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*De Christi Anima: The Knowledge and Suffering of Christ's Soul in Robert Bellarmine and Francis Turretin*

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## Abstract

The incarnation of the Word is the central Christian mystery—a mystery that cannot be properly understood without a grasp of the nature of Christ’s human soul. A soulless Christ is unable to save those who are embodied souls. However, how is the human soul of the Son of God different from that of any other man? How does it learn? Can it really suffer? These questions about the psychology of the God-man were foundational to the development of Christology in the Ancient church. They later resurfaced in the early modern period as Reformed theologians like John Calvin spoke of Christ’s ignorance and inner torment in a way that Roman Catholics deemed heretical. Although often overlooked, the doctrine of the Christ’s soul is an important exemplar of the methodological and systemic differences between Roman Catholic Theology and Reformed Theology.

This thesis expounds and offers a comparative analysis of the doctrine of the knowledge and suffering of Christ’s soul in Bellarmine and Turretin. Chapter one outlines their individual importance and the legitimacy of points of contact between their work. Chapter two is a biographical introduction and shows that both Bellarmine and Turretin were eager to further entrench their theological systems in contrast to those of their opponents. Chapter three deals with the knowledge of Christ’s soul. It demonstrates that Bellarmine, emphasizing Christ’s infused knowledge, taught that he already knew everything he learned and that Turretin, emphasizing Christ’s acquired knowledge, taught that he actually learned things of which he was previously ignorant. Chapter four treats the suffering of Christ’s soul. Bellarmine rejects Calvin’s doctrine of the *descensus* as attributing desperation to Christ’s soul and follows Aquinas in segregating his suffering to the lower part of his soul. Turretin makes use of a different scholastic distinction (the *affectio commodi* and the *affectio iustitiae*) to protect Christ from disordered passions so that he can emphasize the reality of what Christ felt in the entirety of his soul, most importantly a sense of divine wrath. Finally, chapter five shows some of the ways that the discrepancies in the doctrine of Christ’s soul in Bellarmine and Turretin are the product of more foundational differences in their Christology as well as their soteriology and ecclesiology. Might the doctrine of Christ’s soul be considered a secondary material cause of the Reformation?

## Table of Contents

<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Why These Theologians? .....	6
1.2 Why This Doctrine? .....	8
1.3 Sources for the Thesis .....	9
1.4 Development of the Thesis.....	10
<b>2 The Stories of Two Italian Scholastic Polemicists.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Robert Bellarmine .....	13
2.2 The Controversiae .....	19
2.3 Francis Turretin .....	21
2.4 Institutio Theologiae Elencticae.....	26
2.5 Conclusion .....	30
<b>3 The Knowledge of Christ’s Soul .....</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1 The Basic Arguments.....	33
3.2 The Knowledge of Christ’s Soul according to the Scriptures.....	37
3.2.1 “Fullness texts” .....	37
3.2.2 Hebrews 2:17 (4:15).....	39
3.2.3 Luke 2:52 (2:40) .....	39
3.2.4 Mark 13:32 (Matthew 24:36).....	41
3.3 The Knowledge of Christ’s Soul and Tradition.....	42
3.4 The Perfection of Christ’s Soul.....	46
3.5 The Soteriological Significance of the Knowledge of Christ’s Soul .....	52
3.6 The Knowledge of Christ’s Soul and the Beatific Vision.....	55
3.7 Conclusion .....	56
<b>4 The Suffering of Christ’s Soul .....</b>	<b>58</b>
4.1 Calvin on the Descensus of Christ’s Soul .....	60
4.2 An Overview of the Arguments .....	62
4.2.1 Bellarmine’s Argument .....	62
4.2.2 Turretin’s Argument.....	64
4.3 Did Christ’s soul suffer?.....	65
4.4 How did Christ’s soul suffer? .....	67
4.5 Why did Christ’s soul suffer? .....	77
4.6 Conclusion .....	79
<b>5 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>81</b>
5.1 The Differences Assessed Methodologically .....	82
5.2 The Differences Explained Systemically .....	83
5.3 For Further Study .....	85

***Bibliography*.....86**

# 1 Introduction

“Of a rational soul and body” (ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος) is not a superfluous addition to the Chalcedonian definition.<sup>1</sup> A soulless Christ is an inhuman Christ. Still, it took time and the “help” of heresies like Apollinarianism for the church to recognize that Christ’s true humanity necessitates a real body *and* a real soul. However, confessing Christ’s rational soul raises other significant theological questions. Two of them converge in Hebrews 5:8, “Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through the things which he suffered” (καίπερ ὢν υἱός, ἔμαθεν ἀφ’ ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπακοήν).<sup>2</sup> Learning (knowing) and suffering are psychological phenomena. How much did Christ’s soul know and how much could it suffer? A “complete Christology,” to use John Webster’s phrase, provides a response to these questions in a way that is compatible with the doctrine of the hypostatic union and Christ’s mission of redemption.<sup>3</sup>

The assumption that these questions related to Christ’s soul were either resolved or unimportant in the seventeenth century is understandable, as the doctrine of the incarnation is commonly conveyed as somewhat of a non-issue between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Trueman’s comments, which are indicative of this tendency, are, at the very least, overstated: “In matters such as the Trinity, incarnation, and predestination, for example, by the seventeenth century the parameters and content of the catholic doctrines, undisputed by both Roman Catholics and orthodox Protestants, are clear and broadly based.”<sup>4</sup> While Roman Catholic and Reformed theologians united against the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ’s exalted

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<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum: definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, 43rd bilingual ed., ed. Peter Hünermann (Trento: EDB, 2012), para. 301 (DS followed by the paragraph number); On Christ’s “reasonable soul” see Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ, Countours of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 164-70. “He had a human psychology as truly as he had a human body” (164).

<sup>2</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall, Second English ed. (London: SCM Press, 1963), 97. Cullman calls this text “the most important confirmation of Hebrews’ conception of Jesus’ full humanity.”

<sup>3</sup> John Webster, *God and the Works of God, God Without Measure: Working Papers in Christian Theology*, vol. 1 (London: T&T Clark, 2016), 44. A “complete Christology,” according to Webster comprises two parts, “the teaching about the eternal Son or Word, his deity and the relations which he bears to the Father and the Spirit; and teaching about the Son’s temporal mission, especially in the assumption of the flesh to redeem lost rational creatures.”

<sup>4</sup> Carl R. Trueman, “The Reception of Thomas Aquinas in Seventeenth-Century Reformed Orthodoxy and Anglicanism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception of Aquinas*, ed. Matthew Levering and Marcus Plested (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 208; cf. Stephen R. Holmes, “Reformed Varieties of the Communicatio Idiomatum,” in *The Person of Christ*, ed. Murray Rae and Stephen R. Holmes (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 70. Holmes also notes the tendency to think that “Reformed Christology is merely a continuation of the Catholic tradition.”

human nature, there was significant disagreement between them over Christ's soul. Although the Council of Trent is silent on the incarnation,<sup>5</sup> Bellarmine (1542-1621), Trent's greatest champion, found Calvin's teaching on Christ's soul so troubling that he makes mention of it in the preface to his *Controversiae*. Turretin (1623-1687), who defends and expands upon Calvin's teaching in his refutation of Bellarmine's doctrine of Christ's soul, considers the *locus* to be of the utmost importance because of its bearing on the *passio Christi* which is itself the special foundation of our confidence and consolation (*praecipuum fiduciae et consolationis nostrae fundamentum*, XIII.xiv.1).<sup>6</sup> The nature of Christ's soul was a live issue in early modern theology.<sup>7</sup>

## 1.1 Why These Theologians?

Profitable historical comparison is possible between figures who are not strictly contemporaries. Chesterton has shown as much by his comparison of the "Dumb Ox", Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), to Francis of Assisi (d. 1226).<sup>8</sup> The usefulness of such studies is not merely biographical but ideological; relevant to the task of historical theology.<sup>9</sup> Their success is largely dependent upon two factors: the individual importance of each historical figure and the legitimacy of points of contact between their works.

Robert Bellarmine's significance is most easily assessed by the ecclesial declaration of his church. Although curial politics slowed the process significantly, he was canonized in 1930 and made a Doctor of the Universal Church the following year, putting him among the likes of Ambrose, Augustine and Anselm. He was only the second Jesuit to become a cardinal (1599), was the advisor to various popes and was himself twice considered for the Petrine See.<sup>10</sup> Though he is often remembered for his political theory and his run-ins with Giordano Bruno and Galileo, his *magnum opus* was his *Controversiae* (1586-1593). Bellarmine's polemical approach in the *Controversiae* was innovative: he cited extensively from his protestant opponents, trying to represent them accurately before refuting them. This was so much so the

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<sup>5</sup> Simon Ditchfield, "Tridentine Catholicism," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, ed. Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen, and Mary Laven (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2013), 32.

<sup>6</sup> Turretin's *Institutio* will be cited directly in the text in this format: locus, quaestio, section.

<sup>7</sup> On the use of "early modern" see Ulrich L. Lehner, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology, 1600-1800*, ed. Ulrich L. Lehner, Richard A. Muller, and A. G. Roeber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4.

<sup>8</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *Thomas Aquinas* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1993).

<sup>9</sup> For one such example that compares a Reformed theologian and a Roman Catholic theologian see Chris Castaldo, *Justified in Christ: The Doctrines of Peter Martyr Vermigli and John Henry Newman and their Ecumenical Implications* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2017).

<sup>10</sup> Giancarlo Pani, *Roberto Bellarmino: Cercatore della verità* (Palermo: Pietro Vittorietti, 2021), 11.

case that he was at times accused of giving too much space to heresy.<sup>11</sup> Two of the five adversaries he cites the most were Turretin's Reformed forefathers: John Calvin and Peter Martyr Vermigli.<sup>12</sup> The *Controversiae* went through numerous editions and remained "the standard Roman Catholic theological rebuttal of the reformation up to the First Vatican Council (1870)."<sup>13</sup>

Francis Turretin was one of the two hundred or so Protestants who felt the need to respond to Bellarmine.<sup>14</sup> He was born three years after Bellarmine's death and held the chair of theology in Geneva during most of what Richard Muller considers the period of High Orthodoxy (1640-1685).<sup>15</sup> Turretin is, for many, "synonymous with the term 'Protestant scholasticism'"<sup>16</sup> and he is one of "the major formulators of the fully developed Reformed orthodoxy."<sup>17</sup> His *magnum opus*, *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae* was a thorough defense of Reformed catholicity. His work of apologetics addressed Lutherans, Anabaptists and Socinians but his primary target was the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>18</sup> Although published in an era well populated with Reformed polemics and systematics, Turretin's *Institutio* would become a textbook for thousands of Reformed pastors both in Europe and in the New World.<sup>19</sup>

The interface between Bellarmine's *Controversiae* and Turretin's *Institutio* is conspicuous in at least three ways. First, they are methodologically analogous as they package their theology in scholastic form. In this regard, Bellarmine set the tone which was then followed by Protestants like Turretin. *In nuce*, scholastic nuance had to be met with scholastic nuance. That is to say, as Van Asselt explains, that "Bellarmine's attack was scholastic in

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<sup>11</sup> Stefania Tutino, *Empire of souls* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 76. On the *Controversiae* being put on the index of prohibited books see Giuseppe Domenci, "Le Genesi, le Vicende ed i Giudizi delle Controversie Bellarmine," *Gregorianum* 2, no. 4 (1921): 529-33; Franco Motta, *Roberto Bellarmino. Teologia e potere nella Controriforma, La compagnia di Gesù*, ed. Michela Catto (Milano: 24 ORE Cultura, 2014), 150.

<sup>12</sup> Robert W. Richgels, "The Pattern of Controversy in a Counter-Reformation Classic: The Controversies of Robert Bellarmine," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 11, no. 2 (1980): 6.

<sup>13</sup> Leonardo De Chirico, "Robert Bellarmine and His Controversies with the Reformers. A Window on Post-Tridentine Roman Catholic Apologetics," *European Journal of Theology* 31, no. 1 (2022): 25; Carl Trueman, *Owen: Reformed Catholic, Renaissance Man* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 19. "Given that Bellarmine died in 1621, it is a testimony to his brilliance that he remained the Roman Catholic whom Protestants felt it necessary to refute until very late in the seventeenth century."

<sup>14</sup> Richgels, "Pattern of Controversy," 4.

<sup>15</sup> Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 5-6.

<sup>16</sup> Richard A. Muller, "Scholasticism Protestant and Catholic: Francis Turretin on the Object and Principles of Theology," *Church History* 55, no. 2 (1986): 195.

<sup>17</sup> Muller, *After Calvin*, 6.

<sup>18</sup> J. Mark Beach, "Francis Turretin's Elenctic Theology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, ed. Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 287-88.

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas A. Cumming, *Francis Turretin (1623– 87) and the Reformed Tradition* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020), 148-90.



nature, and to counter him and other Roman Catholic polemical theologians, it was necessary to make use of the same scholastic apparatus.”<sup>20</sup> Second, in addition to standard shared sources (patristic and medieval), they both interact with John Calvin (1509-1564). Calvin is significant for both: as an arch-nemesis for Bellarmine<sup>21</sup> and a hero for Turretin.<sup>22</sup> Finally, Turretin interacts extensively with Bellarmine, mentioning him directly more than 100 times.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, Turretin often responds to arguments presented by Bellarmine without naming him. Even the sequencing of the argumentation of Turretin’s *Institutio* maps onto Bellarmine’s *Controversiae*.<sup>24</sup>

## 1.2 Why This Doctrine?

The centrality of Christology in both systems makes the knowledge and suffering of Christ’s soul a strategically fruitful point of analysis. For Turretin the *persona Christi* is foundational because the *foedus gratiae* is the center and bond of all religion (*centrum ac vinculum totius religionis*, XII.i.1). Introducing the subsequent *locus*, *De Persona et Statu Christi*, he explains that the *foedus gratiae* cannot be rightly understood without a knowledge of Christ because he is its mediator and the cause and fountain of all its blessings (XIII.i.1). Considering Christology soteriologically is standard fare for Reformed Theologians whose doctrine of the person of Christ was determined “by the soteriological issue of the identity of the mediator.”<sup>25</sup>

Bellarmino’s *Controversiae* likewise affirms the centrality of Christology, but primarily does so ecclesiologicaly. He introduces his *Controversiae* by noting that the church and

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<sup>20</sup> Willem J. van Asselt, “Scholasticism in the Time of Early Orthodoxy (ca. 1560-1620),” in Willem J. van Asselt with T. Theo J. Pleizier, Pieter L. Ouwendal and Maarten Wisse, in *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), 109-10; Carl Trueman, “Reformed Theology in the Context of the Reformation(s),” in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, ed. Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 51; Muller, “Scholasticism Protestant and Catholic,” 194. “Protestant scholasticism...was developed in part for the sake of debating Roman Catholic polemicists like the great Cardinal Bellarmine on the sophisticated level of his own scholasticism.”

<sup>21</sup> Richgels, “Pattern of Controversy,” 21. He cites Calvin more than any other foe (23% of the citations are of Calvin, but only 12% of Luther). Richgels explains that in 1607 Bellarmine called Calvin “the one whom I oppose above all in my writings.”

<sup>22</sup> Although he does not directly cite him often, Turretin calls him a “*magnus vir Dei*” (XIII.xiv.15).

<sup>23</sup> Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., trans. George Musgrave Ciger, 3 vols. (1997), 3:705-06. Dennison counts 102 times in his index.

<sup>24</sup> This is the case with the *locus* on Christ’s soul which passes from Christ’s knowledge to his suffering in the *descensus*.

<sup>25</sup> Richard A. Muller, *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 146-47; cf. Stephen Robert Spencer, “Reformed Scholasticism in Medieval Perspective: Thomas Aquinas and François Turretini on the Incarnation” (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1988), 188-89. Spencer makes a similar point based on the order of the loci in the *Institutio*.

sacraments are under attack; the ninth and the tenth articles of the Apostles Creed: “I believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints and the forgiveness of sins.” He explains, therefore, that he will first speak of the church, beginning with her head and prince, Jesus Christ. This is confirmed in the preface to the second major controversy, *De Christo capite totius Ecclesiae*, where Bellarmine explains that to defend the universal church he has to begin with her supreme head.<sup>26</sup> For Bellarmine, the relationship between Christology and ecclesiology is not a one-way street because in his mind “the Church is an essentially Christological mystery.”<sup>27</sup> This should not be taken to mean that Bellarmine connects Christology and ecclesiology instead of Christology and soteriology because he considers the church and her sacraments to be the purveyors of salvation (VIII.I.XXII).<sup>28</sup>

### 1.3 Sources for the Thesis

The principal primary source for Bellarmine’s teaching on Christ’s soul is his *De Christi Anima*, which is book IV in the second major controversy, *De Christo capite totius Ecclesiae*, in his *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Fidei adversus hujus temporis Haereticos (Controversiae)*.<sup>29</sup> The *Controversiae* were originally published in Ingolstadt in three volumes (1586, 1588, and 1593). Additional relevant primary sources are his exposition of Psalm 22 in *Explanatio in Psalmos* (1611) and his comments on the cry of dereliction in *De septem Verbis Domini in cruce prolatis* (1618). Each of these works can be found in the standard edition of his *opera omnia*.<sup>30</sup> The main primary source for Turretin’s treatment of Christ’s soul are *quaestiones XII-XVI* in the thirteenth locus, *De Persona et Statu Christi* in his *Institutio theologiae elencticae (Institutio)*.<sup>31</sup> His *Institutio* was originally published in

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<sup>26</sup> Franco Motta, *Bellarmino. una teologia politica della Controriforma* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2005), 240. In his lectures, which are the basis for the *Controversiae*, the locus *De Christi* was originally dealt with much later. Of this shift Motta says “si tratta di una ricollocazione che sembra avere più un significato simbolico che sostanziale.”

<sup>27</sup> Ervin J. Alácsi, “The Christological Thought of Saint Robert Bellarmine: A Selective Study in Light of Sixteenth Century Christological Controversies” (PhD diss., Pontifical Gregorian University, 2008), 47.

<sup>28</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Bellarmine’s *Controversiae* will be cited directly in the text with this format: controversy.book.chapter.

<sup>29</sup> There are two English translations of the second controversy, both made available in 2016. The first is found in Robert Bellarmine, *Controversies of the Christian Faith*, trans. Kenneth Baker (New Jersey: Keep the Faith, 2016). The second is Peter L. P. Simpson, “Second General Controversy: On Christ the Head of the Whole Church,” 2016, accessed December 9, 2022, <https://aristotelophile.com/Books/Translations/BellarminoControversyTwo.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> Robert Bellarmine, *Opera Omnia*, 12 vols., ed. Justin Fèvre (Paris: Vivès, 1870). As the frontispiece explains this edition is an expansion on the Venetian collection of Bellarmine’s works (1721).

<sup>31</sup> For the English translation (1997) see note 22 above.

Geneva in three parts (1679, 1682, and 1685). His tractate, *De satisfactione Christi* (1666), also contains relevant information. Both of these works are found in Turretin’s *opera omnia*.<sup>32</sup>

Secondary literature that focuses on Christology—whether in Bellarmine or Turretin—is scant. Elliott’s chapter “Christology in the Seventeenth Century” is a good place to start as he deals directly, albeit briefly, with both Bellarmine and Turretin.<sup>33</sup> The foremost work on Bellarmine’s Christology is Alácsi’s unpublished dissertation, “The Christological Thought of Saint Robert Bellarmine: A Selective Study in Light of the Sixteenth Century.” Although an unabashed defender of Bellarmine, Alácsi helpfully sets Bellarmine’s Christology in the context of his broader theology and draws extensively from Sebastian Tromp’s unpublished transcription of Bellarmine’s comments on Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*. Joseph de La Serviére’s *La théologie de Bellarmin*<sup>34</sup> summarizes Bellarmine’s teaching in the *Controversiae* and offers brief comments. Turretin’s Christology is treated directly in Spencer’s unpublished dissertation, “Reformed Scholasticism in Medieval Perspective: Thomas Aquinas and François Turretini on the Incarnation.” Spencer’s analysis of Turretin’s Christology is only introductory. Muller’s *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* includes much that is germane both to Turretin and to the broader picture of Reformed scholastic theology. Holmes’ “Reformed Varieties of the Communicatio Idiomatum” also comments briefly on Turretin’s Christology. The relevant biographical material will be treated in the next chapter.

## 1.4 Development of the Thesis

This thesis purposes to expound and offer a comparative analysis of the doctrine of the knowledge and suffering of Christ’s soul in Bellarmine and Turretin. The primary research question addressed is: “How can the differences in their positions be explained?” This in turn begets two secondary questions: (1) “How does methodology contribute to the difference?” Both apply the scholastic apparatus but are there nuances in its application which shape their theological conclusions (e.g., the weighing and prioritization of traditional sources)? (2) “To what extent is this divergence indicative of broader, systemic differences? In what way can the *locus* on Christ’s soul serve as a window to foundational theological commitments?”

The thesis proceeds as follows. Chapter two is a biographical introduction to Bellarmine and Turretin and an overview of their *magna opera*. This chapter sets the stage for the

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<sup>32</sup> Francis Turretin, *Francisci Turretini opera*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: John D. Lowe, 1847).

<sup>33</sup> Mark W. Elliott, “Christology in the Seventeenth Century,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Christology*, ed. Francesca Aran Murphy and Troy A. Stefano (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 297–314.

<sup>34</sup> Joseph de La Serviére, *La théologie de Bellarmin* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1908), 63–69.

discussion which follows, ensuring the ideas discussed are historically contextualized. Chapter three takes up the question of the knowledge of Christ's soul. After an initial explanation of the views, a comparative analysis is undertaken according to five criteria: scriptural support, retrieval of tradition, explanation of Christ's perfection, soteriological considerations, and the place of the beatific vision in Christ's earthly ministry. Chapter four treats the question of the sufferings of Christ's soul following a similar pattern: general exposition and then comparative analysis. The two positions of the suffering of Christ's soul are evaluated on the basis of four simple questions: Did Christ's soul suffer? How did it suffer? What did it suffer? and Why did it suffer? Chapter five summarizes the findings in light of the purpose and primary research question of the thesis. It then offers a preliminary response to the two secondary questions mentioned above. First, select comments on their methodology are offered, primarily in regard to the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. Second, connections are drawn between the differences in their doctrine of Christ's soul and other differences in their theological systems, specifically soteriology and ecclesiology. Finally, avenues for further study are outlined.

## 2 The Stories of Two Italian Scholastic Polemicists

Robert Bellarmine and Francis Turretin are hardly household names in the modern manifestations of their respective traditions. Bellarmine is not as well-known among Roman Catholics as his Christian namesake, Francis of Assisi (d. 1226)<sup>1</sup> nor is Turretin as well-known among Reformed Christians as his predecessors in Geneva like John Calvin (1509-1564) and Theodore Beza (1519-1605). Vatican II's *aggiornamento* (1962-1965) meant a move away from polemical paradigms like that of Bellarmine, emphasizing the church's catholicity more than its Roman nature.<sup>2</sup> As for Reformed theology, the 'Calvin and the Calvinists' movement worked to set post-reformation theologians like Turretin against their earlier reformation counterparts, implying the latter were more biblical whereas the former were more philosophical.<sup>3</sup>

Their being somewhat overlooked is unsurprising, as the seventeenth century, wherein both Bellarmine's and Turretin's works were widely read, "has often been considered a forgettable one for Christian theology."<sup>4</sup> This assessment is unwarranted, as the seventeenth century, and more broadly the early modern period, was a time of significant theological evolution for both Roman Catholic and Reformed theology.

The time between 1600 and 1800 has been undeservedly neglected, despite the fact that important and ingenious theological work was done in these centuries. This was the time in which the ideas of the Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation were synthesized, systematized, and widely disseminated.<sup>5</sup>

As a part of the Roman Catholic church's "second scholasticism," Bellarmine systemized Tridentine thought and deployed it against the *novatores*. As a part of Reformed theology's "first scholasticism," Turretin synthesized Reformed thought, as defined by the Synod of Dort and wrote against the *pontificii*.<sup>6</sup> Both left an extended work of controversial theology as their primary literary legacy which would be a reference point for their respective traditions in the

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<sup>1</sup> His full name is Robert Francis Romulus Bellarmine.

<sup>2</sup> Bellarmine's name is mentioned only once in the introduction to the Roman Catholic Catechism among the names of others who previously wrote catechisms (Prologue, II.9). Although not a doctor of the church, Francis of Assisi is mentioned 4 times (see 344, n. 212; 598 n. 392; 1014 n. 590; 2416); Alácsi, "Christological Thought," 2. Alácsi talks about Bellarmine's "romanità."

<sup>3</sup> See Willem J. van Asselt with Pieter L. Rouwendal, "The State of Scholarship: From Discontinuity to Continuity," in *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 10-25.

<sup>4</sup> Elliott, "Christology in the Seventeenth Century," 297.

<sup>5</sup> Lehner, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology, 1600-1800*, 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 4; cf. Jordan J. Ballor, "Deformation and Reformation: Thomas Aquinas and the Rise of Protestant Scholasticism," in *Aquinas Among the Protestants*, ed. Manfred Svensson and David VanDrunen (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 38-42.

centuries that followed. The connection between Bellarmine and Turretin clearly transcends their shared Italian heritage.

This chapter will set both theologians and their *capolavori* in their respective historical contexts. Sections one and three will begin with a review of the relevant biographical literature and then provide a sketch of their intellectual history, focusing on the information most pertinent for the present study on Christology. Sections two and four will introduce Bellarmine's *Controversiae* and Turretin's *Institutio* respectively, interacting with the prefatory material and briefly discussing their methodological approach. Finally, section five will offer a concise, comparative summary of the preceding sections.

## 2.1 Robert Bellarmine

La Chiesa del Gesù in Rome, mother church of the Jesuits and initial resting place of the remains of Robert Bellarmine, contains a variety of homages to a triumphalist reading of the Counterreformation. In the chapel dedicated to the founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), Andrea Pozzo's massive painting of Ignatius before Christ is flanked by twin statues. The statue on the right, Pietro Le Gros' "The Triumph of Faith over Heresy" depicts Mary (and so the church) standing over two men entangled in serpents who have books scattered around them, two of which bear names on their spines: "Mart Luther" and "Joann Calvin." This memorial captures well the life of the *haereticorum malleum*, "the hammer of heretics" who was first and foremost a Jesuit polemical theologian.<sup>7</sup>

The biographical information on the *haereticorum malleum* is extensive and Bellarmine scholarship has evolved in various phases, some of them corresponding to important moments in his canonization process.<sup>8</sup> The Historical Archives of the Pontifical Gregorian University hosts *Bibliografia Bellarminiana*,<sup>9</sup> which includes over 750 entries, as well as *Epistolae Bellarmini Cardinalis*,<sup>10</sup> which contains his correspondence from the time he was appointed cardinal until his death (March 1599 – October 1621). The biographical accounts of Bellarmine have recently increased in number coinciding with the four-hundredth anniversary of his death

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<sup>7</sup> Domenci, "Controversie Bellarmine," 514; Motta, *Teologia e potere*, 31. "Prima di tutto, però, Bellarmino fu gesuita e teologo. Teologo controversista, per la precisione: una specializzazione particolarmente importante, in quei tempi di controversie religiose senza fine."

<sup>8</sup> Alácsi, "Christological Thought," 1-2.

<sup>9</sup> "Bibliographia Bellarminiana," Historical Archives of the Pontifical Gregorian University, accessed December, 2022, [https://gate.unigre.it/mediawiki/index.php/Bibliographia\\_Bellarminiana](https://gate.unigre.it/mediawiki/index.php/Bibliographia_Bellarminiana). Cf. Stefania Tutino, "Cardinal Bellarmine," Oxford Bibliographies, 2013, accessed December, 2022, <https://www-oxfordbibliographies-com.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/display/document/obo-9780195399301/obo-9780195399301-0236.xml>.

<sup>10</sup> "Epistolae Bellarmini Cardinalis," Historical Archives of the Pontifical Gregorian University, accessed December, 2022, [https://gate.unigre.it/mediawiki/index.php/Epistolae\\_Bellarmini\\_Cardinalis](https://gate.unigre.it/mediawiki/index.php/Epistolae_Bellarmini_Cardinalis).

