's model of practical theological interpretation is the overarching methodology that frames this dissertation as a whole. Osmer's model has four distinct yet interconnected tasks: the descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic. These four tasks function as a hermeneutical circle, which allows an interpreter to be able to start with any of the tasks, but to circle back to tasks that have been explored. I also mentioned that, in this work, I have chosen to start with the normative task which, answering the question "What should be going on?," is a spirituality of prophetic discernment that engages in interdisciplinary thinking by drawing upon theological concepts, ethical norms, and/or good practice, in order to interpret specific episodes, situations, or contexts. To fulfill this task, I draw mainly upon a theological concept—Martin Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness—and establish it as an interdisciplinary framework for pastoral care in general, and for the description, interpretation, and healing of shame in particular.

My exploration of this theological concept covers two chapters—the present one and the next. The present chapter discusses the nature and dynamics of the two kinds of righteousness as Luther understands them. Chapter three will transpose Luther's two kinds of righteousness into an interdisciplinary framework.

### **The Nature and Dynamics of the Two Kinds of Righteousness in Luther**

Luther understands reality as consisting of two distinct, but inseparable, realms, one heavenly, and the other earthly.<sup>1</sup> The heavenly realm, or the kingdom of God, is governed by the Word and the Holy Spirit. It is the kind of kingdom that brings about salvation and produces inner righteousness, freedom, and peace. The earthly realm, or the kingdom of the world, is ruled by the law and by reason and is the kind of kingdom that produces outer righteousness, freedom, and peace.

Luther teaches that a person exists in these two realms simultaneously and must satisfy at one and the same time the respective rules that govern them. The rules are that in his or her existence in the kingdom of God (*coram Deo*), a person is made righteous only through faith, without works; but in his or her existence in the kingdom of the world (*coram mundo*), he or she is made righteous through works that serve the well-being of the self and the neighbor. In other words, *coram Deo*, a person is made righteous passively, but *coram mundo*, he or she is made righteous actively.

Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness—passive and active—is therefore a dialectical principle which is associated with his doctrine of the two kingdoms—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. To understand the nature and dynamics of his doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness, one has to understand the nature and dynamics of his doctrine of the two kingdoms. Consequently, this section will look at the nature and dynamics of Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms briefly before

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<sup>1</sup> Luther interchangeably calls the first realm “the kingdom of God,” or “the kingdom of Christ,” and interchangeably describes it with the following adjectives: “heavenly,” “spiritual,” or “eternal.” Likewise, he calls the second realm “the kingdom of the world,” “the kingdom of the law,” or “the kingdom of the sword,” and interchangeably describes it as “earthly,” “secular,” or “temporal.”

it moves on to explore the nature and dynamics of his doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness at length.

### Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms

The doctrine of the two kingdoms is central to Luther's thought and theology. That is, his thought and theology, even since his early works, developed around this notion. "The first clear use of the two-kingdoms concept," William J. Wright rightly notes, "may be found in Luther's early commentaries on the psalms, which were written during the years 1513 to 1515."<sup>2</sup> "These commentaries," however, Wright continues, "were not prompted by political agendas of any kind, for Luther had not yet become the great Reformer."<sup>3</sup> The first explicit statements Luther as a Reformer made concerning the doctrine of the two kingdoms are found in a series of six sermons he delivered in Weimar on October 19 and 24-26, 1522.<sup>4</sup>

Luther later on developed the themes of these sermons (especially the two he preached on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>) and formed the treatise known as *Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed*.<sup>5</sup> This treatise was published in March of 1523 and fully develops the doctrine of the two kingdoms. He, of course, kept refining the

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<sup>2</sup> William J. Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding of God's Two Kingdoms: A Response to the Challenge of Skepticism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academy, 2010), 115.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 55 vols., ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955-1986), 45:79. (Hereafter cited as *LW*.) The texts of these six sermons may be found in *WA* 10<sup>III</sup>, 341-352, 371-399.

<sup>5</sup> Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms in the Context of His Theology*, Facet Books Social Ethics Series (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1966), 6. The treatise may be found in *LW* 45:75-129.

formulation of this doctrine throughout his career as a Reformer. However, W. D. J. Cargill Thompson convincingly argues that it “is the language in which [this doctrine is] expressed which changes more than the ideas themselves.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore, my exploration of Luther’s doctrine of the two kingdoms will focus solely on this treatise.

According to Luther in this treatise, “the children of Adam and all mankind” may be divided into two groups; one group belongs to the kingdom of God and the other one to the kingdom of the world.”<sup>7</sup> The first group comprises Christians who are true believers and for whom Christ is Lord and King. These people do not need the law, for they “have in their hearts the Holy Spirit, who both teaches and makes them to do injustice to no one, [and] to love everyone.”<sup>8</sup> If the world was filled with these people, there would be no need of the law to govern human life, because everybody would conform to God’s will. But since not everyone in the world is Christian, God establishes the government of the law “so that those who are not Christians may through the law be restrained outwardly from evil deeds.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, the second group of people comprises those who are not Christians and are under the law.

Luther notes, however, that a Christian exists simultaneously in both kingdoms—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. This is because a Christian is simultaneously saint and sinner (*simul iustus et peccator*). Also, the two kingdoms are ordained by God. A Christian, therefore, at one and the same time must satisfy the rules

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<sup>6</sup> W. D. J. Cargill Thompson, *The Political Thought of Martin Luther* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Books, 1984), 37.

<sup>7</sup> *LW* 45:88.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 88-89.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 89-90.

that govern the two kingdoms.<sup>10</sup> The kingdom of God is governed by the Word and the Holy Spirit, the kingdom of the world by the law and reason.<sup>11</sup>

The government of the Word and the Spirit seeks to produce “Christians and righteous people under Christ.”<sup>12</sup> The righteousness this government brings about, however, is received through faith alone. That is, it is a passive righteousness that cannot be attained through the law and reason, “[f]or faith is a free act, to which no one can be forced. Indeed, it is a work of God in the spirit, not something which outward authority should compel or create.”<sup>13</sup> A Christian therefore must be a person of faith.

The government of the law, on the other hand, seeks to produce righteousness through service that is “done in love . . . toward the benefit, honor, and salvation of others, and not toward the pleasure, benefit, honor, comfort, and salvation of the self.”<sup>14</sup> This kind of righteousness is administered by the law and thus by reason because “reason may be the highest law and the master of all administration of law.”<sup>15</sup> A Christian therefore must be a law-abiding person.

Luther notes that though anyone may perform this kind of righteousness because it can be coerced by the law and administered by reason, it can be properly done only through faith and thus only by Christians, “[f]or without the Holy Spirit in the heart no one becomes truly righteous, no matter how fine the works he [or she] does [before

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 85-104.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 118

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 119.

humankind].”<sup>16</sup> However, Luther warns that the government of the Word and the Spirit cannot rule alone in both the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, for “where the spiritual government alone prevails over land or people, there wickedness is given free rein and the door is open for all manner of rascality, for the world as a whole cannot receive or comprehend it.”<sup>17</sup> Likewise, the government of the law and reason cannot rule alone in both kingdoms, because “where temporal government or law alone prevails, there sheer hypocrisy is inevitable, even though the commandments be God’s very own. For without the Holy Spirit in the heart no one becomes truly righteous, no matter how fine the works he [or she] does.”<sup>18</sup> Luther therefore concludes:

For this reason one must carefully distinguish between these two governments. Both must be permitted to remain; the one to produce righteousness, the other to bring about external peace and prevent evil deeds. Neither one is sufficient in the world without the other. No one can become righteous in the sight of God by means of the temporal government, without Christ’s spiritual government.<sup>19</sup>

In sum, Luther’s doctrine of the two kingdoms consists of the overlapping of the two simultaneous realms of human existence—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world—with the two rules or governments—the Word and the Spirit for the former, and the law and reason for the latter—that respectively govern these two realms. The kingdom of God, under the government of the Word and the Spirit, brings about a righteousness that is a matter which concerns the salvation of the soul, something that God alone can do, for “the soul is taken out of all human hands and placed under the

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

authority of God alone.”<sup>20</sup> The kingdom of the world, under the government of the law and reason, aims to produce personal and social well-being, and peace for the world. As we shall see below, Luther’s doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness is placed into this complex doctrine of the two kingdoms.

### Luther’s Doctrine of the Two Kinds of Righteousness

Unlike his doctrine of the two kingdoms, Luther’s doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness permeates his works only from 1518 onward. For my discussion of this doctrine, I shall limit myself within the following works: his sermon “Two Kinds of Righteousness” (1519);<sup>21</sup> his treatise *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520);<sup>22</sup> his *Treatise on Good Works* (1520);<sup>23</sup> the preface to his *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), entitled “The Argument of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians;”<sup>24</sup> and his treatise *The Disputation concerning Justification* (1536).<sup>25</sup>

I have chosen these five particular works because here Luther explicitly explains his view of the two kinds of righteousness. Also, these works, though written with different nuances and emphases and using different terminologies to describe the two kinds of righteousness, show how consistent Luther was in regard to this doctrine

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>21</sup> The dating of this sermon is disputed among scholars. Some date it to 1518, some 1519. I follow the *LW* dating, which is 1519. The sermon may be found in *LW* 31:293-306.

<sup>22</sup> *LW* 31:327-377.

<sup>23</sup> *LW* 44:15-114.

<sup>24</sup> *LW* 26:4-12.

<sup>25</sup> *LW* 34:144-196.

throughout his career as a Reformer. These works expand from 1519 to 1536, yet they hold more or less the same substance of the doctrine.

The sermon entitled “Two Kinds of Righteousness,” which he preached in 1519, is the first place where Luther began to explicitly articulate his doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness. He asserts in this sermon:

There are two kinds of Christian righteousness. . . . The first is alien righteousness, that is, the righteousness of another, instilled from without. This is the righteousness of Christ by which he justifies through faith. . . . The second kind of righteousness is our proper righteousness, not because we alone work it, but because we work with that first and alien righteousness.<sup>26</sup>

Luther develops the sermon by describing the nature and dynamics of the two kinds of righteousness that he mentioned. First, he describes the alien righteousness as total and complete. That is, it “is an infinite righteousness, and one that swallows up all sins in a moment, for it is impossible that sin should exist in Christ.”<sup>27</sup> Moreover, he describes this total righteousness from Christ as given to us in baptism,<sup>28</sup> and as received only through faith. “Through faith in Christ . . . Christ’s righteousness becomes our righteousness and all that he has becomes ours; rather, he himself becomes ours.”<sup>29</sup> Luther eventually claims that our alien righteousness is instilled in us by God without our own works, by grace alone.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *LW* 31:297, 299.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 297.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

Second, Luther describes the second kind of righteousness as “the product of the righteousness of the first type, actually its fruit and consequence.”<sup>31</sup> He explains that this righteousness “is that manner of life spent profitably in good works, in the first place, in slaying the flesh and crucifying the desires with respect to the self. . . . In the second place, [it] consists in love to one’s neighbor, and in the third place, in meekness and fear toward God.”<sup>32</sup> Luther thereby taught his hearers that the second type of righteousness seeks the well-being of the neighbor, so he addressed them and said:

[Y]ou are powerful, not that you make the weak weaker by oppression, but that you may make them powerful by raising them up and defending them. You are wise, not in order to laugh at the foolish and thereby make them more foolish, but that you may undertake to teach them as yourself would wish to be taught. You are righteous that you may vindicate and pardon the unrighteous, not that you may only condemn, disparage, judge, and punish.<sup>33</sup>

Luther summarizes his exposition of the two kinds of righteousness in this sermon by saying that “through the first righteousness arises the voice of the bridegroom who says to the soul, ‘I am yours,’ but through the second comes the voice of the bride who answers, ‘I am yours.’”<sup>34</sup> Thus, Luther understands the first kind of righteousness, which is the alien righteousness of Christ instilled to us in baptism and received through faith, as the basis for the second one, which consists of goods works performed toward the self, others, and God. The two kinds of righteousness are distinct, yet connected, and ordered with the first kind of righteousness being the source of the second.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 300.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 299.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 300.

In the treatise *The Freedom of a Christian*, where he discusses the nature of the Christian freedom, Luther sets down the following two propositions: “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.”<sup>35</sup> To support these two propositions, he presupposes that a Christian has a twofold nature, consisting of both a spiritual and bodily nature. The spiritual nature refers to the soul, spiritual, inner, or new person, whereas the bodily refers to the flesh, carnal, outward, or old person.<sup>36</sup>

There is only one thing that can set the spiritual person or, as Luther prefers, “the inner person,” free or make him or her righteous. That one thing is the Word of God, which “is the gospel of God concerning his Son, who was made flesh, suffered, rose from the dead, and was glorified through the Spirit who sanctifies.”<sup>37</sup> This Word of God “cannot be received and cherished by any works whatever but only by faith.”<sup>38</sup> And faith “is produced and preserved in us by preaching why Christ came, what he brought and bestowed, what benefit it is to us to accept him.”<sup>39</sup> This means that Christ ought “to be preached to the end that faith in him may be established that he may not only be Christ, but be Christ for you and me, and that what is said of him and is denoted in his name may

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<sup>35</sup> LW 31:344.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 346.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 357.

be effectual in us.”<sup>40</sup> The inner person is therefore made free and righteous only by the Word and by faith.

Indeed, there are three benefits of faith. First, faith frees a person from the bondage of the law and works.<sup>41</sup> A person does not do good works to be made righteous and free. Rather, salvation and freedom are free gift from God bestowed unto us. Second, faith honors God in that it renders to God the highest and the most reverent regard as it considers God truthful and trustworthy.<sup>42</sup> Luther writes, “Nothing more excellent than this can be ascribed to God. The very highest worship of God is this that we ascribe to him truthfulness, righteousness, and whatever else should be ascribed to one who is trusted.”<sup>43</sup> The third benefit of faith is that it unites the person of faith with Christ as a bride.<sup>44</sup> That is, it makes a perfect marriage between Christ and the believing person. And this marital union makes the person of faith have everything that Christ has because, through faith, Christ and all his righteousness belong to the believing person. Therefore, faith “is a treasure beyond comparison which brings with it complete salvation.”<sup>45</sup> In other words, faith makes the inner person a “perfectly free lord of all, subject to none.”

On the other hand, faith makes the outer person a “perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.” That is, faith does not free a person from works; rather, it pushes him or her to serve the well-being of the neighbor through good works. Luther, however, notes,

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 349-350.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 350.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 351.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 347.

“Good works do not make a good [person], but a good [person] does good works.”

Likewise, “evil works do not make a wicked [person], but a wicked [person] does evil work. . . . A good or a bad house does not make a good or a bad builder; but a good or a bad builder makes a good or a bad house.”<sup>46</sup>

Good works consist of self-discipline and service to the neighbor. First, a person must control his or her own body and desire from leisure and evil lusts. He or she does so through “fastings, watchings, labors, and other reasonable disciplines.”<sup>47</sup> The goal of this self-discipline is to subject the bodily nature or the outer person to the Holy Spirit so that it may conform to the spiritual nature or the inner person and not revolt against faith.<sup>48</sup> Second, a person serves the needs of the neighbor just as God through Christ serves him or her and his or her needs.<sup>49</sup> Luther describes this in the first person as follows:

Although I am an unworthy and condemned man, my God has given me in Christ all the riches of righteousness and salvation without any merit on my part, out of pure, free mercy, so that from now on I need nothing except faith which believes that this is true. Why should I not therefore freely, joyfully, with all my heart, and with an eager will do all things which I know are pleasing and acceptable to such a Father who has overwhelmed me with his inestimable riches? I will therefore give myself as a Christ to my neighbor, just as Christ offered himself to me; I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable, and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ.<sup>50</sup>

Luther, in this treatise, shows that a Christian is made free *coram Deo* only by the Word of God, through faith; but he or she *coram mundo* is made righteous through self-

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 361.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 358.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 367.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

discipline that controls the body from selfishness, in order to freely serve the neighbor out of love through good works. Luther concludes that

a Christian lives not in himself [or herself], but in Christ and his [or her] neighbor. Otherwise he [or she] is not a Christian. He or [she] lives in Christ through faith, in his [or her] neighbor through love. By faith he [or she] caught up beyond himself [or herself] into God. By love he [or she] descends beneath himself [or herself] into his [or her] neighbor.<sup>51</sup>

The *Treatise on Good Works*, a teaching on “the real good works which spring from faith,”<sup>52</sup> discusses the connection between faith and good works. As Luther writes, “In this present book I have wanted to show how we should practice and use faith in all good works, and how we should let faith be our chief work.”<sup>53</sup> Luther discusses the relationship between faith and good works by expounding the Ten Commandments. He argues that all commandments are fulfilled in the first, “Thou shalt have no other gods,” and that faith is “the true fulfilling of the first commandment.”<sup>54</sup>

As such, faith fulfils all commandments; and since it does so, it also makes all works good. This means that works are not good in themselves, no matter how wonderful they look and what splendid names they have. They are good only when done in faith,<sup>55</sup> for faith makes a person righteous, and a righteous person does righteous works. But righteous works do not produce a righteous person, because “faith does not originate in works; neither do works create faith.”<sup>56</sup> Rather, faith “must spring up and flow from the

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 371.

<sup>52</sup> *LW* 44:24.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 38.

blood and wounds and death of Christ.”<sup>57</sup> Luther argues, “We never read that the Holy Spirit was given to anybody because he had performed some works, but always when [they] have heard the gospel of Christ and the mercy of God.” Therefore, he concludes that faith “must arise at all times from th[e] same word and from no other source.”<sup>58</sup> Thus, faith comes “only from Christ, [and is] freely promised and freely given.”<sup>59</sup>

Moreover, faith is exercised in good works both toward God and toward the neighbor.<sup>60</sup> The first three commandments, or “the first table of the Law,” as Luther puts it, concern the good works we exercise toward God. These works are to trust God, to hear sermons, to pray, to praise, to sing, and to laud and to magnify God’s glory, honor, and name.<sup>61</sup> Luther summarizes the first three commandments as follows: “The first commandment tells how our inmost heart should think about God; the second, how the words of our mouth should express this. The third tells us how we should relate ourselves to God in works.”<sup>62</sup> The last seven commandments concern the good works we exercise toward the neighbor. These commandments teach and encourage us to perform good works that seek the benefits of the neighbor.<sup>63</sup>

So in this treatise, Luther teaches that faith produces good works, and not vice versa. Faith comes from the Word of God only. Good works out of faith go to two

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 38-39.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 39, 54-55.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 81.

directions—toward God and toward the neighbor. Toward God, good works manifest in prayer, praise, and worship. Toward the neighbor, they manifest in service that seeks the well-being of others.

In “The Argument of St Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians,” his preface to the 1535 *Lectures on Galatians*, Luther distinguishes what he calls “the righteousness of faith” or “Christian righteousness” from other kinds of righteousness such as “political righteousness,” “ceremonial righteousness,” and “righteousness of the Law or of the Decalogue.”<sup>64</sup> He describes the righteousness of faith as passive, and all the others as active.<sup>65</sup> He also uses the expression “the righteousness of the Law” to describe the active righteousness.

The two kinds of righteousness—passive and active—are placed into the two kingdoms.

We set forth two worlds, as it were, one of them heavenly and the other earthly. Into these we place these two kinds of righteousness, which are distinct and separated from each other. The righteousness of the Law is earthly and deals with earthly things; by it we perform good works. . . . But th[e] righteousness [of faith] is heavenly and passive.”<sup>66</sup>

Luther’s goal in writing this preface and the entire commentary is to encourage both clergy and laity to diligently learn the art of distinguishing between the two kinds of

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<sup>64</sup> Luther describes the three other kinds of righteousness as follows: [R]ighteousness is of many kinds. There is a political righteousness, which the emperor, the princes of the world, philosophers, and lawyer consider. There is also a ceremonial righteousness, which human traditions teach, as, for example, the traditions of the pope and other traditions. Parents and teachers may teach this righteousness without danger, because they do not attribute to it any power to make satisfaction for sin, to placate God, and to earn grace; but they teach that these ceremonies are necessary only for moral discipline and for certain observances. There is, in addition to these, yet another righteousness, the righteousness of the Law or of the Decalogue, which Moses teaches. We, too, teach this, but after the doctrine of faith. *LW* 26:4.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

righteousness, in order that they may know how far they should obey the Law.<sup>67</sup> This is important for Luther because “our theology,” he claims, consists of the distinction between the two: “This is our theology by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works and grace, secular society and religion may not be confused. Both are necessary, but both must be kept within their limits.”<sup>68</sup> Moreover, distinguishing between the two kinds of righteousness is an important art because the two remain as long as a Christian lives. For as long as a Christian lives, he or she is simultaneously saint and sinner. Thus, passive righteousness or the righteousness of faith applies to the new person in Christ, whereas the active righteousness or the righteousness of the Law to the old being.<sup>69</sup>

Passive righteousness is “the righteousness of grace, mercy, and the forgiveness of sins. In other words, this is the righteousness of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, which we do not perform but receive, which we do not have but accept, when God the father grants it to us through Jesus Christ.”<sup>70</sup> Active righteousness, on the other hand, consists of the works a person performs and which proceed from social norms, ecclesiastical traditions, and the commandments of God.<sup>71</sup> Active righteousness does not justify a person before God, however. Rather, it serves social order and outward peace.

