

**A Worm So Vile:**  
**Christological Humility and the Affirmation of the Self in the Works of Teresa de Jesús**

BY

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For the Teresas in my life—the warrior mothers, sisters, and daughters.

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## SUMMARY

Readers of Santa Teresa de Jesús (1515-1582) are often confounded by her frequent self-disparaging remarks. Following Alison Weber's *Rhetoric of Femininity* (1990), many critics have regarded these utterances of wretchedness and humility as rhetorical legerdemain, which Teresa employed to navigate the patriarchal atmosphere of the Spanish Inquisition after the Council of Trent. Yet, in doing so, Teresa would have done a disservice to women by reinforcing feminine stereotypes and ideologies of women's subordination. In this view, women's religious writing shares little with a contemporary feminist consciousness; Teresa (and women religious writers like her) failed to confront patriarchal assumptions rather than merely navigate them.

Though this dissertation should not be read as a rejection of Weber's seminal work, it is a response to her conclusions. I explore Teresa as a theologian, where her utterances of wretchedness and humility are integral elements of her Christ-centered worldview. Here, Teresa's theological understanding of the terms *ruin* and *humildad* becomes paramount.

My thesis is that Teresa's humility is Christological and, therefore, affirms the feminine self rather than negates it. As a Christological virtue, Teresa's humility is essential for the self's teleological fulfillment; it is the catalyst for its restoration. It is a supernaturally-endowed certainty of one's spiritual poverty in which the self agrees with God's view of sin. Spiritual poverty, however, culminates in spiritual wealth: the soteriological process that reconstitutes the fallen self, reorients it to God, and restores the *agape* love relationship for which it was created. In this way, humility leads to the affirmation of the eternal self, whether masculine or feminine.

After an introductory chapter, I examine (in chapter 2) Augustine's Christological view of humility as poverty of spirit. I employ Augustine as a heuristic tool, for it is easier to locate Teresa's understanding of Christological humility and *agape* (or *caritas*) love within the

## SUMMARY (continued)

conceptual landscape he provides. In chapters 3 and 4, I locate Teresa's theology of humility and *agape* love within this landscape. In chapter 4, I also describe the ethical implications of her theological humility for a Christian society; for Teresa, as for Augustine, one's evidence of a restored relationship with God was an *agape* love for others, including one's enemies, essentially extending one's ethical obligation universally.

In such a reading, the rhetorical effect of Teresa's expressions of wretchedness would result from emphasis rather than exaggeration. But in that case, humility as *poverty of spirit* allows for subversion, not of Scripture or of the Church, but of interpretations of Scripture that would limit women's public participation; for if every self is spiritually empty before God, the result is an ontological leveling of all humanity. In other words, women cannot have more *nothing* than men and, therefore, cannot be spiritually inferior. In this way, Teresa wrote a theology sanctioned by the Church to subvert misogynistic dogma within the Church.

Furthermore, current research on the role of Christian theology in the development of modern liberalism allows for such a reading. I conclude this dissertation, therefore, (in chapter 5) with a discussion of two ideological consequences of Teresa's Christological humility: namely, 1) an ontological equality that presupposes civil equality and 2) a circle of obligation that is universal rather than local. These two normative assumptions inherent in Christian theology became indispensable to forming the concept of the modern individual and to the evolution of civil and political rights in the secular West. As such, Teresa's writings (though not necessarily Teresa herself) represent a progression of Western thought that steadily undermined ideologies of subordination and made *conceptually* possible a vision of society established on civic equality.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Readers of Santa Teresa de Jesús (1515-1582) are often left confounded by her deluge of self-disparaging remarks. For example, in her compiled works in Spanish, she refers to herself as *wretched* (*ruin*) over 200 times and as a *worm* (*gusano*) more than twenty. In the first sentence of her first book, the *Book of Her Life* (1562), she writes, “Since my confessors commanded me and gave me plenty of leeway to write about the favors and the kind of prayer the Lord has granted me, I wish they would also have allowed me to tell very clearly and minutely about my great sins and wretched life.”<sup>1</sup> Later, in the same autobiography, she includes such declarations as: “Lord...[d]on’t forget so quickly my great wickedness,”<sup>2</sup> “Don’t, my Creator, pour such precious liqueur in so broken a bottle,”<sup>3</sup> “I don’t recall His ever having granted me one of the very notable favors...if not at a time when I was brought to nothing at the sight of my wretchedness,”<sup>4</sup> “[E]verything we do is disgusting,”<sup>5</sup> “May You be blessed...that from such filthy mud as I, You make water so clear...! May You be praised...for having desired to raise up a worm so vile!”<sup>6</sup> As Carol Slade notes, a common critical problem surrounding Teresa and her writings concerns what to do with her “insistent self-deprecation.”<sup>7</sup> Was Teresa suffering from depression? Was she mimicking the humility *topoi* of her time? Are these remarks sincere, or do they serve a rhetorical function?

Barbara Mujica has suggested that any attempt to measure or confirm the sincerity of Teresa’s self-deprecation has, up to this point, reduced her to a self-hating misogynist or a manipulative hypocrite.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, following Alison Weber’s *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity*,<sup>9</sup> many scholars have read Teresa’s utterances of wretchedness and humility as literary legerdemain. These analyses portray Teresa as a victim of patriarchal



ideologies, which, despite her prolific writings and active role in conventual reforms, pressured her into a discourse of self-debasement for self-preservation.<sup>10</sup>

In this dissertation, however, I explore Teresa's utterances of wretchedness and humility theologically. They are integral elements of her Christ-centered worldview. I contend that most of Teresa's assertions of wretchedness are intrinsic to her understanding of Christological humility: a virtue necessary for her relationship with God. Readings that approach these declarations merely as a literary device—as an expedient, rhetorical shield against misogynist confessors and inquisitors—fail to account for the theological role of humility within an ontology that is, for Teresa, eternal.

For Teresa, humanity's *being* is eternal, and its *end* is Christ. Like Augustine, however, she views humanity's (not just women's) natural state as utterly wretched and in need of redemption. As a Christological virtue, humility engenders the process of bringing the ontological change necessary to restore humanity to God. Thus, as a virtue defined by its *telos*,<sup>11</sup> Teresa's humility is theological because it is Christ-centered. It dissolves the self's alienation from God, affirming and restoring the self *in Christ*. At the same time, it constructs a new self defined by Christ's love. This *agape* love dissolves one's alienation from *others*, for genuine humility is evidenced in the self by that love, which overflows through the self to humanity.

Accordingly, within Teresa's theology of humility, one finds two concepts that have become normative assumptions in the development of Western liberalism. These are an ontological equality that presupposes civil equality and a circle of obligation that is universal rather than local. Both were paramount in the formation of the concept of the modern individual and the development of civil and political rights in the secular West—or what historian Larry

Siedentop has called the “creation of a self-consciousness that undercuts merely social identities”<sup>12</sup> and recognizes “equality and reciprocity [as] the main-springs of justice.”<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, in this dissertation, I explore how Teresa subverted 16<sup>th</sup>-century cultural and ecclesiastical norms through orthodox theology rather than despite it. Though many of her contemporaries regarded elements of her writings as questionable doctrine, the core of her theology was not. That all humanity was equal in spiritual poverty and that a redeemed Catholic should love others without respect of persons: these tenets were indisputably orthodox. Teresa, therefore, uses a theology sanctioned *by* the Church to reprove abuses *within* the Church.

**A. A Worm So Vile: Teresa’s *Sermo Humilis* and the Negation of the Feminine Self**

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes, “[W]omen should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says.”<sup>14</sup> Later, in a letter to Timothy, he adds this command, “Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent.”<sup>15</sup> Weber begins her analysis of Teresa and other women religious writers in the early modern here, with “Paul’s justification for the exclusion of women from an apostolic role.”<sup>16</sup> As she recounts, by the 16th century, interpretations of this passage had broadened to limit women’s participation not just in the Church but in the public sphere altogether. Patriarchal oppression by the Church against its daughters became consolidated, and the Pauline Dictum (as it came to be known) was used to proscribe theological discourse by women.<sup>17</sup> As Elizabeth Howe remarks concerning this interpretation of Paul’s command, “If [women] take up the pen, they invade the public sphere occupied by men and, perforce, sin against modesty and humility, the quintessentially female virtues.”<sup>18</sup>

The prominence of women in religious sects that the Inquisition deemed dangerous and heretical, along with the increase in scandals involving women visionaries, led to a broad proscription against women's writing. Coupled with the Counter-Reformation's growing distrust of female spirituality, this reinforced an atmosphere of ecclesiastical and cultural misogyny.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, when Teresa's confessors ordered her to write her autobiography, she faced a double bind: she must write despite a proscription against women's writing and express herself despite the feminine virtues of modesty and humility broadly interpreted as silence.<sup>20</sup>

Weber, therefore, begins her book with a question that had undergirded much of previous scholarship: "How can we account for [Teresa's] survival, let alone her transformation in such a short period of time, from a controversial figure of questionable orthodoxy into a candidate for national sainthood?"<sup>21</sup> Critics before *Rhetoric* had cited the force of her personality, her influence with influential nobles, Phillip II's interest in her, as well as her charm, humor, and humility. Others pointed to her writing style, which they described as spontaneous, inadvertent, scattered, uneducated, and written as though spoken.<sup>22</sup> For these critics, her writing was either a deliberate act of "ascetic mortification"<sup>23</sup> or an instance of feminine affectivity, feminine shrewdness, or maternal instincts. In Weber's view, however, these readings are founded on condescending gender stereotypes of emotionalism and maternalism.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, Francisco Márquez Villanueva and Victor García de la Concha were the first to see Teresa's writing as a deliberately subversive "poetics for women"<sup>25</sup> that was persuasive rather than degrading. The result was the beginning of a criticism that recognized the "pragmatics of writing as a woman in Counter-Reformation Spain."<sup>26</sup> But where García de la Concha saw a rhetoric of women, Weber sees a rhetoric of femininity. That is, Teresa was not writing as a woman but rather as a woman was *perceived* to write in 16<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish

culture. The distinction marks the difference between an essentialist idea of women's authorship and the subversive possibilities of language. In a broad sense, Teresa is writing performatively<sup>27</sup>—an appropriation of femininity, not to expose or subvert norms *per se*, but to persuade. Her seemingly spontaneous style is self-conscious and subversive; it allows her to break the Pauline mandate of silence without seeming to encroach on the theological-rational domain of men. Thus, Weber views Teresa's utterances of humility and wretchedness more through a lens of rhetoric than theology:<sup>28</sup> a feminine *sermo humilis* rather than *humilitas* itself. These utterances are rhetorical tools that allowed her to persuade authority without directly confronting it—to break the Pauline silence without appearing to defy it.<sup>29</sup>

It is here in this rhetorical space that feminist critics have placed Teresa's wretchedness and humility. For them, humility is a feminine virtue of timorous silence and obsequiousness. It is synonymous with (or analogous to) subordination, penitence, obedience, and submission to ecclesiastical authority.<sup>30</sup> Thus, Teresa embraces a rhetoric of humility to distance herself from false visionaries<sup>31</sup> and to protect her status as a writer and reformer.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, she feels compelled to defend herself despite herself. Rather than endure in humble silence (the mark of true spirituality), she often takes a bellicose tone against an oppressive patriarchy.<sup>33</sup> In this case, humility's demand for silence conflicts with Teresa's apparent desire for self-promotion.<sup>34</sup> Yet, humility (as an external act rather than a spiritual condition) paradoxically allows a type of secular self-fulfillment. As a woman and a writer, her seeming pusillanimity—her “syntactical legerdemain”<sup>35</sup> both duplicitous and necessary<sup>36</sup>—becomes a ruse to charm and fool witless and credulous men.<sup>37</sup>

In this understanding of humility, Teresa's adoption of feminine stereotypes as a deliberate literary strategy achieved several objectives for the nun. Her writing, simple yet

persuasive, demonstrated to her contemporaries that Teresa was divinely inspired. She was a “virile” woman of her time: “[B]y becoming exaggeratedly feminine (particularly through her embrace of humility), [she] approached manliness, thus avoiding all the problems associated with the ‘feminine nature.’”<sup>38</sup> Stated another way, she “was a prodigy because of her sex and a saint in spite of it.”<sup>39</sup>

A predominant representation of women in Teresa’s time was that of the weaker sex. They were naive and susceptible to temptation (as evidenced by Eve’s credulity with the snake). They were adept at dragging men down with them (again as Eve with Adam), and they were susceptible to passion and vengeance more so than men. This presentation pervaded Protestant Europe as much as Catholic Europe. Coupled with the Aristotelian view of *woman* as a “botched” man, a misogynistic repression of women’s participation in public discourse resulted.<sup>40</sup> The 16<sup>th</sup>-century portrayal of women as morally and spiritually inferior to men should have hindered Teresa (as a woman) from writing persuasive theology. That she nevertheless did was miraculous. Her rhetorical acumen, however, elevated her not only to the status of honorary man but inspired saint. Consequently, she became an authoritative theological voice.<sup>41</sup>

Implicit in this argument is that Teresa did a disservice to women. The act she performed allowed her to thrive but ultimately reinforced the patriarchal values she struggled to overcome.<sup>42</sup> Teresa succeeded as a writer through a rhetorical judo that turned feminine stereotypes of her day to her benefit. Thus, Weber concludes that the employment of those stereotypes ultimately reinforced the misogyny of her day: “Her rhetoric of femininity, which served her own needs of self-assertion so successfully, also paradoxically sanctioned the paternalistic authority of the Church over its daughters and reinforced the ideology of women’s intellectual and spiritual subordination.”<sup>43</sup>

Teresa's performance of feminine sanctity granted her success and authority as a writer and legitimized her exceptionalism.<sup>44</sup> Yet, her performance simultaneously negated the feminine self by reaffirming its subordinate status to masculine virtue. In this way, Teresa inadvertently impeded other women from achieving the same degree of recognition, authority, and autonomy.<sup>45</sup> Weber, therefore, ends *Rhetoric* with this reproach, "[Teresa] won a public voice for herself, if not for other women."<sup>46</sup> Her conclusion is unsurprising given the book's argument and implicit assumption: that women's religious writing shares little with a contemporary feminist consciousness. Women religious writers like Teresa failed to confront patriarchal assumptions rather than merely navigate them. For that reason, Weber remarks, "[I]t would be difficult to argue that any of them developed an alternative vision of the future predicated on the civil equality between the sexes and among all classes."<sup>47</sup>

**B. A Worm Raised Up: Teresa's Christological Humility and the Affirmation of the Feminine Self**

When analyzing Teresa's authorial practice within the patriarchal climate of the Inquisition and in the immediate aftermath of the Council of Trent, questions justifiably arise about the role that her construction of humility played in the formation of her subjectivity. Did humility cripple her intellectual, social, and political freedom or her self-development as a woman? Did it justify her exclusion from any public role or sanction patriarchal demands for servility? Did it allow for the disguising of self-interest behind a mask of self-denigration?<sup>48</sup> If humility were a feminine virtue, the cultural and political context of the 16<sup>th</sup> century described above would justify the conclusion that humility was no virtue at all. Humility would indeed result in a negation of the self and especially of the feminine self. But was Teresa's humility merely a feminine virtue?

Philosophers and theologians have disagreed on the nature of humility and what its normative status should be.<sup>49</sup> In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche famously wrote, “When stepped on, a worm doubles up. That is clever. In that way he lessens the probability of being stepped on again. In the language of morality: humility.”<sup>50</sup> Hume, in his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, also derided humility (along with self-denial, silence, and solitude) as a *monkish* virtue, “rejected by men of sense;” it neither advanced their fortunes in this world, made them valuable to society, nor increased self-enjoyment; it made men saints in death but useless in life.<sup>51</sup> More recently, feminist philosophers and theologians have regarded humility as especially detrimental for women: a form of subordination where a woman never aspires too high, lives with an “ambivalent fear of success,” and espouses “attitudes of self-depreciation” that she will then impose on other women.<sup>52</sup> Others posit that humility can be viewed more positively as a virtue in which one maintains a modest view of one’s own importance or at least exhibits a lack of haughtiness or arrogance, if not deference or submission.<sup>53</sup> As an others-focused virtue, it can be “associated with virtuous traits such as altruism, compassion, and forgiveness...[and] stave off vices such as arrogance, vanity, selfishness, and conceit.”<sup>54</sup>

What these definitions have in common, however, is that they remain contained within teleological endeavors of temporal glory and self-fulfillment.<sup>55</sup> Humility, therefore, has developed in modernity as a limiting (if not negative) concept tied to mundane ends such as political stability, societal progress, or self-amelioration. Thus, meekness tends to be synonymous with weakness and humility with pusillanimity and obsequiousness. Even a humility that is others-focused fulfills the self and other selves through what I would call a *horizontal* (temporal) rather than *vertical* (eternal) teleology.

Definitions of humility hinge on one of these two teleologies. But because they are antithetical, the conceptual framework constructing the virtue will be incompatible. For example, Augustine and Aristotle both regarded humility as a virtue that emanated from humanity's chief end or *telos*. But where, for Aristotle, that *telos* was temporal and could only be fulfilled in this life, for Augustine, the *telos* was eternal. Thus, two humilities sprang from different sources with contrary goals, making attempts to reconcile their opposing definitions difficult since they embody incompatible worldviews and *desiderata*.<sup>56</sup> Greek humility remained at most a limitations-owning modesty and stood opposed to *hubris*. In contrast, as developed by Augustine, Christian humility became the highest virtue, intrinsic to faith and defined by its eternal *telos*, Christ himself.<sup>57</sup> For that reason, this dissertation places Teresa's humility within that eternal *telos* and asks: did humility as she envisioned it render her a worm doubled up or (as she wrote) a worm raised up?

Discursive outcomes are inscribed upon discursive ideologies: "those political [and] intellectual commitments that motivate people...to use language in particular ways, react differently to the language uses of others, and draw different conclusions about the authority, value, or significance of language acts."<sup>58</sup> Thus, as Elena Carrera maintains, "the critic...must choose between interpreting Teresa's rhetoric as a pose, seeing language simply as a way of expressing the self, or...examining to what extent language and the *ideology* of humility...also influenced her notion of herself as a Christian subject."<sup>59</sup> In such an examination—one founded on an ideology that begins with a theological notion of the self—perhaps Teresa's declarations of wretchedness and humility would be found to be neither self-denigrating, servile, or self-serving but rather self-affirming and restorative. Indeed, Constance Furey observes that Teresa's texts represent an "earlier age of criticism" that explored "the meaning of God's word (the essence of



biblical criticism) not (or not just) as systematic linguistic or grammatical interpretation...but instead as a process of discernment.”<sup>60</sup> Critics should, therefore, abandon a hermeneutics of suspicion as a form of “mandated paranoia” that merely exposes “the way people fetishize objects and social forces by (wrongly) ascribing power to them” or revealing how people are “subject to forces beyond their control.”<sup>61</sup> Instead, *discernment* explores a text’s “language of relationality.”<sup>62</sup> Through humility and attentiveness to God’s presence and role in revelation, one examines the relationship between words and the Word.<sup>63</sup> This approach, rather than requiring the reader to be premodern, recognizes that, for Teresa (who *was* premodern), the inscription and interpretation of religious texts was the result of a revelatory gift of understanding through communion with God.<sup>64</sup> Thus, the interpretive process of those texts should be “transformative, interactive, and relational” as Teresa envisioned that process.<sup>65</sup>

I, therefore, interpret Teresa’s utterances of wretchedness within a conceptual framework of theological humility that is *relational*.<sup>66</sup> Wretchedness and humility are synonymous in this framework, but they are not self-negating. They are self-realizing: first (and by necessity) by one’s relation to God and then secondarily to others. I aim to develop what Bernard McGinn briefly considers in his study of Teresa’s mysticism. He writes, “[Teresa] teaches us our own *worthlessness*, that is, the *foundational virtue of humility*, which returns again and again in her account.”<sup>67</sup> McGinn offers the possibility of recognizing her wretchedness as an essential tenet within her theology rather than a mere literary *topos*. The concept of wretchedness is, in fact, ubiquitous within Christian theology. Paul declares his wretchedness in Romans 7.<sup>68</sup> It is present in the writings of Augustine and Christian mystics. It is sung at funerals in the first stanza of “Amazing Grace.” The wretchedness of sin and the need for Christ’s redemption have been central concepts within Christianity from its inception. Yet, equally important is the

understanding that upon this initial foundation of wretchedness stands a new structure of grace. Biblical wretchedness never ends in self-deprecation but rather with Paul's consequent declaration in Romans 8: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."<sup>69</sup>

The last three words serve as a template for understanding Teresa's confessions of wretchedness and incompetence in a transformative and relational sense. The theological question of humility and wretchedness is ultimately an ontological question. By addressing it, Teresa enters a millennia-old discourse pertinent to spiritual and philosophical concepts of selfhood. At the center of this discourse is the question: what does it mean to be human? From this question flows the consequent teleological question: what is humanity's end (*telos*)? In this context, humility is the essential virtue necessary for the (re)construction of the *self*.

Like Augustine, Teresa presents a tragic ontology of humanity that is eternal yet broken. Her subsequent solution—ontologically and teleologically—is Jesus Christ. Her corpus, therefore, is (like Augustine's) not only theological but Christological. As Christopher Cook defines this term in his book, *Hearing Voices, Demonic and Divine: Scientific and Theological Perspectives*, a Christological perspective assumes that Christ is the foundation for Christian anthropology. Accordingly, a life lived most fully is one in harmony with God; therefore, "amidst all...particularities of gender, culture, and history...there is a receptivity within the human soul/mind to God."<sup>70</sup> Thus, to read from a Christological perspective is to "assert that our understanding of what it means to be human is most fully revealed in the life of the man whom Christians look to as the unique exemplar of life lived according to divine purpose."<sup>71</sup>

This is Teresa's perspective. Christ is the doxological center of her every work.<sup>72</sup> He is the source and example of perfect humility, a divine virtue that becomes the catalyst for healing

humanity's brokenness of *being*. Teresa's confessions of wretchedness, then, should not be confused with self-deprecation or rhetorical feigning, for her wretchedness *before* Christ ends in exaltation *in* Christ and his infused empowerment. Nevertheless, the exaltation and empowerment depend on an initial awareness of sin that she expresses as *ruin*. It is an ontological problem, not an ethical one. As Scottish minister Oswald Chambers wrote over a century ago:

Sin...is not wrong *doing*, but wrong *being*—it is deliberate and determined independence from God. The Christian faith bases everything on the extreme, self-confident nature of sin. Other faiths deal with *sins*—the Bible alone deals with *sin*.... The revealed truth of the Bible is not that Jesus Christ took on Himself our fleshly sins, but that He took on Himself the heredity of sin that no man can even touch.<sup>73</sup>

Teresa discusses sin in these same ontological terms. Though she rarely mentions her sins, her discussion of sin itself is prolific and is wrapped in her understanding of humility as the restorative catalyst.

