

“Christus intra nos Vivens” The Peculiar Genius of Bullinger’s Doctrine of Sanctification

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The popular modern portrait of Heinrich Bullinger has too often followed G. W. Bromiley’s sketch which characterized this reformer’s thought as “pedestrian”, works lacking “vitality of thought and expression” and thus justly overshadowed by those other Swiss luminaries, Zwingli and Calvin.¹ Following this reception, Bullinger becomes the second-hand systematizer of others’ theological genius, and hence is cast into the diminishing shadows of his contemporaries. Among recent contributions to the scholarly reception of Bullinger, this portrait has been repeatedly and convincingly challenged, though interpreters more favorably inclined toward this reformer seem unable to identify the locus of Bullinger’s peculiar genius. This study seeks to add yet another voice to the chorus critical of Bromiley’s characterization, yet it also offers a fresh vantage point regarding the coherence of Bullinger’s mature theology. To accomplish these tasks, we shall focus this analysis upon the reformer’s understanding of sanctification, that doctrine which integrates justification “sola gratia” into the broad themes of the pious life. Indeed, the native genius of Bullinger emerges with particular clarity precisely in his elucidation of this doctrine, for he here shows himself as a theologian of considerable originality and scope: the manner in which he speaks of sanctification in essential identity with justification, as two aspects of Christ’s one saving act, distinguishes his approach from Lutheran counterparts while also establishing a precedent later followed by Calvin.² This particular doctrine, therefore, provides a unique and central thematic axis around which Bullin-

¹ G. W. Bromiley, “General Introduction”, *Zwingli and Bullinger. Selected Translations*, with Introductions and Notes by G. W. Bromiley (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), p. 46.

² Cf. below, n. 17 (Luther) and pp. 56–57 and esp. n. 29 (Calvin). This theme of the union of justification and sanctification, and the parallel established by the Church’s Christological language, emerges as a central argument in Calvin’s 1559 edition of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*: “As Christ cannot be torn into parts, so these two which we perceive in him together and conjointly are inseparable — namely, righteousness [or, justification which results from God’s ‘free acceptance’] and sanctification”. III.xi.6. All references from this work will be cited according to the text’s standard divisions, with translations taken from this edition; *ibid.*, Vol. 20: *Library of Christian Classics*, ed. by John McNeill and tr. by F. L. Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960). W. Niesel rightly concludes, in respect of Calvin’s argument, that “the

ger's œuvre as a whole seems to turn; indeed, it is to this theme that Bullinger returns with such striking regularity in his works, perhaps a sign of his vocation not merely as a theologian responsible for presenting the "reformed" contribution to the "Kontroverstheologie",³ but as the "people's pastor" of Zürich whose daily duty it was to interpret the import of this doctrine for life.⁴ Sanctification, therefore, may well provide the pivotal key for grasping the genius of Bullinger's contribution to Reformed doctrine as to the Reformed church's life.

Yet in turning to Bullinger's œuvre, we find that this is a theme difficult to delineate in his writings, despite its centrality, and this for several reasons. First, it is an expansive doctrine whose task it is to portray in theological language the coherent texture of the Christian life. As a consequence, it is drawn for both polemic and constructive reasons into a wide range of ancillary doctrines — e.g., justification, the character and function of faith, the use of the law, the nature of covenant, the influence of original and actual sin, etc. Precisely for this reason, however, sanctification serves Bullinger as a unifying theme, a principal thread which he weaves into the broad tapestry of his occasional and systematic writings. Second, the formulation of this

two things — justification and sanctification — are one in [Christ], but *only* in Him". Cf. W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, tr. by H. Knight (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 138. Alfred Goehler reaches the same conclusion, regarding Calvin: "Die Einheitlichkeit des göttlichen Gnadewirkens kommt darin zum Ausdruck, daß Rechtfertigung und Heiligung immer gleichzeitig vom Menschen ergriffen werden können . . . Da Gott beide Gnadengaben gleichzeitig schenken will, ist es unmöglich, die Heiligung zeitlich oder genetisch der Rechtfertigung nachfolgen zu lassen . . . Gott [heiligt und rechtfertigt] in völliger Parallelität". Alfred Goehler, *Calvins Lehre von der Heiligung. Dargestellt auf Grund der Institutio, exegetischer und homiletischer Schriften* (München, 1934), pp. 87–8. Clearly, the parallel development of this theme in Bullinger and Calvin is more than accidental, for we here come upon a distinct identity of argument and even terminological distinctions. In this case, moreover, Bullinger's contribution antedates that of Calvin, a fact which supports our contention that Bullinger is a constructive and original theologian in his own right.

³ This phrase is used in its technical sense, as developed in the works of Joseph Lortz and Hubert Jedin, referring to religious polemics during the 16th century. Cf. Lortz, "Wert und Grenzen der katholischen Kontroverstheologie", *Um Reform und Reformation*, ed. by A. Franzen (Münster, 1968). Throughout our study, however, we shall suggest that for Bullinger at least his theology always shaped itself with one view toward the "pietatis praxis", even where he is also articulating arguments with a clearly polemic edge. Even as a defender of the "reformed" tradition, Bullinger speaks with the tones of the "people's pastor" of Zürich, exhorting and encouraging his readers in practical matters of the Christian life. It is perhaps for this reason, as we shall subsequently argue, that the doctrine of sanctification takes on such a central role in his writing, establishing a broader framework for related doctrines.

⁴ The texture of the *Decades* bears this out admirably, for these "sermons" present theological arguments with a constant view to their bearing on the practical dimensions of life. This characteristic reflects Bullinger's concrete commitments to the Church — and here we mean the daily rhythms of parish life in Zürich, a point which seems altogether obvious but is often ignored in discussions of Bullinger's theology. The question of integrating "theory" and "praxis" was not, as often today, a matter of abstract academic inquiry.

doctrine took shape under the constant pressure of several diverse and shifting polemic fronts. Indeed, it is quite clear that sanctification offered a common platform for critics to the "right" and "left" of Bullinger and the mainstream Reformed position, though Roman Catholic and Anabaptist responses attacked this theme for decidedly differing reasons, as we shall see.⁵ The intriguing point which bears emphasis at the outset is that sanctification establishes the "via media" by which Bullinger steered the course of Zürich reform between what he considered the Scylla and Charybdis of Roman and Anabaptist formulations. This is not only to say what is already too well known — viz. that Bullinger spoke as a theologian and churchman whose daily preoccupations with parish and pulpit in Zürich kept the practical matters of his pastoral office squarely before him —, but to suggest that precisely for this reason this doctrine comes to exert a unifying force within Bullinger's complex world of pulpit and text. If Bullinger is always a theologian whose writings reflect his pastoral obligations, this is not to suggest that they are for that reason "pedestrian".

One final note of explanation is called for regarding the selection of text utilized in this study. The primary focus of this analysis falls upon Bullinger's mature writings, those works published roughly from mid-century to the end of his life. This is a particularly critical period in the development of Bullinger's "via media" for two principal reasons: first, this is the period during which Bullinger published *Der Widertöufferen Ursprung* (1560), his final treatise against the Anabaptists which sought systematically and historically to identify the underlying unity amid the diverse outbursts of this "pestilence" which the reformer had encountered; and, second, this is the period concurrent with the opening sessions of Trent, whose sixth session (1547) collapsed the discussion of sanctification into the heart of the conciliar statement on justification. It is probably no coincidence that Bullinger, like Calvin, found himself working on a major systematic treatise — namely, the *Decades* (1549–51) — during this period. We shall, of course, also consider the *Confessio Helvetica Posterior* (1566), Bullinger's "summa" of sorts in which we find a condensed version of themes dealt with more elaborately elsewhere. Clearly, the lingering anabaptist challenge to the Zürich reform along with the Servetus affair, on the one side, and the newly articulated conciliar attack by Roman Catholic theologians, on the other, make this period particularly critical for grasping the spectrum in which Bullinger formulated his mature doctrine of sanctification. And, as we have already tentatively suggested, it is precisely these diverse ecclesiastical forces which thrust this doctrine into the center of his thought, and thus intrude this theme into the heart of his mature writings.