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 4.

The two kinds of righteousness complement each other. A person, however, has to be justified by the righteousness of faith first before his or her works become good and righteous.<sup>72</sup> That is, passive righteousness is the basis for the active, and not vice versa. “Therefore,” Luther concludes, “we always repeat, urge, and inculcate this doctrine of faith or Christian righteousness, so that it may be observed by continuous use and may be precisely distinguished from the active righteousness of the Law. (For by this doctrine alone and through it alone is the church built, and in this it consists.)”<sup>73</sup> “For if the doctrine of justification is lost,” he insists, “the whole of Christian doctrine is lost.”<sup>74</sup>

The task of Christian theology, according to Luther in the preface of the commentary on Galatians, is to distinguish between the passive and the active righteousness. Passive righteousness consists of the righteousness of God granted to us through Jesus Christ, which we receive through faith alone. This kind of righteousness belongs to the heavenly kingdom, the kingdom of God. Active righteousness consists of the good works we do for the church, for the community in general, and for God. This kind of righteousness belongs to the earthly kingdom, the kingdom of the world. The goal of the distinction between the two kinds of righteousness, however, is to acknowledge that passive righteousness is the basis for and the hub of active righteousness. That is, Luther’s point is not to denigrate good works or to discount our service of neighbor. Rather, his point is to properly order service of neighbor so that it flows from divine action—from what God has done in us—so that none of us might boast before God

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 9.

In *The Disputation concerning Justification*, in which he interprets Paul's words in Romans 3:28 ("For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law"), Luther writes, "It is clear enough from this passage that the method of justifying [a person] before God must be distinguished from the method of justifying him [or her] before [humans]."<sup>75</sup> Here Luther clearly places the two kinds of righteousness into the two simultaneous worlds or realms of human existence—*coram Deo* and *coram mundo*.

*Coram Deo*, Luther contends, faith alone justifies. Through faith in Christ, "our sins are forgiven in the sight of God, and this is called inward righteousness."<sup>76</sup> True faith, however, produces love which manifests in good works toward the neighbor. Thus good works justify that we have been justified by God: "This love shows all [humans] that we have remissions of sins and that we have been pronounced righteous by God, and this is called outward righteousness."<sup>77</sup> There are therefore two kinds of justification, one *coram Deo* and the other *coram mundo*. Justification *coram Deo*, which happens between God and human, is the efficient cause of justification *coram mundo*, which manifests between human and human.

Where justification is between God and [hu]man, this is from the efficient cause. The other is corporal and outward, which takes place between [hu]man and [hu]man; this is from the effect. Before God, faith is necessary, not works. Before [human] works and love are necessary, which reveal us to be righteous in our own eyes and before the world.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> LW 34:151.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 161-162.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

Moreover, justification *coram Deo* is twofold. “[God] first purifies by imputation, then he gives the Holy Spirit, through whom he purifies even in substance. Faith cleanses through remissions of sins, the Holy Spirit cleanses through the effect. This is divine cleansing and purification which is let down from heaven, by faith and the Holy Spirit.”<sup>79</sup> In other words, justification *coram Deo* is both forgiveness of sins and re-creation.

This disputation shows that there are two kinds of justification: *coram Deo* and *coram mundo*. *Coram Deo*, a person is justified through faith. This kind of justification consists of forgiveness of sins and re-creation. *Coram mundo*, a person is justified through love manifested in good works.

### **Conclusion**

The two kinds of righteousness in Luther correspond and are intertwined with the two kingdoms in which a person exist simultaneously—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, or the realms *coram Deo* and *coram mundo*—and which are ruled by two distinct governments—the Word and the Spirit on one side, and the law and reason on the other. *Coram Deo*, under the government of the Word and the Spirit, we are passively made righteous. God justifies us by bestowing the righteousness of Christ upon us. For Luther, passive righteousness, which he customarily labels as justification, is inseparable from the incarnation, the cross, and the resurrection of Christ. Philip S. Watson writes,

Luther’s conception of the Work of Christ has fundamentally the same significance as his doctrine of justification. He speaks of the two in the same breath and in identical terms. . . . Luther maintains that [human beings] are justified and saved by Christ’s work and not by their own. To deny the divinity of

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 168-169.

Christ, therefore, is to deny the article of justification, and to reject the article of justification is to reject the divinity of Christ.<sup>80</sup>

Christ's righteousness is bequeathed to us through the proclamation of the Word and the distribution of the Sacraments. I add "sacraments" because in the sermon "Two Kinds of Righteousness," Luther mentions that our alien or passive righteousness is given to us in baptism.<sup>81</sup> This is the only instance in which he connects the gift of this righteousness with baptism. And nowhere in all the five works listed does he mention any connection between this righteousness and the Holy Communion. However, when one looks at Luther's description of the benefits of baptism and the Holy Communion as he explains them in *The Small Catechism* (1529), one will see that Luther assigns to the sacraments the same benefits he gives to the Word.

Baptism, he writes in the *Small Catechism*, "brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation."<sup>82</sup> It is true that he defines baptism as "not simply plain water [but as] water enclosed in God's command and connected with God's Word."<sup>83</sup> And he writes that

without the Word of God the water is plain water and not a baptism, but with the Word of God it is a baptism, that is, a grace-filled water of life and a "bath of the new birth in the Holy Spirit," as St. Paul says to Titus in chapter 3[:5-8], "through the bath of rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit, which he richly poured out over us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that through that very grace we may be *righteous and heirs in hope of eternal life*."<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Philip S. Watson, *Let God Be God! An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther*, Fernley-Hartley Lecture (London: Epworth Press, 1947), 117.

<sup>81</sup> LW 31:297.

<sup>82</sup> Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 359.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. Emphasis in the original.

Nevertheless, Luther believes that baptism affects forgiveness of sins and brings about new life. Moreover, “Forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament,”<sup>85</sup> he writes, concerning the Holy Communion before adding, “Eating and drinking certainly do not do it, but rather, the words that are recorded: ‘given for you’ and ‘shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.’ These words, when accompanied by the physical eating and drinking, are the essential thing in the sacrament.”<sup>86</sup> For Luther, therefore, righteousness *coram Deo* is granted to us through the Word and the Sacraments.

We receive this kind of righteousness only through faith, a total trust in God to be a God of mercy and grace. And faith is the fruit of the Word also: “So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). We receive this righteousness through faith alone because, in the words of Luther, it “is a righteousness hidden in mystery, which the world does not understand. In fact, Christians themselves do not adequately understand it or grasp it in the midst of their temptations.”<sup>87</sup> In other words, righteousness *coram Deo*, or passive righteousness, cannot be comprehended by human reason. Klaus Schwarzwäller, in his foreword to Mattes’ book *The Role of Justification in Contemporary Theology*, writes that

the “article” of justification is neither a formula nor a theological conception. . . . It is no more a formula or a conception than is faith itself. Faith means a personal commitment, a reality, or even *the* reality of my life. Accordingly, the “article” of justification cannot be examined or handled as if it were a thing or a wording or something similar. *It describes and clarifies the reality of our lives as Christians.* It is therefore impossible to deal with it properly from any point of view “beyond”

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 362.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 363.

<sup>87</sup> *LW* 26:5.

our own condition. There is no effective “beyond,” any more than there is a place to stand “beyond” our solar system.<sup>88</sup>

This righteousness secures our being and identity before and in God, and is twofold in nature. First, it is forgiveness of sins, proclaimed in the words of absolution (“Your sins are forgiven”) and in the words of the Holy Communion (“This is my body given for you, and this is my blood shed for you, for the forgiveness of sins”). Second, it is new birth, resurrection, or new life, for, as Luther writes, “where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation.”<sup>89</sup> Baptism, by definition, is death to sin and resurrection to new life in Christ (Romans 6:3-4). This righteousness is therefore a holistic reality which justifies us both from what we do through forgiveness of sins, and from who we are through new life. Gerhard Forde confirms this when he writes,

There are two basic metaphors (they are something more than metaphors . . . ) at the root of Pauline/Reformation theology. One we can call the moral or legal metaphor, which speaks in terms of law, morality, justice, and justification. The other is the death-life metaphor, which speaks in terms of mortality, dying to the old and raising to the new life in Christ and the Spirit.<sup>90</sup>

Unfortunately, the legal language, that is, justification understood as forgiveness of sins, tends to be predominant in the Lutheran tradition, whereas justification understood as new life or resurrection has been often left out of the discussion. Forde, therefore, makes a wakeup-call that “the explosive character of the Reformation’s confessional message can come to light once again if the death-life language is recovered

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<sup>88</sup>Mark C. Mattes, *The Role of Justification in Contemporary Theology*, Lutheran Quarterly Books (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2004), xi. Emphases in the original.

<sup>89</sup>Kolb and Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord*, 362.

<sup>90</sup>Gerhard O. Forde, *Justification by Faith: A Matter of Death and Life* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982), 3.

and restored to its proper place.”<sup>91</sup> Recovering and restoring the resurrection or new life language is also important for the healing of shame, as I will discuss in chapter seven of this dissertation. But here I would simply claim that righteousness *coram Deo* is a holistic righteousness in that it is for both our being (new life) and our deeds (forgiveness of sins).

Luther assigns primacy to passive righteousness or righteousness *coram Deo*. This is why the doctrine of justification is so central to his theology that he claims in the preface to the commentary on Galatians that “by this doctrine alone and through it alone is the church built, and in this it consists;”<sup>92</sup> and that “if [this doctrine] is lost, the whole of Christian doctrine is lost.”<sup>93</sup> Indeed, the Lutheran tradition has maintained that the doctrine of justification is the article upon which the Church stands and falls (*articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*).

Einar Billing is therefore right when he asserts the following: “Anyone wishing to study Luther would indeed be in no peril of going astray were he [or she] to follow this rule: never believe that you have a correct understanding of a thought of Luther before you have succeeded in reducing it to a simple corollary of the thought of the forgiveness of sins.”<sup>94</sup> In fact, the doctrine of justification is the hub of Luther’s theology, where everything else springs.<sup>95</sup> Oswald Bayer writes, “Luther’s teaching about creation, his

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> LW 26:10.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>94</sup> Einar Billing, *Our Calling*, trans. Conrad Bergendoff (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1964), 4.

<sup>95</sup> Mattes, *The Role of Justification in Contemporary Theology*, 4.

teaching about Christology, and his teaching about the judgment of the world as the consummation of the world are each articulated within the framework of his teaching about justification.”<sup>96</sup>

However, at the same time, Luther insists that *coram mundo*, under the government of the law and reason, we are actively justified: we do everything we can for the sake of the well-being of the self and of the neighbor. We do so to justify and to witness before our eyes and that of the world that we have been justified by God, not that we can justify ourselves, but because “we are what [God] has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life” (Ephesians 2:10).

Luther frames righteousness *coram mundo* as consisting of good works toward the self, the neighbor, and God. That is, this kind of righteousness goes in two directions—vertically, toward God, and horizontally, toward the world. *Active* righteousness toward God must not be confused with the *passive* righteousness *coram Deo*. The former, which manifests in prayer, praise, and worship, is our response to the latter, which is the divine gift of forgiveness and new life imparted to us through faith and the Holy Spirit. Active righteousness toward God is the consequence or the fruit of God’s righteousness toward us. What we do for God through prayer, praise, and worship does not justify us before Him. We pray because God promises to listen to us, and we praise and worship God because we have been saved.

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<sup>96</sup> Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008), 38.

Active righteousness toward the world manifests toward the self and other human beings. Toward the self it manifests in self-discipline that controls the self from selfishness or sin, for sin is the urge to pursue selfish interests in everything. Toward others, it manifests in familial, social, political, and economic justice. Luther actually frames righteousness *coram mundo* within what is known as “the three divine orders,” “the three estates,” or “the three hierarchies”—household (*œconomia*), politics (*politia*), and church (*ecclesia*)—which, Luther believes, are spheres created and ordained by God for faith to be active in love.<sup>97</sup>

Wright notes that when Luther talked about *œconomia* or household, “he was not only talking about the institutions of marriage and raising children, but all of the institutions involved in living and earning a livelihood.”<sup>98</sup> In other words, “one may call [the order of *œconomia*] the order of daily life. Moreover, Wright writes,

It is important to understand that, while the church was responsible for duties of the spiritual kingdom on earth (i.e., during humankind’s physical, temporal existence), as the third divine order it also represented a human institution, with physical and temporal responsibilities. There were purely worldly responsibilities included in the work of the church, such as paying the pastor’s salary and repairing sanctuary. Even activities that had spiritual purposes involved physical, temporal input. Luther said that baptism, preaching the gospel, and the Lord’s Supper were externals because it was only the Word that made them effective for salvation. External matters, therefore, were not limited to the institutions of daily life and politics.<sup>99</sup>

We exercise our active righteousness within the spheres of daily life, politics, and church institutions.

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<sup>97</sup> Oswald Bayer, *Freedom in Response: Lutheran Ethics: Sources and Controversies*, trans. Jeffrey F Cayzer, Oxford Studies in Theological Ethics (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 97.

<sup>98</sup> Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding of God's Two Kingdoms*, 131.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

In conclusion, the doctrine of the two kingdoms and that of the two kinds of righteousness form Luther's view of reality and his anthropology respectively. He understands reality as consisting of two realms—the realm of the Creator or the kingdom of God, and the realm of creation or the kingdom of the world. He understands a person as existing simultaneously in these two kingdoms. Thus, the two kingdoms can be rightly labeled as the two realms of human existence.<sup>100</sup> B.A. Gerrish rightly asserts,

Luther is thinking of the two kingdoms as two dimensions of existence. At one and the same time, the Christian faces towards God in the Heavenly Kingdom, and towards his [or her] neighbour in the Earthly Kingdom. He [or she] lives in relation to God, and he [or she] lives in society with his [or her] fellows. To the Heavenly Kingdom belong grace, faith, and spiritual righteousness; to the Earthly Kingdom, law, works, and civil righteousness.<sup>101</sup>

Because a person exists simultaneously in the two realms, he or she must satisfy at one and the same time the respective rules that govern them. In the heavenly realm (*coram Deo*), he or she is justified by faith alone, without works. In the earthly realm (*coram mundo*), he or she is justified by good works that benefit the well-being of the self and the neighbor. Put differently, a person is made righteous passively *coram Deo*, and actively *coram mundo*.

To be human, therefore, for Luther, includes being passive before God, simply receiving God's gracious act of justification through faith, and being active before the world, lovingly caring for the well-being of the self and the neighbor through good works. Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand capture this well when they write that, according to Luther, "what makes human beings genuine human creatures of God in his

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<sup>100</sup> See F. Edward Cranz, *An Essay on the Development of Luther's Thought on Justice, Law, and Society*, Harvard Theological Studies (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959).

<sup>101</sup> B.A. Gerrish, *Grace and Reason: A Study in the Theology of Luther* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 119.

sight is his grace and favor alone, to which we respond with total trust in him; what makes us genuinely human in relationship to other creatures is our performance of the works of love, which God designed to be our way of living our trust in him.”<sup>102</sup> Kolb and Arand rightly call the two kinds of righteousness “Luther’s anthropological presupposition.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 12.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE  
THE TWO KINDS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY  
FRAMEWORK

The previous chapter explored the nature and dynamics of Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness and remarked that this doctrine is interconnected with his doctrine of the two kingdoms. A person exists simultaneously in the kingdom of God and in the kingdom of the world. In his or her life in the kingdom of God, he or she is made righteous passively. But in his or her life in the kingdom of the world, he or she actively works his or her righteousness through good works.

The chapter concluded that the two doctrines—the doctrine of the two kingdoms and that of the two kinds of righteousness—form Luther's view of reality and his anthropology respectively. I shall argue further in the present chapter that the doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness can also be utilized as an interdisciplinary framework that determines the terms of the relationship between theology and other fields of inquiry.

**An Interdisciplinary Framework**

In his exposition of Psalm 51, Luther writes, "The proper subject of theology is [hu]man guilty of sin and condemned, and God the Justifier and Savior of [hu]man the sinner."<sup>1</sup> Bayer formulates this statement succinctly as follows: "the subject—the

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<sup>1</sup> LW 12:311.

*subiectum*—of theology [is] ‘the *sinning* human being and the *justifying* God’”<sup>2</sup> (*homo peccator et Deus iustificans*). Bayer explains,

It is not by chance that Luther’s answer to the question about the subject of theology is articulated in his interpretation of Psalm 51, which tradition has counted among the penitential psalms; it has particular importance for the history of Luther’s theology. The wording of the psalm forces one to speak of sin and grace. . . . To speak theologically of sin and grace means to speak of God’s *promissio* and of his *lex*, about the law that accuses as well as kills and about the gospel that comforts as well as makes alive.<sup>3</sup>

Bayer then argues that if to speak of the sinning human being and the justifying God means to speak of sin and grace, and of law and gospel, then it means to speak of the Word. “God and humans coexist in the Word,” he writes, “in the Word of the confession of sins and in the Word of the forgiveness of sins.”<sup>4</sup> As noted in the previous chapter, God bestows the righteousness of Christ or passive righteousness upon us through the Word. That is, to speak of the Word means to speak of the gift of justification by grace. One therefore can infer from Luther’s statement that the subject matter of theology is justification or the righteousness of Christ. Indeed, theology, as Forde compellingly argues, is for the proclamation of this kind of righteousness.<sup>5</sup> In other words, theology is intertwined with passive righteousness.

Moreover, as previously explained, active righteousness, for Luther, is where reason plays an important role. It is true that Luther sometimes referred to reason as “a big red murderess, the devil’s bride, a damned whore, a blind guide, the enemy of faith,

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<sup>2</sup> Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 37. Emphases in the original.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 38. Italics in the original.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard O. Forde, *Theology Is for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).

the greatest and most invincible enemy of God”<sup>6</sup> or, more famously, as “the devil’s whore.”<sup>7</sup> However, he does so only when reason is used as a way to know God and thereby to achieve righteousness *coram Deo*, which, he insists throughout his works and life as a Reformer, is received only through faith. But when reason is used properly, that is, in the realm of life *coram mundo*, he agrees that reason can be “God’s greatest and most important gift to [hu]man[ity], of inestimable beauty and excellence, a glorious light, a most useful servant in theology, something divine.”<sup>8</sup>

In the words of Gerrish, “Luther is not simply ‘against’ law and reason, he is against an unwarranted transferring of them from their proper place, which is (with qualifications) the Earthly Kingdom, to the Heavenly Kingdom, where they generally lead only to the agonies of a tormented conscience. It is precisely the work of the Devil to ‘mix the Kingdoms’ in this way.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, Gerrish concludes, “Luther’s attitude towards reason is seen to rest upon a fundamental dualism between the Kingdom of Christ (*regnum Christi*) and the Kingdom of the World (*regnum mundi*). Reason is properly exercised within the limits of the *regnum mundi*, and must not presume to trespass upon the *regnum Christi*.”<sup>10</sup>

For Luther, Gerrish summarizes, reason, in the realm of life *coram mundo*,

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<sup>6</sup> Siegbert W. Becker, *The Foolishness of God: The Place of Reason in the Theology of Martin Luther* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Pub. House, 1982), 1.

<sup>7</sup> LW 40:175.

<sup>8</sup> Becker, *The Foolishness of God*, 1.

<sup>9</sup> Gerrish, *Grace and Reason*, 137.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

is able to do many things: it can judge in human and worldly matters, it can build cities and houses, it can govern well. The world knows how to build, how to keep house, how to manage estate and servants, how to be outwardly pious and to lead a decent, honest life. . . . Reason is able to found kingdoms and commonwealths, to fence them in and make them firm with useful laws, to direct and govern them with good counsel and sound precepts, to prescribe many things indispensable for the preservation of commonwealths and human society (*societatis humanae*—virtually, “civilization”).<sup>11</sup>

Luther associated reason with philosophy and sciences.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, one can claim that active righteousness is associated with other fields than theology. In sum, the two kinds of righteousness can be associated with theology and other forms of human knowledge. And because the two kinds of righteousness, as I shall demonstrate below, are related to each other in specific ways, theology and other fields also are.

The two kinds of righteousness are inseparable. As already mentioned, Luther placed the two kinds of righteousness into the two kingdoms. He writes, “We set forth two worlds, as it were, one of them heavenly and the other earthly. Into these we place these two kinds of righteousness.”<sup>13</sup> Gerhard Ebeling notes that “the two kingdoms are related to one another and belong to one another, in that God is Lord in both. For ‘the secular rule can also be called the kingdom of God.’”<sup>14</sup> And he continues,

To exist before God and to exist before the world are not two possible and mutually exclusive choices, two separate realities, but an alternate relationship which is necessarily simultaneous. Someone who possesses his [or her] existence in the sight of God does not thereby cease to exist in the sight of the world. And

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>12</sup> For more details on Luther’s understanding of reason, see Becker’s and Gerrish’s books cited above.

