

- “The Case for Christian Panentheism,” *Dialog* 37 (Summer 1998): 201-208.

The Case for Christian Panentheism

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In this paper I offer a defense of panentheism, the doctrine that the world is (in some sense) inside of God even though God is also more than the world. There is much that is attractive about panentheism as a position in philosophical theology, and it has won major advocates in the field (e.g., Charles Hartshorne, David Tracy, Joseph Bracken, Arthur Peacocke¹). As these thinkers have shown, panentheism is able to solve certain contemporary philosophical problems in thinking the nature of God and God's relationship to the world better than any other "live option" being advocated in the field today.²

But this is not a paper in philosophical theology; its primary goal is not to provide metaphysical arguments for or against particular theistic philosophies. The primary focus is instead on the viability of *Christian* panentheism. Is this a viewpoint that a *Christian* theologian can hold? Assuming that it is a conceptually viable position, is it one that recommends itself to the systematic theologian? What is it that Christian panentheism is being contrasted *to*, and why would one wish to side with this particular theological option? What does *trinitarian* panentheism look like? And in what ways do the biblical texts influence those theologians who label themselves Christian panentheists; what is the theological method that we employ?

The Complementarity of Biblical and Systematic or "Philosophical" Theology

Let's address the last question first. How in general is theologizing guided by the scriptures? Using the most sophisticated techniques available to us (the techniques of historical-critical exegesis, form and redaction criticism, genre studies, linguistics and archeology, cultural and social-historical comparisons, etc.) we work to establish the meaning of the text. For example, we might work to show what are the major themes and teachings of the epistle to the Galatians. Then we compare and contrast the various writings that we have good reason to attribute to Paul, with the goal of developing an overall Pauline theology. We do the same with Johannine texts, Lucan texts, and so forth, formulating a variety of New Testament theologies. By individual theme and as a whole, we compare these theologies into even broader meaningful units (e.g., synoptic theologies, the theology of the pastoral epistles), attempting eventually to formulate a New Testament theology. This task is a hard one, and anyone familiar with its complexities knows how tenuous its results can be.

But Christian theologians face an even more difficult task. We must compare theses about the nature of God and his actions in the world from New Testament theology -- to the extent that we can formulate some -- with the various theologies found in the Hebrew Bible, with the daunting goal of formulating a theology of the Bible as a whole. Those who have worked with the texts know that the plurality is just too great for successful systematization; a single coherent system does not emerge. For example, different genres give rise to different ways of speaking about God. When there are conflicts, it is not obvious that the propositional passages should be given precedence over other types of writing -- say, over what we learn of the nature of God from the narrative of Job, the poetry and urgent prayers of the Psalmists, the parables of Jesus, or the events of Holy Week.³ Especially when we come to the doctrine of God, we must work with an understanding that is at least *compatible* with all the manifold facets of the biblical record; indeed, ideally it should be an understanding that ties them all together and makes sense of them all. Surely an awe-inspiring task of synthesis!

My thesis is that progress can only be made in biblical theology if one uses systematic and philosophical theologians as allies. By trade, the philosophical theologian works on developing broad, overarching accounts of the nature of God and the world, evaluating their conceptual strength and their potential for explaining various data from science and human experience. Now, as biblical scholars well know, these accounts are often unconstrained by the biblical texts; in the past some have led Christian reflection badly astray (think of theories of human perfectability, white supremacism or the defense of war).

Still, some philosophical theologies are sometimes able to express key Christian motifs in a powerful and expressive manner. I suggest that it is the *systematic theologian* who has the valuable -- indeed, indispensable -- task of bringing these two groups into contact. Her job is to show how biblical theology can constrain broader philosophical speculation and, conversely, how philosophical theology can help in developing a consistent and systematic account of God and God's relationship to the world. Biblical theology needs this interaction because, as we saw, the texts are so diverse that no single consistent systematic doctrine of God emerges out of them, *and* because there is a need to find a way to speak of the One God of the Christian proclamation. Finally, the theological claim is that philosophy also needs this interaction because the biblical texts recount the history of Israel and the life of Jesus, which are in some sense revelatory of the divine nature (the doctrine of the inspiration of scripture; cf. John 16:13).