⁵ Cf. below, pp. 59–60, 64–65. Calvin also identifies "Pope" and "Anabaptist" for similar reasons: even though he does not speak explicitly of sanctification, he does point to what he considered their common attempts to "boast extravagantly of the Spirit". Cf. Calvin, "Reply to Sadoleto", in *A Reformation Debate. Sadoleto's Letter to the Genevans and Calvin's Reply*, ed. by John Olin (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1966), p. 61.

The manner of approaching the doctrine of sanctification as articulated by Bullinger presents a different cluster of problems for the historian and systematician. From the historian's point of view, the task of identifying the specific influences upon Bullinger's thought presents a challenge of seemingly insurmountable proportions, one which clearly lies beyond the limited scope of this study.⁶ The reformed "tradition", if we might call it that at this early juncture, was still quite fluid; indeed, the Swiss reformed theologians like their German counterparts formulated doctrine in a highly polemical arena, and thus gave what we might call an "occasional" accent and depth to their theology which was not only constructive but at the same time deliberately reactive. Furthermore, Bullinger's writings, articulated from his vantage point as "people's priest" in Zürich, host to significant groups of the Marian exiles, and elder statesman among Swiss theologians, are anything but isolationist; indeed, his published work bears the strong imprint of other reformers far and near — from his early study of Luther and Melancthon, his association with Zwingli and later Calvin, and later relationships with the English exiles. Influences were myriad, though the assignment of specific sources becomes for this reason a vexing task, to say the least⁷. On a syste-

⁶ Although we can only suggest in this study the deliberate and highly creative manner in which Bullinger draws upon medieval arguments, and this for both apologetic and what we here call "pastoral" reasons (cf. below, esp. pp. 57–59), it becomes quite clear that Hollweg's dismissal of such influences can no longer be maintained. Hollweg has argued that "the use of medieval theologians falls out almost entirely in Bullinger's *Decades*". Walter Hollweg, *Heinrich Bullingers Hausbuch. Eine Untersuchung über die Anfänge der reformierten Predigtliteratur* (Neukirchen, 1956), pp. 206–7. Against this view, it would appear as a remarkable feature of the *Decades* that Bullinger here appropriates — not uncritically, of course — medieval theological themes as often as he does. Hollweg notes that Bullinger cites Thomas Aquinas only twice, and the Lombard four times. But he misses the point that quantity does not settle the matter. The significant point is that Bullinger draws on medieval theologians as "auctoritates" at all, and that he utilizes such traditional scholastic arguments not as anti-Catholic rhetoric, but as precise, constructive revisions of Tridentine themes which he considered to have strayed from those earlier sources. Here we must also consider the audience of Bullinger's treatises, if we would understand why he appropriates such soteriological themes familiar to the late-medieval world. That is, Bullinger's deliberate use of these themes in sermonic material may suggest that he intended to utilize the common terminology of 16th c. Catholic pulpit rhetoric, but filled it with "reformed" meaning. And, as we later point out, his argument suggests that he identified this "reformed" interpretation with the classical "catholic" formulations of Augustine and the Lombard. This is certainly true of his critical appropriation of the "infusion" language; cf. below, pp. 57 ff. The fact that this particular language disappears in the *Second Helvetic Confession* may only mean that he is here writing for an audience now quite estranged from such terminology, since the basic substance of these convictions remains there intact, albeit expressed in different language.

⁷ Contemporary influences are not difficult to identify, and have often been traced by recourse to Bullinger's biography; cf. in this regard, F. Blanke, *Der junge Bullinger* (Zürich, 1942). Throughout this study, the question of "influences" is approached from a different angle, by considering the thematic parallels, usually implicit, which because of their significance in the argument appear to be anything but accidental. We shall see, in particular, that Bullinger often appropriates medieval terminology which his Prote-

matic front, the task of ascertaining the central locus of his theology is no less complex. Thus, for example, Staedtke,⁸ Locher,⁹ and most recently Baker¹⁰ have all pointed to the "covenant" as the centerpiece of Bullinger's theology. Yet the difficulty they face in establishing the exact character of that covenant is by no means inconsiderable. Perhaps, as we shall suggest, the ambivalence which Baker and others find vis-à-vis Bullinger's use of "covenant" as unilateral or bilateral has less to do with his understanding of "Bund" as a theological principle than it does with his more general yet apparently unwavering concern in articulating a pastorally practicable theology, one which would integrate doctrine and life.¹¹ In short: the heart of Bullinger's theology, though articulated in the intentionally ambivalent biblical language of covenant, takes shape as a theory always interpreting and at the same time rooted in praxis. The focus of this study of Bullinger — i.e., the doctrine of sanctification — thus provides an alternative to previous systematic and historical analysis of this reformer's theology, both in method and focus. Our point of departure will suggest that Bullinger's discussion of reformed doctrine arises out of the "praxis pietatis", and thus always seeks to account for the practical dimensions of doctrine for life, and that this pastoral commit-

stant colleagues dismissed as problematic, if not outright misleading. And, as we here argue in considerable detail regarding his use of "infusion" language, his deliberate use of such precedents in the first instance didactic rather than polemic. Hence, to speak of "influence" is only to say that Bullinger often adopts, in critical fashion, the inherited language of the medieval scholastics, but reworks it to bring it in line with its earlier "catholic" tradition. That Bullinger here speaks not merely polemically, but didactically, may again suggest his rhetorical skill in reshaping his readers' (or, hearers') understanding of still familiar themes, without discarding them altogether.

⁸ Joachim Staedtke, *Zur Theologie des jungen Bullingers* (Zürich, 1962).

⁹ E.g., Gottfried Locher, "Die Lehre vom Heiligen Geist in der *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*", *Glauben und Bekennen. Vierhundert Jahre Confessio Helvetica Posterior. Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte und Theologie*, ed. J. Staedtke (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1966).

¹⁰ J. Wayne Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1980).

¹¹ This pastoral basis — and, specifically, the hortatory tone and substance of sermonic references to the theme of "praeparatio" (cf. below, pp. 61–62) — appears to be the reason for the ambivalence which recent studies have identified within Bullinger's work, and particularly regarding his view of "covenant". This theme of "praeparatio" recalls terminology at the heart of late medieval soteriology of "Ockhamist" theologians, as represented for example by Gabriel Biel. Theologians of this tradition integrated such terminology within a broader soteriological framework which marked out the human path toward God: beginning with the medieval formula "faciendo quod in est", a long tradition of scholastic theologians (e.g., Alexander of Hales, Duns Scotus, Ockham, Biel) had affirmed that God only expected us to do what lay within us, and that God would reward those efforts by giving us "first" grace. Clearly, traces of this theme, with its characteristic hortatory tone, are to be found in Bullinger, as illustrated in the sermonic material of the *Decades*. For a more detailed discussion of this background, cf. Berndt Hamm, *Promissio, Pactum, Ordinatio. Freiheit und Selbstbindung Gottes in der scholastischen Gnadenlehre*. Vol. 54: *Beiträge zur historischen Theologie*, ed. by G. Ebeling (Tübingen, 1977), esp. pp. 355–390, "Zwischen Johannes Duns Scotus und Martin Luther".

ment may itself be the shaping force beneath the specific (and often differing) accents he places on related doctrinal matters. Let us look first, therefore, at the historical context in which Bullinger expresses his theology before turning our attention to his thematic presentation of sanctification within the broader stream of his thought.

