

## Karl Barth's Christology



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# **Karl Barth's Christology**

**Its Basic Alexandrian Character**

**By**  
**Charles T. Waldrop**

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*For Lyneve and Andy*



## Preface

This book began as a study of Barth's christological language. In the early stages of my research, I was influenced by the emphasis among philosophers upon linguistic analysis, and my goal was to clarify and evaluate the principles which govern Barth's uses of the term "Jesus Christ" and its variants, such as "Jesus," "Christ," "Son of Man," and so forth. I was particularly intrigued by the fact that Barth assigns to "Jesus Christ" predicates which appear startling, confusing, and even contradictory. Following the lead of analytic philosophers, I wanted to determine whether Barth's christological propositions are meaningful, and if they are, what factors provide the foundation for their meaning.

It soon became evident to me, however, that the principles which govern Barth's christological language are theological principles, not simply linguistic or philosophical principles. Consequently, I found it necessary to turn to the history of Christian theology, especially the crucial debates about Jesus Christ. As the final product of my research indicates, I have concluded that the dialogue between the theologians of Alexandria and the theologians of Antioch during the early centuries of Christian history, when the formative creeds were being developed, sheds considerable light upon the obscurities present in Barth's statements about Jesus Christ. When one becomes aware that Barth follows Alexandrian theologians in his understanding of the identity of Jesus Christ, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the unity of the person of Jesus Christ, Barth's uses of "Jesus Christ" and its variants become understandable.

At one stage of my research, I believed that Barth was an Antiochian theologian. I was influenced by com-

mentators such as John McIntyre, who understand Barth as though he were a representative of the Antiochian theological tradition, and I discovered that much of Barth's christology can appear to "make sense" when it is seen from that perspective. It was my teacher and dissertation adviser, Dr. Gordon D. Kaufman, Professor of Theology at Harvard University, who first raised questions in my mind regarding the validity of that interpretation. In a private conversation, he told me that he doubted that Barth understands the human nature of the Logos as an individual person, even though that human nature is described in the Church Dogmatics as having its own personality and will. Since those who classify Barth as an Antiochian theologian tend to conclude that Barth identifies the human nature which the Logos assumed in the incarnation with the individual named "Jesus," I realized that if Dr. Kaufman's doubts were justified, the view that Barth is an Antiochian theologian is seriously threatened. That realization was an important turning point in my research, for it led me both to reevaluate the idea that Barth is an Antiochian theologian and also to give careful consideration to the possibility that Barth might stand in the Alexandrian theological tradition. Once I began to interpret Barth from an Alexandrian perspective, I discovered how much more sound that view is.

The last stage of the development of the subject matter of the book had to do, again, with philosophy. I came full circle, so to speak, in that my study began and ended with an emphasis upon philosophical concerns. Dr. Jacques Waardenburg, General Editor of the Mouton series "Religion and Reason," in addition to many other thoughtful observations, suggested that I broaden the scope of my study beyond christology by considering the philosophical presuppositions of Barth's theology in comparison with the philosophical foundations of Alexandrian theology. He concluded, correctly, I believe, that adding a discussion of this question would enhance the quality of the book and also make it more interesting to philosophers as well as theologians. The results of my research and reflection on this topic to date are found primarily in the section "Barth's Theology and the Alexandrian Theological Tradition" in the fifth chapter. Because this issue is important and complex, and because I



realize that my examination of it is not exhaustive, I hope that my observations will stimulate others to continue the investigation.

Many people and institutions have contributed to the completion of this work, and it would not be possible to acknowledge all of them. However, I want to express my gratitude to those whose influence has been most decisive.

First, I am grateful to the members of my family, especially my parents, my wife, and my son. My mother taught me by example that religion is an important dimension of human life; without her influence I doubt that I would have chosen the study of religion as my life's work. My wife, Lyneve, is also a college professor; we have helped each other balance the demands of Ph.D. programs, teaching careers, and domestic responsibilities. She read the entire manuscript and made many valuable suggestions regarding content and style. My young son, Andy, has heard about this book almost all of his life; his growing understanding of its importance to me, and his consequent willingness to allow me quiet time have led me to admire his young maturity.