I focus, therefore, on humility's relation to the Christian self as well as to a Christian community and its *ethos*. My argument centers on three points. First, Teresa's ideology of humility—or more precisely, her theology of humility—affirms the self: the soul is restored to God through humility and to others through a consequent *agape* love. Second, her texts subvert rather than sanction the paternalistic authority of the Church, for by affirming every self, she affirms the feminine self. Finally, her theology represents a philosophical and political trajectory that developed over millennia in the West into civil and political equality.

Thus, in chapter 2, I discuss Augustine's Christological understanding of *humilitas* and *caritas*. I employ Augustine as a heuristic tool: it is easier to locate Teresa's understanding of Christological humility and love within the conceptual landscape he provides. For Augustine (and for Paul), the self was eternal. It had an eternal good, making the temporal and material

inferior and secondary in relevance and scope to the former. Therefore, happiness (*eudaimonia*) was demarcated through one's relationship with God. The essence of what it meant to be created in the image of God was the capacity to know God and share his nature. In other words, humanity was meant to live in and partake of the essence of God, who embodied love, and thus enter the relationship that always-already defined the Trinity. Only when able to partake of this holy mystery could a man or woman be happy (fulfilled, complete, centered).

Nevertheless, these terms were first theologically only possible in the Edenic context in which sin was absent. As inheritors of Adam's nature, however, humanity's will was broken; and because it was broken, it was driven to seek its good in temporal terms. In this paradigm, humility became the remedy—the divine cure—that turned the will away from a pride that sought itself. Instead, it allowed God to transform the self into one that sought its ultimate good: unity with him. The salient word here is *transformed*, for the self was neither subdued nor reformed. It was regenerated, acquiring, as Basil Studer has called it, a new ontological disposition<sup>74</sup> initiated through humility by the turning of the self toward God. This, then, is the theological paradox of the self found in the gospels and expounded on by Augustine: “Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”<sup>75</sup> As Augustine conceives this new self, the self is not *emptied* in the sense of being destroyed, lost, erased, or absorbed. The self retains its original individuality and will, but humility allows the postlapsarian self to become an ontologically transformed, *redeemed* self. It is emptied of a singular self-pride and of the desire to seek temporal goods for their own sake. Its interior is then centered and filled with God, united with his will and purpose.<sup>76</sup>

For this reason, Augustine defines humility in relation to Christ's humility as expressed in his *kenosis*: perfect love for the Father and for others, enabling him to empty himself of his

own will and submit to the will of the Father, even to the point of death, thereby providing the means of salvation.<sup>77</sup> In addition, through his *kenosis*, Christ proliferated his eternal relationship with the Father on behalf of himself and the Father. Thus, the Christian self follows Christ's example, not in sinless sacrifice but rather in *self*-sacrifice. Through humility, the self enters salvation and begins that *caritas* relationship with God and others. As a result, the will begins to heal, permitting the self to become the "living sacrifice" Paul describes in Romans 12.<sup>78</sup> In Augustinian terms, the self gains everything from humility, for it fulfills its ontological destiny, living out and living in a God-centered *caritas*. In this way, the self takes on a "permanent loveliness" and the "conferring of happiness," for the self is in God, the source of *caritas*.<sup>79</sup>

In chapter 3, I discuss Teresa's theology of humility. Though she constructs an ontology of the self that resembles Augustine's ontology, she presents humanity not merely as a rational soul but as a *mystical* soul. That is, Augustine (as philosopher and theologian) presents a Christianity that is philosophically and rationally necessary for the self's happiness and fulfillment. In his theology, experiential union is possible and desirable. Teresa, however, constructs a Christian self in experiential terms, and she emphasizes the union of the self with the divine. But though her presentation is less systematic than Augustine's, it is no less theological. She likewise presents the self as eternal, for which temporal aims are inferior servants (if not enemies) of divine destiny. *Eudemonistic* happiness is delineated through the self's relationship with God, and it is Christ's love and work in the self that makes the relationship possible. God's salvific work remains necessary since Teresa's self is also utterly broken—will, mind, reason, emotions, and flesh. Therefore, humility again functions as a remedy for pride and results in an ontological transformation that turns the will to God.

Unlike Augustine, however, Teresa appeals to Christ's own definition of humility, given to her in the form of a locution: "He told me... 'This is true humility: *to know what you can do and what I can do.*'"<sup>80</sup> She will expound on this definition throughout her works. Divine humility empties the self, not of its identity but of any ability to singularly and without divine intervention fulfill its ontological destiny. Only Christ, as constituent of the Holy Trinity, can do that. Humility recognizes, accepts, and enables the process of yielding to Christ's work in the soul. Teresa, therefore, aligns herself with Augustine's concept of humility but takes it in a new direction. She shifts the emphasis from the rational to the mystical, where experience and experiential language (such as the garden and water metaphors of the *Vida*) become paramount. Here, humility is the inevitable consequence of supernaturally seeing oneself from God's viewpoint: first as a recognition of the wretchedness of sin in the soul, then as an appropriation of his imparted righteousness. She acknowledges this appropriation as a redemptive work, but she emphasizes *gratuitous* love as the inevitable, doxological response. This response, though present in Augustine, is more prolific and preeminent in the works of Teresa.

A *caritas* relationship with God as the fulfillment of one's *being*, however, necessarily has temporal consequences, for it assumes an ontological equality of every self created in the image of God. In chapter 4, therefore, I turn to the second facet of Teresa's theology of humility: Teresa's *agape* love of neighbor. Though she never uses this New Testament word for *love*, she privileges the concept of *agape* (what Augustine translates as *caritas*) in her texts. For Teresa, humility and *agape* are inseparable concepts. Humility leads to union with God, where *union* is the integration of one's will with God's will. But in union, one finds that God's will is love because he is love. Therefore, the union of wills transforms one's desires toward *agape* and produces humility's sister virtue: love of neighbor. For Teresa, this is God's love overflowing

from the self to humanity. As such, humility through *agape* constructs a moral obligation to others.

Thus, what is true of Augustine's *caritas* is true of Teresa's *agape*. As Augustine scholar Charles Mathewes explains, "Augustine responded to both pluralism and otherness simultaneously, both anthropologically—because the sinful self is broken into a plurality and thus other to itself—and theologically—because God is theologically the absolute other."<sup>81</sup> But because humility heals this pluralized, broken self and restores the self to God, the self can now also be restored to humanity. What springs from this understanding of *being*, then, is not an erasure of otherness but rather the erasure of subjugated hierarchies among others: a community in which one engages with those that think and act differently and simultaneously encounters every soul in its peculiar oddness.<sup>82</sup>

Christological humility recognizes the fallen self as completely fallen and in need of redemption. No one is exempt from the need for redemption nor too far from redemption itself, and no one is closer to redemption than any other. Because humility is the affirmation that one brings nothing to God in that redemption (except one's own sin), it follows that one cannot have more *nothing* than another. What temporal differences exist are now seen as potentially valuable in service to God and humanity since the self has been reconciled to God and his will.<sup>83</sup> Those possessing wealth and authority, for example, demonstrate the humility and love of Christ by aligning their material resources with God's purpose. Yet, this precludes any theological justification for reinstituting artificially-constructed hierarchies based on class or gender. If one's *being* is defined as equal destitution and restoration, then notions of inherited honor, female spiritual deficiency, and male moral superiority begin to erode.

With that in mind, I will return to my three initial points in the final chapter, addressing them *within* Teresa's Christological perspective. I argue that Teresa is not writing a *feminine* theology, where virtues such as humility, submission, and conformity apply only to herself, her sisters, and daughters of the Church. She inscribes an orthodox, *Christian* theology and so cannot be said to sanction a paternalistic authority over her spiritual daughters. Her writings provide a Christological model of humility—an imitable pattern—for a general, Catholic audience regardless of gender or class. This model applies to every self and affirms every self, feminine or masculine. It dissolves the self's alienation from God and, through *agape*, dissolves the self's alienation from others.

Thus, she uses the orthodoxy *of* the Church to attack abuses *within* the Church. In doing so, she is a mirror, not a manipulator. She subverts paternalistic norms of the Church through a theology that negates a feminine moral and spiritual inferiority and through a moral obligation that applies to both genders. Where she is a worm, so are men. Where her every work is disgusting, so is every work in comparison to the work of the cross.<sup>84</sup> Though she frequently mentions her sin, her emphasis is grounded in soteriology. Her utterances of wretchedness apply to all humanity, including the confessors and inquisitors reading her works. Wretchedness and poverty of spirit are ungendered concepts—and they are total—as is the *agape* that must then flow into the material and mundane.

Accordingly, her theology has implications for the political self. As historian Larry Siedentop documents in his book *Inventing the Individual*, Western “liberalism rests on the moral assumptions provided by Christianity,” for it “preserves Christian ontology without the metaphysics of salvation.”<sup>85</sup> I will argue in the following pages that Teresa inscribes both the metaphysics and the assumptions. Never straying from an orthodox theology of humility and



love, she inadvertently constructs an argument for what her theology implied: that ontological equality assumes civil equality and moral obligation. For that reason, Teresa not only subverts the feminine stereotypes she is accused of sanctioning. She represents a moment in a steady ideological flow over millennia—an ideology that in modern times would become as normative as it was hidden yet inform how society should be structured and governed in the West.

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<sup>1</sup> Teresa of Avila, *The Book of Her Life*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume One*, 2nd ed., ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1987), prologue, Kindle. “Quisiera yo que, como me han mandado y dado larga licencia para que escriba el modo de oración y las mercedes que el Señor me ha hecho, me la dieran para que muy por menudo y con claridad dijera mis grandes pecados y ruin vida.” Teresa de Jesús, *El libro de la vida*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookklasicos, 2015), prólogo, Kindle.

<sup>2</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 18.4. “Señor...no olvidéis tan presto tan grandes males míos.” Teresa, *Vida*, 18.4.

<sup>3</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 18.4. “No pongáis, Criador mío, tan precioso licor en vaso tan quebrado.” Teresa, *Vida*, 18.4.

<sup>4</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 22.11. “No me acuerdo haberme hecho merced muy señalada...que no sea estando deshecha de verme tan ruin.” Teresa, *Vida*, 22.11.

<sup>5</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 39.16. “[E]s todo asco cuanto podemos hacer.” Teresa, *Vida*, 39.16.

<sup>6</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 19.2. “¡Bendito seáis, Señor mío, que así hacéis de pecina tan sucia como yo, agua tan clara que sea para vuestra mesa! ¡Seáis alabado, oh regalo de los ángeles, que así queréis levantar un gusano tan vil!” Teresa, *Vida*, 19.2.

<sup>7</sup> Carole Slade, “Teaching Teresa of Ávila's *The Book of Her Life* in the Tradition of Western Spiritual Autobiography,” in *Approaches to Teaching Teresa of Ávila and the Spanish Mystics*, ed. Alison Weber (New York: Modern Language Association, 2009), 125.

<sup>8</sup> Barbara Mujica, “Was Teresa of Ávila a Feminist?” in *Approaches to Teaching Teresa of Ávila and the Spanish Mystics*, ed. Alison Weber (New York: Modern Language Association, 2009), 74.

<sup>9</sup> Alison Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> Admittedly, Weber's reading of Teresa's humility is one of many available. Yet, judging by the volume of citations both of Weber and of *Rhetoric* since its publication in 1990, her conclusions have had substantial influence on Teresian scholarship. For that reason, though this dissertation should not be read as an attack on Weber or *Rhetoric*, it will be, I hope, a response to her conclusions.

<sup>11</sup> I use this heuristically. I do not argue that Teresa was Aristotelian.

<sup>12</sup> Larry Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 105.

<sup>13</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 216.

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<sup>14</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:34 (New Revised Standard Version). Paul then adds in verse 35, “If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>15</sup> 1 Timothy 2:11-12 (New Revised Standard Version). In verses 13-14, Paul gives this reason, “For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>16</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 19.

<sup>17</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 18-20.

<sup>18</sup> Elizabeth Teresa Howe, “‘Let Your Women Keep Silence’: The Pauline Dictum and Women’s Education,” in *Women’s Literacy in Early Modern Spain and the New World*, ed. Anne J. Cruz and Rosilie Hernández (London, UK: Taylor and Francis Group, 2011), 128. After Weber’s *Rhetoric*, scholarship has demonstrated that women were, in fact, writing prolifically. Silvia Evangelisti argues that even after Trent women had the freedom to write (and publish), to be educated, and to develop their creative and intellectual skills. Convents were workshops of autobiographical writing, and the cloistered atmosphere gave them both the time and the silence to read and write. Readings were usually moral or spiritual, but they also included literary texts. They in turn wrote spiritual tracts and texts describing mystical experiences as well as treatises defending their sex. Silvia Evangelisti, *Nuns: A History of Convent Life* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), 67-98, Proquest Ebrary. Stephanie Kirk likewise asserts that women’s writing formed a kind of intellectual solidarity in pursuit of knowledge, education, and artistic creation. Stephanie L. Kirk, *Convent Life in Colonial Mexico: A Tale of Two Communities* (Gainesville: Florida University Press, 2007), 128.

<sup>19</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 18-33.

<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth Howe describes this double bind as the paradox in which the doctrine that women be silent coincided with the command of confessors that they write even while knowing that those writings would be scrutinized by church authorities. Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Autobiographical Writing by Early Modern Hispanic Women* (London, UK: Routledge, 2016), 26, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>21</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Also addressing Teresa’s style of writing, Howe notes that, until the twentieth century, feminine autobiography was suppressed from the canon. According to Howe, the prevalent stance about women’s writing was that, even where women were writing, they shouldn’t have been (*Autobiographical Writing*, 11-13). The Renaissance notion that women’s writing placed them in the public sphere, dangerously exposing them to the gaze of men (and therefore leading to sexual temptation and impurity), had infiltrated the realm of literary criticism. Likewise, women’s writing was perceived as disorderly, chaotic, “fragmented, circular, or unsure of its voice” (*Autobiographical Writing*, 21) confirming the stereotypes of the reasonable man and emotional woman. Howe concludes: “Such a bias equates the male work with the rational, serious, and reflective, while relegating the female to the emotional, frivolous and spontaneous.... Too often, these stark contrasts became the justification for excluding female writing from the canon” (*Autobiographical Writing*, 21). This was the case until feminist critics began to give female writers authorial agency, finding that agency in the paradox of writing in a culture that demanded they not write (*Autobiographical Writing*, 21-22).

<sup>23</sup> Menéndez Pidal cited in Weber, *Rhetoric*, 7.

<sup>24</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 7-10.

<sup>25</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 11.

<sup>26</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 11.

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<sup>27</sup> Weber does not use this word. I find it interesting, however, that Weber's *Rhetoric* was published in 1990, the same year that Judith Butler published *Gender Trouble*. See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990; New York: Routledge, 2006), ProQuest Ebook Central (citations refer to 2006 edition). Butler broadly describes performativity as "a stylized repetition of acts...which are internally discontinuous... [such that] the appearance of substance is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment" (*Gender Trouble*, 192). I, therefore, use the term loosely. Where Butler troubles gender roles through "parodic repetition" (*Gender Trouble*, 192), Weber sees Teresa sanctioning them for self-preservation.

<sup>28</sup> Weber's book considers several rhetorical strategies—affected modesty, concession, irony, the use of diminutives, obfuscation, and designed disorder, to name a few. For brevity, I look at two examples relevant to Teresa's humility: affected modesty and irony.

<sup>29</sup> In an earlier article, Weber acknowledges that Teresa did not construct her theology *ex nihilo*. As she defines her own position, "Teresa's originality lies not in doctrinal content *per se*, but rather in her transformation of doctrine into a vital solution to her personal anguish." Alison Weber, "The Paradoxes of Humility: Santa Teresa's *Libro de la vida* as Double Bind," *Journal of Hispanic Philology* 9, no. 3 (1985): 229n. I agree with Weber on this point, but in my attempt to provide a more composite and complete (i.e., Christological) definition of *humility*, I arrive at different conclusions than hers concerning Teresa's potential legacy.

<sup>30</sup> Gillian T. W. Ahlgren, *Teresa de Avila and the Politics of Sanctity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 68-80. Ahlgren adds, "The idea that Teresa wrote out of dutiful obedience to her confessors can no longer be defended. It shifts her literary motivation and creativity to her confessors and attributes the genius of her works to the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit.... The best explanation is that she wanted to write" (*Politics of Sanctity*, 79). Though some might argue for the compatibility of collaborative inspiration and genius, I nevertheless agree with Ahlgren's view that Teresa wanted to write. I, therefore, don't dispute that Teresa employed rhetorical strategies that she, Weber, and others identify. In this dissertation, however, I maintain that they incorrectly conflate a rhetoric of humility with Teresa's Christological humility.

<sup>31</sup> Francisco Garcia Rubio, "La función retórico-jurídica del demonio en *El libro de la vida* de Teresa de Jesús," *Ehumanista* 17, (2011): 193.

<sup>32</sup> See Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*. For Ahlgren, Teresa's humility runs counter to her public defense of her position, her prolific writing, and the promotion of her reforms. Ahlgren, like Weber, references the context of the Catholic Reformation. Teresa was always under the skeptical eye of the Inquisition. Thus, she was willing "to conform to the models of religiosity prescribed for women" (Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 3-4). Her humility was, consequently, distinctly "female" and "reinforced patriarchal structures and stereotypes" (*Politics of Sanctity*, 69). Yet, her public posture and activities were essentially male (*Politics of Sanctity*, 165), thereby allowing Teresa to appear to be in subjection to the Church and its authority in her writings while behaving contrary to the discourse of inferiority she reproduced. Her utterances were a strategy for survival rather than any sincere self-doubt (*Politics of Sanctity*, 152). Teresa "bested" or "charmed" the men that tried to censor and control her because of their belief in her inferiority as a woman. Her rhetoric of humility and obedience, along with her tenacity, allowed her to survive (*Politics of Sanctity*, 5). Following Weber, Ahlgren posits that Teresa "*fooled* many of her contemporaries," noting that during her canonization process, so many praised her obedience, submission, and humility (*Politics of Sanctity*, 5, italics added).

<sup>33</sup> Yonsoo Kim and Ana Maria Carvajal Jaramillo, "La codificación de la espiritualidad femenina de Teresa de Cartagena y Santa Teresa de Avila," *Ehumanista* 32, (2016): 76.

<sup>34</sup> Noelia Bueno Gómez, "Self-management and Narrativity in Teresa of Avila's Work," *Life Writing* 15, no. 3 (2018): 307.

<sup>35</sup> Howe, *Autobiographical Writing*, 64.

<sup>36</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 97.

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<sup>37</sup> In *Rhetoric*, Weber is careful not to describe Teresa as manipulative or Machiavellian. She turns instead to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and his distinction between the *alazon* (braggart) and the *eiron* (ironist). For Aristotle, the mean between excess boastfulness and extreme self-deprecation was irony. Weber places Teresa's incessant descriptions of wretchedness and sin in that rhetorical space (15). Others have not been so generous. Robert Rudder, for example, addressing the paradox of Teresa's humility and headstrong will, cites James Leuba who, almost a century ago, in his book, *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism*, dismissed Teresa's humility as "shot through with an ambition and a pride that death alone could subdue." Robert S. Rudder, "Santa Teresa's Mysticism: The Paradox of Humility," *Hispania* 54, no. 2 (1971): 342. Rudder also cites Miguel de Unamuno, who rejected Teresa's spiritual humility and argued instead that she embodied a humanity that appeared at once as *vir* and *mulier*—that is, she simultaneously exhibited masculine resolve and feminine servility ("The Paradox of Humility," 342).

<sup>38</sup> Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 165.

<sup>39</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 165.

<sup>40</sup> Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 332-358.

<sup>41</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 163-164.

<sup>42</sup> Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 166.

<sup>43</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 165.

<sup>44</sup> Alison Weber, "Literature by Women Religious in Early Modern Catholic Europe and the New World," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jane Couchman and Allyson M. Poska (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2013), 33, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>45</sup> Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 165-166. Ahlgren and Weber arrive at similar conclusions. In her final chapter, Ahlgren remarks, "Teresa's independence, originality, and spiritual power were acceptable as long as the woman who embodied them was seen as exceptional, not in these respects to be emulated.... [T]he Teresa who came to be canonized was increasingly a solitary figure, so circumscribed by her virtues [i.e., feminine humility, obedience, submission, subordination, penitence] that she would encourage women to exist within the margins of the institutional church" (166). Her hagiographical image eventually came to represent the patriarchal values that perpetuated stereotypes of feminine sanctity in the Counter-Reformation. As such, she impeded other women from achieving the same degree of authority and autonomy. Ironically, Teresa, "who had fought so hard for women's spiritual autonomy, became the instrument by which the Roman hierarchy propagated its own gender ideology" (166).

<sup>46</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 165.

<sup>47</sup> Weber, "Women Religious," 45.

<sup>48</sup> These questions are modified from Deborah Wallace Ruddy, "A Christological Approach to Virtue: Augustine and Humility" (PhD diss., Boston College, 2001), 235, ProQuest ID 276592258.

<sup>49</sup> Thomas Nadelhoffer, Jennifer Cole Wright, Matthew Echols, Tyler Perini, and Kelly Venezia, "Some Varieties of Humility Worth Wanting," *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 14, no. 2 (2017): 169-170, doi:10.1163/17455243-46810056.

<sup>50</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, trans. A. M. Ludovici (Hastings, UK: Delphi Classics, 2015), "Apophthegms and Darts" 31, Kindle.

<sup>51</sup> David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning the Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 2nd ed., ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1963), 270.

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<sup>52</sup> Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1973), 53. I place Weber's view of Teresa's writings here. For a discussion of classical and contemporary views of humility as contrasted with a Christological view of humility, see Joseph J. McNerney, *The Greatness of Humility: St. Augustine on Moral Excellence* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016), 1, "Classical Views of Humility and Greatness," Kindle; and Ruddy, "A Christological Approach to Virtue," 14-47. See especially Ruddy's discussion of the feminist critique of humility (33-46).

<sup>53</sup> Nadelhoffer et al, "Some Varieties of Humility," 169-170.

<sup>54</sup> Nadelhoffer et al, "Some Varieties of Humility," 195-196.

<sup>55</sup> Ashleen Menchaca-Bagnulo, "Humility and Humanity: Machiavelli's Rejection and Appropriation of a Christian Ideal," *European Journal of Political Theory* 17, no. 2 (30 March 2015): 134-135, 147, <https://doi-org.proxy.cc.uic.edu/10.1177/1474885115577145>.

<sup>56</sup> For a discussion of Aquinas's attempt, see appendix A.

<sup>57</sup> Kent Dunnington, "Intellectual Humility and the Ends of the Virtues: Conflicting Aretaic Desiderata," *Political Theology* 18, no. 2 (2017): 107, doi:10.1080/1462317X.2016.1224049.

<sup>58</sup> C. H. Knoblauch, *Discursive Ideologies: Reading Western Rhetoric* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2014), 10.

<sup>59</sup> Elena Carrera, *Teresa of Avila's Autobiography: Authority, Power and the Self in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Spain* (London, UK: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2005), 6 (italics added).