The influence of Bullinger's early education in the orbit of the "devotio moderna" has been adequately documented elsewhere, though not without differences of emphasis.¹² For our purposes, it will suffice to acknowledge the reformer's early and abiding commitment to what he called "the absolute doctrine of godliness"¹³ for defining the task of theology, exegesis, and the practical demands of Christian living. Furthermore, his early commentaries reflect a deep and consistent emphasis of themes which were already well developed in the young Luther's thought, and which presumably exerted an influence on Bullinger's theology already during his student years in Köln.¹⁴ Thus he writes in his Galatians commentary with an accent unmistakably Lutheran in emphasis:

Christus ist unsere gnüthüung. Wann er hat sich für unser sünd geben. So syend nu alle leeren von der gnüthüung der menschen verflücht. Ja, ghein mensch mocht gnug thün, noch versönen göttliche gerechtigkeit. ...¹⁵

Satisfaction is a matter of Christ's person and work, "solus Christus". In his early commentary on Romans (1525), we hear a similar emphasis, and again the echo to Luther is unmistakable:

Siche, die sünd werdent bedeckt, so blibend sy nu, wie wol sy nitt für sünd grechnet werdent von Gott. Sittenmal nu allweg sünd blipt, sind wir allweg unrein. Dorumb sind ouch unsere werck unrein. Dorumb so ligt ouch die seligkeit an inen nitt. Der ist selig, nitt der ghein sünd hat oder viel wercken thüt, sunder der, dem die sünd nitt wirt zuogerechnet. Da lüg, ob das nitt trostliche wort syend.¹⁶

¹² Cf. Hans-Georg vom Berg, "Spätmittelalterliche Einflüsse auf Bullingers Theologie", *Bullinger-Tagung, 1975. Vorträge, gehalten aus Anlaß von Heinrich Bullingers 400. Todestag*, ed. by Ulrich Gaebler, Endre Zsindely (Zürich 1979), pp. 1–12. Vom Berg summarizes the broader spectrum of work done on this subject by saying that "his [i.e., Bullinger's] piety maintained the influence of the spirit of the 'modern devotion', which he absorbed into himself as a boy in Gamerich on the lower Rhine, and which distinguishes him clearly from the prophetic enthusiasm ['Eifer'] of his predecessors [in the Protestant reform]". This essay also collects further citations to this theme from Pestalozzi, Blanke, Staedtke, et al.

¹³ This is a favorite expression of Bullinger in his *Decades*; cf. for example, in the English edition, ed. by Thomas Harding for the Parker Society (Cambridge: The University Press, 1851), I/ii, pp. 55, 63.

¹⁴ Cf. Blanke, pp. 22, 50–2.

¹⁵ Cited in Staedtke, pp. 177–8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 181. The theme of Bullinger's "pastoral" intentions is quite clear in this passage, for he is intent on addressing theological matters to the specific concerns of his congregation or readership, here offering a doctrinal discussion which he intends as "trostliche wort".

The parallel to Luther's early commentaries is not inconsiderable and perhaps, as others have suggested, anything but accidental. Yet Bullinger adds an emphasis in his early commentaries, lectures, and sermons not found in Luther, one which reflects what must be seen as a characteristic emphasis of the young Swiss reformer: namely, his insistence on merging the doctrines of justification with sanctification.¹⁷ This union, as we shall subsequently argue, is misinterpreted if seen only as a measure of the "ethical tendencies" of Bullinger's theology, as Ernst Koch has argued;¹⁸ rather, the ethical emphasis of his theology arises in large part because of this merger of doctrines, a union which in turn reflects the sensitive pastoral roots of his doctrinal formulations.

This peculiar emphasis of the integral unity of sanctification and justification can be traced to Bullinger's early Romans commentary. In this treatise, we hear an interpretation of imputed righteousness which strikes us as remarkably different than that of Luther or even Melancthon. "Das ist summa summarum: Gott ist allein fromm", concludes Bullinger, "und alle menschen sind sündler. Gott teilt aber mitt die fromgheit denen, so da an Jesum gloumbend".¹⁹ Or as he elsewhere concludes, justification is an imputation of

¹⁷ Locher supports this argument, concluding in this regard: "Stärker als auf Luthers Linien wird hier der Glaube mit der Heiligung verschmolzen". Cf. Gottfried Locher, *Die Zwinglische Reformation im Rahmen der europäischen Kirchengeschichte* (Göttingen, 1979), p. 619.

¹⁸ Cf. Ernst Koch, "Die Heilslehre der *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*", *Glauben und Bekennen*, p. 290ff.

¹⁹ Cited in Staedtke, p. 181. "Fromm" is one of the most difficult words to grasp in Bullinger's writings; it is now quite misleading to translate this as "pious", since the sixteenth century understanding of this term had a much more specific meaning than it does in today's vocabulary. In that context, it was often used interchangeably with "gerecht"; cf. below, p. 55, n. 21. Bullinger is here referring to the "righteousness" by which we are justified (or, made right/righteous) by God, a righteousness, however, which bears fruit in the believer's (pious) life. "Piety", in this sense, is not the result of human effort; rather, it is a state of being brought about by God, a "transfer" of God's character through Jesus Christ. In other words, salvation does not depend upon our "piety", even though it does radically alter that piety, because the righteousness which God gives us is precisely what *makes* us pious. The same difficulty, however, already vexed the early translators of Bullinger's *Decades*, this time surrounding the translation of the word "beatificatio". Throughout this English rendition, the translators opted to express this as "sanctification", which initially at least appears an un felicitous reading. Thus, the editors of the Parker Society text point this supposed "error" out at every juncture of the way. Yet our wider reading of Bullinger's oeuvre — and, specifically, the consideration of how he spoke of sanctification in his mature writings — suggests that his intention in speaking of "beatificatio" was that of describing our growth not in grace but in obedience — the very process which Bullinger, like Calvin, otherwise describes as "sanctificatio". The point is that Bullinger always resists the traditional Catholic reading of sanctification as a "progress" in righteousness; justification and sanctification rely on the one righteousness of Christ, and derive exclusively from Christ's "fromgheit". This makes it all the more difficult to minimize Bullinger's use of "beatificatio", since he uses it in a manner similar to his pronouncements elsewhere on sanctification. And, we must here recall that this word was understood in medieval theology to describe the final union of the believer with God. It is, in this historically familiar

Christ’s “fromgheit” – or, alternately, Christ’s “gerechtigkeit” – which emphasizes the directly participational character of the believer in God’s act of justification. Bullinger’s understanding of the function of faith in justification thus points to a dimension beyond that of a forensic act: “welches unschuld, *heiligkeit*, gnugthun, und gerechtigkeit allen denen mitteilt wirt, so in ihn gloubend”.²⁰ Justification has to do not only with a newly established relationship, but with a shared participation (“mitteilung”) in Christ, and not merely in Christ’s righteousness (“gerechtigkeit”) but in Christ’s “piety” (“fromgheit”). The imputation of “righteousness”, according to these early formulations, is thus to be understood as a transfer of “fromgheit”, or an imputation of “piety”.

Lest we interpret Bullinger’s use of “fromgheit” uncritically, Veronika Guenther points out in an able philological analysis that 16th century reformers, developing a new theological vernacular, often used the word “fromm” interchangeably with “gerecht”. As she concludes, “‘Fromm’ und ‘Gerecht’ werden hauptsächlich in der theologischen Fachliteratur der Reformation als gegenseitige Ersatzwörter verwendet”.²¹ The rather self-assured title which Melanchthon affixes to the fourth article of his “Apology” of the *Confessio Augustana* (1530) – i.e., “Wie man vor Gott *fromm und gerecht* wird” – suggests that this equation was by no means of exclusively Swiss derivation. Although this use of “fromm” was thus no innovation on Bullinger’s part, Guenther rightly argues that the Zürich reformers stood alone in applying this word to the doctrine of justification, and that “fromm” eventually served as an appellation which signified not, in the first instance, the anabaptists, but rather the broader circle of Zürich Protestants as a group. “Diese Ansätze sind vor allem durch die zweite reformatorische Generation in den Zeiten der Verfolgung und des Kampfes weiter entwickelt worden”, as she concludes, “so daß ‘fromm’ besonders im Kreise Heinrich Bullingers und bei Johannes Kessler nun den Sinngehalt ‘evangelisch’ annimmt”.²² Yet Guenther’s restricted focus on philological matters offers no further clue into the underlying cause of this distinctively Zürich brand of reform. That is, the crucial question which Guenther’s otherwise suggestive study does not yet pose is

sense, an “eschatological” term. Hence, Bullinger’s intentions, particularly if he is here addressing – and altering – common expectations of his hearers/readers (cf. above, n. 6), seems to have been to flatten out this eschatological interpretation of “beatificatio” and bring it into line with the believer’s present life in Christ. To recall a characteristic theme of his, as articulated in the *Second Helvetic Confession*: “Christus intra nos vivens”. This is, thus, a powerful reworking of an established tradition, by which he perceives the Christian not as a “viator” wandering in this nether world of shadows and hoping for a full vision of God hereafter; rather, this pilgrim is already beatified, already “in” God through Christ’s righteousness. The English translators seem to be vindicated on this crucial point, since their reading captures the full force of Bullinger’s critical revision of this medieval tradition.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