<sup>13</sup> *LW* 26:8.

<sup>14</sup> Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought*, trans. R.A Wilson (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1970), 189.

someone who possesses his existence in the sight of the world is not thereby deprived of his existence in the sight of God.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, the two kingdoms are governed by two governments. And Luther insists that these two governments “must be permitted to remain; the one to produce [passive] righteousness, the other to bring about external peace and prevent evil deeds. Neither one is sufficient in the world without the other.”<sup>16</sup> Luther here implies that the two kinds of righteousness which the two governments produce are not “alternatives to one another as if we could be fully human by possessing only one kind of righteousness, either the passive or the active.”<sup>17</sup> Indeed, he insists that “we must be righteous before God and [human].”<sup>18</sup> Hence, “The two kinds of righteousness,” Kolb and Arand remark, “are inseparable from one another. The passive righteousness of faith provides the core identity of a person; the active righteousness of love flows from that core identity out into the world.”<sup>19</sup>

However, the two kinds of righteousness are distinct. Luther claims in the preface to his 1535 Galatians commentary that his theology consists of the clear distinction between the two kinds of righteousness. “This is our theology,” he writes, “by which we teach a precise distinction between th[e] two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works and grace, secular society and religion may not

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 200-01.

<sup>16</sup> *LW* 45:92.

<sup>17</sup> Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 29.

<sup>18</sup> *LW* 34:162.

<sup>19</sup> Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 26.

be confused. Both are necessary, but both must be kept within their limits.”<sup>20</sup> His main goal in writing the commentary is to admonish both clergy and laity to diligently learn the art of distinguishing between the two kinds of righteousness, because they “may not be confused.”<sup>21</sup>

Passive righteousness is received through faith, whereas active righteousness is achieved through good works. Also, passive righteousness is wholly and perfect, while active righteousness is partial. As Gerrish notes, “[I]n the Earthly Kingdom there is the possibility of improvement, daily growth in the righteousness of love; whereas in the Heavenly Kingdom the Christian is already *wholly* righteous, because the righteousness of faith is the perfect righteousness of Christ. Justification before God is instantaneous and complete.”<sup>22</sup> Indeed, Luther writes that passive righteousness “is an infinite righteousness, and one that swallows up all sins in a moment, for it is impossible that sin should exist in Christ.”<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, passive righteousness defines our core identity as it secures our core being before and in God. In other words, passive righteousness is ultimate as it is eternal. Active righteousness, on the contrary, is penultimate. It is temporal as it is related to the temporal realm—the world or the realm of creation.

The two kinds of righteousness, therefore, must be distinguished from each other. “Maintaining the distinction between the two,” Kolb and Arand write, “allows us to affirm both dimensions of our humanity. The passive righteousness of faith brings about

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<sup>20</sup> *LW* 26:7.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>22</sup> Gerrish, *Grace and Reason*, 119. Italics in the original.

<sup>23</sup> *LW* 31:298.

our salvation by restoring our relationship with God. The active righteousness of works serves the well-being of creation by looking after our neighbor.”<sup>24</sup>

Lastly, the two kinds of righteousness are in asymmetrical order. Passive righteousness has conceptual priority over the active. For Luther, active righteousness is the fruit or the consequence of passive righteousness.<sup>25</sup> That is, passive righteousness is the basis for active righteousness. A person has to be justified by the righteousness of faith first before his or her works become good and righteous.<sup>26</sup> In fact, Luther maintains that the doctrine of justification is the doctrine upon which the church stands or falls; if this doctrine is lost, then the whole of Christian doctrine is lost.

In conclusion, the two kinds of righteousness are inseparable, distinct, and asymmetrical in order, with passive righteousness having priority over the active. These conditions of the relationship between the two kinds of righteousness also determine the conditions of the relationship between theology and other fields. Theology and other fields are inseparable, distinct, and asymmetrical in order, with logical priority assigned to theology. These conditions of the relationship between theology and other forms of human knowledge function in parallel with the conditions of the relationship between theology and other forms of human knowledge proposed by Loder and Hunsinger in the Chalcedonian model of interdisciplinarity.

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<sup>24</sup> Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 31.

<sup>25</sup> *LW* 31:300.

<sup>26</sup> *LW* 26:8-9.

## The Chalcedonian Model

In his book *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, Osmer identifies three models of interdisciplinary approach that theologians have developed. The first model he identifies is the *correlational model*, which comprises Paul Tillich's "method of correlation"<sup>27</sup> and all the subsequent diversities that different theologians have developed based on this method, such as the "revised correlational method" by David Tracy and Don Browning,<sup>28</sup> and the "revised praxis method of correlation" by Matthew Lamb and Rebecca Chopp.<sup>29</sup> The second model is the *transformational model*, which includes the "*ad hoc* correlational method" of Hans Frei<sup>30</sup> and the "Chalcedonian model" developed by Loder and Hunsinger.<sup>31</sup> The third model Osmer identifies is the *transversal model* developed by J. Wentzel van Huyssteen.<sup>32</sup>

I will focus solely on the second type of the *transformational model*—the Chalcedonian model. This model is built upon the Chalcedonian pattern which is made up of the Christological formulations issued by the ecumenical council of Chalcedon

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Matthew L. Lamb, *Solidarity with Victims: Toward a Theology of Social Transformation* (New York: Crossroad, 1982); Rebecca S. Chopp, *The Praxis of Suffering: An Interpretation of Liberation and Political Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Hans W. Frei, George Hunsinger, and William C. Placher, *Types of Christian Theology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Loder and Neidhardt, *The Knight's Move*; Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*; Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. J. Wentzel Van Huyssteen, *The Shaping of Rationality: Toward Interdisciplinarity in Theology and Science* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1999); J. Wentzel Van Hussteen, *Alone in the World: Human Uniqueness in Science and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2006).

(A.D. 451) which declared that the two natures of Christ, his divinity and humanity, are “without confusion or change” and yet also “without division or separation.”<sup>33</sup> It was expanded by Karl Barth later on, as Hunsinger writes: “According to Barth’s interpretation of Chalcedon, Jesus’ divine and human natures, each present in a complete or unabridged way, were to be understood not only as related without separation or division and without confusion or change but also with conceptual priority assigned to the divine over the human nature.”<sup>34</sup>

As a result, the Chalcedonian pattern consists of the following three features that characterize the relationship between the divinity and humanity of Christ: without confusion or change (indissoluble differentiation), without separation or division (inseparable unity), and with an asymmetrical ordering (indestructible order).<sup>35</sup> Both Loder and Hunsinger have creatively, but somewhat differently, transposed this pattern as an interdisciplinary model.

Concerning Loder’s use of the Chalcedonian pattern as an interdisciplinary framework, Osmer provides a succinct summary of it as he writes:

Loder argues that the three rules of [the Chalcedonian pattern] can guide theology’s dialogue with other fields. First, the knowledge given to faith is unique and not to be confused with other forms of human knowledge. Theology, thus, must be differentiated from the arts and sciences. Second, theology cannot carry out its work without entering into a dialogue with other forms of human knowledge; they are inseparably joined in a bipolar unity. Third, the relationship between theology and other fields follows an asymmetrical order, with theology retaining “marginal control” over the knowledge of other fields when they are brought into its own forms of discourse. In short, theology listens to and learns

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<sup>33</sup> The text of the Chalcedonian Creed may be found in Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 2 (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1919), 62-65.

<sup>34</sup> Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*, 62.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

from other fields. But it transforms their insights according to the rules of its own theological grammar.<sup>36</sup>

What Osmer does not mention about Loder's use of the Chalcedonian pattern as an interdisciplinary framework is that Loder assigns logical and ontological priority to theology.<sup>37</sup> Besides, Loder also analogously utilizes the Chalcedonian pattern as a norm to describe the nature of epistemology, reality, and human development. First, noting that the Chalcedonian pattern was "carefully constructed to communicate accurately a non-objectifiable reality as objectively as possible,"<sup>38</sup> Loder argues that this pattern, especially when used analogously to the logic of complementarity in Niels Bohr's quantum physics, allows faith and reason to complement each other. This means, he explains, that the Chalcedonian pattern endorses what he calls "the epistemology of complementarity," which is an epistemology that "keep[s] faith with reason and at the same time complete[s] the knowing act as inclusive of faith."<sup>39</sup>

Second, Loder contends that the complementarity between the two natures of Christ or "the God-man frame of reference," as he calls it, analogously define reality as the complementarity between eternity and human existence.<sup>40</sup> Drawing upon Søren Kierkegaard's interpretation of the Chalcedonian pattern, he claims that "'eternity' and human 'existence' are always both antithetical and inseparable."<sup>41</sup> Third, Loder uses "the

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<sup>36</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 169.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 37.

<sup>38</sup> Loder and Neidhardt, *The Knight's Move*, 84.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 87-99.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

God-man” framework to describe analogously the nature of human development as involving the complementarity between the Divine Spirit and the human spirit. The Divine Spirit and the human spirit, for Loder, are without confusion or change, without separation or division, and with the Divine Spirit having logical and ontological priority over the human spirit, for he notes that the third characteristic of the Chalcedonian pattern “refers to the asymmetry that pertains between the divine and the human in Christ, with the divine exercising logical and ontological priority over human.”<sup>42</sup>

Loder, in his use of the Chalcedonian pattern, works primarily in the normative move of the practical theological interpretation.<sup>43</sup> Drawing upon Bohr’s quantum physics and Kierkegaard, he utilizes the Chalcedonian pattern as a norm to define epistemology and reality. Drawing upon Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, and Erik Erikson, just to name a few, he makes use of it as a norm to describe human development. And drawing upon Barth, whom he interprets through T.F. Torrance, he develops it as a norm for practical theology.

The two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework can also be utilized as a norm for reality, personhood, epistemology, and pastoral theology. I have already made the point that the two kinds of righteousness in Luther are interconnected with the two kingdoms or the two realms of human existence. One cannot talk about the former without the latter. The doctrine of the two kingdoms is Luther’s view of reality, while the doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness is his view of personhood or his anthropology.

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<sup>42</sup> Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 37.

<sup>43</sup> Therea F. Latini, “From Community to Communio: A Practical Theology of Small Group Ministry” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2006), 318.

Moreover, the framework of the two kinds of righteousness makes faith and reason epistemologically complete each other. Passive righteousness is a subject of faith, whereas active righteousness is a subject of reason. As the two kinds of righteousness, though distinct and asymmetrical in order, are inseparable, faith and reason also are. And because faith and reason are inseparable, but complementing each other, pastoral theology, in order to faithfully fulfill its vocation, needs to enter into conversation with other fields.

Hunsinger uses the Chalcedonian pattern to interpret the nature of the relationship between theology and other disciplines, specifically between theology and psychology in the church ministry of pastoral counseling. For her, this ministry of the church is fundamentally interdisciplinary. “Becoming equipped for [it],” she writes, “requires both psychological and theological training.”<sup>44</sup> Hence, she contends that

pastoral counselors must learn to become “bilingual.” They must learn to be as skilled in the language or symbol system of theology as they are in that of psychology. They must be equipped to interpret and experience themselves and their world in theological as well as in psychological terms. They must become linguistically competent in the one discipline as in the other, interiorizing by practice and training two very different sets of skills. They must learn how to feel, act, and think in conformity with two different modes of thought.<sup>45</sup>

She defines the bilingual competencies of the pastoral counselor by the stipulations of the Chalcedonian pattern. That is, the two languages, for her, must be without separation or division, yet without confusion or change; and theology has logical precedence over psychology. Theology is assigned logical priority because it “essentially pertains not only to creaturely realities but also to the reality of God . . . psychology by

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<sup>44</sup> Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*, 1.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

definition pertains only to a creaturely level of reality.”<sup>46</sup> Thus, “psychological concepts could not possibly exist on the same level as theological concepts.”<sup>47</sup>

Unlike Loder, who assigns ontological priority to theology, however, she assigns only conceptual or logical precedence to theology. Theresa F. Latini highlights Hunsinger’s position as follows:

Asymmetry does not mean that theology has ontological superiority over other disciplines. Theology is a human, finite, and frequently flawed endeavor. At its best, it witnesses to Jesus Christ, the Word and work of God. Like other ecclesiastical practices, it exists in one of the outer spheres that potentially point to Christ. As human reflection on and response to the Word and Spirit of God, theology (or, more accurately, theologian) is put to death and resurrected, again and again, by Jesus Christ.<sup>48</sup>

I would clarify this further and argue that what makes theology have logical or conceptual, and not ontological, priority over other fields, is that, as noted above, justification is the subject matter of theology. However, justification is not theology, nor is theology justification. To frame it in the Chalcedonian language, justification and theology are inseparable, yet they are distinct, with justification having logical *and* ontological priority over theology. Justification is a divine act which defines our core identity. It belongs to the eternal realm or life *coram Deo* and is objective. Theology, on the other hand, is a method for interpreting this eternal and ultimate reality. It is a subjective human endeavor and belongs to the temporal sphere or life *coram mundo*. In fact, as a method for interpretation, it uses reason. It is science. Hence, it has no

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Theresa F. Latini, *The Church and the Crisis of Community: A Practical Theology of Small Group Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2011), 206.

ontological priority over other scientific fields. It has logical priority, however, because of the ontological nature of its subject matter.

So what is ontologically superior is not theology as a method, but its subject matter, the gospel of justification, which is an objective reality that precedes any discipline, even theology itself. “[J]ustification,” Mattes states, “serves as a *discrimen*” or “the evaluator of all theology—including the standard of reason operative in theology.”<sup>49</sup> “Hence,” he continues, “the doctrine of justification is the critical point that shapes other doctrines and church practices. Our teachings need to conform to it, as well as our pastoral practices.”<sup>50</sup>

Hunsinger notes, concerning the specification of asymmetry between theology and psychology, “that what is at stake here are logical relationships that pertain to *concepts*.”<sup>51</sup> She explains, “We are speaking of theological and psychological concepts, not directly of theological and psychological *realities*. In reality, there is no reason why these factors may not all come together at one time.”<sup>52</sup>

In sum, theology and psychology, for Hunsinger,

represent material that cannot be integrated into a unified whole. They are logically diverse; they have different aims, subject matters, methods, and linguistic conventions. They do not exist on the same level. Both perspectives are fully a part of the pastoral counselor, that is, they are integrated into the *person*, but as language and thought worlds, they are not to be integrated *with one another* in any systematic way.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Mattes, *The Role of Justification in Contemporary Theology*, 10. Italics in the original.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>51</sup> Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*, 69. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* Italics in the original.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 6. Emphases in the original.

Because she understands pastoral counseling as an interdisciplinary ministry that requires the counselor to become fluent in two distinctively different languages, the language of theology and that of psychology, she proposes that the practice of pastoral counseling “would mean that one interprets the counselee’s material by employing two logically diverse perspectives, the psychological and the theological.”<sup>54</sup>

While Hunsinger recommends theological and psychological interpretation of the counselee’s material, I would like to propose, from the vantage point of the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework, that pastoral theologians not only interpret and describe pastoral care issues, such as shame, from both theological and scientific perspectives, but also suggest strategies for its healing from both perspectives. Stated otherwise, I recommend that pastoral theologians address shame from both theological and scientific angles, not only at the interpretive and descriptive levels, but also, and most importantly, at the pragmatic level.

As mentioned in the introduction, pastoral theologians tend to use exclusively theological resources when it comes to the healing of shame. The framework of the two kinds of righteousness, however, dictates that pastoral theologians not only interpret and describe shame from both theological and scientific lenses, but also propose strategies for its healing from both divine action (passive righteousness) and human action (active righteousness).

Therefore, chapter four, the interpretive move of this work, will interpret shame in an interdisciplinary way, that is, from both theological and social scientific viewpoints. Chapter five, the descriptive-empirical move, will describe the personal, social, and

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

theological aspects of the Malagasy shame. And chapters six and seven, the pragmatic move, will discuss the healing of shame from social scientific and theological views respectively.

But before we move on to the interpretation, description, and healing of shame from an interdisciplinary perspective, it is important to warrant my choice for the two kinds of righteousness, instead of the African understanding of personhood, as a framework for pastoral theology in general, and for the interpretation, description, and healing of shame in particular.

### **A Critique of the African Understanding of Personhood**

As noted above, to be human, according to the framework of the two kinds of righteousness, is to be simultaneously righteous *coram Deo* and *coram mundo*. This is a holistic anthropology because a person is defined in relation to the two realms of human existence—the eternal and the existential—which, according to Luther, form the structures of reality. Though the framework of the two kinds of righteousness holistically forms what it means to be human, it also points out that the two must be distinguished, because they are without confusion or change. Indeed, what ultimately defines personhood is righteousness *coram Deo*, or passive righteousness, because it is connected to divine action that does for the creature, at the ontological level, what the creature cannot do for itself. Therefore, though the two kinds of righteousness complement each other to form personhood, the two must not be confused; and passive righteousness has logical priority over active righteousness.

The African understanding of personhood is also holistic. In fact, Emmanuel E. Lartey labels this understanding “relational holism” because it describes a person in

relation to the community which, for Africans, encompasses the living and the dead, the ancestors and the spirits, and the whole cosmos and God.<sup>55</sup> The African view of community, therefore, in the language of Bénézet Bujo, is anthropocentric, cosmic, and theocentric.<sup>56</sup> And personhood is defined in relation to such holistic view of community.

John S. Mbiti, one of the most prominent scholars of African religions and philosophy, is worth quoting at length in his description of this African understanding of personhood, despite the presence of strong masculine language therein. He writes:

In traditional life, the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. He owes his existence to other people, including those of past generations and his contemporaries. He is simply part of the whole. The community must therefore make, create or produce the individual; for the individual depends on the corporate group. Physical birth is not enough: the child must go through rites of incorporation so that it becomes fully integrated into the entire society. These rites continue throughout the physical life of the person, during which the individual passes from one stage of corporate existence to another. The final stage is reached when he dies and even then he is ritually incorporated into the wide family of both the dead and the living. Just as God made the first man, as God's man, so now man himself makes the individual who becomes the corporate or social man. It is a deeply religious transaction. Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities towards himself and towards other people. When he suffers, he does not suffer alone but with the corporate group; when he rejoices, he rejoices not alone but with his kinsmen, his neighbours and his relatives whether dead or living. When he gets married, he is not alone, neither does the wife "belong" to him alone. So also the children belong to the corporate body of kinsmen, even if they bear only their father's or mother's name. Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am." This is a cardinal point in the understanding of the African view of man.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Jean Masamba ma Mpolo, Daisy Nwachuku, and Harry Sawyerr, eds., *Pastoral Care and Counselling in Africa Today*, African Pastoral Studies Vol.1 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1991), 41.

<sup>56</sup> Bénézet Bujo, *Foundations of an African Ethic: Beyond the Universal Claims of Western Morality* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2001), 2.

<sup>57</sup> John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), 108-09.

Because of the primacy of community in the African understanding of personhood, scholars of African religions and philosophy have critiqued this understanding as condescending to the rights of the individuals. Some other scholars, however, have responded to this objection and even provided more persuasive explanations. Kwame Gyekye, for instance, argues that African communitarianism is moderate and not radical.<sup>58</sup> He explains that African communal life seeks the well-being of both the community as a whole in general and of the individual as a person in particular.<sup>59</sup> Bujo, confirming Gyekye's point, observes that the African "principle of solidarity does not in the least mean that the individual loses his [or her] identity in and because of the group. . . . For example, individuality in Africa is emphasized by the fact that each one has his [or her] own name, which is different from that of his [or her] parents."<sup>60</sup>

What is problematic in the African understanding of personhood, therefore, is not the condescension of the rights of the individuals to the values of the whole group, but rather, the reversal of the proper ordering of the two kinds of righteousness, by making righteousness *coram mundo* the ultimate basis for defining personhood. As already shown in the previous chapter, in his treatise *The Freedom of a Christian*, Luther associates righteousness *coram Deo* with the inner person and righteousness *coram mundo* with the outer person. He states that *coram Deo*, a person "is perfectly free lord of

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<sup>58</sup> Kwame Gyekye, *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 35-76.

<sup>59</sup> Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Value: An Introduction* (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 1996), 35-51.

<sup>60</sup> Bujo, *Foundations of an African Ethic*, 6.

all, subject to none.” That is, no external thing a person does has any influence or contribution to his or her personhood. Rather, personhood is ultimately determined and secured by what God does for a person through Christ. Hence, though *coram mundo*, a person, “is perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all,” by performing good works that serve the neighbor, his or her good works do not make him or her a good person. He or she does good works because he or she is a good person. In other words, for Luther, the inner person is always primary, whereas the outer always secondary.