(2021). Giancarlo Pani's *Roberto Bellarmino. Cercatore della verità* and the essays in *Bellarmino e i Gesuiti a Montepulciano. Studi in occasione del IV centenario della morte di San Roberto (1621-2021)*<sup>11</sup> are two such examples. The former is a brief, helpful sketch of the main events of Bellarmine's life and is regularly hagiographic and at times apologetic. The latter is a compendium of papers presented at the 2021 symposium at his birthplace. Also of more recent date is Stefania Tutino's *Empire of Souls: Robert Bellarmine and the Christian Commonwealth*, which is a study of the impact of Bellarmine's theory of the *potestas indirecta* in early modern Europe. Tutino's approach to Bellarmine builds on Motta's earlier, *Bellarmino. una teologia politica della Controriforma*, which is a sprawling exposition of Bellarmine's religiopolitical ideology. Motta's *Bellarmino. Teologia e potere nella Controriforma* is a popular, although not unscholarly, biographical account and his article in the *Dizionario Storico dell'Inquisizione* provides a simple biographical sketch.<sup>12</sup> Brodrick's *Robert Bellarmine: Saint and Scholar*,<sup>13</sup> which is an updated and revised abbreviation of his earlier pre-canonization two volume biography,<sup>14</sup> is still a standard source. Brodrick was a Jesuit writing just 30 years after Bellarmine's canonization and recognition as a doctor of the universal church and his narration is predictably hagiographical. Finally, there is Bellarmine's "autobiography" penned not long before his death in 1613, but not published until 1675.<sup>15</sup> The rather self-congratulatory tone of the little work is often justified by the fact that it was written at the behest of Jesuit superiors for internal use.<sup>16</sup> After Bellarmine describes the prodigiousness of his intellect, his hand in papal affairs, the impact of his preaching and several examples of his successful foretelling of the future, the concluding phrase rings somewhat hollow:

Of his [Bellarmino writes in the third person] virtues he said nothing for he does not know whether he truly possesses any; and of his faults he has said nothing, for they are not the sort of thing to be put in print, and may they be found to be blotted out of the book of God on the day of judgment.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Bellarmino e i Gesuiti a Montepulciano. Studi in occasione del IV centenario della morte di San Roberto (1621-2021)*, ed. Manlio Sodi and Anna Głusiuk (Calenzano: Leo S. Olschki, 2022).

<sup>12</sup> Franco Motta, "Roberto Bellarmino," in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, ed. Adriano Proseri, vol. 3 (Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore, 2010), 1334-35.

<sup>13</sup> James Brodrick, *Robert Bellarmine: Saint and Scholar* (London: The Catholic Book Club, 1961).

<sup>14</sup> James Brodrick, *The Life and Work of Blessed Robert Francis Cardinal Bellarmine, S.J., 1542-1621*, 2 vols. (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1928). For additional biographical details see James Brodrick, *The Progress of the Jesuits (1556-79)* (New York; London: Longmans, Green, 1947), 283-88.

<sup>15</sup> The latin text is available in: Brodrick, *The Life and Work of Blessed Robert Francis Cardinal Bellarmine, S.J., 1542-1621*, I:460-81; For an English translation see: Robert Bellarmine, "The Autobiography of St. Robert Bellarmine," *Woodstock Letters* 89, no. 1 (1960): 3-30.

<sup>16</sup> Pani, *Bellarmino*, 16-19.

<sup>17</sup> Bellarmine, "Autobiography," 26. However, he does mention another priest's initial angry response to Bellarmine's correction of his work (27).

Robert Bellarmine was born on October 4, 1542, in the picturesque Tuscan hill town of Montepulciano near Siena, less than three months after the beginning of the Roman inquisition (*Licet ab initio*, July 21, 1542).<sup>18</sup> The hope of reconciliation between the Roman Catholic and Protestant communions had only recently died: Bellarmine was born fifteen months after the failed Regensburg colloquy (Apr. 5 – May 22, 1541) and less than two months after the death of Gasparo Contarini (August 24, 1542), whose views on justification (*duplex iustitia*) promised a possible *via media* for ecumenical reconciliation.<sup>19</sup> He grew up breathing the air of the council of Trent which began when he was three (1445) and would not adjourn until he was twenty-one (1563).<sup>20</sup>

The Society of Jesus, only recently founded in 1540, already had a strong presence in Montepulciano in Bellarmine's early years.<sup>21</sup> Bellarmine describes his parents, Cynthia Cervini and Vincenzo Bellarmino, as devout. He says of himself and his brothers that "at an early age she [their mother] accustomed them to go to confession, to attend mass, to pray and other pious practices."<sup>22</sup> In 1555, when he was thirteen, his maternal uncle, Marcello Cervini, was elected pope with the name Marcello II. Although his pontificate lasted only 28 days due to his untimely death, his life left a lasting impact on Bellarmine.<sup>23</sup> Among the many displays of his cleverness narrated in his autobiography, he mentions the sermon he preached before the confraternity of Saint Stephens when he was only fifteen.<sup>24</sup> He was admitted to the Society of Jesus on September 20, 1560. He began his life as a scholar in the Roman College, where he studied Aristotle for three years and the "brightest luminary" was Francisco de Toledo (Toletus, 1532-1596), the future first Jesuit cardinal (1593).<sup>25</sup> While in Rome his health declined as his

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<sup>18</sup> Motta, *Teologia e potere*, 30.

<sup>19</sup> See his *De iustificatione* in Gasparo Contarini, *Opera* (Paris 1571), 588-96. Cf. Turretin, *Institutio*, XVI.ii.17 where Turretin notes that there are two Cardinals who agree with a key aspect of his position on justification and then quotes Contarini and Bellarmine.

<sup>20</sup> On the Council of Trent see Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, 2 vols. (London: T. Nelson, 1957).

<sup>21</sup> Robert Danieluk, "La compagnia di Gesù nei tempi di Bellarmino e De Nobili," in *Bellarmino e i Gesuiti a Montepulciano*, 3-15. "Durante il generalato di Acquaviva l'ordine fondato nel 1540 conobbe un periodo di eccezionale espansione: basti ricordare che alla morte del suo fondatore, nel 1556, si contavano circa mille gesuiti; nel 1581 erano già saliti a più di 5,000..."

<sup>22</sup> Bellarmine, "Autobiography," 6.

<sup>23</sup> Motta, *teologia politica*, 75-83; On Cervini see Chiara Quaranta, *Marcello II Cervini (1501-1555). Riforma della Chiesa, concilio, Inquisizione* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Bellarmine, "Autobiography," 7. His preaching (and its impact) is an important theme in his autobiography.

<sup>25</sup> Brodrick, *Saint and Scholar*, 12; Brodrick, *The Progress of the Jesuits (1556-79)*, 283-86. Cf. *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* (1908), s.v. "Toletus."



studies progressed. Therefore, he was sent elsewhere and eventually to Padua where he studied several parts of Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* including the *Pars Tertia*.<sup>26</sup>

In 1569, Bellarmine was sent to Louvain (Flanders) to preach and finish his studies.<sup>27</sup> In his second year there, he was asked to teach on scholastic theology as a part of the new faculty of the Society of Jesus. His textbook was Thomas' *Summa* rather than Peter's *Sententiae* and after his lectures on the Trinity, he commented to his students: "I guarantee ... that any one among you will make more all-round progress in two months devoted to the *Summa*, than in several months' independent study of the Bible and the Fathers."<sup>28</sup> He lectured on the *Tertia Pars* from 7 May 1576 to 25 August 1576, but only taught the first seven questions and so stopped short of the questions of the knowledge of Christ's soul (9-12) and its suffering (14-15, 46-47).<sup>29</sup>

His Louvain years were also preparatory for his polemics against protestants for two reasons.<sup>30</sup> First, he was directly involved in his first theological dispute: Michael de Baius' (Baius, 1513-1589) teachings on the efficacious nature of grace. Baius and his followers were undeterred by Pius V's *Ex omnibus afflictionibus* (1567) which anonymously condemned many of their views on free will and grace, such that Bellarmine could write that Baius, "was teaching opinions which seemed to lean towards the erroneous novelties of the Lutherans and were condemned by Pius V."<sup>31</sup> Baius' reading of Augustine led him to teach a doctrine of total depravity that had affinities with Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio*.<sup>32</sup> Bellarmine used his lectures on the *Summa* to refute Baius indirectly.<sup>33</sup> Second, he found himself in proximity to countries where the Reformation had a greater impact than it had in his native Italy.<sup>34</sup> In his autobiography he mentions his flight from the army of William of Orange. He and the other religious had to conceal themselves in lay garb because "the heretical Calvinists of whom William's army was full, were particularly savage towards religious."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Bellarmine, "Autobiography," 14. The *Tertia Pars* is the section on Christology.

<sup>27</sup> R. de le Court, "Saint Robert Bellarmin à Louvain," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 28, no. 1 (1932): 75.

<sup>28</sup> Brodrick, *Saint and Scholar*, 29.

<sup>29</sup> Sebastian Tromp, "Conspectus chronologicus praelectionum quas habuit S. Robertus Bellarminus in Collegio S. I. Lovaniensi et Collegio Romano," *Gregorianum* 16, no. 1 (1935): 101.

<sup>30</sup> De le Court, "Louvain," 83.

<sup>31</sup> Bellarmine, "Autobiography," 15. Cf. de le Court, "Louvain," 77.

<sup>32</sup> R. J. Matava, "A Sketch of the Controversy de auxiliis," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 7, no. 3 (2020): 421.

<sup>33</sup> De le Court, "Louvain," 78; cf. Motta, *Teologia e potere*, 85. Motta notes that it seems he was sent there to gather information on Michael Baius.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. De Chirico, "Bellarmine," 24.

<sup>35</sup> Bellarmine, "Autobiography," 16.

Bellarmino was not only in the proximity of places where heresy had taken root, he preached against it and had the opportunity to read heretical works with the permission of his superiors.<sup>36</sup> It was during this time that he created several indices that would become the foundation for his later works, the most interesting of which for present purposes is the *Index haereticorum*.<sup>37</sup> The work lists 217 heresies categorized by century, several of which include responses and patristic citations. The work is evidently more concerned with the present than the past: 15 heresies are listed for Arius but 45 for Wycliffe, 41 for Huss, 144 for Luther and 101 for Melancthon.<sup>38</sup> However, the most space is dedicated to Calvin from whom 186 articles of heresy are listed which are derived from his *Institutio*. The *Index haereticorum* is of particular interest because it demonstrates that Bellarmine was already concerned about the nature of Christ's soul. He mentions the Agnoetae and their leader Themistius who "was one of the Monophysites, who added to the vestiges of Eutyches that Christ was ignorant of the day of judgment."<sup>39</sup> He also notes that Calvin teaches that "nothing was accomplished, if Christ died bodily only" and further that Christ suffered the "terror of death" (*mortis terrore*) and the torment of the damned in his soul (*in animo cruciatus damnati*).<sup>40</sup>

In 1576 Bellarmine was called back to Rome to teach controversial theology in the Roman College. His goal was to prepare to his students to defend the Catholic faith in their homeland as though they were "*novos Ecclesiae milites*."<sup>41</sup> His lectures there would serve as the basis for his *Controversiae*. As Bellarmine's teaching schedule makes clear, Christology and soteriology were clearly secondary to questions of authority and ecclesiology:

- 1576-1577 *De Verbo Dei, De Traditione, De Eccl. Milit. and De Conciliis*
- 1577-1578 *De Romano Pontifice and De Clericis*
- 1578-1579 *De Monachis et Horis Canonicis, De Laicis and De Purgatorio*
- 1579-1580 *De Ecclesia triumphante and De gratia et peccato primi hominis*
- 1580-1581 *De libero arbitrio and De iustificatione*
- 1581-1582 *De Christo and probably de Rom. Pontifice (Probabiliter quaestiones selectae de Rom. Pontifice)*
- 1582-1583 *De Romano Pontifice and De Conciliis (second course)*

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<sup>36</sup> Sebastian Tromp, "De Sancti Roberti Bellarmini Contionibus Lovaniensibus," *Gregorianum* 21, no. 2 (1940): 383-412; Motta, *Teologia e potere*, 97. Motta explains that he preached "12 sermons containing as many arguments to confirm the catholic in his faith and convert the heretic from his deceit" in December 1571 – March 1572.

<sup>37</sup> Sebastian Tromp, "De Bellarmini indice haereticorum Treviris reperto," *Gregorianum* 15, no. 2 (1934): 206. Tromp dates the Index to 1571-1573; cf. de le Court, "Louvain," 79; Motta, *Teologia e potere*, 105-6.

<sup>38</sup> Tromp, "De indice," 201.

<sup>39</sup> Robert Bellarmine, *Index haereticorum*, Gregorian Archives Texts Editing, 329v, [https://gate.unigre.it/mediawiki/index.php/Index:Bellarmino-Index\\_haereticorum.pdf](https://gate.unigre.it/mediawiki/index.php/Index:Bellarmino-Index_haereticorum.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 348v.

<sup>41</sup> Bellarmine, *Opera Omnia*, 1:54.

- 1583-1584 *De Clericis, De Monachis and De Laicis* (second course)
- 1584-1585 *De Sacr. in genere, De Baptismo, Confirmatione, Unctione and Ordine*
- 1585-1586 *De Sacr. Eucharistiae, Poenitentiae, Matrimonii*
- 1586-1587 *De gratia et quaestionibus annexis (De gratia et peccato primi hominis ; de lib. arb. ; de iustificat. impii et de bonis operibus).*<sup>42</sup>

Although he relinquished the chair of controversies in 1587, his role as the “paladino del pontefice”<sup>43</sup> continued until his death. Motta describes his importance to papal affairs as follows:

Bellarmino’s ascent as an expert in doctrinal matters which began under Gregory XIII and Sixtus V, culminates in the election of Clement VIII who uses him as counselor *in theologicis*, entrusts him with drawing up the official catechism of the church and elevates him to the rank of cardinal.<sup>44</sup>

He played an important role in the production of the Sixto-Clementine version of the Vulgate<sup>45</sup> and was only the second Jesuit to become a cardinal (1599).<sup>46</sup> Disagreements with Clement VIII over his role in the *De Auxiliis* controversy led to his being appointed archbishop of Padua (1602-1605). Although not in complete agreement with Molina,<sup>47</sup> Bellarmine defended the Jesuit anthropocentric position, which protected the conceptual priority of free will.<sup>48</sup> He returned to Rome when Paul V was elected Pope (1605-1621), was involved with diplomatic relations with Venice and James VI/I after James’s accession to the English throne and was a key figure in important trials like those of Giordano Bruno and Galileo.<sup>49</sup> His literary output included a Hebrew grammar, two catechisms, a commentary on the Psalms and several devotional works written towards the end of his life, the last of which was *Ars bene moriendi* (1619). Bellarmine died on September 17, 1621, but due to differing interpretations of his autobiography, it would be over three hundred years before he was canonized a saint (1930) and made a Doctor of the Universal Church (1931).

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<sup>42</sup> Tromp, “Conspectus chronologicus praelectionum,” 101-05.

<sup>43</sup> Pani, *Bellarmino*, 39.

<sup>44</sup> Motta, “Roberto Bellarmino,” in *Dizionario storico dell’Inquisizione*, 1334. Translation mine. Cf. Brodrick, *Saint and Scholar*, 157.

<sup>45</sup> Paul Mueller, “Bellarmino, nella storia e nella scienza del suo tempo,” in *Bellarmino e i Gesuiti a Montepulciano. Studi in occasione del IV centenario della morte di San Roberto (1621-2021)*, ed. Manlio Sodi and Anna Głusiuk (Calenzano: Leo S. Olschki, 2022), 18-19.

<sup>46</sup> Robert A. Maryks, “Jesuit Cardinals: An Introduction,” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 7, no. 4 (2020): 521-25.

<sup>47</sup> Brodrick, *Saint and Scholar*, 196-205; cf. Tutino, *Empire of souls*, 14. Tutino says that Bellarmine insisted “on a strictly Augustinian reading of Aquinas.”

<sup>48</sup> Matava, “de auxiliis,” 435. Matava describes the Dominican position as theocentric and the Jesuit position as anthropocentric; Brodrick, *Saint and Scholar*, 191.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Pani, *Bellarmino*, 91-114.

## 2.2 The Controversiae

The *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Fidei adversus hujus temporis haereticos* is a massive two-million-word tome.<sup>50</sup> The work was purchased by Protestants as well as Catholics and there were over two hundred responses written to all or part of it, the most renowned being William Ames's *Bellarmino Rendered Powerless (Bellarminus enervatus, 1626)*.<sup>51</sup> The *Controversiae* "conceded something important to the heretics" in that "the heretics of Bellarmine's own time existed in such a way that obliged post-Tridentine Catholicism to change something fundamental in its theological and political structure."<sup>52</sup> Motta well summarizes its importance:

This work, which, being reprinted numerous times, knew an unusually long success (the most recent edition was published at the margins of the work of Vatican I in 1870-1874), qualifies as what is probably the most exhaustive compendium of Tridentine orthodoxy, articulated in the context of a concise dialectic between Catholic and heretical thought that covers all of the articles of faith, from biblical hermeneutics to ecclesiology, from theological anthropology to Christology, to matters both sacramental and liturgical.<sup>53</sup>

In addition to introductions to specific sections, the *Controversiae* contains a twofold general introduction: *ad lecotorem* and *praefatio*. In the former the author provides a threefold apology for his decision to publish his work. First, he argues that his work was needed although there were already others like it. Second, while other polemical writings deal extensively with errors, his desire was to house all the matters under dispute in one place. Third, his hand was forced in the matter, as his students were already circulating their lecture notes from the Roman College. The *praefatio* begins by underscoring the urgency of the refutation of heresy—Bellarmine compares it to a plague. He explains that it is the speed with which it poisons and the scope of the spread of its carnage that causes a plague to be feared: "...When heresy immediately assails that heart of the soul, it removes completely the gift of grace and extinguishes the beginning of divine and heavenly life."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> De Chirico, "Bellarmine," 28.

<sup>51</sup> Brodrick, *Saint and Scholar*, 66-75; van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 109; Trueman, *Owen*, 19; cf. De Chirico, "Bellarmine," 25; Eef Dekker, "An Eccumenical Debate between Reformation and Counter-Reformation? Bellarmine and Ames on liberum arbitrium," in *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise*, ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 141-54.

<sup>52</sup> Tutino, *Empire of souls*, 78.

<sup>53</sup> Motta, "Roberto Bellarmino," in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, 1334. Translation mine. Cf. Pani, *Bellarmino*, 47-51.

<sup>54</sup> Bellarmine, *Controversies of the Christian Faith*, 14.

The first two heretics he mentions are Reformed theologians, Peter Martyr Vermigli and John Calvin. Calvin is mentioned a second time just a few paragraphs later, where Bellarmine takes issue with his Christology, specifically his doctrine of the *descensus*. Bellarmine sketches the history of heresies which he considers to be a succession of attacks against the articles of the Apostle's Creed. In the first two centuries, heretics like the Marcionites and the Gnostics attacked the first article, then, beginning in the third century the second article came under attack and so on. In the ninth century, heretics attacked the Holy Spirit (the eighth article) and in his day, the ninth and tenth articles of the creed were under siege. This attack predated Luther's 95 Theses (1517) because, according to Bellarmine, Berengarius (d. 1088) is the author and the parent of the heretics of his age.<sup>55</sup> He traces all the protestant heresies to three of Berengarius' errors: the first two are connected with the nature of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist and the third with the sacraments of baptism and marriage. Therefore, Bellarmine interprets the Protestant heresy as a eucharistic problem, at the crossroads between Christology and Ecclesiology. Indeed, Ecclesiology is central to his thought and permeates his theological system which works as a unit; "un vero e perfetto organismo."<sup>56</sup> While the section on Christology contains 515 protestant citations (43% radical, 29% Reformed and 24% Lutheran), the sections with the most protestant citations deal with Ecclesiology: the sections on the Eucharist and the Pope, contain 1,192 and 627 respectively.<sup>57</sup>

For Bellarmine the Church determines, defines, and interprets the Scriptures. Thus, Bellarmine deals with the Scriptures in his first controversy out of necessity, not because they alone are foundational to his system. He calls the first controversy not simply *De Verbo Dei* but rather *De Verbo Dei Scripto et Noscripto* for a reason. His copious patristic citations are evidence of his application of Trent's doctrine of the consensus patrum<sup>58</sup> and, in line with his controversialist predecessors, he taught the obscurity of Scripture (even on the fundamental articles of salvation) over against the protestant doctrine of perspicuity (I.III.I). "Bellarmine's primary reason for stressing the obscurity of scripture, however, is to establish the need for the Church as the authentic interpreter of the scriptures."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> On Berengarius see Henry Chadwick, "Ego Berengarius," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 40, no. 2 (1989), 414-45.

<sup>56</sup> Alácsi, "Christological Thought," 41; Domenci, "Controversie Bellarmine," 521.

<sup>57</sup> Richgels, "Pattern of Controversy," 13-14. For Bellarmine on the Eucharist see R. J. Daly, "Robert Bellarmine and Post-Tridentine Eucharistic Theology," *Theological Studies (Baltimore)* 61, no. 2 (2000): 239-60.

<sup>58</sup> DS, 1507.

<sup>59</sup> Christian D. Washburn, "St. Robert Bellarmine on the Authoritative Interpretation of Sacred Scripture," *Gregorianum* 94, no. 1 (2013): 65; cf. Evangelista Vilanova, *Storia della teologia cristiana*, vol. 2 (Rome: Borla, 1994), 377. "Le convinzioni dogmatiche dei cattolici sono molto chiare: tutti, senza eccezione,

## 2.3 Francis Turretin

Francis Turretin is nowhere to be found on Geneva's monument to the Reformation, *Monument international de la Réformation*. Nevertheless, it was Turretin who defended and refined the doctrinal heritage he received from the men depicted in the monument's central statues (William Farel, 1489-1565, Theodore Beza, John Calvin and John Knox, d. 1572). He was the last prominent theologian to teach Reformed orthodoxy at the Academy in Geneva; a dying breed for, by the time his nephew Benedict Pictet took his place, it was too late for him to stem the tide of liberalizing tendencies.<sup>60</sup> Francis' son, Jean-Alphonse Turretin (1671-1737), held the same chair his father had (1705-1737), but embraced the very theological ideas from which Francis strove to protect Geneva.<sup>61</sup>

The relative paucity of the literature on Turretin—biographical or otherwise—is especially evident when compared with the extensive *Bellarminiana*. Thankfully, the biographical lacuna has been recently filled by Cumming's *Francis Turretin (1623–87) and the Reformed Tradition* (2021) which is a reprisal of his 2016 dissertation.<sup>62</sup> Cumming includes new archival work and a helpful introduction to Turretin's *Institutio*. James T. Dennison's biographical sketch (1997) is the only such work published in the twentieth century.<sup>63</sup> Dennison's contribution should not be undervalued as it is as dense as it is compact. His work on Turretin's Italian roots is especially helpful. In the two centuries prior to Dennison, two French biographies were published: de Budé's *Vie de Francois Turrettini*<sup>64</sup> and Keizer's *Turrettini: Sa Vie et Ses Oeuvres et le Consensus* (1900).<sup>65</sup> John Walter Beardslee III's unpublished doctoral thesis, "Theological Development at Geneva under Francis and Jean-Alphonse Turretin (1648-1737)" provides helpful background information drawing in part on

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ammettono l'insufficienza della Bibbia, l'esistenza della tradizione, l'autorità dogmatica degli organi di tale tradizione (papi, padri, concili)."

<sup>60</sup> Beach, "Francis Turretin's Elenctic Theology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, 282; James T. Dennison Jr., "The Life and Career of Francis Turretin," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol. 3 (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1997), 645.

<sup>61</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 5; cf. Martin I. Klauber, "The Drive toward Protestant Union in Early Eighteenth-Century Geneva: Jean-Alphonse Turrettini on the "Fundamental Articles" of the Faith," *Church History* 61, no. 3 (1992): 334-49; Martin I. Klauber, "The Uniqueness of Christ in Post-Reformation Reformed Theology: from Francis Turretin to Jean-Alphonse Turretin," in *Church and School in Early Modern Protestantism: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Muller on the Maturation of a Theological Tradition*, ed. Jordan Ballor, David Sytsma, and Jason Zuidema (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 699-710.

<sup>62</sup> Nicholas Andrew Cumming, "The Life of Francis Turretin (1623-87) and his Impact on the Protestant Reformed Tradition" (PhD diss., King's College London, 2016).

<sup>63</sup> Dennison Jr., "Life and Career," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 639-58.

<sup>64</sup> Eugene de Budé, *Vie de François Turrettini, Theologien Genevois, 1623-1687* (Lausanne: Georges Brindel, 1871).

<sup>65</sup> Gerrit Keizer, *Turrettini: Sa Vie et Ses Oeuvres et le Consensus* (Lausanne: Georges Bridel, 1900).

the two French biographies mentioned above.<sup>66</sup> Although it is understandably hagiographical given the occasion, Benedict Pictet's *Funeral Oration* is a contemporary biographical account.<sup>67</sup> Also worthy of consideration are Turretin's own autobiographical comments in the introductory material to each of the three volumes of his *Institutio*.<sup>68</sup> Finally, Beach's chapter "Francis Turretin's Elenctic Theology" and his article "Reading Turretin: Some Observations on Reading Turretin's Institutes of Elenctic Theology"<sup>69</sup> are useful introductions to Turretin's *Institutio*.

Francis (François) was born on October 17, 1623 and was baptized in the Italian church in Geneva six days after his birth.<sup>70</sup> Geneva was much the same as Calvin had left it eighty years earlier (1564): the consistory which governed the Genevan church, the Venerable Company and the councils overseeing the city's civic life were largely unaltered.<sup>71</sup> It was a season of important victories for Reformed Orthodoxy. Less than five years before his birth, the Synod of Dort condemned Arminianism (November 13, 1618 – May 9, 1619). Geneva sent two delegates who would later become Francis' professors: the Hebraist and translator, Jean Diodati (1576-1649) and Theodore Tronchin (1582–1657), who then held the chair of theology.<sup>72</sup> In 1620 Francis' father, Benedict Turretin (1588-1631), was a delegate to the French Synod of Alès, which accepted the Canons of Dort and condemned popery.<sup>73</sup> However, these victories were in some ways the calm before the storm as Moses Amyraut (1596-1664) would publish his *Apologie* defending hypothetical universalism 20 years later.<sup>74</sup> In addition to threats from within the Reformed Church like Arminianism and Amyraldianism, from without there loomed a large threat: Roman Catholicism. Francis was born less than a year after the

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<sup>66</sup> John Walter Beardslee III, "Theological development at Geneva under Francis and Jean-Alphonse Turretin (1648-1737)" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1956).

<sup>67</sup> Benedict Pictet, "Funeral Oration of Benedict Pictet Concerning the Life and Death of Francis Turretin: Delivered on the Third Day of November of the Year 1687," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., vol. 3 (Phillipsburg, NJ: Prebyterian and Reformed, 1997); For the Latin see Turretin, *Francisci Turretini opera*, 4, xxix-xxviii.

<sup>68</sup> Giger includes the introductory material to the first volume in his translation. The introductory material for the second (*Epistola dedicatoria* and the *Præfatio ad lectorem*) and third volume (*Ad lectorem*) are only available in Latin: Turretin, *Francisci Turretini opera*, 2:xiii-xxiv; 3:v-xv.

<sup>69</sup> J. Mark Beach, "Reading Turretin: Some Observations on Reading Turretin's Institutes of Elenctic Theology," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 27, no. 1 (2016), 67-84.

<sup>70</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 26.

<sup>71</sup> Beardslee III, "Theological Development," 13.

<sup>72</sup> On Diodati and Tronchin see Karin Maag, "From Professors to Pastors: The Convoluted Careers of Jean Diodati and Théodore Tronchin," in *Church and School in Early Modern Protestantism: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Muller on the Maturation of a Theological Tradition*, ed. Jordan Ballor, David Sytsma, and Jason Zuidema (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 243-53.

<sup>73</sup> De Budé, *Vie de François Turretini*, 14-15.

<sup>74</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 24, n. 14.

Battle of White Mountain, the first major battle of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). Although the Catholic Savoyard failed in their attempt to take the city twenty years before his birth (1602), Francis would have witnessed the arrival of Waldensians feeling Savoyard persecution in Piemonte in 1655.<sup>75</sup>

Turretin's origins are intertwined with the Roman Catholic Counter Reformation. The Turretin family was from Lucca, a Tuscan city which became an "Italian Geneva" under Peter Martyr Vermigli's ministry in 1541.<sup>76</sup> This was so much so the case that it was a key factor in provoking the Roman Inquisition in 1542 (the year Bellarmine was born).<sup>77</sup> Having been influenced by figures like Gasparo Contarini (1483-1542) and Juan de Valdés (1509-1541), Vermigli was a part of the Italian Evangelism movement which flourished in Italy especially between 1520 e 1542.<sup>78</sup> Vermigli crossed the Alps in August of 1542, leaving behind hundreds who had embraced the doctrine of justification by faith alone. As a testimony to his erudition and orthodoxy, just two months after his flight, he was teaching the sacred Scriptures alongside Martin Bucer in Strasbourg.<sup>79</sup> While he did not end up in Geneva, it was not because Calvin did not ask.<sup>80</sup> Vermigli was "the harbinger of many Lucchesi compelled to flee for their lives for the Protestant centers north of the Alps."<sup>81</sup> Some families immediately followed Vermigli's exodus, while others with protestant sympathies, like Regolo Turretin, Francis' great grandfather, remained behind.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Beardslee III, "Theological Development," 15.

<sup>76</sup> Philip M. J. McNair, "The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in Renaissance Italy," *Studies in Church History* 17, no. 1 (1981): 165. Lucca was "the one place in Italy which came closest to total reformation on the pattern of Geneva."

<sup>77</sup> Marino Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti nella Luca del Cinquecento* (Torino: Einaudi, 1965), 408. "Nell'estate del 1542 si è dunque diffuso il convincimento che 'il luogo più corrotto di tutti è Lucca,'" Josiah Simler, "Oration on the Life and Death of the Good and Outsanding Theologian, Doctor Peter Martyr Vermigli, Professor of Sacred Letters at the Zurich Academy," in *Peter Martyr Vermigli Life, Letters and Sermons* ed. and trans. John Patrick Donnelly, *Peter Martyr Library* (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies, 1999), 99.