<sup>60</sup> Constance M. Furey, "Discernment as Critique in Teresa of Avila and Erasmus of Rotterdam," *Exemplaria* 26, no. 2-3 (2014): 257, doi: 10.1179/1041257314Z.00000000053.

<sup>61</sup> Furey, "Discernment as Critique," 255.

<sup>62</sup> Furey, "Discernment as Critique," 258.

<sup>63</sup> Furey, "Discernment as Critique," 258-263.

<sup>64</sup> Furey, "Discernment as Critique," 260.

<sup>65</sup> Furey, "Discernment as Critique," 268.

<sup>66</sup> This approach also allows me to address certain methodological concerns that Carlos Eire identifies at the end of his work on the history of the *Vida* and its reception. See Carlos Eire, *The Life of Saint Teresa of Avila: A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 196-216. Eire remarks that, during what he calls the post-mystical intermillennial era (mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to the present), Teresa and the *Vida* have become akin to a Rorschach inkblot. That is, readings mirror the concerns of the interpreters. Post-mystical interpreters, however, have one characteristic in common: they hail from "interpretive schools of thought that identified themselves as definitive breaks with the past and proudly employed the prefix 'post' in naming themselves: such as postmodern, poststructural, postfeminist, postsecular, and postcolonial" (197). In Eire's view, these schools share the conceit that Western civilization and culture have reached a nadir that now transcends history, allowing intellectuals to discard past assumptions—including the ontological and teleological assumptions that Teresa and her contemporaries would have shared—to "embrace some unassailable obvious truth that had eluded all their benighted ancestors" (198). He adds an acerbic critique that, though these schools deny epistemological certainty, with their claims to interpretive finality, they share "a cocky, self-assured certainty that resemble[s] that of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment" (198)—a movement that itself rejected the religious and mystical epistemologies of the pre-modern. Current readings, then, tend to ignore or misread Teresa's mystical theology as well as its phenomenological elements. They instead emphasize her socio-political and historical context or her status as a woman and a writer (among other concerns).

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Eire concludes ironically that the *Teresa* constructed in the post-mystical intermillennial era would have “baffled, shocked, and offended” the actual Teresa as well as her contemporaries (215). Though I do not claim to transcend his Rorschach test, my focus on Teresa’s conceptual framework of theological humility as *relational* attempts to bridge the interpretive dissonance he notes (215) by accounting for the Christological and phenomenological aspects of Teresa’s theology within her socio-political and historical context and her status as a woman writer. My final chapter is a summary of research that suggests that the ontological, teleological, epistemological, and ethical assumptions that Teresa and her contemporaries would have shared provided the intellectual foundation for the epistemological instability and (yet) the normative ethical certainties of the post-mystical intermillennial era.

<sup>67</sup> Bernard McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain, 1500-1650*, vol. 6.2 of *The Presence of God: The History of Western Christian Mysticism* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2017), 146. Here he is writing specifically about Teresa’s metaphor of the garden and its initial stages of labor.

<sup>68</sup> Romans 7:24: “Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>69</sup> Romans 8:1 (New Revised Standard Version). There is controversy concerning the original Greek of this verse. Many English translations reflect the short version, like the NRSV above. Yet, the Vulgate adds, “qui non secundum carnem ambulat” which the Douay-Rheims Bible renders as “who walk not according to the flesh.” Other versions, such as the King James and Tyndale Bibles, add, “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” My essential point, however, is that Paul’s theological wretchedness does not end in wretchedness or condemnation but in Christ.

<sup>70</sup> Christopher C. H. Cook, *Hearing Voices, Demonic and Divine: Scientific and Theological Perspectives* (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2019), 12-13, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK540477/>.

<sup>71</sup> Cook, *Hearing Voices*, 13.

<sup>72</sup> Mary seldom appears in Teresa’s works. Where she does, she affirms what Christ is already doing in and through her. Because Teresa is Catholic, her works are broadly Mariological, where Mary is a prototype of the redeemed man and woman and of the Roman Catholic Church. Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *Mariology*, trans. T.L.M.J. Geukers (N.p.: Ex Fontibus, 2015), 7-8. But her writings are not Mariological in the way that, for example, María de Ágreda’s are. In *Mística ciudad de Dios*, de Ágreda is in constant dialogue with Mary, and Mary authorizes her voice. See María de Jesús de Ágreda, *Mística ciudad de Dios* (Omaha, NE: Patristic Publishing, 2019; Kindle version of 1670 text). In Teresa’s works, Christ is the object of the intimate friendship she seeks through mental prayer (*Life*, 8.5)—and he appears at moments (usually in her intimate *Spiritual Testimonies*) to authorize key definitions of her theology. See, for example, Christ’s definitions of *humility* and *union* in Teresa of Avila, *Spiritual Testimonies*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume One*, 2nd ed., ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1987), 24.1 and 25.1 (respectively), Kindle. [The *Spiritual Testimonies* and *Relaciones espirituales* are numbered differently in these English and Spanish editions. See Teresa de Jesús, *Relaciones espirituales*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookklasicos, 2015), 28 and 29.1 (respectively), Kindle.]

<sup>73</sup> Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest: An Updated Edition in Today’s Language: The Golden Book of Oswald Chambers*, ed. James G. Reimann (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992): October 7.

<sup>74</sup> Basil Studer, *The Grace of Christ and the Grace of God in Augustine of Hippo*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1997), 127.

<sup>75</sup> Matthew 10:39 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>76</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. James F. Shaw (N.p., 2019), 3.16, Kindle.

<sup>77</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginity*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. C. L. Cornish (N.p., 2019), 31, Kindle, citing Philippians 2:7-8: “Therefore the Teacher of humility, Christ, first ‘emptied Himself,

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taking the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, made obedient even unto death, even the death of the Cross.”

<sup>78</sup> Romans 12:1: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship” (New Revised Standard Version). Augustine adds, “the soul itself [becomes] a sacrifice when it offers itself to God, in order that, being inflamed by the fire of His love, it may receive of His beauty.” Augustine, *The City of God*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Marcus Dods (N.p., 2019), 10.6, Kindle.

<sup>79</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 10.6.

<sup>80</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies* 24.1 (italics added). “Esta es la verdadera humildad, conocer lo que puede y lo que yo puedo.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 28.

<sup>81</sup> Charles T. Mathewes, “Pluralism, Otherness, and the Augustinian Tradition,” *Modern Theology* 14, no. 1 (January 1998): 88.

<sup>82</sup> Jo Robson, Mary of St. Joseph, and Philomena Sargeant, “Living the Teresian Tradition in the Twenty-First Century,” in *Teresa of Avila: Mystical Theology and Spirituality in the Carmelite Tradition*, ed. Peter Tyler and Edward Howells (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017), 133.

<sup>83</sup> Mathewes, “Pluralism,” 88.

<sup>84</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 39.16. “[E]s todo asco cuanto podemos hacer, en comparación de una gota de sangre de las que el Señor por nosotros derramó.” Teresa, *Vida*, 39.16.

<sup>85</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 338.

## II. AUGUSTINIAN HUMILITY AND THE AFFIRMATION OF THE SELF

In *After Virtue*, Alasdair Macintyre argues that the moral *ethos* of modernity can be understood as one of “unresolved and apparently unresolvable moral and other disagreements in which the evaluative and normative utterances of the contending parties present a problem of interpretation.”<sup>86</sup> Central to his thesis is that these normative utterances were once intelligible only within a shared context of beliefs that were lost in the transformative and disruptive climate of moral and social instability of the early modern. Seeking to provide new ways to understand this *ethos*, Enlightenment philosophers, in fact, did nothing but provide incompatible and rival accounts of moral judgment—a “characteristic of the moral culture of modernity [that] has not changed.”<sup>87</sup> As Kent Dunnington observes, moral concepts (such as humility) have in modernity (but especially in post-modernity) been divorced from the metaphysical, political, or cultural foundations that once braced them. As a result, from differing metaphysical allegiances have sprung rival premises with dissonant definitions of virtue.<sup>88</sup> I, therefore, begin my examination of Teresa’s Christological humility with Augustine; for it is my contention that Augustine and Teresa represent a shared context of orthodox beliefs within which humility as a theological concept remains intelligible.<sup>89</sup>

Fundamental to that context is its eternal worldview. Harry Blamires writes in *The Christian Mind*, “To think secularly is to think within a frame of reference bounded by the limits of our life on earth; it is to keep one’s calculations rooted in this-worldly criteria. To think christianly is to accept all things with the mind as related, directly or indirectly, to man’s eternal destiny as the redeemed and chosen child of God.”<sup>90</sup> This general demarcation is the dividing line between a secular view of humility with temporal ends and the Augustinian or Christological view of humility. Within the limits of material life and a *this-world* criterion, critics have tended



to view Christological humility with suspicion as a self-limiting and self-negating quality that muffles or extinguishes one's agency in fulfilling temporal goals. In contrast, within a purview of eternity, Augustine and Teresa center humility as the essential spiritual condition that occasions the affirmation of the self by engendering the fulfillment of, as Blamires puts it, humanity's eternal destiny.<sup>91</sup>

I, therefore, begin with the obvious. Whatever his Neoplatonic roots, Augustine was, like Teresa, a Christian. That foundation afforded him an eternal perspective upon which he constructed his ontological, teleological, and ethical schemata. In Augustine's metaphysics, humanity is not merely a rational animal but a rational soul. The self is eternal. This non-temporal ontology, therefore, requires a non-temporal teleology—namely, happiness (*eudaimonia*) that is delimited through one's relationship with God. Thus, the *telos* of humanity is eternal because humanity's *being* is eternal. Humanity was created by an eternal, personal, and relational God. The chief end of humanity is, therefore, not just the salvation of the soul for salvation's sake but salvation for the sake of an ever-increasing knowledge of God.<sup>92</sup> To be created in the image of God means to have the capacity to know God and to partake of the essence of God, who through Christ was the incarnation of love (*caritas*). Only when a man or woman enters into this love relationship, eternally already known by the Trinity, will he or she be complete. In humanity's post-Edenic state, however, this became impossible because of sin and pride, and one can only find the cure through *humility*.

From sin, the will has become corrupt and broken. It is determined to center the self and serve the self through temporal ends; for the definition of pride is the will's shift of orientation from God to the self. In this paradigm, humility becomes a divine remedy that turns the will from its self-centering and re-orientes it toward the self's ultimate good. In this way, humility allows

humanity to attain happiness (*eudaimonia*). That is, it empties the soul of the self and re-unites the self with God in the *caritas* first known in the prelapsarian state. That is not to say, however, that the self is emptied in the sense of being absorbed, destroyed, or erased. Rather, the soul is emptied of *pride* (or the self's dis-alignment) and of its demand for self-centering, where it sought a temporal good over an eternal one.<sup>93</sup> By that emptying, the self is now capable of centering itself *within* God and of being filled *by* God. In Augustinian terms then, the self is affirmed rather than negated, for humility allows the self to fulfill its ontological destiny and become complete, living in and living out a God-centered *caritas*. Conversely, the negation of humility will be the negation of self, due to the finality of every temporal aim.<sup>94</sup>

**A. The Augustinian Essence of the Self**

The whole of Augustine's ontology of humanity (and the necessary teleology that follows) is condensed in this passage within the *City of God*:

Therefore God supreme and true, with His Word and Holy Spirit (which three are one), one God omnipotent, creator and maker of every soul and of every body; by whose gift all are happy who are happy through verity and not through vanity; who made man a rational animal consisting of soul and body, who, when he sinned, neither permitted him to go unpunished, nor left him without mercy; who has given to the good and to the evil, being in common with stones, vegetable life in common with trees, sensuous life in common with brutes, intellectual life in common with angels alone...; who also to the irrational soul has given memory, sense, appetite, but to the rational soul, in addition to these, has given intelligence and will; who has not left, not to speak of heaven and earth, angels and men, but not even the entrails of the smallest and most contemptible animal, or the feather of a bird, or the little flower of a plant, or the leaf of a tree, without an harmony, and, as it were, a mutual peace among all its parts.<sup>95</sup>

In the passage above, Augustine's opposition to Aristotle concerning the immortality of the soul becomes clear. For Aristotle, humanity was merely a rational *animal*. Similar to Augustine's hierarchy of being, in Aristotle's hierarchy, humanity likewise shared *being* with stones, life with trees, and senses with animals, but was separated from all other beings by an ability to reason.

Though Aristotle, like Augustine, speaks of a *rational soul*, Aristotle's notion of the soul differed from Augustine's soul. In Aristotle's metaphysics, any object was a *unity* of matter and form (*hylomorphism*). The soul (*anima*) was the form—the actuality or *being* that a thing had at any one moment the potential of *becoming*.<sup>96</sup> That is, the *soul* was the essence of any given body.<sup>97</sup> He concluded, however, that the soul was therefore “inseparable from its body” since “the soul plus the body constitutes the animal.”<sup>98</sup> The immortality of the soul was, therefore, impossible. Humanity remained a mortal animal—a rational animal to be sure, but a mortal animal nonetheless.

Augustine's ontology mirrors this hierarchy of being but speaks of an irrational soul and a rational soul with one crucial difference. As with Aristotle, what separates the human soul from the brute soul is reason, but most importantly it is reason whose source is eternal and divine. That is, humanity possesses a vivified soul (*anima*) like animals but an eternal spirit (*spiritus*) like angels, where *spirit* is the gift of rational thought. This ability to reason, however, is both un-natural and un-rational from a materialist viewpoint, for the essence and source of pure reason is *supernatural*. This is an “intellectual life in common with angels alone,” by which he means that, apart from God, who created both, only angels and humans share an ability to reason like that of their Creator. Consequently, reason had an eternal derivation apart from the present body and continued eternally even after that mortal body died. Humanity is, therefore, like angels, a rational *and* immortal animal.

For Augustine, the *imago dei* is, therefore, as he writes in the *City of God*, the eternal soul “endowed with reason and intelligence.”<sup>99</sup> This *reason*, however, is not reason in the classical sense. The key difference between the *verity* and *vanity* of the passage above is the nature of reason within the *imago dei*. *Vanity* was the use of fallen reason to do philosophy with a

temporal purview.<sup>100</sup> Fallen reason was unable to recognize the eternal and invisible nature of God.<sup>101</sup> It concentrated instead—as the Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians had—on natural questions (“the investigation of nature”<sup>102</sup>), logical questions (“how truth may be discovered”<sup>103</sup>), and moral questions (“how good is to be sought, and evil to be shunned”<sup>104</sup>). Not that these pursuits were vanity in themselves, but they were empty as ends to be sought in and of themselves. As ends they missed the point: namely, that pursuing them as ends made one ignorant of the fact that humanity was created by God in the image of God. Augustine defines this *image* in the *City of God* as the “doctrine by which we know Him and ourselves, and that grace through which, by cleaving to Him, we are blessed.”<sup>105</sup> The *imago dei* was, therefore, the ability to know not just that there was a first cause but to know how to find the Cause himself; not just to know truth but to know “the light by which truth is to be discovered”; not just to define happiness but to know “the fountain [i.e., the Source] at which felicity is to be drunk.”<sup>106</sup>

This aspect of relationship is the heart of Augustine’s understanding of the *imago dei*. The rational soul could, with fallen reason, gain an understanding of creation. But only redeemed reason could *know* the Creator. Indeed, Edenic humanity had had its entire nature turned towards God and had known God in unbroken friendship. Through redemption, the fallen self could, therefore, have that relationship restored.

If the *imago dei* was the capacity of every self to know God, what is that *knowing*? Augustine answers that, just as the temporal senses can experientially know sensual things, the soul can experientially know spiritual things. God gave senses and reason to see nature and the order of nature. He gave natural eyes to see the sun and its light. But the *imago dei* allows the self to see with an *eye of the mind*, by which Augustine meant a spiritually-infused rationality capable of seeing the light of God.<sup>107</sup> For that reason, though God might be ineffable, he was not

unknowable. As he remarks in his *Sermons*, “Now God made you, O man and woman, to his image. Do you think he would give you the wherewithal to see the sunlight which he made, and not give you the wherewithal to see the one who made you...?”<sup>108</sup>

A question that becomes important later for Teresa’s understanding of the nature of faith as much as for Augustine’s is where does that *knowing* take place? What is the locus of the *wherewithal* to see the one who made you? Augustine speaks of this *seeing* as an inward manifestation,<sup>109</sup> an experiential certainty based not on fallen reason but on *redeemed* reason. The redeemed soul would gain access to an infused divine faith, defined not as intellectual assent or belief but as inward *evidence* or certainty of things not seen or perceived by the senses.<sup>110</sup> Augustine describes the locus of this evidence in *On the Holy Trinity*:

[A]lthough it is wrought in us by hearing, yet [it] does not belong to that sense of the body which is called hearing, since it is not a sound; nor to the eyes of this our flesh, since it is neither color nor bodily form; nor to that which is called touch, since it has nothing of bulk; nor to any sense of the body at all, since it is a thing of the heart.<sup>111</sup>

Likewise, in the *City of God*, he writes that “faith is an act of the spirit, not of the body.”<sup>112</sup> In both instances, he uses the word *heart* (*cordis*) in opposition to corporeal faculties.<sup>113</sup> But it is also the *heart* in opposition to the fallen intellect. The *heart* was that part of humanity that connected with God and was redeemed by God—not merely intellect but a redeemed intellect that had been illuminated.<sup>114</sup> Thus, where Cartesian *knowing* would later look to one’s own mind to find a degree of certainty (and empirical *knowing* would look to a sensual interpretation of data), Augustinian *knowing* was a spiritual gift in the form of faith. This faith, however, was divinely infused, Spirit into spirit. Its substance was experienced in the soul and only then processed *through* the mind; and its source was God.

For that reason, one had to be “ontologically disposed” to experiential faith, which implied a transformation of being<sup>115</sup> rather than a conformation of mind. The renewed mind was a spirit-mind, joined in purpose and in like-being to the mind of God.<sup>116</sup> This ontological disposition, therefore, was consequent of the redemptive work of God in a believer. Upon salvation, the believer received a new being—one where the “inner man” was conformed to the image of Christ.<sup>117</sup> The mind was then transformed into a vessel of divine understanding, and the will became capable of seeking God.

Since God was Spirit, however, and the kingdom of God was found within the spirit, one could never simply conjure up God at will. For Augustine, God was a self-revealing God. In other words, humanity could see God only because God willed to manifest himself to them. At the same time, humanity would desire to see God upon realizing their need for Him. One’s ontological disposition therefore ultimately resulted from being pure in heart: that is, a re-oriented heart. Augustine writes in the *City of God*, “But that God shall be seen with these [spiritual] eyes no Christian doubts who believably accepts what our God and Master says, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God’.”<sup>118</sup> Being pure of heart, however, also came by grace, and not merely by the force of one’s will;<sup>119</sup> it came through the gift of faith because faith purified the heart.<sup>120</sup> It was not, however, merely a belief that God existed or that Jesus was Messiah since even unclean spirits had such a belief.<sup>121</sup> It was, most importantly, a “[f]aith which worketh by love,”<sup>122</sup> which is to say, a faith in which God’s *caritas* or *agape* now worked in and through the believer.<sup>123</sup> But this re-orientation could only begin with the new ontological disposition: a transformation of one’s being that resulted in a recognition of one’s need.

In sum, the essence of the Augustinian self—the *imago dei* as he defined it—was the ability to know and love God. This knowing took place in the “inward” part of the believer, that part of the redeemed soul that consisted of the will and intelligence that humanity shared with the angels. Most importantly, however, this *knowing* could only take place upon the redemption of the self by grace through faith.<sup>124</sup> Being made pure in heart, the believer would *see* God with inward, spiritual eyes.<sup>125</sup> This relationship was humanity’s ultimate good; for to know God was to love God, and this love was the fruit of faith.<sup>126</sup> Only then could a person have the ontological “harmony” and the “mutual peace among all its parts,” that Augustine describes above.

How, then, does Augustine’s ontology lead to a teleology of relationship? And what is humility’s role in that teleology? Since humanity was a spiritual animal, it was in the soul that one enjoyed God.<sup>127</sup> As Augustine writes in his *Letters*, “[T]he soul of man is furnished and fitted for fellowship with God, and for dwelling in the eternal heavenly kingdom.”<sup>128</sup> The soul was spiritual, and being spiritual, it was eternal. Nevertheless, in its eternal state, it could suffer death and enjoy life. Eternal death was the natural state of a soul not connected with God.<sup>129</sup> Conversely, eternal life was knowing God intimately. Here, Augustine cites Christ himself: “[T]his is eternal life, that they may know Thee the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”<sup>130</sup> Furthermore, to know God was to love God, as he writes in *On the Holy Trinity*:

But it is by love that we must stand firm to this and cleave to this [Supreme good, i.e., God<sup>131</sup>] in order that we may enjoy the presence of that by which we are, and in the absence of which we could not be at all.... *[No] one loves God before he knows Him.* And what is it to know God except to behold Him and steadfastly perceive Him with the mind? For He is not a body to be searched out by carnal eyes.... He is loved by faith.<sup>132</sup>

Again, the ability to *know Him* was for Augustine possible through a spiritual certainty based on an ontology of humanity that was more than carnal mind. An experiential knowledge of God

was, rather, founded on the existence of a redeemed, vivified mind-spirit that was now able to enter an authentic (though ineffable) communion with God.

Within this nexus of divine communion and human *eudaimonia*, eternal life was not merely the existence of heaven. Heaven was a space where that relationship would be free of all human and satanic obstruction. Eternal life, however, was a return to the prelapsarian state in which created man and created woman walked with their Creator in the cool of the day in perfect fellowship.<sup>133</sup> Though humanity would never again know a state of *innocence*, in a greater way, humanity might know a state of *redemption*—greater in that redemption provoked a love in the redeemed self that was eternally enhanced through, as Michael Hanby has called it, a *transcendent gratuity*.<sup>134</sup> That is, “We love him because he first loved us.”<sup>135</sup> Redeemed humanity, therefore, fulfilled its teleological destiny by entering into a love relationship with the one whose ontological essence was love itself.<sup>136</sup>

How then did Augustine define that *love*? Anders Nygren, in his study of *agape* (*caritas*) and *eros* (*cupiditas*) in the Hellenistic and Christian world, summarizes the difference between the two this way: “*Caritas* is love directed upwards, *Cupiditas* is love directed downwards. *Caritas* is love of God, *Cupiditas* love of the world. *Caritas* is love for the eternal, *Cupiditas* is love for the temporal.”<sup>137</sup> As regards *caritas*, we can note two elements here: first, it ultimately finds its source in God because the ontology of God is *caritas*. Second, humility will ultimately be bound to *caritas* because both are, in their relation to one’s knowledge of God, mutually dependent.

*Caritas* was, for Augustine, an acquisitive love.<sup>138</sup> That is, it was directly bound to desire. As Nygren explains, life for Augustine was a “ceaseless pursuit of advantages.”<sup>139</sup> Saying that all created life seeks its own good, however, was not a negative. Only God was self-sufficient.