²¹ Cf. Veronika Guenther, ‘Fromm’ in der Zuercher Reformation. Eine wortgeschichtliche Untersuchung (Aarau, 1955), esp. pp. 208–215.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 209.

whether there might be some more penetrating theological reason for Bullinger's interchangeable use of "gerecht" and "fromm". On this point her study does not consider the subtle and, in our estimation, decisive verbal force of "mitteilen". Bullinger, at least, anchors the apparently variable use of "fromgheit Christi" and "grechtigkeit Christi" in the manner in which the believer ("der gloubende") receives Christ, and thus underscores the *participational* character of justification. Staedtke hints at this, suggesting that Bullinger's doctrine of justification which drew upon distinctive Augustinian elements shared Luther's emphasis on the relationship of faith and imputed righteousness, but went further than Luther by introducing language not found in the forensic emphasis of "iustitia extra nos posita".²³ This is a theme to which we shall return in examining Bullinger's peculiar and, among the reformers at least, unprecedented use of "infusion" language.²⁴

In the *Decades*, the early emphases we have noted from Bullinger's commentaries become even more pronounced. In this collection of sermons, Bullinger introduces what must be seen as a characteristic theme in this theology: namely, his fusion of the justification and sanctification doctrines. As he argues in a sermon from the First Decade, Paul "doth expound justification by sanctification, and sanctification by remission of sins . . . The question of justification containeth nothing else but the manner and reason of sanctification."²⁵ And, as he goes on to argue in a manner strikingly reminiscent of Melancthon's insistence that the justified person can and must do good works,²⁶ we hear Bullinger affirming the necessity with which faith brings forth good works:

... whereas we say that the faithful are justified by faith alone, or else by faith without works, we do not say, as many think we do, that faith is post alone, or utterly destitute of good works: for wheresoever faith is, there also it sheweth itself by good works; *because the righteous cannot but work righteousness.*²⁷

²³ Staedtke, p. 190; also cf. discussion below, which includes a fuller defense of this suggestive point, pp. 58–60, and esp. p. 60, n. 37.

²⁴ Cf. below, pp. 57–59.

²⁵ *Decades* I/vi, pp. 106–7 in the Parker Society edition (hereafter cited by number of decade and sermon and by pagination in this edition). See our discussion, n. 19 above, regarding the insightful solution to terminological difficulties faced by these early translators; also, regarding Bullinger's anticipation of this particular theme which becomes central in Calvin's subsequent writings, cf. above, n. 2.

²⁶ Cf. Melancthon's formulation in the *Confessio Augustana*, esp. ch. XX, "Vom Glauben und guten Werken", and the corresponding discussion in the *Apologia*. In *Decades* IV/ii, p. 62, Bullinger concludes a lengthy discussion of the distinct but always unified occurrence of "faith" and "repentance" (which he derives, in striking parallel to young Luther, from a proper understanding of "poenitentia") by saying that "we do all know that true faith is not without works, as that which of necessity sheweth forth good works. . . ." etc. For the full citation, cf. below, n. 28; also, *Decades* IV/ii, pp. 63–4.

²⁷ This citation concludes with Bullinger's affirmation that "before he doth work righteousness, *that is to say, good works*, he must of necessity be righteous: therefore, the righteous does not attain righteousness that goeth before by the works which follow after". Cf. *Decades* I/vi, pp. 118ff.

Justifying faith, according to Bullinger, has everything to do with the Christian life, not simply because it evokes a response of gratitude but because it sanctifies the believer. In the second sermon of the Fourth Decade, Bullinger returns to this theme, this time expressing this union of justification and sanctification in terms of the necessary bond of faith and repentance (“poenitentia”):

... repentance and faith seem to be diverse: not that true repentance can be without faith; but because they must be distinguished, and not confounded. We do all know that true faith is not without works, as that which of necessity sheweth forth good works, so yet that we do not separate them or rend them one from the other: and in like manner we acknowledge that true faith and true repentance are undividedly knit together, and closely fastened the one to the other.²⁸

Distinct yet not separated: the terminological echo to the Chalcedonian christological language can hardly go unnoticed. Indeed, we can only suggest in this study that this theme would subsequently gain a firmer grip upon the reformed tradition, in that we find in this regard a clear anticipation of – and perhaps a direct influence upon – Calvin, who subsequently also exploits this intriguing parallel by underscoring not merely the christocentric, but this precise christological character of soteriology, and this he posits like Bullinger in terms of both justification and sanctification.²⁹ Once again, Bullinger shows himself as a constructive theologian in his own right: despite the otherwise familiar emphasis of the *necessity* with which faith brings forth good works, he here strikes out in an eccentric direction among reformers of his generation by locating the undergirding rationale of this bridge linking soteriology and ethics in the union of justification and sanctification.

This discussion brings us to the matter of Bullinger’s peculiar – at least insofar as reformed theologians of his day were concerned – insistence on speaking of salvation throughout the *Decades* as a process of “infusion”. That this might have been the case in his early commentaries would not have been surprising, given his early education in Köln with its doctrinal commitments to the “*via antiqua*”. Our study of Bullinger’s early treatises, however, reveals no significant dependence on such theological terminology, perhaps because his youthful theology stood as a still insecure polemic reaction to that tradition. Yet this language is curious for another, more immediate reason. The formulation of the Tridentine decree on justification (1547), with its functional description of this doctrine as a process of infusion, might also have deterred him from borrowing such language to clarify his “reformed” doctrine. But it is precisely at this juncture – against our expectations – that this terminology finds its way into Bullinger’s texts, which should alert us to examine this matter with greater precision, since Bullinger’s approach here

²⁸ *Decades* IV/ii, p. 62.

²⁹ Cf. above, n. 2.

stands as a curious anomaly amidst other contributions to the "Kontrovers-theologie" of this late date.

In the First Decade, Bullinger relies on this terminology to describe the "causa fidei". As "a gift of God, poured into man from heaven", faith "cometh not of any man, or any strength of man, but of God himself, who by His Holy Spirit inspireth faith into our hearts".³⁰ This metaphor of the "pouring" of the Holy Spirit "into our hearts" is, of course, an apparent gloss of Rom. 5.5, the biblical citation which grounded scholastic discussions of infused grace from Augustine through the Lombard (e.g., Augustine, *De trinitate* xv: 17–18; also, cf. the Lombard's *Sentences* I Q. xvii and subsequent commentaries³¹ on this passage). Yet this passage also becomes, not surprisingly given such a precedent, the locus classicus of the later Tridentine formulations on justification (cf. esp. Ch. VII); it is for this reason quite surprising, however, that we should find this argument in Bullinger's work of this period. Standing confidently within the Augustinian/Lombardian tradition on this point, Bullinger defends "fides infusa", apparently because this formulation clearly expressed the human dependence upon God's act – i.e., that faith comes "sola gratia".³² Indeed, Bullinger proves his consistent loyalty to this well-worn medieval argument when in his explication of the Apostle's Creed he speaks of the Holy Spirit's role in the trinity:

For by him the fruit of God's salvation, fulfilled in the Son, is sealed to us, and our sanctification and cleansing is bestowed on us, and derived from him to us, by the Holy Ghost. . . . *God poureth into us His Holy Spirit*, the fullness of all good things; and *doth communicate Himself wholly to us*, joining us unto Himself with an indissoluble knot.³³

The emphasis here is merely a variation on an earlier theme we noted: Bullinger prepares us with his earlier "participation" language of God's "Mitteilung" of himself in justification (cf. above, pp. 54–55) for this language of God's "self-communication" in sanctification. As he later continues:

. . . although the grace of God doth not depend upon us or our works, yet doth it not idly abide in God, as if it were utterly without us ["extra nos"] and altogether far from us, as the thing that is neither felt nor yet worketh in us. . . . But none are delivered save those that believe; therefore grace hath somewhat whereby to work in man: for *by the pouring of the Holy Ghost into our hearts*, the understanding and will are instructed in faith.³⁴

³⁰ *Decades* I/iv, p. 84.