Second, many of my teachers, fellow students, and colleagues have had a significant impact on me. Dr. Dan O. Via, Jr., now of the University of Virginia, was the professor of my first religion course in college, and it was under his direction that I first experienced the satisfactions of studying religion academically. Dr. J. William Angell, Wake Forest University, was my first professor of historical and systematic theology; and Dr. Leander E. Keck, now Dean of Yale Divinity School and at one time my professor at Vanderbilt University, restimulated my interest in theology when it was at a low ebb. Dr. Gordon D. Kaufman, in addition to his insight about Barth's concept of the human nature of the Logos, presented many constructive criticisms which have enhanced the quality of this work. Also, he, Dr. Richard R. Niebuhr, and Dr. Wolfhart Pannenberg launched my teaching career by inviting me to be "Teaching Fellow" in courses they taught at Harvard Divinity School, and each of them gave me valuable guidance. Others who have helped me develop my theological skills are Herbert W. Richardson, University of Toronto; George Rupp, Dean of Harvard Divinity School; Melvin Goering, Executive Director of Associated Colleges

of Central Kansas; Wayne Proudfoot, Columbia University; Gene Klaaren, Wesleyan University; Marcus Hester, Wake Forest University; Robert Shellenberger, Greeley, Colorado; Ronald Vinson and Thomas F. Duncan, Atlanta, Georgia; Claude Stewart, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Tom Davis, Skidmore College; and Gerald Largo, St. Francis College.

Third, in a category by himself is Dr. Allen Hackett, now a retired churchman, who was Area Minister of the Metropolitan Boston Association, United Church of Christ, and my "superior" when I was a student-pastor. Dr. Hackett, an expert on French Protestantism and the author of several books, took time off from a busy schedule to read my manuscript and make comments. He provided helpful suggestions and enthusiastic encouragement. He and his wife Dorothy have become honorary members of my family.

Fourth, for financial support, I want to register my appreciation to Brother Donald Sullivan, O.S.F., President, and the members of the Board of Trustees, St. Francis College, Brooklyn, New York, for providing research funds for use by faculty members. I am also grateful that the members of the Faculty Research Committee, chaired by Professor Sidney Rutar, awarded me a portion of those resources to apply toward the production costs of this volume.

Fifth, for advice regarding technical matters related to publication, I am grateful not only to the staff at Mouton, especially Asta Wonneberger, but also to Kevin Von Gonton and Francis Slade. For typing, I want to thank Sarah Braveman, Lynne Roberts, Nancy Giammarella, Elisabeth Barlow and Joe Ann Olszowy. For proofreading, I am grateful to Gerald Galgan, Jeanne-Anne Lewis, Nithya Micheletti, and Geraldine Smith.

Finally, I want to thank Professor Jacques Waardenburg, not only for his valuable advice regarding subject matter and style, but also for selecting this work for publication in the "Religion and Reason" series. I am elated that my years of study have been rewarded with this good fortune. Any mistakes of detail or judgment that remain, in spite of the efforts of my many advisers, are, of course, my own.

Saratoga Springs, New York

Charles T. Waldrop

## Note on Reference

Due to the contemporary production methods used in the publication of this volume, the note numbers have been placed in square brackets on the line of type. In most instances, the bracketed number has been positioned immediately after the passage to which it refers, in the spot where a book produced by traditional printing methods would ordinarily set a small superscript. However, because of the amount of space required, it has sometimes been necessary to place a bracketed number on the line following the passage to which it refers. The notes have been numbered consecutively in each chapter, and they have been assembled in one section following the text.



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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

The principal purpose of this book is to demonstrate that Barth's christology is predominantly Alexandrian rather than Antiochian in character. In order to achieve this goal, we shall focus upon Barth's treatment of the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ, his understanding of the unity of the person of Christ, and his use of the name "Jesus Christ" and its variants. In these three areas Barth pursues a line of thought which is consistently Alexandrian.

These three issues merit attention because they have been decisive in past debates between Alexandrian and Antiochian thinkers and also because they are important topics of discussion in the contemporary assessment of Barth's theology. Consequently, concentrating upon them will enable us to portray in an efficient manner the sharp contrast between Alexandrian and Antiochian modes of thought and, at the same time, accentuate the relevance of our findings for Barthian scholarship. In addition, these boundaries will allow us to delineate crucial elements in Barth's christology while freeing us from the necessity of explicating every detail.

