

Alan – Ethics and participation in Christ's resurrection

Core Thesis: Participation in Christ as Foundation for Christian Ethics

- Christian ethics stems from participation in Christ, not natural law or innate moral capacities
- Resurrection challenges existing justice systems based on “logic of just deserts”
- Murray Rae’s argument: resurrection reveals poverty of violence/death order, presents alternative kingdom of grace
- Dogmatics and ethics belong together (contra Western tradition of separating them)

Epistemological Framework: How We Know What's Right

- Challenges internalist approaches (checking beliefs through internal reflection)
- Advocates externalist epistemology: knowledge requires tracking objective reality through properly functioning faculties
- Ethical knowing occurs through reconciliation of hostile, dysfunctional minds
- Matthew 16 example: Peter’s recognition of Jesus as Messiah came through divine revelation, not natural capacity
 - “Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven”
 - Peter’s identity transformed through recognition event

Semantic Externalism: Meaning of Religious Terms

- Hilary Putnam’s Twin Earth experiment: meaning not “in our heads” but determined by external environment
- Term “God” cannot be separated from history of God’s engagement with creation in revelation
- Christian ethics cannot be “Christian faith + general ethics” - must track God’s covenantal commitments
- Tracking secured through Incarnation, Jesus’ speech acts, orientation to marginalized

Case Studies in Radical Forgiveness

- Gee Walker (Anthony Walker’s mother): Forgave racist murderers of her son
 - Not natural/innate response but recognition event within church community
 - Reflected “having that mind that was in Christ Jesus”
- Jill Saward: Ealing Vicarage rape victim who forgave and sought reconciliation with rapist
- Desmond Tutu: Truth and Reconciliation Commission embodied resurrection ethic

- Prevented predicted bloodbath in post-apartheid South Africa

Theological Resolution to Forgiveness Dilemma

- Central problem: Who has right to forgive on behalf of victims, especially the dead?
- Incarnation addresses this: God became one with human victims as Emmanuel
- “As you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me”
- Sin against human victim identical with sin against God (same object, same sin)
- Only the crucified God entitled to forgive on behalf of victims while upholding their dignity
- Christian ethics as participation through Spirit in incarnate Son’s communion with Father