Therefore, all created things must seek their sufficiency outside themselves. Consequently, “[d]esire is the mark of the creature.”<sup>140</sup> The difference then between *caritas* and *cupiditas* was not one of essence but rather of object. Every creature seeks its own good, but for humanity, rightly ordered desire was a desire for God.<sup>141</sup> The essential nature of God was this *agape-caritas* love. That is, it was not merely that God loves. It was that God is love.<sup>142</sup> One would know the essence of God in the inner man through spiritual sight which, becoming purer, would see his love more clearly; that is, one would have a revelatory understanding of and participation with that essence,<sup>143</sup> an understanding which found its source in God and could only be given by God.<sup>144</sup> Thus, in knowing God, one would know love.

As well, since *caritas* was a seeking of the greatest good (namely the God who is love), one would find that God was an adversary of the proud<sup>145</sup>—of pride itself—precisely because pride denied the creature from this ultimate good.<sup>146</sup> *Caritas* was, therefore, nearly synonymous with humility in that it was the antithesis of pride. It was not puffed up<sup>147</sup> with mere sensual and temporal *scientia* knowledge (i.e., the world perceived with the senses) but rather was filled with true *sapientia* wisdom or contemplation of the eternal God.<sup>148</sup> This contemplation would, in turn, lead the individual into this fundamental truth: that because God is love, and love does not seek its own,<sup>149</sup> God also seeks the individual. This is shown clearly, Augustine affirms, in that Christ did not come to condemn an already condemned world but to save it through his own death.<sup>150</sup> Thus, for God, love is not one-sided. The kenotic requirement of the believer began with the *kenosis* of God himself in the person of Christ, both in his taking on flesh and in his death at the cross. As Augustine writes in his *Ten Sermons on the First Epistle of John*, “Whence beginneth charity, brethren? .... [T]he very measure of it is what the Lord hath put before us in the Gospel: ‘Greater love hath no man,’ saith He, ‘than that one lay down his life for his friends’.”<sup>151</sup> Christ

was, therefore, by this definition, the ultimate friend who had expressed a sacrificial love to a degree no other person could.

Furthermore, because God was the essence of *caritas*, it was thus *caritas* that unlocked the knowledge of God in the soul.<sup>152</sup> Bernard McGinn summarizes the process as a desire that precedes knowledge; yet, an ineffable God is, by definition, unknowable. It is through love, however, (and its corollary, faith) that one finds God in this life. That is, the love that God pours into the believer's heart, changes the heart and produces faith (the Hebrew *emunah* of certainty). He then changes the believer's desires and creates both a longing for God and a capacity to see with new, spiritual eyes. One could, therefore, not approach God except by the *caritas* of God's own essence being supernaturally poured into the believer. This was essentially a paracletic healing of the heart. It was an ontological change that happened first at salvation but continued throughout life, such that the degree that one allowed that love to operate was the degree that one could see God. Because one desires what one loves, love was, therefore, the "glue" that bound the believer to God (as well as to other believers).<sup>153</sup>

*Caritas* directed upward was thus an essential difference between pagan philosophy and mysticism and Christological mysticism as Augustine and Teresa would conceive it.<sup>154</sup> As Earle Cairns describes the distinction, "[Pagan] philosophy could only seek for God and posit Him as an intellectual abstraction; it could never reveal a personal God of love."<sup>155</sup> In pagan mysticism, such as in Plotinus, one was neither saved nor united with any person or thing. One was merely liberated by a recognition of the unknowable One within—a One without discrete personality—a goal that was both self-centering in that it was void of any concept of an *Other*-directed love and restrictively aristocratic in that it was attainable only to a philosophical elite.<sup>156</sup> In contrast, Augustine's conception of the personal God was that of three distinct persons capable of

relationship with each other as well as with humanity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were essentially one—an ineffable Trinity, separate yet inseparable. They shared an essential nature, namely love,<sup>157</sup> even if to humanity that nature was revealed through different expressions (such as the submission of the Son to the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit revealing the Son). That ontological unity, however, implied that, as a God of love and perfect friendship, humanity found its *eudaimonia* by entering the perfectly expressed *eudaimonia* of the uncreated and eternal Trinity; for the greatness of the God who is love was the expression of the *agape-caritas* relationship that the Triune God had already-eternally known with each other.<sup>158</sup>

The communion between God and humanity was, therefore, between two sentient and personal beings—one born flesh and spiritually dead, the other taking on flesh to revive the spirit of the other. Augustine’s understanding of communion and fellowship with God was, therefore, not theoretical, metaphorical, or chimerical. Fellowship with God *in the spirit* was as tangible as one’s fellowship with humanity *in the flesh*. As he writes in the *Tractates*, “[A]long with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit also taketh up His abode in the saints; that is to say, within them, as God in His temple.”<sup>159</sup> With the mention of the temple, he stirs the reader’s knowledge of Biblical history—a history that included the manifestation of God’s presence in the Mosaic tabernacle and later in the Solomonic temple in Jerusalem. This same presence was later concealed in the incarnation of Christ and now dwelt as the triune presence within the spirit of the believer. Augustine continues, “The triune God, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, come to us while we are coming to Them: They come with help, we come with obedience; They come to enlighten, we to behold; They come to fill, we to contain: that our vision of Them may not be external, but inward.”<sup>160</sup> The relationship was “inward,” taking place in one’s spirit-soul, but it was no less authentic for the believer even where the experience became impossible to express

with language. Nevertheless, that friendship was spiritually tangible and substantive, and one had to clear one's soul to enter it.<sup>161</sup>

How did one clear the soul, and what did it need to be cleared of? Augustine states that Adam had been created an eternal being—body and soul. As an eternal being, he had found his life in God.<sup>162</sup> Sin, however, had entered the world through Adam (not Eve).<sup>163</sup> Consequently, he writes, “The whole mass [of creation] was corrupted in the root.”<sup>164</sup> At that point, death had entered the world. Theologically speaking, if eternal life was the *caritas* relationship with God, then eternal death was the opposite: separation from God.<sup>165</sup> Augustine affirms this in the *City of God*:

When, therefore, God said to that first man whom he had placed in Paradise...“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” that threatening included...[the death] by which the soul is punished in *separation from God*...even to that final death which is called second, and to which none is subsequent.<sup>166</sup>

Eternal death began from the moment of conception, for all humanity was separated by God through sin.<sup>167</sup> The choice made by Adam had been a choice between a God-sufficiency or a self-sufficiency. By rejecting the teleological destiny for which he was created, he had ushered in an ontological change within the soul that had caused every person after him to be born into that death:<sup>168</sup> a form of hell on earth since the separation was now humanity's natural state.<sup>169</sup>

Metaphorically, humanity had been created upright so that it may look upward (toward God). After the Adamic fall, however, humanity was looking down (toward temporal concerns).<sup>170</sup> The consequence of sin was, therefore, a human ontology divided against itself—a conflict between body and soul. The higher element, the soul (higher in that it contained the *imago dei*), was now subject to the flesh; and that corrupted flesh infected the faculties (emotion, will, and intellect). This infection was pride (*superbia*)—the original sin. Pride was the root of

the love of self. It was a desire for temporal pleasures and goods (*cupiditas*) and led the self away from its greatest good. As Joseph McInerney explains, “[B]oth *superbia* and *cupiditas* are crucial to Augustine’s understanding of sin. It is pride..., or love of self, that is the source from which the evil desires of *cupiditas* spring.”<sup>171</sup>

In essence, because humanity had undergone this ontological division, being wholly given over to *superbia*, it had also become misaligned teleologically. Of this, Augustine writes in the *City of God*:

What is pride but the craving for undue exaltation? And this is undue exaltation, when the soul abandons Him to whom it ought to cleave as its end, and becomes a kind of end to itself. This happens when it becomes its own satisfaction. And it does so when it falls away from that unchangeable good which ought to satisfy it more than itself.<sup>172</sup>

Pride seeded and sustained the eternal separation from God that began in this temporal life and continued through eternity. Pride was the first sin.<sup>173</sup> Lucifer had fallen because of pride, or exaltation of the self. Therefore, pride was synonymous with apostasy, the turning away from God.<sup>174</sup> It was thus also the fount of all sin<sup>175</sup>—the brick and mortar of that wall of separation between God and humanity. Pride was, in sum, the essential sin. It bestowed on humanity an elusive and seemingly fulfilling new *telos*, namely the love of self or the desire to empower self above all else. It consequently separated human will from God. The fallen will now chose the self and cut itself off from God, who was the source of love and light.<sup>176</sup>

Thus, the *will* needed a cure. But because the will was the very mechanism by which one moved in a direction, either for good or for evil, it was powerless to move towards good or God without the direct intervention of God. That intervention would come in the form of the salve or the antidote that would dynamically empower the will to be regenerated, restructured, and resettled in the divine center: humility. For that reason, Augustinian humility would be nothing

like its classical counterpart defined in temporal terms. It would be, rather, an exclusively divine attribute,<sup>177</sup> exhibited in and by Christ's kenotic example and only then appropriated by the believer through the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit.

## **B. Augustine's Christological Humility**

Augustine writes in the *Tractates*, "Pride is the source of all diseases, because pride is the source of all sins."<sup>178</sup> By *diseases*, he refers to all of life's ills, crimes, injustices, and wrongs. He, therefore, compares pride to an infection that produces sores and scurf on the skin. Religion and philosophy that prescribed morality and virtue apart from Christ were akin to treating the symptoms of the disease—treating the sores and scurf—rather than removing the infection. The treatment of symptoms might work temporarily, but eventually, the symptoms would return if the infection itself was not dealt with. Since pride was the infection, he declares, "Cure pride and there will be no more iniquity."<sup>179</sup> Humility was that cure. For Augustine, therefore, *humilitas* meant essentially two things. First, it was seeing oneself in the light of God: that is, spiritual poverty. Second, it was a giving of oneself to God (and consequently to others) in a kenotic emptying of the will and submission to God. In this, Christ was to be the unblemished example.

After declaring pride as the source of sin, Augustine offers this definition of humility in the *Tractates*: "Thy whole humility is to know thyself."<sup>180</sup> Though he never describes this knowledge of self in the experiential terms that Teresa will, he provides a similar definition: the soul placed in *comparison* with a holy God will *know* its sin nature and wretchedness. In God's light, the soul comprehends its lowliness—or, as Augustine puts it, that "thou art man."<sup>181</sup>

To know oneself is to know one's place before God, which is to have a reverential fear of God. Augustine uses the terms *humble*, *fear*, and *spiritual poverty* (*pauperes spiritu*) as facets of the same concept. He begins his exegesis of the Beatitudes, for example, defining the terms

synonymously, “The fear of God corresponds to the humble [*humilibus*], of whom it is here said, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit [*Beati pauperes spiritu*],’ i.e., those not puffed up, not proud: to whom the apostle says, ‘Be not high-minded, but fear;’ i.e., be not lifted up.”<sup>182</sup> In other words, the humble self is not capable of being “puffed up” or “high-minded” in its own estimation as being just or holy before God. It recognizes itself as a spiritual pauper, where humility and fear are not feelings or affective reactions but rather a spiritual state or recognition of truth. This sense of humility will lead to piety, which Augustine defines as meekness (*mitis*). Yet, being meek is not pusillanimity or obsequiousness outwardly expressed in relation to others. Meekness is one’s stance before God. The meek person, writes Augustine in the same passage, is one “who inquires piously [and] honours Holy Scripture, and does not censure what he does not yet understand, and on this account does not offer resistance” to God or his truth in Scripture.<sup>183</sup> This pious stance, or placing oneself in the light of God’s truth, allows the self to see its spiritual state before God. It is a knowledge, he writes, that “corresponds to those that mourn [*lugere*] who already have found out in the Scriptures by what evils they are held chained which they ignorantly have coveted as though they were good and useful.”<sup>184</sup> In other words, the sin-filled self is placed in juxtaposition with a sinless and holy God, resulting in a conviction of sin in the soul. That conviction is thus the recognition that the self has nothing to offer to God but its own sin. It is an absolute and unqualified poverty such that the mourning surpasses any affective response of the self and becomes a spiritual certainty. This degree of spiritual poverty is, Augustine writes, what God requires for one to *become* pure in heart (*mundicordes*); for after hungering, seeking, and finding the mercy and forgiveness of God, the self attains understanding. That is, the pure heart is what comes from having one’s spiritual eyes “purged” so that the self

can see God in the soul.<sup>185</sup> It is pure, for it no longer contains the pride of self-deceit concerning its own righteousness.

The reverential fear of God, according to Augustine, is, therefore, the beginning of spiritual wisdom<sup>186</sup> because that fear is a result of one's humility before God. It is a recognition of one's spiritual poverty that allows the self to see itself in truth. That wisdom, in turn, allows the redemptive and regenerative grace of God to transform the self and lift it toward God, which is the kingdom within, or that *caritas* relationship with God. For that reason, Christological humility is a stance before God, not humanity. Through humility, one overcomes pride, allowing the self to fulfill its teleological purpose, thus providing the affirmation of the self's eternal rather than temporal ontology.

As an illustration of spiritual poverty (*pauperes spiritu*), Augustine, in his treatise *Of Holy Virginity*, cites Jesus' parable concerning the publican and the Pharisee in the gospel of Luke.<sup>187</sup> In the gospel context that he cites, the publicans, though Jews, are universally despised by their countrymen as Roman collaborators and extortionists. They have become wealthy by eliciting exorbitant sums from the populace under the auspices of collecting taxes under Roman authority. They are condemned as corrupt and antinationalist. More importantly, in the historical context, they are also religious outcasts, banned from being witnesses or judges in legal cases, and considered by Rabbis to be nearly beyond the bounds of repentance before God.<sup>188</sup> The Pharisees, on the other hand, are *the separated ones*, refusing to associate with either Gentile or common Jew, whom they suspect of every kind of sin. They are religious leaders, observing and interpreting Mosaic law with a zeal that the common people envy and yet find impossible to adhere to. As Alfred Edersheim describes the sect, citing the *Mishnah*, "[The Pharisee] tithes all that he eats, all that he sells, and all that he buys, and he is not a guest with an unlearned



person.”<sup>189</sup> In the parable found in Luke, both publican and Pharisee, representing the two extremes of Jewish society in Jesus’ day,<sup>190</sup> enter the temple to pray. The Pharisee separates himself from other worshippers, raises his head (as the text implies), and then prays, “God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.”<sup>191</sup> The publican, however, also separating himself, though “far off,”<sup>192</sup> will not raise his head, but instead beats his breast and prays, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”<sup>193</sup> Jesus declares that the publican will leave the temple *justified* or *righteous* before God. The word for *justified* used in Luke’s Greek is *dikaioō* (δικαίωω),<sup>194</sup> the root of which comes from *dikē* (δίκη)—a legal term implying one’s stance before the law, a judicial proceeding, or an execution of a sentence. In the context of the parable, therefore, it is this act of humble repentance that brings the publican into right legal standing before God, ironically leaving the legal expert in a state of condemnation before God’s law. Thus, Jesus concludes, “[A]ll who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.”<sup>195</sup>

In *Of Holy Virginit*y, Augustine sets out to expound on the “teaching of Christ concerning humility”<sup>196</sup> and states that that teaching begins with poverty of spirit (*pauperes spiritu*). He then cites the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (along with the gospel stories of the faithful Centurion and the woman of Canaan) as incontrovertible examples of the concept.<sup>197</sup> The Pharisee, he writes, was, in a sense, doing good. He was in the temple. He was praying. He was giving thanks to God. Nevertheless, “the Pharisee was rendering thanks unto God by reason of those things wherein he was greatly *self-satisfied*.”<sup>198</sup> The publican, on the other hand, was also praying, but because of a sense of wretchedness, he stood far off *confessing his sin*. Therein, says Augustine, lies spiritual poverty. It is the antithesis of the self-satisfaction of the Pharisee; for “it

may come to pass, that...one [may] shun real evils, and reflect on real goods in himself, and render thanks for these...and yet be rejected by reason of the sin of haughtiness...[and] pride.”<sup>199</sup>

For Augustine, the pride of the Pharisee was the spiritual riches of his self-satisfaction that blinded him from an awareness of the sin that separated him from God; conversely, the spiritual poverty of the publican was humility, which was demonstrated to be a sense of wretchedness for (and conviction of) sin that then led him to turn himself to God, who then lifted him into his kingdom—or friendship with God.<sup>200</sup> The publican, though he would have been among the wealthiest of the population, was nevertheless poor in *spirit*; for the cry of his heart was, “I am poor and needy.”<sup>201</sup> That is, he was poor by his humility.<sup>202</sup>

Those that exhibit poverty of spirit are, like the publican, those who reverently fear God, confess their sins, and do not rely on their own merits or self-righteousness.<sup>203</sup> As Augustine declares in his exposition of Psalm 74, when they do good, they praise God. When they do evil, they accuse themselves.<sup>204</sup> In contrast, the Pharisee is rejected because of his haughtiness, pride, and arrogance—for standing before God with self-exaltation.<sup>205</sup> The Pharisee’s failure is, in essence, a failure to know himself *before God*,<sup>206</sup> such that his legal measurement is one of his own making. The publican, however, having measured himself in the light of God, sees his actual state and is left with nothing. Though wealthy in material goods, he is nevertheless destitute spiritually, having nothing to offer God but a humble heart and repentant confession. This is Augustine’s conceptual framing of the humility of the Beatitudes: it begins with a knowledge of one’s emptiness before God and ends with an intimate relationship with God.<sup>207</sup>

As Augustine states in the *Tractates*, it was because of pride that humanity was lost. For this reason, it was through humility and to “cure pride” that “the Son of God came down and was made low.”<sup>208</sup> Thus, though one is lost by appropriating the pride of Lucifer, one could now be

found, as it were, by learning to imitate the humility of Christ.<sup>209</sup> I, therefore, wish to emphasize two aspects of Augustine's understanding of Christ as the archetype of humility that will be important for a discussion of Teresa's Christological perspective. The first concerns Christ as the author, teacher, and standard of humility in exhibiting a *doulos* servitude, in which he emptied his will and submitted it completely to the Father. The second involves Augustine's understanding of Christ's humility as a demonstration of his sovereignty, omnipotence, and divine wisdom.

Augustine exhorts Christians to guard humility since, in calling oneself a Christian, one is appropriating the name of Christ.<sup>210</sup> In other words, Christians—or Christ-followers<sup>211</sup>—were to be Christ-like, meaning that, in this life, they were to be the image of Christ, who was the teacher,<sup>212</sup> the author,<sup>213</sup> and the standard<sup>214</sup> of humility. This Christological humility was consummated and ultimately defined by the cross. As he writes in the *Tractates*:

But wherefore was He crucified? Because the wood of His humiliation was needful to thee. For thou hadst become swollen with pride, and hadst been cast out far from that fatherland.... On account of thee He was crucified, to teach thee humility.... For if He should come as God, He would not come to those who were not able to see God.... But, according to what did He come? He appeared as a man.<sup>215</sup>

Here again, one sees humility not as a rhetorical or literary *topos* nor as pusillanimity or obsequiousness but rather as a magnanimity of divine proportions that consummates unconditional self-sacrifice for an eternal end. Christ came, as Augustine implies here—glory concealed in flesh—through an utter kenosis of his eternal glory, not only for soteriological ends but to teach humility. Thus, in the *Confessions* (where he cites Paul in the book of Philippians), he defines the essence of humility in terms of that kenotic emptying. In doing so, he mirrors Christian orthodoxy, the Patristic writers, and the early creeds: Christ was equal with God (equal in Godhead, equal in glory, equal in grace and goodness); at a moment in history, he clothed and

concealed that glory in humanity; in relation to the Father he became a servant (*doulos*, i.e., slave), emptying his own will to the point of death; and, as a man, he identified with man, taking on human emotion, human pain, human death, and (on the cross) even spiritual death through separation from the Father. This is, consequently, the degree of humility that a Christ-follower must seek—a complete emptying of self before God for the sake of a “love which builds on the foundation of humility which is Jesus Christ.”<sup>216</sup>

For Augustine, humility is contrary to pride, just as union with God is contrary to apostasy from God and Christ’s emptying of self is contrary to Lucifer’s exaltation of self. Divine *caritas* love—leading to union with God and with others—is not possible without humility. Thus, true humility, as a virtue, can *never* exhaust itself or decay into hyperbole since it (with divine love) is void of all that is self-seeking in a temporal teleology.

Divine humility is, therefore, by definition and by example, the will of a discrete self uniting itself with the will of God. This union of wills is what Augustine means in his exegesis of Philippians 2. Since, in his kenosis, Christ loses nothing of his divinity—he remains co-equal with God the Father—his incarnation leaves his essential being unchanged. What, then, is the *emptying*? For Augustine, though Christ remains ontologically the same, he nevertheless submits completely to the will of the Father. From the moment of his incarnation to the moment of his death—through a perfect communion with the Father through the Holy Spirit, in which he is aware of the Father’s will at every moment and in every situation—he places his will in the hands of the Father. He makes himself an empty vessel that the Father can fill and direct. As Christ declares in the gospel of John, “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.”<sup>217</sup> This is, in Augustine’s view, the essence of Christ’s *emptying*—perfect obedience to the Father. In

this, therefore, he is also a teacher of humility; for in the same way, the Christian is meant to submit his or her will to the Trinity.<sup>218</sup>

In other words, for Augustine, Christ asks nothing of the Christian but what he first required of himself. Citing Philippians 2 again in his treatise *Of Holy Virginity*, he argues that the Christian can have no greater teacher of humility than Christ since it was he who first “emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, made obedient even unto death, even the death of the Cross.”<sup>219</sup> Christ displayed a *doulos* (or servant) heart,<sup>220</sup> where because of a *caritas* love, he bound his own will to the Father’s. The same humility and meekness must mark a Christ-follower filled with the same Spirit since, as Christ said, no disciple could be greater than his teacher.<sup>221</sup> God is *caritas*, writes Augustine, and where his Spirit rests and dwells, that *caritas* will bring a humility characterized by the *doulos* heart of Christ.<sup>222</sup> As he writes in the *Tractates*, “[B]ecause God teaches humility, He said, ‘I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.’ For this is the commendation of humility. Whereas pride doeth its own will, humility doeth the will of God.”<sup>223</sup>

A question arises: why did God have to humble himself? If God is both omnipotent and omniscient, why not overpower both sin and the enemy by sheer force? Why suffer the kenosis, the unfathomable humbling of a righteous God becoming sin on the cross? Augustine answers: pride was the origin of all sin. So, God ordained the defeat of sin and its consequences to come through its contrary, humility. By this, he demonstrates that love is the greater force—greater by kind and degree. Again, God is love, and love is exhibited through and characterized by humility. Thus, God chose humility and love to be the means by which pride, sin, and darkness would be defeated. Christ’s humility was, therefore, a *conquering* force, not a deficiency or

weakness. As Basil Studer explains, “Christ abased himself in order to break the arrogance of human beings and thus also to *conquer* pride as the origin of sin.”<sup>224</sup> In other words, though God’s creation demonstrated God’s power, splendor, and majesty, the fallen state of humanity was incapable of seeing this. God, therefore, chose to heal humanity through power’s opposite: namely a poverty of spirit and humility.<sup>225</sup> Thus, explains Augustine, as Isaac submitted to Abraham, Christ submitted to the Father. As Isaac carried the wood of sacrifice on his back, Christ carried his own cross to the place of his sacrifice.<sup>226</sup> He chose to take on humanity—both its weakness and its death—so that humanity could then share in his divinity by means of the same humility.<sup>227</sup> Christ’s humility is, therefore, intimately tied to his work of redemption. He emptied himself in order to accomplish the desire of the Father: to repair the separation between God and humanity that had occurred in Eden. But, for Augustine, only God could end that separation.<sup>228</sup> He alone would be the teacher of humility and the *standard* of humility since no created being—angel or human—could empty himself to the degree that he, as God, was capable.