In order to clarify what we mean when we say that Barth's christology is Alexandrian, it is necessary to characterize Alexandrian thought and show how it differs from Antiochian. While a more detailed account of these traditional ways of doing theology will be presented later,<sup>[1]</sup> our understanding of the basic distinctions between them can be offered here.

In our judgment, it is helpful to define Antiochian and Alexandrian christologies according to how they conceive the identity of Jesus Christ. For Antiochian thought, Jesus Christ is first of all an individual human being, a

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concrete person. Although he has a special relation to God and performs a unique role in God's plan for all men, he nevertheless does not become something other than a man. In Alexandrian theology, on the other hand, Jesus Christ is first of all the eternal Logos and Son of God, the second "person" of the trinity who condescends to the creaturely realm and unites human nature to himself. In Antiochian theology, Jesus Christ is the man who is "also" divine, while in Alexandrian thinking Jesus Christ is the divine person who is "also" human.

Given these diverse conceptions of who Jesus Christ is, the differences between these two theologies on the three issues before us can be readily discerned. First, in Alexandrian theology the divinity of Jesus Christ is an inherent quality of his being. As the second "person" of the trinity, Jesus Christ is divine prior to and apart from his existence as a man. In contrast, in Antiochian theology Jesus Christ is divine because of his unique relation to God. Because God is present in and through Jesus Christ in his redemptive act, and since Jesus Christ participates in this act, one may say that Jesus Christ is divine. However, in the strictest sense, this divinity does not belong to Jesus Christ but to the God who is present with him. Second, according to Alexandrian thought, the unity of the one person of Jesus Christ is a unity between the fully personal divine Logos and the less-than-personal human nature of Jesus. That is, in Alexandrian thought the human nature which is related to God in the incarnation is not a complete individual person in its own right, although its human nature is complete. In opposition, according to Antiochian thinking, the personal unity of Jesus Christ is a union between two personal subjects, the divine person God in his second mode of being and the human person Jesus. Third, for Alexandrian thought the name "Jesus Christ" and its variants denote the one divine person, while in Antiochian thinking the language is more complicated. Since there are two personal beings united in one reality, "Jesus" or "Jesus of Nazareth" can be used to denote the man Jesus, and "Logos" or "Son" can be used to denote the divine person. The one reality of the union can be designated by the phrase "the incarnate Logos."

Now that the predominant features of these two modes of

christological thinking are before us, the content of our claim about the Alexandrian character of Barth's theology can be stated more clearly. Our view is that Barth's doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ is Alexandrian because Barth conceives of the deity of Christ as the act which constitutes his being. This conception of the identity of Christ's divine being with his act is developed by Barth in such a way that it gives theoretical justification for two important affirmations. The first is that Jesus Christ's deity is fully and completely his own deity; it is his inherent, active nature. This deity is not simply predicated of him although it does not strictly belong to him. The second is that the act of being of Jesus Christ is divine because it is completely and fully identical with the act and being of God himself. For Barth, there is no tension between the deity of Jesus Christ and the deity of God. The act of God is the divine being of God, and this act is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the deity of God.[2]

Barth's understanding of the unity of Christ follows the Alexandrian pattern, although it incorporates significant Antiochian elements. The unity of Christ is presented as a unity of the eternal Logos with the human nature of all men. The specific human nature of the Lord is not, for Barth, a complete person in itself, although it is, in some sense, personal. It possesses its own will, soul, body, personality, and even its own self-consciousness, and it is related to the Logos in obedience and fellowship; yet it is, in the final analysis, less than a person. The person Jesus is the Logos, and this "is" is direct and emphatic.

Finally, Barth's christological language follows from and is consistent with his understanding of the deity of Christ and the unity of his person. "Jesus Christ" and its variants are used to denote the divine subject, the eternal Logos. While Barth uses "Jesus" and "Jesus of Nazareth" to connote the divine Logos in his being and action as a man, these terms do not denote a human subject who is distinct from the divine subject. As we shall show, a recognition of the distinction between the denotation and the connotation of "Jesus Christ" and its variants clears up a lot of ambiguity in Barth's language.