<sup>78</sup> McNair, "The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in Renaissance Italy," 155. McNair explains that, "Before 1542 Catholics in Italy were free to accept or reject the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith as they pleased; after 1542 such freedom of belief was gradually but inexorably crushed out of renaissance Italy." For an idea of the impact of the movement in Venice even after 1542 see John Martin, "Salvation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Venice: Popular Evangelism in a Renaissance City," *The Journal of Modern History* 60, no. 2 (1988); contra Eva-Maria Jung, "On the Nature of Evangelism in Sixteenth-Century Italy," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14, no. 4 (1953). Jung, who wrote about thirty years before McNair, sees the movement as disconnected from the Reformation.

<sup>79</sup> Simler, "Oration," 27.

<sup>80</sup> Lucia Felici, *Giovanni Calvino e l'Italia* (Torino: Claudiana, 2010), 97. "[Calvino] invitò caldamente il Vermigli ad andare a insegnare nell'Accademia di Ginevra e ad assumere la guida della chiesa italiana."

<sup>81</sup> Dennison Jr., "Life and Career," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 639.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 640; Cumming, *Turretin*, 22.



Francis' grandfather, Francesco, was born five years after Vermigli fled (May 5, 1547). He embraced reformation truth at the age of nineteen and left Lucca on October 17, 1575, after the Bishop of Rimini arrived there to investigate heresy.<sup>83</sup> Francesco arrived in Geneva by way of Lyons and was an "active adherent" of the Italian church which was led at the time by Nicolo Balbani, a fellow Luccan expatriate.<sup>84</sup> Benedict, Francesco's most famous child, studied at Calvin's Academy under Theodore Beza's leadership and eventually became professor of Theology in 1612.<sup>85</sup> He "distinguished himself...as an advocate of the Calvinism of the Synod of Dort (1618-1619)," but was generally overshadowed by his more famous colleagues.<sup>86</sup> Born in Geneva to Benedict and Louise Micheli Turretini, Francis was one of seven children.<sup>87</sup> Francis was fatherless by the time he was eight but remembered Benedict with great affection.<sup>88</sup> It seems he was also close to his mother and that she "held significant influence over her son."<sup>89</sup> Pictet notes that, "From an early age our Turretin produced tokens of his genius" and relays the words of Benedict Turretin concerning his son: "This one has been sealed with the seal of God."<sup>90</sup> Little is known about Turretin's early education save what can be deduced from general accounts of education in Geneva.<sup>91</sup>

Turretin completed his course of study in Geneva in 1644, learning philosophy and theology under the likes of Jean Diodati, Frederic Spanheim (1600-1649) and Theodore Tronchin.<sup>92</sup> Then, as was common at the time, he traveled continental Europe to study at the leading centers of learning. He spent time at Leiden, Utrecht, Paris, Saumur, Montauban, and Nîmes between 1644 and 1647. By 1645, "The controversy over Amyraldianism and the Saumur Academy had created division with the French Reformed Church."<sup>93</sup> At Saumur, Turretin heard directly from the men who were to be the source of the great controversy in the French church (Amyraut, Cappell and de la Place).<sup>94</sup> His studies having been so "inundated

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<sup>83</sup> Berengo, *Luca del Cinquecento*, 419.

<sup>84</sup> Dennison Jr., "Life and Career," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 640.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 642.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 641; Cumming, *Turretin*, 25.

<sup>87</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 2.

<sup>88</sup> Turretin, *Francisci Turretini opera*, 2:xix. He mentions him in the *epistola dedicatoria* to the second volume of his *Institutio*: "*Benedictum Turretinum...Parentem meum desideratissimum.*"

<sup>89</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 26.

<sup>90</sup> Pictet, "Funeral Oration," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 662.

<sup>91</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 25-27.

<sup>92</sup> See Pictet, "Funeral Oration," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 663-64 for a description of these three teachers as well as Alexander Morus.

<sup>93</sup> Dennison Jr., "Life and Career," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 642; cf. Cumming, *Turretin*, 38 for an overview of Amyraut's theology.

<sup>94</sup> Pictet, "Funeral Oration," in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 665.

with Amyrauldian sympathisers...[it] is a wonder how Turretin finished [them] without being thoroughly convinced of hypothetical universalism.”<sup>95</sup>

Upon his return to Geneva, Turretin was called as the pastor of the Italian church in 1648 and ordained in 1649. Turretin is remembered as a theologian, but he was likewise a pastor and a preacher. Two compendiums of his French sermons were published: *Sermons sur divers passages de l'Écriture Sainte* (Geneva, 1676) and *Recueil de sermons sur divers textes de l'Écriture Sainte* (Geneva, 1686). Beach uses his sermon *De l'affermissement de la vocation et de l'élection du fidèle* to show the way his pastoral handling of predestination differs from his exposition of the same in his *Institutio*.<sup>96</sup> An important Christological theme is present in his sermon “Le gain malheureux” on Matthew 16:26: Christ gave his soul to redeem our soul.<sup>97</sup>

Turretin was called to the chair of Philosophy in 1650 but declined because of the responsibilities of his pastorate in the Italian church. After several months as a visiting pastor in Lyons (Feb-Dec 1652),<sup>98</sup> he was appointed to the chair of Theology in Geneva, succeeding Theodore Tronchin. He went on to produce several disputations during his time as professor of theology.<sup>99</sup> His two primary disputations were *De Satisfactione Christi* (Geneva, 1666) and *De necessaria secessione nostra ab Ecclesia Romana et impossibili cum ea syncretismo* (Geneva, 1687). In the former he explains the cry of dereliction as a temporary lack of the sense of divine sweetness (*causam sensus suavitatis divinae*),<sup>100</sup> which anticipates his argument on the sufferings of Christ soul in his *Institutio*. In the latter he references Bellarmine often and in the seventh chapter defends the classic protestant position that the Pope is Antichrist.<sup>101</sup>

Whereas some of his contemporaries embraced elements of Salmurian theology in their teaching, Turretin reacted strongly against it, desiring to maintain the theological lineage of Dort. The Formula Consensus Helvetica, devised to condemn Salmurian theology and

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<sup>95</sup> Cumming, “The Life of Francis Turretin,” 138.

<sup>96</sup> J. Mark Beach, “Preaching Predestination—An Examination of Francis Turretin’s Sermon De l’Affermissement de la Vocation et de l’élection du Fidele,” *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 21, no. 1 (2010): 133-47.

<sup>97</sup> Francis Turretin, *Recueil de sermons sur divers textes de l'Écriture S. pour l'état présent de l'Église* (Geneva: Samuel de Tournes, 1686), 437. “...puis qu’il a mis son ame pour nous, c’est-a-dire, une ame, qui n’est pas simplement toute sainte et toute juste; mais l’ame de celui qui est le propre Fils de Dieu, qui par consequent est d’un prix infini, capable de racheter, non pas un monde seulement, mais plusieurs s’il y en avoit. C’est la seule chose qui s’est pu trouver pour recompense de nostre ame...”

<sup>98</sup> On his time there see de Budé, *Vie de François Turrettini*, 41-60.

<sup>99</sup> For a list of his disputations see *ibid.*, 107-69.

<sup>100</sup> Turretin, *Francisci Turrettini opera*, 4:547.

<sup>101</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 123.

strengthen the unity of Switzerland against the Roman Catholic Church, was drafted in 1675 and adopted in Geneva in 1679.<sup>102</sup> Klauber provides an overview of its twenty-six articles:

The first three were directed against the textual criticism of Louis Cappel ... Articles four to nine and thirteen to twenty-two were aimed at attacking the doctrines of Amyraut. These articles denied that God intended to save all people on the condition of their faith in Christ ... Articles ten to twelve attacked the views of La Place and stated that people stand condemned before God for their own sin, for the sin of Adam, and for inherited depravity.<sup>103</sup>

The adoption of the Consensus was meant “to preserve the orthodoxy of the Synod of Dort (1619) in its Swiss fortress against the swelling tide of error washing in from the west. The victory was short-lived (actually less than thirty years).”<sup>104</sup> The full picture of the adversity that Turretin faced must also take into account the entrance of Cartesianism into the Academy in Geneva with the appointment of Jean-Robert Chouet (1641-1731) as professor of philosophy.<sup>105</sup> Turretin’s *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae* was birthed in the wake of these controversies in the decade before his death on September 28, 1687.

## 2.4 Institutio Theologiae Elencticae

Turretin’s *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae* is his most important legacy.<sup>106</sup> As the title suggests, his treatment of theological *loci* is primarily *polemical* (ἔλεγχος) rather than *positive*.<sup>107</sup> Nonetheless, it is not *merely* polemical because Turretin “is positively concerned with the statement of truth as well.”<sup>108</sup> Calvin noted that a pastor must have a twofold voice (*duplex vox*), first for gathering the sheep and second for driving away wolves and thieves.<sup>109</sup> Turretin’s *Institutio* contains this dual voice. The first is *catholic* as a refined expression of Reformed dogma,<sup>110</sup> which contextualizes its key doctrines in the greater historical tradition

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<sup>102</sup> Martin I. Klauber, “The Helvetic Formula Consensus (1675): An Introduction and Translation,” *Trinity Journal* 11, no. 1 (1990): 107-8; For an account of what led to the Consensus and its reception see Keizer, *Turretini: Sa Vie et Ses Oeuvres et le Consensus*, 64-212.

<sup>103</sup> Klauber, “The Helvetic Formula Consensus,” 107.

<sup>104</sup> James T. Dennison Jr., “The Twilight of Scholasticism: Francis Turretin at the Dawn of the Enlightenment,” in *Protestant scholasticism: essays in reassessment*, ed. Carl Trueman and R. Scott Clark (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999), 245. See also Martin I. Klauber, “Jean-Alphonse Turretini and the Abrogation of the Formula Consensus in Geneva,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 53, no. 2 (1991): 325-37.

<sup>105</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 62-64.

<sup>106</sup> Beach, “Francis Turretin’s Elenctic Theology,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, 281. Beach calls it, “Among the most prominent works in the history of Reformed theology.” Cf. Sebastian Rehnman, “Theistic Metaphysics and Biblical exegesis: Francis Turretin on the Concept of God,” *Religious Studies* 38, no. 2 (2002): 170.

<sup>107</sup> Beach, “Reading Turretin,” 70. The word means “to expose error.” Muller, *After Calvin*, 86-87.

<sup>108</sup> Dennison Jr., “Life and Career,” in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 647.

<sup>109</sup> Jean Calvin, *Commentarii in omnes Pauli Epistolas* (Geneva: Crispinus, 1557). 534, “*Duplex esse vox Pastoris debet: altera ouibus colligendis, altera arcendis fugandisque lupis & furibus.*”

<sup>110</sup> Rehnman, “Theistic Metaphysics and Biblical Exegesis,” 168.

and allows for variance on issues of lesser importance among Reformed Theologians. The second is *controversial*, as his systematizing takes place in debate with Roman Catholic theologians, Socinians and views which he deems inadequate expressions of Reformed orthodoxy.

Reformed orthodoxy describes the substance of Turretin's theology whereas scholasticism describes its form.<sup>111</sup> Scholasticism, rightly defined as "the analytical method of the schools,"<sup>112</sup> was the best tool for codifying and defending Reformed orthodoxy against its detractors both from within and from without. Scholasticism has at times been plied as a pejorative to describe theological content rather than methodology, framed in terms of particular philosophical systems (Aristotelianism) and specific theological centers (e.g., predestination),<sup>113</sup> and has been used as a foil for humanism.<sup>114</sup> In the past, this approach has been used to distance Reformed Scholastics like Turretin from Calvin.<sup>115</sup> This reading of the development of Reformed theology is problematic for at least two reasons. First, it wrongly assumes that Calvin is the sole source of the theological tradition that follows and the sole standard by which to evaluate it, ignoring his contemporaries, like Vermigli.<sup>116</sup> Second, it assumes that Calvin is at odds with most of his Medieval predecessors. As Muller has shown, Calvin's clear dislike for certain Scholastics is not a condemnation of all things scholastic (scholasticism qua scholasticism) because he often has in mind particular theologians (e.g., the theologians of the Sorbonne).<sup>117</sup> Further, even though Calvin does not explicitly cite Medieval

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<sup>111</sup> Beach, "Francis Turretin's Elenctic Theology," 282.

<sup>112</sup> Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 42; cf. Muller, *After Calvin*, 26.

<sup>113</sup> Muller, *After Calvin*, 61.

<sup>114</sup> Robert W. Righels, "Scholasticism Meets Humanism in the Counter-Reformation the Clash of Cultures in Robert Bellarmine's Use of Calvin in the Controversies," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 6, no. 1 (1975). Cf. Spencer, "Reformed Scholasticism in Medieval Perspective," 72. Spencer tries to find a via media between an overemphasis on the contrast between Scholasticism and humanism and a rejection of the same.

<sup>115</sup> Cumming, *Turretin*, 76-77; Muller, *After Calvin*, 15. Muller notes that "If there is a difference between 'Calvin' and the 'Calvinists' (or between Bullinger or Musculus and the Reformed orthodox) on this point, it is simply that, in the case of the Reformers, one must make a little effort to 'connect the dots,' whereas the Reformed orthodox made sure, against various doctrinal adversaries, that the picture was presented in full."

<sup>116</sup> Muller, *After Calvin*, 40. Research on Vermigli, who was a "Calvinist Thomist" and Calvin's contemporary (he died two years before Calvin), was important in exposing weaknesses in the 'Calvin Against the Calvinists' thesis; cf. Spencer, "Reformed Scholasticism in Medieval Perspective," 1-11. who highlights the importance of the work done on Vermigli. Both Calvin and Vermigli wrote to the church in Poland in response to Stancaró's Christology, arguing that Christ is mediator in His person according to both natures (substantive continuity), but they do so in rather different ways (formal discontinuity).

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin*, 55. Muller notes that the "scholastici" in the latin edition of Calvin's *Institutio* become "theologiens Sorboniques" or "Sorbonistes" in the French.

theologians such as Thomas, the lines of his argumentation often appropriate their work indirectly.<sup>118</sup>

There are, however, real differences between the two *Institutiones*. Turretin is more willing to work explicitly with extrabiblical theological categories, such as the threefold division of Christ's knowledge (XIII.xii.1), directly quotes Thomas and Cajetan (some of the "sounder scholastics") on questions like providence (VI.v.17) and takes on classic questions that Calvin does not (e.g., the necessity of the incarnation, XIII.iii).<sup>119</sup> Turretin's language is indeed more philosophical than Calvin's, but not because he was a thoroughgoing Aristotelian, or a Thomist strictly speaking.<sup>120</sup> He is closer to Calvin than to Thomas philosophically speaking,<sup>121</sup> but his methodological heritage is in some ways closer to Vermigli than Calvin.<sup>122</sup> On the other hand, Turretin defends what he considers to be caricatures of Calvin against authors like Bellarmine (e.g. Christ's "fear" for the salvation of his soul, XIII.xiv.14). He continues the tradition of exegetical precision, which is found in Calvin and Vermigli, even though his exegesis is rarely shown at length (e.g., his handling of Psalm 2:7 in his section on eternal generation, III.xxix.8). Finally, Turretin had to "fight on two different fronts" in his use of historical sources (especially patristic), just as Calvin and other earlier Reformed Theologians had before him. First, he had to fight the Catholic doctrine of the consensus patrum. Second, he had to defend the Patristic doctrines of the Trinity and Christology against Anti-trinitarians. Just as his Reformed forebearers had done, he "regarded overestimation of the authority of the Fathers as a graver error than underestimation." The Fathers served as testimonies to the truth of Scripture, and he accepted classical doctrinal formulations because he believed them to be Scriptural.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 78. According to Muller, the problem is that much of Calvin scholarship views Calvin's theology as providing its own theological context.

<sup>119</sup> Irena Backus, "Reformed Orthodoxy and Patristic Tradition," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis, vol. 40, *Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition*, ed. Christopher M. Bellitto (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 98-100. On the relationship between Turretin and Calvin see Martin I. Klauber, "Francis Turretin on Biblical Accommodation: Loyal Calvinist or Reformed Scholastic?," *Westminster Theological Journal* 55, no. 1 (1993): 73-86.

<sup>120</sup> Muller, *After Calvin*, 82. He has a mediating view of the usefulness of philosophy for theology, he neither employs it excessively nor denies its place.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid. "Turretin held to a series of basic premises that follow out Augustinian and Scotist as distinct from Thomist views."

<sup>122</sup> Spencer, "Reformed Scholasticism in Medieval Perspective," 248.

<sup>123</sup> This paragraph relies on E. P. Meijering, "The Fathers and Calvinist Orthodoxy," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: from the Carolingians to the Maurists*, ed. Irena Backus, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 867-69.

The first volume of his *Institutio* (1679) is dedicated to the leaders of Geneva. He begins by expressing his gratitude for Geneva, a city sustained by God, the happy hill on which God was pleased to place the candle stick of truth. It was through heavenly truth that:

the tyranny of the Roman Antichrist having been cast down, error triumphed over, superstition put to flight, idols overthrown, darkness scattered—that saving light which even long ago was hoped for after darkness, has happily arisen upon those who were lying in the darkness of the shadow of death.”<sup>124</sup>

Although Turretin is willing to quote Catholics positively,<sup>125</sup> the “polemic against Rome remains as bitter as ever, and Turretin makes no effort to enter dialogue with his Roman Catholic contemporaries.”<sup>126</sup> He says of Rome, “That most base enemy of the human race... strove to obscure and at the same time to extinguish the light of the nascent gospel.”<sup>127</sup> This view of Rome is carried on in the introductory material to the second and third volumes. For example, in the *epistola dedicatoria* to the second volume he describes in vivid language the gospel of light that brought about “the rebirth of the church” (*Ecclesiae παλιγγενεσία*): “Prophetic men with the sound of an evangelical trumpet and with flash of divine truth, happily drove away the darkness of the densest error, the reign of the Anti-Christ was struck.”<sup>128</sup>

After a word about the Anabaptists and Michael Servetus (“he suffered the most just punishment”), he lauds the work of the Reformation, especially Farel, Viret and the “never-to-be-sufficiently praised theologian, John Calvin.”<sup>129</sup> He confesses that he has always considered himself to be inferior to the great men who preceded him, yet his aim was always to follow his predecessors, “not with the same steps, but in the same way and according to my ability tread in their footsteps, though not with equal paces.”<sup>130</sup> He worked hard to avoid novelty and anything “that is not confirmed by the vote of our most proven theologians of highest reputation.”<sup>131</sup> Muller has noted that, “Turretin was a codifier and a gatherer of opinion rather than an original thinker.”<sup>132</sup> Turretin confirms this when he explains that his *Institutio* had its

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<sup>124</sup> Francis Turretin, “Turretin’s Dedication,” in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., vol. 1 (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992). xxxiv.

<sup>125</sup> For example, he quotes the Jesuit Toletus positively on the definition of justification (XVI.i.7) and the nature of faith in justification (XVI.vii.19).

<sup>126</sup> Muller, “Scholasticism Protestant and Catholic,” 205.

<sup>127</sup> Turretin, “Turretin’s Dedication,” xxxiv.

<sup>128</sup> Turretin, *Opera*, 2:xiv. Translation mine.

<sup>129</sup> Turretin, “Turretin’s Dedication,” xxxv-xxvi.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* xxxvi.

<sup>131</sup> Francis Turretin, “Turretin’s Preface to the Reader,” in *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., vol. 1 (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992), xlii.

<sup>132</sup> Muller, “Scholasticism Protestant and Catholic,” 194.

origins in his lecture notes which were based on Maresius' *Decades*.<sup>133</sup> As will be noted in the following chapters, the broad outlines of his articulation of Christology includes little that does not find its origin in Maresius.<sup>134</sup> However, his unoriginality does not undercut the value of his work. Beach certainly strikes the right balance when he notes that “while his theology is not distinctive as to content, his penchant of focusing on controversial issues with erudition and insight gives his theological work abiding value.”<sup>135</sup>

## 2.5 Conclusion

Bellarmino and Turretin are drawing from a shared heritage—the Scriptures, the Fathers and Medieval theologians—which is channeled into two opposing systems of theology. Their commitment to their respective causes was not only an academic exercise: both were preachers, pastors and professors who trained men for ministry. Each of their primary works were born in classroom lectures which they were later compelled to publish. In these works, both are defending systems which were recently codified (The Council of Trent and the Synod of Dort) and each works to set his opponents in the broader context of heresy. Bellarmine considers Reformed Theology to be an updated version of an ancient heresy and Turretin considers Catholicism to be that system which was rightly exposed and overthrown at the Reformation.

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<sup>133</sup> Samuel Maresius, *Collegium Theologicum*, 2 ed. (Groningen: Nicolaus, 1649). Cf. Turretin, “Turretin’s Preface to the Reader,” xxxix.

<sup>134</sup> His Christology also closely follows that of Friedrich Spanheim the elder (1600-1649).

<sup>135</sup> Beach, “Francis Turretin’s Elenctic Theology,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, 291.

### 3 The Knowledge of Christ's Soul

Just how much did Christ's soul know during his earthly ministry? Even a cursory reading of the gospels reveals the troublesome nature of a rapid response. One encounters, on the one hand, a Christ who does not seem to have all the information he needs to accomplish his aims. For example, upon arriving in Tyre and entering a house Mark tells us that, "he did not want anyone to know, but he was not able to remain hidden (οὐδένα ἤθελεν γινῶναι, καὶ οὐκ ἠδυνήθη λαθεῖν, 7:24)."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, one encounters a Christ who commands his own destiny; of whom it can be said, "Everywhere and always, it is he who possesses the mastery both of circumstances and of himself."<sup>2</sup> In the foot washing which is prefatory to the upper room discourse, John explains that Jesus knew that the Father had handed over all things to him and that Judas was going to betray him (John 13:3, 11).<sup>3</sup> These are but examples of what have been called "two contrasting sets of texts."<sup>4</sup>

Two crucial *cruces christologiae*, Mark 13:32 and Luke 2:52, form the backbone of the set of texts that seem to imply ignorance in Christ and feature prominently at key points in early Christological development.<sup>5</sup> The patristic period presents a variegated approach to the ignorance of Christ's humanity which gradually coalesced in its exclusion at the end of the

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<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that this comment appears only in Mark's Gospel along with another that speaks of Jesus wanting to do something but being unable: He wanted to pass by them on the water (αὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς, Mark 6:48). It could be that Mark intends his readers to use these occurrences of θέλω to interpret its occurrence in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). Mark 7:24 is referenced twice by John of Damascus in *De Fide Orthodoxa* to argue for the real humanity of Christ's will (III, 14, 17). See also Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 4 vols., ed. Fernando Fiorentino (Rome: Citta Nuova, 2019), III.13.4 (Hereafter ST). On Mark's Christology see R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 23-27.

<sup>2</sup> B.B. Warfield, *The Emotional Life of our Lord*, reprint ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022), 92.

<sup>3</sup> There are other usages of "οἶδα" in John's Gospel that similarly indicate the uniqueness of Christ's knowledge: 6:61, 64, 7:29; 13:1, 18; 18:4; 19:28. Cf. Jeffrey Tripp, "Jesus's Special Knowledge in the Gospel of John," *Novum Testamentum* 61, no. 3 (2019): 269-78; Benedict M. Ashley, "The Extent of Jesus' Human Knowledge according to the Fourth Gospel," in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology*, ed. Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 241-53.

<sup>4</sup> Raymond Moloney, *The Knowledge of Christ, Problems in Theology* (London and New York: Continuum, 1999), 28; For a more pessimistic reading of attempts to reconcile these sets of texts from another catholic theologian see: Engelbert Gutwenger, "The Problem of Christ's Knowledge," *Concilium* 1, no. 2 (1966): 48.

<sup>5</sup> These texts were central to the Arian's argumentation in the fourth century. Cf. Kevin Madigan, "Did Jesus 'Progress in Wisdom'? Thomas Aquinas on Luke 2:52 in Ancient and High-Medieval Context," *Traditio* 52, no. 1 (1997): 179; Kevin Madigan, *The Passions of Christ in High-Medieval Thought: An Essay on Christological Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 14.



patristic age.<sup>6</sup> In the fourth century Athanasius can say of Mark 13:32, which speaks of the Son not knowing, that he spoke as a man for good reason “for since he became man, as it is written, it is proper to man to be ignorant, just as being hungry and other things.”<sup>7</sup> Luke 2:52, which speaks of Christ’s growth in wisdom, stature and grace (...Ἰησοῦς προέκοπτεν τῇ σοφίᾳ καὶ ηλικίᾳ καὶ χάριτι...), was spoken of in similar fashion in the same period. When writing against the Apollinarians, Ambrose (d. 397) took these words to mean that Christ “grew in the wisdom of a human being.”<sup>8</sup>

The beginning of the seventh century already bears a Christological consensus. Gregory’s letter to Eulogius, *Sicut aqua* (600) begins with an interpretation of Mark 13:32 and then connects orthodox Christology to his understanding of Christ’s knowledge. For Gregory to attribute ignorance to Christ is Nestorian:<sup>9</sup> “For whoever is not Nestorian, can by no means be Agnoate” (*quia quisquis Nestorianus non est, Agnoita esse nullatenus potest*).<sup>10</sup> Analogously, for John of Damascus (ca. 675 – ca. 749), Luke 2:52 must be interpreted in a way that does not jeopardize the *hypostatic* union—two natures in *one person*.<sup>11</sup> These texts also featured prominently in medieval discussions of Christ’s knowledge. Some medieval theologians countenanced very little expansion to what they inherited from John of Damascus

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<sup>6</sup> Lionel Wickham, “The Ignorance of Christ: A Problem for Ancient Theology,” in *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity* ed. Christopher Stead, Wickham, Lionel R., Hammond Bammel, Caroline, Pictet, Benedict, (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1993), 213. “The writers we call ‘patristic’ and recognize as classic, do not speak with one harmonious accord, however much grand talk there may be, amongst those who have little direct acquaintance with it, of ‘the mind of the fathers.’” Raymond Moloney, “Approaches to Christ’s Knowledge in the Patristic Era,” in *Studies in Patristic Christology* ed. Thomas Finan, Twomey, Vincent. (Dublin; Portland: Four Courts Press, 1998), 37; Madigan, “Did Jesus ‘Progress in Wisdom’?,” 180.

<sup>7</sup> Athanasius, Second letter to Serapion 9 in *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne, 162 vols. (Paris 1857-1886), 26:624 (Hereafter PG). “Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος γέγονεν, ὡς γέγραπται, ἀνθρώπων δεῖ ἴδιον το ἀγνοεῖν, ὡσπερ καὶ το πεινᾶν, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα.” Moloney, “Approaches to Christ’s Knowledge,” in *Studies in Patristic Christology* 40-41; Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (AD 451)*, trans. John Bowden, vol. 1 (London: Mowbrays, 1975), 315. Grillmeier says of the whole of Athanasius’ corpus: “From the whole of his explanation of the ignorance of Christ it follows that the thought of a human knowledge, a limited human consciousness in Christ, had not occurred to him.”

<sup>8</sup> Ambrose, *De incarn. dom. sacram.* vii 72 in Moloney, “Approaches to Christ’s Knowledge,” 48. Moloney explains that this later interpretation differed from the earlier interpretation he employed against the Arians (*De fide ad Grat.*, II 11, 94); Madigan, “Did Jesus ‘Progress in Wisdom’?” 184-85.

<sup>9</sup> On Nestorianism see John Norman Davidson Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th revised ed. (London: A. and C. Black, 1977), 311-45.

<sup>10</sup> DS, 476; see below on the Agnoetae.

<sup>11</sup> *De Fide Orthodoxa* III, 22.

(e.g., Peter Lombard),<sup>12</sup> but others introduced nuanced categories that enabled them to parse Christ's knowledge in new ways (e.g., Aquinas).<sup>13</sup>

The debate was rekindled in the early modern period as Protestants spoke about Christ's ignorance in ways that Roman Catholics deemed heretical. Bellarmine argues that the hypostatic union excludes ignorance in Christ, while Turretin argues that our salvation necessitates it. This chapter seeks to bring Bellarmine and Turretin into conversation on the knowledge of Christ's soul. After their basic arguments are presented in the first section, the following sections deal with Christ's knowledge according to the Scripture (2) and Tradition (3) and then in relation to Christ's perfection (4), soteriology (5) and the beatific vision (6). Finally, section seven outlines concluding thoughts.

### 3.1 The Basic Arguments

The first five chapters in Bellarmine's *De Christi Anima* give attention to the perfection (*perfectio*) of Christ's soul, which he argues must exclude growth and correction. Bellarmine's argument unfolds as follows: In Chapter 1, after associating the modern heretics with the ancient ones (the Agnoaete), he surveys their approaches to the question, lists the biblical foundations of their arguments and contrasts their position with a summary of Roman Catholic teaching. Then, in Chapters 2-4, he lays out his positive case: The truth is proved from the Scriptures (chap. 2), the Fathers (chap. 3) and from reason (chap. 4). The distinction between these sections is rather porous, as the Fathers are appealed to throughout. The final section, Chapter 5, purports to deal with the arguments of his adversaries, interacting with each of the biblical foundations listed in Chapter 1.