Just as we acknowledge a hermeneutical circle between interpreting a text and a book, or between a book and an author's overall theology, so also here we will expect to find a productive hermeneutical circle between biblical and philosophical theology. This is the standpoint from which we must approach the question of Christian panentheism -- not as a competitor to a biblically based theology but as an ally to the theological project. I suggest that it makes a better mate to biblical theology than some of the other models of God bequeathed to Christian theology by philosophical theologians.

Classical Philosophical Theism

I have suggested that some sort of philosophical theology is always tacitly involved in doing systematic theology. What is the alternative to panentheism that is most often presupposed (usually unconsciously) by systematians?

There is space here to make detailed comparison with only one of panentheism's competitors, which I shall refer to as classical philosophical theism (CPT). Recall that panentheism is the view that God includes the world within himself, although God is also more than the world. By contrast, CPT holds that God is fully distinct from the world, though present to it. In many other ways the two positions are similar. As I will present them, both are trinitarian; both accept the free creation of the world and the fall; both can share a high christology and a robust doctrine of the church. (The fact that I do not address other systematic doctrines here does not mean they are irrelevant or unimportant, but rather that they can be asserted by both positions.) And yet ... there may be a *greater* resonance between panentheism and key tenets of the biblical account of God's relation to the world than there is between that account and CPT. I suggest that the biblical texts reveal features in the doctrine of God to which classical philosophical theism can do justice, if at all, only with difficulty.

Before making this case, I must mention in passing another reason for looking beyond CPT, since without it I cannot adequately explain the motivation for Christian panentheism. Classical philosophical theism is in crisis in the contemporary world. Serious attacks have been raised by scientific advances, 20th-century philosophical developments, cross-cultural comparisons, and by the ethical and political implications of certain forms of classical theism. Of course, even given the difficulties one can still do systematic theology in the traditional fashion, paying less attention to contemporary worries about certain traditional assumptions about the nature of God.⁴ But my argument will be that it is better advised to effect a change of philosophical categories.

What is the nature of these difficulties? To put it gently, there is a widespread sense that a certain picture of God has come to lack relevance and credibility. Note that the crisis does not have to do with belief in a personal, self-revealing God; it is rather the *underlying framework* that has come to lack motivation and credibility. The theology of the God/world separation has come to rely, philosophically, on the concept of necessary substance. The substance tradition goes back before Thomas Aquinas to some of the Patristic writers, though interestingly it is less dominant in the tradition running from Augustine through Anselm. It also runs through the modern Cartesian ("ontotheological") tradition up to the time of Kant.

But classical theists have not done a very good job of showing how CPT can address more contemporary difficulties and a new theological *Sitz im Leben*. This is what forces us to the radical-sounding question, Is the CPT notion of God really necessary for Christian theology? Or could there actually be *biblical* reasons for preferring a panentheistic account? I suggest that the biblical texts should draw us back to aspects of the nature of God that have not been adequately picked up by classical philosophical theism.

From Substance to Mutual Indwelling Subjects

Both CPT and panentheism include ontologies, or theories about the primary things that exist. CPT was originally developed in substantialist terms. On this view, God is understood as one substance, albeit a substance consisting of three persons. In the case of all other beings, each individual person is a separate substance. What makes a substance a person rather than a rock is the fact that personal qualities or attributes are predicated of it or "pertain" to it (subjectivity, consciousness, will), whereas these qualities do not "inhere" in rock-substances. If one objects to this way of conceiving God and persons, she can employ one of the other models currently available; this is, for example, the strategy that panentheists employ when they speak of a "new personalist ontology." But one does not avoid the problems by refusing to do ontology at all (say, by asserting that he is limiting himself to the biblical statements and refusing to do philosophical theology at all), since some sort of ontology will be tacitly assumed in any case.