In the remainder of this introduction, we wish to show,

first, that a careful analysis of the issue of whether Barth is Alexandrian or Antiochian in his christology will make a needed contribution to contemporary Barthian scholarship. Concomitantly, a discussion of this topic will offer a valuable clarification of Barth's treatment of the divinity of Christ, the unity of his person, and the name "Jesus Christ." We shall illustrate the need for the analysis we propose by showing how two commentators interpret Barth differently in respect to these questions. Secondly, we shall indicate the method and order to be followed in our analysis.

#### NEED

It may be asked, Why focus upon the problem of whether Barth's christology is Alexandrian or Antiochian? Does this subject merit this much consideration? The answer to this question has several parts.

In the first place, the question of whether Jesus Christ should be understood in Alexandrian or Antiochian terms is important not only because it is inherently interesting but also because of its systematic implications. The judgment that a theologian makes with respect to it will have a significant impact upon the way he develops other doctrines, such as justification and revelation. As a result, determining whether Barth's christology is Alexandrian or Antiochian will suggest a great deal about his theology as a whole.

The importance of this question is evidenced by the extensive attention that it has received in the history of Christian thought, particularly during the era of the Council of Chalcedon in the fifth century. Proponents of the various positions realized that they were at odds over matters of serious theological consequence which influenced the Christian gospel at its roots. Even today this issue has not been resolved or become outdated.

Secondly, in spite of the importance of this question, no thorough investigation has been devoted to Barth's treatment of it. Studies of Barth's christological thought have tended to concentrate upon other significant issues, such as the importance of the historical Jesus, the relation of christological method to historical

thinking, christology and anthropology, christology and analogy, christology and revelation in relation to natural theology, christology and justification, christology and atonement, and christology and pneumatology.[3] Some studies have dealt with problems which are directly related to the question of whether Barth's christology is Alexandrian or Antiochian, such as the unity of the person of Christ. However, they have spent much of their energy comparing the basic thrust of Barth's position with other viewpoints, rather than going into Barth's thought in depth.[4] As a result, a careful analysis of Barth's position on this question is needed.

Thirdly, although insufficient attention has been given to Barth's stance on this question, this does not mean that the whole subject has been ignored. In fact, the attention which has been devoted to it indicates the need for further study. This is the case because there is a striking disagreement among Barth scholars as to whether Barth's christology is Alexandrian or Antiochian. Many investigators consider Barth a forthright defender of the Alexandrian way of doing christology. For example, Herbert Hartwell, Walter Guenther, and Wolfhart Pannenberg hold this view.[5] On the other hand, the influential commentators Henri Bouillard and Regin Prenter believe that Barth stands firmly in the Antiochian tradition and that his position can be accurately described as Nestorian.[6] The existence of this disparity suggests that there are elements of both traditions in Barth's theology; yet the relationship between them remains unclear.

Since there is definitely a need for an airing of this problem, it is surprising that the investigators who have explicitly dealt with it have not developed their views in more detail. Yet, they have not engaged in any significant debate with their opponents, nor have they discussed systematically either the evidence which supports their judgment or the implications which follow from it. In general, they have been content to assert their conclusion as though it were self-evident, without carefully examining the alternative. As a result, the grounds for each interpretation of Barth need to be clarified and evaluated.

Fourthly, not only is there a need for an investigation of whether Barth is Alexandrian or Antiochian, there is

also a need for a study of each one of the three sub-issues which we have mentioned, the deity of Jesus Christ, the unity of the person of Christ, and the use of the name "Jesus Christ" and its variants. Although these topics are inherently interesting and important, no thorough analysis of Barth's treatment of them is available. By examining these subjects within the context of the broader question of whether Barth is Alexandrian or Antiochian, we can show how they are related to each other and to the larger issue. Showing these relationships will make a valuable contribution to Barthian scholarship because the consistency of his treatment of these subjects is not always noted. For example, Hartwell thinks that Barth's treatment of the unity of the two natures is Alexandrian; yet he thinks that Barth's language about Jesus Christ is in tension with this view.[7] We shall attempt to demonstrate that Barth's language is also Alexandrian.

As we conclude this discussion of the ways in which this study will contribute to Barthian scholarship, perhaps we should mention the rather apparent point that our findings will also shed light on studies of Barth's thought which do not directly deal with the question of whether Barth is Alexandrian or Antiochian. Once the characteristics of Antiochian and Alexandrian interpretations of Barth are made clear, it will be possible to recognize them when they appear in studies of Barth, whether or not they are labeled as such.