Theo Sundermeier, in his book *The Individual and Community in African Traditional Religions*, makes an interesting remark that, for Africans, it is the other way around, i.e., the external takes priority over the internal. He writes,

The external is decisive, the real thing, because everything to do with people and their earthly life has its place here, in this world. Body and soul cannot be separated, and so perception proceeds from the external to the internal. If Goethe captured the traditional Western experience of reality in the couplet: “Denn das is der Natur Gehalt, dass aussen gilt, was innen galt,” then it should be reversed for Africa: the content of nature is that the inside is determined by the outside.<sup>61</sup>

He continues,

The following anecdote will illustrate this point. Once we were reading Luther’s “Of the freedom of a Christian” in a theological seminar. The African students spontaneously and violently opposed Luther’s claim that appearances and outward signs are not important. Even Jesus’ saying that it is what comes out a person that makes him or her unclean, and not what goes in (Mark 7: 15, 20), was not understood as a devaluation of outward signs.<sup>62</sup>

In fact, personhood, for Africans, is not inherent. It is gained. One gains it through specific rites of passage or initiation. In the Antemoro tribe of Madagascar, to which my mother belongs, for instance, a baby boy has to be circumcised before he is considered a

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<sup>61</sup> Theo Sundermeier, *The Individual and Community in African Traditional Religions* (Hamburg: Lit, 1998), 9.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

human being. Likewise, a baby girl has to be ear-pierced before she is considered a person. An uncircumcised boy, or a girl who is not ear-pierced, when dead, cannot be mourned either by the parents or the community at large; nor can he or she be buried in the communal tomb.

To be buried in the communal tomb means that a person belonged to the community of the living when he or she was alive, and now he or she belongs to the community of the ancestors. Remember that community, for Africans, encompasses the living, the dead, the whole cosmos, and God. To be buried outside the communal tomb, therefore, means that a person is excommunicated. That is, he or she lost his or her personhood, for personhood is defined by connection to the community.

Moreover, the African notion of personhood not only reverses the order of the two kinds of righteousness, but also induces shame easily. In his description of the Akamba initiation rites, Mbiti notes, “Without being initiated, a person is not a full member of the Akamba people. Furthermore, no matter how old or big he [or she] is, so long as he [or she] is not initiated, he [or she] is despised and considered to be still a boy or girl.”<sup>63</sup> Not being initiated becomes a stigma. And stigma is a big shame factor.<sup>64</sup>

Or consider the following description by Mbiti,

In some African societies, marriage is not fully recognized or consummated until the wife has given birth. First, pregnancy becomes, therefore, the final seal of marriage, the sign of complete integration of the woman into her husband’s family and kinship circle. Unhappy is the woman who fails to get children for, whatever other qualities she might possess, her failure to bear children is worse than committing genocide: she has become the dead end of human life, not only for the genealogical line but also for herself. When she dies, there will be nobody

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<sup>63</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 122.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Michael Lewis, “Shame and Stigma,” in *Shame: Interpersonal Behavior, Psychopathology, and Culture*, ed. Paul Gilbert and Bernice Andrews (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 126-40.

of her own immediate blood to “remember” her, to keep her in the state of personal immortality: she will simply be “forgotten.” Her husband may remedy the situation a bit, by raising children with another wife; but the childless wife bears a scar which nothing can erase. She will suffer for this, her own relatives will suffer for this; and it will be an irreparable humiliation for which there is no source for comfort in traditional life.<sup>65</sup>

Therefore, though I am an African, and my work aims to suggest faithful and effective pastoral care practice in relation to the problem and pain of shame in the Malagasy context, I chose to use the two kinds of righteousness, instead of the African understanding of personhood, as a framework for interpreting, describing, and healing shame. Using the two kinds of righteousness as a framework is more promising to the healing of shame than using the African notion of personhood.

It is to be noted, however, that the African understanding of community is convenient for framing the scope of active righteousness in that it is more holistic than the Lutheran conception of active righteousness. For Luther, good works serve the well-being of the self and the neighbor. For Africans, the community which good works should serve is the whole cosmos. Therefore, one can formulate active righteousness, from an African perspective, as good works that serve the self, other, and God’s entire creation.

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<sup>65</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 110-11.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SHAME: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY INTERPRETATION

Chapter three developed Luther's doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework and proposed that pastoral theologians and pastoral caregivers should describe and interpret shame as well as suggest strategies for its healing from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing upon both theology and other disciplines. The present chapter, the interpretive task of this work, shall therefore interpret shame from both social-scientific and theological perspectives.

According to Osmer, the interpretive task of practical theology draws upon theories of the arts and sciences in order to explain and understand why patterns and dynamics of a particular episode, situation, or context are going on. As already mentioned, theology, as a method for interpretation, belongs to sciences. Interpreting shame theologically is therefore appropriate for the interpretive task.<sup>1</sup> Thus, this chapter is divided into two sections. Section one provides a social-scientific interpretation of shame, while section two a theological interpretation.

#### **A Social-scientific Interpretation of Shame**

In his book *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, Carl D. Schneider helpfully distinguishes between two types of shame. One is discretion, "a sense of shame" before a

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<sup>1</sup> I veer from Osmer at this point. According to Osmer, theological interpretation is one way of carrying out the normative task, not the interpretive task.

given act or circumstance. This type of shame, Schneider writes, “not only reflects, but sustains, our personal and social ordering of the world.”<sup>2</sup> The other is disgrace, a feeling of shame after the act or circumstance. According to Schneider, this type of shame is the painful experience of “being ashamed.”<sup>3</sup>

In his book *Shame: The Power of Caring*,<sup>4</sup> Gershen Kaufman persuasively argues that shame in its disgrace form can be internalized and become a personality trait. This section, therefore, is divided into three sub-sections. Sub-section one briefly describes the nature and functions of discretion shame, whereas sub-sections two and three delve into the exploration of the nature, origins, and effects of disgrace shame and internalized shame, respectively.

#### Discretion Shame

As enunciated above, this type of shame, according to Schneider, is the sense of shame that protects the personal and social ordering of the world. It safeguards us from the potential violation entailed in the public display of our intrinsically private experiences, such as sex and love, eating and elimination, and pain and death.<sup>5</sup> These fundamental human experiences, Schneider argues, are emotionally vulnerable and need to be protected from the obscenity of inappropriate exposure in order for the personal and

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<sup>2</sup> Carl D. Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977), 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Gershen Kaufman, *Shame: The Power of Caring*, 3rd ed. (Rochester, VT: Schenkman Books, 1992).

<sup>5</sup> Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, 56-91.

social ordering of life to be sustained.<sup>6</sup> He believes that “the individual is left open to violation when the restraining claims of shame are dismissed.”<sup>7</sup>

Francis Broucek, drawing from the work of Schneider, describes discretion shame as “anticipatory shame, that is, the discretionary function that makes us pause before saying or doing something that would arouse the painful feeling of shame in ourselves or another.”<sup>8</sup> For Broucek, discretion shame is “vital to our individual and collective emotional, moral, and spiritual welfare.”<sup>9</sup> Léon Wurmser, though he does not use the term “discretion shame,” identifies the same type of shame and calls it “preventive shame.” In his article “Nietzsche’s War against Shame and Resentment,” he describes preventive shame as “an overall *character trait* preventing disgraceful exposure. It is an attitude of respect toward others and toward oneself.”<sup>10</sup>

In short, discretion shame has two roles. First, it functions as the custodian of personal worthiness. That is, it acts as the guardian of self-respect. Second, it protects the dignity of others. It functions as moral shame. Discretion shame is therefore the guardian angel of our humanness. The opposite of discretion shame is shamelessness, as Schneider writes, “The concept of *shamelessness* suggests that the lack of a proper sense of shame is a moral deficiency and that the possession of a sense of shame is a moral obligation.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 92-93.

<sup>8</sup> Francis J. Broucek, *Shame and the Self* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1991), 5.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>10</sup> Léon Wurmser, “Nietzsche’s War against Shame and Resentment,” in *The Widening Scope of Shame*, ed. Melvin R. Lansky and Andrew P. Morrison (Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, 1997), 186. Emphases in the original.

<sup>11</sup> Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, 19. Italics in the original.

Thus, he concludes, “I have drawn attention to shame, not to dismiss it as a mechanism that is crippling or inhibiting, but rather to suggest that a sensitivity to the sense of shame will result in a richer understanding of what it means to be fully human.”<sup>12</sup>

### Disgrace Shame

While discretion shame is humanizing, disgrace shame is disintegrative. As stated above, disgrace shame is the felt experience of being ashamed.<sup>13</sup> Schneider observes that “[b]eing ashamed is an affect.”<sup>14</sup> Silvan Tomkins, the pioneer of what is known as “affects theory,” identifies nine affects, which he classifies into two groups—positive and negative. There are three positive affects: interest or excitement, enjoyment or joy, and surprise or startle. And there are six negative ones: distress or anguish, fear or terror, shame or humiliation, dissmell, disgust, and anger or rage. Shame affect, according to Tomkins, is the physiological interruption of interest or excitement.<sup>15</sup> Donald L. Nathanson, an interpreter of Tomkins, writes, “Shame affect operates to reduce interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy, the affects that make us vital, lively, charming, fun, interesting, enjoyable, exciting, charismatic, thrilling, inspiring, and appealing. If you wonder why someone lacks vitality, look first for nearness to shame.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., ix.

<sup>13</sup> As such, disgrace shame is commonly studied in various shame literature by various scholars of shame. Usually, it is called simply “shame.”

<sup>14</sup> Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, 20.

<sup>15</sup> Silvan S. Tomkins, “Shame,” in *The Many Faces of Shame*, ed. Donald L. Nathanson (New York: The Guilford Press, 1987), 139. For more details on Tomkins’ affects theory, see Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect, Imagery, and Consciousness: The Positive Affects* (New York: Springer, 1962). And Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect, Imagery, and Consciousness: The Negative Affects* (New York: Springer, 1963).

<sup>16</sup> Donald L. Nathanson, *Shame and Pride: Affect, Sex, and the Birth of the Self* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992), 155.

Disgrace shame, in the words of Schneider, “is a painful experience of the disintegration of one’s world. A break occurs in the self’s relationship with itself and/or others. An awkward, uncomfortable space opens up in the world. The self is no longer whole, but divided. It feels less than it wants to be, less than at its best it knows itself to be.”<sup>17</sup> The experience is so painful, Brown notes, that “when we try to describe it, when we try to make it accessible for other people to understand, we struggle to find the words. Even when we find the words, it is rare that people will want to listen.”<sup>18</sup>

Shame is hard to communicate because, as Tomkins points out in his introduction to Gershen Kaufman’s book *Shame: The Power of Caring*, “there is shame about shame. It is much easier to admit one is happy or sad than one feels ashamed.”<sup>19</sup> We do not want to listen to an experience of shame because listening to it can be almost as painful as the actual experience. Shame is painful emotionally, physically, and mentally, as John Everingham writes,

Here are some of the keys now known for shame: *emotional* keys include feeling like shrinking, feeling frozen, a sinking feeling, an intense desire to hide, intense emotional discomfort for no apparent reason, feeling like being on the hot seat, or imagining all eyes are on you, and anxious self-surveillance.

The *physical* keys are eyes averted, head down, face flushed, ears burning, involuntary shudders, or throat and chest tight, speech halting or without resonance and power, and gut rigid or churning.

The *mental* and *cognitive* keys involve being inarticulate . . . the panicky awareness of a mind gone blank.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, 22.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 4.

<sup>19</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, xxvii.

<sup>20</sup> John Everingham, “Men Facing Shame: A Healing Process,” in *Men Healing Shame: An Anthology*, ed. Roy U. Schenk and John Everingham (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1995), 97. Italics in the original.

This holistically painful experience, at its core, is a feeling of unworthiness and diminishment. Brown writes, “Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging.”<sup>21</sup> Paul Gilbert asserts, “Shame is about being in the world as an undesirable self, a self one does not wish to be. [It] is . . . an awareness that one has lost status and is devalued.”<sup>22</sup> In fact, shame calls into question not only the self’s value, but also the meaning of interpersonal relationships, and the meaning of existence itself.<sup>23</sup> Thus, shame strikes deepest into one’s psyche. To use Kaufman’s words, it is “a sickness within the self, a disease of the spirit, however brief or lasting.”<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, fear, namely fear of rejection and disconnection, is embedded in shame experience. “The underling dynamic of disgrace shame,” Schneider writes, “is the fear of rejection.”<sup>25</sup> Brown concurs and states, “Shame is all about fear. . . . [It] is about the fear of disconnection. When we are experiencing shame, we are steeped in the fear of being ridiculed, diminished or seen as flawed. We are afraid that we’ve exposed or revealed a part of us that jeopardize our connection and our worthiness of acceptance.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 5. Italics in the original.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Gilbert, “What Is Shame? Some Core Issues and Controversies,” in *Shame: Interpersonal Behavior, Psychopathology, and Culture*, ed. Paul Gilbert and Bernice Andrews (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 30.

<sup>23</sup> Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity*, 57.

<sup>24</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, xvi.

<sup>25</sup> Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, 26.

<sup>26</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 20.

According to Schneider, disgrace shame and discretion shame are intimately linked to exposure.<sup>27</sup> Disgrace shame, in particular, “is about exposure of some discrediting fact or quality. It is exposure of something that ought not to show because it is discrediting, potentially harmful . . . and capable of fracturing a relationship.”<sup>28</sup> Kaufman, stating that “[e]xposure is an important characteristic of shame and is, therefore, central to understanding its dynamic impact,” notes that the “exposure can be either to others or to the self alone.”<sup>29</sup>

The sense of exposure that can generate shame is made possible by what Broucek calls “objective self-awareness,” which is “an awareness of oneself as an object for others and, through the mirroring of the observing others, taking oneself as an object of reflection (objectifying oneself).”<sup>30</sup> Objective self-awareness, on one hand, creates self-image, the status the self believes it holds at the moment. On the other hand, it creates self-ideal, which is what the self wants to become. Self-ideal is created by the self in relation to the ideal of the community or group to which it belongs.<sup>31</sup> Shame ensues when the self realizes that it fails to measure up to its ideal.<sup>32</sup>

The realization may come through an exposure to the self, a type of exposure that does not require the presence of other. It happens when the eye of the self gazes inward

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<sup>27</sup> Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, 30.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>29</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, 195.

<sup>30</sup> Broucek, *Shame and the Self*, 37.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>32</sup> Andrew P. Morrison, *Shame: The Underside of Narcissism* (Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, 1989), 35-36.

and sees that there is deficiency between the self and its ideal.<sup>33</sup> It may also happen when a person involuntarily remembers previous traumatic shameful event or experience.<sup>34</sup>

Exposure to the self can take place as long as the attributions that give rise to it occur.

The self may realize its failure to measure up to the ideal-self also through an exposure to other, namely an evaluative other who subjects the self to shaming evaluation(s).<sup>35</sup> The intensity of this type of exposure, however, does not depend on how shaming the other's evaluation of the self is, but rather, on how the self evaluates itself through the evaluation of the other. Kaufman writes that "[i]t is not so much that others are, in fact, watching us. Rather, it is *we* who are watching ourselves, and because we are, it *seems* most especially that the watching eyes belong to others."<sup>36</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre puts it as follows:

To "feel oneself blushing," to "feel oneself sweating," *etc.*, are inaccurate expressions which the shy person uses to describe his state; what he really means is that he is vividly and constantly conscious of his body not as it is for him but as it is *for the Other*. . . . We often say that the shy man is "embarrassed by his own body." Actually this expression is incorrect; I cannot be embarrassed by my own body as I exist it. It is my body as it is for the Other which may embarrass me.<sup>37</sup>

Since shame is holistically painful, to survive it, a person naturally develops defense mechanisms against it. Nathanson identifies four poles of shame defense

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<sup>33</sup> Andrew Morrison, "The Eye Turned Inward: Shame and the Self," in *The Many Faces of Shame*, ed. Donald L. Nathanson (New York: The Guilford Press, 1987), 271-90.

<sup>34</sup> Merle A. Fossum and Marilyn Mason, *Facing Shame: Families in Recovery* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1986), 39-44.

<sup>35</sup> James W. Fowler, *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 104.

<sup>36</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, 9. Italics in the original.

<sup>37</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956), 462-63. Italics are in the original.

reactions, which he calls “the compass of shame.” They are withdrawal, attack self, avoidance, and attack other.<sup>38</sup> Withdrawal is associated with hiding, which involves gestures such as putting hands to lips, placing hand to forehead, or covering the eyes with hands. Attack self is associated with blaming the self as deserving the shame it is experiencing, for example, when someone comes up to me after Sunday morning worship and says, “You are a bad preacher!” Such a criticism would normally trigger a feeling of shame in me! If I am in the attack self mood, I would accept the person’s judgment and agree that I indeed am a bad preacher.

Avoiding is associated with using alcohol, drugs, among others, to alleviate the pain of shame. For example, in response to “You are a bad preacher,” I would spend the rest of my Sunday afternoon watching movies on Netflix, trying to divert the feeling of shame I might experience. Attack other is associated with shaming the other who caused the shame experience on the self. I would express rage to the person who says “You are a bad preacher,” and blame him or her, saying, “I’m not a bad preacher. I spend so much time to prepare for my sermons. You are the bad listener! You didn’t understand how good that sermon was!”

Brown, using Linda Hartling’s three categories of shame defenses, gives a succinct summary of shame defense mechanisms as follows:

According to Dr. Hartling, in order to deal with shame, some of us *move away* by withdrawing, hiding, silencing ourselves, and keeping secrets. Some of us *move toward* by seeking to appease and please. And some of us *move against* by trying to gain power over others, by being aggressive, and by using shame to fight

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<sup>38</sup> Nathanson, *Shame and Pride*, 305-77. See also Donald L. Nathanson, “Shame and the Affect Theory of Silvan Tomkins,” in *The Widening Scope of Shame*, ed. Melvin R. Lansky and Andrew P. Morrison (Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, 1997), 134-36. And Donald L. Nathanson, “Affect Theory and the Compass of Shame,” in *The Widening Scope of Shame*, ed. Melvin R. Lansky and Andrew P. Morrison (Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, 1997), 349-52.

shame . . . .Most of us use all of these—at different times with different folks for different reasons.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, since shame is holistically painful, some scholars deem it to be completely negative. Brown insists that “there is nothing positive about shame. In any form, in any context, and through any delivery system, shame is destructive.”<sup>40</sup> June Price Tangney and Ronda L. Dearing argue that a feeling of shame makes a person less able to empathize, more likely to blame others, and more prone to a resentful kind of anger. It is the feeling of guilt which can make a person better able to empathize, accept responsibility, and express anger in a fairly direct and more constructive manner.<sup>41</sup>

It is important to note that shame is different from guilt. The difference between the two, according to Brown,

is best understood as the differences between “I am bad” (shame) and “I did something bad” (guilt). Shame is about who we are and guilt is about our behaviors. If I feel guilty for cheating on a test, my self-talk might sound something like “I should not have done that. That was really stupid. Cheating is not something I believe in or want to do.” If I feel shame about cheating on a test, my self-talk is more likely to sound like “I’m a liar and a cheat. I’m so stupid. I’m a bad person.”<sup>42</sup>

In sum, disgrace shame or the felt experience of being ashamed is the painful feeling of unworthiness, accompanied by an intense fear of disconnection and rejection. It is a painful experience which ensues as a result of exposure to the self or other, or both. It is a feeling of disintegration both interpersonally and intrapersonally. In the language of

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<sup>39</sup> Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* (New York: Gotham Books, 2012), 77-78. Italics in the original.

<sup>40</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 62.

<sup>41</sup> June Price Tangney and Ronda L. Dearing, *Shame and Guilt, Emotions and Social Behavior* (New York: Guilford Press, 2002), 3.

<sup>42</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 13-14.

Kaufman, “shame is both alienating and isolating.”<sup>43</sup> Disgrace shame may be internalized and become a personality trait.

### Internalized Shame

Internalized shame is the result of the process Kaufman calls “shame internalization,” which “refers to the process by which shame comes to lie at the very core of the self, and hence one’s identity.”<sup>44</sup> A shame-based identity entails constant feelings of inferiority, defectiveness, unwantedness, unworthiness, or isolation. “Those who have a shame-based-identity,” Albers writes, “believe in their heart of hearts that in essence they are of no account, unacceptable, and unlovable.”<sup>45</sup> Moreover, a shame-based identity includes chronic fear of disconnection, alienation, isolation, or rejection. A person with a shame-based identity is more likely to think and to say, in the words of Everingham, “There’s something wrong with me. I’m so defective that I don’t belong here. If I can hide my defectiveness, may be they won’t notice and let me stay. So far I’ve managed to fool them, but I live in constant fear of being exposed as a fraud and sent away—to die.”<sup>46</sup>

According to Kaufman, there are three aspects of internalization:

(1) We internalize specific affect-beliefs or attitudes about ourselves which come to lie at the very core of the self and thereby help to mold our emerging sense of identity. (2) We also internalize the very ways in which we are treated by significant others and we learn to treat ourselves accordingly. . . . (3) And we

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<sup>43</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, 37.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>45</sup> Albers, *Shame*, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Everingham, “Men Facing Shame,” 117.

internalize *identification* in the form of images—we take them inside us and make them our own.<sup>47</sup>

Internalization is a natural outcome of identification, which “is an inevitable occurrence in human affairs, universally experienced, and life-long.”<sup>48</sup> We identify with our parents, our siblings, or our grandparents. We also identify with our teachers, mentors, or any significant other who is most vital for our survival.<sup>49</sup> We identify with the significant others whether they treat us with respect or contempt. Kaufman notes, “Identification based on love and respect, that is, experiencing a significant other who primarily treats us in these ways, will enable us to learn to treat ourselves tenderly, lovingly and with respect for our own imperfect humanness.”<sup>50</sup>

Identification with shaming and contemptuous significant others will lead to shame internalization, and thus to shame-based identity. Hunsinger writes, “When those around us have attitude of devaluation or contempt toward us, when they treat us in a blaming fashion, and when we internalize the image and voice of the shaming parent, then we become subject to a shame-based identity.”<sup>51</sup>

There are three contributing sources of shame internalization, according to Kaufman. They are affect-shame binds, drive-shame binds, and need shame-binds.<sup>52</sup> Drawing on Tomkins’ affects theory, Kaufman argues that particular affects can be

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<sup>47</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, 41-42. Italics in the original.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>51</sup> Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*, 175.