For this reason, in discussing Christ’s kenosis, Augustine often seems ecstatic (compelling translators to include frequent exclamation points). In his view, humanity is utterly blind in understanding the degree to which God in Christ humbled himself, not out of weakness but from strength and sovereignty. For him, the cross was never an afterthought. The Word as Mediator had been chosen from the foundation of the world,<sup>229</sup> meaning that an omniscient God—who knew that free will made both love and *refusal* possible—by his omnipotence offered Christ as a sacrifice before creation, aware of why and for whom he would die.<sup>230</sup> This was strength submitted to God; for, in this sense, no one killed Christ—neither Jew nor Roman. Rather, it was a matter of divine will, an agreement among the three members of the Trinity, in

which Christ consented to the cross but was not conquered by it, “inasmuch...as he had power to lay down his life and to take it up again.”<sup>231</sup>

This theme of conquering is an essential point in Augustine’s Christology, for the humility exhibited at the cross had no weakness in it. It was not in any sense accidental or passive. Rather, in this seeming paradox, Christ took on weakness—the weakness of human flesh—to expose the weakness of human strength.<sup>232</sup> That is, God chose the means of the cross to show that, even in weakness, his sovereignty was greater than men’s pride in their power and wisdom.<sup>233</sup> The concept of exposing human strength and human pride as true weakness is, thus, intrinsically tied to God’s sovereignty. Augustine is adamant that God’s sovereignty within time and space is absolute—a divine checkmate, as it were, accomplished from the beginning. As he writes in *The City of God*, “[W]e worship that God who has appointed to the natures created by Him both the beginnings and the end of their existing and moving; who holds, knows, and disposes the causes of things;...who hath imparted the gift of foretelling future things to whatever spirits it seemed to Him good; who also Himself predicts future things.”<sup>234</sup> Regarding the proud, then, it is not God who destroys. Rather, because of his sovereignty and omniscience, pride comes before destruction because pride is its own destruction. Pride is the beginning of sin,<sup>235</sup> but because God is the Creator, pride becomes a trap that one digs for oneself by going against his divinely ordained, natural order. Scripturally, pride leads to being entangled in one’s own net,<sup>236</sup> falling into one’s own pit,<sup>237</sup> and being entrapped in one’s own schemes,<sup>238</sup> and this axiom is illustrated in Biblical stories such as the Red Sea crossing, Haman’s gallows, and of course, the cross itself.<sup>239</sup> But God’s sovereignty is central to Augustine’s doctrine of humility because his sovereignty, married to his grace, offers an out.

“Everyone that prepareth a pit for his brother,” he writes in his exposition of Psalm 57, “it must needs be that himself fall into it.”<sup>240</sup> This is a prophecy rather than a curse—what God perceives rather than desires—since for a person to fall into his or her own destruction, he or she must choose to “persevere” in pride,<sup>241</sup> as Pharaoh did in the story of the exodus.<sup>242</sup> In Augustine’s doctrine of free will, humanity has the freedom to choose but has no capacity to surmount God’s omniscient sovereignty. God’s will can never be overcome, such that even the evil that humanity does ultimately fulfills his will.<sup>243</sup> For this reason, God turns human strength upside down, choosing out of love not to destroy humanity but rather providing Christ as both *example* and *means* to overcome the problem of pride. At the cross, where sin was destroyed not by brute force but by sacrifice, Christ shows the *way* of humility by overcoming the primary stumbling block to relationship: pride. He also demonstrates the *strength* of humility by doing so within the bounds of God’s sovereignty. In Augustinian theology, God’s sovereignty is both an eternal constant and a guarantor of humanity’s *telos*, which is God himself.

### C. Conclusion

For Augustine, wretchedness as spiritual poverty could not be synonymous with emotional or psychological misery. Understood in its proper context, it does not leave the self destitute or deprecated—either feigned or actually. This would indeed be a negation of the self, as modernity has defined humility. Rather, in the *Confessions*, Augustine refutes this negation with a prayer and an explicit reference to the Beatitudes from the gospel of Matthew:

I have said already; and again will say, for love of Thy love.... It is...our affections which we lay open unto Thee, confessing our own miseries [*miserias nostras*] and Thy mercies [*miseri cordias tuas*] upon us, that Thou mayest *free us wholly*...that we may *cease to be wretched in ourselves* [*miseri in nobis*], and be *blessed in Thee*; seeing Thou hast called us, to become poor in spirit, and meek, and mourners, and hungering and athirst after righteousness, and merciful, and pure in heart, and peace-makers.<sup>244</sup>



As will be seen in Teresa's writings (with much greater frequency), Augustine makes similar assertions of wretchedness and the need for God's mercy, but the assertions end in spiritual freedom and blessings; for wretchedness as spiritual poverty was the virtue that brought about the affirmation of the self. That is, it brought the self to its *telos*—made it complete, fulfilled, and fully realized—through a relationship with God: the God who is love.

Without this eternal end, Christianity became fatuous. As Augustine concedes, "[I]f in this life only...we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."<sup>245</sup> Augustine here follows Paul in affirming that humanity is merely sojourning in this temporal realm toward an eternal destination. Eternal *desiderata*, therefore, result in transformed definitions of virtue often antithetical to the classical or modern definitions. Augustine's Christological humility opposes those definitions of humility because, for him, man's end is supra-natural. Humility, which subjects the self to God, exalts the self by taking on God's strength. Conversely, pride, which refuses that subjection, ultimately debases the self by disconnecting the self from its eternal end. It is, therefore, a humility exemplified by Christ that ultimately separates Christian and secular paradigms and, at the same time, becomes part of the economy of salvation.<sup>246</sup>

A Christological humility, therefore, is intrinsic to Augustine's metaphysics, which sees relationship, or knowing the ineffable God, as the chief end of man. It is a pride that wants to *be* divinity rather than participate *in* God's divinity that keeps one from it. As Augustine writes in the *City of God*, "By craving to be more, man becomes less; and by aspiring to be self-sufficing, he [falls] away from Him who truly suffices him."<sup>247</sup> Thus, since pride goes before destruction and humility before honor,<sup>248</sup> it can only be humility that restores the self to its original state, allowing it to see the face of God.

Here, then, I turn to Teresa; for if Augustine can be considered the father of Christian mysticism,<sup>249</sup> he begets a spiritual descendent in Teresa.<sup>250</sup> Though she will have no theological training or opportunity to explicitly express herself as a theologian, she will nevertheless inscribe a theology of humility like that of Augustine. She likewise defines humility as spiritual poverty and wretchedness before God and as a kenotic emptying of the self that aligns the will with God's will. Her doctrine, expressed in experiential rather than theological or philosophical language, will nevertheless center on the idea that humanity has an essential nature with a defined end.

Like Augustine's, Teresa's *telos* is an eternal one. Thus, it will become difficult to reconcile her theology with classical and modern conceptions of human good and virtue.<sup>251</sup> This will apply to her use of the word *wretchedness* (*ruin*) and other apparently self-depreciatory utterances. Critical, then, is the location of her point of departure: namely, a Christological view of humility that will, like Augustine's, flow from her teleological view of humanity and a deontological view of morality. As with Augustine, both *end* and *duty* for Teresa will once again be directed toward a personal God. More importantly, however, she will ground her concepts of end and duty in what Michael Hanby calls "Christianity's understanding of transcendent gratuity," its "doxological soul" and the "vocative, ecstatic soul which is more itself the more God is in it and it is in God."<sup>252</sup> In other words, what will set Teresa's notions of virtue apart is not that they are merely teleological, deontological, or utilitarian (as are modern notions of virtue). It is that their *telos* is personal—namely, Christ the Son—and a sense of gratuitous overflow necessarily arises from an intimate knowledge of him, of his omnipotence, and of his goodness. Ultimately, her ethics will be a *doxological* impulse that arises from a grateful soul, not only from what the soul knows it owes but from what it responsively *wants* to owe. Teresa's

self can, therefore, neither subside into self-negation or depreciation nor even take on their appearance. Rather, like Augustine's self, the eternal soul will, through Christological humility, be fulfilled in spiritual union with God and, consequently, in his divine *caritas* and freedom.

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<sup>86</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame: Notre Dame UP, 2007), ix.

<sup>87</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, ix-x.

<sup>88</sup> Dunnington, "Intellectual Humility," 96.

<sup>89</sup> For a discussion of why I begin with Augustine, see appendix A.

<sup>90</sup> Harry Blamires, *The Christian Mind: How Should a Christian Think?* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1978), 44.

<sup>91</sup> In this chapter, I do not examine the classical view of humility or trace its genealogy to modernity. For such a discussion, See McInerney, *The Greatness of Humility*, 1, "Classical Views of Humility and Greatness" and Ruddy, "A Christological Approach to Virtue," 14-47. Both contrast classical and modern views of humility with Augustine's *humilitas*. Ruddy's treatment of the feminist critique of humility is insightful for any feminist reading of Santa Teresa. As Ruddy describes, contemporary critics of humility tend to consider it a self-limiting act in which powerlessness is a consort of service to others. They find humility's origins in Greco-Roman notions of virtue—ideas that then seeped into Church dogma during its infancy. Within this classical-doctrinal schema, virtue was gender-inflected. Men were expected to model courage and self-mastery. Women were models of silence, obedience, and modesty. Men were honored for civic and personal excellence. Women were honored for their shame, distance, and subordination—that is, humility. In contemporary society, therefore, asking women to live out the virtue of humility merely reinforces ancient values that relegated women to the private rather than public sphere. Thus, as an ideal that marginalizes and degrades women and that hinders their ability to develop themselves morally and socially, humility is for these feminist critics a conservative virtue that reinforces the status quo (Ruddy, "A Christological Approach to Virtue," 33-46).

<sup>92</sup> Augustine, *Lectures or Tractates on the Gospel According to St. John*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. John Gibbs and James Innes (N.p., 2019), 19.18, Kindle.

<sup>93</sup> This emptying was perfectly exemplified, according to Augustine, by the *kenosis* of Christ (*Tractates*, 9.10).

<sup>94</sup> For that reason, for Augustine, the Greeks failed to find genuine virtue because their virtues were tied to mundane concerns rather than union with God. Lacking this eternal focus, any notion of pagan humility could never be humility at all. Pagan virtues curbed baser desires and the body's propensity to vice, but they did so for the betterment of a temporal self without thought for the eternal self (Augustine, *City of God*, 19.25). Augustine agrees with Aristotle that *telos* defines *arete*. But for Augustine, Aristotle's temporal *telos* reckons his virtues to be vice (Dunnington, "Intellectual Humility," 111-112).

<sup>95</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 5.11.

<sup>96</sup> Therefore, he writes, it is unnecessary to discuss questions about the unity of body and soul since they are one and the same. Aristotle, *On the Soul*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, One-Volume Digital Edition*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, trans. J. A. Smith (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 2.1, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>97</sup> Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 2.2.

<sup>98</sup> Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 2.1.

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<sup>99</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 12.23.

<sup>100</sup> Or to “philosophize according to the elements of this world.” Augustine, *City of God*, 8.10. Here Augustine cites Paul in Colossians 2:8: “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>101</sup> Citing Romans 1:19-20, Augustine writes, “For His invisible things from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, also His eternal power and Godhead” (*City of God*, 8.10).

<sup>102</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 8.10.

<sup>103</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 8.10.

<sup>104</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 8.10.

<sup>105</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 8.10.

<sup>106</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 8.10.

<sup>107</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament (51-94), Volume 3*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. and notes Edmund Hill (Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1991), 88.6. As Rotelle notes here, “[E]ternal wisdom is identified by Augustine, together with the whole Christian tradition, with the Word of God which became flesh, that is to say, with Christ. See 1 Cor 1:24” (436n5).

<sup>108</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on the New Testament (51-94)*, 88.6.

<sup>109</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 76.2.

<sup>110</sup> Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Arthur West Haddan (N.p., 2019), 13.1.3, Kindle, citing Hebrews 11:1. “That’s why,” Augustine writes in his *Sermons*, “before you see what you are still unable to see, you must believe what you still do not see. Walk by faith, in order to arrive at vision...or the sight of God.” *Sermons on the New Testament (51-94)*, 88.6. Rotelle adds, “A constant theme of Augustine’s, that believing must come before understanding (which he here calls seeing). In this context he frequently quotes Is. 7:9, in the Septuagint version, *If you do not believe, you will not understand*” (436n4, italics in the original).

<sup>111</sup> Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 13.2.5.

<sup>112</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 22.29.

<sup>113</sup> “...quoniam cordis est res ista, non corporis.” Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 13.2.5. “Fide quippe acceditur ad Deum, quam cordis constat esse, non corporis.” Augustine, *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos*, 22.29.4.

<sup>114</sup> One saw God then with “the eye of the heart, of which the apostle says, ‘Having the eyes of your heart illuminated’.” Augustine, *City of God*, 22.29, citing Ephesians 1:18.

<sup>115</sup> Studer, *The Grace of Christ*, 127.

<sup>116</sup> As Augustine describes it, a mind “renewed to the knowledge of God, after the image of Him that created him.” Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 7.6.12, citing Romans 12:2: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>117</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 22.16.

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<sup>118</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 22.29, citing Matthew 5:8.

<sup>119</sup> Augustine, *On Nature and Grace*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, trans. Robert Ernest Wallis and Peter Holmes (N.p., 2019), 72 (LXI), Kindle.

<sup>120</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Richard Gell MacMullen (N.p., 2019), 3.10 (LIII.Ben.), Kindle, citing Acts 15:9.

<sup>121</sup> “[U]nclean spirits...also ‘believe and tremble’.” Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, 3.11 (LIII.Ben.), citing James 2:19.

<sup>122</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, 3.11 (LIII.Ben.), citing Galatians 5:6.

<sup>123</sup> Discussed below and in chapter 4.

<sup>124</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, 77.5 (CXXVII.Ben.).

<sup>125</sup> “There is therefore a kind of inward manifestation of God, which is entirely unknown to the ungodly, who receive no manifestation of God the Father and the Holy Spirit.” Augustine, *Tractates*, 76.2.

<sup>126</sup> In other words, you would know true faith in someone else by the accompanying fruit of love: “Therefore everyone sees his own faith in himself; but does not see, but believes, that it is in another; and believes this the more firmly, the more he knows the fruits of it, which faith is wont to work by love.” Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 13.2.5.

<sup>127</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.27.

<sup>128</sup> Augustine, *Letters of St. Augustine*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. John George Cunningham (N.p., 2019), “To My Noble Lord and Justly Honoured Brother Nectarius, Augustin Sends Greeting,” Letter 91.3, Kindle. C. S. Lewis echoes this ontological-teleological principle in *Mere Christianity*, “God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other. That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there.” C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, in *The Complete C. S. Lewis Signature Classics* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002), 35.

<sup>129</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 13.2.

<sup>130</sup> John 17:3 cited in Augustine, *Tractates*, 19.18. The Greek word *ginōskō* (γινώσκω) is like *conocer* in Spanish. It is stronger than merely knowing *of* or knowing *that*. It is knowing *by acquaintance*—the same word used for sexual intimacy between a man and a woman. *Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. “G1097 - *ginōskō* - Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV),” <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g1097/kjv/tr/0-1/>.

<sup>131</sup> Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 8.3.4-5.

<sup>132</sup> Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 8.4.6.

<sup>133</sup> Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 2.10.17.

<sup>134</sup> Michael Hanby, *Augustine and Modernity* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2003), 2, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>135</sup> Augustine, *On the Grace of Christ, and on Original Sin*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, trans. Robert Ernest Wallis and Peter Holmes (N.p., 2019), 27 [XXVI], Kindle, citing 1 John 4:19.

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<sup>136</sup> Augustine, *Ten Sermons on the First Epistle of John*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Henry Browne (N.p., 2019), “Homily VII” (1 John 4:4-12), 1-7, Kindle. Here Augustine likens finding this love relationship to a person wandering in the desert and finding water. The desert is this temporal life. The water is God, whose essence is love. By accepting his salvation, one begins to know him and drink his charity—that is, one participates in his love. By extension, however, one will then exhibit that love toward others. He writes, “To have the name of Christ is possible even for a bad man; i.e., even a bad man can be called a Christian: as they of whom it is said, ‘They polluted the name of their God’ [Ezekiel 36:20]. I say, to have all [the] sacraments is possible even for a bad man; but to have charity, and to be a bad man, is not possible. This then is the peculiar gift, this the ‘Fountain’ that is singly one’s ‘own.’ To drink of this the Spirit of God exhorteth you, to drink of Himself the Spirit of God exhorteth you” (6).

<sup>137</sup> Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, trans. Philip S. Watson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), 483.

<sup>138</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 476.

<sup>139</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 479.

<sup>140</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 479.

<sup>141</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 484.

<sup>142</sup> “[As] the apostle says, ‘God is love’.” Augustine, *Letters of Saint Augustine*, “A Letter of Instructions (*Commonitorium*) to the Holy Brother Fortunatianus,” Letter 148.5.18, citing 1 John 4:8.

<sup>143</sup> Augustine, *Letters of Saint Augustine*, “A Letter of Instructions (*Commonitorium*) to the Holy Brother Fortunatianus,” Letter 148.5.18.

<sup>144</sup> Augustine, *On the Grace of Christ*, 22 [XXI].

<sup>145</sup> Augustine, *Letters of Saint Augustine*, “Replies to Questions of Januarius,” Letter 55.16.29.

<sup>146</sup> Augustine, *Letters of Saint Augustine*, “Replies to Questions of Januarius,” Letter 55.16.29.

<sup>147</sup> Augustine, *Letters of Saint Augustine*, “Replies to Questions of Januarius,” Letter 55.21.39.

<sup>148</sup> Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 153.

<sup>149</sup> Augustine, *Letters of Saint Augustine*, “Replies to Questions of Januarius,” Letter 55.16.29.

<sup>150</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 87.2.

<sup>151</sup> Augustine, *Ten Sermons*, “Homily V” (1 John 3:9-18), 12, citing John 15:13.

<sup>152</sup> McInerney, *The Greatness of Humility*, 3, “*Caritas* and *Voluntas* as the Foundation.”

<sup>153</sup> Bernard McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism*, vol. 1 of *The Presence of God: The History of Western Christian Mysticism* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1991), 258-259.

<sup>154</sup> See appendix B.

<sup>155</sup> Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 1996), 43.

<sup>156</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 45-55.

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- <sup>157</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, 2.2 (LII.Ben.).
- <sup>158</sup> Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 15.19.37 and *Ten Sermons*, “Homily VII” (1 John 4:4-12), 4-7.
- <sup>159</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 76.4.
- <sup>160</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 76.4.
- <sup>161</sup> Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. J. G. Pilkington (N.p., 2019), 6.4.6, Kindle.
- <sup>162</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 13.15.
- <sup>163</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Arthur Cleveland Coxe (N.p., 2019), Psalm 90.9, Kindle.
- <sup>164</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, 46.6 (XCVI.Ben.).
- <sup>165</sup> Maximus the Confessor cited in Olivier Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism: Texts from the Patristic Era with Commentary*, trans. Theodore Berkeley and Jeremy Hummerstone (London: New City Press, 1993), 86.
- <sup>166</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 13.12 (italics added).
- <sup>167</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 10.22.
- <sup>168</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 90.9.
- <sup>169</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 13.12.
- <sup>170</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, 46.6 (XCVI.Ben.), citing Ecclesiastes 7:29.
- <sup>171</sup> McNerney, *The Greatness of Humility*, 2, “Pride: Love of Self Rather than Love for God.”
- <sup>172</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 14.13.
- <sup>173</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.15, paraphrasing Ecclesiasticus 10:12-13.
- <sup>174</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 19.14.
- <sup>175</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.15, paraphrasing Ecclesiasticus 10:12-13.
- <sup>176</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 14.13.
- <sup>177</sup> Ruddy, “A Christological Approach to Virtue,” 65.
- <sup>178</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.16.
- <sup>179</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.16.
- <sup>180</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.16. Christ will similarly define humility to Teresa in her *Spiritual Testimonies* (24.1) [*Relaciones espirituales* 28].
- <sup>181</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.16.
- <sup>182</sup> Augustine, *Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, According to Matthew*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. William Findlay (N.p., 2019), 1.4.11, Kindle.

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- <sup>183</sup> Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, According to Matthew*, 1.4.11.
- <sup>184</sup> Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, According to Matthew*, 1.4.11.
- <sup>185</sup> Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, According to Matthew*, 1.4.11.
- <sup>186</sup> Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, According to Matthew*, 1.4.11, citing Proverbs 9:10.
- <sup>187</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32.
- <sup>188</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Oxford, 1883), 3.17, <https://ccel.org/ccel/edersheim/lifetimes/lifetimes>.
- <sup>189</sup> Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, 4.19.
- <sup>190</sup> Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, 4.19.
- <sup>191</sup> Luke 18:11 (New Revised Standard Version).
- <sup>192</sup> Luke 18:13 (New Revised Standard Version).
- <sup>193</sup> Luke 18:13 (New Revised Standard Version).
- <sup>194</sup> *Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. "G1344 - *dikaioō* - Strong's Greek Lexicon (KJV)," <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g1344/kjv/tr/0-1/>.
- <sup>195</sup> Luke 18:14 (New Revised Standard Version).
- <sup>196</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32.
- <sup>197</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32.
- <sup>198</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32 (italics added).
- <sup>199</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32.
- <sup>200</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32.
- <sup>201</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 40.25.
- <sup>202</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 40.25.
- <sup>203</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 74.21.
- <sup>204</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 74.21. Teresa states the same thing—and often—such as at the end of her *Life*, "I don't call mine what is good, for I already know that there is nothing good in me but what the Lord has given me without my meriting it" (Teresa, *Life*, 39.8). "[N]o llamo mío lo que es bueno, que ya sé no hay cosa en mí, sino lo que tan sin merecerlo me ha dado el Señor" (Teresa, *Vida*, 39.8). At this point, the reader must make a choice to render those statements as reflecting a theology of humility towards spiritual ends or a rhetorical humility for socio-political ends. As I argue in the next chapter, it cannot be both, because they are entirely different types of humility with different ends.
- <sup>205</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32.
- <sup>206</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 32.



