

What good is God when there is division? Yancey, part X, Mumbai April 13 Pastor Tim Smith

If I've learned only one thing by reading WGIG?, it's that I don't want to travel with Philip Yancey!

If an earthquake is an "Act of God," then terrorism is an "Act of Humanity?" part of the theodicy question is, "Why does God ALLOW such things to happen?", or even "Does God sometimes will terrorist acts?" (see Romans 8)

The Boethian solution (6th century, from the Stanford Dictionary of Philosophy)
(Foreknowledge does not equal causality)

This solution denies the first premise of the basic argument: (1) Yesterday God infallibly believed *T*. What is denied according to this solution is not that God believes infallibly, and not that God believes the content of proposition *T*, but that God believed *T yesterday*. This solution probably originated with the 6th century philosopher Boethius, who maintained that God is not in time and has no temporal properties, so God does not have beliefs at a time. It is therefore a mistake to say God had beliefs yesterday, or has beliefs today, or will have beliefs tomorrow. It is also a mistake to say God had a belief on a certain date, such as June 1, 2004. The way Boethius describes God's cognitive grasp of temporal reality, all temporal events are before the mind of God at once. To say "at once" or "simultaneously" is to use a temporal metaphor, but Boethius is clear that it does not make sense to think of the whole of temporal reality as being before God's mind in a single *temporal* present. It is an atemporal present, a single complete grasp of all events in the entire span of time.

Aquinas adopted the Boethian solution as one of his ways out of theological fatalism, using some of the same metaphors as Boethius. One of the metaphors is the circle analogy, in which the way a timeless God is present to each and every moment of time is compared to the way in which the center of a circle is present to each and every point on its circumference (SCG I, 66). In contemporary philosophy probably the most well-known defenders of the idea that God is timeless are Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (1981), who apply it explicitly to the foreknowledge dilemma (1991).

Most objections to the timelessness solution to the dilemma of foreknowledge and freedom focus on the idea of timelessness itself, arguing either that it does not make sense or that it is incompatible with other properties of God that are religiously more compelling, such as personhood (e.g., Pike 1970, 121-129; Wolterstorff 1975; Swinburne 1977, 221). I have argued (Zagzebski 1991, chap. 2) that the timelessness move does not avoid the problem of theological fatalism since an argument structurally parallel to the basic argument can be formulated for timeless knowledge. If God is not in time, the key issue would not be the necessity of the past, but the necessity of the timeless realm. So the first three steps of the argument would be reformulated as follows:

- (1t) God timelessly knows *T*.
- (2t) If *E* is in the timeless realm, then it is now-necessary that *E*.
- (3t) It is now-necessary that *T*.

Perhaps it is inappropriate to say that timeless events such as God's timeless knowing are *now*-necessary, yet we have no more reason to think we can do anything about God's timeless knowing than about God's past knowing. The timeless realm is as much out of our reach as the past. So the point of (3t) is that we cannot now do anything about the fact that God timelessly knows *T*. The rest of the steps in the timeless dilemma argument are parallel to the basic argument. Step (5t) says that if there is nothing we can do about a timeless state, there is nothing we can do about what such a state entails. It follows that we cannot do anything about the future.

Man born blind in John 9. Why was the man born blind, according to Jesus? Jesus replaces on flawed answer to the suffering question (sin) with the assertion that there was some cause to it for the glory of God

DIVISION

38,000 Christian denominations (page 274)

That's where I used to go to church!

Unity in diversity (John 17 unity prayer)

Value of pain as the body's unifier (page 271) Dr. Brand: "A healthy body attends to the pain of the weakest part." (Me: Jesus, the least of these) How does this relate to the cross at center of Lutheran theology and our identity? (see Theology of Glory vs. Theology of the Cross confirmation handout)

Page 272: We get not what we deserve but what we need

"Grace meets its test in the context of difference."

Page 275: Galatians...neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free...."