<sup>52</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, 43-77.

bound with shame when the expression of any affect is followed by a shaming reaction. For instance, if a child is consistently ridiculed for expressing anger, he or she will become ashamed of being angry. Every time the child feels anger, he or she will also feel shame. The two affects—anger and shame—are therefore bound together. A drive-shame bind might arise when a child learns from the significant others that his or her sexuality is disgusting or bad in some way. The child may become prone to feeling shame about his or her sexuality.

A need-shame bind may occur when a child's need is consistently denied and unmet by significant others. Kaufman identifies six fundamental needs which, when denied, might lead to need-shame binds. One is the need for relationship, the most fundamental need of all. It is the need for close interpersonal relationship with others, who want to be in relationship with you. The second need is the need for touching and holding. This need provides a primary basis for the development of security and trust. The third need is the need for identification, the need to know others "from the inside" and to gain a sense of belonging. The fourth need is the need for differentiation, an experience of oneself as a separate being and capable of mastering developmental tasks. The fifth need is the need to nurture. One needs to feel that the love and care one has to give is good and valued by others. And the sixth need is the need for affirmation, which is the need to feel worthwhile and valued for one's uniqueness. When shame is bound with a particular need, that need might be repressed altogether and any awareness of it is completely absent.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> For the above descriptions of Kaufman's three sources of shame internalization—*affect-shame binds*, *drive-shame binds*, and *need-shame binds*—I am indebted to Hunsinger's paraphrase of Kaufman. See Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*, 176.

Shame internalization is a complex process. In addition to the three sources of shame internalization described above, shame may also be internalized through family systems, especially “those that protect [the family] history with secrets, mysteries, and myths.”<sup>54</sup> Family secrets may include bankruptcies, suicides, childhood deaths, or incest. Family mysteries may entail unresolved grief or trauma. And family myths may involve stories of success or heroism that needs to be preserved.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, shame may be internalized through physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse, especially when the abuse is repeated and traumatic. Also, shame may be internalized through personal or others’ stigma, specifically that of parents or siblings.<sup>56</sup> The stigma may be disability, weight, illness, or addiction to alcohol, drugs, sex, and food, among others.

Shame may be internalized through gender expectations. Brown writes, “Shame is organized by gender. The expectations that fuel shame for women are based on our culture’s perception of what is acceptable for women. In my new research on men, I’m learning that the expectations that fuel shame for men are based on our culture’s perception of masculinity—what should a man be, look like and act like.”<sup>57</sup> Brown, of course, refers to the North American culture where she conducted her research on shame. However, gender expectations across cultures around the world undeniably fuel shame internalization differently among men and women.

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<sup>54</sup> Fossum and Mason, *Facing Shame*, 44.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 44-47.

<sup>56</sup> Lewis, “Shame and Stigma,” 126-40.

<sup>57</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 18.

Racism and colonization are also factors that may feed shame internalization. In his book *The Souls of Black Folk*, published more than one hundred years ago (1903), W.E.B. Du Bois describes the “Spiritual Striving” of the African Americans of that period as follows:

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.<sup>58</sup>

The experience Du Bois describes in the quote above is shame in its internalized state. Brown remarks that “shame is about perception. [It] is how we see ourselves through other people’s eyes.”<sup>59</sup> When shame is internalized, exposure in the eyes of others becomes exposure of one’s inherent defectiveness as a human being. That is, to be seen means to be seen as irreparably and unspeakably bad.<sup>60</sup>

The attitude of looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, i.e., internalized shame, has also been the experience of the colonized Africans, according to Frantz Fanon in his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, a psychoanalytic description of the effects of the colonization on the colonized.<sup>61</sup> The colonized Africans, Fanon argues, developed a deep inferiority complex as they looked at themselves through the eyes of the colonizers and become overwhelmed by the desire to be white.

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<sup>58</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2003), 9.

<sup>59</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 82.

<sup>60</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, 75.

<sup>61</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles L. Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1967).

When shame is internalized, it is no longer one affect or feeling among many. It becomes a deep permanent feeling of unworthiness. Kaufman writes, “‘I feel shame’ becomes transformed, given new meaning: ‘I am shameful, deficient in some vital way as a human being.’”<sup>62</sup> And Kaufman notes, “After shame becomes internalized, a new shame experience, whether induced interpersonally or activated autonomously, must be defended against . . . because exposure both to others and oneself has become intolerable.”<sup>63</sup>

Kaufman then identifies six of the most prominent types of internalized shame defenses. They are rage, contempt, striving for power, striving for perfection, the transfer of blame, and internal withdrawal.<sup>64</sup> Rage is one of the most spontaneous defenses against shame. It may be expressed toward the self for not being careful enough and thus making the exposure happen. Or it may be expressed toward other, especially the one who caused the experience of shame. When rage is expressed toward the other, it serves the purpose of transferring the shame to that person. Contempt as a defense mechanism against shame is not as natural as rage. It involves rejection, be it the self or other. By rejecting itself, or the other, the self protects itself from future experience of shame.

Striving for power “is a direct attempt to compensate for the sense of defectiveness” that underlies an experience of shame. The self thinks that having control over its flaws, the other, and the circumstances might save it from another shame experience. “Instead of striving for power,” Kaufman writes, “an individual may quest

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<sup>62</sup> Kaufman, *Shame*, 72.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 79-97.

after perfection. This, like power-seeking, is a striving against shame and attempts to compensate for an underlying sense of defectiveness. If I can become perfect, no longer am I so vulnerable to shame.”<sup>65</sup>

Blaming is as spontaneous as rage. It is about blaming the self or other for causing the shame. Internal withdrawal involves retreating inside the self and then engaging in internal fantasy and imagery in order to sooth the painful experience of shame. This defense mechanism is more likely utilized by people with introverted temperament, as Kaufman writes,

When an individual with a given introverted nature is forced to contend with excessive shame, excessive beyond current capacity to cope or due to some failure of the supporting interpersonal environment, that individual is likely to fall back upon his [or her] own natural tendency to withdraw inside as a useful means of adaptation.<sup>66</sup>

In sum, shame may be internalized through affect-shame binds, drive-shame binds, and need-shame-binds. Besides, it may be internalized through family secrets, mysteries, and myths. It may also be internalized through abuse (physical, verbal, and/or emotional), stigma (illness, weight, disability, and addiction), gender expectations, racism, and colonization. This list, of course, is not comprehensive. There are many other factors through which shame may be internalized. For instance, in his book *Shame: Theory, Therapy, Theology*, Pattison argues that “certain aspects of Christian ideology or theology can intersect with personal experience to generate or maintain a sense of shame or defilement. [Also] some of the ways in which the practices of the Christian community

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 117.

may reflect, amplify and confirm the dynamics of chronic shame or defilement in individuals and in groups.”<sup>67</sup>

### Conclusion

From a social-scientific perspective, shame can be categorized into three forms—discretion, disgrace, and internalized. Discretion shame is the sense of shame that protects our humanness both at the personal and social levels. It is integral to being human. Disgrace shame is the painful experience of being ashamed, which involves feeling of diminishment and fear of disconnection. Disgrace shame may be internalized through different socially-related factors and create a shame-based identity, a personality character containing a constant feeling of unworthiness and chronic fear of rejection. Disgrace shame and internalized shame are disintegrative at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Wurmser is therefore right when he observes that “shame in its typical features is complex and variable, a range of closely related affects rather than one simple, clearly delimited one. It shades into moods on one side, into attitudes on the other.”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Pattison, *Shame*, 231. A helpful list of aspects of Christian ideology and practice that may induce shame internalization may be found on pages 234 -274.

<sup>68</sup> Léon Wurmser, *The Mask of Shame* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 17.

### **A Theological Interpretation of Shame**

In the Lutheran tradition, God’s word is conceived as both law and Gospel. The law has two uses.<sup>69</sup> Its first use is to protect and to sustain social orders by promoting civil conduct. The law demands the performance of good works. This use of the law is known as the “civil” or “political” use (*usus civilis* or *usus politicus*). The second use of the law, known as the “theological” or “spiritual” use (*usus theologicus* or *usus spiritualis*), is to reveal human’s sinful nature and sinful deeds. This second use, however, is deemed primary, as Luther writes in the *Smalcald Article*, “The foremost office or power of the law is that it reveals inherited sin and its fruits. It shows human beings into what utter depths their nature has fallen and how completely corrupt it is.”<sup>70</sup> I shall interpret shame from the perspective of these two uses of the law in the Lutheran tradition in order to show that shame, in addition to its personal and social functions, also has theological function.

#### Shame and the First Use of the Law

At least two things can be said about the relationship between shame and the first use of the law. One, discretion shame may be analogously associated with the law in its first use. Discretion shame sustains and protects our personal and social ordering of the world. The law in its first use, by promoting civil conduct, also seeks to sustain and protect social orders. Moreover, Luther, in agreement with Paul, contends that the work of the law is written on our hearts, and that our conscience bears witness to it (Romans

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<sup>69</sup> For a succinct summary on the two uses of the law, see Part III, Article II, “Concerning the Law,” of *The Smalcald Articles*, which may be found in Kolb and Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord*, 311-12.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 312.

2:15). In other words, the law functions as “a sense of shame,” i.e., discretion shame, that drives us to serve the well-being of the neighbor.

The law is good and holy. Indeed, it is spiritual. However, the law does not secure our core being and identity as human beings. Only the gospel, the righteousness of Christ bestowed upon us through the Word of promise, does so. As Broucek rightly points out, discretion shame is crucial to our personal and collective emotional, moral, and spiritual well-being.<sup>71</sup> However, in opposition to Schneider’s claim, a sensitivity to discretion shame will not result in any better understanding of what it means to be fully human.<sup>72</sup> The law in its first use belongs to the earthly realm and produces only “earthly righteousness” or “active righteousness,” to use Luther’s expressions. Likewise, a sensitivity to discretion shame produces only earthly or active righteousness. This kind of righteousness is an inadequate basis for defining what it means to be fully human. What defines our humanity fully is righteousness *coram Deo* and *coram mundo* simultaneously. In fact, what determines our ultimate identity is righteousness *coram Deo*.

Two, disgrace shame and internalized shame may prevent a person from fulfilling the law. As shown above, disgrace shame generates contempt either toward the self or other, or both. Contempt is a feeling that more likely leads a person to commit life-alienating reactions, again either toward the self or other, or both. Internalized shame, on the other hand, might lead to destructive compulsory behaviors, such as addiction to alcohol, drugs, food, sex, to name a few. Addiction may destroy the self and the neighbor, and thus violate the first use of the law. Furthermore, disgrace shame and

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<sup>71</sup> Broucek, *Shame and the Self*, 5.

<sup>72</sup> Schneider claims that “a sensitivity to the sense of shame will result in a richer understanding of what it means to be fully human.” See Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*, ix.

internalized shame bring about perfectionism. No one, however, can ever attain perfection, no matter how hard one strives for it. In fact, perfectionism is a form of self-righteousness or self-justification. A perfectionist thinks that he or she can be good and accepted only by being perfect. Such attitude violates the gospel, which is God's acceptance of the unacceptable, to use Paul Tillich's language.<sup>73</sup>

### Shame and the Second Use of the Law

At least two things also can be said about the relationship between shame and the second use of the law. On one hand, the law in its theological use causes shame. The law always accuses (*lex semper accusat*). It accuses the conscience and makes it, "terrified, humbled, despondent, and despairing," to use Luther's language.<sup>74</sup> Arthur B. Holmes cogently argues that Luther understands the conscience as the self.<sup>75</sup> As already pointed out, shame is affecting and affected by the whole self. In other words, the law in its theological use, by accusing the conscience, produces shame. Shame occurs, Dietrich Bonhoeffer argues, when we realize, through the accusations of the law, that we are sinful, and that we lay bare before God and cannot run away from God's presence.<sup>76</sup>

Since we cannot escape from God,<sup>77</sup> the shame of sin is deeply engrained in our human nature. "Shame," Bonhoeffer writes, "is man's ineffaceable recollection of his

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<sup>73</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1956), 164.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Arthur B. Holmes, "Nos Extra Nos: Luther's Understanding of the Self as Conscience," *The Drew Gateway* 53, no. 1 (1982).

<sup>76</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, trans. Neville Horton Smith, The Library of Philosophy and Theology (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 145.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Psalm 139.

estrangement from the origin; it is grief for this estrangement, the powerless longing to return to unity with the origin. Man is ashamed because he has lost something which is essential to his original character, to himself as a whole; he is ashamed of his nakedness.”<sup>78</sup> It is to be noted, however, that the shame because of sin should not be confused with internalized shame. The latter is made possible by the former. That is, our shame because of our sinful nature is the basis for internalized shame. The two are distinct, with the shame of sin having priority over internalized shame; yet the two are inseparable.

On the other hand, shame may lead a person to the gospel. The main purpose of the second use of the law is to prepare a person to receive the gospel. Shame may serve such purpose. As aforesaid in the introductory chapter, my awareness of my shame has led me to authentically live the reality of justification. And I believe, based on my experience, that when we acknowledge our shame, the gospel confronts this binding disease, dismantles its bondage, and reveals our true identity, which is we are accepted by God. Lynd states that “shame if confronted full in the face may throw an unexpected light on who one is and point the way toward who one may become. Full faced, shame may become not primarily something to be covered, but a positive experience of revelation.”<sup>79</sup> The gospel can confront shame full in the face.

Because the law brings about shame when revealing our sin, it is important to discuss the connection between shame and sin.

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<sup>78</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 145.

<sup>79</sup> Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity*, 20.

## Shame and Sin

When revealed through the law, sin generates both guilt and shame, but primarily shame. Adam and Eve, before the Fall, were naked, but they were not ashamed (Genesis 2:25). After the Fall, however, their eyes were opened, “and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves” (Genesis 3:7). Besides, “they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden” (Genesis 3:8). In other words, they were ashamed.

Moreover, we have discussed that shame is related to what we are, whereas guilt is related to what we do. Sin involves what we are and what we do. It is both ontological and ethical or behavioral. We are sinners and we commit sinful deeds. However, though these two aspects of sin are inseparable, and need to be distinguished, the ontological aspect has logical priority over the behavioral. We sin because we are sinners.

Unfortunately, despite the primacy of our sinful nature over our sinful deeds, and the clear connection the bible makes between sin and shame, the Christian church has interpreted sin mainly on the basis of guilt and seen salvation principally as forgiveness of sins. In the Lutheran tradition in particular, as already indicated, the doctrine of justification, the article upon which the church stands and falls, has been understood one-sidedly as forensic, i.e., proclamation of forgiveness.

Consequently, shame has received a negligible amount of sustained theological attention. Pattison, surveying recent Christian theological discussions on shame, including the works of the great theologians of the twentieth century, such as Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Reinhold Niebuhr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, among others, concludes,

Within the theological arena, shame has not been a major discrete category for analysis and understanding, even in the context of discussions about atonement.

Theologians use the word shame *en passant*, but most direct theological attention has been focused upon guilt and offence as the main constituents of sin and alienation from God and humanity. A number of theologians do allow some significance to shame in their writings. However, often their understandings of shame are partial, arbitrary or desultory. Shame has yet to receive the comprehensive theological examination that it deserves.<sup>80</sup>

For shame to have the theological examination it deserves, the church needs to interpret sin primarily in relation to shame. Doing so will actually bring to light the importance of the “new creation” or “re-creation” that the resurrection of Christ has brought about. This is important because, as Forde asserts, when the resurrection aspect of salvation or justification is restored to its proper place, the explosive character of the Christian message can come to light once again.<sup>81</sup>

Guilt can be dealt with easily by confession and penance. Nathanson writes, “Whenever we feel guilty, we can pay for the damage inflicted. The confessional is a system of release from guilt, for it allows us to do penance for sins we know we have committed—a simple trade of one action for another.”<sup>82</sup> Interpreting sin in relation to guilt may conceal the gravity of our sinful nature.

Shame, on the contrary, in the words of Lynd, “cannot be modified by addition, or wiped out by subtraction, or exorcised by expiation. It is not an isolated act that can be detached from the self. It carries the weight of ‘I cannot have done this. But I have done it and I cannot undo it, because this is I.’”<sup>83</sup> In other words, shame requires re-creation. Its remedy is the reality of the “New Creation,” i.e., the “New Being,” in Christ. “[I]f anyone

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<sup>80</sup> Pattison, *Shame*, 226. Italics in the original.

<sup>81</sup> Forde, *Justification by Faith*, 3.

<sup>82</sup> Nathanson, *Shame and Pride*, 19.

<sup>83</sup> Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity*, 50.

is in Christ, he [or she] is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV).

Moreover, interpreting sin primarily in relation to shame is beneficial for the practice of pastoral care and counseling. In his article “The Shame Factor: Theological and Pastoral Reflections Relating to Forgiveness,” Albers argues that “disgrace shame stands as a significant barrier to the hearing and appropriation of the words of forgiveness.”<sup>84</sup> For him, forgiveness is for guilt, and guilt is different from shame. He associates guilt with phenomenology, and shame with ontology.<sup>85</sup> Thus, guilt can be amended, but shame cannot.<sup>86</sup> What shame needs is acceptance.<sup>87</sup> “What is at the core of the gospel,” he writes, “is God’s grace, understood as forgiveness for one’s guilt and acceptance for one’s shame.”<sup>88</sup>

Albers notes, “Pastoral care for people with disgrace shame will have to start not with forgiveness but with ‘acceptance.’”<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, he contends that people with a shame-based identity need to know that they are accepted by God through Christ and that “their identity is inextricably bound up and determined by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ,” before they can appropriate the words of forgiveness.<sup>90</sup> In other words,

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<sup>84</sup> Robert H. Albers, “The Shame Factor: Theological and Pastoral Reflections Relating to Forgiveness,” *Word and World* 16, no. 3 (1996): 349.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 350.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 353.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 353.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.

pastoral theologians need to deal with shame before dealing with guilt. But before we further discuss strategies for the healing of shame, we shall describe the patterns and dynamics of shame in the Malagasy context as my research has shown.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MALAGASY SHAME: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DESCRIPTION

The previous chapter functioned as the interpretive move of this work and interpreted shame from social scientific and theological perspectives. From a social scientific perspective, the chapter showed that shame has three forms—discretion, disgrace, and internalized. Discretion shame creates boundaries that serve the well-being of the self and others. This type of shame is integral to being human both at the personal and social levels. Disgrace shame is painful and is disintegrative also at the personal and social levels. Moreover, disgrace shame can be internalized and creates an identity that is shame-based. A shame-based identity may develop through different social factors. From a theological perspective, the chapter demonstrated that discretion shame, disgrace shame, and internalized shame, have a theological dimension as well. Thus, shame, in its discretion, disgrace, and internalized forms, has personal, social, and theological dynamics.

The current chapter shall take on the descriptive-empirical move and describe the patterns and dynamics of shame among Malagasy. The descriptive-empirical task, according to Osmer, aims to answer the question “What is going on?” and gathers data that help determine patterns and dynamics of a particular episode, situation, or context. With its aim to explain and understand why something is going on in a given episode, situation, or context, the interpretive task sets a theoretical framework for the descriptive-

empirical task. Therefore, I shall use the three forms of shame (discretion, disgrace, and internalized), and the three dynamics of shame (personal, social, and theological) as frameworks to describe the patterns and dynamics of shame among Malagasy. Before delving into the exploration of the patterns of shame among Malagasy and their dynamics, however, I shall first discuss my research methodology and design.

### **Research Methodology and Design**

I explored the patterns and dynamics of shame among Malagasy by conducting in-depth interviews among lay ministers called “shepherds”<sup>1</sup> who work in the MLC *tobys*.<sup>2</sup> My research questions were: “How does shame function among MLC *toby* shepherds and how does it affect their ministry?” “What words do they use to describe this phenomenon and its effects in their ministry?” and “How do these shepherds deal with shame?” In other words, what resources do they use to address and heal shame?

I am interested in the exploration of the patterns and dynamics of shame among shepherds working in the *tobys* because I would like to promote an awareness and understanding of shame for MLC shepherds and beyond through future workshops or any form of training. As mentioned previously, being aware of and understanding shame is important for doing pastoral care and counseling.<sup>3</sup> I am interested in the *toby* settings

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<sup>1</sup> A shepherd, *mpiandry* in Malagasy, is a lay minister who is theologically trained for two years to be a pastoral caregiver and counselor, and whose ministry includes preaching, counseling, and exorcism. Shepherd ministry is a volunteer ministry.