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<sup>207</sup> Two other points need be made here: first, Augustine's spiritual poverty is a stance before God, not humanity. Nowhere will Augustine (or Teresa) define humility or spiritual poverty as synonymous with an obsequious timidity in one's relationship to others. Rather, humility and *caritas* are conceptual opposites of pusillanimity and obsequiousness. One's submission to God does not translate into an unqualified submission to others. Christ the Son submitted to God the Father and not always to humanity. In the same way (as I discuss in greater detail in chapter 4), true humility is submitting one's will to God first and then to others in accordance with his will.

Second, neither Teresa nor Augustine equates monastic, material poverty with poverty of spirit (though, at times, Teresa equates spiritual poverty with inner detachment to temporal things; see, for example, *Camino de perfección*, 38.9). As Augustine writes in his exposition of Psalm 132, "God's poor one is...poor in spirit, not in his purse" (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19). As he explains, a person could have land and wealth and still be humble before God, aware that, in an eternal sense, riches for their own sake profit nothing (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19, "riches themselves profit him nothing"). He could thus detach the soul from those temporal goods, using his riches to profit God's kingdom. Here Augustine cites Paul in his first letter to Timothy, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19, citing 1 Timothy 6:17). Here it becomes evident that material goods were not a problem for Augustine but rather one's stance toward them. For that reason, the materially wealthy were also to be "rich in good works, ready to distribute" their wealth in generosity as the Lord might lead (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19, citing 1 Timothy 6:18). In other words, Augustine's understanding of Paul's exhortation is that there remained a place for wealthy Christians in the kingdom *if* they understood their wealth to be God's blessing through them for the benefit of others. In that way, he or she would be "counted among the poor who are satisfied with bread" (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19). Conversely, a man poor in temporal wealth and status could be a "proud beggar," seeking temporal goods by any means possible in order to "be puffed up" in his own estimation rather than seeking true and eternal wealth, or eternal life (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19). God, therefore, looks at spiritual intent rather than at a temporal state: "[He] doth not heed the means a man hath, but the wish he hath, and judgeth him according to his wish for temporal blessings" (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19). One could thus have nothing of temporal goods but be rendered spiritually gluttonous because of the heart's desire for self-exaltation through those goods. On the other hand, one could have immense temporal wealth yet, because of a spiritual detachment to those things, be rendered spiritually poor, or humble, before God. Thus, writes Augustine, "God counteth among His poor all the humble *in heart*...whatever they may have in this world" (*Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 132.19, italics added). These are essentially Teresa's complaints about monastic life in 16<sup>th</sup>-century Spain—a pretense of outwardly separating oneself and abandoning secular life yet retaining a desire for privilege, honor, and status. Her reforms are meant to level temporal hierarchies in those regards. Nevertheless, she will insist that true detachment happens in the soul as Augustine describes.

<sup>208</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.16.

<sup>209</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 55.7.

<sup>210</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 33, "Whereas, then, all Christians have to guard humility, forasmuch as it is from Christ that they are called Christians, Whose Gospel no one considers with care, but that he discovers Him to be a Teacher of humility."

<sup>211</sup> In Greek, Χριστιανός or *christianos*, meaning a "follower of Christ." *Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. "G5546 - *christianos* - Strong's Greek Lexicon (KJV)," <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g5546/kjv/tr/0-1/>.

<sup>212</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginit*y, 33.

<sup>213</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament*, 27.11 (LXXVII.Ben.).

<sup>214</sup> Augustine. *Sermons on the New Testament (51-94)*, 68.11.

<sup>215</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 2.4.

<sup>216</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, 7.10.26.

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<sup>217</sup> John 5:30 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>218</sup> “To such a degree does He who is equal to the Father humble Himself.... Let us then do the will of the Father, the will of the Son, the will of the Holy Ghost.” Augustine, *Tractates*, 22.15.

<sup>219</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginity*, 31, citing Philippians 2:7-8.

<sup>220</sup> The original Greek word for *servant* that Augustine cites is *doulos* (δοῦλος). *Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. “G1401 – *doulos* - Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV),” <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g1401/kjv/tr/0-1/>. It is the root of the word used in the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 15 for *serve*, *douleuō* (δουλεύω). *Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. “G1398 – *douleuō* - Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV),” <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g1398/kjv/tr/0-1/>. In this passage cited by Augustine, Paul is etymologically and conceptually connecting Christ’s kenosis with the Mosaic law of servitude. As Kenneth Fleming explains the concept, in Deuteronomy 15 (as well as in Exodus 21), the law required that any man or woman bonded into indentured servitude be freed from service on the seventh year of their service. The servant, however, out of love for his master, could choose on that Sabbath year to stay as a servant for the rest of his life. Should the servant choose to do so, he (or she) would ritually pierce an ear to demonstrate this. Four characteristics then marked his service from that moment. First, it was a service no longer performed out of duty but rather out of *love*. Second, because it was a service based on love, it was *voluntary*. Third, it was a commitment for life and was therefore *perpetual*. Lastly, that service was *total* in that the servant was now dedicated absolutely to the will of the master. Kenneth Fleming, *He Humbled Himself: Recovering the Lost Art of Serving* (Kansas City, KS: Walterick Publishers, 1993), 31-32.

<sup>221</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginity*, 51, “there is no servant greater than his Lord, nor disciple greater than his master.”

<sup>222</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginity*, 52.

<sup>223</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 25.16.

<sup>224</sup> Studer, *The Grace of Christ*, 51 (italics added).

<sup>225</sup> Ruddy, “A Christological Approach to Virtue,” 59.

<sup>226</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 16.32.

<sup>227</sup> Ruddy, “A Christological Approach to Virtue,” 59.

<sup>228</sup> Ruddy, “A Christological Approach to Virtue,” 58-59.

<sup>229</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 105.7.

<sup>230</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons (184-229Z)*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. and notes Edmund Hill (Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1993), 229E.2.

<sup>231</sup> Augustine, *Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons (184-229Z)*, 223C.

<sup>232</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 69.14.

<sup>233</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:25 cited in Augustine, *City of God*, 10.28.

<sup>234</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 7.30.

<sup>235</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 12.6.

<sup>236</sup> Psalm 35:8.

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<sup>237</sup> Psalm 57:6.

<sup>238</sup> Psalm 5:10; also see Psalm 141:10 and Proverbs 29:6.

<sup>239</sup> Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 2, “But we speak God’s wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (7-8, New Revised Standard Version). Here, the Greek word for *rulers* is *árchōn* (ἄρχων), which can mean human rulers but also spiritual princes or rulers as in the “the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient” (Ephesians 2:2, New Revised Standard Version). The Septuagint uses the same word *árchōn* for the prince that opposes Gabriel as he brings a prophetic word to Daniel in Daniel 10 as well as for the archangel Michael who comes to Gabriel’s aid. It is the word used for Jesus in the book of Revelation, for political and religious leaders, and for the fallen principalities of the second heaven (*Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. “G758 – *árchōn* - Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV), <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g758/kjv/tr/0-1/>”). It is also the root of the word *archangel*—or chief or ruling angel—such as Michael and Gabriel (*Online Etymology Dictionary*, s.v. “archangel (n.),” [www.etymonline.com/search?q=archangel](http://www.etymonline.com/search?q=archangel)). In Paul’s theological schema, these fallen *arché* are the true enemies of God, not humans. In other words, Christ became human not to defeat humanity but to destroy these *arché* principalities and powers of darkness (see Ephesians 6). He did so through humility, for the cross redeemed creation and humanity, taking back from them what Adam had legally forfeited to them. But as Paul implies in 1 Corinthians 2, this was a hidden mystery: that redemption would come through the humiliation of the cross rather than through brute force, demonstrating to these powers and principalities that God is sovereign; for by the cross the Father “made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (1 Corinthians 5:21, New Revised Standard Version) and legally gave Jesus the “keys of Death and of Hades” (Revelation 1:18, New Revised Standard Version). As Paul writes, had these fallen principalities clearly understood what Jesus’ crucifixion would bring, they would have fought the cross rather than foment it. In the end, however, as Haman had done in the book of Esther, they constructed their own gallows; for “God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; [and He] chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong” (1 Corinthians 1:27, New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>240</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 57.12.

<sup>241</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 5.13.

<sup>242</sup> Augustine, *On Faith, Hope and Love (The Enchiridion)*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. J. F. Shaw (N.p., 2019), 99, Kindle.

<sup>243</sup> Augustine, *On Faith, Hope and Love*, 100-101.

<sup>244</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.1 (italics added).

<sup>245</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 128.8, citing 1 Corinthians 15:19.

<sup>246</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 14.13. Because faith and humility exalt where human pride debases, Augustine agrees with Nietzsche’s assessment that Judea ultimately conquered Rome. See Augustine, *The Harmony of the Gospels*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Stewart Dingwall Fordyce Salmond (N.p., 2019), 1.14.21, Kindle; and Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, in *Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, trans. Horace B. Samuel (Hastings, UK: Delphi Classics, 2015), “First Essay” 16, Kindle.

<sup>247</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 14.13.

<sup>248</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, 14.13, citing Proverbs 18:12.

<sup>249</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 231.

<sup>250</sup> I do not argue that she is a theological clone. Rather, in Teresa’s writings, one finds a theological likeness with that of Augustine. See appendix A, p. 173.

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<sup>251</sup> As MacIntyre notes concerning the development of Christianity and Christian ethics in general. Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics: A History of Moral Philosophy from the Homeric Age to the 20th Century*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1998), vi-vii. ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>252</sup> Hanby, *Augustine and Modernity*, 2-3.

### III. TERESA'S HUMILITY AND THE AFFIRMATION OF THE SELF

Was Teresa's employment of the language of humility a rhetorical move that helped her navigate an oppressive patriarchy, or was it a product of an already-established theology of *humilitas*? Could it have been both? Writing as a woman, did her theology of humility lead to the negation of the feminine, or did it affirm it?

Having discussed the Augustinian theological view of humility in the last chapter, my aim in this chapter is to locate Teresa's metaphysical allegiances and determine whether her own view of humanity's ontology reflects a frame of reference bounded, as Blamires<sup>253</sup> describes, by this-world criteria or by a concern for humanity's eternal destiny. I argue for the latter and, therefore, establish continuity with Augustine's theological humility. As a result, I place her humility within a similar view of human ontology. Within that continuity, however, where Augustine presents humanity as a rational soul, Teresa presents a mystical soul. The distinction is one of focus, not contrast, and the emphasis is the result of the intended audience. Augustine wrote as a philosopher and as a "doctrinal and speculative theologian."<sup>254</sup> His concern was the margins between philosophy and faith and the establishment of a systematic theology. In contrast, sixteenth-century Spanish misogyny masked in doctrine made it difficult for Teresa to overtly represent herself as a philosopher or a theologian.<sup>255</sup> Her theology, therefore, is subtle, gleaned from within her confessions, her testimonies, and her spiritual instructions.

Within that theology, however, her declarations of wretchedness and of sin (rather than sins) are, in fact, prominent and accentuated. But, as theological declarations, they apply to all humanity regardless of gender. In this case, her rhetoric is a question of emphasis rather than exaggeration. As Weber recognizes, "I do not mean to claim that Teresa's theological concepts are created *ex nihilo*.... Teresa's originality lies not in doctrinal content *per se*, but rather in her

transformation of doctrine into a vital solution to her personal anguish.”<sup>256</sup> Indeed, Teresa’s doctrine is unoriginal because it is orthodox. The relevant question, then, concerns the transformation and the solution. In other words, does she construct that doctrine in a way that results in self-affirmation rather than pusillanimous self-negation or manipulative self-assertion?

In this chapter, I hope to demonstrate that Teresa’s descriptions of herself as a *mujercilla ruin* are paradoxical utterances of spiritual self-affirmation rather than a rhetorical ruse. But to view them as such, one must define them within her own theological paradigm: one that is constructed upon an ontology of the self aligned with Augustine and with Scripture. In this paradigm, the *mystical* center of the soul is an *eternal* center. There, the self finds perfect fulfillment and meaning in its union with the divine through an experiential and ineffable relationship with the person of Jesus Christ.

Accordingly, her *telos* is not the mystic experience itself. Rather, it is the ineffable knowledge that results—a knowledge that is synonymous with a spiritual *unknowing* rather than its intellectual antithesis, the *unknowable*. An experiential union with God has as its objective (or its eternal teleology) a relationship with him that begins in this temporal life. It is a foretaste and shadow of the relationship to be known in the next. Like Augustine’s self, however, Teresa’s self is also corrupted by sin. It is utterly broken—will, mind, reason, emotions, and flesh. Pride has kept the self turned toward itself and away from that relationship. Humility again will be the cure and the catalyst for transforming the will and uniting the self with God. Teresa, however, places a greater emphasis on humility as a supernatural revelation of wretchedness. That is, humility is the result of seeing oneself supernaturally from God’s viewpoint. As a virtue, it is God-granted self-knowledge,<sup>257</sup> divinely infused and spiritually apprehended in the soul. Thus, the soul is undone—even ruined. The self receives revelation of its wretchedness as a *spiritual* state before

God, and this revelation empties the self completely of any ability to fulfill singularly and without divine intervention its ontological purpose. It recognizes that only Christ can do that.

Humility, thus, places the self in a position in which God can create a new redeemed self that exists in that experiential union with him. Again, the self is not lost, erased, or absorbed. The humble self, rather, can fulfill its ontological destiny: namely, to be near to God and to be in perfect unity with him (as the Trinity is in perfect unity). Consequently, not only do declarations of wretchedness and *ruin* fill her writings. So too are expressions of reciprocated love, worship, and gratitude equally prolific and preeminent.

In short, Teresa's humility enables and opens that experiential space—the tangible encounter with God through contemplative prayer—that will occupy much of her writings and teachings. More than a rhetorical deflection or literary *topos*, Teresa's humility is a spiritual state that recognizes, accepts, and enables the Augustinian process of yielding to Christ's work in the soul and the perceptible relationship with the Trinity that she prolifically and passionately describes. As such, Teresa takes the foundational concepts of humility found in Augustine in a new direction. She shifts the focus from the rational and philosophical and places it on the experiential and the ineffable. Yet her theology equally affirms the self through the fulfillment of its eternal destiny (*knowing* God) as well as in the enjoyment of the fruits of that destiny (*experiencing* God) in this life.

#### **A. Teresa's Ontology: The Eternal Self**

As Augustine does, Teresa describes an ontology of an eternal self with an eternal soul formed by God in his image.<sup>258</sup> In Teresian language, this is the soul's capacity to have the dwelling place of God in the center of the soul—the most interior part where the mystical union

or marriage takes place detached from the temporal cares and pleasures of the world.<sup>259</sup> This ontology is evident not only in her treatises but in her poetry.

Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez emphasize in their introduction to her poetry that Teresa kept her poems separate from her other spiritual writings, leading to a neglect of academic and critical scrutiny.<sup>260</sup> They were written for herself and for her spiritual daughters and were, therefore, not exposed to questioning by the Inquisition or her confessors. They could not have been penned, as Kavanaugh and Rodriguez note, under duress but rather during “her ardent moments of love...as a release for the mystical fire she could no longer contain in her heart.”<sup>261</sup> In other words, while writing her poetry, she was not under the same imposed scrutiny as she was with her other writings.

In her poetry, she expresses the same degree of detachment to temporal concerns as she does elsewhere, and the majority of her statements concerning eternity come packaged within her declarations of detachment. Such declarations are frequent in her works, such as in the *Life* when she discusses the ability to see God through prayer and what then becomes of temporal concerns, “[W]hat good things can you still seek in this life—leaving aside what is gained for eternity—that could compare with the least of these favors?”<sup>262</sup> What she expresses as detachment, however, is actually an *attachment* to eternal concerns that causes temporal concerns to become inconsequential. The result is a yearning for this eternal good, which she expresses through aspirations of death, for no other reason than the desire to see God without hindrance.<sup>263</sup> If these aspirations seem hyperbolic to a contemporary reader, they do so only until one considers their premodern antecedents going back at least to Christ himself, who, as Teresa notes, willingly sought death for the greater glory of placing eternity before his people.<sup>264</sup> In her poetry,



therefore, one can see the kenosis of Christ described by Paul in Philippians 2: that Christ, for the sake of an eternal end, left eternity in order to die.

In her poem, “For Christmas” (“*Para Navidad*”), for example, she writes:

[W]hy did he  
So graciously take  
Garments so coarse  
Forsaking such richness?  
Let us follow Him,  
In seeking poverty;  
He became man for this.  
Let us both die.<sup>265</sup>

Here, she speaks of a spiritual death to self (“following him and seeking poverty”), but she does so in relation to Christ’s physical death. In this, Christ is the model<sup>266</sup> since the way of perfection implies forsaking a temporal teleology for the sake of an eternal one and responding to both his example and his call.<sup>267</sup> Christ is the standard of the call of obedience unto death, and those who love him will take no other path than the one he did,<sup>268</sup> forsaking the self-centering *cupiditas* Augustine describes for the sake of the *caritas* that finds its center in the eternal God.

Likewise, she echoes the apostle Paul, awaiting possible execution: “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”<sup>269</sup> In her poem, “Aspirations toward Eternal Life,” she reproduces this Pauline conviction with the same Christ-centered focus:

Life, do not trouble me.  
See how all that remains  
Is in losing you to gain.  
Come now, sweet death,  
Come, dying, swiftly.  
*I die because I do not die.*  
That life from above,  
That is true life....  
Life, what can I give  
To my God living in me,  
If not to lose you,  
Thus to merit Him?  
In dying I want to reach Him alone whom I seek.<sup>270</sup>

Evident in these expressions of longing for death is a degree of detachment that results from an eternal perspective. Life and its temporal concerns are troublesome, and death is “sweet” because of the desire for that “life from above,” which for her is “true life.” In losing her life (*perderte*), she will gain Christ (*ganarle*), whom she loves. Detachment is, therefore, not just a requirement for perfection. Detachment is the *result* of the perfection of a *caritas* that is spiritual. As she writes in the *Way of Perfection*, that perfect way entails a perfect *caritas* that ultimately finds its source in God. But that love brings with it a “clear knowledge...about the nature of the world, that there is another world, about the difference between the one and the other, that the one is eternal and the other a dream.”<sup>271</sup> That *caritas* love, being directed to God and the things of God, causes detachment as a by-product. This detachment is not self-generated. It is the effect of seeing from God’s perspective.

Furthermore, because the center of the soul is the dwelling place of God, the soul (or soul-spirit<sup>272</sup>) itself is that part of one’s being that, united with God, will ultimately be united with him in heaven. Thus, she calls her experiences—or her mystical encounters with the divine presence—a type of pledge.<sup>273</sup> They are for her, as they were for Augustine,<sup>274</sup> a foretaste of what awaits her in eternity, not only in the sense of an absence of suffering but in the presence of her Creator’s unfettered love. That, she writes later in the *Way*, is the purpose of her mystical experiences:

The above [i.e., worshipping God in perfection unfettered by sin and weakness] would be possible, through the favor of God, for a soul placed in this exile, but not with the perfection of those who have gone forth from this prison [i.e., life in the flesh]; for we are at sea and journeying along this way. But there are times when, tired from our travels, we experience that the Lord calms our faculties and quiets the soul. As though by signs, He gives us a clear foretaste of what will be given to those He brings to His kingdom. And to those to whom He gives here below the kingdom we ask for, He gives pledges so that through these they may

have great hope of going to enjoy perpetually what here on earth is given only in sips.<sup>275</sup>

In this life, as she says in her “Aspirations toward Eternal Life,” the “soul is fettered” by the “shackles”<sup>276</sup> of sin and the deceptive nature of this life. It is easy to get discouraged and lose sight of Christ as the object of one’s love and as one’s eternal goal. These signs (*señas*) and sips (*sorbos*) are, therefore, necessary at times due to the temporal and imperfect nature of the soul’s exile within what she calls the “exterior man.”<sup>277</sup> This imperfect exterior is a prison for the eternal soul, which is hindered from loving God the way that it wants<sup>278</sup> and longs for that perpetual enjoyment that comes from having been completely liberated by death. As will be seen, therefore, eternal life will be more than mere immortality and everlasting paradise.

#### **B. Teresa’s Teleology: The Eternal Relationship**

Elizabeth Howe writes of Teresa, “Ultimately...it is her relationship with God that is at the center of the entire corpus of her writings.... [A]t its heart [her text] remains a revelation of the person Teresa believes herself to be and what has brought her to this present state.”<sup>279</sup> This emphasis on experiential relationship is the demarcation between Augustine and Teresa. McGinn argues that Augustine can be considered the Father of Christian Mysticism because of the mystic elements woven within his theology that later mystics would build upon. He particularly notes three attributes: Augustine’s descriptions of the contemplative and of the ecstatic, his understanding of the *imago dei* within human ontology as making contemplation and union possible, and the necessity of Christ and his work in and for the Church to realize that union. Thus, Augustine lays the foundation for all Christian mysticism that follows.<sup>280</sup>

At the same time, however, Augustine was conscious that he was writing as a theologian and church leader.<sup>281</sup> His texts read, therefore, like hermeneutic texts,<sup>282</sup> where he interprets Scripture and cites and alludes to Scripture in almost every paragraph. In contrast, Teresa builds

on her own theological foundation by relating her experiences; yet this results in a composite work that is no less theological. Thus, where Augustine writes a theology in which experience is an integral part, Teresa writes her experiences in a way that constructs an integrated theology. Put another way, Augustine writes a theology of experience; Teresa writes an experiential theology—the demarcation being one of emphasis, not of kind, for she never deviates from her ultimate appeal to Scripture and Church doctrine.

As Denise Dupont contends, Teresa’s experiences are essential to her theology because they form the basis of her claim to union (which, for Teresa, is akin to the relational intimacy of marriage<sup>283</sup>). But Dupont makes an important delineation between the experiences themselves and their *telos*:

[T]he experience of locutions and visions would be misunderstood and misused if interpreted as an end in itself and a monument to a special, individualized, experiential moment with God. However, if such an experientialist approach is broken open and redirected toward the divine’s working within the self, it reveals its dependence on God as origin of both undeserved gifts and of pure contemplation. In the experiences had by Teresa’s body and soul there is truth, but the truth is not that body or soul—it is God.<sup>284</sup>

Teresa herself makes this distinction. In her theology, the experience was not the end; the goal was not consolations or raptures. Rather the mystical experiences were a means to *knowing God*.<sup>285</sup>

Teresa’s supernatural or mystical moments were, therefore, not a “monument” to the *merely* experiential, as Dupont notes, and their purpose was not self-knowledge “according to...contemporary analytic and therapeutic understandings”<sup>286</sup>; nor was Teresa a 19<sup>th</sup>-century romantic out to celebrate a triumphant individuality or a 20<sup>th</sup>-century postmodernist intent on constructing a subjectivity<sup>287</sup>—either as a writer or as a woman—for she never brandishes contemporary concerns over the body. On the contrary, Teresa’s self-knowledge is mediated by

God-knowledge. In the interior part of the soul, she finds truth, but that truth is not herself; it is God.<sup>288</sup> That is, she sees herself in truth, which is to say, she sees herself *in* God. Thus, “when the soul arrives at [her] seventh *morada*, it encounters the Trinity rather than the exalted, independent, self-sufficient ‘I’.”<sup>289</sup> The result is a greater love for God, greater knowledge of His grace, greater humility, and a greater desire to serve him.