Our common-sense way of thinking of the world has long since lost all touch with the substantialist manner of speaking, and philosophers no longer appeal to it as a significant resource for resolving debates. Yet its influence on the theology continues to be immense, since CPT was institutionalized into credal statements that silently presupposed it. Here we will be concerned with three doctrines in particular: the doctrine of creation, the God/world relationship, and the *imago dei*, which expresses the similarities and differences between God and the world.

Recall that for CPT everything is either a substance or the attribute of a substance, and wherever one substance is no other substance can be at the same time. Thus God had only two choices in creating the world. He could create it as a set of attributes (or "accidents") with God as their substance -- but then the world would exist only as a manifestation of God, which would not leave room for personal substances to exist other than God (as in the pantheistic view of God's relation to the world). Or God could create a world of really existing substances -- but then they must exist outside the divine substance. Hence there must be a "space" outside God "in" which this realm of finite substances has its being. Since in earlier centuries space (and time) were understood as an objective framework -- something like a big box "into" which events or objects might be placed -- there seemed to be no problem with God creating this box somewhere and then creating a bunch of substances *ex nihilo* to place into it. With this you have the creation narrative of CPT, and one still widely assumed by theologians today.

There are many problems with this picture. One is that we now know it to be *physically* incorrect: time is not an absolute quantity but depends on the inertial frames of the observers, and the geometries of space are transformed by the mass and/or energy of objects. In this sense, the "space" of the universe comes into existence with the objects themselves. And there are equally grave theological problems. On this model, it becomes difficult to express the way in which God is present in the world (which explains the headaches theologians have had trying to make sense of the various modes of God's presence). How can God be present to the believer if one substance can never be internally present to another? Perhaps, some thought, God's omnipresence could be preserved in the sense that he perceives the physical world simultaneously from every point in space. Yet locating God at every point in space, while it does give him a pretty good vantage point (he won't miss much), does not give him the same intimate presence as the mystical interiority of which the biblical writers and Christian mystics have spoken.

Nor does it seem to capture the vivifying presence of the divine *ruach* of the Old Testament, who is life-giving spirit. The moment that this breath is withdrawn, say the Hebrew writers, there is no more life, since no separation between the life and the breath can be thought. Finally, the substance-based picture cannot do justice to the existence of subjects, and specifically not to the sense of enveloping personal presence reflected in the biblical texts (e.g., "Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O Lord, Thou dost know it all. Thou hast enclosed me behind and before, And laid thy hand upon me," Ps. 139:5-6).

Equally worrisome, CPT has made the notion of divine action increasingly problematic. In a pre-modern context these difficulties had not yet surfaced. Unlike ours, the physics of that day required constant interventions by a divine agent, since the world order needed to be maintained at every moment.⁵ Likewise, since all things strive toward their final cause, the goal of perfection must be imparted to the system to make the physics work, making a most-perfect being (*ens perfectissimum*) a *physical* necessity.

Yet we live in an age that has come to accept a very different view of the physical world. Perhaps it may still be possible to find some evidence of the divine in this world, but it is no longer a world of interacting substances. Instead, the assumption today is that physical systems are closed to causal interventions from outside. This closure has led to a 200-year struggle to rethink what divine action or miracles in the world could mean. It is fair to say that no answer has been found within the context of CPT that is both theologically and scientifically adequate.

Before turning to that solution, I should note that two escapes still remain. One can say, "Who cares what modern science says? I choose the Bible over science." Or one can say, "Who needs philosophical theology in the first place, especially if it necessarily makes use of conceptual frameworks that are not found in the Bible?" I cannot close the door to these two escapes; believers are under no obligation to think systematically or scientifically. But both represent rather costly escapes, since they leave Christians believing in the God of all truth but not being able to incorporate the best that our empirical and systematic thinkers can tell us. Far better, I suggest, to attempt a comprehensive statement of Christian belief, one that works to integrate the best of *all* human knowledge with the biblical message rather than remaining with only "internal" statements.