<sup>2</sup> A *toby* is a church community center that welcomes any physically, mentally, and/or spiritually sick person, where shepherds and pastor(s) provide pastoral care and counseling.

<sup>3</sup> Patton, *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?*, 40.

because the *tobys* are at the heart of the MLC care ministry. To study the life of the *tobys* is the same as to study the care ministry of MLC.

The MLC has more than one hundred regular *tobys* and three main ones—Ankaramalaza, Soatanàna, and Farihimena. I chose to focus my research on the main *tobys*. Due to bad road conditions, however, I did not have access to Farihimena. Therefore, my data on the patterns and dynamics of shame among Malagasy were gathered from shepherds who work in Ankaramalaza and Soatanàna. I chose to focus my research on the main *tobys* because the care ministry practice in the MLC regular *tobys* depends so much on the models practiced in the main ones that I can, to some extent, generalize my findings from the main *tobys* to the regular.

I explored the patterns and dynamics of shame among shepherds in Ankaramalaza and Soatanàna using a qualitative simple exploratory methodology. Robert A. Stebbins defines exploratory research as follows:

*Social science exploration* is a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life. Such exploration is, depending on the standpoint taken, a distinctive way of conducting science—a scientific process—a special methodological approach (as contrasted with confirmation), and a pervasive personal orientation of the explorer. The emergent generalizations are many and varied; they include descriptive facts, folk concepts, cultural artifacts, structural arrangements, social processes, and beliefs and belief systems normally found there.<sup>4</sup>

I opted for this particular method because of my aim to describe and understand areas of psychological and social life—patterns and dynamics of shame. Moreover, I chose exploratory research method because the patterns and dynamics of shame among

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<sup>4</sup> Robert A. Stebbins, *Exploratory Research in the Social Sciences*, *Qualitative Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001), 3. Italics in the original.

MLC *toby* shepherds have not received any thorough empirical analysis. Stebbins recommends that “exploration is the preferred methodological approach . . . when a group, process, activity, or situation has received little or no systematic empirical scrutiny.”<sup>5</sup> Also, he writes, “Researchers explore when they have little or no scientific knowledge about the group, process, activity, or situation they want to examine but nevertheless have reason to believe it contains elements worth discovering.”<sup>6</sup> I had little knowledge of the patterns and dynamics of shame among *toby* shepherds, but I knew that this aspect of *toby* shepherds’ life is worth discovering.

I conducted three individual in-depth interviews in Soatanàna and three individual in-depth interviews in Ankaramalaza. All three participants in Soatanàna were men, whereas all three participants in Ankaramalaza were women. Due to the sensitivity of my topic, I chose a purposive sampling to select my interviewees. In a purposive sampling, the researcher chooses specific people within the population to use for a particular study or research project. The idea behind it is to concentrate on people with particular characteristics who will better be able to assist with the relevant research. Therefore, to select my interviewees, I announced and explained my research in the church and invited people to participate in the interview voluntarily.

In Soatanàna, willing participants had to gain the consent of the *toby* superintendent. This is part of the rules that are at work in this particular *toby*. Any shepherd who volunteers to participate in any research interview has to have authorization from the superintendent before he or she can proceed. The superintendent

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 6.

approved three men to participate in my research. In Ankaramalaza, participants were free to participate directly in the interview as they choose to. But to balance the gender of my participants, I deliberately selected three women.

The age range of the interviewees is between twenty-two and fifty-eight years old and each interviewee signed a form of consent before the interview (See Appendix A). I developed one interview protocol for all the interviews (See Appendix B). Each interview was conducted in Malagasy, the local and official language of Madagascar, and lasted for one hour to one hour and half. Throughout the interviews, I used digital audio-recorders, but at the same time took notes. I also used a journal to keep notes of my research process and any other relevant information. The research was conducted between June 10 and July 15, 2015.

The research conformed to the standards of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Luther Seminary. Thus, the records of this study are kept confidential. All electronic data have been kept in a password-protected file in my personal computer (which is already a password-protected computer as well). All hard-copy data have been kept in a locked file in my study room. Only my advisor, Theresa Latini, and I have access to the data and the audio recordings. The data will be destroyed by July 15, 2018, three years after its collection. In the present data analysis, I do not include any information that makes it possible to identify my interviewees. However, while I make every effort to ensure confidentiality, anonymity cannot be guaranteed due to the small number studied.

I transcribed the data and manually coded them in Malagasy. In terms of coding, I used word-by-word, line-by-line, phrase-by-phrase, theme-by-theme, concept-by-concept

coding, as suggested by Kathy Charmaz.<sup>7</sup> Two main themes emerged after the analysis of the data. The two themes are: 1) shame has three patterns—*fahalalana menatra*, *fahafahambaraka*, and *hasaronkenatra*, and 2) shame can be healed. In addition, my data revealed that all three patterns of shame affect the shepherds' lives at the personal, social, and theological levels. That is, the three patterns of shame have personal, social, and theological dynamics. These dynamics of shame could be categorized as an independent theme. However, I will merge the description of these dynamics of shame with the description of the three patterns of shame, as they are interconnected.

### **The Patterns and Dynamics of Shame among Malagasy**

#### Fahalalana Menatra

All my interviewees identified this pattern of shame. They described it as a sense of shame before an act. *Fahalalana* is a Malagasy noun which means “knowledge.” And *menatra* is a Malagasy verb which means “being ashamed. “I am ashamed” may be glossed in Malagasy as “*menatra* (being ashamed) *aho* (I).” *Fahalalana menatra*, then, means, literally, “knowledge of being ashamed,” that is, “the ability to know shame,” or, in the language of Schneider, “a sense of shame.” For *toby* shepherds, *fahalalana menatra* is an important virtue to have. An interviewee insists that “a person who has no sense of shame does not deserve to be a shepherd!”<sup>8</sup>

First, *fahalalana menatra* safeguards a shepherd as a shepherd. *Toby* shepherds are expected to be role models for the *toby* community in particular and for the

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<sup>7</sup> Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis* (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 42-71.

<sup>8</sup> “. . . izany olona tsy mahalala menatra izany, dia tsy mendrika ho mpiandry velively!”

community at large in general. People expect them to be kind, caring, and wise people of prayer, just to mention a few traits. A sense of shame will help a shepherd behave according to people's expectations, as one interviewee states: "Wherever you are, even where people might not know that you are a shepherd, you always need to keep in mind that you are a shepherd. This will help you to be careful with your reactions and behaviors and protects you not be dishonored."<sup>9</sup> Second, *fahalalana menatra* safeguards the *toby* as a community. As we shall see below, when a toby shepherd becomes dishonored, the toby she or he belongs to is dishonored also. Third, behaving well as a shepherd is considered as giving glory to God. A shepherd stated that "when you respect yourself as a shepherd, you actually give glory to God."<sup>10</sup>

#### Fahafahambaraka

All my interviewees also acknowledged this pattern of shame. While *fahalalana menatra* was described by my interviewees as a sense of shame before an act, *fahafahambaraka* was described as an experience of shame after an act. This is the difference between these two patterns of shame. According to my interviewees, *fahafahambaraka* is a Malagasy noun, which is a combination of two different nouns: *fahafahana* and *baraka*. *Fahafahana* comes from the root word *afaka*, which can mean "to be able to," "to be allowed to," "to pass a test or an exam," etc., when used as a verb, and "removed" or "taken away," when used as an adjective. Here it is used as an

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<sup>9</sup> "N'aiza n'aiza alehanao, na amin'ny toerana tsy mahafantatara anao ho mpiandry aza ny olona ao, dia tsy maintsy tandrovana mandrakariva ny maha-mpiandry. Rehefa apetrakao ao an-tsainao ao foana hoe mpiandry ianao, dia tsy ho sahinao ny hanao fihetsika sy fiteny mamoa fady sy manala-baraka."

<sup>10</sup> ". . . ny fanajanao ny maha-mpiandry anao, dia tena fanomezanao voninahitra an'Andriamanitra."

adjective. *Baraka* is a noun which means “honor.” *Afaka baraka*, or, in proper Malagasy, *afa-baraka*, thus, means “deprived of honor,” or “dishonored.” The noun *fahafahambaraka* denotes the state of being dishonored. A person becomes *afa-baraka* when she or he breaks any significant rules or taboos of the community she or he belongs to. Theft, for instance, generates *fahafahambaraka*.<sup>11</sup>

A person’s *fahafahambaraka* is personal as well as social or communal. A *toby* shepherd’s *fahafahambaraka* is a *fahafahambaraka* for the *toby* community which she or he works for. An interviewee gave the following illustration: “If a *toby* shepherd is caught stealing somebody’s belongings, he or she is not the only one dishonored, the *toby* community as a whole also is. Indeed, we all are dishonored!”<sup>12</sup> In addition, a *toby*’s *fahafahambaraka* is also a *fahafahambaraka* before God. All my interviewees asserted that a *toby* is a holy place, chosen and sanctified by God. To dishonor a *toby* is therefore a shame before God. In fact, my interviewees suggested that the person who brought the shame into the *toby* and the *toby* community as a whole needs to repent before God.

#### Hasaronkenatra

This pattern of shame was acknowledged only by the three female interviewees. They described *hasaronkenatra* as a Malagasy noun which derives from two different nouns: *sarona* and *henatra*. *Sarona*, depending on the context, can mean “cover” or

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<sup>11</sup> An interviewee puts it as follows: “Afa-baraka ny olona iray rehefa manao ny zavatra tsy tokony hatao eo amin’ny fiarahamonina, toy ny fady sy ny fitsipika aman-dalàna maro samihafa. Ny halatra, ohatra, dia maha-afa-baraka!”

<sup>12</sup> “Raha misy, ohatra, mpiandry anankiray tratra mangalatra zavatr’olona, tsy izy irery ihany anie no afa-baraka e, fa ny olona rehetra eto amin’ny toby mihitsy. Isika rehetra mihitsy moa ’zany no afa-baraka e!”

“covered.” Here it means “covered.” *Henatra*, which derives from the verb *menatra*,<sup>13</sup> can denote the genitals, but here it denotes “shame.” *Sarona henatra*, in proper Malagasy *saron-kenatra*, therefore, means “covered by shame,” in the sense of “bound by shame.” A person who is *saron-kenatra* is a person who has internalized shame so that his or her identity becomes shame-bound. *Hasaronkenatra* then denotes the state of being shame-bound.

My interviewees describe *hasaronkenatra* as a “*complexe d’infériorité*” (inferiority complex). An interviewee states, “When you are *saron-kenatra*, like me, you feel deeply inside you that you are inferior and small . . . very small.”<sup>14</sup> For the *toby* shepherds, this feeling of inferiority creates fear of participation in the usual shepherd’s activities, such as worship leadership, prayer for the people, preaching, and exorcism. These activities are believed to serve and contribute to the well-being of the *toby* as community.

In Ankaramalaza, also in Soatanàna, there is a devotional service that is held twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon. The service includes hymns, scripture readings, sermons, exorcism, and prayers for the people. Sermons, exorcism, and prayers are done by shepherds. The sermon tasks in particular are usually assigned. But when the assigned preacher is absent, any shepherd present in the service is expected to volunteer and fill in. *Hasaronkenatra*, according to my interviewees, creates fear and prevents a shepherd from volunteering for preaching. “Yesterday, for instance,” an interviewee shared, “the assigned preacher did not come. . . . I wanted to volunteer, but I was so

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<sup>13</sup> See the section “Fahalalana Menatra” above for the meaning of *menatra*.

<sup>14</sup> “Lefa anao ’zany saron-kegnatry, ako iaho ma ’zany, da tena mahatsapa mitsiny anao hoe ambany sady kely. . . . da tena kely bilitiny mitsiny e, tena kely!”

scared. . . . Two voices were competing in my head. One voice says ‘go and do it.’ Another voice, however, says, ‘you have nothing to say. You will be exposed. . . . And I did not do it!’<sup>15</sup> Then, she continued, “When I get home, I felt ashamed of myself, I am still feeling ashamed. . . . And I am feeling ashamed before God.”<sup>16</sup>

### **Shame Can Be Healed**

My interviewees unanimously believe that shame can be healed. It can be healed through prayer, exorcism, and the hearing of the Word of God. Prayer is believed to be powerful. The statement, “Prayer changes things,”<sup>17</sup> was used to support this claim. Female interviewees believe that *hasaronkenatra* may be natural or from the devil. They stated that in either case, prayer and exorcism can help with its healing. An interviewee testified, “I used to be *saronkenatra*, but one of my teachers<sup>18</sup> told me to pray and attend exorcism every day to heal my shame. I followed his advice and now I am not *saronkenatra* anymore.”<sup>19</sup> All interviewees stated that the Word of God may bring comfort at any time of shame experience.

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<sup>15</sup> “Ohatra ’zao an, omaly, ts’avy gny mpitoriteny. Da nagniry mafy agnatiko agny iaho hagnano anazy, nefa da natahotry. . . . Nisy feo roy gny tagnatiko tao. Hoy gn’eritritroko raiky en, ’ndana, ataovy. Fa hoy gn’eritritriko raiky koa ‘ino gny raha ho zakainao egnny zao? Afa-baraka egnny anao androany. . . . Da tsy nagnano ma rô iaho!”

<sup>16</sup> “Lefa avy tandragno anefa iaho, da nahatsiaro megnatry tagnatiko tagny iao, da mbola megnatry iaho zao e. . . . sady mahatsiaro megnatry eo anatrehan’Andriamanitra!”

<sup>17</sup> “Ny vavaka manova zavatra.”

<sup>18</sup> As mentioned above, shepherds are trained theologically for two years. The interviewee here referred to one of his teachers during this two-year training.

<sup>19</sup> “Iaho taloha da saronkegnatry ma. Fa gny mpampianatry anahy niteny hoe mivavaha isan’andro, da magnatogna koa asa sy fampaherezagny isan’andro, f’ho hitanao fa da ho afaky io hegnatrinao io. Narahiko gny torohevitriny seky. Da tsy saronkegnatry koa iaho zao.”

### **Limitation of the Research**

The findings of this research are limited in many ways. The number of people interviewed, which is six in total, is too small for generalizability. Furthermore, though all my interviewees identified the first pattern of shame, *fahafahambaraka*, and the second pattern, *fahafahambaraka*, only the female interviewees identified the third one, *hasaronkenatra*. Further research, therefore, needs to be conducted in order to identify the correlation between gender and *hasaronkenatra*. Also, though I expected to identify the effects of shame on the ministry of my interviewees, the data revealed only the effects of shame on their lives at the personal, social, and theological levels. Again, further research needs to be carried out in order to describe the correlation between shame and the shepherds' ministry. Moreover, I expected to find out about the importance of shame awareness for the shepherds. However, the interviewees confused the notion of shame awareness with shame experience. Finally, my interviewees did not make any connection between the origin of *hasaronkenatra* and family systems, abuse, stigma, gender expectations, racism, or colonization. Further research needs to be done to identify the correlation of this pattern of shame to these factors.

### **Conclusion**

The data of this study revealed that there are three patterns of shame among Malagasy—*fahalalana menatra*, *fahafahambaraka*, and *hasaronkenatra*. *Fahalalana menatra* is a sense of shame before an act. It is integral to the life of the shepherds and the *toby* community as a whole. *Fahafahambaraka* is an experience of being ashamed. It is painful and disintegrative at the personal, communal/social, and theological levels. *Fahalalana menatra* is the state of being bound by shame. It is disintegrative at the

personal, communal/social, and theological levels. The three patterns of shame among Malagasy therefore correspond respectively with discretion shame, disgrace shame, and internalized shame described in chapter four. Discretion shame is a sense of shame before a given act. Disgrace shame is the actual experience of being ashamed. And internalized shame generates a shame-bound identity.

As enunciated above, my interviewees believe that *hasaronkenatra* can be healed through prayer, exorcism, and the hearing of the Word of God. I agree with them. However, I agree more with Pattison, who notes that “Christians would argue that specifically religious healing methods such as prayer should be the main, and possibly the sole, means of effecting cure,”<sup>20</sup> but that “Christians should be prepared to learn about how to understand and work with shame from other disciplines. This will help to prevent either evasion or facile optimism in relation to dysfunctional shame and will deepen an integrative religious response.”<sup>21</sup> The next two chapters shall therefore discuss strategies for the healing of shame respectively from social scientific and theological perspectives.

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<sup>20</sup> Pattison, *Shame*, 287.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 290.

## CHAPTER SIX

### HEALING SHAME: A SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC PERSPECTIVE

This work has so far discussed three out of the four tasks of the practical theological interpretation. The two previous chapters, serving respectively as the interpretive and the descriptive-empirical tasks, interpreted and described shame from an interdisciplinary perspective. Chapter four concluded that shame has two forms—discretion and disgrace. Disgrace shame, however, may be internalized and form a shame-based identity. Hence, one can conclude that shame has three forms—discretion, disgrace, and internalized. All three forms have personal, social, and theological dynamics.

Chapter five showed that there are three patterns of shame among Malagasy—*fahalalana menatra*, *fahafahambaraka*, and *hasaronkenatra*. The three patterns correspond respectively with the three forms of shame discussed in chapter four. Also, *fahalalana menatra*, *fahafahambaraka*, and *hasaronkenatra* all have personal, social, and theological dynamics. Discretion shame/*fahalalana menatra* is integral to being human, whereas disgrace shame/*fahafahambaraka* and internalized shame/*hasaronkenatra* are disintegrative. Therefore, I would like to suggest that disgrace shame/*fahafahambaraka* and internalized shame/*hasaronkenatra* need to be healed at the personal, social, and theological levels.

Chapters two and three, functioning as the normative task, developed the two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework that would guide the interpretation and the description of shame, as well as the choice for strategies for its healing, i.e., the pragmatic task, which the present chapter and the next shall undertake. According to Osmer, the pragmatic task seeks to answer the question “How should we respond?,” and looks for strategies that might influence a particular episode, situation, or context. The two kinds of righteousness as an interdisciplinary framework, as noted, recommend that pastoral theologians suggest healing for shame from both theological and social scientific perspectives. Therefore, the present task shall cover two chapters. The current chapter shall discuss strategy for the healing of shame from a social scientific perspective, whereas the next chapter shall discuss strategy for the healing of shame from a theological perspective.

In the present chapter, I shall claim, from a social scientific perspective, specifically drawing upon Brown’s works, that the strongest antidote for shame is empathy.<sup>1</sup> In other words, empathy heals shame. Self-empathy and empathy *from* other heals the shame of the self, whereas empathy *toward* other may contribute to the healing of the other’s shame. Moreover, drawing upon Siegel’s works, I shall also claim that self-empathy and empathy toward other are the linchpins of what is called in IPNB “integration,” the heart of well-being.<sup>2</sup>

According to Brown, empathy is a skill. “I believe,” she writes, “that empathy is best understood as a skill because being empathic, or having the capacity to show

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 32.

<sup>2</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 9.

empathy, is not a quality that is innate or intuitive. We might be naturally sensitive to others, but there is more to empathy than sensitivity.”<sup>3</sup> As a skill, empathy can be learned. And it can be learned and developed at any time in the lifespan. The question is: How does one develop the skill of empathy? As this chapter unfolds, it will become clear that NVC can help with the cultivation and development of empathy, as it educates people to be empathic both toward the self and toward other, as well as to be able to receive empathy from other.

The present chapter therefore falls into three sections. Section one shall discuss the importance of empathy for shame resilience. Section two shall discuss the interconnection between empathy and integration. And section three shall discuss the role of NVC in the cultivation of empathy.

### **Empathy and Shame Resilience**

In her book *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't): Making the Journey from “What Will People Think?” to “I am Enough”*, Brown proposes a shame resilience that has four elements in it. The four elements are: 1) recognizing shame and understanding our triggers, 2) practicing critical awareness, 3) reaching out, and 4) speaking shame.<sup>4</sup>

Recognizing shame is being aware of the physical, emotional, mental, or even spiritual symptoms of shame when it strikes. Does your chest tighten when you feel shame? Or does your mind go blank? Where do you feel the effects of shame in you? Understanding our triggers involves identifying the events or circumstances that most

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 69-172.

likely trigger our shame, such as appearance, parenting, aging, work, religion, addiction, family, etc. Critical awareness involves knowing why an experience of shame arises in us and how it affects us emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally. It is to be mindful of our shame experience as it arises. Reaching out involves sharing our experience of shame with someone that can relate to us with empathy. And speaking shame involves cultivating shame awareness to the general public. Shame is a silent disease. It loves silence and it thrives well when it is kept silent. When we speak about it, however, shame loses its power.