Teresa, then, does not construct a material subjectivity either as a writer, a woman, or a theologian. Her objective, via these experiences, is a revealed spiritual subjectivity founded on the questions: who is God, who am I in God, and how does God see me? And having those questions addressed, a new set of questions result: how can I repay him,<sup>290</sup> how can I serve him,<sup>291</sup> what would he do through me?<sup>292</sup> When discussing, in the *Way of Perfection*, the Lord’s Prayer and the phrase *thy kingdom come*, she, therefore, declares:

[T]he great good that it seems to me there will be in the kingdom of heaven, among many other blessings, is that one will no longer take any account of earthly things, but have a calmness and glory within, rejoice in the fact that all are rejoicing, experience perpetual peace and a wonderful inner satisfaction that comes from seeing that everyone hallows and praises the Lord and blesses His name and that no one offends Him. Everyone loves Him there, and the soul itself doesn’t think about anything else than loving Him; *nor can it cease loving Him, because it knows Him*. And would that we could love Him in this way here below, even though we may not be able to do so with such perfection or stability. *But if we knew Him we would love in a way very different from that in which we do love Him.*<sup>293</sup>

In other words, like Christian mystics before her, Teresa upholds the fundamental Christian tenet that eternal life begins here.<sup>294</sup> If the soul is that part of humanity that remains after death, and if in heaven the soul is freed and made perfect, and if in its perfect state the soul loves God and knows God perfectly, then loving God and knowing him, though perfected in heaven, can be experienced on earth. In doing so, God *in* the soul brings his kingdom to this realm.

Similar then to Augustine's inward manifestation of God or inward *seeing* and *knowing* is Teresa's spiritual "certitude and security."<sup>295</sup> Edward Howells describes this spiritual knowing as "the perfection of natural knowing and 'divine,' rather than merely human knowledge *of* the divine."<sup>296</sup> This is a vital distinction, for the substance of the soul literally comes into contact with God's substance and knows it experientially.<sup>297</sup> It is important then to understand what Teresa herself means by *experience* (*experiencia* or *experimental*). McGinn notes that when Teresa uses the word, she means it differently than the way a modern reader might read it. *Experience* for Teresa is not sensory in the sense of the Spanish *sentir* (to feel), even though she includes descriptions of powerful corporal sensations. Experience for Teresa means "coming to *know* something in a vital and holistic way, a gift that does not exclude some kind of external or internal perception, but that necessarily goes beyond mere feeling to knowing and loving."<sup>298</sup> Experience is thus not merely the perception *of* something. Rather, Teresa's experience is "dynamic and relational," the result of being frequently engaged with someone or something.<sup>299</sup> The engagement is what makes the experience ineffable.<sup>300</sup>

For Teresa, this experiential knowing is, therefore, more certain than natural knowledge. It is imaginative, in the Augustinian sense, in that it is spiritual, taking place first in her spirit before overflowing and being perceived by the fallen faculties.<sup>301</sup> Her claim to a relationship with God is thus not metaphorical or figurative but rather entails a literal and intimate meeting of friends, as she describes in the *Life*: "Although I didn't see the Divinity, I knew with an indescribable knowledge that It was there."<sup>302</sup> Indeed, it was for this eternal relationship that humanity was created and is, therefore, what God also desires.<sup>303</sup>

Reading Teresa on her terms, then, entails taking into account "her Augustinian turn to the interactive divine within."<sup>304</sup> That is, Christ is both an eager teacher and a friend who is near.

This is the starting point of all Teresian theology<sup>305</sup> and the basis for the foundations she passionately pursues. As she writes in the *Life*: “The main disposition required for always living in this calm is the desire to rejoice solely in Christ, one's Spouse. This is what [the Sisters who live here] must always have as their aim: to be alone with Him alone.”<sup>306</sup>

This intimate friendship as a spiritual union of two persons—human and divine—cannot be overstated. As Howells explains, the *imago dei* in Teresa's theology is the same as Augustine's: it is the capacity of the soul to undergo a transformation in the center of the soul whereby “secret exchanges between God and the soul take place.”<sup>307</sup> But where the image of God is the divine reflection of God created in every soul from the moment of conception, making this union possible, the actual *goal* is union itself. Thus, the soul must be “restored from the damage of sin *and* raised above the level of nature.”<sup>308</sup> The *image* and the *goal* are, in sum, Teresian ontology and teleology. Both are centered around the *imago dei* in the soul and its capacity to participate in the already-known union eternally experienced by the Trinity—a union that parallels the hypostatic union of human and divine known by Father and Son.<sup>309</sup>

### C. **Muddy Water Made Clear: Humility, Wretchedness, and the Union of Wills**

In one of her many self-deprecatory declarations in the *Life*, Teresa writes, “May You be blessed...that from such filthy mud as I, You make water so clear...! May You be praised...for having desired to raise up a worm so vile!”<sup>310</sup> Deirdre Green notes that though an academic reader may find Teresa's incessant self-criticism excessive and beyond even saintly humility, it is “heartening to the ordinary reader.”<sup>311</sup> To the soul seeking the way of perfection, the smallest fault can torment. Thus, what to some may seem defensive self-deprecation by a woman under the gaze of the Inquisition, to others Teresa's self-analysis serves as a mirror to their own experience in prayer, reminding them that “sanctity is grounded in humanity,” and the way of

perfection is always fleshed in imperfection.<sup>312</sup> Teresa recognizes her own humanity and imperfection, “[W]e are never, never blamed without there being faults on our part, for we always go about full of them since the just man falls seven times a day, and it would be a lie to say we have no sin.”<sup>313</sup> Here, she cites the book of Proverbs but leaves the reader to fill in the remainder of the verse; for the proverb continues, “[A] just man shall fall seven times, and shall rise again.”<sup>314</sup> Though Teresa recognizes her imperfection, she also recognizes that she is just, or *justified*; and because she is just, God raises her up. As she writes in the *Life*, “They who really love You, my Good, walk safely on a broad and royal road. They are far from the precipice. Hardly have they begun to stumble when You, Lord, give them Your hand. One fall is not sufficient for a person to be lost, nor are many, if they love You and not the things of the world. They journey in the valley of humility.”<sup>315</sup> In other words, the just person lives in recognition of two simultaneous truths: her own imperfection and God’s perfection and love.

Her self-deprecatory remarks, therefore, must be taken in the context of the complete thought: she is not muddy water. She is muddy water made clear. She is not a worm. She is a worm raised up. She is a worm that, in union with God, becomes a white butterfly.<sup>316</sup> These two spiritual truths resident within her keep her grounded in the valley of true humility, which Jesus himself has defined for her, “to know what you can do and what I can do.”<sup>317</sup> Humility, then, is self-recognition, not self-criticism. Thereby, the soul can walk humbly, focused on its eternal *telos*—“they love You”—rather than the things of the world: the self-love and self-will that keep the soul from seeing him.<sup>318</sup>

The soul, however, must first find the valley of humility, which happens through God moving on the soul. As the Council of Trent declared in 1547, all are born into Adam’s original sin and are justified through new birth into the Second Adam (Jesus); yet, man is “not able, by



his own free will, without the grace of God, to move himself unto justice in His sight.”<sup>319</sup> The soul must, therefore, be prepared for—or disposed toward—God and his righteousness by first being “excited and assisted by divine grace.”<sup>320</sup> The Council never uses the word *humility*, but its essential role in the soul’s preparation is implicit:

[U]nderstanding themselves to be sinners, they, by turning themselves...to consider the mercy of God, are raised unto hope, confiding that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake; and they begin to love Him as the fountain of all justice; and are therefore moved against sins by a certain hatred and detestation, to wit, by that penitence which must be performed before baptism.<sup>321</sup>

Thus, the soul becomes newly disposed toward God. It acknowledges not only its sins but its sinful state. At the same time, it embraces the mercy of God, a hatred of sin, and a new love for God and his righteousness. Teresa, for her part, emphasizes mental prayer and experience in this process, but she never departs from these orthodox tenets when describing humility in her own writings.<sup>322</sup>

One example of where she uses Church orthodoxy to defend her own orthodoxy is her defense of mental prayer in the *Way*, “If while speaking I thoroughly understand and know that I am speaking with God and I have greater awareness of this than I do of the words I'm saying, mental and vocal prayer are joined. If, however, others tell you that you are speaking with God while you are reciting the Our Father and at the same time in fact thinking of the world, then I have nothing to say.”<sup>323</sup> In other words, vocal prayer *is* mental prayer. Indeed, all prayer is mental prayer since prayer is not a ritual; you are talking to a person. You are talking to a king—the *telos* of one’s being—and you cannot truly call him king “if you do not clearly understand what his position is and what yours is.”<sup>324</sup> This is true if you are reciting the Our Father or the Creed.<sup>325</sup> Any condemnation of mental prayer, then, is a theological absurdity as she then states, “What is this, Christians, that you say mental prayer isn't necessary? Do you understand

yourselves? Indeed, I don't think you do, and so you desire that we all be misled. You don't know what mental prayer is, or how vocal prayer should be recited, or what contemplation is, for if you did you wouldn't on the one hand condemn what on the other hand you praise.”<sup>326</sup> She reiterates this later in the chapter: if you do not understand prayer to be a conversation with a person—spirit to Spirit—you do not know what prayer is.<sup>327</sup>

Thus, she writes in her *Life*, mental prayer is “an intimate sharing between friends.”<sup>328</sup> It entails “taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us.”<sup>329</sup> This union takes place in the center of the soul. It is the image of God that, in Teresian and Augustinian theology, is present in every soul. Yet, though that image (i.e., that divinely-ordained capacity to know him) is present, Teresa speaks of a “black cloth” that blocks the light of God from reaching that center.<sup>330</sup> Teresa views sin—and particularly sin nature<sup>331</sup>—as a postlapsarian effect. Human nature does not, therefore, naturally see the *good* that it was created for. In short, it does not seek that eternal relationship.

Teresa describes the will as the driving force that points the soul away from or toward that *good*. It is not, as McGinn notes, “a capacity to act” so much as an “attitude of the soul” that becomes “docile to divine action.”<sup>332</sup> In other words, the will allows the soul to conform to God’s will. Because of sin, however, Teresa says that the will is “vicious, sensual, and ungrateful.”<sup>333</sup> Natural fallen humanity, therefore, is not able to love God as God loves because the will is not yet conformed, or even capable of conforming, with God’s will.<sup>334</sup> Yet, since intimacy is only possible when the wills of two friends are in agreement,<sup>335</sup> conformity of the will must be the agent that prepares the soul and removes that black cloth, allowing the divine light to shine into the center of the soul.

The Adamic will, however, does not desire that conformity. It clings to pride, which she defines as self-sufficiency or a trust in self and the self's determination to direct the will apart from and away from God.<sup>336</sup> Therefore, the self rejects humiliation and humility, detachment, intimacy with God, and selfless love that define perfection<sup>337</sup> since that Adamic nature is spiritually dead. The will is depraved (*vicioso*) and sensual (*sensual*) and pursues what it sees in the present.<sup>338</sup> For her, this is not just wealth or fame but, as she implies above, is also a concern for honor or one's place in society. In this, she opposes a strictly Aristotelian understanding of virtue, where self-assertion and temporal means are necessary for a proper function within the *polis*. At the same time, she opposes a modern, secular *eudaimonia* that would stress a will to power, personal authenticity, or any type of self-centering that would attempt to triumph in its own individuality apart from the eternal and experiential *visio dei*—that face-to-face moment with the divine—and the resulting enjoyment of his presence (*frui Deo*). For Teresa, the will is so *miserable*, inclined to temporal things because of the Adamic nature,<sup>339</sup> that it is incapable of acting on the *imago dei* in the center of the soul. It considers nothing but temporal self-seeking.

As she writes in the *Way*:

How our will deviates in its inclination from that which is the will of God. He wants us to love truth; we love the lie. He wants us to desire the eternal; we, here below, lean toward what comes to an end. He wants us to desire sublime and great things; we, here below, desire base and earthly things. He would want us to desire only what is secure; we, here below, love the dubious.<sup>340</sup>

Here again, in her ontological economy, the eternal is both truth and sublime. It is the greater goal, where the lie is equated with all things temporal—honor, riches, status, class, success, and all that will end with death. To conform one's will to those temporal things is to love that lie. The goal then is to overcome the damage of original sin<sup>341</sup> and have the will so conformed with the will of God that one begins to desire to have and to do what God desires.<sup>342</sup>

Humility is the cure that detaches the soul from those Adamic desires and replaces them with a desire for God. In the *Way*, she compares humility and the resulting intimacy with God to a game of chess:

[W]e checkmate this divine King, who will not be able to escape, nor will He want to. The queen is the piece that can carry on the best battle in this game.... There's no queen like humility for making the King surrender.... [T]he one who has more humility will be the one who possesses Him more; and the one who has less will possess Him less.<sup>343</sup>

Just as the queen is the most powerful piece in a game of chess, humility is the most powerful virtue in the Christian walk; for if the goal is union in the center of the soul—which, for Teresa, is synonymous with “possessing Him” or sharing that intimate friendship with Christ—and if that cannot happen unless, renouncing all pride, the soul’s will and God’s will become aligned, then humility becomes the key that opens the will, giving God access and freedom in the soul.<sup>344</sup> The result of humility will therefore be a transformed will that declares, as she does in the *Life*: “Here is my life, here is my honor and my will. I have given all to You, I am Yours, make use of me according to *Your* will.”<sup>345</sup>

Humility transforms the will, heals the will of a self-sufficient pride, and turns the will to God. It allows the virtues of God to manifest in the self, allowing the self to experience God, which is its end. In this way, humility makes it possible for God to place the kingdom of heaven within. A comprehensive examination then of Teresa’s use of the word *humility* (*humildad*) reveals humility in the Christian subject to be at once a recognition of God’s received gifts, an admission of one’s own spiritual poverty, an abandonment to God and a giving up of one’s right to self, a distrust of self and of one’s abilities apart from God, a disdain for titles and honor, a sustained practice, a love for God’s ways and of his spiritual and eternal perspective, and therefore a subsequent submission to his will.<sup>346</sup> Broadly speaking, it is walking in truth<sup>347</sup> as a

result of God's supernatural light and favor.<sup>348</sup> These descriptions, however, are merely her own definitions that reveal one composite concept given to her, she says, by Christ himself.

In one of her spiritual testimonies (1572), written a few years after her autobiography, she states that she had been afraid that she might be living apart from God's grace—living in darkness, as she describes it. Amid this fear, during a time of prayer, Christ gives her this locution:

He told me: "Daughter, light is very different from darkness. I am faithful. Nobody will be lost unknowingly.... But people should not think that through their own efforts they can be in light or that they can do anything to prevent the night, because these states depend upon my grace. The best help for holding on to the light is to understand that you can do nothing and that it comes from me.... *This is true humility: to know what you can do and what I can do.*"<sup>349</sup>

This definition of *true humility* contains all the facets that she will later describe in her major works. Knowing what he can do is knowing that both humility and the spiritual favors it foment are a *supernatural* work of God. They can never be gained through human effort. Therefore, humility, as a *theological* concept in Teresa's corpus, is a supernaturally endowed virtue that is spiritually apprehended in the soul rather than generated and exerted in the intellect. That is, humility originates in the center of the soul—in the *imago dei*—by the divine touch, only manifesting then in the regenerated faculties of the will and mind. Furthermore, as a theological concept, humility will develop through a spiritual knowing (like Augustine's *inward manifestation*) of one's spiritual state before God. *Knowing what she can do* thus results from seeing herself through God's eyes from his perspective, both as a vessel of sin and as the recipient of Christ's redemptive work. Yet even this divine perspective is only attained through God's mystical favors, where she gazes upon her imperfection through the light of God's perfection. It is at this intersection of her own sin and God's sinlessness that she will place her *ruin* and spiritual poverty—a poverty that is absolute and utterly devoid of the possibility of

being able to offer God anything but the grace and favors that he has already given. Teresa's Christological humility, therefore, has at its core the understanding that what *he can do* flows directly from what, through humility, *he has done* at the cross. Returning then to her poetry:

The Lord of heaven and earth  
Is on the cross.  
On it, too, delight in peace....  
This cross is the verdant tree  
Desired by the bride.  
In its cool shade  
Now she is resting....  
The soul to God  
Is wholly surrendered,  
From all the world  
Now truly free  
The cross is at last  
Her 'Tree of Life' and consolation....  
After our Savior  
Upon the cross placed Himself,  
Now in this cross is  
Both glory and honor.<sup>350</sup>

As she states here, spiritual peace (the delight, the cool shade, the resting) and all mystic consolations and favors, as well as the *tree of life* (or eternal life), which allows the Christian subject to be Christ's bride, are the result of *his* humility and submission to the Father, in agreement with the Father, such that, in Teresa's narrative, Christ even asks and receives permission to go to the cross both because of his love as well as the love that the Father has for humanity.<sup>351</sup> Teresa's Christological humility, then, doesn't end with *ruin*. It is only the necessary first condition that begins with spiritual poverty and leads to spiritual wealth, glory, and honor. In the end, Christ and him crucified remain at the center of this theology; and the eternal riches of spiritual relationship and love become possible and available, expressed through the Christian subject in the *transcendent gratuity* exemplarily and prolifically found in Teresa's treatises and poetry.

For Teresa, all that is good comes from God. Her *Interior Castle*—written as a metaphor for one’s relationship with God and the knowledge of God—the soul is the castle, and one comes closer to union with God in the center of the soul as one enters further into the center of a castle through prayer and reflection.<sup>352</sup> Here, Teresa writes: “you will not be able to enter all the dwelling places through your own efforts, even though these efforts may seem to you great, *unless the Lord of the castle Himself brings you there.*”<sup>353</sup> All spiritual favors and virtues are, therefore, ultimately a gift from God. She reiterates this sentiment again in one of her seemingly spontaneous prayers in the *Way*: “if I have some good it is a gift from no one else’s hands but Yours.”<sup>354</sup> Though raptures are not necessary for attaining his virtues<sup>355</sup> (which develop even in dryness<sup>356</sup>), these virtues are nevertheless a work of God, not humanity. As Kavanaugh and Rodriguez note, the effects of God’s favors are “like the jewels the Spouse gives to the betrothed.”<sup>357</sup> All are spiritual: namely, a rejection of temporal things (save what is useful for advancing God’s kingdom), a knowledge of God’s grandeur, and a knowledge of self that produces humility.<sup>358</sup> For this reason, reaching this spiritual knowledge is impossible if God does not do this work in the soul himself.<sup>359</sup>

This supernatural element, however, becomes the essential element in her theology of humility and Christian subjectivity. As Dupont notes, Teresa differs from Augustine, not in substance, but in emphasis, grounding her theology in her own experiences, locutions, and visions.<sup>360</sup> In other words, Teresa claims theological authority based on her mystical (or prophetic) encounters with the divine presence. As such, she becomes a mediator of the divine for those she is writing to.<sup>361</sup> But, as she always insists, the experience must originate with God. In the *Book of Her Life*, for example, she writes that divine locutions—words not heard with bodily ears but addressed directly to the soul<sup>362</sup>—are known to have divine origin by their effects

in the soul: “[T]hey dispose the soul and prepare it from the very beginning, and they *touch it, give it light, favor it and bring it quiet*. And if the soul suffers dryness, agitation, and worry, these are taken away as though by a stroke of the hand since it seems the Lord wants it to understand that He is powerful and that His words are works.”<sup>363</sup> Again, it is the Spirit’s divine touch and his supernatural light into the soul that brings spiritual peace and rest through a revelation of God’s sovereignty. In the same way, humility is mystically apprehended in the soul as a product of that divine touch:

Believe me, in the presence of infinite Wisdom, a little study of humility and one act of humility is worth more than all the knowledge of the world. Here there is no demand for reasoning but for knowing what as a matter of fact we are and for placing ourselves (with simplicity) in God's presence, for He desires the soul to become ignorant in His presence, as indeed it is.<sup>364</sup>

The catalyst for this “knowing” (*conocer*), as it were, is the presence of God. As she writes here, his presence grants the soul the true humility that transcends intellect and reasoning. Though I do not address here the apophatic-cataphatic distinction, I merely note (for the purposes of delineating her theological and intellectual borders) this point regarding Teresa’s *agnosia*, or *unknowing*: for Teresa, it is not that God’s presence is unknowable or unattainable.<sup>365</sup> Rather, as described by Dionysius the Areopagite in the *Divine Names*, “He is fixed above all reason and mind and [human] wisdom.”<sup>366</sup> In other words, the divine touch transcends the senses and intellect but is still known by the soul—or, as Teresa affirms in the *Interior Castle*, by “a certitude remaining in the soul that only God can place there.”<sup>367</sup> Her “little study of humility,” attained in his presence, therefore, also takes place in the soul’s center as a supernatural work of God.

As though anticipating contemporary interpretations of her humility, she also describes humility in the *Life* as a virtue that expresses itself through the will, “calmly, without daring to



raise its eyes, like the publican, [giving] better thanks than the intellect can perhaps express with all its rhetorical artifices.”<sup>368</sup> She is, of course, referring to Christ’s parable of the Pharisee and the publican, and in doing so, marks humility as primarily a spiritual stance before God rather than an intellectual or rhetorical stance before humanity. Placing all of Teresa’s utterances of wretchedness in the category of rhetorical artifice, thus, negates her claim to God’s divine touch within the soul and ignores her own sense of Christian subjectivity. Repositioning these utterances as effects of God’s work, however, places them back within Teresa’s own understanding of mystical theology. Teresa writes later in her *Life*, “Nor do I myself believe I will ever arrive if God in His goodness doesn’t do everything Himself.”<sup>369</sup> As a humility topic, she would need only to stop after the word *arrive* to achieve the self-limiting effect of rhetoric. Instead, she continues, declaring her *need*—a theologically poignant declaration that will lead her to the spiritual consummation of union. A self-limiting in the rhetorical sense that never moves beyond the self-deprecatory would, in fact, be for her a faithless God-limiting, the kind of false humility that she continually rejects, as she does in her autobiography:

Let them pay no attention to the kinds of humility...in which it seems to some that it is humility not to acknowledge that God is giving them gifts. Let us understand most clearly the real fact: God gives them to us without any merit on our part.... And it is very certain that while we see more clearly that we are rich, *over and above knowing that we are poor*, more benefit comes to us, and even more authentic humility.<sup>370</sup>

Authentic humility is always for her of utmost concern; and, as Dupont observes, one can note here that, because Teresa’s approach is experiential, with an emphasis on God’s divine touch within the self, she reveals “a dependence on God as origin of both undeserved gifts and of pure contemplation.”<sup>371</sup> Authentic humility is accordingly not the denial of God’s gifts or favors, and it is not having to be silent about them. It is knowing that they come from him.