Turretin deals with the knowledge of Christ's soul in *quaestio* XIII which builds on his general treatment of the *gratia habitualis* bestowed on his human nature in the preceding section, *quaestio* XII. His argument in these two *quaestiones* draws heavily on earlier *quaestiones* in the thirteenth locus, perhaps most notably: III on the necessity of the incarnation and IX on the *duplex status Christi*. Turretin's doctrine of the knowledge of Christ's soul must

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<sup>12</sup> Madigan, "Did Jesus 'Progress in Wisdom'?", 187. Madigan sees Lombard as siding with John of Damascus over Ambrose.

<sup>13</sup> Madigan, *The Passions of Christ*, 38; cf. Thomas Joseph White, *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology*, vol. 5, *Thomistic Ressourcement Series* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2017), 354. Thomas developed in his handling of Christ's knowledge and arrived at a position that was different than that of other medieval theologians: "It is the case that Aquinas in his mature works (very originally, in comparison with his medieval contemporaries) posits the notion of a natural acquired knowledge that is proper to the human mind of Christ." See also Tuomas Vaura, "The Psychology of the Incarnation in Thirteenth- and Early Fourteenth-Century Theology" (PhD diss., University of Helsinki, 2017), 32-76. Vaura discusses Christ's knowledge in Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Richard Middleton, Durand of St. Pourçain, Peter of Palude, John Duns Scotus and Peter Auriol.

be understood in the context of these two doctrines. Some ignorance was necessary for Christ to fulfil his redemptive role as Mediator (*munus triplex*) in his state of humiliation (*status duplex*).

Turretin explains that the debate is not concerned with the *gratia aeterna*, which is in God (his divine nature) or with the *gratia unionis* by which Christ's humanity was assumed by the Logos into union with his person. It deals, rather, with the *gratia habitualis* or the gifts and perfections in his human nature which are the result of the hypostatic union (XIII.xii.1); the *communicatio gratiarum*.<sup>14</sup> Continuing to refine the question, Turretin notes that Scholastics parse Christ's human knowledge according to three principal species—blessed, infused and acquired (*beatam, infusam, acquisitam*)—according to the threefold light of glory, grace and nature (XIII.xiii.1).<sup>15</sup> Turretin only recognizes two of them: infused (which is part of the *gratia habitualis*) and acquired. Bellarmine, on the other hand, recognizes a threefold knowledge, but is most preoccupied with defining the nature of Christ's infused knowledge and only briefly comments on the other two genres.<sup>16</sup>

Turretin frames the principal question as follows: “Was Christ's soul from the beginning saturated with so great a knowledge in virtue of the hypostatic union, such that he was ignorant of nothing and was unable to learn *de novo*? (*An Anima Christi tanta scientia imbuta fuerit ab initio, ex vi Unionis hypostaticae, ut nihil ignoraverit, vel de novo discere potuerit, XIII.xiii.3*). The very formulation of the question intimates that Bellarmine is his primary interlocutor because Turretin alludes to the main strand of Bellarmine's constructive argument: the fullness of Christ's infused knowledge excludes development of knowledge. Bellarmine claims that this has always been the common Catholic position (*at Catholicorum communis sententia semper fuit, II.IV.I*). He does not deny that Christ could learn in any way, only that he was unable to learn things of which he was previously ignorant (*ita ut nihil postea didicerit, quod antea nesciret*) and that he never acted in such a way as to need emendation (*nec ullam actionem fecerit, aut facere potuerit, quae emendatione egerit*). This is precisely the problem he sees in the Protestant position: they teach that Christ was truly ignorant (*vere*

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<sup>14</sup> Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, Second ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 69.

<sup>15</sup> See for example Aquinas, *ST*, III.10-12. Thomas speaks of *scientia beata* (III.10), *scientia indita vel infusa* (III.11) and *scientia acquisita vel experimentalis* (III.12). Alácsi, “Christological Thought,” 183. Alácsi notes that the threefold division is also found in Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Albert the Great and Dun Scotus.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Thomas Joseph White, “The Infused Science of Christ,” *Nova et Vetera* 16, no. 2 (2018): 617-41.

*ignorabat*) and so learned or gained knowledge gradually (*paulatim*, Argument 1) and that he was corrected, and so was guilty of sin (Argument 2).<sup>17</sup>

Turretin gladly affirms Argument 1 arguing that Christ, being ignorant of some things, had to learn them *de novo*. However, he works hard to steer clear of Argument 2 and never affirms that Christ was corrected. His position is more refined thanks to his attentiveness to Bellarmine's critique. His opponents claim—calumniously, he says—that the Reformed position teaches that Christ labored under a crass ignorance of many things (*crasa multarum rerum ignorantia laboraverit*). Bellarmine does not say so outright but might be taken to implicitly affirm as much about Calvin's position. Turretin avoids Argument 2 by emphasizing the uniqueness of Christ's infused knowledge even as he outlines its creaturely limitations, leaving space for a real acquisition of experiential knowledge.

The crux of the controversy is not merely that Bellarmine affirms beatific knowledge in Christ's humility, whereas Turretin does not. Again, this is not reflected in the emphases of Bellarmine's argument (although Bellarmine's affirmation of beatific knowledge in Christ's humiliation is no small issue for Turretin). Rather, the real incongruity lies in the nuances of their understandings of the other two species of knowledge. First, they have a different understanding of the extent of Christ's infused knowledge. For Bellarmine Christ was not theoretically ignorant of anything because he had infused knowledge of all things (*haberet infusam scientiam omnium rerum*, II.IV.V). Conversely, Turretin argues that Christ's infused knowledge was “finite and created to which something could be added, and truly was added” (*sed finita tamen et creata, et cui aliquid addi potuerit, et revera additum sit*, XIII.xiii.3). Second, they understand the *modus operandi* of experiential knowledge (acquired knowledge) differently. Bellarmine follows Aquinas' mature position as found in the *Summa* (although he does not mention him), arguing that Christ can be said to be *practically* ignorant of everything that he had not experienced (*practice ignorabat illa omnia, quae non fuerat expertus*, II.IV.V).<sup>18</sup> However, his experiential knowledge “grew” not thanks to external helps, but when the infused knowledge he already possessed was actualized experientially.<sup>19</sup> Bellarmine

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<sup>17</sup> The protestant position is presented with citations from Luther, Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin and Beza, the majority of whom teach, according to Bellarmine, a form of Argument 1. Calvin's teaching on Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane is Bellarmine's primary example of Argument 2.

<sup>18</sup> Aquinas, *ST*, III.12. Gaine explains that Aquinas' mature position on Christ's aquired knowledge was the result of philosophical commitments. Simon Francis Gaine, “Christ's Acquired Knowledge According to Thomas Aquinas: How Aquinas's Philosophy Helped and Hindered his Account,” *New Blackfriars* 96, no. 1063 (2015): 255-68.

<sup>19</sup> Madigan, *The Passions of Christ*, 31. Madigan explains that Aquinas' position should not be taken to countenance growth in “essential knowledge.”

underscores this point repeatedly: Christ's growth comes not from without but within himself (*non extrinsecus adveniente, sed qui in ipso erat*); he is filled with wisdom, not by learning from elsewhere, but by that which was in him diffusing itself (*non aliunde ad scita, sed e aquae in ipso erat diffundente se*). Turretin, on the other hand, speaks of actual knowledge being gained (*aquisita est cognitio actualis*, XIII.xiii.3), and not simply a different aspect or manifestation of the infused knowledge that Christ already possesses. Although this growth in knowledge does come by way of drawing conclusions from the principles of infused knowledge (*conclusions deducendo ex principiis scientiae infusae*, XIII.xiii.1), it also comes in two ways that Bellarmine excludes: by ratiocination (*per ratiocinationem*) and by his own experience (*per propria experientiam*) by the light of nature.<sup>20</sup> In sum, Turretin affirms the growth of essential knowledge in Christ's soul. Bellarmine rejects it.

Before moving forward with the dialogue between Bellarmine and Turretin, a brief explanation of Calvin's comments on the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26) will be helpful, as Bellarmine sees Calvin as the primary purveyor of Argument 2. Bellarmine seizes on the phrases that he takes to imply imperfection: "suddenly let slip" (*subito elapsum*) and "rebukes and recalls" (*castiget, ac reuocet*) and "correction" (*correctio*). These phrases are Calvin's attempt to capture the grief depicted in Gethsemane in Matthew 26, but they become for Bellarmine cause for serious concern. Nevertheless, one is surprised to find that Calvin dedicates considerable time to possible questions that could be raised in light of his exposition. Bellarmine may not agree with Calvin's caveats and qualifications, but they are present both before and after the section he cites. After interacting with Ambrose and Cyril, Calvin explains that:

Still the weakness which Christ took upon himself must be distinguished from ours, for there is a great difference. In us there is no affection unaccompanied by sin, because they all exceed due bounds and proper restraint; but when Christ was distressed by grief and fear, he did not rise against God, but continued to be regulated by the true rule of moderation (*sed maneret compositus ad veram temperantiae regulam*).<sup>21</sup>

Before talking about the way Christ corrects himself, he notes that his emotions were not turbulent (*non fuisse turbulentos Christi affectus*) like ours and cannot be exercised beyond pure moderation (*pura moderationem*).<sup>22</sup> He explains in diverse ways that Christ's affections

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<sup>20</sup> Both Bellarmine and Turretin mention Heb. 5:8 in the context of their explanations of experiential knowledge.

<sup>21</sup> This translation is from John Calvin, *Commentary on the Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke*, trans. William Pringle, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 227-28. For the Latin see Jean Calvin, *Harmonia ex Tribus Evangelistis* (Geneva: Stephani, 1555), 389.

<sup>22</sup> Calvin, *Harmonia ex Tribus Evangelistis*, 390.

were always kept in order and he even uses strong language to make this point: “We see that Christ steadily keeps his affections from their prisons, and opportunely brings himself in order.” (*Videmus ut Cristus statim ab ipsis carceribus affectum suum cohibeat, seque ipsum mature cogat in ordine*).<sup>23</sup> It bears noting that Calvin never speaks of *correctio* that comes from outside of Christ (Bellarmine’s Argument 2). However, aware that he may be misunderstood, he asks, “How is it that Christ corrects *himself* (*quomodo nunc seipsum corrigit*)?”<sup>24</sup> His response is that the petition should only be taken to show that Christ was, in that moment, thinking specifically about his death as a man. Calvin essentially affirms what Anselm did when he explains that, “Christ naturally desired, by his own will, safety, in accordance with which his human flesh was fleeing from the pain of death.”<sup>25</sup> For Calvin, Christ’s prayer in Gethsemane is a condemnation of Monothelism as it necessitates a distinction between Christ’s human will and the divine will.<sup>26</sup> Although Bellarmine finds his exposition unconvincing, Calvin considers Gethsemane and other similar passages as windows into the true humanity and servanthood of Christ, as Muller explains:

Like the traditional ‘Christology from above,’ Calvin’s Christology recognizes from the outset the divinity of Christ; but like the ‘Christology from below’ Calvin’s thought focuses on the concrete Christ in history and on the integrity of the human nature, the *forma servi* encountered by faith in the temporal dispensation of salvation.<sup>27</sup>

Turretin’s explanation of the knowledge of Christ’s soul follows Calvin, emphasizing “the integrity of the human natures” all the while employing similar caveats to protect Christ’s impeccability.

## 3.2 The Knowledge of Christ’s Soul according to the Scriptures

Unsurprisingly, both Bellarmine and Turretin consider their position to have exegetical warrant. They interact with the same passages: “fullness texts” (e.g., Isaiah 11), Hebrews 2:17, Luke 5:52 (and 2:40) and Mark 13:38 (Matthew 24:36).

### 3.2.1 “Fullness texts”

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 391.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, I.IX, “...naturale salutis per voluntatem suam significat appetitum, quo humana caro dolorem mortis fugiebat”

<sup>26</sup> Calvin, *Harmonia ex Evangelistis*, 391.

<sup>27</sup> Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 29. See also Willem J. van Asselt, “Christ, Predestination, and Covenant in Post-Reformation Reformed Theology,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology, 1600-1800*, ed. Ulrich L. Lehner, Richard A. Muller, and A. G. Roeber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 213.

Bellarmino highlights Christ's anointing in Isaiah 11:1 ff. and other parallel texts (Psalm 44:8; Isaiah 61:1; Acts 4:27; Acts 10:38) to prove that the soul of Christ was from its very creation full of wisdom and grace (II.IV.II). Bellarmine is, however, aware that there could be problems with his interpretation of the fullness texts, what he calls a *duplex difficultas*. (1) It might seem as if Christ's anointing was not at his conception but at the age of 30 (his baptism at the beginning of his public ministry); (2) Even if he was anointed with the Holy Spirit at his conception he could still grow (like John the Baptist). The first difficulty is resolved in four steps. (1) Isaiah is talking about the incarnation and the flowering branch is to be connected with Mary. (2) Luke 2:11 refers to the newborn child as "Christ," and so he was already anointed, that is, full of grace and knowledge. (3) According to John 1:14 the fullness of grace is connected with the incarnation. (4) It would be absurd for Christ to wait until the age of 30 to be anointed when John the Baptist was anointed in the womb. Jerome says of Isaiah 61 that Christ's anointing was completed at 30 years of age. However, according to Bellarmine, Jerome means that his baptism was the visible anointing and *exteriore signo* of his conception which was itself an invisible anointing. The second difficulty is dispatched without any real argumentation. Even though John and others were filled initially, but could progress (*potuisse proficere*), Christ was different such that he could not. He then appeals to John 1:16, John 3:34, Ephesians 4:7, John 21:27 and Colossians 2:3,<sup>28</sup> all texts which he takes to exclude growth in Christ without a specific explanation about why it must be this way.

Using several of the same texts Bellarmine does (Is. 11:2; Acts 10:38; Jn. 1:14; 3:34), Turretin affirms the uniqueness of Christ's humanity noting that these "graces were truly and most fully (*vere et plenissime*) bestowed on Christ" (XIII.xii.2), However, for Turretin, plenitude cannot be confused with infinitude (XIII.xii.3), because, although the Son is infinite in his person, his human nature is finite and so not capable of that which is infinite (*nec potest esse infiniti capax*).<sup>29</sup> This grace is a created thing (*aliquid creatum*) which, although exceptional, is incompatible with infinity. The fullness of *gratia habitualis* must be considered according to something else (*secundum quid*), relatively<sup>30</sup> not absolutely or simply (*simpliciter*). Other beings might have *plenitudo sufficientiae*, but in Christ there is *plenitudo abundantiae* because he gives grace to others (he cites John 1:16). The fullness of *gratia*

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<sup>28</sup> Bellarmine is following Lombard's use of these texts (see *Sententiae*, III.XIII).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. the common reformed locution: *finitum non capax infiniti*. Turretin deals with the question of Christ's omnipotence in *quaestio VIII* on the *communicatio idiomatum*. There he says that the nature of Christ is "*finita e limitata, atque adeo infinti incapax*." Cf. Rehnman, "Theistic metaphysics and Biblical Exegesis," 169; van Asselt, "Christ, Predestination, and Covenant," 214.

<sup>30</sup> Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 328.

*habitualis* must also be understood by degree (*ratione graduum*) because he had every possible degree of God's grace. Thus, Turretin takes Isaiah 11:1-2 to refer to the gifts which were specially required for the administration of the office which was given to him (*ad impositi Christo muneris administrationem praecipua requirebantur*, XIII.xii.4). He interprets the texts that Bellarmine uses to teach that Christ knows all things (John 21:7; Mt. 11:27) as either a reference to his divine knowledge, or a reference to his human knowledge considered not absolutely, but relatively (XIII.xii.3). The knowledge spoken of in Colossians 2:3 refers not to "all manner of knowledge in every time, always and absolutely" but "all that knowledge which could belong to the design of his mediatorial office" (*ad rationem Officii Mediatorii*, XIII.xiii.8). Turretin grants that from the very moment of conception Christ has the right (*jus*) to every paternal good but argues that he could be without the possession of some of them for a time by a voluntary dispensation (*ex voluntaria dispensatione*). In the same way Christ's majesty was veiled for a time by his flesh in his humiliation, the anointing he received at his conception was dispensed in intervals of time (XIII.xiii.9).

### 3.2.2 Hebrews 2:17 (4:15)

Turretin argues that Christ was "like unto us in all things" (Heb. 2:17) "sin excepted" (4:15). He recognizes that there are undoubtedly types of ignorance which must be considered vices, such as ignorance of a crooked disposition (*pravae dispositionis*) and an ignorance of things which should be necessarily known. Still, since the ignorance he is advocating is not sinful, it cannot be excluded. Bellarmine concedes that not all ignorance is necessarily sinful, but that does not mean that Christ was ignorant. The phrase "*absque peccato*" does not merely mean without sin according to Bellarmine, but without every defect that is not useful for redemption (*utiles redemptioni*). When Hebrews 2:17 says Christ must be made like his brothers "in all things (*κατὰ πάντα*)," "all" means all which lead to redemption (*ad redemptionem conducunt*). "All" must be limited in some way because there are ways in which he was not like us which go beyond his sinlessness: his virgin birth, his wisdom as a child and (assuming quite a bit) his never having been ill.

### 3.2.3 Luke 2:52 (2:40)

For Bellarmine Luke 2:40 teaches not growth from without, but from within. That which is already fully present in Christ seems to grow. Similarly, he notes that Christ's learning in Hebrews 5 must be understood to mean that, although he was perfected from the beginning,



he advanced “*sensu humano*.”<sup>31</sup> Interpreting Luke 2:52, Bellarmine adheres to what he calls the common exposition of the Fathers: Christ advanced in the opinion of men (*opinione hominum*) to whom he opened his wisdom more daily (*quibus in dies magis aperiebat sapientiam suam*, II.IV.V). This is aptly illustrated by the sun, which does not actually become hotter. It only seems to become so from the human perspective. Additionally, just like a teacher increases by making others increase, Christ increases. Christ was making others advance (*faciebat alios proficere*) and appearing himself daily wiser (*ipse etiam quotidie sapientior apparebat*). Calvin’s objection that it was not only a growth before men, but *apud Deum* is rejected because he did grow before God in the sense that he grew in the external signs of God’s benevolence.

Turretin’s initial interpretation is rather straightforward: Christ increased in wisdom and stature and this increase precludes punctiliar perfection (XIII.xiii.4). He finds untenable Bellarmine’s interpretation that Christ increased in the opinion of men as he disclosed his wisdom. Moreover, he refutes Bellarmine by referencing the work of one of Bellarmine’s former teachers and fellow Jesuit, Toletus.<sup>32</sup> Turretin claims that Toletus agrees with him that Christ grows in wisdom just as he grows in age and stature. Toletus says of Luke 2:52, “his wisdom was increasing daily, not that the habit itself would regain an increase in wisdom (*non quod habitus ipse in se sapientiae augmentum reciperet*) but that daily he was producing wiser words and works; his words and works the evangelist addresses (as) wisdom.”<sup>33</sup> Then in the *annotatio* which follows Toletus gives a rather extended history of the interpretation of the verse before elucidating his own interpretation. Here he follows the threefold scholastic distinction of wisdom and interprets the phrase, *proficiebat sapientia*, to mean that Jesus grew in experiential knowledge (acquired knowledge).<sup>34</sup> It could be that this is what Turretin has in mind when he invokes Toletus. However, Toletus goes on to explain that it does not mean that Christ learned something *de novo* which he did not know before.<sup>35</sup> This last point makes one

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<sup>31</sup> Here Bellarmine is likely following Lombard (*Sententiae*, III.XIII.9). There Lombard is interpreting Ambrose’s words “*sensus proficiebat humanus*” and he takes them to mean “*Proficiebat ergo humanus sensus in eo secundum ostensionem et aliorum hominum opinionem*.”

<sup>32</sup> On Toletus see Luke Murray, *Jesuit Biblical Studies after Trent: Franciscus Toletus & Cornelius A Lapide* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019), 59-104. Murray notes that “Despite the success of his philosophical and theological works, it was Toletus’ biblical work that drew special praise from the popes during the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth centuries” (68).

<sup>33</sup> Francisco de Toledo, *Commentarii In Sacrosanctum Iesv Christi D. N. Euangelium secundum Lucam* (Cologne: Boëtzer, 1611), 212. Translation mine.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* “...*non est affirmandum, Christum profecisse in sapientia ita, ut aliquid de novo cognosceret, quod non ante cognoscebat.*”

wonder how much Toletus helps Turretin's case, as this is precisely the opposite of his position. Turretin concludes his section on Luke 2:52 by quoting Ambrose as saying he grew in wisdom just as he grew in age.<sup>36</sup> He also quotes another Catholic Polemicist, Thomas Stapleton (1535-1598). Turretin seizes on the fact that Stapleton mentions that Christ progressed "*apud Deum*" as a token of his agreement with his own position.<sup>37</sup> It could be that Turretin mentions Stapleton here because he also quotes the same section from Ambrose in his comments on Luke 2:52. It seems that Stapleton's position is closer to Turretin's than Bellarmine's and this might be due to the way he follows Thomas more closely (and explicitly).<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, Stapleton should not be seen as being totally on Turretin's "side" as he views his position to be at odds with Calvin's and critiques him immediately after the section Turretin cites.<sup>39</sup>

### 3.2.4 Mark 13:32 (Matthew 24:36)

Bellarmino interprets Matthew 24 (Mark 13:32) in similar fashion to Luke 5:25. After listing out several possible interpretations he considers himself to be following Gregory in his *Letter to Eulogius* along with Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Basil, Augustine and others teaching that his knowing meant that he did not know to tell others (*non sciebat ad dicendum aliis*). Gregory says that the omnipotent God speaks according to human custom (*more loquitur humano*). He then explains that Christ knew the day and hour of judgment *in* the nature of his humanity (*in natura humanitatis*) but not *from* the nature of his humanity (*ex natura humanitatis*). Therefore, what he knew *in* it, he did not know *from* it (*quod ergo in ipsa novit, non ex ipsa novit*) because he knew it by the power of his divinity (*per deitatis suae potentiam novit*).<sup>40</sup> It seems that Bellarmine's position goes one step further than Gregory because he affirms that he knew everything *from* his humanity by the graces that his divinity had given to it.

For Turretin, Mark 13:32 cannot mean that he did not know it to tell others, which he says, "savors of Jesuitical equivocation" (XIII.xiii.4). Turretin relies upon Chalcedonian

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<sup>36</sup> *The Sacrament of the Incarnation of our Lord* 7. On Ambrose see Moloney, "Approaches to Christ's Knowledge," 47-48.

<sup>37</sup> Thomas Stapleton, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 3 (Paris: Roberti Foüet, Nicolai Buon, Sebastiani Cramoisy, 1620), 157. "*Quam etiam ob causam, gratiam posuit Lucas ultimo loco et post aetatem, volens insinuare non iuxta aetatem in ea profecisse, sed in externa tantu demonstratione apud Deum et homines: faciens videlicet opera Deo et hominibus magic ac magic grata.*"

<sup>38</sup> In this small section Stapleton mentions Thomas twice in the course of the paragraph wherein he comments on Luke 2. He specifically references ST, III.12.2, III.15.3 and III.7.12.

<sup>39</sup> Stapleton, *Opera Omnia*, 157. "*Nec pudet Calvinum ignorantiam positivam ponere in Christo, quae accedente cum aetate sapientia informaretur, quia etiam mortem subiit peccati poenam. Atqui, nec plenitudini gratiae, nec plenitudini scientiae quae in Christo fuit, opponitur, sicut ignorantia.*"

<sup>40</sup> DS, 475.

distinctions noting that: There are not two Christs, but two unconfused natures in the one Christ. Being one person with two distinct and inseparable natures, Christ can know and not know in different respects (the distinction is not of *alius et alius* but of *aliud et aliud*).<sup>41</sup> Therefore, “Christ was ignorant of the day of judgment and Christ was not ignorant of the day of judgment.” While there is patristic precedence for this type of partitive exegesis, Turretin’s conclusions do leave unanswered questions about the hypostatic relationship between human psychology and divine knowledge.

### 3.3 The Knowledge of Christ’s Soul and Tradition

Although Bellarmine begins with his adversaries’ objections, his approach is a far cry from the Thomistic dialectic. If reading the first section of a *quaestio* in the *Summa* gives one the idea that Thomas presents the best arguments which will then be considered with care, one’s experience reading Bellarmine is quite different: he rejects his opponent’s positions *a priori* and one is left wondering if those mentioned are indeed the most meaningful. Bellarmine begins by connecting his contemporary opponents with the ancient Agnoete heresy and its father, Themistius (d. before 600).<sup>42</sup> Agnoetism is not the worst charge he levels against Calvin in his *Controversies*: he twice connects Calvin with Arianism in book 5, *De Christo Mediatore* (5.3, 8). Bellarmine does not merely mention Agnoetism *en passant*. After noting its origin in Themistius, he provides a brief summary (II.IV.I).<sup>43</sup> His explanation of the Agnoete heresy is important for understanding the nature of his accusations. The Agnoetae taught, according to Bellarmine, that Christ did not know the day of judgment (*docebant Christum ignorasse diem iudicii*) and attributed ignorance to Christ’s soul, connecting the ignorance of Christ’s soul to his corruptible body rather than his divinity. Bellarmine also understood the Agnoete formulation to be soteriological in nature: just as he needed such a body to free us from death, he needed such a mind to free us from ignorance.

Bellarmino does not paint with the broad brush of “Arianism” for at least two reasons. First and most simply, the Agnoete heresy deals more specifically with the question of Christ’s ignorance while at the same time being condemned by the Magisterium of the Church.

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<sup>41</sup> Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 20-21.

<sup>42</sup> On Themistius see: D. Stiernon, “Temisto,” in *Dizionario patristico e di antichità cristiane*, ed. Angelo Di Berardino (Casale Monferrato: Marietti, 1983), 3360; Alácsi, “Christological Thought,” 209.

<sup>43</sup> Bellarmine says he derives his understanding of the heresy from Liberatus’ Breviary ch. 19 and Gregory’s Epistle 8.42. Cf. Wickham, “Ignorance of Christ,” 221. Wickham explains that both Liberatus “the African church historian” and Leontius “agree that Themistius argued from the unity of Christ’s nature and the completeness of his assumed manhood to his genuine ignorance.”

Gregory's letter *Sicut aqua* written to Eulogius condemns Agnoetism and provides a summary refutation of key texts.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, Canon 18 of the Lateran Synod of 649 includes Themistius' name on the list of heretics to be condemned.<sup>45</sup> Second, beginning with Themistius permits him to avoid the complicated genesis of the discussion in earlier centuries. It was not abnormal to attribute ignorance to Christ's humanity in the Nicene and pre-Nicene periods. Irenaeus, for example, uses Mark 13:32 as an example of the true humanity of Christ against Gnostics.<sup>46</sup> Arians tried to use these texts to undermine Christ's divinity, but, as Grillmeier explains, "the Nicenes solved the difficulty by ascribing Christ's ignorance to the humanity of Jesus."<sup>47</sup> The last extant orthodox text of Greek patristic literature that attributes ignorance to Christ's humanity is Leontius of Byzantium's *De Sectis* written in the first half of the sixth century.<sup>48</sup> There Leontius explains that, although the Council of Chalcedon made no official ruling,<sup>49</sup> almost all of the fathers of that council seemed to hold to ignorance in Christ. Leontius then summarizes: "For as He is confessed to be of one substance with us in all respects, and we are ignorant, he was ignorant also. Indeed, Scripture itself says that he grew in age and wisdom, namely by coming to learn what He did not know."<sup>50</sup> An approach like that of Leontius was problematic only for those Fathers who saw ignorance as "blameworthy pathos" (this is certainly Bellarmine's position).<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> DS, 474-476. Cf. Wickham, "Ignorance of Christ, 221. Wickham provides the translation of an essay from Stephen of Hierapolis who was bishop there at the end of the sixth century. Stephen wrote "So, no one is to arianize by attaching ignorance to Christ's Godhead or paulianize or nestorianize by attaching it to his manhood" (219).

<sup>45</sup> DS, 519; cf. Moloney, "Approaches to Christ's Knowledge," 62. Moloney notes that, "Even one hundred years after his life-time, his challenge to the accepted orthodoxy of the day had not been forgotten or forgiven."

<sup>46</sup> Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, 28.6 (PG 7: 808) in Moloney, "Approaches to Christ's Knowledge," 38. On Irenaeus' christology see Anthony Briggman, "Irenaeus' Christology of Mixture," *Journal of Theological Studies* 64, no. 2 (2013): 516-55; Anthony Briggman, *God and Christ in Irenaeus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Jackson Lashier, "Irenaeus as Logos Theologian," *Vigiliae Christianae* 66, no. 4 (2012): 341-61.

<sup>47</sup> Aloys Grillmeier, *Part Two: The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century*, trans. John Cawte and Pauline Allen, vol. 2, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (London and Kentucky: Mowbray and Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 363.

<sup>48</sup> Moloney, "Approaches to Christ's Knowledge," 61.

<sup>49</sup> For a general introduction to the limits of Chalcedon see Sarah Coakley, "What Does Chalcedon Solve and What Does it Not? Some Reflections on the Status and Meaning of the Chalcedonian 'Definition'," in *The Incarnation: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Incarnation of the Son of God*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall SJ, and Gerald O'Collins SJ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 143-163; Dirk Krausmüller, "Making Sense of the Formula of Chalcedon: the Cappadocians and Aristotle in Leontius of Byzantium's 'Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos'," *Vigiliae Christianae* 65, no. 5 (2011): 484-513.