Empathy, both toward the self, i.e. self-empathy, and from other, is the preconditions for these four elements of shame resilience. First, to recognize shame and to understand our triggers, to practice critical awareness, to reach out, and to speak shame all need some degree of self-empathy. Kristin Neff, a leading scholar in self-empathy, or in her preferred terminology, self-compassion, describes this particular skill as being kind and understanding, instead of mercilessly judging and criticizing, when confronted with personal failings.<sup>5</sup> Self-compassion has three essential components: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness:

Self-kindness, by definition, means that we stop the constant self-judgment and disparaging internal commentary that most of us have come to see as normal. It requires us to *understand* our foibles and failures instead of condemning them. It entails clearly seeing the extent to which we harm ourselves through relentless self-criticism, and ending our internal war.<sup>6</sup>

Common humanity consists of remembering that we all suffer in one way or another. The triggers, the circumstances, and the degrees of our suffering might be

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<sup>5</sup> <http://self-compassion.org/the-three-elements-of-self-compassion-2/> (accessed May 20, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Kristin Neff, *Self-Compassion: Stop Beating Yourself up and Leave Insecurity Behind* (New York: William Morrow, 2011), 42. Italics in the original.

different. However, we all feel pain when we suffer.<sup>7</sup> Neff defines mindfulness as “a form of ‘meta-awareness,’ which means awareness of awareness. Instead of simply feeling anger, I am aware that I am now feeling anger.”<sup>8</sup> When applied to shame, mindfulness means that one is aware that one is feeling shame. That is, one is critically aware of shame, recognizes it, and understands its triggers.

Self-compassion, Neff argues, enhances emotional intelligence, the type of intelligence that entails the ability to monitor our emotions and to skillfully alter them and guide our thinking and action. In other words, emotional intelligence is the ability to be aware of our feelings without being swept by them, but being able to make wise choices.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, self-compassion helps us to accept who we are regardless of the judgment or praise we receive from others. It helps us to do so because it “does not try to capture and define the worth or essence of who we are. It is not a thought or a label, a judgment or an evaluation. Instead, self-compassion is a way of *relating* to the mystery of who we are.”<sup>10</sup> Lastly, self-compassion enhances motivation and self-growth by helping us to be more authentic and autonomous in our life.

Moreover, Brown, drawing upon Neff, notes, “Self-compassion is key because when we’re able to be gentle to ourselves in the midst of shame, we’re more likely to reach out, connect, and experience empathy.”<sup>11</sup> In other words, self-compassion is the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 152. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>11</sup> Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 75.

prerequisite for reaching out. And I believe that self-compassion is also the prerequisite for speaking shame. Shame is hard to communicate without certain degree of kindness toward the self. In sum, self-compassion, or self-empathy, is the foundation for the four elements of shame resilience.

Second, Brown, based on her empirical research on the correlation between empathy and shame resilience, maintains that empathy from other is the strongest antidote for shame. For her, the importance of self-empathy in the process of shame resilience, as stated in the quote above, is to help us to reach out for empathy. “Empathy,” she claims, “creates a hostile environment for shame—it can’t survive.”<sup>12</sup> That is, empathy dissipates shame.

Empathy, for Brown, is the ability or skill to tap into our own inner experiences in order to connect with an experience someone is sharing with us.<sup>13</sup> It has four defining elements: 1) to be able to see the world as others see it, 2) to be nonjudgmental, 3) to understand another person’s feelings, and 4) to communicate our understanding of that person’s feeling.<sup>14</sup> In other words, “empathy [is] ‘the ability to perceive a situation from the other person’s perspective. To see, hear and feel the unique world of the other.’”<sup>15</sup>

In conclusion, self-empathy and empathy from other are the cornerstones of shame resilience. Since empathy from other is a crucial element for the healing of one’s shame, I believe that empathy toward other also contributes enormously to the alleviation

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>13</sup> Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't)*, 44.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 17-41.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 33.

of the other's shame. Most importantly, as I shall show below, self-empathy and empathy toward other constitute what Siegel calls "integration," the heart of health.

### **Empathy and Integration**

Integration is an IPNB concept. And IPNB is a broad field that draws from the findings of different disciplines exploring what it means to be human.<sup>16</sup> Its basic presupposition is that who we are is shaped by the interactions among the mind, the brain, and our interpersonal relationships, and that our well-being consists of the integration within and among these three elements.<sup>17</sup>

IPNB conceives of the mind, brain, and relationships as "three aspects of one reality"—the flow of energy and information—rather than three separate elements.<sup>18</sup> Energy, in its very essence, despite the many ways physicists describe it and the various forms it has, is the ability to perform an action, such as moving our limbs or even thinking a thought.<sup>19</sup> "We feel radiant energy when we sit in the sun," Siegel writes, "we use kinetic energy when we walk on the beach or go for a swim[;] we utilize neural energy when we think, when we talk, when we listen, when we read."<sup>20</sup> Information, on the other hand, "consists of swirls of energy that have symbolic meaning."<sup>21</sup> "These words you are reading, or words that you hear," Siegel illustrates, "are packets of

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<sup>16</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 3.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-10.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>19</sup> Siegel, *Mindsight*, 52.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 6.

information.”<sup>22</sup> The mind “is the embodied and relational process that *regulates* the flow of energy and information,” while the brain “is the embodied neural *mechanism* shaping the flow,” and relationships “are the *sharing* of the flow.”<sup>23</sup>

Siegel claims that “[i]ntegration is the organizing principle that links the ways energy and information flow is shared (relationships), is shaped (the mechanisms of the embodied nervous system or, termed simply, the brain), and is regulated (the mind).”<sup>24</sup> That is, integration involves the integration of the flow of energy and information both within the nervous system and between people.

According to Siegel, integration is the process of linking differentiated parts of a system into a functional whole. It is a process because it is never completely achieved. The process of integration has two fundamental components—differentiation and linkage.<sup>25</sup>

Differentiation is how parts of a system can become specialized, unique in their growth, individualized in their development. Linkage involves the connection of separate areas to each other. . . . When differentiated areas become linked, they retain some of their essential qualities while also becoming a part of a functional whole. Here we see how integration makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts.<sup>26</sup>

One analogy that Siegel uses to describe the nature of integration is choral harmony. When each member of the choir sings with his or her unique voice, and each voice is agreeably linked with one another, a complex and harmonious melody emerges.

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<sup>22</sup> Siegel, *Mindsight*, 52.

<sup>23</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 7. Emphases in the original.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

“[The] balance between differentiated voices on the one hand and their linkage on the other,” Siegel writes, “is the embodiment of integration.”<sup>27</sup>

The opposite of integration is rigidity and chaos. Rigidity is the absence of differentiation. It is like a choir singing in unison. The voices are linked, but they are not differentiated. Chaos, on the other hand, is the absence of linkage. To use the choir analogy again, chaos is like singing chorally, but with each voice being off key. That is, the voices are differentiated, but they are not linked.

Siegel identifies nine domains of integration, the first one being the integration of consciousness. This type of integration, according to Siegel, is “the foundation for the other domains.”<sup>28</sup> It entails the integration of the sense of knowing and that which is known, for consciousness is the state of being aware; and awareness has two distinct elements—the subjective experience of awareness or the sense of knowing, and the object of awareness or that which is known. These two elements need to be differentiated and linked in order to promote consciousness well-being.

To cultivate consciousness integration, Siegel has proposed the “Wheel of Awareness” practice, which he describes as follows:

The Wheel of Awareness is a reflective, “time-in” practice that uses the metaphor of a wheel as a visual image for the mind. The hub represents the experience of being aware. Points on the rim signify anything of which we can be aware. The rim itself is divided into four segments. The first include the five senses that bring in data from the outside world. The second segment represents the input from the body—the “sixth sense.” The third segment of the rim represents our mental activities, such as emotions, thoughts, images, and memories. A final segment signifies our sense of connection to other people and to things outside our bodily selves, such as our relationship to our community or our planet. The Wheel of

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<sup>27</sup> Siegel, *Mindsight*, 66.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

Awareness practice enables an individual to gain the skill of differentiating the elements of the rim from one another, and to distinguish the experience of knowing (the hub) from that which is known (the rim). Through the systematic focus of attention, this practice is designed to integrate consciousness.<sup>29</sup>

The second domain of integration that Siegel identifies is the bilateral or horizontal integration, which involves the integration of the left and right hemispheres of the brain. The left hemisphere “is responsible for logic, spoken and written language, linearity, lists, and literal thinking,” whereas the right hemisphere “is the realm of imagery, holistic thinking, nonverbal language, autobiographical memory, and a host of other processes.”<sup>30</sup> Horizontal integration “entails respecting differences while cultivating collaborative connections between these two important but distinct ways of knowing.”<sup>31</sup>

The third domain of the nine is the vertical integration. It consists of the integration of the data from the limbic and the brainstem areas, and the body proper. The limbic area is responsible for processing emotion, motivation, various forms of memory, and our attachment relationships. In other words, the limbic regulates the state of receptivity in our body. The brainstem is the mechanism of basic arousal, alertness, the physiological state of the body and the brain, and the fight-flight-or-freeze reaction to threat, and regulates our bodily reactivity. Vertical integration is the integration of our bodily sense of receptivity and reactivity.

Memory integration is the fourth domain. According to Siegel, there are two types of memory; one is implicit and the other explicit. Implicit memory is the early form of memory we develop even before our birth up to the first year of life. This type of memory

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<sup>29</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 294.

<sup>30</sup> Siegel, *Mindsight*, 72.

<sup>31</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 381.

has no recall of the experience or the time it occurred. It is a memory without subjective internal experience.<sup>32</sup> Hence, it makes us “act, feel, and imagine without recognition of the influence of past experience on our present reality.”<sup>33</sup> “If prior encounters with animals with large teeth have shown that they present a danger,” Siegel illustrates, “then within the memory of such an animal will be the association of fear. The next time we encounter such a beast, we will be motivated by fear to run for safety.”<sup>34</sup> Explicit memory, conversely, is the memory we develop from the first year of life onward and requires conscious awareness for encoding. It involves factual and autobiographical memory. Memory integration, therefore, “is the linkage of differentiated implicit memory into the explicit forms of factual and autobiographical memory with which we can exercise intention and choice.”<sup>35</sup>

Narrative integration, the fifth domain, is interconnected with the horizontal integration described above, as it is about harnessing the power of the left and the storage of the right hemispheres of the brain in order to make sense of our narratively-shaped life.

A story is the linear telling of a sequence of events, and so naturally narrative integration involves the left hemisphere’s linguistic, logical, linear drive to explain the cause-effect relationships of things in life. But autobiographical storage and the ability to understand our mental lives are predominantly right-sided affairs, suggesting that to tell a coherent story of our lives, we need collaboration between these two differentiated, lateralized way of seeing and being in the world.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 383.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

The sixth domain, state integration, and the seventh, interpersonal integration, are connected with each other. We humans are driven and motivated by essential needs such as independence, mastery, autonomy, closeness, solitude, and love, just to mention a few. State integration is the process of identifying my own needs in order to differentiate them from the needs of others. It is, for instance, about giving myself time alone, if I am in need of solitude. It is about integrating our needs at the “I” level. Interpersonal integration, on the other hand, is the integration of our needs at the “we” level. It “involves the honoring and relishing of differences while cultivating compassionate connections with others.”<sup>37</sup>

The eighth domain of integration, temporal integration, is “the way we differentiate our longing for certainty, permanence, and immortality from—and link them with—the reality of life’s uncertainty, transience, and mortality.”<sup>38</sup> We long for certainty, but at the same time we know that we cannot control or predict the outcome of things. We also know that we are mortal, and that nothing lasts forever. Siegel notes that as the eight domains of integration described above are created and developed, the ninth and the last domain, the transpirational integration, which he describes as “breathing across,” arises. Transpirational integration

involves a person’s sense of coming to feel connected to a larger whole. The “larger” here refers to a sense of belonging to something bigger than merely a bodily defined sense of self (as in vertical integration), or even to friends and family, as in interpersonal integration. Transpirational integration has the feeling

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 385.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 386.

that joining with others to give back to the world is as natural as taking care of oneself.<sup>39</sup>

### Integration and Mindsight

According to Siegel, integration may be cultivated through mindsight, the ability to see and transform our own mental activities as well as those of others.<sup>40</sup> Mindsight is a mental ability; and the mind, as mentioned above, functions as a regulatory process of the flow of energy and information. The mind's regulatory role involves two-fold tasks—monitoring and modifying. Siegel analogously describes these tasks as follows:

Consider the act of driving. To drive or “regulate” a car, you must both be aware of its motion and its position in space and also be able to influence how it moves. If you have your hands on the wheel but your eyes are shut (or focused in your text message), you can make the car move, but you're not driving it—because *driving* means regulating the car's movement, its flow, across time. If you have your eyes open but you're sitting in the backseat, you can monitor the movement of the car (and make comments, like one particular relative I know), but you can't actually modify its motion yourself. (No matter how hard you try. Sorry.)<sup>41</sup>

Mindsight, therefore,

is a process that enables us to monitor and modify the flow of energy and information within the [nervous system and within relationships]. The *monitoring* aspect of mindsight involves sensing this flow within ourselves—perceiving it in our own nervous systems, which we are calling Brain—and within others through our Relationships, which involve the sharing of energy and information flow through various means of communication. We then can *modify* this flow through awareness and intention, fundamental aspects of our mind, directly shaping the paths that energy and information flow take in our lives.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Siegel, *Mindsight*.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 54. Italics in the original.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 267. Emphases in the original.

Moreover, the mind, in its very nature, is a product of both our inner neural connections and our interpersonal communications with others.<sup>43</sup> Our inner neural connections include the neural connections throughout the whole body and are not limited to the enskulled brain only. The brain is intricately interconnected with the whole of the body through the spinal cord. The brain has three major areas—the neocortex or cortex, the limbic, and the brainstem. The cortex, the upper area of the brain, creates the “complex perceptual and abstract representations that constitute our associational thought process.”<sup>44</sup> It is the generator of our perceptions of the world, and our ability to think and to reason. The limbic, the central area, processes emotion, motivation, various forms of memory, and our attachment relationships.<sup>45</sup> And the brainstem, the lower area, serves as the mechanism of basic arousal, alertness, and the physiological state of the body and brain. It also functions as the mechanism of the fight-flight-or-freeze reaction to threat.<sup>46</sup> “Input to the brainstem and limbic areas,” Siegel notes, “comes from the spinal cord . . . and ultimately rises up to our midline prefrontal regions in the cortex.”<sup>47</sup> Our inner neural connections therefore involve the nervous system as a whole.

Our interpersonal communications entail the sharing of energy and information flow with one another. As already noted, energy is the ability to perform an action, such

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<sup>43</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 5.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Daniel J. Siegel, *Pocket Guide to Interpersonal Neurobiology: An Integrative Handbook of the Mind* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012), “Brain and Body,” 3.

as moving our limbs or thinking a thought.<sup>48</sup> Swirls of energy are going up and down our body, moment by moment, as we think any thought, experience any emotion, and move any part of our body. Information consists of swirls of energy that have symbolic meaning, such as the words you are reading right now.<sup>49</sup>

Mindsight, therefore, enables us to perceive and to change our own mental activities and those of others because the mind, the generator of mindsight, and which functions as both a monitor and a modulator, is both embodied and relational. Besides, we can understand the mental states of others thanks to what are known as “mirror neurons.” Marco Iacoboni, a leading neurologist and neuroscientist, writes, “We achieve our very subtle understanding of other people thanks to certain collections of special cells in the brain called mirror neurons. These are the tiny miracles that get us through the day. They are the heart of how we navigate through our lives. They bind us with each other, mentally and emotionally.”<sup>50</sup>

### Integration and Mindfulness

Siegel argues that through the monitoring role of the mind, mindsight may provide us with mindful awareness of our “own inner life and the surrounding world with kindness, a form of positive regard for the self and others.”<sup>51</sup> Siegel notes that “[t]his form of awareness [i.e., mindful awareness] . . . can be thought of as having the features

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<sup>48</sup> Siegel, *Mindsight*, 52. Italics in the original.

<sup>49</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 6.

<sup>50</sup> Marco Iacoboni, *Mirroring People: The New Science of How We Connect with Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), 4.

<sup>51</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 44.

of *self-compassion* and *other-directed compassion*.”<sup>52</sup> According to Siegel, mindful awareness, which he preferably calls “mindfulness,” is the basis for integration. As mentioned above, integration of consciousness is the foundation for the other domains of integration. And this domain of integration involves, at its core, mindful awareness or mindfulness.<sup>53</sup>

Mindfulness is the state of being attentive to our inner experiences, without being swept up by judgments.<sup>54</sup> And there are two types of mindfulness, one a state of being and the other a trait. Mindfulness as a state of being is the awareness of what is going on at the present moment.<sup>55</sup> It is being attentive to “our here-and-now experience with curiosity, openness, acceptance, and love (COAL).”<sup>56</sup> COAL is essential here because, Siegel remarks, “If you have a COAL stance, the rest takes care of itself. There is no particular goal, no effort to ‘get rid’ of something, just the intention to be, and specifically, to experience being in the moment as one lets go of grasping onto judgments and goals.”<sup>57</sup> Mindfulness as a state of being generates short-term integration. Mindfulness as a trait, on the other hand, creates long-term integration. This type of mindfulness is the state of being mindful of our moment by moment experiences.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid. Emphases added.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 380.

<sup>54</sup> Daniel J. Siegel, *The Mindful Brain: Reflection and Attunement in the Cultivation of Well-Being* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 10.

<sup>55</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 44.

<sup>56</sup> Siegel, *The Mindful Brain*, 15.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>58</sup> Siegel, *The Developing Mind*, 44.

The point being made here is that mindfulness is the foundation for integration. And mindfulness, according to Siegel, as quoted above, has the features of self-empathy and other-directed empathy. Thus, one can conclude that integration has the features of self-empathy and empathy. In other words, self-empathy and empathy toward other constitute integration. Empathy is therefore essential not only for the healing of shame, but also for the promotion of health and well-being in general. As articulated above, empathy is a skill that can be learned and cultivated at any time in the lifespan, and I believe that NVC can help with its cultivation.

### **Empathy and NVC**

Rosenberg developed the model and practice of NVC out of his firsthand experience with violence, especially during his childhood in Detroit in the 1940s. He henceforth became preoccupied with the following two questions: “What happens to disconnect us from our compassionate nature, leading us to behave violently and exploitatively? And conversely, what allows some people to stay connected to their compassionate nature under even the most trying circumstances?”<sup>59</sup>

To answer these questions, Rosenberg supposes that there are four ways we receive a negative message someone gives us.<sup>60</sup> One is to receive the message “personally by hearing blame and criticism.”<sup>61</sup> For example, if I bump into someone’s new car, and the owner is angry and says, “You, idiot!,” if I choose to take the message personally, I would accept the person’s judgment of me as an idiot and blame myself for

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<sup>59</sup> Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication*, 1.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 49-50.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

bumping into his or her car. My self-talk would be: "I am an idiot!" A second way to receive a negative message is to blame the speaker by expressing contempt or even rage toward him or her. In response to "You, idiot!," I would react with rage and say, "You think I'm an idiot? You are the idiot!" A third option is to acknowledge our own feelings and needs. It is to practice self-empathy. Using the same example above, I would express myself as follows: "When I hear you say I am an idiot, I feel sad and angry, because I need some understanding." The fourth option is to sense the feelings and needs of the speaker. It is to practice empathy. I might ask the owner of the car I hit as follows: "Are you feeling angry because you need some considerations for your new car?" The first two options, according to Rosenberg, generate more violence, whereas the last two engender life-enhancing communication. Hence, NVC aims to equip people with the skills of self-empathy and empathy.

According to Rosenberg, there are four basic skills a person needs to learn and to integrate in order to be able to practice empathy toward the self and toward others. The four basic skills are observation (O), feeling (F), need (N), and request (R). Understanding these four basic skills is the first step to the integration and practice of NVC.

Observation is a non-judgmental and non-evaluative description of what is going on. For instance, a class starts at 8 a.m., but a student comes at 8:15 a.m. And this is the third time this particular student comes to the class at 8:15 a.m. The teacher then says to the student: "You are always late!" This is a judgment. This is an evaluation of the student. An observation would be: "This is the third time you come to this class at

8:15am.” From an NVC perspective, judgments and evaluations escalate violence, whereas observation can lead to Nonviolent Communication.

Emotions play important roles in human life. Emotions might get triggered any time by any reaction, thought, behavior, event, or circumstance. When we are not conscious of our feelings, we might be controlled by them and react automatically and unconsciously in regrettable ways. But when we consciously name and acknowledge our feelings, we can be in control of them and can react deliberately and out of choice. Naming and acknowledging our feelings as they arise in us is therefore an important component of the NVC basic skills. NVC distinguishes between feelings and non-feelings. A feeling would state, “I feel sad, anxious, or happy, etc.”<sup>62</sup> A non-feeling would state, “I feel like a failure.” This sentence expresses a thought, not a feeling. It expresses what I think I am.

From an NVC perspective, needs, whether they are physical, emotional, or spiritual, are at the root of our feelings. In fact, needs are the underlying motivation for all our reactions, whether we are conscious of them or not. When our needs are met, we thrive and are energized to produce life-giving reactions. When our needs are not satisfied, we feel pain. But we are motivated to meet our needs. Thus, when we do not know how to meet those needs in life-giving, interdependent ways, we are prone to be violent toward ourselves and toward others.