In the preceding pages we have made three principal points. The first is that we shall argue that Barth's christology is Alexandrian. The second is that in order to substantiate our position we shall analyze Barth's doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ, his concept of the unity of the person of Christ, and his use of the name "Jesus Christ" and its variants. The third is that Barth's theology and the secondary scholarship about it reflect a need for this investigation. In the next section we shall clarify the second of these points and give a concrete illustration of the third by examining briefly the conflicting interpretations of Barth presented by two influential theologians, John McIntyre and Claude Welch.

*McIntyre and Welch*

John McIntyre interprets Barth as an Antiochian theologian, while Claude Welch sees him as standing in the Alexandrian camp. By contrasting their views we can show in a straightforward manner both some of the basic characteristics of these two ways of understanding Barth and also some of the features of Barth's thinking which give rise to these two interpretations. At the same time, the close relationship between the deity of Christ, the unity of the person of Christ, the use of the name "Jesus" and its variants, and the question of whether Barth is Alexandrian or Antiochian will become apparent. In the commentaries of McIntyre and Welch, these issues arise directly from the text, and a discussion of any one of them leads inevitably to the others. This fact supports our proposal to show Barth's Alexandrianism by concentrating on his concept of the deity of Christ, the unity of the person of Christ, and the use of the name "Jesus Christ."

Neither McIntyre nor Welch concentrates primarily upon the question of whether Barth is Alexandrian or Antiochian. Welch does not mention this problem specifically, while McIntyre argues that Barth veers closely to Nestorianism but avoids its error. Their opinions come into explicit conflict not over Alexandrianism or Antiochianism but in regard to Barth's concept of revelation and its relation to the divinity of Christ. Both think that Barth attempts to demonstrate that the event of revelation entails the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ. McIntyre concludes that Barth fails in this derivation, while Welch believes that Barth is successful.

The fact that Welch and McIntyre devote considerable attention to the concept of revelation helps substantiate our belief that whether Barth is Antiochian or Alexandrian is not simply a minor question, with implications that are restricted to christology in the narrow sense. On the contrary, the findings of these interpreters indicate that this question has direct significance for a proper understanding of Barth's treatment of revelation and also the doctrine of the trinity. Nor should we conclude that the relevance of this issue stops here.[8]

Although McIntyre and Welch do not self-consciously confront one another over the issue of Barth's Antioch-

ianism or Alexandrianism, our hypothesis is that this is a primary difference between them. They understand the identity of Jesus Christ differently, and this leads to their opposite conclusions regarding the divinity of Christ, the unity of Christ, and the meaning of "Jesus Christ." For McIntyre, Jesus Christ is the human person who is the form of revelation and who, as such, is distinct from God. Jesus Christ is the man through whom God reveals himself, not the God who reveals. For Welch, on the other hand, Jesus Christ is primarily the divine agent who reveals himself through the form. In Welch's view, Jesus Christ is not so much the medium as the revealer, although he is also the medium as well. When this principal contrast between McIntyre and Welch is grasped, then their other differences can be clearly perceived.

We shall look first at the interpretation of Barth presented by McIntyre. Since he raises serious objections to Barth's christology, we can bring the issues into focus more quickly by considering him first. After presenting the viewpoints of both McIntyre and Welch, we shall indicate specifically how they differ on the topics of the deity of Christ, the unity of the person of Christ, and the use of the name "Jesus Christ" and its variants.

### *McIntyre*

McIntyre states that Barth's attempt to derive the concept of the divinity of Jesus Christ from the fact of revelation is doomed to failure because the medium or form of revelation must be something or someone other than God. God is not known directly, McIntyre argues. He reveals himself through forms which are creaturely and different from God himself. The fact that God reveals himself through the life of Jesus Christ does not lead us to conclude that Jesus Christ is divine. Jesus Christ is simply the instrument or medium of God's revelation, and therefore he must be different from God. If Jesus Christ is confessed as divine, says McIntyre, this confession must be based on some firmer foundation than simply the fact that he is the form through which God reveals himself.