The Panentheistic Analogy

What then is the alternative to CPT? Since the biblical narratives describe the encounter of a personal God with human persons, one begins with an ontology of persons rather than of substances (more on this below in the context of the Trinity). Now, once we have moved beyond the definition of God as one substance in three persons (and humans as personal substances), we will need to think more deeply about what personhood means. How central is the teaching that God is personal and that human persons reflect in a special way the image of God? I take that claim to mean that calling God personal, and using our understanding of personhood as the hermeneutical key to unlock the meaning of the ascription, we get as close as humanly possible to an understanding of God's nature.

(That this understanding still fails to grasp infinite divine being fully goes without saying.)

Suppose therefore that we take the analogy as seriously as we possibly can. What is it that we know about human personhood? We have thoughts, wishes and desires that together constitute our character. We express these mental states through our bodies, which are simultaneously our organs of perception and our means of affecting other things and persons in the world. The biblical anthropology (view of the human person) is emphatic that our natural state is not as disembodied agents.⁶ Perhaps this is why the Old Testament writers did not clearly assert an afterlife until the time of the later prophets. The Old Testament is not characterized by the Greek dualism of mind and body⁷, much less by Plato's belief that we are essentially mind and that we are imprisoned in a lower state by the fact that we are embodied. A mass of books in recent years has for the first time provided theories of personhood free from the life-draining constraints of substance-centered theories (Aristotle through the middle ages and up until Kant) and rationality-centered theories (Hegel).⁸ Although I cannot summarize this fascinating literature here, it clearly points to the indispensability of embodiedness as the precondition for perception and action, moral agency, community and freedom -- all aspects that philosophers take as indispensable to human personhood and that theologians have viewed as part of the *imago dei*.

Indulge me for a moment, then, in a sort of thought experiment, one which attempts to mirror the hermeneutical interdependence of systematic and biblical theology described above. Inspired by biblical questions, we must develop a systematic conception of personhood, one that pertains both to the divine and the human persons, and *then* correct this conception based on theological considerations. For reasons that will become clear, I shall call this argument form the Panentheistic Analogy. Taking the notion of personhood as truly basic for our understanding of God, then, let's first try to think God as person analogous to us, and then correct it where necessary.

Individual persons are not separate from their bodies; they are not essentially disembodied souls that had the bad luck to be locked within bodies. Bodies are crucial to human agency in the world, and the input that we receive as embodied agents is crucial to the experience that we have, and hence to the persons that we become. At the same time, we are also more than our bodies, which are physical things that are studied by physiologists and neuroscientists.⁹ We include a center of subjective experience; we are essentially subjects. Still, we only know subjects as *embodied subjectivity*. For example, an essential part of what it is to be a persons is to exist in community (family and other social units); yet community relies on embodiedness and would be incomprehensible without it.

Now the Panentheistic Analogy suggests that we understand what it means for God to be personal based on this, the only understanding of personhood that we have. What does it mean? Clearly God cannot have a particular body (though the doctrine of the Incarnation, traditionally understood, teaches that it is possible for at least one person of the triune God to be embodied). But suppose that God were related to the whole universe so that it were, roughly speaking, his body. The universe would then become the focal point of his agency.¹⁰

When the world is understood as ontologically “outside” God, then any actions that God takes within the world must represent interventions “from outside” into the world’s order. This model of God as a sort of foreign agent intervening into an independently existing order raises numerous problems. If the creation (and its Creator) were perfect from the start, why would it have to be “fixed” in this manner? Are regularities within the world to be understood as representing a causality independent of God, one which functions all on its own? Would it not be far better theologically to view even inner-worldly causality as (in at least some sense) a manifestation of divine agency? How could these divine interventions be known at all by humans if they came from completely outside the order that we inhabit?