279 very important! Far harder to show grace to the oppressor than to the oppressed (Zacchaeus) (Me: are we inclusive even to the non-inclusive?)

280 (bottom) Mandela insisted that the country needed healing more than it needed justice

There comes a point when justice reaches a dead end (281)...Gandhi quote

Theology of the Cross and Theology of Glory

Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 2:1–13

Lesson Focus: God overturns human expectations.

Big Question: What's so great about the cross?

Key Words: THEOLOGY, THEOLOGY OF GLORY, THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS, EGOTISM, GRACE

Prepare

QUICK PREP

- Paul preaches and writes from a theology of the cross.
- A theology of the cross focuses solely on Jesus' saving death.
- A theology of the cross recognizes that nothing we can do can reconcile us with God.
- A theology of glory focuses on what we do.
- Our culture is steeped in a theology of glory in which success is viewed as "proof" of God's favor.
- A theology of glory presents an image of God that conforms to human expectations of power.
- A theology of the cross overturns human expectations: God's power is revealed in weakness.
- A theology of glory was present in Luther's day, too.
- The Augsburg Confession states that we are reconciled with God based on Christ's actions alone.

DEEP PREP

In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul speaks of his personal weakness (and even his fear and trembling!) as he preaches about the mighty work of God accomplished through Jesus Christ and his death on the cross. Paul makes it clear that his preaching is not about him and any thoughts of personal glory, but it is all about Jesus Christ and what he did for humanity by dying on the cross. Paul also says that God's wisdom is "secret and hidden" and that it is the Spirit alone who reveals God's intentions for humanity. The bottom line is that Paul is preaching from a theology of the cross. He isn't seeking to glorify himself in any way. In fact, he fully acknowledges his weakness here and in his other writings. He realizes that his preaching should focus solely on the cross of Christ, and it does. He knows that it is not about him and what he can do. It's all about what Christ did for us in his death. Christ alone can reconcile us with God.

Our contemporary culture is steeped in a theology of glory in which the individual is celebrated as the master of his or her own fate. Worldly success and riches are elevated and seen as "proof" of God's favor. Just watch TV and see how frequently sports and movie stars are the focus of news stories. In our culture, suffering, of any kind, is viewed as a grave weakness. Phrases like "If you really believed in Jesus, you wouldn't have gotten sick" or "Have you found Jesus and welcomed him into your heart as your personal savior?" are not uncommon among Christians whose focus is a theology of glory. They put the emphasis not on Jesus' saving death on the cross but on the actions of the believer. Judgments are often made whether or not others are acceptable to be in God's presence or in the company of believers, as if any human could make that decision.

Luther and his followers addressed this type of thinking that was present in his day, too. The Augsburg Confession states "our works cannot reconcile God or merit grace and forgiveness of sins, but we obtain this only by faith when we believe that we are received into grace on account of Christ, who alone has been appointed mediator and atoning sacrifice through whom the Father is reconciled" ("The Augsburg Confession," Latin, Article XX, Faith, 55.9 from *The Book of Concord* edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert).

This may be a difficult concept for young minds to comprehend. Teens have the drive to achieve, which is thrust on them at an early age in school and through the media. Our culture is based on a theology of glory. It's everywhere we look. The theology of the cross acknowledges that God alone is in charge of our salvation and we rely on God's grace. Our culture expects God to conform to societal expectations of power and authority; instead, we find God in a manger, eating with outcasts, and suffering on a cross?in the last places humans would reasonably expect to find a deity. Theology of the cross is inherently counter-cultural.

The material found in Student Book will help youth understand the difference in thinking and the use of language between the theology of the cross and the theology of glory. Anytime we elevate ourselves or our ability to reconcile ourselves to God, we are looking at life from a theology of glory. When we do that, we use a lot of "I" language. Theology of the cross language will point to Christ at the actor and the one who receives all the glory.

From "Here we Stand" Confirmation instructional materials, Augsburg Fortress