According to McIntyre, revelation has a triadic struc-



ture. The three components of God's revelation are "God, the reality through which God reveals himself, and ourselves as recipients of revelation." By affirming the triadic structure of revelation, McIntyre denies that revelation is "a theophany, the naked appearance of God before us." [9] God always reveals himself through some form or medium which is known directly, but which is not God. This aspect of revelation, McIntyre explains, can be designated by the symbols Non-B reveals B to C. [10]

Any notion that the medium of revelation is identical with God himself is attacked by McIntyre as "quite close to impermissible nonsense." [11] Because the medium of revelation is known directly, there would be no revelation if the subject of revelation were identical with the medium. "For ex hypothesi the medium of revelation is known directly, and if the medium and the subject of revelation are identical and thus known directly, there is no occasion for revelation." [12]

The principle of the creaturely character of the medium of revelation is upheld in the understanding of revelation found in the New Testament, McIntyre believes. In the New Testament, the medium of revelation is "the ordinary human life of the man Jesus, as it would appear to the people of his day regardless of whether they believed in him or not, his life as it would be written down by a modern scientific historian." [13]

The creaturely character of the medium of revelation is also upheld by Barth, according to McIntyre. This fact is made clear in the later volumes of the Church Dogmatics, [14] particularly 4/2, where Barth claims that the medium of revelation is the human nature of Jesus Christ. [15] In this volume, McIntyre explains, Barth explicitly affirms that God reveals himself through the human nature, through the words and actions of the man Jesus of Nazareth. The human nature is described by Barth as the "organ" of God in his revealing action to man. [16]

Although McIntyre does not say so unequivocally, it is evident that he thinks that Barth makes no conceptual distinction between the human nature which is the medium of revelation and the man Jesus of Nazareth. For McIntyre, when Barth states that the divine nature reveals itself through the human nature, this is equivalent to saying that God reveals himself through the man Jesus of

Nazareth.[17] "Human nature" and "the man Jesus of Nazareth" appear to McIntyre to be interchangeable terms in Barth's theology. For McIntyre, both these terms denote the man Jesus as he could and can be known through ordinary, empirical means.

This assumption of McIntyre is a crucial element in his criticism of Barth. Because he thinks that Barth identifies Jesus Christ with the human nature, he can conclude that the man Jesus is not divine. Barth clearly states that the human nature is not divinized by its participation in revelation.[18]

McIntyre's opinion that Barth identifies the human nature with the man Jesus is evidenced not only by the fact that he uses these terms synonymously but also by his belief that Barth is in danger of Nestorianism. Barth's speaking of the human nature of revelation as the "organ" of God, McIntyre notes, is "curiously reminiscent of the famous sentence attributed to Nestorius, 'Mary bore a man who was the organ of the Godhead.'" However, McIntyre thinks that Barth's position should not be called Nestorian because there are not in Barth's presentation "two complete persons present in exactly the same way at the same time." [19] If there were, then Barth would be Nestorian.

Barth avoids the charge of Nestorianism, McIntyre believes, because his stance is "rather different and much more subtle." Although Jesus is a person who is present to man in "the ordinary empirical and inspectible [*sic*] way," the divine person or the "divine nature is 'there' only as it reveals itself through the human nature." God and his divine nature are therefore present in the human nature "revelationally." The two natures and the two persons are related to each other "in terms of this quite peculiar and unique relation of revelation." [20] They are not present in the same manner at the same moment. [21]

McIntyre's argument against Barth is simple and direct. "For example, it has been argued that if it is true that Jesus Christ reveals God, then the deity of Christ is ipso facto demonstrated. But such a demonstration is not by itself valid." [22] On the contrary, as the medium of revelation, Jesus must be a creaturely reality, distinct from God.

For McIntyre, there is a clear distinction between the

person Jesus Christ, who is the medium of revelation, and the person God, who reveals through revelation. God may reveal himself through any medium, such as a sunset or, more traditionally, the words of a preacher, but such an act does not make the medium divine. If the person Jesus is divine, the foundation of this divinity is not the event of revelation.[23]

### *Welch*

In our consideration of Welch's interpretation of Barth, we shall deal with two principal points. The first has to do with the derivation of the doctrine of the trinity from revelation, and the second concerns the unity and diversity of God. These elements are related directly to the question of who Jesus Christ is.

In support of Barth, Welch argues that an analysis of the event of revelation requires the concepts of the divinity of God the Son, Jesus Christ, the divinity of God the Father, and the divinity of God the Holy Spirit. The deity of Jesus is established not in isolation but along with the doctrine of the trinity. As an element of the doctrine of the trinity, it is an immediate and analytical implication of revelation.