On the Panentheistic Analogy, there would be no *qualitative* or ontological difference between the regularity of natural law and the intentionality of special divine actions. Put differently, this view denies that only the latter should count as divine actions and not the former. Instead, natural laws, when viewed theologically, will count as descriptions of the predictable regularity of patterns of divine action. The fact that our universe exhibits the physical regularities it does could be taken as a surd, a brute fact needing no further explanation (atheism); or it could be attributed to an original act of God, by which he “set the clock in motion” and then let it run on its own (deism). CPT has held that the continuing “concurrence” of God is required to keep things ticking along. Panentheism stands closest to classical Western theism in this regard, yet it draws an even closer link between physics and theology: since God is present in each physical interaction and at each point in space, each interaction is a part of his being in the broadest sense, for it is “in him [that] we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

Natural regularities within God's universe, then, would be roughly analogous to autonomic responses within an individual's body -- the things that one's body does without conscious interference or guidance. In one sense, such behaviors are still one's own “actions,” even though they occur through the body's operating in a regular or autonomic manner and one thus performs them unconsciously. For instance, one can become conscious of particular actions that her body normally carries out automatically (by concentrating, for example, on her breathing in and out -- a process you were presumably not thinking about before reading this sentence and yet, I hope, one that you were still performing!). The breathing example does suggest a difference, however: theologically, we must conclude that God, being omniscient, would *always* be aware of his autonomic or habitual actions within the universe.

Yet this theological interpretation of natural regularities as (autonomic) divine actions does not rule out *conscious* actions that God might undertake. In fact, the analogy with human agency actually creates the expectation that God would also consciously pursue certain ends, just as human agents also engage in actions that they perform consciously and with particular intentions in mind. How we are to understand such “focal” divine actions and how belief in them could be compatible with the institution of science -- these are questions that demand careful attention. For now, the point is only to argue that divine action, which is obviously not an issue for atheism or deism, is better addressed within the context of panentheism than classical Western theism.

At the same time, the the Panentheistic Analogy also teaches us that God as personal

should be *more than* his body. This is to say that God's consciousness or awareness is more than the world that he created and sustains. This means that there is no need to question God's transcendence of the world which is fundamental to biblical theism: God continues, as the scriptures attest, to be aware of all that occurs within the world and to value and judge it. But now his relationship to the world is much more intimate than can be conceptualized on any externalist or substance-based model.

Biblical corrections to the Panentheistic Analogy

I have argued that panentheism makes a better systematic model to use in dialogue with the biblical texts than does the substance ontology of CPT. But the thought experiment now requires that we allow the biblical texts to correct this model as necessary.

The first correction involves survival of the death of the body. The biblical picture of God includes his pre-existence of the world as its Creator and his existence subsequent to the world as the one who establishes a new heaven and a new earth. So God must be a being who *can* exist separate from the world. This means that his creation of the world does not need to be viewed as necessary, either in the form of a rational necessity (Hegel) or an automatic emanation from him (Neoplatonic thought). Nonetheless, when God *has* freely decided to create a world, he stands in a relationship to it as close as our relation to our own bodies; he is no more outside of it than we are really a disembodied spirit who happens to inhabit (or be trapped in!) our bodies during some period of time.

Further, note that if we can assert this survival of God apart from the world, the the Panentheistic Analogy, now used in reverse, gives us some reason to hope that through God's power we too will enjoy a state of presence with him after the death of our bodies -- which is the message of hope expressed in the New Testament teaching of the resurrection of Jesus, the firstborn from the dead. The hope lies in this, that as Christ has overcome the sting of death (1 Cor. 15:55), so also believers will be given a new heavenly body "like his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). For belief in salvation must include the sense that he has gone "to prepare a place," and the eschatological hope is that "I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, you may be also" (John 14:2-3).¹¹

Criticisms

I have tried to show that panentheism can do justice to major Christian teachings about the nature of God and his relationship to the world, while at the same time coming closer to the biblical accounts of God's presence and activity than CPT. Still, I can imagine that theologians may bring certain reservations to this model.