³¹ For a detailed discussion of this tradition, cf. Paul Vignaux, *Luther, Commentateur des Sentences (Livre I, Distinction XVII)* (Paris, 1935), pp. 45–86.

³² *Decades* I/v, pp. 100–1.

³³ *Decades* I/viii, pp. 155–6.

³⁴ It is significant that Bullinger affirms that regeneration – as the inpouring of the Holy Spirit – renews the mind *and* will, though not the body (cf. below, pp. 63–64, and esp. n. 48). In this sense, Bullinger echoes a theme almost ubiquitous among Protestant reformers in general: namely, that of the "engaged" faith, which is not a matter of merely intellectual assent (one recalls here, for example, Melancthon's language

This language is hence no invention of Bullinger's, though his use of it is highly original among Protestant reformers at this juncture. For he is here drawing upon the rich – and for Protestant theologians in general exceedingly problematic – Augustinian doctrine of infusion, diffused in medieval theology through the conduit of the Lombard's *Sentences*. According to this doctrinal tradition so crucial for medieval soteriology, God's act of pouring faith into us (i.e., Rom. 5.5) means neither more nor less than that God pours God's own person into us – that is, the infusion of grace is at the same time the infusion of *God*. Bullinger's formulations thus stand squarely in line with the earliest tradition of the *Sentences* I, Q. 17, though he moves away from the later medieval emphasis of infused grace as a "substance" distinct from God. This point should not be missed: Bullinger seems to be recalling Catholic theology to the original emphasis of this Augustinian theme, such that his discussion of salvation as a process of infusion – the "inpouring" of love into our hearts (Rom. 5.5) – defines this, contra Trent with its parallelism of the "merits of Christ" alongside "the virtue and efficacy of the sacraments" (cf. Ch. IX), as nothing more nor less than the infusion of God's very self.³⁵

Yet there is another plausible reason for this emphasis in Bullinger, one which has more to do with his pastoral as contrasted for the moment with his polemical interests. We have earlier spoken of how his pastoral responsibilities shaped his theology, of how his approach to doctrine not only shaped but itself arose out of the "praxis pietatis". Perhaps this theme reflects this same point, since it clearly provided Bullinger with a means of highlighting the *assurance* of justification "sola fide". In other words, whereas the Tridentine decree condemned the "vain confidence" of the Protestant understanding of justification by faith alone, siding rather with an emphasis on infused grace via the sacraments (cf. Ch. IX), Bullinger gives the Protestant argument an intriguing twist by affirming a soteriology based on both "sola fide" and "gratia infusa". Perhaps Bullinger realized that the metaphor of infusion struck a pastoral chord which needed to be heard alongside the forensic formula of an imputed righteousness, of the "iustitia Christi extra nos". Bullinger nowhere refutes this stark Lutheran formulation, but he consistently

regarding the "historiae notitiam"; *Confessio Augustana*, Ch. 20). E. Dowey points out a similar theme in Calvin, arguing that the noetic aspect of faith is "expansive" and not "reductivist" in his writings. Cf. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology* (New York and London, 1965), pp. 197–8. It is also significant to note Bullinger's careful identification of the Holy Spirit, and not "caritas", which God "inpours" into our hearts. Staedtke thus misses the point when he ties this usage without further differentiation (unlike Bullinger) to the medieval doctrine of the *infusio caritatis*; cf. Staedtke, p. 192. Cf. below, pp. 59–60.

³⁵ Drawing on Augustine, *De trinitate*, XV 17–18, the Lombard argues in this vein that "Dilectio igitur, quae ex Deo est et Deus, proprie Spiritus sanctus est, per quem diffunditur in cordibus nostris Deus caritas, per quam nos tota inhabitat Trinitas. *Sentences* I, Q. XVII.iv. Calvin, we recall, resists Osiander's language of "substance" for similar reasons; cf. *Institutes* III.xi.5–12.

sets it alongside what we here call his “participational” doctrine of how God justifies: that is, he sees God’s grace as by no means “utterly without us” or “far from us”, but rather speaks of it as something directly “felt” because it “worketh in us”. The same language of infusion which the conciliar fathers had used both to oppose the magisterial reformers’ general accentuation of justification and to reconstitute a sacramental confidence became in Bullinger’s constructive model the clarification of why sanctification and justification were to be considered together: namely, as the means by which faith – and, following Augustine and the Lombard on this key Romans passage, God – enters into us. In this sense, it seems that Bullinger’s bold use of a metaphor which had been so fundamental for medieval theology is not merely another contribution to “Kontroverstheologie”; rather, his intention is equally constructive in a pastoral sense, for he utilizes this theme to underscore the immediacy of justification *and* sanctification “sola fide” without resorting to the “precarious” theme of grace mediated “substantially” via the sacraments.³⁶ Thus, he says not less but more than Trent: in pouring “caritas” into our hearts, God gives us not grace but God’s very self. This is the doctrinal language of assurance, for here soteriology speaks of the union of persons, not the fusion of substance.

Here, then, we find solid support for Staedtke’s otherwise unsubstantiated conclusion that “das Teilhaftwerden der Menschen an der Gerechtigkeit Christi wird einmal umschrieben durch den occamistischen Begriff der *imputatio*, oder aber in Formulierungen, die ihre Anklänge in der augustinischen Infusionslehre finden”.³⁷ Staedtke’s conclusion, in other words, moves in the right direction, though he does not yet suggest how Bullinger utilized this theme for polemic as well as pastoral purposes. With this curious doctrinal construct we meet Bullinger in his most constructive form, for he confronts Trent head on by drawing from the heart of scholastic theology in order to clarify – for reformers Protestant and Catholic, apparently – the systematic, historical, and at the same time pastoral depth of the “reformed” position. Bullinger employs this metaphor both as a defense of God’s sovereignty over salvation and as an assertion of the subjective pole – viz. the believer’s reception – of God’s simultaneously justifying and sanctifying grace. The language of infusion articulates the manner in which the indwelling presence of God occurs, and thus grounds his theological discourse in the realm of the “*praxis pietatis*”. If this doctrinal formulation can be read on some level as “controversial”, then at a deeper stratum it offers a clear pastoral explanation defining the gift of faith as the very presence of God.

³⁶ Again, resisting this emphasis as articulated in the Tridentine decree; cf. above, pp. 58–59. For a precise discussion of how this decree sought to establish the “*certitudo salutis*”, and identify it with the sacraments, cf. W. Dantine, “Die subjektive Mitbeteiligung des Menschen im Heilsprozeß”, *Das Dogma im tridentinischen Katholizismus*. Handbuch der Dogmen- und Theologiegeschichte, hg. v. C. Andresen. II: *Die Lehrentwicklung im Rahmen der Konfessionalität* (Göttingen, 1980), pp. 454–461.

³⁷ Staedtke, p. 190.