<sup>50</sup> Moloney, "Approaches to Christ's Knowledge," 62; PG, 86:1262ff.

<sup>51</sup> Grillmeier, *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century*, 364. Grillmeier uses "the monk Theodore" as an example of an extant source that accused Themistius of an overly simplistic hamartiology. He summarizes this aspect of Theodore's critique as follows: "Themistius always assumes that 'sin' is what deserves supplicium (death penalty) and (severe) penalty. It is a severe, actual sin. But 'sin' can also mean that

Turretin mentions that his position has been compared to Agnoetism, but he is largely unfazed by the accusation (XIII.xiii.11). He claims that the comparison is baseless as the Agnoetae, an offshoot of Arianism, attributed ignorance to Christ as he is God, whereas the Reformed position clearly did not. However, it does not seem that the Agnoetae attributed ignorance to Christ's deity such that Bellarmine has the better grasp of the nature of the heresy. Though, as the Agnoetae were Monophysites, it could be that Turretin means to say they lack the Christological apparatus needed to protect Christ's divinity.<sup>52</sup>

At the end of the first chapter of *De Christi Anima*, Bellarmine claims that all Theologians (*omnes Theologi*) and all the Fathers (*omnes Patres*) together the *Magistro* (Lombard) agree with his position.<sup>53</sup> The fact that he invokes Lombard and not Aquinas could be indicative of a preference for Lombard's more definitive denial of progress in Christ's human soul.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, a more explicit adherence to Aquinas' classification of the various ways one can speak of human knowledge in Christ might have forced him to concede more to Calvin.<sup>55</sup> Lombard's position is no different than the position which was standardized in the five centuries before he wrote.<sup>56</sup> Colish explains Lombard's stance this way: "The human Christ, for him, did know everything that God knows."<sup>57</sup> She then goes on to point out a possible weakness in Lombard's position: "In any event, and notwithstanding other aspects of his Christology, Peter is thus willing to deny to the human Christ a fully human psychology of

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in ignorance one can be 'capable' of sin and thus too deserving of disapprobation (*improbatio*) and blame (*incretatio*). In this sense the teachers said that every ignorance is subject to blame and also to sin" (365).

<sup>52</sup> Wickham, "Ignorance of Christ," 221. Wickham says they "argued from the unity of Christ's nature to the completeness of his assumed manhood to his genuine ignorance."

<sup>53</sup> For a quick summary of how Bellarmine interprets the fathers see: de La Servi re, *La th ologie de Bellarmine*, 64. "Les P res ne reconnaissent aucune ignorance dans l' me de J sus et interpr tent les textes object s par les h r tiques d'une manifestation progressive de la sagesse et de la science toujours pr sentes dans le Christ." Bellarmine's comments are reminiscent of Trent's statement that no one is to interpret scripture in a way that goes "*contra unanimum consensum Patrum*" (DS, 1507).

<sup>54</sup> This is noteworthy in light of his decision to use Thomas instead Lombard as the textbook for his lectures (see 1.1 above).

<sup>55</sup> Aquinas, *ST*, III.8-10. Aquinas speaks of a threefold distinction whereas Lombard only speaks of a twofold distinction: begotten and created.

<sup>56</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiarum libri quattuor* ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 3 (Paris: Migne, 1841), III.XIII.5, p. 238. "*In aliis ergo non in se proficiebat sapientia et gratia.*" Distinguishing between actual growth in himself (*in se*) and before others (*in aliis*), Lombard follows Gregory and notes that Christ is full of grace and that what is perceived as growth is only a gradual demonstration of his fullness (*paulatim demonstrabat*).

<sup>57</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, vol. 41 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 442; cf. Philipp W. Rosemann, *Peter Lombard* (Oxford University Press, 2004), 135. Rosemann advocates a different reading of Lombard: "I am not sure if it is fair to criticize the Lombard for his 'quasi-divinized view of Christ's human nature'...I understand Peter's theory of Christ's human wisdom— which he takes to have the same breadth as the Father's, but not the same depth—as an attempt to minimize the distance between Christ's two wisdoms, precisely to avoid the impression that Christ's personality was less than united."

knowledge.”<sup>58</sup> Bellarmine seems to have taken a page out of Lombard’s *Sentences*, as Lombard also seems to give deference to those texts that talk about Christ’s fullness of grace, to which he then conforms texts that seem to indicate growth in his humanity.

In chapter 3 Bellarmine compiles a patristic florilegium with only minimal interpretation. He organizes his catalogue of citations chronologically, but they can be organized according to the following general categories:<sup>59</sup>

- (1) Christ’s soul was perfect from its creation at the time of his conception (Eusebius, Jerome, Augustine).<sup>60</sup> According to Eusebius, Christ had perfect knowledge and constancy (*perfectissimam cognitionem, e constatiam*) even in the womb. Jerome and Augustine teach that he was likewise full of the Spirit.
- (2) Christ’s soul did not grow in knowledge, as his fullness permitted no addition (Eusebius, Athanasius, Bernard, Cyril).<sup>61</sup> Eusebius taught further that Christ saw God (*Deum vidisse*) and so nothing could be added to his knowledge (*cui cognitioni nihil addi potest*). It is noteworthy that this (rather oblique) reference to Christ’s vision of God is the only one Bellarmine makes in *De Christi Anima*.
- (3) Christ grew in age but his growth in wisdom was only apparent in the eyes of men (Ambrose, Gregory of Nazianzen, Augustine, Bede).<sup>62</sup> He took human affections like us, but he only seemed ignorant because of our ignorance (Ambrose). Gregory of Nazianzen notes that his fullness of knowledge was gradually made known (*paulatim apparerent*) to ignorant men. He did not grow in wisdom but gradually ministered wisdom to others (Bede). Augustine says that he grew in age but not in gifts of the soul (*in dotibus animae*).
- (4) Advance in wisdom means addition and therefore those who teach it do not worship the union according to the hypostasis (John of Damascus).<sup>63</sup> John, following Gregory, teaches that affirming certain types of ignorance in Christ makes one Nestorian. Bellarmine, as will be seen below, leans heavily on John of Damascus, whom he takes to exclude any kind of growth in Christ’s soul.

At the end of the list of his patristic citations, Bellarmine mentions Book I of *Cur Deus Homo*. Anselm taught that the incarnation was not a humbling of Christ’s deity, but an

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<sup>58</sup> Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 443.

<sup>59</sup> There is of course overlap between these categories.

<sup>60</sup> Bellarmine cites the sources as follows: Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica* 10, last chapter, expounding Psalm 21; Jerome on Isaiah 11; Augustine, *On Merit and Remission of Sin*, 2.29

<sup>61</sup> Bellarmine cites the sources as follows: Athanasius, sermon 4 Against the Arians; Bernard, second homily on “*Missus est*,” Cyril, *Thesaurus* 20.7

<sup>62</sup> Bellarmine cites the sources as follows: Ambrose, *De Fide*, 5.8; Gregory of Nazianzen, Epistles 8.42

<sup>63</sup> John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, III.22

exaltation of the nature of his humanity (*natura hominis creditur exaltata*).<sup>64</sup> Anselm focuses on the word “learned” (*didicit*) in Hebrews 5, which he notes can be understood in two ways: he made others learn (*alios discere fecit*) or he learned experientially things of which he was not ignorant (*scientiam non ignorabat, experimento didicit*).<sup>65</sup> He then explains Luke 2, as not meaning that there was real growth but that he carried himself as if it were so (*ac si ita esset*).<sup>66</sup>

Returning to the above list which summarizes his patristic evidence, although it is unclear if some of the Fathers side with him as closely as he seems to imply (e.g., Athanasius, Bede and Cyril),<sup>67</sup> the way the pieces of the puzzle fit together is evident enough: The first category (1) is, in and of itself, inconclusive, being that perfection and fullness of the Spirit do not necessarily exclude forms of intellectual growth and limitation in Christ’s humanity. However, when (1) is interpreted to mean that no addition is possible (2), one must find ways to explain why no text can speak of real addition to his knowledge (3). Finally, trying to follow John of Damascus, Bellarmine teaches that a real union precludes any additions (4).<sup>68</sup>

Bellarmino is clearly working to find a consensus patrum, as evidenced by the number of patristic citations. Turretin is more sparing in his patristic citations and predictably prefers earlier fathers who wrote before the hardening of the cement of the consensus which excluded ignorance in Christ. Turretin does not mention here his predilection for Fathers that predate the seventh century as he does elsewhere (I.xxi.3), although this might have been helpful to undercut Bellarmine’s reference to Agnoetism. Nonetheless, Turretin is unwilling to concede earlier fathers like Ambrose and Athanasius to Bellarmine. For example, he cites Athanasius from the same work Bellarmine cites as saying “As a man he did not know, for ignorance is proper to man.”<sup>69</sup> Still he does not take the time to argue that there are commonalities between his position and the figures upon whom Bellarmine relies heavily, like John of Damascus or Peter Lombard. Turretin’s use of the tradition confirms his conviction that it carries no authoritative weight except so far as it agrees with the Scriptures (I.xxi.5).

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<sup>64</sup> Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, I.VIII.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* This second possible interpretation does not seem to be extensively considered by Bellarmine.

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

<sup>67</sup> On Bede see Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 439. On Athanasius and Cyril see Macleod, *The Person of Christ*, 167-68. “For Cyril, clearly, the ignorance was as real as the sleep and the weariness and reflected the same fact: the Logos had taken flesh.”

<sup>68</sup> Alácsi, “Christological Thought,” 197. Alácsi summarizes this cardinal tenet in Bellarmine’s teaching, which is the focal point of the next chapter: “In Bellarmine’s mind any opposition to the long-standing doctrine of Christ’s perfection in grace and supernatural wisdom betrays some timid hesitation, a slight qualm vis-à-vis the reality of the Incarnation, casting a shadow of suspicion on one’s true understanding or unreserved reception of the Christological doctrine defined at Ephesus.”

<sup>69</sup> Turretin cites *Contra Arianos, Oratio quarta*. On Athanasius’ christology see Thomas G. Weinandy, *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction*, (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 2007), 49-80.

### 3.4 The Perfection of Christ's Soul

Christ's impeccability is unhesitatingly affirmed by both Bellarmine and Turretin. However, as has been seen, they are working with opposing criteria for perfection. Calvin introduced a revised understanding of Christ's human perfection which is critiqued by Bellarmine and defended by Turretin. Allen explains Calvin's view:

Calvin challenged the idea that perfection and dignity require immediacy and punctiliar perfection in the theanthropic Christ and this became a hallmark of Reformed Christology, which emphasizes the importance of the life of Christ. Calvin notes that such an inference, which holds that 'ignorance was a fault,' would thereby confuse sinful blindness with creatureliness and even require that angels be subsumed within the divine nature, lest the angelic creatures be inherently sinful in their ignorance.<sup>70</sup>

Bellarmino argued for punctiliar perfection, whereas Turretin argued for progressive perfection. Perfection is punctiliar for Bellarmine because it is rooted in the hypostatic union and the ontology of the union undergoes no change. Perfection is progressive for Turretin because it is rooted in Christ's experiences in his two states; it manifests itself differently in his humiliation and his exaltation. It might be said that Turretin's definition allows for a distinction between being and becoming that Bellarmine's does not.

Bellarmino argues that first, it is not credible that the Word should become man and not pour out all the gifts of which it was capable (*quorum capax erat*, II.IV.IV).<sup>71</sup> If it is indeed the *anima Dei*, it is absurd that it is not wise. Second, wisdom and grace were natural (*naturalis*) to the man Christ.<sup>72</sup> Third, he must be filled with every gift because Christ the man in the incarnation began to be the Son of God (*coepit esse filius Dei*). Christ is heir of all the Father has and therefore, Bellarmine concludes rather creatively that, since the Father will not die, he already has it all. Fourth, in the incarnation Christ became, not just the head of men, but of angels and the head cannot be less wise than its members. Fifth, Adam was wise at his conception, as is evidenced by the naming of all the animals. The second Adam must therefore be even wiser.

Bellarmino agrees with John of Damascus who teaches that those who believe that Christ's soul increased in wisdom by degrees (*paulatim profecisse*) do not really believe in the

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<sup>70</sup> R. Michael Allen, *The Christ's Faith: a Dogmatic Account* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 60-61.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Alácsi, "Christological Thought," 197.

<sup>72</sup> Bellarmine points out that Augustine, *Enchiridion* 40 teaches that these graces flow from one nature to the other (*ex una Christi natura in alteram haec dona redundabant*) according to an intrinsic principle (*ab intrinseco principio*). Thus, they are natural (*naturalis*). In other words, it is inevitable that his humanity has them.



incarnation.<sup>73</sup> According to John of Damascus, if there is growth in Christ’s wisdom and grace in such a way that he adds to something he does not have, then there is not a real union. This position is Nestorian because it means the union is only relative and so not truly hypostatic.<sup>74</sup> While it is true that John is eager to emphasize the union when talking about Christ’s soul—the main principle upon which Bellarmine draws—he also nuances his explanation of Christ’s human soul in such a way to protect its integrity within the unity of the one person. These nuances apparently are not reflected in Bellarmine’s formulation. For John, Christ’s human nature does not essentially possess the knowledge of the future but does however have such knowledge because of the union with the Word of God, that is the hypostatic identity.<sup>75</sup> His human will *became* the will of God made man—the person of God the Son.<sup>76</sup> These nuances permit John to interpret texts without explaining away their apparent implications for Christ’s humanity. For example, John says of Mark 7:24, “In His person (God the Word) was shown the real existence of the weakness of his human will.”<sup>77</sup>

Although he does not quote John of Damascus in the *quaestio* on the knowledge of Christ’s soul,<sup>78</sup> Turretin agrees with Bellarmine that, “Christ’s life was singular and metaphysically different from any other life.”<sup>79</sup> The English Puritan John Owen (1616-1683), also writing against Bellarmine, well summarizes Turretin’s position on Christ’s ignorance:

The human nature of Christ was capable of having *new objects* proposed to its mind and understanding, whereof before it had a *simple nescience*. And this is an inseparable adjunct of human nature as such, as it is to be weary or hungry, and no vice or blamable defect. Some have made a great outcry about the ascribing of ignorance by some protestant divines unto the human soul of Christ: Bellarm. De Anim. Christi. Take ‘ignorance’ for that which is a *moral defect* in any kind, or an unacquaintedness with that which any one *ought to know*, or is necessary unto him as the perfection of his condition or duty, and it is false that ever any of them ascribed it unto him. Take it merely for a nescience of some things, and there is no more in it but a denial of infinite

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<sup>73</sup> John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, III.22 (PG 94:1088).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., III.21 (PG 94:1085).

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., III.17 (PG 94:1069).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., III.18, PG:94:1069, 1072. Cf. Dominic Legge, *The Trinitarian Christology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 112. Aquinas is similarly careful. Legge unpacks Thomas’ explanation of the personal *esse* of the Son this way: “...in virtue of the hypostatic union, Christ’s humanity is the humanity of the divine Son to its deepest roots, according to its very being. Consequently, everything in that humanity takes on the filial mode of the Son.” He goes on to say: “To hold that the hypostatic union elevates or divinizes Christ’s humanity irrespective of habitual grace lets a kind of Monophysitism enter through the back door” (134).

<sup>78</sup> According to Dennison’s index, Turretin only quotes John of Damascus directly twice. Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, 1:522; 3:501.

<sup>79</sup> Allen, *The Christ’s faith*, 59. Cf. Bruce Lindley McCormack, *The Humility of the Eternal Son: Reformed Kenoticism and the Repair of Chalcedon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 250.

omniscience,—nothing inconsistent with the highest holiness and purity of human nature.<sup>80</sup>

Turretin uses the presence of faith and hope in Christ to delimit the ways that Christ's perfection expressed itself while on earth. Turretin attempts to make his case from the Scriptures, but his selection of texts does not explicitly speak of Christ having faith: Heb. 2:17; 3:2; Acts 2:26; Matthew 27:46). He explains that Christ's faith is unique just like the rest of his humanity and therefore different from the faith of sinners. It is not "a fiducial apprehension of the mercy of God" because only sinners can exercise faith in that sense (XIII.xii.6). Nor is it a mode of knowledge (*modus cognitionis*) which might imply imperfection in Christ (compared to obscurity or sight; 2 Corinthians 5:7). It is rather the substance of knowledge (*substantia cognitionis*) and consists of assent (*assensus*) to what is known (e.g., that which God has revealed) and trust (*fiducia*), which rests in the good providence of God.<sup>81</sup> Christ possesses hope in a similar fashion. That is to say, the aspects of hope which do not entail imperfection are his. Christ's hope is *certitudo* which rests on divine promises of future things. Imperfection might be present in a human hope because of a still obscure expectation (*expectatione adhuc obscura*) of something not yet possessed (Rom. 8:24). Turretin's treatment of Christ's faith and hope are not altogether unlike Aquinas' in that both deny a faith and hope in Christ that are exactly analogous to ours because of what is imperfect in them, while granting to him the part of them that is unencumbered by sin.<sup>82</sup>

Christ's faith and hope are, for Turretin, a part of a more fundamental theological distinction: the *status duplex*. A fundamental question for Turretin, which seems almost entirely absent in Bellarmine, is, "What is the difference in Christ's pre- and post-resurrection soul?" Turretin always interprets Christ's humanity according to the two states schema. The

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<sup>80</sup> John Owen, *Pneumatologia*, vol. 3, *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 170. Owen goes on to talk about Mark 13:32 and Hebrews 5:8. See also A. M. Dubarle, "La Science Humaine du Christ selon saint Augustin," *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 29, no. 2 (1940): 262. Dubarle says that Augustin affirmed nescience in Christ.

<sup>81</sup> This threefold description differs substantially from his sixfold division of saving faith in *locus XV* on calling and faith (he calls them acts, *actus*): (1) *notitia*, (2) *assensus theoreticus*, (3) *assensus fiducialis & practicus*, (4) *actus refugii*, (5) *actus receptionis Christi sive adhesionis*, (6) *actus reflexus* (XV.VIII).

<sup>82</sup> Joseph P. Wawrykow, "The Christology of Thomas Aquinas in Scholastic Context," in *The Oxford Handbook of Christology*, ed. Francesca Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 246. Notably, whereas Aquinas disallowed the theological virtues of faith and hope in Christ he did permit trust to be attributed to his humanity. As Wawrykow explains, "For one thing he does not deny faith (or hope) simply; he denies to Christ the virtues of faith, of hope, because of what is imperfect in them: to believe is to see in a glass darkly; that gives way to vision; to hope is to hope for something future that one does not now possess. Aquinas grants to Jesus the perfections associated with faith and hope (obedience, and trust in God, respectively)." Cf. Joseph P. Wawrykow, "The Theological Virtues," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. Brian Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 302-3; Joseph P. Wawrykow, "Jesus in the Moral Theology of Thomas Aquinas," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 42, no. 1 (2012): 13-33.

difference between Christ's knowledge before and after the resurrection is not a question of finiteness and infiniteness or imperfection and perfection, but rather humiliation and exaltation. The fullness of his knowledge, like the fullness of his happiness, while always his right, was not completely experienced during the dispensation of his suffering.

Augustine spoke of man in four states in relationship to sin: *posse non peccare; non posse non peccare; posse peccare et non peccare; non posse peccare*.<sup>83</sup> Peter Lombard applied this fourfold state to Christ, noting that he took on something from each of the four states in his humanity.<sup>84</sup> Christ received immunity from sin (*immunitatem peccati*) from the first state, punishment and other defects (*poenam...et alios defectus*) from the second, true fullness of grace (*vero gratiae plenitudinem*) from the third and the *non-posse peccare* and perfect contemplation of God (*Dei perfectam contemplationem*) from the fourth.<sup>85</sup> Lombard concludes the section by noting that Christ "had in fact simultaneously some of the goods of the way (*via*) and the goods of home (*patria*), just as he also had some of the evils of the way (*via*)."<sup>86</sup> Thus, it seems Lombard is describing Christ's humanity while on earth as possessing portions of each state.<sup>87</sup> Bellarmine's position is essentially the same as Lombard's. Reformed Theologians spoke of two states of Christ's humanity,<sup>88</sup> the *status humiliationis* and the *status exaltationis*, as mutually exclusive. This two states schema was absent in medieval theologians such as Aquinas,<sup>89</sup> and were not hamartiological descriptions like the four-fold schema, but rather Christological dispensations in the *historia salutis*.

Muller explains that, "The doctrine was first developed by the Lutherans as a reflection on the earthly suffering and humiliation of Christ in relation to the *communicatio idiomatum*."<sup>90</sup> According to Martin Chemnitz (1522-1586), "For a time at the time of His humiliation His glory and majesty did not always reveal themselves openly in and through the assumed

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<sup>83</sup> See Augustine, *On Rebuke and Grace*, XXXIII.

<sup>84</sup> Lombard, *Sententiarum libri quattuor* d. 16, c. 2, 2. Lombard describes the fourfold state this way: "primus ante peccatum, secundus post peccatum et ante gratiam, tertius sub gratia, quartus in gloria."

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. "Habuit enim simul bona viae quaedam et bona patriae, sicut et quaedam mala viae."

<sup>87</sup> Contra Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 444. Although Lombard does not explicitly say so (at least in this section), Colish takes him to mean that Christ will have the fourth state of man after the resurrection.

<sup>88</sup> Heinrich Hepppe, *Reformed Dogmatics: Set Out and Illustrated from the Sources* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1950), 488-509.

<sup>89</sup> Spencer, "Reformed Scholasticism in Medieval Perspective," 233.

<sup>90</sup> Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 343; Richard A. Muller, "The Christological Problem in the Thought of Jacobus Arminius," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis = Dutch Review of Church History* 68, no. 2 (1988): 150. "The concept of the two states of Christ, the *status humiliationis* and *status exaltationis*, taken over by the Reformed from Lutheranism and modified to conform to the Calvinist's view of the *communicatio idiomatum*, is also noticeable in Arminius' Christology, though not in as developed a form as found in contemporary writers like Perkins and Polanus."

nature.”<sup>91</sup> Calvin did not explicitly employ the doctrine of the *status duplex* in his *Institutio* as Turretin did, but the way he structured his Christology around Christ’s role as mediator, specifically his three offices (*munus triplex*), laid the groundwork for his successor’s use of the *status duplex*.<sup>92</sup> Other second generation Reformed theologians, like Vermigli, did however utilize it as a key doctrinal construction.<sup>93</sup> The *status duplex* features prominently in Turretin’s Reformed contemporaries Fredrich Spanheim (1600-1649)<sup>94</sup> and Samuel Maresius (1599-1673).<sup>95</sup> The last three items of Maresius’ *Decas X* provide an overview of the Reformed doctrine:

8. The state of Christ, the true Messiah promised in the Prophets, was twofold: first emptying, after exaltation in both of which the unity of the person is always recognized, maintaining also the properties of the natures without confusion.

9. To his emptying pertain his conception, birth, miserable life, the passion of the cross, the descent to hell (which by no means looks to the separated soul of Christ), death and burial.

10. To his exaltation pertain his glorious resurrection, visible and local ascension, which were followed by his session at the right hand of the Father, which does not denote the position of his body, but the royal dignity of his person.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Martin Chemnitz, *The Two Natures of Christ*, trans. J. A. O. Preus (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2007), 487. Chemnitz goes on to argue in the same chapter that Christ’s ignorance is a part of his humiliation, specifically contrasting his understanding of Luke 2:52 with that of the “Scholastics” (489). He also claims that “Antiquity believed and spoke the same way about Christ’s humiliation” (492). The citations that he gathers indicate an understanding of Christ’s humiliation but not the *status duplex*. On the difference between the Lutheran and Reformed versions of the *status duplex* see Ivor J. Davidson, “Christ,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, ed. Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain (Oxford University Press, 2020), 458.

<sup>92</sup> Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 32-33: “Although Calvin does not use the states of humiliation and exaltation as a specific doctrinal determination in the argument of his Institutes, his conception of the office of Christ points toward the relationship established between these two doctrines by his successors.” Bruce L. McCormack, “Christology,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformed Theology*, ed. David A. S. Fergusson and Paul T. Nimmo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 67: “Credit for devising the concept of a threefold office of the Mediator (*munus triplex*) as an organizing principle for discussing the work of Christ in all of its dimensions belongs to John Calvin, though he did not make the expansive use of it that later Reformed theology would.”

<sup>93</sup> Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Una Semplice Dichiarazione sopra gli XII Articoli della Fede Cristiana* (Basel: Johan Hervagius, 1544), 64, 67.

<sup>94</sup> Friedrich Spanheim, *Disputationum theologicarummiscellaneorum pars prima* (Geneva: Chouet, 1652), 270-76. On Spanheim see van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 117.

<sup>95</sup> On Maresius see Julien Léonard, “Un pasteur français au service des Provinces-Unies. Le ministère de Samuel Des Marets à Maastricht (1632-1636),” *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine* 65, no. 2 (2018); cf. van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 143.

<sup>96</sup> Samuel Maresius, *Collegium Theologicum*, 6 ed. (Geneva 1662), 479. My translation. In the second edition (Groningen, 1549) these three items (8-10) make up only two (9-10) of *Decas X*.

Turretin follows Maresius' exposition of the status duplex:<sup>97</sup> the first is *exinanitionis et humilitatis* and the second is *exaltationis et Majestatis*.<sup>98</sup> He treats both states generally, explaining the difference as that of suffering and glory; battle and triumph; way and goal (*via et meta*, XIII.ix.1). For Turretin, Christ's ignorance befits his first state but not the second. Whereas Bellarmine protects Christ's divinity by arguing that union with the divine nature must produce punctiliar perfection, Turretin protects Christ's divinity by way of an appeal to the *extra calvinisticum* which allows him to speak of progressive perfection in his humanity.

### 3.5 The Soteriological Significance of the Knowledge of Christ's Soul

Gregory Nazianzen's oft cited maxim encapsulates the soteriological import of the incarnation: "That which is not assumed is not healed" (Το... ἀπρόσληπτον, ἀθεράπευτον).<sup>99</sup> Both Bellarmine and Turretin would readily affirm as much because they concur that the Son's mission determines the nature of the humanity he assumes. Bellarmine explains that Christ did not need attributes like ignorance because they were not connected to the essence or perfection of the nature he assumed (*essentiam, vel perfectionem*). He only had to take on those qualities which were necessary for the goal of the incarnation: salvation (*ex eiusmodi defectibus non debuit accipere nisi illos, qui conducebant ad finem incarnationis; qui erat salvare homines*, II.IV.V). His suffering and dying could gain merit with God because of his virtue (specifically patience).<sup>100</sup> Ignorance would have only hindered this. Christ took on two things from us in the incarnation, says Bellarmine. First, he received a blameless nature with everything pertaining to its perfection (*naturam integram cum omnibus quae ad eius perfectionem pertinent*). This comports with the Athanasian creed: *Perfectus Deus est Christum, et perfectus homo*. Second, he received certain defects consequent to our corrupt nature (*aliquos defectus consequentes naturam nostrum corruptam*): death, hunger and thirst, but he certainly did not assume all of our defects. Following Aquinas (without citing him), Bellarmine notes that, Christ did not receive sin, an inclination to sin or ignorance (*non accepit peccatum fomitem, ignoratiam*).<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 187-90. Here Maresius has an extended locus on the duplex status where he explains Christ's emptying according to specific degrees.

<sup>98</sup> Turretin does not distinguish between emptying (*exinanitio*) and humiliation (*humiliatio*) the way that some other Reformed theologians do. Cf. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 343-44.

<sup>99</sup> PG, 37: 182-183.

<sup>100</sup> For some of the background on the issue of merit see T. Robert Baylor, "With Him in Heavenly Realms': Lombard and Calvin on Merit and the Exaltation of Christ," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 17, no. 2 (2015), 152-75.

<sup>101</sup> ST, III:14.2.

Bellarmino, making nearly an identical point in a Christmas sermon, notes that he did not assume anything that could *lead* to sin:

Quite the opposite, He did not accept sin or ignorance or concupiscence, since He came to take away the sins of the world; therefore, He had to come endowed with the contraries, that is, with innocence and grace, and not with sin or those things which lead to sin, as do ignorance and concupiscence.”<sup>102</sup>

In a sermon preached for the occasion of the Annunciation Bellarmine explains that, in so far as his perfect human knowledge was there from the beginning of his human existence, he was already accomplishing redemption *in utero*:

What could be more extraordinary, marvelous, and singular than a babe who is breastfed, nay, who is still carried in the womb, yet interiorly in His soul He is engaged in the greatest of occupations, and in His mind He bears thoughts of the utmost importance, and even now He begins to work with God on the restoration of mankind...He was to dispel our iniquity and darkness of mind by means of His own splendor, was never acquainted with sin or ignorance.<sup>103</sup>

Bellarmino teaches that Christ “by reason of His unique metaphysical status and substantial sanctification, meets all the necessary conditions for the acquisition of merit.”<sup>104</sup> Bellarmine’s position seems to imply that Christ could have merited salvation from conception, a view which creates difficulties for texts that talk of obedience which culminates in the cross (e.g., Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:8-9). Moreover, Paul connects Christ’s fulfilling of the law with the Son coming “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (ἐν ομοιώματι σαρκὸς αμαρτίας, Rom. 8:4).<sup>105</sup>

Christ’s ignorance is, for Turretin, part of what makes him truly human.<sup>106</sup> Ignorance is fitting for incarnation, not immediately in a singular manner like his death and his resurrection, but mediately and in a common manner. It is necessary in a secondary and derived sense because it testifies to the truth of Christ’s partaking of our “animal nature” with its guiltless infirmities (*cum infirmitatibus suis ἀδιαβλήτοις*, XIII.xiii.10). Turretin’s affirmation

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<sup>102</sup> Robert Bellarmine, *Opera Oratoria Posthuma: adiunctis documentis variis ad gubernium animarum spectantibus*. Ed. Tromp, S. Vol 1 (Rome: Gregorian University, 1942), 311 in Alácsi, “Christological Thought,” 187. Cf. Turretin XI.xxi.4 where he argues that concupiscence is a sin against the Roman Catholic position.