The first and most obvious is that the Old Testament is emphatic not to identify God with the world. Is not the prohibition against graven images a warning against uniting God with anything physical? But panentheism is emphatically not repeating the errors for which the heathen that surrounded Israel were chastized. No object or person within the world is being divinized; God's transcendence is not being denied, and the world is not being called divine. God remains Lord over the earth, and he continues to be in the

position (i.e., continues to have the power) to bring about the consumation of history. The difference is that he does not do this from the outside -- *senkrecht von oben* (vertically from above), in Barth's words -- but rather through an action and transformation that can only come from the inside.

As we saw above, God's transformative influence takes two forms for panentheism: the constant influence of his nature that is analogous to our body's autonomic functioning (which after all expresses *our* nature in an important and irreducible sense), and the focal divine action that is similar to our conscious actions. This is certainly a far cry from an idolatry of the world or a denial of God's sovereignty.

Second, panentheism must not be confused with pantheism. I think I have shown how the Panentheistic Analogy, with its stress on divine agency that is more than the sum of bodily (or worldly) parts, avoids any reduction of God to the world.

Interestingly, and perhaps ironically, panentheism also faces the exactly opposite objection: the claim that it does not add anything new (any new resources) that are not already present within the Christian tradition. Does not also CPT teach the omnipresence of God to the world, and cannot God be intimately present to his creation even if it is a separate substance from himself? Does it not also affirm the continual dependence of the world upon its Creator? And does not the doctrine of the Trinity offer resources: God was present as embodied human in the incarnation of the pre-existent Christ, he tabernacled among us (Jn. 1:14), and God continues to be present in the Holy Spirit, whose function it is to represent God's presence to the world and to be so intimately present to believers that he knows their thoughts before they utter them (Ps. 139:4) and helps us to pray with sighs and moanings too deep for words (Rom. 8:26).

The trinitarian understanding of God does indeed hold indispensable resources for conceiving the God/world relationship; it is as indispensable for panentheism as it is for an adequate philosophical theism. But, as hinted above, the three persons are not unified within one substance, which is then kept ontologically separate from the multiple independent substances in the world. Instead, the three persons are to be understood as personal spheres of activity. As Joseph Bracken has argued convincingly, there is no reason why finite persons cannot be included within a personal sphere of activity that at the same time transcends it, whereas it is clear that one substance cannot include another substance.¹²

I thus suggest that there is a more natural wedding of personalistic panentheism and trinitarian thought than there ever was of substance metaphysics and Trinitarianism -- especially if we take biblical theology as the other pole of the debate, as I have done.

One might object that panentheism threatens the goodness of God. All concede that much that is in the world is evil. Panentheism views the world metaphorically as God's body, whereas God must not be conjoined to evil in any way. But panentheism does not raise the problem of evil in any worse a fashion than is already present for classical theism. It is a mystery that God could be "present to" evil in any fashion and not immediately stamp it out or dissolve it by his presence alone. Yet he works within a world that is fallen, even choosing as his co-agents human assistants who are pervasively

motivated by self-desire. Under both models, the theological stress must fall on God's redemptive project: not fearing to unite himself to a world that is fallen -- in the Incarnation, of course, and for panentheism also (in a different sense) in the doctrine of creation as well -- God works intimately with and within it to bring about transformation.