It should not surprise us, therefore, to discover that Bullinger refuses to follow the Tridentine lead in speaking of an "increase of the justification received" (cf. Ch. X). Without exception Bullinger resists introducing any quantifying language in explaining this process of infusion, just as he avoided linking sanctification to any sacramental mediation of grace as a "substance", and this he accomplishes in three ways. First, his clear distinction of justification and sanctification underscores his insistence that our assurance begins with the former and is only confirmed by the latter. Hence, while he does affirm the necessity by which faith brings forth good works — and this primarily on the basis of the indwelling of God within the believer —, yet he maintains, early and late, that the faith which God "pours" into us and by which we are justified is that which assures us: "Nihil pacificat cor, nisi sola fides, ergo nihil iustificat, nisi sola fides".³⁸ As he later concludes in the same vein, "our salvation should be utterly uncertain, if it did depend on our works and merits".³⁹ The certainty of our salvation thus depends on our faith alone, which as we have seen he understands as the very presence of God through the Holy spirit: in short, Bullinger's emphasis is that faith necessarily assures us because it is not merely descriptive of some extrinsic relationship, but rather itself arises from God's indwelling presence. He is not at the moment at all concerned about the circularity of this pastoral argument: no faith, no assurance; no assurance, no faith. At the same time, Bullinger does not suggest a passive waiting for God to intervene in giving faith. Rather, he introduces with a due measure of caution a standard scholastic argument — again, quite an unexpected theme in the reformed circle — which explains how we might prepare ourselves, and thereby acquire the right disposition, to receive the faith which God alone gives:

Now he [i. e., Paul in the letter to the Romans] beginneth at sin to this end and purpose, that every one, descending into himself, may see and acknowledge that in himself he hath no righteousness, but that by nature he is a son of wrath, death, and damnation: not that such acknowledging of sins doth of itself make us acceptable unto God, or else deserve remission of sins and life everlasting; but that *after a sort it doth prepare a way in the minds of men to receive faith in Christ Jesus*, and so by that means to embrace Christ Jesus himself, who is our only and absolute righteousness; for 'the whole need not the physician, but such as are sick and diseased'.⁴⁰

³⁸ If it is true to say that Bullinger's "pastoral" intentions are visible in his emphasis of the "assurance" of Reformed doctrine, we must recall that Catholic theologians offered their own sacramental version of this accent; cf. the Tridentine "Decree on Justification", Ch. IX.

³⁹ *Decades* IV/i, p. 53.

⁴⁰ *Decades* IV/ii, p. 101 ff. Cf. above, n. 11. The same theme is to be found in the 1559 edition of Calvin's *Institutes*, where he speaks of the need for us to come "empty and with the mouth of our soul open to seek Christ's grace" in order that we might indeed receive Christ. III.xi.7. As with Bullinger, this is a kind of preparation, though we might call it the preparation of negation which is more similar to the medieval "mor-

In this point, the overtones to the late medieval discussion of the human "praeparatio" for the reception of grace cannot be missed, though again Bullinger carefully speaks of this preparatory act in terms of receiving faith — and, thus, God. And, as this passage from the *Decades* makes abundantly clear, "praeparatio" for Bullinger was not the human side of an equation with the divine "acceptatio"; here is no trace of the late medieval discussion of "congruous" and "condign" merit as progressive and humanly initiated steps in salvation. Bullinger salvages the theme of human preparation from this elaborate soteriological system, and thereby speaks again in the hortatory tone of the pulpit, reminding his audience that assurance rests solely on the presence of faith which God "pours" into us, but that we can and must also prepare ourselves to receive that grace.

Bullinger's second argument, which clarifies how infusion transpires without recourse to the language of quantification or substance of sacramental grace, has to do with his understanding of "conversion": namely, he insists that regeneration is not a change of inner substance (pace Osiander⁴¹) but a rebirth. As he argues in the Fourth Decade:

Now regeneration is the renewing of the man, by which through the faith of Jesus Christ, we, which were the sons of Adam and of wrath, are born again the sons of God, and do therefore put off the old man and put on the new, which both in understanding and will doth freely serve the Lord. *This regeneration is the renewing of the mind, not of the body ... The same substance and form of the body abideth still; the mind is changed, the understanding and will renewed.*⁴²

The crucial point in this passage is Bullinger's conviction that sanctification is a process of re-generation, not as a change of substance but rather as a rebirth or conversion of the mind. This theme corresponds to his oft-repeated emphasis of regeneration as "adoption", an interpretation which again avoids the language of substance altogether and points rather to the change of inner identity.⁴³ Bullinger's focus is thus not upon *what* we become, but on *who* (and *whose*) we have become.

tification"; it is, then, a fundamental revision of the medieval understanding of preparation as "vivification", or the "facere quod in se est", but shares with that concept the exhortative mood.

⁴¹ Cf. here W. Niesel, "Calvin wider Osianders Rechtfertigungslehre", *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 46 (1927), 410–430. The parallel which exists between this argument, and Calvin's in the *Institutes* III.xi.5–6 (1559 edition), is again striking.

⁴² *Decades* IV/ii, p. 101. This argument carries a clear polemic edge against the Anabaptist morphology of conversion, as Bullinger understood it. His insistence that the body is not renewed in regeneration is consistent with Calvin, who spoke of the "reliquiae peccati" in terms of the "imperfectiois reliquiae" which "give us occasion for humility". *Institutes* III.xiv.9, 11. In this same sense, Bullinger never speaks of the believer's, but always of Christ's, "fromgheit" which we receive "sola fide".

⁴³ Bullinger's language of "adoption", which we also find in Calvin, underscores the relational aspect of justification. As persons whom God adopts because of Christ whom we receive "per fide", this biblical metaphor emphasizes the point that our regeneration

Third and finally, Bullinger clarifies the subtle pastoral implications of his theology by reminding his readers that God’s justifying grace, which also sanctifies us, does not completely eradicate the “old” man in the process of regeneration. That sanctification is a necessary element of justification does not mean that we are to expect perfection of life because we are “purified sinners”. For Bullinger, this realization provides a note of encouragement to those who live “in Christ”, yet still struggle with sin. Thus he warns against the hopeless situation of the Novatians and Anabaptists,⁴⁴ who as “the very messengers of Satan . . . feign that we are by baptism purged into an angelical life, which is not polluted with any spots at all [and] that if it be polluted, then can he that is so defiled look for no pardon at all”. We now find ourselves face to face with the other side of Bullinger’s “via media”: namely, the anabaptist formulation of sanctification. Here echoing Luther’s view of the Christian, Bullinger argues that the justified and sanctified person is “simul iustus et peccator”.⁴⁵ As he elsewhere argues,

... repentance (whose only scope, whereto it tendeth, is the renovation by the Spirit of Christ of the image of God, which was by Adam’s fall of old defiled) is not a work of a day or twain, or of a prescribed number of years, but a *continual observance of one whole life*, and so consequently a daily putting off and renewing of the old man for ever . . . For we bear about the relics of the flesh through all our life. Whereupon it cometh that in the saints there is a perpetual and very sharp battle.⁴⁶

In this manner, Bullinger affirms the growth which characterizes the Christian life. Yet this is not a growth in righteousness in any sense — i.e., either that of the specific Tridentine decree on justification (Ch. X) or that of the Anabaptist insistence on the purity of the elect — since “God alone is righteous, without whom there is no righteousness at all; and . . . he doth communicate his righteousness to all that do believe in Christ . . . and for [Christ’s sake] we are reputed both just and holy”.⁴⁷ Justification by faith means that “by faith we are made *partakers* of Christ”, but this does not mean that we acquire more righteousness according to the level of our faith — i.e., that the imputation of righteousness occurs by degrees, as it were, or that it ever

depends on Christ’s righteousness (= “fromgheit”), not on any inner change of our own substance. The centrality of this language of adoption, therefore, needs to be held constantly before us, particularly when we note Bullinger’s insistence that Christ also dwells *within* us, but again “through faith”.

⁴⁴ *Decades* IV/ii, p. 66. Note that Bullinger identifies in the Anabaptists’ teaching a message which places so much emphasis upon personal perfection that it could only lead to despair, particularly because “the old man” is not entirely eradicated, according to Bullinger’s view of salvation. Thus, to return to our consideration of Bullinger’s somewhat eccentric use of “beatification” as our present state “in Christ”, we must remember that he was speaking of regeneration as a life of obedience, not of purity.