<sup>103</sup> Concio XXVII, In festo Annuntiationis Beatae Mariae (OOB, vol. V/B, p. 172) in *ibid.*, 206.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* “...One the most important reasons why Christ’s human soul had to be made perfect and rendered deiform at the very moment of its creation was so that He can commence His work of redemption without delay.”

<sup>106</sup> Cf. G.C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, trans. John Vriend, *Studies in Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1954), 212. “In the history of the church we note that people repeatedly came to conclusions which, in effect, placed them in the Docetic camp - not, to be sure, from Docetic motives (the incompatibility of God and earthly reality), but in view of the union of the two natures. This led to the practice of reading the parts of the Scriptures which most clearly bring out the humanity of Christ in such a way as to deprive them of their original force.”

of the necessity of the incarnation unfolds according to three propositions. First, the incarnation would not have been necessary if man had not sinned (XIII.iii.3). He is aware that his position is against the *Scholasticis veteribus* in their assertion that the incarnation would have been necessary even without the fall, “without the authority of Scripture” (*citra auctoritatem Scripturae*).<sup>107</sup> He points to Alexander of Hales, Ockham and Bonaventure as examples. The contrast between the two positions, at least in the case of Bonaventure in his commentary on the Sentences, seems somewhat overdrawn. While Bonaventure conceives of the reason for the incarnation as extending beyond the remedy of the fall, he recognizes redemption as the main reason (*praecipua ratio*) for the incarnation.<sup>108</sup>

Turretin maintains his first proposition for several reasons: First, the Bible gives no reason for the incarnation save the redemption of fallen man. The protoeuangelion is postlapsarian (Gen. 3:15).<sup>109</sup> Second, Christ’s *munus triplex* is “occupied only with sinners.” As a Prophet he calls sinners to faith and repentance; as a Priest he gives himself as a ransom for sinners; and as King he protects sinners from the world, the flesh and the devil.<sup>110</sup> Third, the “impelling cause” (*causa impulsiva*) was not God’s love toward men in general, but rather his special love toward fallen men. Fourth, this position is confirmed in the fathers (Irenaeus, Augustine and Gregory). Finally, he argues that God’s goodness can explain creation but not restoration.

Turretin’s second proposition is that it was not simply fitting (*necessitas congruentia*) or suitable (*non modo conveniens*)<sup>111</sup> that the Son become incarnate, it was necessary. It is a

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<sup>107</sup> Cf. Oliver D. Crisp, “Incarnation without the Fall,” *Journal of Reformed Theology* 10, no. 3 (2016). Crisp argues for what he calls christological account. For his explanation on how his account does (or does not) comport with biblical teaching see pp. 230-232.

<sup>108</sup> Bonaventure, *Commentaria in Quatuor Libro Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi in Opera Omnia*, vol. 3 (Florence: Collegi S. Bonaventurae, 1887), dist. I, a. 2, q. 2. Bonaventure explains his conclusion this way: “*Praecipua ratio incarnationis videtur fuisse redemptio humani generis, quamuis multae rationes aliae congruentiae huic sationi sint annexae.*” See Iliia Delio, “Revisiting the Franciscan Doctrine of Christ,” *Theological Studies (Baltimore)* 64, no. 1 (2003): 9-11. Bonaventure sets redemption in the context of cosmic completion.

<sup>109</sup> Turretin does not make the connection, but Aquinas says essentially the same thing in the opening *quaestio* of the *Pars Tertia*: Aquinas, *ST*, III, q. 1, a. 3. “*Unde, cum in sacra Scriptura ubique incarnationis ratio ex peccato primi hominis assignetur, convenientius dicitur incarnationis opus ordinatum esse a Dio in remedium peccati, ita quod, peccato non existente, incarnatio non fuisset.*”

<sup>110</sup> Turretin expands his understanding of the *munus triplex* in the next locus on the mediatorial office of Christ (see esp. XIV.V). There he explains that his threefold office corresponds to a threefold misery of men: “Ignorance is healed by the prophetic; guilt by the priestly; the tyranny and corruption of sin by the kingly” (XIV.V.VIII, p. 393). His three offices are really three functions of his one office as Mediator (“*Munus hoc Mediatorium Christi distribuitur in tria Officia, quae sunt totidem ejus partes, Prophetiam, Sacerdotium, Regnum,*” XIV.V.VIII).

<sup>111</sup> For different varieties of *necessitas* see Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, 228-31.

*necessitas naturae* because it asks if the nature of redemption demanded the incarnation and a *necessitas justitiae* because it was the only way to satisfy the justice of God.<sup>112</sup> His third proposition is that redemption can only be accomplished by the God-man, that is by the “indissoluble bond” of the two natures. There are three reasons redemption must be accomplished by the God-man. First, God’s justice required that sin was punished in the same nature in which it was committed and at the same time Christ had to be God to give an infinite value to his sufferings. Second, the three offices of his mediatorship required it because Christ is mediator according to both natures. Third, our relationship with Christ required it. He redeemed us as our brother according to his humanity and we belong to Him as His creatures according to his divinity. He explains that, “We have need of like feeling (*homoiopatheia*) in the one dying and of sympathy (*sympatheia*) in the one living.” Bellarmine would argue that ignorance impedes Christ ability to sympathize with his people. However, Turretin sees ignorance as a part of the way Christ connects experientially with his people.<sup>113</sup>

### 3.6 The Knowledge of Christ’s Soul and the Beatific Vision

Medieval Scholastics like Lombard taught that Christ had the beatific vision from his conception. Lombard goes so far as to say that Christ’s post-resurrection soul was not more blessed in the contemplation of God than his pre-resurrection soul.<sup>114</sup> Unconcerned with the doctrine’s pedigree, Turretin finds this blurring of the distinction between the two states problematic because the beatific knowledge belongs to those who have attained (*quae est comprehensorum*) and so “cannot fitly be ascribed to Christ while still sojourning upon the earth” (XIII.xiii.1). Bellarmine’s argument for the beatific vision in Christ’s earthly ministry are only implicit in *De Christi Anima* (II.IV.II).<sup>115</sup> It could be that it was a tactical decision to argue less forcefully for the doctrine since it features prominently in the Reformed critique of the Catholic position. Elsewhere in the controversy on justification, Bellarmine explicitly affirms that in his earthly ministry *Christus simul viator fuit, et comprehensor* (XIV.V.XI).

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<sup>112</sup> Turretin distinguishes the logical necessity of the incarnation in great detail. It was not a *necessitas absoluta* or a *necessitas simplex* because God was not obligated to save anyone. It is a *necessitas hypothetica* because it asserts the necessity of the incarnation in light of God’s will to save sinners. In other words, it asks if there were another way to save sinners other than the incarnation. Nor does the proposition consider a *necessitas decreti*, because everyone agrees that God must necessarily do that which He decrees.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. XIII.V.X where Turretin explains that sin had to be expiated in the same nature in which it was committed: “*Si Christus nobis per omnia similis non est factus quoad identitatem naturae, non potuit nos verè redimere, cum peccatum in eadem natura, in qua commissum fuit, expiari debuerit.*”

<sup>114</sup> Lombard, *Sententiarum libri quattuor* III.XVIII.2-3. He (rather confusingly) says that Christ’s soul can only be said to be more blessed post-resurrection because it is immune from all misery. Cf. Baylor, “With Him in Heavenly Realms,” 156.

<sup>115</sup> See his citation of Eusebius above in 3.3.



Bellarmino seems to view the beatific vision the same way he views the perfection of infused knowledge: as an ontological necessity of the incarnation;<sup>116</sup> Christ “naturally” possesses it in virtue of the incarnation itself (II.IV.IV).<sup>117</sup>

Turretin’s apprehension is soteriological. Towards the end of the *quaestio* on the knowledge of Christ’s soul he comments on the “papist” position on the beatific vision: “This they maintain the more easily to deny that spiritual sufferings were felt by the soul of Christ” (XIII.xiii.12). He views the Roman Catholic position as an impossible hybrid of the *status duplex*; a failed attempt to amalgamate humiliation and exaltation. The pilgrim labors and suffers in the way (*in via... Viator laborat & patitur*), while the attainer is at the goal and enjoys perfect blessedness having finished his labor (*in meta... Comprehensor finitis laboribus perfecta beatitudine fruitur*). *Beatitudo* is a glorious and happy state (*status gloriosus et felix*), the second state which is incompatible with the state of pain and dishonor (*doloris et ignominiae*) of the first state. For Turretin, the hypostatic union implies the possession of happiness and glory, but it was not always experienced in every moment of Christ’s mission in his humanity. In the first state, Christ was perfect as to holiness but not as to happiness. Christ abdicated his right to unmitigated happiness in his humanity so that he might fulfill the office of his mediatorship. His human experience of the blessedness that belongs to his person as the God-man is an accident (*accidens*) which can be absent (XIII.xiii.15).

### 3.7 Conclusion

The incarnation necessitates nuance. Heresy is a foregone conclusion without a certain theological dexterity. There is, as Davidson notes, an inevitable tension between the Son’s humanity and his deity:

The perennial temptation is to attempt to adjust one side or the other in order to depict a person who is, as it were, psychologically credible – to trim, for example, aspects of what divinity might mean in order to fit the parameters of humanity, or to submerge the reality of Jesus’ human struggles in the depths of a divine agency that renders his moral

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<sup>116</sup> It seems that Aquinas can be read to affirm as much. See Jean Galot, “Le Christ terrestre et la vision,” *Gregorianum* 67, no. 3 (1986): 433; White, *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology*, 238-39. White argues that “the affirmation of beatific vision of the historical Christ was and is essential for maintaining the unity of his person in and through the duality of his natures, and most particularly in safeguarding the unity of his personal agency in and through the duality of his two wills (human and divine).” He then explains, concerning Aquinas’ teaching of the same: “This is not an argument that Aquinas makes explicitly. However, it is a conclusion that can be derived from his Christological principles.” See also Luigi Iammarrone, “La visione beatifica di Cristo viatore nel pensiero di Sant Tommaso,” *Doctor communis* 36, no. 2 (1983): 303-06.

<sup>117</sup> Here Bellarmine is speaking specifically about infused knowledge, but he does not seem to draw a hard line between infused knowledge and beatific knowledge.

dedication as a human subject somewhat less impressive than it otherwise appears to be.”<sup>118</sup>

Bellarmino and Turretin handle this tension differently. It might be said that Turretin’s position risks losing sight of Christ’s divine agency whereas Bellarmine’s position risks losing sight of something of Christ’s human psychological creditability. Both make use of an *et-et* (both-and) as well as an *aut-aut* (*either-or*) hermeneutical approach in their Christology, but they are applied asymmetrically. While Turretin relies on the *et-et* paradigm to explain how Christ can both know and not know, Bellarmine treats his knowledge according to an *aut-aut* paradigm: either Christ knows everything essentially or he does not. Moreover, Bellarmine employs the *et-et* hermeneutic to explain how Christ can both be on the way and have already arrived (*viator et comprehensor*), whereas Turretin considers these to be mutually exclusive (*aut-aut*). Therefore, Turretin allows for a more definitive distinction between his two natures, whereas Bellarmine places the distinction within Christ’s humanity: body and soul. Bellarmine might be asked if his conception of Christ’s knowledge comports with the full picture of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels. Turretin might be asked if Jesus knew that he was the Son of God in his humanity.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Ivor J. Davidson, “‘Not My Will but Yours be Done’: The Ontological Dynamics of Incarnational Intention,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 7, no. 2 (2005): 185.

<sup>119</sup> Thomas Joseph White, “Dyothelitism and the Instrumental Human Consciousness of Jesus,” *Pro Ecclesia* 17, no. 4 (2008): 417. “As such he must be conscious of who he is in a human way. Consequently, this requires both objective human knowledge of ‘what’ he is and subjective psychological self-awareness. His outright knowledge that he is God must pertain to his objective knowledge (he has to know ‘what’ he is as the Son, in his human mind), while his subjective self-awareness is a facet of his human experiential presence-to-himself. Jesus is aware of himself as a person: when Jesus is aware of himself, the self he is aware of (his who) is the Son of God.”

## 4 The Suffering of Christ's Soul

The incarnation is about suffering; God became man to suffer. If saving was possible sans suffering the incarnation would be unnecessary.<sup>1</sup> This line of thinking assumes a particular theology which is shared by both Bellarmine and Turretin. God *qua* God can not suffer; He is impassible.<sup>2</sup> But Christ—God become man—can. The Lord of Glory was crucified (1 Cor. 2:8).<sup>3</sup> Again, Bellarmine and Turretin draw upon a shared heritage to explain this reality. The hypostatic union entails a real *communicatio idiomatum* because the attributes of both natures are predicated upon the one divine person.<sup>4</sup> The Son is God, and the Son can suffer. Yet, the way the God-man suffers surely must be different from the way a mere man suffers. Once again, Bellarmine and Turretin would both sustain as much. But an impasse is reached when it comes to the divergent ways they explain the uniqueness of Christ's human suffering.

Expounding the suffering of Christ requires several sophisticated theological moves to harmonize divine impassibility and real, sinless human suffering all without rending the hypostatic union.<sup>5</sup> Bellarmine tries to avoid the possible Christological pitfalls by arguing that there is a part of Christ's humanity that is untouched by his suffering (the higher part of his soul), attributing Christ's suffering primarily to his body. For Turretin, this is not a viable solution—although he does acknowledge the twofold partition of the soul (IX.xi.17)<sup>6</sup>—because he argues that Christ's whole soul is permeated with suffering, namely a sense of God's wrath.

The suffering of Christ's soul parallels the knowledge of Christ's soul as the theological substructure is the same: the nature of Christ's perfection (punctiliar or progressive), a hamartiological taxonomy (defining sinful suffering and ignorance) and the redemptive nature

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<sup>1</sup> For Turretin on the necessity of the incarnation see 3.5 above. Bellarmine notes that "*Nam opus Mediatoris praecipuum fuit passio Christi*" (II.V.II).

<sup>2</sup> Bellarmine, II.III.V; Turretin, III.xi.11. Steven J. Duby, "Atonement, Impassibility and the Communicatio Operationum," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 17, no. 3 (2015): 284-95. Cf. John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, III.26. Thomas G. Weinandy, *Does God Suffer?* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 172-213.

<sup>3</sup> Both Bellarmine (II.III.IV) and Turretin (XIII.vii.7) use this text.

<sup>4</sup> Both Bellarmine (II.III.X) and Turretin (III.viii.4) argue against the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's human nature. Cf. Elliott, "Christology in the Seventeenth Century," in *The Oxford Handbook of Christology*, 307. Elliott notes that "Bellarmine disliked the Reformed's tendency to argue that the *communicatio idiomatum* was merely verbal." However, Turretin specifies that it is indeed real with respect to the person. See also Holmes, "Reformed Varieties of the *Communicatio Idiomatum*," in *The Person of Christ*, 77; Richard Cross, *Christology and Metaphysics in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 244-48.

<sup>5</sup> For an example of a modern author who does not think this is possible see McCormack, *The Humility of the Eternal Son*.

<sup>6</sup> Turretin mentions it in the context of total depravity. For Turretin, man's soul is corrupted in both its parts.

of the incarnation (what did Christ have to be and experience to accomplish salvation?). It comes as no surprise then that these two aspects of Christology develop concomitantly. In the fourth century Arians appealed to Christ's suffering alongside his ignorance in their arguments against his divinity.<sup>7</sup> Mustering an orthodox response was no easy task. Athanasius seems to have argued that at least some of the sufferings of Christ's soul (fear and abandonment) were only apparent.<sup>8</sup> Parts of Hilary's construction "veered close to Docetism" as he taught that Christ suffered, but that His nature was not capable of pain.<sup>9</sup> However, although the sixth-century Christological consensus rejected real ignorance in Christ's soul, it affirmed its real suffering. John of Damascus taught that Christ's human soul, which was passable, suffered along with his body, even though his divinity did not suffer.<sup>10</sup> Lombard likewise affirms suffering in Christ's soul and in his flesh.<sup>11</sup> Calvin takes things a step further and, although building in some ways on antecedent ideas in Erasmus, Lefèvre and Luther, explains the gravity of Christ's sufferings in his doctrine of the *descensus* in a way that had been almost altogether unheard of previously.<sup>12</sup> His doctrine of the *descensus* gave rise to a new emphasis on the sufferings of Christ's soul among Reformed theologians.<sup>13</sup>

It is Calvin's position on the *descensus* that sets the stage for conversation between Bellarmine and Turretin on the sufferings of Christ's soul. The first section will sketch Calvin's doctrine of the *descensus*. The second section will summarize Bellarmine's argument in the

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<sup>7</sup> Moloney, "Approaches to Christ's Knowledge," 40.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>9</sup> Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 335. Cf. Carl L. Beckwith, "Suffering without Pain: The Scandal of Hilary of Poitiers' Christology," in *In the Shadow of the Incarnation: Essays on Jesus Christ in the Early Church in Honor of Brian E. Daley, S.J.*, ed. Peter W. Martens (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 71-96; E. Jerome Van Kuiken, *Christ's Humanity in Current and Ancient Controversy: Fallen or Not* (London: Bloomsbury Business, 2017), 138. For an example of an attempted defense of Hilary see Lombard, *Sententiarum libri quattuor*, III.24. Bellarmine, II.IV.VIII, notes that Hilary only barely taught pains in Christ and so finds it absurd that Calvin tries to use him to defend his position.

<sup>10</sup> *De Fide Orthodoxa*, III.26 (PG : 94, 1094).

<sup>11</sup> Lombard, *Sententiarum libri quattuor* III.XVI.2.

<sup>12</sup> Russ Leo, "Jean Calvin, Christ's Despair, and the Reformation *Descensus ad Inferos*," *Reformation* 23, no. 1 (2018): 78. Leo observes that Calvin talks about despair in Christ's soul in a way that no one else does. On the historical development of the *descensus* see also David Bagchi, "Christ's Descent into Hell in Reformation Controversy," *Studies in Church History* 45, no. 1 (2009), 228-47; Constance I. Smith, "Descendit ad Inferos-Again," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28, no. 1 (1967), 87-88.

<sup>13</sup> E.g., Thomas Goodwin, "Of Christ the Mediator," in *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*, vol. 5 (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1863), 278. "Two things were due us for our sins: 1. *Poena damni*, the loss of God's favor, and a separation from God and all good, even to a drop of water. 2. *poena sensus*, the curse and wrath of God...These two are the substance of the pains of hell, and now do both fully meet in Christ." Samuel Rutherford, *Christ Dying and Drawing Sinners to Himself or A Survey of our Saviour in his Soule-suffering, his Loveliness in his Death and the Efficacie thereof* (London: Andrew Croke, 1647), 11, 64, 141. Cf. Mark Jones, "John Calvin's Reception at the Westminster Assembly (1643-1649)," *Church History and Religious Culture* 91, no. 1 (2011): 226.

second half of *De Christi Anima* and Turretin's argument in *Quaestiones* XIII.xiv-xvi. The next four sections will moderate the interaction between Bellarmine and Turretin according to four basic questions: Did Christ's soul suffer? How did Christ suffer? What did Christ's soul suffer? Why did Christ's soul suffer? Finally, section seven will offer select concluding reflections.

#### 4.1 Calvin on the Descensus of Christ's Soul

Bellarmino calls Calvin's interpretation of the creedal phrase *descendit ad inferos* a "new and unheard-of impiety" (*nova et inaudita impietas*),<sup>14</sup> but Turretin considers it to be central to the gospel (XIII.xiv.1). For Bellarmine, contra Calvin, the *descensus* has nothing to do with suffering; it is a triumphant "victory lap" wherein Christ announces redemption to the souls of the righteous.<sup>15</sup> For Turretin, following Calvin, the *descensus* should be understood, not as the first phase of Christ's *exaltation*, but as the nadir of his *humiliation*. The *descensus* can be interpreted in this fashion only in the context of a constellation of Reformed doctrines: hamartiology (total depravity), Christology (accentuation of the distinctness of Christ's two natures) and Soteriology (penal substitutionary atonement). Calvin uses the *descensus* to describe what Christ had to feel in our stead to redeem our fallenness.

At the heart of Calvin's treatment of the *locus* is a psychological question: What exactly must Christ's soul feel?<sup>16</sup> Calvin, as Edmondson explains, finds the answer to these questions in his emphasis on Christ's real fear of punishment: "To say that Christ's descent into hell plays a vital role in our salvation is to say, for Calvin, that it was needful that Christ suffered the dread of death and that it was not inappropriate for the Son of God to suffer such dread."<sup>17</sup> Edmondson goes on to add, "if Christ's suffering were not profound, [Calvin] is arguing, the kind of suffering that arises from the fear of damnation, then we would not be saved and Christ's behavior would be inexplicable."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Evidently, Bellarmine deems this error particularly pernicious, as it numbered among the shocking heresies in the preface to his *Controversiae*; cf. Leo, "Jean Calvin, Christ's Despair, and the Reformation *Descensus ad Inferos*," 56.

<sup>15</sup> For a recent evangelical work that considers the *descensus* to be the first step in Christ's *exaltation* see: Matthew Y. Emerson, "He Descended to the Dead:" *An Evangelical Theology of Holy Saturday* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Johan Buitendag "John Calvin's Understanding of Christ's Descent into Hell" in *Restoration through Redemption: John Calvin Revisited*, ed. Henk van den Belt (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 150.

<sup>17</sup> Stephen Edmondson, *Calvin's Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 104.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

Leo suggests that, “For Calvin, human salvation hinges not only on what Jesus wills, but what Jesus feels.”<sup>19</sup> In other words, any diminishment of the reality of Christ’s experience as a man jeopardizes our salvation because it empties penal substitutionary atonement of its efficacy.<sup>20</sup> Christ could not have been, according to Calvin, the second Adam, if he could not *feel* death:

Jesus had to be a true man (*verus homo*), taking Adam’s place obeying the Father, so that he might set up our flesh as the price of satisfaction (*in satisfactionis pretium*) of God’s just judgment. He had to become man because as God he could not feel death (*mortem nec solus Deus sentire*).<sup>21</sup>

His doctrine of the *descensus* is then a rather extreme application of his doctrine of Christ’s true humanity. Christ really felt all that we should have so that we do not have to, even to the point of fearing for the salvation of his soul.<sup>22</sup> For Calvin the *descensus* is important not only theologically—in that it shows us the price Christ paid by suffering as a condemned man—but pastorally: what Christ felt, should make us feel the greatness of our salvation: “And this is our salvation: feeling properly how much our salvation cost the Son of God (*Atqui haec nostra sapientia est, probe sentire quanti constiterit Dei Filio nostra salus*).”<sup>23</sup> Christ’s soul was troubled so that our souls might know peace.

In sum, Calvin’s doctrine was unique in the way that it spoke of the proximity of Christ’s soul to real despair:

[T]he descensus, for Bellarmine as well as for Cusa, Erasmus, Lefèvre, Luther, and many others, was not merely a matter of Christ’s suffering. They all recognize *Christus patiens*, and they all emphasize Christ’s agony, albeit in diverse attempts to understand how this agony relates to his triumph and glory. Any orthodox Christian can agree that Christ suffered. At stake for all of these theologians—really, what separates them—is how close Christ can come to despair. And in Calvin’s confident interpretation, Christ comes closest.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Leo, “Jean Calvin, Christ’s Despair, and the Reformation *Descensus ad Inferos*,” 57. Leo explains later that, “Christ’s descent names the degree to which he suffered the torments of an angry God. To redeem a sinful mankind, Christ experienced the full extent of God’s wrath and vengeance. And, as the Geneva Bible gloss makes clear, Christ suffered so for mankind: ‘he feeleth himself as it were wounded with God’s wrath and forsaken for our sinnes, yet he ceaseth not to put his confidence in God and call upon him’ (Geneva Bible, 16v, note to Matt 27:46)” (71).

<sup>20</sup> Edmondson, *Calvin’s Christology*, 105. “His substitution is objectively effective in securing our salvation. On the other hand, Calvin will emphasize equally the subjective effectiveness of this aspect of Christ’s priestly work. When Christ is brought low through his experience of God’s vengeance and the dread that this generates, we are made to see the depth of Christ’s love for us in his willingness to join us in our fear, while at the same time come to recognize the great burden that he has lifted from our shoulders. In other words, when Christ takes our punishment, we are moved both by what he has taken on himself and by what he has taken from us, and thereby we are brought to entrust our lives to him.”

<sup>21</sup> Jean Calvin, *Institutio Christianae Religionis* (Geneva: Oliva Roberti Stephani, 1559), 2.12.3; 91v.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.16.12

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.16.12; 101r. .

<sup>24</sup> Leo, “Jean Calvin, Christ’s Despair, and the Reformation *Descensus ad Inferos*,” 78.

The above should not be taken to impugn Christ's perfection. In *Institutio* 2.16.8-12 Calvin labors to qualify his statements that might seem, at first glance, somewhat problematic.<sup>25</sup> His comments here are similar to those noted in his *Harmony of the Gospels* in the previous chapter. Christ's weakness should not worry us, Calvin explains, because he was not compelled by violence or necessity (*non violentia aut necessitate coactus*) to suffer but was led by pure love for us and mercy. His weakness is free from every vice, and he held himself within the limits of obedience (*intra obedientie fines cotinuit*). When Christ was suffering, the divine power of the Spirit hid itself (*occultavit divina vis spiritus*), so that he could fully have the feeling of pain and fear (*ex doloris et metus sensu*), but this in no way contended with his faith (*quae cum fide non pugnaret*), which was always intact.

That Calvin is convinced that his interpretation of the *descensus* is within the bounds of classical orthodoxy is evidenced by his mention of Apollinarianism and Monothelitism. He argues that his view, offering a correct balance between Christ's two natures, refutes both ancient heresies. This balance is seen in his interpretation of the cry of dereliction (Matt. 27:46), where he notes, "But although he was caused to suffer beyond measure, nevertheless he did not cease to call God his, by whom he himself cried out forsaken" (*Nam etsi supra modum agitur, non tamen desinit vocare Deum suum, à quo se derelictum exclamat*).<sup>26</sup> Against Apollinarianism, Calvin teaches that Christ is shown to be truly man, rather than half a man (*dimidius homo*) by his suffering. Against the Monothelites, he explains that: "We see that at this moment he did not will according to his humanity that which he was willing according to his divine nature" (*videmus ut nunc secundum hominem noluerit quod volebat secundum divinam naturam*).<sup>27</sup> Distinguishing Christ's two natures so specifically in the *descensus* is, for Calvin, exemplary of his application of classical Christology.

## 4.2 An Overview of the Arguments

Before the conversation proper can begin in section three, something needs to be said about the broader framework that houses Bellarmine's and Turretin's respective comments on the suffering of Christ's soul.

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 74-75.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Calvin's comments on Matthew 27 in *Harmonia ex Tribus Evangelistis*, 420.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 391 where Calvin views his interpretation of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane as a refutation of Monothelitism.

#### 4.2.1 Bellarmine's Argument

The second controversy (Chapters VI-XVI) in *De Christi Anima* deals with descent of Christ's soul into hell (the *descensus*). The question, seemingly presented *in primis* as two-pronged (*An et quomodo Christus ad inferos descenderit*), is rather quickly shown to be about the modality (*quomodo*) of the *descensus*, as according to Bellarmine, everyone agrees that Christ descended in some way (*aliquo modo*).<sup>28</sup> After introducing the controversy in chapter VI, Bellarmine takes up four errors: (1) the *descensus* means Christ perished (Chap. VII); (2) the *descensus* means that Christ suffered the pain of the damned (Chap. VIII); (3) the *descensus* refers to Christ's burial (Chaps. IX-XIV); and (4) the *descensus* means that Christ did not descend to hell in substance (Chap. XV). Finally, the second controversy concludes with a resolution of doubts (Chap. XVI). Although Calvin is only the primary purveyor of the second error, Bellarmine is quick to implicate him in the others.

The first error (Chap. VII) is attributed to the Lutheran Johannes Brenz, but Bellarmine seems most concerned with trapping Calvin in a contradiction. Although he (rather reluctantly) admits that Calvin clearly teaches the immortality of the soul, he finds Calvin's articulation of the same problematic in his *Pyschopannychia*.<sup>29</sup>

The second error (chapter VIII) will be the primary source for the discussion that follows, as it contains the most relevant material on the suffering of Christ's soul.<sup>30</sup> Bellarmine's positive teaching on the Christ's suffering is intertwined with extended critiques of Calvin. He begins by presenting what he takes to be Calvin's four most problematic arguments, then offers six lines of refutation before dealing with seven of the main sources Calvin's main sources (specific texts of Scripture and then Hilary).