Human needs are therefore fundamental values that serve our well-being in this life. Hence, the ability to recognize and to acknowledge our needs is very important. In

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<sup>62</sup> See Appendix C for the feelings inventory.

fact, identifying needs is the conceptual hub of the whole process of NVC.<sup>63</sup> The teacher in the example above might need respect.<sup>64</sup> Needs should be differentiated from strategies. Strategies are ways to meet needs. The teacher in our example might say to the student after judging the student as being always late, “I need you to come to class on time!” This is not an NVC strategy, because it is a demand and not a request.

Request, the fourth component of NVC basic skills, is a strategy to meet the identified need(s) that underlie(s) our feeling(s). As such, a request needs to be specific. In fact, NVC uses the acronym PLATO to describe the characteristics of a request. PLATO stands for Person, Location, Action, Time, and Object.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, a request lets the person to whom the request is made freely choose either to accept or not. That is, a request is not a demand. A demand requires the other person to accept what is asked. A demand is coercive, a request is not.

Observation is the non-judgmental description of what is going on; feeling is naming the feelings that get triggered by what is observed; need is naming the needs behind the identified feelings; and request is the expression of the strategy one envisages to meet the needs. The teacher could express him- or herself to the student, using the four basic skills of NVC, as follows: “This class starts at 8 a.m. This is the third time you have come at 8:15 a.m. I feel angry and worried, for I need respect and commitment to this class. Would you please come to my office this afternoon at three, or tomorrow morning at ten, or anytime you are available and talk about this?”

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<sup>63</sup> Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger and Theresa F. Latini, *Transforming Church Conflict: Compassionate Leadership in Action* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 5.

<sup>64</sup> See Appendix D for the needs inventory.

<sup>65</sup> Hunsinger and Latini, *Transforming Church Conflict*, 30.

In addition to the basic skills of OFNR, NVC involves also three skill sets, which are self-empathy, honesty, and empathy.<sup>66</sup> Self-empathy is the process of identifying, based on what one observes, what one feels and needs, and making request accordingly. Self-compassion may then lead to honesty, the process of expressing one's observation, feelings, and needs, and, if needed, requests to others. Empathy is the process of identifying the feelings and needs of the other, and, if needed, finding strategies that might make the needs met. Empathy might start with what is called "empathic guess." The question I asked the owner of the car I hit ("Are you feeling angry because you need some considerations for your new car?") is an empathic guess. The person might have feelings and needs otherwise. Self-empathy, empathy, and honesty are the goals of NVC, as Hunsinger and Latini notes, "NVC aims for three things: authentic connection with oneself, [or self-empathy,] empathic reception of the other, and honest expression toward the other."<sup>67</sup>

### **Conclusion**

What is needed for the healing of shame, from a social scientific perspective, is empathy—empathy toward the self and empathy from other. Moreover, empathy toward the self and empathy toward other are essential for the formation of integration, the heart of well-being. Therefore, empathy serves the well-being of the self and the neighbor. Self-empathy, empathy from other, and empathy toward other serve the well-being of the self. Empathy toward other serves the well-being of the neighbor. It should be noted,

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<sup>66</sup> I am indebted to Hunsinger and Latini in my understanding of NVC as involving basic skills and skill sets. See their book cited above.

<sup>67</sup> Hunsinger and Latini, *Transforming Church Conflict*, 4.

however, that being empathic is not salvific. It does not guarantee one's salvation.

Salvation is a divine gift, not something we gain by being empathic. Serving the well-being of the self and that of the neighbor through empathy belongs to the earthly realm or the human existence *coram mundo*. It belongs to the realm of the law and reason.

Empathy is a skill that can be learned and developed through NVC, a process of communication that educates people to be able to give empathy both toward the self and toward other, as well as to receive empathy from other. NVC is therefore important for the healing of shame and for the formation of integration. Accordingly, in order for the Malagasy church to effectively address the problem and pain of shame in the Malagasy context, I encourage the church to embrace the practice of NVC and equip people with this life-giving skill.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON HEALING SHAME THEOLOGICALLY

Chapter six, in proposing a strategy for the healing of shame from a social scientific perspective, has argued that empathy, a skill that can be learned and developed through NVC practice, is the linchpin for shame resilience. Indeed, empathy is essential for the cultivation of integration, the heart of well-being. The present chapter shall propose a strategy for the healing of shame from a theological perspective, and argue that what is needed for the healing of shame is faith in God's act of justification. But faith is the fruit of the Word. Hence, the present chapter is divided into two sections. Section one provides an interpretation of justification. The purpose of the interpretation is to highlight the importance of this divine act for the human phenomenon of shame. Section two is a short observation on faith and preaching.

#### **Shame and Justification**

As noted in chapter one, Smedes claims in his book *Shame and Grace: Healing the Shame We Don't Deserve* that grace is the antidote for shame. According to Smedes, grace is acceptance whereas "[t]he feeling of shame is about our very *selves*—not about some bad thing we *did* or *said* but about what we *are*. It tells us that we *are* unworthy. Totally. It is not as if a few seams in the garment of our selves need stitching; the whole

fabric is frayed. We feel that we *are* unacceptable.”<sup>1</sup> According to Smedes, grace meets the feeling of unworthiness of shame.

Albers, in his book *Shame: A Faith Perspective*, also claims that grace, as acceptance, meets the feeling of unacceptableness of shame and heals it. In addition, Albers believes that the creation, baptism, the theology of the cross, church community, and justification are all helpful theological resources for addressing the problem and pain of shame.<sup>2</sup> Shame is the feeling that one *is* bad. The biblical creation account, however, confronts such an assertion and gives comfort that one is actually good as a creation of God. Moreover, Shame shakes a person’s identity. It is a disease that destroys the self as a whole. Baptism gives reassurance of a person’s identity. In baptism, a person becomes a child of God and that is who she or he is, as God says “You are my [child]; today I have begotten you” (Psalm 2:7).

In the cross, Jesus bears all our shame, which means that we do not bear our shame alone. God is with us in our shame experience. The faith community is also a place where individuals bear the burdens of one another’s shame. Finally, Albers asserts that the doctrine of justification, when it becomes a lived reality, overcomes unworthiness. For him, “the doctrine of justification is that God has declared to you that you are a person of value and worth.”<sup>3</sup>

I agree with Smedes and Albers that grace, as God’s acceptance of us, despite our unacceptable sinful nature, heals shame, for what a person with shame needs is

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<sup>1</sup> Smedes, *Shame and Grace*, 6. Italics in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Albers, *Shame*, 86-108.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

acceptance. However, I veer from Albers in that I associate grace with justification. According to one of the Reformation dicta, justification is by grace. In fact, I agree with Paul Tillich in his interpretation of justification as God's acceptance of the unacceptable.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, I relate baptism also to justification. As mentioned in chapter one, passive righteousness or justification is bestowed upon us through baptism.

Furthermore, the cross, i.e., the death and resurrection of Christ, for me, is inseparable from justification. Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead for our justification (Romans 4:25). Moreover, "the message of the cross," Mattes asserts, "liberates nature and allows creation to be restored."<sup>5</sup> That is, creation is subject to justification. This also means that a community of faith is a community that lives under the reality of justification. In other words, justification, to borrow Bayer's words, "has principal significance. It touches on every theme. Justification concerns not merely one's own history, not only world history, but also natural history. It has to do with everything."<sup>6</sup>

As a result, justification has to do with shame. First, God justifies the sinful human being. That is, justification is for sin. I argued in chapter four, however, that sin is interconnected primarily with shame. According to the Genesis account of the Fall, Adam and Eve felt shame after they had sinned. Also, while sin is both behavioral (guilt) and ontological (shame), the ontological aspect has priority over the behavioral. We sin because we are sinners. Furthermore, the Lutheran understanding of the second or

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<sup>4</sup> Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, 164.

<sup>5</sup> Mattes, *The Role of Justification in Contemporary Theology*, 187.

<sup>6</sup> Bayer, *Living by Faith*, xii.

theological use of the Law shows that sin generates shame. Therefore, if justification is for sin, then it is for shame.

Second, as noted above, justification is interconnected with the death and resurrection of Christ. Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger, drawing on Barth, argues that Jesus, on the cross, bears the shamefulness of our sin in order for us to share God's honor and glory. She writes,

According to Barth, God enters fully into the shamefulness of sin and in Christ takes it upon himself so that human beings might share God's honor and glory. Barth goes so far as to call Jesus "the one great sinner" (IV/1, 239). Not because of any sinfulness of his own, but because of the sin and shame of the entire human race that he bears in his body. Jesus knows human sin in its awful depths and bears the shamefulness of it to an extent greater than human imagining.<sup>7</sup>

Third, justification is both forensic and effective. It is forgiveness of sins and new creation or new life. That is, it is for our deeds and for our being, meaning that it is both for our guilt and our shame. To quote Luther again, he describes God's act of justification as follows: "[God] first purifies by imputation, then he gives the Holy Spirit, through whom he purifies even in substance. Faith cleanses through remissions of sins, the Holy Spirit cleanses through the effect. This is divine cleansing and purification which is let down from heaven, by faith and the Holy Spirit."<sup>8</sup> For Luther, the forensic is effective, and vice versa, as Bayer writes,

For Luther the customary alternative of "forensic" or "effective" is no alternative at all. The forensic is effective, the effective forensic. That is his answer to the much-debated question. What God says, God does. The reverse is also true. What God does, God says; his doing is not ambiguous. God's work is God's speech. God's speech is not fleeting breath. It is a most effective breath that creates life, that summons into life. It is the "nature" of God to create out of nothing, to be the

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<sup>7</sup> Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counseling*, 199.

<sup>8</sup> LW 34:168-169.

Creator by the Word alone. This is not a speculative thought, for those who confess the one who creates out of nothing and gives life to the dead are those who have experienced the truth that God justifies the ungodly by his word, creating a new self for the old Adamic self.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, our new self, i.e., our new identity, is safe and secured in God through the divine act of justification. That is, justification is the ultimate ground for our identity. Justification is God's unconditional acceptance of us. It is God's "yes" to us, despite our unacceptableness. This is important for the phenomenon of shame. First, in our experience of shame, either disgrace or internalized, we can recur to the reality of justification again and again. Second, justification creates a sense of shame, i.e., discretion shame, in us. It reminds us that we are children of God and must live as such. We are good trees that bear good fruits.

To recur to justification again and again requires faith, which is a total trust in God and his promise of justification in Jesus Christ. In faith, justification becomes ours. It becomes a lived reality in our life. But how do we come to faith?

### **Faith and Preaching**

We come to faith by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). The hearing of the Word requires preaching (Romans 10:14). Therefore, preaching plays a crucial role for the formation of faith. Preaching, from a Lutheran perspective, is both judgment and promise. It is both Law and Gospel. The Law judges our being as well as our deeds, whereas the Gospel transforms also our being as well as our deeds. The Gospel is nothing but the divine gift of justification. According to Bayer, justification is a speech act. It is a

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<sup>9</sup> Bayer, *Living by Faith*, 43.

word of promise.<sup>10</sup> As mentioned above, justification is both forensic and effective.

Therefore, to preach the gospel rightly is to proclaim it as addressing our shame (being) and guilt (deeds). Likewise, to hear the gospel rightly is to hear it as for our shame and our guilt.

It is important to note that the task of proclaiming the gospel is not confined particularly to the art of preaching. Theology, in general, as Forde states, is for proclamation. It is for the proclamation of God's promise which brings about forgiveness of sins and new life.<sup>11</sup> Forde argues that theology and proclamation are closely correlated. Without theology there is no proclamation, and without proper understanding of proclamation, theology falsifies itself and oversteps its bounds.<sup>12</sup> In addition to proclaiming the gospel as addressing shame and guilt, the church in Madagascar, in order to address the problem and pain of shame, needs to produce theology that proclaims the gospel rightly.

## CONCLUSION

From the perspective of the two kinds of righteousness, what is needed for the healing of shame is faith and empathy. In faith we live in the reality of justification, a divine act that secures our core identity in and before God. In other words, faith heals our shame *coram Deo*. It heals shame at the theological level. In empathy, we heal our own shame and that of the other. Self-empathy and empathy from other heals our own shame, whereas empathy toward other contributes to the healing of the shame of the other. Stated

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<sup>10</sup> Bayer, *Theology the Lutheran Way*, 126-34.

<sup>11</sup> Forde, *Theology Is for Proclamation*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

differently, empathy heals our shame *coram mundo*. It heals shame at the personal and interpersonal (social) levels. This is important because the healing of shame, according to Pattison, constitutes “two main tasks. The first is to overcome or transcend the sense of . . . shame in individuals. The second is to address the social and political factors that create and exploit an unhelpful sense of shame and alienation on the level of institutions and communities.”<sup>13</sup> This approach is what Pattison calls “integration,” which he describes as follows:

The use of the word “integration” is proposed as a way of indicating that the task of [healing] shame extends beyond particular individuals. . . . [W]hat might be required for optimal well-being is a situation where individuals and groups are recognized and respected by themselves and others as *distinct*, but also as *belonging* within the community.<sup>14</sup>

But a more integrative approach to the healing of shame involves healing of shame *coram Deo*. Thus, the healing of shame has three main tasks. The first is to heal shame at the personal level. The second is to heal shame at the social level. And the third is to heal shame at the theological level. All three levels are intertwined with each other. Faith and empathy are what is necessary for the healing of shame at these three levels.

Faith comes through preaching, a proclamation of the good news of justification, whereas empathy can be learned and developed through the practice of NVC. Nevertheless, faith and empathy go hand-in-hand. They are inseparable. Yet they must be distinguished from each other, with faith having primacy over empathy. Faith is the basis for empathy, and not vice versa. But as faith is active in love, so is it active in empathy. Indeed, Rosenberg connects the practice of NVC with love, as he writes,

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<sup>13</sup> Pattison, *Shame*, 155.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* Emphases in the original.

Nonviolent Communication really grew from my attempt to understand the concept of love and how to manifest it, how to *do* it. I had come to the conclusion that love is not just something we feel, but it is something we manifest, something we do, something we have. And love is something we give: We give ourselves in particular ways. It is a gift when you reveal yourself nakedly and honestly, at any given moment, for no other purpose than to reveal what's alive in you. Not to blame, criticize, or punish. Just "Here I am, and here is what I would like. This is vulnerability at this moment." To me, that giving is a manifestation of love.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Marshall B. Rosenberg, *Being Me, Loving You: A Practical Guide to Extraordinary Relationship* (Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 2005), 61. Italics in the original.

## APPENDIX A

### **Sample of Informed Consent Form**

You are invited to be in a research study which explores how shame functions among “shepherds” working in the Malagasy Lutheran Church’s three main tobys— Ankaramalaza, Soatanàna, and Farihimena. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by me, Barson Lahivelo Mahafaly, 1570 Eustis St., Apt. #220, St. Paul, MN 55108, USA, as part of my PhD dissertation project in Pastoral Care and Counseling at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, USA.  
My advisor is Theresa Latini.

#### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to explore how shame functions among shepherds who work in the Malagasy Lutheran Church tobys.

#### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: I will interview you individually for about two hours to gain your own description of how shame functions in you.

#### **Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

The study might trigger your own shame. If so, you are free to end the interview at any point without any negative repercussions.

In addition, there will be no direct benefits of participation in this project. There will be indirect benefits, though. My knowledge of the dynamics of shame within the Malagasy context in general and in the tobys in particular will help me as a teacher of theology to better train my future students for their pastoral care and counseling ministry. Moreover, it will help me to have clear ideas of how to conduct workshops for toby ministers to provide more effective care to those who come or live in the tobys.

#### **Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept confidential. If I publish any type of report, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. All data will be kept in a locked file in my study room; only my advisor, Theresa Latini, and I will have access to the data and, if applicable, any tape or video recording. If the research is terminated for any reason, all data and recordings will be destroyed. While I will make every effort to ensure confidentiality, anonymity cannot be guaranteed due to the small number to be studied.

Raw data will be retained but all identifying information removed by May 30, 2017.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Luther Seminary or with the Malagasy Lutheran Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is Barson Lahivelo Mahafaly. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at the toby superintendent's number.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information or have had it read to me. I have received answers to questions asked. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of investigator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I consent to be audiorecorded (or videorecorded):

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I consent to allow use of my direct quotations in the published thesis document.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Protocol

1. Please tell me about yourself: your name, date of birth, how long you have been working as a shepherd in this toby.
2. When you hear the word “shame,” what comes to your mind?
  - a. What words would you use to describe shame?
  - b. Could you give an example of when you felt shame and describe what was going on in you then?
3. How does this feeling of shame impact your ministry?
  - a. What does shame do to you as a person and as a shepherd?
  - b. Could you give an example of when shame interfered with your ministry?
  - c. What gives you the strength and courage to keep on doing your ministry despite shame?
4. What do you think happens when one acknowledges his or her shame?
  - a. What might be the importance of being aware of one’s shame?
  - b. Could you give an example of when you were aware of this feeling of shame and what happened?
5. Anything else you would like to share?

*Thank you for your time for and participation in this interview!*

## APPENDIX C

### **Feelings Inventory<sup>1</sup>**

This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is compiled for the purpose of helping people to be able to clearly articulate feelings and confidently describe a whole range of emotional states.

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<sup>1</sup> Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication*, 44-46.

## How we are likely to feel when our needs are being met

absorbed	engrossed	moved
adventurous	enlivened	optimistic
affectionate	enthusiastic	overjoyed
alert	excited	overwhelmed
alive	exhilarated	peaceful
amazed	expansive	perky
amused	expectant	pleasant
animated	exultant	pleased
appreciative	fascinated	proud
ardent	free	quiet
aroused	friendly	radiant
astonished	fulfilled	rapturous
blissful	glad	refreshed
breathless	gleeful	relaxed
buoyant	glorious	relieved
calm	glowing	satisfied
carefree	good-humored	secure
cheerful	grateful	sensitive
comfortable	gratified	serene
complacent	happy	spellbound
composed	helpful	splendid
concerned	hopeful	stimulated
confident	inquisitive	surprised
contented	inspired	tender
cool	intense	thankful
curious	interested	thrilled
dazzled	intrigued	touched
delighted	invigorated	tranquil
eager	involved	trusting
ebullient	joyous, joyful	upbeat
ecstatic	jubilant	warm
effervescent	keyed-up	wide-awake
elated	loving	wonderful
enchanted	mellow	zestful
encouraged	merry	
energetic	mirthful	

## How we are likely to feel when our needs are not being met

afraid	edgy	nervous
aggravated	embarrassed	nettled
agitated	embittered	numb
alarmed	exasperated	overwhelmed
aloof	exhausted	panicky
angry	fatigued	passive
anguished	fearful	perplexed
annoyed	fidgety	pessimistic
anxious	forlorn	puzzled
apathetic	frightened	rancorous
apprehensive	frustrated	reluctant
aroused	furios	repelled
ashamed	gloomy	resentful
beat	guilty	restless
bewildered	harried	sad
bitter	heavy	scared
blah	helpless	sensitive
blue	hesitant	shaky
bored	horrible	shocked
brokenhearted	horrified	skeptical
chagrined	hostile	sleepy
cold	hot	sorrowful
concerned	humdrum	sorry
confused	hurt	spiritless
cool	impatient	startled
cross	indifferent	surprised
dejected	intense	suspicious
depressed	irate	tepid
despairing	irked	terrified
despondent	irritated	tired
detached	jealous	troubled
disaffected	jittery	uncomfortable
disappointed	keyed-up	unconcerned
discouraged	lazy	uneasy
disgusted	leery	unglued
disheartened	lethargic	unhappy
dismayed	listless	unnerved
displeased	lonely	unsteady
disquieted	mad	upset
distressed	mean	uptight
disturbed	miserable	vexed
downcast	mopey	weary
downhearted	morose	wistful
dull	mournful	withdrawn

woeful  
worried  
wretched

## APPENDIX D

### **Needs Inventory<sup>1</sup>**

Again, this list is neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is compiled for the purpose of helping people to be able to identify their needs and to clearly articulate them.

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<sup>1</sup> Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication*, 54-55.

Some of the basic human needs we all share

**Autonomy**

- to choose one's dreams, goals, values
- to choose one's plan for fulfilling one's dreams, goals, values

**Celebration**

- to celebrate the creation of life and dreams fulfilled
- to celebrate losses: loved ones, dreams, etc. (mourning)

**Integrity**

- authenticity
- creativity
- meaning
- self-worth

**Interdependence**

- acceptance
- appreciation
- closeness
- community
- consideration
- contribution to the enrichment of life (to exercise one's power by giving that which contributes to life)
- emotional safety
- empathy
- honesty (the empowering honesty that enables us to learn from our limitation)
- love
- reassurance
- respect
- support
- trust
- understanding
- warmth

**Play**

- fun

- laughter

**Spiritual Communion**

- beauty
- harmony
- inspiration
- order
- peace

**Physical Nurturance**

- air
- food
- movement, exercise
- protection from life-threatening forms of life: viruses, bacteria, insects, predatory animals
- rest
- sexual expression
- shelter
- touch
- water

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