⁴⁵ Here contra Staedtke, pp. 190 ff.

⁴⁶ *Decades* IV/ii, p. 107.

⁴⁷ *Decades* IV/i, p. 42.

becomes “ours” rather than Christ’s. Rather, Bullinger insists that our growth (or regeneration) is a process of faithfulness, of restoring the *imago Dei* within us, such that the ongoing responsibilities of the Christian life are understood in terms of a “battle” and “a continual observance”. Against what he considered as Anabaptist “zealots” demanding perfection of life and Catholic polemicists calling for an increase of the righteousness received (and a corresponding “progress” in justification), Bullinger thus describes the forensic effect of justification in static terms (adoption) while portraying sanctification as a growth of faithfulness by which Christ’s indwelling righteousness becomes more evident in our lives. The bottom line of this morphology of conversion offers a pastoral message of assurance to those who are justified by a grace which also sanctifies, yet in such a manner that it in no way obliterates altogether “the relics of the flesh”⁴⁸ which still hinder us and remind us of our ongoing need for Christ’s forgiveness. Bullinger’s emphasis of our experience of sanctifying grace does not intrude upon the domain of justification, even though these cannot be separated from each other. Once again we hear the reformer’s theme that justification and sanctification are to be distinguished but never divided.

Our consideration of Bullinger on the doctrine of sanctification must finally explore his later writings: namely, his lengthy treatise against the anabaptists (*Der Widertöufferen Ursprung*) and the *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*. In the former work which Bullinger anticipated to be his final theological statement,⁴⁹ we find Bullinger developing what we have seen to be his characteristic emphasis upon the necessary merger of justification and regeneration. In his treatise on the origins of the anabaptists, this theme emerges in another quite unexpected form. Here he introduces this unity by equating and yet also clearly distinguishing two forms of righteousness, an argument which even the theologians meeting a decade earlier at Regensburg could not countenance:

Nütdestminder blybt das styff und war, dass wir durch die erst gerächtigkeit Christi im glauben gerächtfertigt werdend, one unsern verdienst oder werck, und denn erst die ander und volgend gerächtigkeit der wercken die uss dem glauben kumpt sich ouch erzeigt und ouch ein rächte gerächtigkeit heisst und ist.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ This theme has already been touched upon adequately above. In this regard, cf. also Heinold Fast, *Heinrich Bullinger und die Täufer. Ein Beitrag zur Historiographie und Theologie im 16. Jahrhundert: Schriften des mennonitischen Geschichtsvereins VII* (Weierhof, 1959), p. 148ff. “An der Heilsgewissheit fehlte es den Täufern in Bullingers Augen denn auch”. Cf. also above, n. 42.

⁴⁹ The biographies of Bullinger establish this point on the basis of the extant correspondence. This is why Blanke and others insist that many themes extraneous to the baptist controversy find their way into this treatise; in other words, Bullinger wrote it as a “summa” of sorts, because he thought it might be his last piece.

⁵⁰ Bullinger, *Der Widertöufferen Ursprung*, reprinted edition of Christoffel Froeschower (Zürich, 1561) as published by the Zentralantiquariat der DDR (Leipzig, 1975), p. 109v.

Clearly, he is not speaking of any “double justification”, as had been the case in the declaration of the Ratisbon Colloquy. Yet his formulation of “double righteousness” serves the same purpose by emphasizing the inner bond uniting the declaratory act of justification (i.e., an imputation of righteousness, “extra nos”) and the inherent process of regeneration (“in nobis”). Bullinger thus introduces this theme as a means of accentuating the necessary place of works – not works which *precede* justification, but those which *proceed* from faith and are thus accomplished by the “viator” who is already justified. He reminds us in this same passage, however, that this twofold righteousness depends upon Christ, and that the righteousness of works depends upon faith:

Und darumb wenn unsere werck, die wir uss dem glauben thund, gerächtigkeit genennet werdend, gäbend wir den bescheyd, dass sy nit von unser selbs wägen also heissend, sonder von wägen der gerächtigkeit Christi, die durch den glauben unser worden, uss der selben erwachsen, unnd Gott desshalb gesellig ist, deren er ouch belonung verheisst und gibt.^{50a}

As he had earlier claimed, “the glory of Christ is darkened and corrupted in the minds of men . . . if we begin to divide the righteousness [of Christ] whereby we stand and appear before God”.⁵¹ The justifying righteousness of Christ is indivisible, but this does not, according to Bullinger’s emphasis of the unity of justification and regeneration, preclude us from speaking of a justifying and a sanctifying righteousness – which, however, are fundamentally united in Christ.

In the *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*, we see the specific manner in which Bullinger develops a Christology which is intimately related to the doctrine of sanctification. Koch suggests that the central section (viz. Ch. XV) of this treatise “legt . . . starkes Gewicht auf den zu ethischer Lebendigkeit erweckenden Charakter des Glaubens”, and thus argues that “in der Betonung der ethischen Erneuerung des Glaubenden das Herz der Ausführungen der *Confessio* schlägt”.⁵² Yet this claim distorts the broader shape of Bullinger’s theology, correctly noting the decisive ethical flavor of this confessional treatise but ignoring the specific christological fabric into which the reformer weaves this theme. Here we agree with Staedtke’s point that Bullinger’s theology depends upon “die *christologische* Umklammerung der Rechtfertigungslehre”.⁵³ Ethical renewal comes to play such a decisive role in this document on the basis of Bullinger’s christology, not in any independent sense. Thus, the Zürich reformer develops the theme of “Christus in nobis”, which we have already encountered in his use of the medieval language of “infusion” (cf. above, pp. 57–60, 62), by claiming that we apprehend Christ’s righteousness, which is a righteousness “extra nos” (or, the “imputativa iustitia”), by

^{50a} *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Decades* IV/i, p. 52.

⁵² Koch, “Die Heilslehre der *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*”, p. 287.

⁵³ Staedtke, p. 190.

the faith which receives Christ "in nobis" (namely, "fide nos recipere Christum").⁵⁴ In this sense, the pulse of Bullinger's christology points toward — just as his soteriological discussion of sanctification derives from — this precisely formulated emphasis of "Christus in nobis".

Bullinger's development of this christological theme thus carries forth what we have come to see as a two-fold characteristic of his thought: namely, the participational quality of his understanding of justification, and the union of this doctrine with sanctification (cf. above, pp. 56–57; this union, like Christ's natures, is one of "distinct" but not "separated" doctrinal partners). To return to his early commentaries, we recall that he there portrayed justification "sola fide" as the "mitteilung der fromgheit christi". Staedtke observes in this regard that "das Teilhaftwerden an der 'fromgheit Christi' liegt allein in dem Christusgeschehen begründet".⁵⁵ Bullinger thus understands Christology in terms of its participational character — i.e., "iustitia Christi extra nos, sed Christus in nobis". As Koch rightly concludes, "der *Christus extra nos positus* muß für den Gläubigen der *Christus intra nos vivens* (*Confessio*, 245.47) werden, sonst rechtfertigt er nicht".⁵⁶

On one significant point Bullinger has here altered his approach to this theme from his exposition in the *Decades*. In the Second Helvetic Confession, Bullinger emphasizes the participational quality of regeneration not by alluding to the effective role of the Holy Spirit as the medium by which God pours "the most excellent and heavenly grace into us". Rather, he here relies on Gal. 2.20–1 as the locus classicus for describing how and why justification and sanctification cannot be either confused or severed: *Vivo iam non ego, sed vivit in me Christus*, etc. Justification is not merely the imputation of Christ's righteousness by means of the Holy Spirit; rather, it signifies Christ's indwelling. The language which we have called "participational" abounds in the central chapters of this confession (i.e., Chs. XIV–XVI): he speaks of the believer's *comprehensio Christi* (245.43–4; 246.10–12), the *participatio Christi* (245.29; 261.18), the *receptio Christi* (245.22–3, 25–9), and, finally, the *communicatio cum Christo* (235.16–7). "Alle (solche) termini", according to Koch's analysis, "überschreiten die Grenze einer rein personalen Beziehung zwischen dem Gläubigen und Christus. Sie schließen den Glauben als *fiducia* keineswegs aus, geben ihm aber einen über eine reine Beziehungsgröße hinausgehenden Charakter."⁵⁷ Indeed, we might well see in Bullinger's use of this crucial Galatians passage — i.e., "Christ lives in me" — the heart of his theology and the center of the Second Helvetic Confession. Faith is to be understood both as "lively and enlivening" (i.e., *de fide viva, vivificantique*; 245.42–3) because of Christ „who is life and who enlivens

⁵⁴ *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*; references taken from the Niesel edition, *Bekennnisschriften und Kirchenordnungen der nach Gottes Wort reformierten Kirche* (München, 1938), 245.10–12.