The third error (Chap. IX) is taught by Beza and Bucer, but even here Bellarmine cannot resist including Calvin, because Calvin also connects hell with the grave. The response to the third error requires three chapters, as it is here that Bellarmine presents his positive argument on the *descensus*. Each chapter covers a fundamental building block of the doctrine: "Hell is a Subterranean Place distinct from the Grave" (Chap. X); "The Souls of the Godly were not in Heaven before Christ's Ascension" (Chap. XI); "That Christ truly Descended into Hell is

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<sup>28</sup> His surety of the catholicity of some form of *descensus* rests on the frequency of its teaching in Scripture of which he provides two examples: Acts 2:27 and Ephesians 4:9. To these two texts is added what is in many ways the real source material for the controversy, the relevant article in the Apostle's Creed: *Descendit ad inferos*.

<sup>29</sup> Jean Calvin, *Psychopannychia* (Strasbourg: Wendelinus Rihelius, 1545), 14.

<sup>30</sup> As Bellarmine does not include subsections within the chapter, in the sections that follows it should be assumed that citations from Bellarmine come from this chapter unless otherwise noted.



Shown from the Scriptures” (Chap. XII). The section concludes with an exposition of the obscure texts in 1 Peter 3 and 4 (Chap. XIII) and with an impressive catalogue of patristic evidence (Chap. XIV).

The fourth error (Chap. XV) is attributed to the French Dominican, Durandus of Saint-Pourçain (d. 1332/1334) in his commentary on the Sentences. Although he grants there is much difference between Calvin and Durandus on the question (he lists five differences), Bellarmine is still compelled to draw Calvin into the conversation. The problem with Calvin’s position in this regard is that he taught that the soul of Christ descended to the holy Fathers *per efficaciam non per essentiam*.

#### 4.2.2 Turretin’s Argument

Turretin develops his argument over the span of three *quaestiones* (XIV-XVI). He deals most directly with Bellarmine’s arguments in *Quaestio XIV* where he most fully elucidates the nature of the suffering of Christ’s soul. *Quaestiones XV* and *XVI* both deal with the *descensus*. *Quaestio XV* refutes a local descent to hell (the position of the Lutheran and the Papists) and argues that Christ’s soul was translated immediately to paradise after death. *Quaestio XVI* argues that the *descensus* is rightly taken to refer to the sufferings of his soul and is complimentary to “*et sepultus*” in the Creed as both describe the height of his humiliation.

*Quaestio XIV* follows the standard formula. In the introductory paragraph he stresses the importance of the *locus*. Christ’s sufferings are the most important part of our ransom (*Passio Christi potissima est pars λύτρου*), the primary object of our faith, and theme of our mediation. Christ’s suffering must be diligently protected because, “Satan more impotently rages to obscure the truths of those sufferings and deprive us of their saving fruit” (XIII.xiv.1). He then defines his position and that of the papists (2-3), provides four *rationes* for his position (4-7) and finally, turns to the *fontes solutionum*, where he deals with possible objections.

*Quaestio XV* argues against the papal position (and that of some Lutherans) that Christ descended into hell in order to declare his victory (XIII.xv.1-4). There are three strands to his principal argument (5-8): (1) his soul left his body and immediately went to paradise (Luke 23:43); (2) The soul of Christ was at the right hand of the father; (3) the views which speak of a local descent are inadequate because the Scriptures connect it to his humiliation. He then deals with texts which are typically used to defend the view that he critiques, such as Ephesians 4:9, Acts 2:27 and 1 Peter 3:19 (9-14).

*Quaestio XVI* provides the constructive argument for his position. He recognizes that, while some of the “orthodox” view the *descensus* as spiritual anguish, following Calvin others

maintain it refers to his burial (e.g., Zanchius). After dealing with the origin of the article in the creed (XIII.xvi.2) he deals with the words *sheol* and *hades* (3). He then interacts with both positions and affirms that they are complimentary (4-8). He ends the sections by describing how to explain Christ's suffering in light of the question of the beatific vision (9-11).

### 4.3 Did Christ's soul suffer?

Was Christ's suffering corporeal, psychological or both? Bellarmine's eagerness to rebut Calvin's doctrine of the *descensus*, leads him to emphasize Christ's bodily suffering almost to the exclusion of that of his soul.<sup>31</sup> Though he will acknowledge suffering in the lower part of Christ's soul, he argues that the Scriptures attribute our entire salvation to Christ's blood and bodily death. Turretin's emphasis is the opposite: he has a great deal more to say about Christ's psychological sufferings. Although, he is careful to avoid undermining the scriptural accent on Christ's corporal suffering. Turretin understands Bellarmine's formulation as an attempt to defend the perfect blessedness of Christ's soul in his humiliation (*de perfecta beatitudine animae Christi in toto Exinanitionis statu*). He sees the papists as protecting the *visio beatifica* in Christ on three levels: (1) They argue that Christ suffered in body, not in soul. (2) If pressed they will admit that Christ suffered in soul, but only in his lower, sensitive soul and not in his higher, rational soul. (3) If he did indeed suffer in his higher, rational soul it was only by proximity and sympathetically (XIII.xiv.3). This progression seems to be a fair reading of the Roman Catholic position as articulated by Bellarmine, who, as seen, turns to suffering in Christ's soul only secondarily. However, Bellarmine does not specifically acknowledge Turretin's third point (3), and so it is likely a critique aimed at Aquinas.<sup>32</sup>

Again, Bellarmine's insistence on the primacy of bodily suffering is conveyed in contrast to Calvin. He rightly establishes that, according to Calvin, the movement in the *descensus* is psychological (or metaphorical) rather than spatial.<sup>33</sup> Though Bellarmine surely misreads Calvin when he implies that he does not recognize *any* corporal suffering in Christ based on his teaching of the suffering of the wicked. Bellarmine interprets Calvin (*Institutio* 3.25.12 and *Pyschopannychia*) to mean that the pain of damnation is *only* the terror and anguish

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<sup>31</sup> Bellarmine, *De septem Verbis Domini in cruce prolatis* in *Opera Omnia*, VII:543. Bellarmine speaks of Christ's soul as having impassibility which it could have transmitted to his body on the cross (but did not): "*Potuit denique anima Christi beata transmittere ad corpus donum impassibilitatis et incorruptionis.*"

<sup>32</sup> Aquinas, *ST*, III.46.7.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Constance I. Smith, "Descendit ad inferos—Again," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28, no. 1 (1967): "The Protestant theologians, Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin, also took the mystical view that hell was to be explained metaphorically as the absence of the divine, and that the *descensus* meant Christ's spiritual and physical anguish when he felt himself to be forsaken by God."

of a conscience provoked by the knowledge of God's anger and hostility. Calvin does teach that there is no subterranean place for the wicked, no purgatory and no *limbo patrum* (*Institutio*, 2.16.9). He also teaches the centrality of the torment of the conscience in suffering of the damned. Nonetheless, Calvin clearly affirms the bodily resurrection of the damned and so cannot be said to deny their bodily torment.<sup>34</sup> In another place, Bellarmine explicitly claims that Calvin teaches that Christ did nothing by his bodily death (*corporali morte nihil egisse*). Bellarmine here misconstrues Calvin's teaching. He does not deny the importance of Christ's bodily suffering but considers his soul suffering to be of even more importance. This is plain when he comments on the article on the descensus saying that it is included, "so that we might know not only the way the body of Christ was given as the price of our redemption (*in pretium redemptionis*), but there is another greater and more excellent price that is, he bore in his soul the terrible torments of a damned and lost man."<sup>35</sup> This is why Calvin can assert that bodily death is not sufficient to save. "It was done for no purpose, if Christ died only a bodily death," rather Christ had to "feel the severity of divine judgement."<sup>36</sup> Whereas, the insufficiency of bodily suffering is odious to Bellarmine, Turretin will follow Calvin arguing in identical fashion (III.xiv.5).

Further along in his argument, Bellarmine gives attention to a group of texts that confirm his original thesis that our entire salvation is attributed to Jesus' body and blood (and not to suffering in hell). The first text talks about this death in general: "*Christus pro nobis mortuus est*" (Romani 5:9), whereas the rest highlight Christ's blood, for example: "*In quo habemus redemptionem per sanguinem ejus*" (Ephesians 1:7).<sup>37</sup> Turretin is aware that the Scriptures speak predominately of Christ's bodily suffering, but he argues that this must be understood synecdochally, not as a diminishment or a denial of internal, spiritual suffering.<sup>38</sup> He uses Isaiah 53:10 and John 10:15 to show that the Scriptures teach that Christ laid down his soul in addition to his body. Turretin does no more than list these two references, but they are

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<sup>34</sup> Calvin, *Institutio*, 3.25.9.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.16.10, 100r.

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

<sup>37</sup> He also lists Colossians 1:20, Hebrews 9:12, 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 1 John 1:7 and Revelation 5:9.

<sup>38</sup> Turretin also deals with the question of the prefiguring of Christ's spiritual sufferings in the typological sacrifices under the old covenant. Although it might be the case that such sacrifices did not point directly to the sufferings of Christ's soul, it is possible that they do so. Fire, which is a symbol of divine wrath, could be taken as a type of Christ's sense of divine wrath in his soul. Further, it is best to see the blood of the sacrifices to be a symbol of the soul. Turretin also finds a feasible type in David who suffered not only externally, but internally (Psalm 22, 69). For Turretin, when Christ's sacrifice is called "the offering of his body" (Heb. 10:10), the design is not to reject spiritual suffering, but rather to contrast Christ's suffering with those repeated under the law of Moses.

exegetically significant to his argument. Isaiah 53:10 talks about Christ's giving of his soul (שׁוֹרֵף) as a guilt offering, which the Vulgate translates "*si posuerit pro peccato animam suam.*" Similarly, the Vulgate translates ψυχή in John 10:15 as follows: "*animam meam pono pro ovibus.*"

Finally, Bellarmine delivers what appears to be the weakest argument, especially when it is considered without the sacramental system that it presupposes: Christ's suffering in hell is absent in the sacramental system and in iconography. He assumes that, if it really happened, the church must have a specific sacrament. Bellarmine argues that either it is all a figment of Calvin's imagination or that the church is ungrateful (*Ergo Ecclesia vel sepre fuit ingrattissima, vel figmenta sunt quae docet Calvinus*). Turretin, without mentioning Bellarmine by name, interacts directly with the question of sacramental support for Christ's interior suffering. Turretin responds by pointing to the synecdochical nature of the sacraments: they represent a part in which the whole is contemplated. For Turretin, the whole always includes the curse. Calvin likely would have responded in similar fashion as he connects the sacrament in the Lord's supper with Christ's bearing our curse.<sup>39</sup>

#### 4.4 How did Christ's soul suffer?

It has been established that both recognize—albeit in different ways or to different extents—that Christ suffered in his soul. But how was this possible? Both will respond by employing a scholastic distinction: Bellarmine uses the distinction between the upper and lower part of the soul and Turretin uses the distinction between the *affectio commodi* and *affectio iustitiae*

Bellarmino argues that Christ feared because he wanted to, for if he was unable to keep himself from feeling fear he would have been inferior to and weaker than other men. Thus, his critique of Calvin is not that Calvin says Christ suffered and feared, but the way he goes about explaining it. Bellarmine's emphasis on the role of Christ's volition in his suffering is his way of protecting his impeccability. It is in this context that he turns to the scholastic distinction of the upper and lower part of the soul:

But Christ, so that redemption might be abundant, also wanted to undergo the pain of grief and fear, and therefore he did not numb his sensation (*sensum suum*), nor did he allow joy from the higher part to overflow into the lower part, nor did he avert his thinking from imminent death, but was able to deliberately set his mind on all the impending torments (II.IV.VIII).

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<sup>39</sup> Calvin, *Institutio*, 4.17.4.

A similar version of Bellarmine's use of the distinction between the two parts of the soul is found in Lombard. He distinguishes between the affection of the soul according to reason and the affection of the soul according to sensuality (*et alius est affectus animae secundum rationem, alius secundum sensualitatem*).<sup>40</sup> Speaking of Christ's prayer in Gethsemane, Lombard explains that Christ desired in two different ways: "But according to the affection of reason he wanted that which was according to the divine will, that is, to suffer and to die; but according to the affection of sensuality he did not want, indeed he was fleeing."<sup>41</sup> However, although he does not appeal to him explicitly, it seems that Bellarmine is following Aquinas,<sup>42</sup> who argues along similar lines. Bellarmine's description of the way that Christ's blessedness was kept in the upper part of his soul closely mirrors Aquinas.<sup>43</sup>

As Bellarmine follows Aquinas (at least up to a certain point) and as key elements of Turretin's criticism seems to be levelled against Aquinas, a brief exposition of Aquinas' position will prove useful. In the *Prima Pars* Aquinas distinguishes between the *appetitus sensitivus* which is a natural inclination and the *appetitus intellectivus*, which is a superior inclination.<sup>44</sup> These appetites operate in the soul and are distinguishable.<sup>45</sup> He then applies this same division in the *Tertia Pars* when he deals with the passion of Christ's soul. Christ's soul was passible because it was connected to his body which was passible.<sup>46</sup> However, passions in Christ were different from our passions:

He begins his analysis by stating that Christ's passions were in him 'otherwise than us' in three ways: 1) regarding their object: they did not tend toward what is unlawful, 2) regarding their principle: they did not forestall the judgement of reason, and 3) regarding their effect: they remained in the sensitive appetite.<sup>47</sup>

Christ's anguish in Gethsemane (Mt. 26:37) is not *passio* but *propassio* because a perfected *passio* dominates the soul so as to impact reason. A *propassio* begins in the *appetitus sensitivus* but extends itself no further.<sup>48</sup> For Aquinas, Christ could indeed suffer for two reasons. First,

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<sup>40</sup> Lombard, *Sententiarum libri quattuor* III, d. 17, c. 2.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., III, d. 17, c. 2. "*Affectu autem rationis id volebat quod voluntate divina, scilicet pati et mori; sed affectu sensualitatis non volebat, immo refugiebat.*"

<sup>42</sup> Aquinas first talks about this distinction in *ST*, I.77-79.

<sup>43</sup> Aquinas, *ST*, III.5.5. "*Et, eadem ratione, delectatio contemplationis sic continebatur in mente quod non derivabatur ad vires sensibiles, ut per hoc dolor sensibilis excluderetur.*"

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., I.80.1.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., I.80.2.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., III.15.4.

<sup>47</sup> Stewart Clem, "The Passions of Christ in the Moral Theology of Thomas Aquinas: An Integrative Account: The Passions of Christ in the Moral Theology of Thomas Aquinas," *New Blackfriars* 99, no. 1082 (2018): 474.

<sup>48</sup> Aquinas, *ST*, III.15.4: "*ut passio perfecta intelligentur quando animo, idest rationi, dominatur; propassio autem, quando est inchoata in appetitu sensitivo, sed ulterius non se extendi.*"

because his *beatitudo* was contained in his soul, not reaching his body, he could suffer bodily. Second, He could suffer sensible pain (*dolor sensibilis*) in his soul because the delight of his contemplation (*delectatio contemplationis*) was relegated to his mind not reaching his sensitive powers (*vires sensibiles*).<sup>49</sup> Aquinas explains Christ's sadness (*tristitia*) along the same lines.<sup>50</sup> Bellarmine explicitly follows Aquinas up to this point. Turretin's uneasiness with Aquinas' application of the twofold distinction of the soul to Christ's is that it nullifies Christ's suffering. However, Aquinas is not consciously tempering Christ's anguish for he claims it was the greatest ever experienced. Aquinas considers Christ's pain in four ways: the cause of the pain, the perception of the sufferer, the purity of the pain, and the voluntary nature of Christ's suffering. These four reasons lead him to conclude that Christ's suffering was the greatest (*dolor Christi fuit maximus*).<sup>51</sup>

Having established the intensity of Christ's suffering, Aquinas asks if Christ suffered in his whole soul.<sup>52</sup> While Bellarmine does not explicitly affirm as much, Aquinas' initial response is that Christ did indeed suffer in his whole soul (*Christus secundum totam animam passus est*). However, a faculty of the soul (*potentia animae*) can suffer in two ways. First, it can suffer by its own proper passion, such as when sight suffers from an excess in what is visible (*superabundantia visibilis*). Second, it can suffer by a passion of the subject on which it is founded, like when sight suffers when the sense of touch suffers in the eye, for example when the eye is pricked or affected by fire. In this second sense, according to the essence of soul, it is evident that Christ suffered in his whole soul, because the soul's whole essence is united to the body. However, in the first sense (the suffering of a faculty according to its own proper passion) it must be said that Christ only suffered according to all the lower faculties (*secundum omnes vires inferiores*). Turretin finds this last line of argumentation particularly unconvincing, and he seems to have it in mind when noting that some of his adversaries admit that Christ did suffer in the higher part of the soul, but only by way of its communion with the body (*propter communionem animae cum corpore*, XIII.xiv.3). Turretin deems this to be insufficient as it would mean that the rational part of his soul did not suffer properly in itself from a sense of God's wrath (*non passum esse proprie et in se ex sensu israel Dei*) but only secondarily. For Turretin, this results in a massive soteriological lacuna.

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., III.15.5.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., III.15.6.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., III.46.6. For more on Aquinas' explanation on the nature of Christ's suffering see: Michael Gorman, "Incarnation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. Brian Davies (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2012), 428-35.

<sup>52</sup> Aquinas, *ST*, III.46.7.

Aquinas, arguing in more explicit fashion than Bellarmine, does deal directly with the relationship between Christ's suffering and his beatific vision. He asks if Christ enjoyed blessed fruition (*fruitione beata*) during his passion.<sup>53</sup> He answers that Christ did enjoy the blessed fruition in the higher part of his soul, but not in his lower part. While Christ was *viator* there was a hard line of separation between his higher and lower soul. His blessedness did not spill over into the sensible part of his soul and his suffering did not rise to the higher part of his soul.<sup>54</sup> Christ's suffering does not pose a problem to Aquinas' understanding of the beatific vision in Christ, it only means that in Christ "it did not have its normal heavenly effects in the sensory appetite and body."<sup>55</sup> As was mentioned above, Turretin does seem to acknowledge the bipartite understanding of the soul; its different faculties of the soul can be distinguished. He does not, however, accept their compartmentalization. Turretin will accept nothing less than the entirety of Christ's humanity as authentic *viator*: body and both parts of the soul.

Turretin argues that the Scriptures speak about the sufferings of Christ's soul in such a way that they must be understood to include both parts of his soul. He certainly does not argue that the Scriptures speak specifically to the scholastic distinction between the higher and lower part of the soul. He argues, rather, from the extent of Christ's sufferings as described by the Scriptures. Christ's soul was troubled (Jn. 12:27) and exceedingly sorrowful to the point of being overwhelmed (Mt. 26:38). He mentions *en passant* that the soul is impartible and indivisible such that when one quality of the soul is affected, all are. The true weight of this sadness (*gravitas vero istius tristitiae*) is confirmed by various passages. He highlights three Greek words: *ταράσσω* (John 12:27), *ἀδημονέω* (Matt 26:37) and *ἐκθαμβέω* (Mark 14:33). To these three words he adds Luke 22:44, which he interprets to mean the intensity of Christ's anguish caused him to sweat blood. Turretin then describes his suffering as dejection and perturbation, that horror and exceeding fear (*dejectio* and *perturbatio, horror ille et pavor ingens*). Turretin considers it to be inconceivable that this sort of suffering could be limited to his body or to the lower part of his soul because to do so would be to make Christ inferior to martyrs who suffered bodily death and dreadful torments in their soul. Although, this is not his

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., III.46.8.

<sup>54</sup> Joel R. Gallagher, "The Gethsemane Event according to Thomas Aquinas," *Angelicum* 94, no. 4 (2017): 686. "When he examined Christ's passions, Aquinas argued that Christ obstructed the 'communication' from the lower part of his soul to his higher part to prevent his passions from infecting his reason. This scheme is similar to the one which allowed Christ to experience the joy of the beatific vision throughout his entire life and simultaneously the extreme suffering of his body and soul at various points in his life. Aquinas claims a requisite, special divine dispensation which holes up the beatific joy in Christ's intellectual appetite and in the higher part of his soul."

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Simon Francis Gaine, *Did the Saviour See the Father?: Christ, Salvation, and the Vision of God* (New York: T&T Clark, 2018), 190.

most convincing point, it seems to be a rebuttal of Bellarmine's emphasis on the body and only a part of the soul.

Turretin's handling of the cry of dereliction is important because it begets some of his most nuanced explanation of the sufferings of Christ's soul. Turretin elucidates his points in three waves of nuance, each consisting of both negative and positive argumentation. The first wave clarifies that this *desertio* was not absolute, total or eternal. It was unlike the *desertio* experienced by demons and the reprobate. Christ's *desertio* was temporary and relative (*secundum quid*).<sup>56</sup> These distinctions are responses to Bellarmine's attempt to blur Calvin's distinction between the way that Christ and the reprobate suffer the pains of hell.

In the second wave, Turretin marshals a string of negative qualifiers. The *desertio* is not conceived in terms of the union of the natures (*unio naturae*), because once united they are never separated. Neither is it by reason of the union of grace and holiness (*unio gratiae et sanctitatis*) because Christ is ever endowed with perfect holiness. Nor was it, finally, a question of his communion or protection, as the Father was always with him (John 16:32).<sup>57</sup> It was instead a question of Christ's participation of joy and happiness (*participatio gaudii et felicitatis*). God suspended the favorable presence of grace and the influx of his consolation for a time (*tantisper*) so that Christ could suffer all the punishment due to us (*ut posset pati poenas omnes nobis debitas*). This entails a withdrawal of the vision (*subductionem visionis*), not a dissolution of the union.<sup>58</sup> It was a want (*carentia*) of the sense of divine love, which was intercepted by a sense of divine wrath and vengeance pressing upon him, not a real privation or extinction of divine love. As the second wave of nuance makes clear, Christ's suffering had to include the *sensus* of divine judgment, which is impossible if there is no way to speak about an interruption in his *sensus* of divine love. Turretin grounds his argument in what Christ subjectively feels (*sensus*)—a lack of love—without undermining the objective reality of the love of the Father for the Son through the Spirit.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Turretin uses the same argument in XIII.12.3 where he is talking about the correct way to understand the plentitude of the grace and gifts bestowed on Christ.

<sup>57</sup> He uses this verse to explain that there is a contrast between the disciple's abandonment of Jesus and the Father's continued presence with him.

<sup>58</sup> It is noteworthy that Turretin is willing to speak of *visio* despite his disdain for Bellarmine's doctrine of the *visio beatifica* in Christ's humanity.

<sup>59</sup> Spanheim, *Disputationum theologiarum miscellanearum pars prima*, 274. Speaking of the way that the passions in Christ's soul can be distinguished, Spanheim explains "*quae considerari possunt partim privative in suspensione antecedente vel influxus non sanctitatis, sed felicitatis, vel potius sensus illius, quae per derelictionem describitur, Matth. 27.46. partim positive in subsequentibus ejus effectibus, tristitia, pauore, ex anticipationem cruciatuum perferendorum, ademonia (Gk.), Matth. 27.37 et in sensu alienationis et irae Dei.*"



The third and final wave of nuance relies on a scholastic distinction between the two affections of the will: the affection of advantage (*affectio commodi*) and the affection of justice (*affectio iustitiae*).<sup>60</sup> Turretin, it would seem, follows the Scholastics by way of Maresius who also invokes this distinction in an identical context.<sup>61</sup> Before referencing the cry of dereliction in Matthew 27:46, Maresius explains:

(Christ) entered natural death, which was separation from God, as to the “affection of advantage,” being destitute of his present consolation, but not as to the “affection of justice” because nothing disordered fell upon him, but on account of the sense of divine wrath against our sin, which he was suffering.<sup>62</sup>

The distinction is Anselm’s formulation, which was a reworking of Augustine’s doctrine of the will.<sup>63</sup> The same distinction is also found in Duns Scotus, but it seems he uses the Anselmian version to develop his own arguments on the nature of the will.<sup>64</sup> Anselm explains that the word “will” is used equivocally in three different senses: “One as the tool of the will’s action, another as the affectivity of the tool, and yet another as the using of the tool.”<sup>65</sup> In speaking of the affectivity of the tool, that is, what disposes the tool, he explains “...the tool for willing has two abilities which I term affectivities: one is for willing what is advantageous, the second for willing what is right (*Quarum una est ad volentum commoditatem, altera ad volentum rectitudinem*).”<sup>66</sup> He goes on to explain that, “Indeed when disposed to their own advantage, people always will their gratification and state of happiness. Whereas when disposed to will uprightness, they will their uprightness and a state of uprightness or justice.”<sup>67</sup>

Pizzo explains the *affectio commodi* this way: “It is therefore happiness or *beatitudo*, which man pursues through this tendency towards what is useful, that brings him to conserve life and health, both of which he considers to be advantageous (convenient).”<sup>68</sup> The goal of the

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<sup>60</sup> Turretin introduces it this way: “*Et ut loquuntur Scholastici.*” In XIII.iii.3 he lists some of the “Old Scholastics:” Alexander of Hales, Occam and Bonaventure.

<sup>61</sup> Turretin, “Turretin’s Preface to the Reader,” xxxix. Maresius’ Decades served as the original basis for Turretin’s notes which later became his *Institutio*.

<sup>62</sup> Maresius, *Collegium Theologicum*, 190. My translation.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Anthony Celano, “Reasons and Actions,” in *The Routledge Companion to Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Richard Cross and JT Paasch (New York: Routledge, 2021), 336-44.

<sup>64</sup> Douglas Langston, “Did Scotus Embrace Anselm’s Notion of Freedom?,” *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5, no. 2 (1996), 145-49. Cruz González-Ayesta, “Duns Scotus on the Natural Will,” *Vivarium* 50, no. 1 (2012): 33-52. Giovanni Pizzo, “La giustizia nella dottrina della volontà di Giovanni Duns Scoto,” *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica* 81, no. 1 (1989): 7-26.

<sup>65</sup> Anselm, “De Concordia,” in *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works, Oxford World Classics*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3.11, p. 467.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.11, p. 468.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.11, pp. 468-69.

<sup>68</sup> Pizzo, “La giustizia nella dottrina della volontà di Giovanni Duns Scoto,” 6. My translation.

*affectio iustitiae* is not happiness, but rather rectitude or justice. Pizzo further explains that, for Anselm, the two affections have a different relationship to the will:

Beyond the different aim toward which they incline the will, the two affections are distinguished in other ways. The *affectio commodi* (la affezione all'utile) is inseparable from the nature of the will, while the *affectio iustitiae* (quella alla rettitudine) can be separated from it. Further, while the former identifies itself with the object desired, the latter is itself just.<sup>69</sup>

Turretin leverages the distinction between the *affectio commodi* and the *affectio iustitiae* to protect the real suffering of Christ's whole soul and at the same time protect him from any disordered desire (*quia nihil propterea sensit in se inordinati*). His *desertio* must be understood as to the *affectio commodi* because his sense of God's paternal love and the beatific vision of his countenance was temporarily interrupted. The *desertio* is not to be conceived as to the *affectio iustitiae* because he never felt anything inordinate which would tend toward desperation, impatience and blasphemy against God. It is tempting, *prima facie*, to conclude that Turretin's distinction between the two types of affection in the soul is no different from Bellarmine's distinction between the higher and lower parts of the soul.<sup>70</sup> While there is undeniable overlap in the two distinctions (e.g., both protect from disordered passions), there seems to be a crucial difference. Bellarmine's distinction allows for the experience of joy to exist in one part of Christ's soul concomitantly with the experience of suffering in another part of his soul.<sup>71</sup> Conversely, Turretin uses his distinction to teach that, when Christ uttered the cry of dereliction, there was a real lack of the sense of divine favor and, in its place, there was the sense of divine wrath.<sup>72</sup>

The *descensus*, according to Bellarmine, was painless. Exaltation rather than humiliation. However, Bellarmine does affirm real suffering in Christ's soul: the pain of grief and fear (*poenam moeroris et timoris*), which includes a certain suffering in his intellectual faculties: cognition (*cogitatio*) of impending death and a mind (*mens*) fixed on imminent torture.<sup>73</sup> But Bellarmine is vehemently opposed to the idea of *desperatio* in Christ, which he finds in Calvin's teaching. Turretin is (unsurprisingly) quick to come to Calvin's defense and is ready to speak of Christ's suffering as "hellish" rightly defined. However, it seems that he

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid. My translation.

<sup>70</sup> Spencer, "Reformed Scholasticism in Medieval Perspective," 244.

<sup>71</sup> Bellarmine, *De septem Verbis Domini in cruce prolatis* in *Opera Omnia*, VIII:543. He says of the cry of dereliction: "*Quarta unio disrumpi non potuerat, quia beatitudo animae amitti non potest, cum omnium honorum aggregationem complectatur. Erat autem Christi anima secundum partem superiorem vere beata.*"

<sup>72</sup> Turretin reiterates this point several different ways in *De Satisfactione Christi* in Turretin, *Opera*, 4:546-48. He also uses this distinction between *affectio commodi* and *affectio iustitiae* (548).

<sup>73</sup> On Bellarmine's positive teaching on Christ's suffering see: Alácsi, "Christological Thought," 235.

subtly distances himself from some of the particulars of Calvin's articulation and employs significant caveats that are absent or articulated differently in Calvin.