The event of revelation confronts us with three questions. We must ask "not only who is the self-revealing God, but also how this happens and what is the result." The answer to each of these questions is the same. We must say that "it is God who reveals himself, that he reveals himself through himself, and that he reveals himself." [24] The doctrine of the trinity is the answer to the question of whether or not there is a revelation. If there is a revelation, the doctrine of the trinity informs us who reveals, how he reveals, and what he reveals.

The manner of revelation is related closely to God's being as Son. God reveals himself by freely choosing to distinguish himself from himself. He becomes himself a second time in a second mode of existence. In his first mode of existence he is hidden from men, unavailable to them. In his second mode as Son he is revealed to man. He assumes a form and is made visible to man in that form.

His lordship is his freedom to assume a form and to be God for man as well as God in himself.[25]

In his second mode of being, God is the same God who also remains in a first mode of being. He is both the one who remains hidden in himself as Father and also the one who becomes a man and exists in the creaturely world as the Son, Jesus Christ. This means that Jesus Christ is not merely the means or form of revelation. He is the one who reveals himself. "Christ reveals the Father our Lord, but in so doing is himself our Lord and reveals himself." [26] The work of revealing and reconciling is appropriated to the Son, not to the Father or the Holy Spirit. But since revealing and reconciling can be accomplished only by God, we must say that the subject of this activity, the Son Jesus Christ, is "identical with God in the full sense of the word." [27]

Although God is three, his threeness is no threat to his oneness. Barth states that God is three modes of existence in one divine essence. It is the one essence which possesses subjectivity and personality; there are not three different agents in God. God's subjectivity is understood in analogy with human subjectivity. He is one actor who acts in his three modes of existence. The modern notion of personality, which denotes a "self-conscious individuality" or a "distinct center of consciousness" is applied to the one essence of God, not to his three modes of being.[28] God is the one true person.

This brief discussion of Welch's endorsement of Barth indicates that Welch thinks of Jesus Christ primarily as the Son of God, the divine subject who reveals himself. For Welch, "Jesus Christ" denotes not merely the human, creaturely form of revelation, but the incarnate Lord, the one who is both God and man. This Lord reveals through his flesh, but his flesh is not a separate person. That Welch thinks of Jesus Christ as the incarnate Lord and not simply as the medium of revelation is clear from the structure of his argument.

This structure can be described as follows. First, if God is truly known in revelation, he must be present to man. Second, if the one who is present to man is truly God, he must be of the same essence as the God who is the presupposition of revelation, the whence of revelation. The one who is known on earth must be of the same essence

as the God who remains in heaven, veiled and hidden. Third, if the God who is known and present to man is truly God, then he must be God in a second mode of existence, different from his mode of existence as the whence of revelation. Fourth, this God who is known is God the Son. Finally, God the Son is Jesus Christ. Thus, Jesus Christ is one essence with the Father.

The question of the form or medium of revelation is basically irrelevant to the validity of this argument. Therefore, it is not important for Welch to emphasize that the medium must be some reality other than God. The argument states that the one who is present in revelation, and presumably in some form, must be God, if in fact God is revealed. This God who is present is Jesus Christ, whatever be the character of his form and the relation of his creatureliness to his divinity.[29]

### *Issues*

This comparison of Welch and McIntyre provides concrete documentation that the issues of the deity of Jesus Christ, the unity of the person of Christ, the use of the name "Jesus Christ," and whether Barth is Alexandrian or Antiochian are inherently related to each other. Welch and McIntyre come to different conclusions about the validity of Barth's derivation of the idea of Christ's divinity from the fact of revelation, and in each case their conclusions are consistent with their understanding of Barth's position in regard to these other issues. We shall indicate more specifically how they interpret Barth differently on these issues, and these differences will indicate the problems we shall consider in our investigation.

It is clear from what has been said above that McIntyre thinks of Jesus Christ as the purely human person who is separate and distinct from God. He can be known by empirical investigation as any other historical person is known. Because he is the human form of revelation, he must be other than God. Conversely, Welch thinks of Jesus Christ as the one who is fully identical with the Son of God and who, therefore, is of one essence with the Father. He is the same personal agent as the Father, although he