⁵⁵ Staedtke, 190.

⁵⁶ Koch, pp. 190–2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

(i.e., *propter Christum, qui vita est et vivificat*; 245.43). Faith does not thus respond only to the Christ who justifies, but to the Christ who indwells us. On the basis of this theme of *Christus in nobis*, Bullinger thus fuses justification and sanctification just as the *imputatio iustitiae Christi* can be distinguished but never separated from the *participatio Christi*. Locher also identifies this bond, arguing that “der Glaube ist der Beginn der Heiligung, die Heiligung die Lebensweise des Glaubens”.⁵⁸

One final comment remains to be made regarding Bullinger’s mature development of the doctrine of sanctification or regeneration. In several key passages in both *Der Widertöufferen Ursprung* and the *Second Helvetic Confession*, Bullinger relies on the metaphor of “eating”, as found in John 6, to describe the participational character of faith:

Now, that we do receive Christ by faith the Lord shows at large [Jn. 6.27, 33, 35, 48–58], where he puts eating for believing, and believing for eating [*ubi pro credere ponit manducare, et pro manducare, credere*]. For as by eating we receive meat, so by believing we are made partakers of Christ (*Nam sicut manducando, cibum recipimus, ita credendo participamus Christo*).⁵⁹

The intriguing point in this usage which is at the same time crucial for this analysis of Bullinger’s sanctification doctrine is that here he derives soteriological arguments from passages elsewhere devoted to the eucharistic controversies of the day (i.e., John 6). Is this accidental? It would not appear to be so, since we have already seen how carefully Bullinger appropriated for his own purposes the “infusion” terminology, otherwise used by Tridentine theologians to describe the sacramental mediation of grace. The point there, as here, was not that grace came via sacraments, but that it came “sola fide”.⁶⁰ Hence, Bullinger utilizes this ambivalent scriptural witness to the advantage of his “participational” soteriology: according to his exegesis, this passage supported a “reformed” affirmation of the “real presence” of Christ, effected not by the sacraments (cf. above, pp. 58–59) but by faith (again, drawing upon Rom. 5.1–5 and the Augustinian interpretation of this justification “sola fide” as the “in-poured” love [“caritas”] which is identified with God’s self [i.e., as “Spiritus sanctus”])). Once again, Bullinger’s intention is to underscore the unity of justification and sanctification, articulating what we might call a christology of “presence” by which he emphasizes the communion of the believer “in Christo” through faith.

⁵⁸ Locher, “Die Lehre vom Heiligen Geist . . .”, p. 306.

⁵⁹ *Second Helvetic Confession*, 245.26–9.

⁶⁰ The distinction Bullinger makes vis-à-vis the Tridentine formulation, therefore, has to do with the *medium* by which God gives grace. Thus, salvation “sola gratia” evoked little reaction among Catholic reformers at Trent; rather, the extension of this formula “per fidem”, which undercut the sacramental system of mediation, became the focus of the controversy.

Staedtke places our specific and varied points of analysis into a manageable framework for understanding Bullinger's doctrine of sanctification when he concludes that "die Glaubensgerechtigkeit, die wir 'in nobis' haben, weist immer zurück auf den Gott, der diese Gerechtigkeit 'extra nos' schafft".⁶¹ Our justification, according to Bullinger's carefully crafted formulation, draws upon Christ's "double" righteousness which is "extra nos" in origin, but "intra nos" in destination. As we have argued, he thereby articulates this doctrine in its integral relation to sanctification, adding to the theme of salvation "sola gratia" an unusual application of the medieval doctrine of infusion, and apparently one meant to correct later medieval (and, of course, Tridentine) wanderings from the original Augustinian doctrine. The thrust of his doctrine of sanctification, which he deliberately casts into this critically "catholic" mold, offers a pastoral basis for consolation and encouragement, because our salvation, which does not depend upon our own acts, is facilitated by the God who is not only *for* us but dwells *within* us. Again, he recovers the medieval doctrine of the "infusio Dei" with his affirmation that "Christus intra nos vivens", and consequently presses the "reformed" soteriology in quite strange directions. Thus, what we have here called his "participational" Christology⁶² extends not only to the doctrine of justification "sola fide", but includes the broader texture of the Christian life — the regeneration or sanctification which occupies the attention of a theologian, like Bullinger, who speaks first and last as a pastor. According to this careful design of Bullinger's theology, sanctification comes to be united with justification for reasons didactic as well as pastoral, and polemic only in a tertiary sense. And, as we have suggested throughout, in this doctrinal formulation Bullinger blazes a new path through the increasingly dense underbrush of the "Kontrovers theologie", setting forth a distinctive "reformed" position which was highly original in its apologetic breadth. Bullinger's soteriology hence fuses justification and sanctification precisely in order to affirm that the Christ who saves brings a righteousness ("fromgheit") at the same time "extra" and "intra nos". His doctrine of sanctification acquires an immediacy parallel, but qualitatively different from, the mediacy which late medieval theology located in the sacraments. Soteriology *is* Christology, and vice versa.

The yield of this study is thus twofold. First, it adds another voice to the loud protest levelled against the (justly) beleaguered view of Bullinger as a plodding systematizer of others' genius. Yet this is no new offering in itself. The second and more compelling contribution lies in a deepened appreciation

⁶¹ Staedtke, pp. 198 ff.

⁶² That is, Bullinger's soteriology derives from his Pauline view of regeneration (i.e., from Gal. 2.20–21; cf. above, p. 66), which in turn dictates the shape of his christological discussion: viz. "Christus intra nos vivens" (*Second Helvetic Confession*, 245.47). As we have argued throughout this study, this claim may well stand at the center of Bullinger's mature theology, just as we have traced its development at the heart of his earlier writings.

of just how constructive Bullinger's eclectic mind really is. In this sense, we have seen how this reformer's sanctification doctrine, and the insistent manner in which he weds this theme to the doctrine of justification, stood as a reformed "via media" steering a careful path between Catholic and Anabaptist extremes on this and other critical doctrinal points. Indeed, the precision with which Bullinger advances his argument regarding sanctification suggests that this doctrine might provide a useful focal point for interpreters of his vast and unevenly systematic oeuvre, for this doctrine unlike others gathers his diverse soteriology themes into a coherent framework. Furthermore, this inquiry into his soteriology — and, specifically, the doctrine of sanctification which stands at the heart of that broader complex of issues — suggests that Bullinger was much bolder than his colleagues in entering into active dialogue with opponents, particularly those conciliar theologians whose defense of the faith often resorted to scholastic sources. Consequently, Bullinger's approach to this doctrine appropriates in a highly constructive fashion themes otherwise abandoned by Protestants. His is thus a careful "catholic" revision of doctrine, a contribution to the "reformed" camp which recognized the abiding value of central aspects of medieval doctrine, even when these needed to be themselves clarified by returning "ad fontes". Bullinger thus goes his own way, constructing in an original fashion a doctrinal model which rooted itself both in the church's present life — the "pietatis praxis" — and in its historical witness.