Even in this brief reflection on some objections, we have seen that Christian panentheism offers certain theological advantages while still remaining within the spirit of the theological tradition. Remember in closing that the problem with CPT does not lie in failing to *assert* God's presence to the world, for CPT has often held to a strong doctrine of the immanence of God in the world. The problem lies rather with a conceptual undergirding that cannot do full justice to the power of the biblical proclamation of radical providential immanence. That is, CPT lacks the conceptual resources to deal with the sort of divine presence that we recognize when we reflect on the nature of the Trinity -- the deep effect of world history on the divine persons, extending even to "the crucified God" for whom the intimacy of salvation included even death.¹³ Since more powerful conceptual resources than the metaphysics of substances have now become available, theologians should now make full use of them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have not denied that God was often taken by classical philosophical theologians to be intimately involved with his creation. There is great language of God's loving concern for his creation in church fathers such as Irenaeus and in even very substance-oriented medieval thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas. The question is not whether they *use* biblical language, but rather whether they have brought the biblical language into contact with a conceptual framework that is both internally consistent and fits closely enough with the biblical accounts of God. My argument has been that CPT fails this criterion. Take just one example: the mode in which God knows the world for St. Thomas (see *Summa I/1*, Q. 14, e.g. art. 5). God cannot know the world directly, as its actual form/matter combination, but only through his knowledge of the forms (and, of course, insofar as everything that exists participates in his Being and Goodness). But for Aristotle (and Thomas), the individuality of a thing is constituted by the particular matter of which it consists, that matter with which its form has been combined. This means that God cannot know it in the intimacy of its own individuality, but only insofar it participates in and reflects his essence. And, since relationship presupposes knowledge, this means that he cannot be related to them in the intimacy of their own individuality.

I should add that I do not have a similar bone to pick with Luther. He did not engage in speculative reflection on the nature of God in the same manner that, say, Aquinas did, focusing his systematic work instead on topics such as the relationship of nature and grace. It could be shown that one can do better justice to the systematic structure and impetus of Luther's thought with a personalistically oriented framework such as panentheism than with the medieval substance ontology that he inherited, and hence that panentheism is a more naturally Lutheran doctrine of the God-world relation than substance metaphysics -- but the details of the argument must await a subsequent treatment.

Endnotes

1. [add references.]

2. I have also attempted to make the case for its philosophical adequacy; see Philip Clayton, *Das Gottesproblem: Gott und Unendlichkeit in der neuzeitlichen Philosophie* (Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 1996); in English as *Infinite and Perfect? The Problem of God in Modern Thought*, forthcoming.

3. Citation from Kevin Vanhoozer [Kevin, which article of yours should I cite here?]

4. It is hard to know how to convince people who do not take these problems seriously. I could argue that many of our (influential) colleagues in the Academy have raised deep, and I think important, questions about classical philosophical theism which we should heed, or I could argue that traditional theism has become problematic for many people in the West today. Since a much broader discussion would be necessary if the point is not granted, I must assume in what follows that contemporary worries about classical philosophical theism are relevant to the doing of Christian theology today.

5. According to the pre-modern notion of inertia, if motion were not added afresh at every moment all things would stop; hence God's action was *physically* necessary at every instant.

6. See the book on body in OT and NT from the Fuller conference, ed. by Nancey Murphy.

7. See e.g. Lynne Rudder Baker, "Need a Christian Be a Mind/Body Dualist?", *Faith and Philosophy* 12 (1995): 489-504.

8. See -- to mention just a few of the major titles -- Bernard Williams, *Problems of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1973); David Wiggins ('67); Sidney Shoemaker, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1963); Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984); John Perry, *The Problem of the Essential Indexical and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford, 1993); Amelie Rorty, ed., *The Identities of Persons* (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1979); Peter Strawson, *Individuals* (London: University of London Press, 1959); Harold Noonan, *Personal Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1989); Peter Unger, *Identity, Consciousness and Value* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1990); and now Carol Rovane, *The Bounds of Agency: An Essay in Revisionary Metaphysics* (Princeton, 1998).

9. This is a controversial thesis among philosophers of mind and would need extensive defense. I have argued it in some more detail in *God and Contemporary Science*, chap. 8.

10. Add from chap. 8 on focal and autonomic divine agency.
11. Another correction supplied by scripture is [check my last chapter].
12. Note: 2-3 articles, including the one cited in Molt. art.; then book. Although I find significant strengths in the process conceptuality that Bracken uses, note that one can still endorse the thesis just cited, and indeed much of Bracken's work, even without doing Whiteheadian metaphysics.
13. See J. Moltmann, *The Crucified God*.