For Bellarmine, Calvin's problem is that he sends Christ to hell, not as victor the way the Fathers do, but as one who is guilty (*Christum non victorem, sed reum ad inferos demittit*). Bellarmine summarizes Calvin as follows: Christ descended when (1) "he apprehended God as angry toward himself and incensed for us" (*apprehendit Deum tanquam sibi iratum, & infensum propter nos*) and (2) "from dread of losing his own salvation, he suffered incredible anguish of soul, of the sort that is suffered by the one who knows that he is to perish eternally" (*ex metu salutis propria amittendae, incredibilem anxietatem, animi passus est, qualem pateretur, qui sciret se in aeternum esse periturum*). Bellarmine rightly explains that Calvin teaches that Christ produced words of despair (*verba desperationis...protulisse*) and said that "he bore in his soul the terrible torments of a damned and lost man" (*diros in anima cruciatus damnati ac perditii hominis pertulerit*).<sup>74</sup> Bellarmine does not accept the distinction between despair and words of despair. Words of despair are sinful because if they were deliberate, they were indicative of actual despair and sin. If they were not deliberate, then they were disordered passions in Christ.

Calvin is, as Bellarmine points out, aware of the accusations against his position. In *Institutio* 2.16.12 Calvin protests that some accuse him of doing frightful injury to Christ (*clamitant me atrocem facere Christum iniuriam*) because it was not the least fitting for him to fear for the salvation of his soul (*de animae salute timere*). Still worse Calvin says he is accused of attributing desperation to the Son of God, which is not compatible with faith (*me desperatione adscribere Filio Dei, quae fidei contraria sit*).<sup>75</sup> It seems that the only part of the accusation that Calvin denies outright is the incompatibility of his claims with Christ's faith. He argues that there was never a disordered fear that was bereft of faith in Christ, a teaching he locates in the inclusion of the phrase "my God, my God" in the cry of dereliction.<sup>76</sup> Nonetheless, it seems undeniable that Calvin "does affirm, without apology, that Christ fears for the salvation of his soul."<sup>77</sup>

Turretin comes to Calvin's defense with strong language, noting that those who accuse him of attributing the *desperatio* of the damned to Christ—the way Bellarmine does—are

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<sup>74</sup> Calvin, *Institutio*, 2.16.10, 100r.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.16.12, 101v.

<sup>76</sup> Calvin, *Commentarii in Librum Psalmorum* (1557), 95. In his commentary on Psalm 22 Calvin says of the phrase, "my God, my God" that faith dictates a correction (*correctionem dictavit fides*) to balance that which comes after: "why have you forsaken me;" cf. Ross, *Jean Calvin, Christ's Despair*, 73.

<sup>77</sup> Leo Ross, "Jean Calvin, Christ's Despair," 73.

guilty of an atrocious calumny. Turretin finds convincing the very things Bellarmine finds inadequate, noting that Calvin does not speak of *desperatio* but *desperationis vocem* and that he balances his statements by an appeal to his faith. Turretin tries to show the Bellarmine's reading of Calvin is unfair, by making an appeal to Maldonatus, who says something similar.<sup>78</sup> Maldonatus (Juan De Maldonado, 1534-1583) was a Jesuit who helped shape modern theology and exegesis.<sup>79</sup> His *Commentarii In Quatvor Evangelistas* was important and Turretin was not the only protestant to make use of it.<sup>80</sup> Although Maldonatus specifically distances himself from Calvin's interpretation, he summarizes his own position this way:

Thus, although He was God, He prayed as a mere man. Like a mere man He complained that He was deserted by God. Not that He thought Himself so, for He soon after commended His spirit into His hands, but that He felt Himself suffering as if He had been. Hence He cried out like a man deserted by God, "My God, My God," to express the person of a man suffering the most extreme punishment and deserted by God.<sup>81</sup>

Bellarmino reads Calvin to teach that Christ experienced the actual suffering of the damned.<sup>82</sup> Bellarmine defines the pain of damnation as essentially including desperation of salvation, just as true happiness includes the certainty of salvation. This means that, even though Calvin tries to guard against it, hope cannot stand with desperation (*spes autem cum desperation consistere non potest*).<sup>83</sup> If Christ did taste the pains of hell, he despaired and so cannot liberate us (*non vere nos liberavit*).

Turretin's response indicates that he is leery of leaving himself open to the critiques used against Calvin. He explicitly affirms that Christ did not feel the *desperatio* of the damned because it is not a part of the *essentia poenae* inflicted by the judge. It is rather an evitable *vitio* in the subject that suffers before the prospect of eternal inescapable torment. This *desperatio* was completely alien (*alienissima*) to Christ because he was certain of the happy resolution of his suffering and his own destiny. At the center of *essentia poenae* is found, for Turretin, the sense of God's wrath. He notes that, "The cry of dereliction arose from the gravest sense of the wrath of God pressing upon him on account of our sins" (*ex sensu gravissimo irae Dei illi*

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<sup>78</sup> Turretin also mentions Ferus and Cusanus.

<sup>79</sup> "Maldonat, Jean," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* (Paris: Letouzey et Anê, 1927), 9:1772-1776.

<sup>80</sup> Owen, *Pneumatologia*, 401.

<sup>81</sup> John Maldonatus, *A Commentary on the Holy Gospels*, trans. George J. Davie, vol. 2 (London: The Aberdeen University Press, 1888), 554. For the latin see: John Maldonatus, *In Quatuor Evangelistas Commentarii*, vol. 1 (Mussiponti: Stephani, 1596).

<sup>82</sup> *Institutio*, 2.16.10.

<sup>83</sup> Similarly, Bellarmine draws from various sections of book three of *Institutio* (3.2.16; 3.2.17; 3.2.18) to show that Calvin acknowledges the sinfulness of doubt. If Christ doubts his own salvation, he must at the very least have had imperfect faith (*tribuere fidem imperfectam*).

*incumbentis propter peccata nostra*). Christ became a curse for us (Gal. 3:13).<sup>84</sup> Christ endured the whole curse, which must include the whole soul, because it is the soul that is affected by divine wrath. Suffering absent of the sense of divine wrath would not qualify as being under the divine curse. He notes that not a few of the papists acknowledge as much, again mentioning Maldonatus.

Maldonatus' treatment of the phrase ἤρξατο λυπεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν in Matthew 26:37 begins with a brief survey of interpretation. He notes that some have spoken of Christ's suffering as *propassio* instead of *passio*, but he does not embrace this position. He summarizes his position in ways directly relevant to what Turretin is arguing:

It has been disputed with much subtlety in the schools how it was that Christ, when He was in happiness, had sorrow. Some have answered that He had happiness only in the higher part of His soul, but His body had it not yet, that He might suffer. Beatitude had not yet effused itself into it, but sorrow was in His lower part, which is in the body. But Christ affirmed that His soul was sorrowful even unto death, by which He showed that sorrow possessed His entire soul; and soon after He said: 'Not as will, but as Thou wilt' ; and more plainly in S. Luke: 'Not My will, but Thine be done'. By this He shows that even in His will, which is the higher point of His soul, He was sorrowful, and shrank from death.<sup>85</sup>

Maldonatus goes on to affirm something that is quite similar to Turretin's position. He explicitly affirms that suffering reaches the superior part of his soul. However, he still leaves space for beatitude to be there at the same time as his suffering (something Turretin seems unwilling to grant):

It is better defined that, even when in happiness, it was ordered by some dispensation that Christ should admit sorrow even into the higher part of His soul; for as He could restrain His beatitude from flowing down into His body, that He might be able to suffer; so He could press it down, and, in a manner, conceal it, that He might yield for a time to sorrows which was one future part of His Passion.<sup>86</sup>

Turretin's use of Maldonatus is strategic.<sup>87</sup> It permits him to show that Roman Catholics who are more exegetically minded have arrived at similar conclusions. However, he does not invoke

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<sup>84</sup> For Tertullian and Ambrose on Gal. 3:13 whose views differ from that of Turretin see Van Kuiken, *Christ's Humanity in Current and Ancient Controversy: Fallen or Not*, 124, 40-41.

<sup>85</sup> Maldonatus, *A Commentary on the Holy Gospels*, 446.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Beach, "Francis Turretin's Elenctic Theology," 287. Beach notes Turretin's tendency to quote Roman Catholic authors to prove his position in the context of sovereign grace: "His mission is to defend robustly the Reformed confession of divine grace (*sola gratia*). In this regard, he is prepared to make common cause even with particular Roman Catholics thinkers who, with him, reject Jesuit deviations from the sovereignty of God's grace; he appeals to the tradition of the church and to scholastic Roman Catholic authors in order to help make his case."

him naively because he is not unaware that Maldonatus attacks Calvin the same way that Bellarmine does (XIII.xiv.14).

Turretin queries whether Christ's sufferings can be rightly called *gehennales* and *tartarea*, as they were by Reformed theologians. He answers affirmatively because to speak of Christ's infernal pains (*inferni doleres*) is to speak of their gravity. Christ was not damned and did not enter into the place of the damned. He bore the pain of those being damned (*poenas damnandorum*) not of those who were already damned (*damnatorum*). Christ was not devoted to eternal punishment. Although Maresius does not employ the specific terms Turretin mentions, he does use synonyms (e.g., *infernalis*). Turretin's line of argument follows Maresius quite closely:

That dereliction, with regard to the infernal pains (*poenas infernales*) it was necessary to bear the debts for sin. That in it the pains of death and the suffocation of the grave surrounded him or rather of hell, befall him, as it is in Psalm 88.16. His suffering of it is only extreme, but not truly eternal. He was without every disorder from the inside, then from the outside not properly of the damned, but the punishment and the pain of the damned fell upon (him). He did not only have to suffer bodily, but also, for full satisfaction, sustain the tortures due to sinners, who laid down that sacrifice on behalf of the accused, Isaiah 53:10, He was redeemer not only of the soul but also of the body.<sup>88</sup>

Although Bellarmine does not go as far as Maresius, he does connect the pains that Christ suffered on the cross with the pains of hell in his *De septem Verbis Domini in cruce prolatis*. He does not say Christ suffered these pains, but that Christ's cry of dereliction should make us think of the greatness and the multitude of the pains of hell (*magnitudo et multitudo poenarum gehennae*). Then he says, "Let us give thanks, therefore, from (our) whole heart to God, who purposed to abandon his only begotten Son in the greatest sufferings for a time, in order that he might free us from the eternal fires."<sup>89</sup>

#### 4.5 Why did Christ's soul suffer?

Bellarmino and Turretin both assert the soteriological significance of Christ's passion. Generally, they agree: Christ suffered for our salvation. However, they disagree on the specific way Christ's suffering and salvation are connected. Two key differences materialize in Bellarmine's critique of Calvin. First, Bellarmine is averse to the idea that Christ was punished by the Father. Calvin interprets Isaiah 53:4, where Christ is said to be stricken of God (*percussus a Deo*), experiencing the anger and hostility of God against him. Bellarmine on the

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<sup>88</sup> Maresius, *Collegium Theologicum*, 190-91. My translation.

<sup>89</sup> In Bellarmine, *Opera Omnia*, VIII:515. My translation.

other hand, sees Christ as stricken, not because the Father hated him (a caricature of Calvin's position) but rather because the Father permitted him to be killed for us (*permisist occidi pro nobis*). Further, just as Abraham did not hate his son when he went to sacrifice him in Genesis 22, and Isaac knew that what was happening was an act of obedience to God, the same was true of Christ and his relationship with the Father. Commenting on the *causa meritoria* of justification, Trent teaches that Christ's most holy passion merited justification and satisfied the Father.<sup>90</sup> "Without offering any definition of 'merit' and 'satisfaction' and without introducing the term 'sacrifice', Trent here interpreted the saving impact of Christ's passion (but not his resurrection) with language that reached back...through Aquinas to Anselm."<sup>91</sup>

Second, there is an asymmetry between what sinners deserve and what Christ suffered in Bellarmine's thought. His interpretation of the cry of dereliction (Matthew 27:46) has nothing to do with the Father's anger toward the son. The cry only evinces that Christ's divinity abandoned his humanity in its pain (*dereliquit enim Deitas humanitatem in poenis*). The cry was meant to show the depth of his pain (*gravissimos dolores*), but not because he was our substitute. For Bellarmine, the price of Christ's death should not be assessed based on the quantity, quality or duration of his sufferings, but rather on the dignity of the person who suffered (*sed ex dignitate personae, quae patiebatur*). Christ is not the Redeemer only of our bodies, because Christ suffered body *and spirit*. However, Bellarmine is quick to add that one suffering of his body was of infinite worth (*una poena corporis erat infiniti pretii*) because of who he is.

When Turretin talks about the necessity of the suffering of Christ's soul, he has in mind Christ's suffering the wrath of the Father. The punishment for sin cannot be reduced to physical suffering because it involves being under the curse of God. Christ became a curse for his people (Gal. 3:12, 13) because he suffered the full penalty which was their due. For Turretin, it is the gravity and the extent of his sufferings that make them adequate to compensate for the eternity of the punishments that we deserved. Turretin quotes Irenaeus approvingly: "With his own blood the Lord redeemed us, who gave his own soul for our soul and his own flesh for our flesh."<sup>92</sup> The context of Irenaeus' words are the necessity of our salvation and it seems that

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<sup>90</sup> DS, 1529, "*sua sanctissima passione in ligno crucis nobis iustificationem meruit [can. 10], et pro nobis Deo Patri satisfecit.*"

<sup>91</sup> Gerald O'Collins, *Jesus our Redeemer: A Christian Approach to Salvation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 138.

<sup>92</sup> Turretin cites Irenaeus as follows: "*Proprio sanguine redemit nos Dominus, qui dedit animam suam pro animis nostris, & carnem suam pro carne nostra,*" but Irenaeus, *Contra Haereses* (PG, 7:1121) has "*Suo igitur sanguine redimente no Domino, et dante animam sua pro nostra anima, et carnem suam pro nostris carnibus.*"

Irenaeus has substitution in mind because he employs two prepositions that are used to underscore substitution in the NT: ὑπέρ and ἀντί.<sup>93</sup> It could be that Irenaeus is dependent upon 1 Clement 49:6: “In love the Master received us. Because of the love that he had for us, Jesus Christ our Lord, in accordance with God’s will, gave his blood for us, and his flesh for our flesh, and his life for our lives (καὶ τὴν σάρκα ὑπὲρ τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν).”<sup>94</sup> For Turretin the Lord is thus not only ἀντίλυτρον (a ransom paid in the stead of) but also ἀντίψυχος (a soul in the stead of) because he pledges and exchanges soul for soul (*qui animam pro anima spondet*). Ἀντίψυχος is used in by Ignatius several times, but never to speak of Christ (IEph 21:1; ISm 10:2; IPol 2:3; 6:1). The origin of Turretin’s use of ἀντίψυχος is unclear. It does not occur in the NT but is found twice in 4 Maccabees (6:9; 17:21) and in various Fathers, some of whom use the term to speak of Christ’s substitutionary atonement.<sup>95</sup>

#### 4.6 Conclusion

“And how can we maintain that Christ suffered abandonment by the Father and death in the very depths of his soul when this very soul was permeated in its depth by ineffable, heavenly joy?”<sup>96</sup> Gutwenger’s question aptly captures the crux of the conversation. Both Bellarmine and Turretin want to protect the joy of Christ’s soul and his real suffering, but do so in different ways. It has been said of Aquinas’ doctrine of the beatific vision in Christ’s earthly ministry (which Bellarmine defends): “A successful challenge to Aquinas’s solution therefore either requires an opponent to show that Christ was different in a way that undermines his saving mission or that the introduction of this exceptional difference was simply unnecessary.”<sup>97</sup> Turretin believes he is making a successful challenge because he shows that Bellarmine’s Christ is different in a way that undermines Christ’s saving mission. He believes Bellarmine misses what Calvin gets right about Christ’s saving mission: Christ had to feel in his whole soul what we should have. Bellarmine sees only problems with Calvin’s new emphasis on the suffering of Christ’s soul and is convinced that the model he inherited from

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<sup>93</sup> Irenaeus, *Contra Haereses* (PG, 1121) includes this greek fragment: “τῷ ἰδίῳ οὖν αἵματι λυτρωσαμένου ἡμᾶς τοῦ Κυρίου, καὶ δόντος τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἡμετέρων ψυχῶν, καὶ τὴν σάρκα τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀντί τῶν ἡμετέρων σαρκῶν.”

<sup>94</sup> This connection is found in Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, vol. 1, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 527, n. 2; Michael W. Holmes, ed., *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 110-11.

<sup>95</sup> For an overview of the patristic usages see: Marcin Tomasz Chrostowski, “The Term ἀντίψυχος as an Expiatory Sacrifice of Martyrs in the Light of The Fourth Book of Maccabees and Other Ancient Extra-Biblical Literature,” *Verbum vitae: pótrocznik biblijno-teologiczny* 39, no. 3 (2021): 736-42.

<sup>96</sup> Gutwenger, “The Problem of Christ’s Knowledge,” 84.

<sup>97</sup> Gaine, *Did the Saviour See the Father?*, 192. The exceptional difference is that Christ is only one who is ever *Viator* and *Comprehensor* simultaneously.



Medieval Scholastics like Aquinas does a better job of protecting Christ's soul from disordered passions.

## 5 Conclusion

This thesis has sought to expound and offer a comparative analysis of the doctrine of the knowledge and suffering of Christ's soul in Bellarmine and Turretin. The primary research question, "How can the differences in their positions be explained?" has been addressed in the three previous chapters. Chapter two explored possible biographical explanations. Both Bellarmine and Turretin were eager to further entrench their theological systems in contrast to those of their opponents. Calvin's doctrine of Christ's soul was on Bellarmine's radar about a decade before his first lecture on the subject, as evidenced by its place on his *Index haereticorum*. Calvin's insistence on the inadequacy of Christ's corporal suffering alone was especially problematic for Bellarmine. It was, however, the very teaching Turretin repeatedly affirmed in his *De Satisfactione Christi* and then in his *Institutio*.

Chapter three treated the differences in their doctrine of the knowledge of Christ's soul. Christ's growth in knowledge is subjective for Bellarmine, but objective for Turretin. The former considers any intellectual growth to be rooted in the observations of others and the latter to include an actual increase in knowledge. Both affirm impeccability but parse it in different ways. Turretin affirms sinless ignorance in Christ (a simple nescience), but Bellarmine rejects the idea of faultless ignorance. Turretin's mindfulness of Bellarmine's critique improved his position as it pushed him to balance Christ's real human ignorance with the uniqueness of his humanity because of the hypostatic union. Two disparate definitions of perfection undergird their respective positions. Bellarmine's definition of perfection is punctiliar: the perfection of Christ's soul is static, just like divine perfection. Turretin's definition is progressive: Christ is always as perfect as his current state necessitates (which is an application of the *status duplex*). Finally, the difference can be seen in the way they deal with the soteriological necessity of Christ's human knowledge. Bellarmine deems ignorance a hindrance to Christ's ability to merit salvation, but Turretin views it as necessary for salvation as Christ must be like those whom he represents in every way, save sin.

Chapter four investigated the differences in their doctrine of the sufferings of Christ's soul. Both affirm that his soul really suffered but with divergent emphases. Christ's soul's suffering is central to Turretin's understanding of the *passio Christi*. Conversely, Bellarmine is more worried about defending the importance of his corporal suffering in his response to Calvin's doctrine of the *descensus*. They both employ scholastic distinctions in an effort to affirm real suffering in Christ's soul without undermining its undisturbed blessedness.

Bellarmino follows Aquinas in segregating his suffering to the lower part of his soul, whereas Turretin limits the suffering in Christ's soul to his *affectio commodi*. This allows Turretin to emphasize the reality of what Christ felt in the entirety of his soul, most importantly the *sensus irae divinae*. Again, soteriological distinctions are apparent. Turretin teaches that Christ must become a curse—body and soul—for those whom he died, but Bellarmine reacts strongly against the notion that Christ experienced suffering analogous to that of the damned.

## 5.1 The Differences Assessed Methodologically

Bellarmino and Turretin both return *ad fontes*, but there are significant methodological variances in the ways they do so. Albeit both exhibit a concern for careful exegesis, they attribute differing roles to tradition because they are working within different taxonomies of authority. Turretin is working within what has been called Tradition I, which Oberman defines as “the single exegetical tradition of interpreted scripture.”<sup>1</sup> Bellarmine is exemplary of Tradition II, “the two-sources theory which allows for an extra-biblical oral tradition,”<sup>2</sup> which the Council of Trent affirmed.<sup>3</sup> This difference materializes in Bellarmine's search for consensus and Turretin's contentedness with mere confirmation. Practically, this means that Bellarmine must make the Fathers and the Medieval Scholastics univocal on the question of Christ's soul, harmonizing their teaching in the light of the most recent magisterial dogma. Turretin often does little more than cite authors who confirm his interpretations in order to prove that his interpretations are not altogether novel. The different understanding of authority in their methodology evinces two very different ways of thinking about Christianity.<sup>4</sup>

This methodological difference is unmistakable in their handling of Luke 2:52. Bellarmine seems unwilling to acknowledge the complicated trajectory of the history of the interpretation of this verse in Fathers like Athanasius and Ambrose. He is not trying to prove something like a Newmanian development, but rather that “all the fathers” (*omnes patres*) essentially interpreted the text the same way Peter Lombard did. However, Turretin can also produce citations from Ambrose that seem to affirm his position. They both use Ambrose selectively to prove their point; however, Bellarmine has more to prove: not merely that Ambrose is compatible with his position but that he can be legitimately harmonized with the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Calvin's reply to Sadoleto; Trueman, “Reformed Theology in the Context of the Reformation(s),” 46.

<sup>2</sup> Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (1986: repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 280.

<sup>3</sup> Sessio IV, DS, 1501.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Carl R. Trueman, “Is the Pope (Roman) Catholic? Joseph Ratzinger on Ecumenism,” in *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*, ed. Tim Perry (Bellingham, WE: Lexham Press, 2019), 152-67.

other Fathers. Free from the encumbrance of a consensus patrum, Turretin only has to harmonize Scripture with Scripture and argues for what might be called a “straightforward” reading of Luke 2:52: Christ must have increased in wisdom in the same way he increased in stature. It is worth noting that some modern Catholic theologians have read the text like Turretin and some magisterial documents seem to leave the door open to this interpretation.<sup>5</sup> It is notable that neither Turretin nor Bellarmine invokes Aquinas on Luke 2:52 or the broader question of the knowledge of Christ’s soul. This is a strategic omission for both. Had Bellarmine invoked Aquinas explicitly it might have pressed him to adopt more nuances in his explanation of experiential knowledge and how Christ’s whole soul suffered and, in so doing, concede more to Calvin (and so Turretin). For Turretin, relying on Aquina’s explanation of the nature of Christ’s soul might have caused him to run the risk of implicitly affirming his doctrine of the *visio beatifica* in Christ humility.

Finally, Turretin employs an interesting methodological tactic that seems to be absent in Bellarmine’s doctrine of Christ’s soul. He cites other Counter-Reformation Catholic theologians to confirm his interpretations and rebut Bellarmine. For example, he cites Toletus and Stapleton on Luke 2:52 and Maldonatus on the suffering of Christ’s soul. At times he seems to be overreaching in his use of these authors, as the broader context from which he draws his citations does not always confirm his position. It could be that he is simply trying to “score points” by making note of what he takes to be smaller concessions to key pieces of his argument. This is certainly the case when he quotes Bellarmine approvingly on justification (*Institutio*, XVI.ii.17).<sup>6</sup>

## 5.2 The Differences Explained Systemically

The doctrine of Christ’s soul is a window that sheds light on broader theological questions because Bellarmine and Turretin expound it in ways that are compatible with their respective theological systems. The differences in their explanations of the doctrine of Christ’s knowledge and suffering are products of their broader Christology as well as their soteriology and ecclesiology.

The Chalcedonian guardrails around Christ’s two natures—*inconfuse* and *immutabiliter* on the one hand and *indivise* and *inseparabiliter* on the other—are acknowledged in both

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<sup>5</sup> Dubarle, “La Science Humaine du Christ selon saint Augustin;” Galot, “Le Christ terrestre et la vision;” Gutwenger, “The Problem of Christ’s Knowledge.” Moloney, *The Knowledge of Christ*, 118-25. Cf. Gaine, *Did the Saviour See the Father?*, 3-14; Ashley, “The Extent of Jesus’ Human Knowledge according to the Fourth Gospel,” in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology*, 241-45.

<sup>6</sup> He also quotes Bellarmine approvingly on the doctrine of election (IV.xi.5).

polemical enterprises but applied differently.<sup>7</sup> Turretin's approach to the doctrine of Christ's soul highlights the first pair of adverbs (*inconfuse* and *immutabiliter*). This permits him, by way of partitive exegesis, to teach that Christ did learn *de novo*, but at the same time he did not. He might be said to be preoccupied *in primis* with protecting Christ's real human growth and suffering and only secondarily with explaining how this does not encroach upon his unity. This prioritization was common in Reformed Theology which was able to maintain a "sharp distinction" between the natures thanks to a theological apparatus that included the *extra calvinisticum*.<sup>8</sup> Bellarmine emphasizes the second set of adverbs (*indivise* and *inseparabiliter*) in that he begins with the singular divine person. He safeguards the hypostatic union by rejecting anything that could imply a diminishment of its reality. Bellarmine unsurprisingly suspects Reformed Christology of Nestorianism, by way of Agnoetism. Although Bellarmine unequivocally affirms the distinction of Christ's natures, he could be accused of elevating "the human nature above the boundaries set for it" and dissolving "into mere appearance both the human development of Jesus and the state of humiliation."<sup>9</sup> At the risk of oversimplification, the humanity of Christ is more transcendent for Bellarmine and more immanent for Turretin.

The Christological emphases stem from soteriological commitments because soteriological systems necessitate different types of humanities in Christ. Generally speaking, Bellarmine assesses Christ's human sufferings qualitatively because it is his virtuousness that merits salvation, whereas Turretin assesses them quantitatively because he saves the elect by suffering all that they should have. Christ cannot be too heavenly in his earthly ministry, otherwise his obedience—both active and passive—is impugned (XIV.xiii). This is why Turretin is so eager to draw a hard distinction between Christ as *viator* and *comprehensor* rejecting the *visio beatifica* during Christ's earthly ministry. Bellarmine believes that the passion of Christ creates the possibility of redemption which is then mediated sacramentally by the Church of which the Pope is the visible head. Turretin believes that the passion of Christ creates the actuality of redemption for the elect which they receive directly by faith.

The difference in their Christology has important parallels in their ecclesiology. Bellarmine critiques the Reformed definition which equates the church with the elect and

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<sup>7</sup> Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom: The Greek and Latin Creeds*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 62.

<sup>8</sup> McCormack, "Christology," 67; McCormack, *The Humility of the Eternal Son: Reformed Kenoticism and the Repair of Chalcedon*, 72; Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend, vol. 3 (2006), 259; Stephen J. Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 332-38; Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation*, 246.

<sup>9</sup> Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, 257.

further denies their distinction between the visible and the invisible church (IV.III.II). As Bellarmine affirms that the church is an extension of the incarnation, his critique of Reformed ecclesiology might be described as ecclesiological Nestorianism.<sup>10</sup> The Catholic ecclesiology that Bellarmine defends might then be considered from a Reformed perspective to be an ecclesiological Monophysitism, as it lacks a distinction between divine and human realities (e.g., the papacy).<sup>11</sup> Further, Bellarmine self-consciously presents his *Controversiae* as a defense of articles 9 and 10 of the Apostles Creed, “I believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints and the forgiveness of sins.” Article 10, *remissionem peccatorum*, is subservient to article 9 because sin is dealt with within the sacramental system of the church. This finds further confirmation in his appeal to Berengarius and his denial of corporal presence in the altar as the originator of the Protestant heresies. Bellarmine presents the Protestant heresy in terms of a rejection of Transubstantiation (following Berengarius) and not in terms of justification.<sup>12</sup> Turretin maintains the integrity of Christ’s two natures, teaching his spiritual presence in the Eucharist. Bellarmine teaches that the whole Christ is present: his humanity (body, blood and soul) and his divinity.

### 5.3 For Further Study

This study has shown the usefulness of the doctrine of Christ’s soul as a catalyst for the assessment of theological systems. It could be used with profit as a starting point for interaction with historical expressions of various theological traditions. Furthermore, the relationship between Christ’s soul and ecclesiology merits further reflection. Finally, the doctrine of Christ’s soul could be further explored as corrective to overstatements of the nature of theological overlap between Protestant and Roman Catholic Christology in the early modern period. Might the doctrine of Christ’s soul be considered a secondary material cause of the Reformation?

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<sup>10</sup> Bruno Forte, *La Chiesa della Trinità: Saggio sul mistero della Chiesa comunione e missione*, vol. 5, *Simolica ecclesiale* (Milano: San Paolo, 1995), 48.

<sup>11</sup> Leonardo De Chirico, “Cosa c’entra Calcedonia con l’ecclesiologia?,” *Studi di teologia* 61, no. 1 (2019): 73.

<sup>12</sup> Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 276. Oberman shows that Biel (1418-1495) also traces his opponents on the Eucharist to Berengarius of Tours.

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