In the sixth dwelling place of the *Interior Castle*, Teresa begins a discussion of the spiritual betrothal, which she will describe as the union of spirit and Spirit. In this union, the two become one, she writes, just as the water from a river and the water from rain that falls into that river become one and cannot be separated or discerned as different.<sup>372</sup> As this begins to happen, however, the believer will see truth as God sees—both truth about God as well as about herself.<sup>373</sup> More than that, however, it is revealed that “God *is* everlasting Truth.”<sup>374</sup> For Teresa, it is not merely that God knows truth or speaks truth. It is that he is Truth itself and the source of truth so that through the soul’s communion with him, the soul sees itself clearly from his perspective. Thus, she provides another definition of humility: that “because God is supreme truth...to be humble is to walk in truth.”<sup>375</sup> In his presence, the soul sees “quickly and ineffably” what God sees,<sup>376</sup> which is that “we have nothing good but only misery and nothingness.”<sup>377</sup> To understand this—in the intimate sense of *conocer* rather than the intellectual assent of *saber*—is to walk a path of self-knowledge (*propio conocimiento*), which is a favor granted from God. Conversely, not understanding it is to walk in falsehood.<sup>378</sup>

Teresa’s theological humility is, therefore, above all, an illuminated self-knowledge<sup>379</sup> that comes from seeing sin in the self by divine revelation. Thus, as she writes at the beginning of the *Interior Castle*, “nothing is more important than humility”<sup>380</sup> as the means of progressing toward the center of the castle (i.e., that intimate union with God as the soul’s chief desire). The outer spaces of the interior castle, therefore, entail gaining humility by a self-knowledge that is attained by “gazing at His grandeur, [in order to] get in touch with our own lowliness...[since] by looking at His purity, we shall see our own filth...[and] by pondering His humility, we shall see how far we are from being humble.”<sup>381</sup> This supernatural comparison that takes place in the soul is the essence of what Teresa means by *humildad* and *ruin*.

Teresa expresses self-knowledge in terms of being *undone* or *wretched*. True humility comes, she says, when the Lord teaches the soul its true nature in a way that brings embarrassment and an inner undoing.<sup>382</sup> In the original Spanish of her *Life*, she uses the word *deshacer*, which can have the meaning of destruction, melting, dissolution, devastation, shattering, and tearing apart. It is not a mere sadness or remorse. The undoing is total. As she continues this thought in her *Life*, she reiterates that this undoing is a work of God through his revelatory light. Furthermore, it comes by his favors, giving a “knowledge that makes us realize we have no good of ourselves”,<sup>383</sup> “the greater the favors, the greater is this knowledge.”<sup>384</sup> The favors she speaks of are, of course, God’s revelations, locutions, and imaginative visions. For Teresa, mystical theology is worthless if it does not result in this self-knowledge and a consequent increase in God-knowledge. But, since intimacy with the soul is God’s own desire, he is faithful to bring the mystic seeker into this perfect contemplation, both for love of his Son and of humanity. As she writes later in the *Life*, “God is very pleased to see a soul that humbly takes His son as mediator and that loves this Son so much that even when His Majesty desires to raise it to very lofty contemplation, as I have said, it is aware of its unworthiness, saying with St. Peter: *Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.*”<sup>385</sup> In other words, the raising up is not possible without the lowering down, or the abasement; as she implies here, Peter, who would become the rock upon which Christ would build the Church, was first undone by the revelation of his own wretchedness.

One argument that may be made here is that Teresa had no obvious sins. Where one can easily identify Augustine’s sin (he describes his sexual lust in detail in the *Confessions*), Teresa tells us nothing of the sins with which she struggles. How, then, is one to believe her incessant claims of wretchedness? Carol Slade notes this contrast between Augustine and Teresa, arguing

that Teresa's sins are too minor for her to have been sincere about her sense of *ruin*.<sup>386</sup> Weber also argues that, whereas we know Augustine's particular sins and his struggle with them, Teresa's sins are evasive; eventually, "we lose track of the 'core' confession."<sup>387</sup> If, however, one instead refers back to Teresa's own definition of humility, her core confession never entails one sin or many sins. She laments the nature of sin itself inherent within her: the Adamic legacy that humanity cannot escape.<sup>388</sup> By perfect contemplation in the light of the divine presence, a sacred measuring and weighing happen deep in the soul. Of that light, she makes this comparison:

The soul is like water in a glass: the water looks very clear if the sun doesn't shine on it; but when the sun shines on it, it seems to be full of dust particles. This comparison is an exact one.... [O]nce it is brought into prayer, which this Sun of justice bestows on it and which opens its eyes, it sees so many dust particles that it would want to close its eyes again.... [F]or the little time that it holds its eyes open, it sees that it is itself filled with mud. It recalls the psalm that says: *Who will be just in Your Presence?*<sup>389</sup>

This description of sin resident in her, rather than being generic or formulaic,<sup>390</sup> is both individual and theological. It is personal in that she has taken this description from her own experience as a judgment of herself. Yet, it is also theological in that, rather than deflecting or offsetting "the inquiry into her individual experience,"<sup>391</sup> she has applied it to herself as well as all of humanity; for the answer to the final question is, of course, no one. Anyone who has had this revelation—seeing himself like the glass of seemingly clear water suddenly exposed to direct sunlight, revealing the actual debris, residue, and mud—will know that it brings with it a sense of wretchedness, and she therefore makes this explicit reference to the Psalms: "Do not enter into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you."<sup>392</sup>

Kavanaugh and Rodriguez translate *sol de justicia* and *justo* (the words that Teresa uses in Spanish) by retaining the original cognates *justice* and *just*. This is fitting, for both the Hebrew

*mishpat* and the Latin Vulgate *iudicio* of this psalm are legal terms. In Teresa's metaphor, therefore, this sun of perfect justice exposes the reality of a spiritual condition that is akin to legal condemnation. In that light, one sees the degree of one's guilt and, in accepting that condemnation, the degree of one's redemption; for with the confession comes the revelation, as Augustine writes: "He then is...our righteousness [our justice]"<sup>393</sup> ("*nostra iustitia*"<sup>394</sup>). She, therefore, indeed represents herself as inherently sinful<sup>395</sup> but to her benefit; for at this point, according to Teresa, one gains true humility and the Lord can begin to distribute his light, his favors, and his virtue into the soul.<sup>396</sup>

This theological interpretation of *iustitia* as a legal pronouncement, however, is overlooked by those that dismiss Teresa's sin as minor. The concept has both Old Testament and New Testament roots, such as in the above Psalm that Teresa herself cites. With this revelation of justice and justness deep in the soul, Teresa is claiming a foundational Christian tenet found, for example, in the New Testament book of James, that "whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it."<sup>397</sup> For this reason, in Teresa's theology, there can be no sin that is too minor or too evasive. It is why, in her poetry (and not only in her treatises), she declares herself "vile," a "wretch", and a "sinful slave."<sup>398</sup> For Teresa, "we caused His death"<sup>399</sup> and (as she writes in her autobiography) "in comparison with one drop of the blood the Lord shed for us, everything we do is disgusting."<sup>400</sup> The theological problem is indeed tied to the Adamic legacy and the inevitability of sin in the human condition. But it is also personal, for she expresses a deep loathing of the sinful nature of humanity because of the way it impedes her own ability to live out the life in God that she desires.<sup>401</sup> Though God is a friend, patiently working in the soul and waiting for the soul to adapt to his nature,<sup>402</sup> because of her love for him, the smallest of sins is an offense. Even in venial sins, she proclaims in her *Testimonies*, "I would

die a thousand deaths rather than offend Him knowingly,”<sup>403</sup> and when she does, she is quick to confess for the sake of her relationship with God<sup>404</sup> and a clean conscience.<sup>405</sup> As Kavanaugh and Otilio add, however, self-knowledge for Teresa will mean not only seeing the ugliness of sin in the soul but also seeing the beauty of the transformed soul in grace.<sup>406</sup>

Like Augustine, Teresa does not end with desolation and *ruin*. As she explains in her autobiography, “Once a soul sees that it is now submissive and understands clearly that it has nothing good of itself and is aware both of being ashamed before so great a King and of repaying so little of the great amount it owes Him—what need is there to waste time here?”<sup>407</sup>

Wretchedness is only a first step. It corresponds to Augustine’s poverty of spirit that leads to the kingdom, which is the soul’s initial revelation of God and consequent relationship with him.<sup>408</sup>

Indeed, wretchedness as a spiritual conviction is the antecedent of relationship, as she writes in the *Life*: “What I have come to understand is that this whole groundwork of prayer is based on humility and that the more a soul lowers itself in prayer *the more God raises it up*. I don’t recall His ever having granted me one of the very notable favors of which I shall speak later if not at a time when I was brought to nothing at the sight of my wretchedness.”<sup>409</sup> How then does a soul lower itself? As she writes in the same passage, “[It] humbly takes His son as mediator and...loves this Son so much that even when His Majesty desires to raise it to very lofty contemplation, as I have said, it is aware of its unworthiness.”<sup>410</sup> Thus, lowering oneself ultimately results in being raised up in divine love. Though poverty of spirit is a recognition of one’s spiritual need, it is at the same time an embrace of *his* inexhaustible wealth.<sup>411</sup> It is, as she declares in her poem, “Against an Impertinent Little Flock,” an exchange of one’s filthy fleece for his “clothing new,”<sup>412</sup> the “white robe of shining brightness” that is his righteousness.<sup>413</sup>

The idea that Teresa's claims of wretchedness are exaggerated or disingenuous, then, is based on an incomplete understanding of the concept within her doctrine of Christological humility. Wretchedness is a spiritual conviction of sin in God's presence. It, therefore, does not end in self-negation and sin-consciousness but rather in self-affirmation and God-consciousness. The result is gratuitous love. Humility heals the will of a self that has rejected its Creator—the one and only sin that, in this sense, is unforgivable, for it obstructs God's redemptive grace and the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul. Humility is the wellspring that draws up love for both God and humanity. It is the one virtue that ultimately defines what it means to be human, for it is the necessary virtue that results from humanity's essence and end. Humility is, in short, the antidote for pride in the soul, the catalyst that turns the will to God, and the means by which the soul finds God in its center.

Teresa states that intimacy between two persons requires that their wills be aligned.<sup>414</sup> Thus, conformity with God's will, not mystic experiences for their own sake, is the goal of all prayer and spiritual effort.<sup>415</sup> Therefore, being humble entails renouncing one's will and giving it to God. As Robert Rudder explains it, "The ultimate step of the mystical path is that of 'Union' with God. This involves the uniting of man's spirit with God.... In order to gain this final step, the mystic must be humble, and this involves complete surrender of one's will to God."<sup>416</sup> In this way, the soul experiences God's kingdom in this life.<sup>417</sup> This kingdom is the knowledge of God in the soul and an intimate sharing between friends—the "vision of Christ" and of "His most extraordinary beauty."<sup>418</sup> It is tasted in this life, experienced as pledges through encounters with him. Teresa's *ruin*, therefore, is transformed into the *caritas* relationship, and she is left with "[a] much greater love for and confidence in [the] Lord."<sup>419</sup> As Augustine asserted, this intimate

knowledge of God is what Scripture means by eternal life. In her *Life*, Teresa personalizes this fundamental, theological tenet in her own experiential language of friendship:

I saw Him as one with whom I could converse so continually. I saw that He was man, even though He was God; that He wasn't surprised by human weaknesses; that He understands our miserable make-up, subject to many falls on account of the first sin which He came to repair. I can speak with Him as with a friend, even though He is Lord.... How true that there is no need for intermediaries with You! Upon beholding Your person one sees immediately that You alone, on account of the majesty You reveal, merit to be called Lord.... Who now would know how to represent Your majesty! It's impossible not to see that You in Yourself are a great Emperor, for to behold Your majesty is startling; and the more one beholds along with this majesty, Lord, Your humility and the love You show to someone like myself the more startling it becomes. Nevertheless, we can converse and speak with You as we like, once the first fright and fear in beholding Your majesty passes.... But the fear is not one of punishment, for this punishment is considered nothing in comparison with losing You.<sup>420</sup>

Here, then, is what Dupont describes as Teresa's experientially-grounded theology.<sup>421</sup> Humility has brought her into the deepest parts of the *moradas*, subordinating all faculties and flesh to a now-conformed will, allowing the black cloth to be lifted in order to see, through revelation in God's divine light, his true nature. Here, she sees not only her own weakness, but that Christ was and remains unsurprised by it. Having atoned for it, he now approaches her as an intimate friend. Her friendship with him is, therefore, both tender and reverential, for with the revelation of his compassion and tenderness also comes a revelation of his authority and majesty and of all that she owes and *wants* to owe.<sup>422</sup>

Thus, her *knowing* is not intellectual assent. She finishes the above passage declaring, "These are the benefits deriving from this vision, besides other great ones it leaves *in the soul*. If the vision is from God it is known through its effects—when the soul is in light."<sup>423</sup> The vision she describes is a spiritual revelation of the nature of Christ. To know Christ is to know his love. It is to know his mercy towards those he died for. As she states, "I see that whoever understands Him more loves and praises Him more."<sup>424</sup> She understands him more because she intimately



knows him as a friend—a knowing that, as McGinn observes, is placed by the Spirit of God into the spirit of a believer apart from his or her own effort.<sup>425</sup>

In this way, the eternal self is affirmed through a humility that restores unity with God. It is not that the self has been lost, absorbed, or eradicated. It is that humility has allowed for two incompatible beings—one sinful and imperfect, the other perfect and just—to enter a spiritual marriage where the wills are united. With united wills, their beings are united—distinct and yet one in the manner that the Trinity has always known. This essential divine virtue, defined as true self-knowledge, has wrought a poverty of spirit, which allows the redeemed soul to turn toward the kingdom of God. Christ himself “finds his delight” in this redeemed soul and reveals the secrets of heaven to it.<sup>426</sup> The soul retains its will and yet freely gives it; for when “he begins to commune with the soul in so intimate a friendship...He not only gives it back its own will but gives it His. For in so great a friendship the Lord takes joy in putting the soul in command...and He does what it asks since it does His will.”<sup>427</sup>

#### **D. Conclusion**

Teresa writes in the *Way of Perfection*: “Only humility can do something, a humility not acquired by the intellect, but by a clear perception that comprehends in a moment the truth one would be unable to grasp in a long time through the work of the imagination about what a trifle we are and how very great God is.”<sup>428</sup> To her spiritual daughters striving towards contemplation and prayer, she repeats here what she heard from Jesus years before: humility is knowing what she can do and what only he can do. It is a dual recognition both of her finiteness and of God’s grandeur. In humility, self-worth is re-positioned and becomes a divinely-infused worth. In this context, self-deprecation is not deprecation. It is a recognition of revealed truth, an emptying of the self, and a filling of the self by God with God, who places the self in the center *with* him. He

fulfills the self's subjectivity and authenticity in the consummation of ontological purpose. Thus, in Teresa's theological discourse, it is a spiritual awakening, not an intellectual pursuit.

It is realized through mental prayer, for the Lord is present in the prayer. Thus, true humility that comes from one's spirit finds its source in the Holy Spirit. It will never be the result of one's own *consideracioncillas*<sup>429</sup> or "little reasonings."<sup>430</sup> One does not think oneself into humility. Rather, this humility is infused and taught, Spirit to spirit, a lesson without words, by the transmission of divine light. One is then undone—brought into a *confusión*, or a *deshacer*, of one's being. Paradoxically, then, the result is gratitude; and the undoing as God's favor is the beginning of all blessings.<sup>431</sup>

Moreover, the divine work of *undoing*, essential to Teresa's discourse of humility, is a concept unoriginal to Teresa. As doctrinal content, it is mundanely orthodox. As presented in Scripture, the *undoing* is a supernatural work that makes wretchedness the only apt response to seeing oneself in that divine light.

An examination of Teresa's definition of wretchedness and humility beyond the deployment of a rhetorical convention thus results pivotal if one is to understand her writings on her own terms informed by a broader theological context. First and most importantly, for Teresa, humility and wretchedness are not merely *topoi*. They are the beginning of any relationship with God, integral to the spiritual journey; the more time one spends in the presence of God, the more one recognizes wretchedness. It is the result of an honest and pure measurement before a perfect and holy God.

Thus, though Teresa may disdain self-worth, this should not be confused either with self-deprecation or the *appearance* of self-deprecation; for her, worth is wrapped up in her friendship, as she describes, with Christ. This friendship is the focus of her life, such that wretchedness,

theologically, can never be rendered hyperbolic. It is a blessed wretchedness that ends with gratefulness and overflowing love—with tears that water, the fragrance of gardens, and a knowledge of God that is neither purely intellectual nor exclusively sensual but spiritually familiar and intimate. For Teresa, one such moment in the presence of God produces not only a conviction of sin but also the knowledge of God's love and a reciprocal love *for* God and a gratefulness for his grace. In short, this is the Christological (and Augustinian) poverty of spirit that results in consequent spiritual wealth. In this context, wretchedness is a beginning, not an end.

Where she emphasizes this wretchedness, she may do so for self-protection or self-preservation. But these utterances cannot fall under the umbrella of a feminine rhetoric of humility or even of femininity. She presents an orthodox theology of humility, reaching back to Paul and Augustine and implied in the Council of Trent. Her theology provided an indisputable and imitable pattern of what it meant to be a Christian. Theologically and etymologically, in fact, a *Christian* (Χριστιανός) was a follower of Christ.<sup>432</sup> To be a Christian, therefore, was to imitate Christ who Himself was the incarnation of God—the exemplar of all exemplars that would come after.<sup>433</sup> Thus, Paul writes to the Corinthians, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ,”<sup>434</sup> and Augustine echoes Paul, “For what is to follow, but to imitate? Because ‘Christ hath suffered for us,’ leaving us an example, as saith the Apostle Peter, ‘that we should follow His steps’.”<sup>435</sup> For that reason, within Christianity, history came to be understood as an aggregate of exemplars in which God was the ultimate author of every example but where the stories and texts of Biblical figures and saints could provide models of imitation.<sup>436</sup> But where hagiographies might portray the lives of saints as exceptional and unique, their lives *as* examples had to be imitable, “[r]econciling the exceptionality of the unique individual with the conventionality of the ordinary

individual.”<sup>437</sup> In this way, they modeled both sanctity and feasibility—exceptionality and commonality.<sup>438</sup>

As María Morrás observes, Teresa, through her life and writings, became one of those models. Both exceptional and common, she was also theologically safe, writing at a time when the Council of Trent had rendered the process of sainthood stricter. That she, in that context, achieved not only sainthood but was made the first woman doctor of the Church testifies to the degree of her orthodoxy. As such, her writing provided an imitable pattern. One could “perform” her texts, “translating into action the ethics conveyed through” her example.<sup>439</sup> Despite the phenomenological traits of her mysticism (raptures, visions, locutions, etc.) that made her both exceptional and suspect, her Christology provided commonality. She asked nothing less of her readers but that they imitate Christ in his humility and love. This ethic and its subsequent ethos, as she defined it, applied to her brothers as it did to her sisters. As such, Teresa’s exemplarity transcended gender, class, and ecclesiastical affiliation.

By her emphasis of these theological concepts, in no way disagreeable to the most learned scholar or inquisitor, Teresa holds up a mirror for her readers—male and female, lettered and unlettered. That some may have ignored that mirror says more about the men than about Teresa. For in highlighting wretchedness and sin, she reminds her readers of a truth that is Scripturally and theologically undeniable: *ruin* is genderless. It is human. If she is a *mujercilla ruin*, so is every male inquisitor and confessor that reads her works an *hombrecillo ruin*. They are equally wretched, equally susceptible to temptation and error (and therefore equally redeemable).

Moreover, as her poetry and other writings attest, anyone who experiences the presence of God will intimately know this sense of *ruin*, as well as God’s love, and be left with genuine

humility as she has defined it. Furthermore, she postulates, those whom God has endowed with true humility know they have nothing to offer him. This would include women *and* men, who are equally poor in spirit before him. All are spiritually inadequate. All are equally dependent on God's grace and gifts; for if one cannot have more *nothing* than another, then that *nothing* is a state that erases all theologically presupposed and constructed ontological hierarchies between men and women, rich and poor, honored and dishonored. But if so, the moral and spiritual justification for the so-called Pauline dictum becomes an indefensible position.

Teresa's Christological definitions of wretchedness and humility have discursively resulted in an ontological leveling that makes subsequent interpretations of gender and class that claim theological underpinnings as the basis of privilege and oppression increasingly difficult to justify.<sup>440</sup> This outcome first finds its theoretical foundation in Teresa's conception of humility as wretchedness and spiritual poverty. But having restored and affirmed the eternal self by dissolving the self's alienation from God, humility now opens a conceptual space for an ethical leveling and the dissolution of one's alienation from *others* through love of neighbor.

In the next chapter, therefore, I will examine the social importance of *humility* in her descriptions and instructions regarding one's relationship to others through humility's sister virtue: *agape* love. That is, where we have seen humility culminate in the affirmation of the eternal self, we will now see humility effectuate an empowerment of the temporal self, where God leads from the center. In this context, her own humility before God will result in the expectation that a genuine Christian (or Christ-follower) will bear that same humility and love of neighbor in them.

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<sup>253</sup> Blamires, *The Christian Mind*, 44.

<sup>254</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 231.

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<sup>255</sup> See chapter 1, “A Worm So Vile: Teresa’s *Sermo Humilis* and the Negation of the Feminine Self.”

<sup>256</sup> Weber, “The Paradoxes of Humility,” 229n.

<sup>257</sup> Elena Carrera defines Christian humility as “a consequence of self-knowledge” and “stresses sinfulness and creatureliness,” where “[r]ecognizing one’s limitations...makes one more receptive to God’s grace” (*Teresa of Avila’s Autobiography*, 49-50). Though I don’t believe this definition captures the degree of spiritual poverty found in both Augustine’s and Teresa’s writings, Carrera portrays its use in early modern Spain not as a limitations-owning intellectual virtue but rather as an infused virtue necessary for the experience of the presence of God. Though humility might be easier for women than for learned men, it was, nevertheless, universal as a requirement for a true knowledge of God (*Teresa of Avila’s Autobiography*, 49-54).

<sup>258</sup> Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Two*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2012), 1.1.1, Kindle. “[Dios] mismo dice que nos crió a su imagen y semejanza.” Teresa de Jesús, *Moradas o El castillo interior (1577)*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookclasicos, 2015), 1.1.1, Kindle.

<sup>259</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.2.9. Earlier (*Interior Castle*, 7.2.7), she writes of this union and of Christ being in the believer and the believer in Christ, citing John 17:21, 23: “As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us.... I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>260</sup> Kieran Kavanaugh, “Poetry: Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Three*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), Kindle.

<sup>261</sup> Kavanaugh, “Poetry: Introduction.”

<sup>262</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 27.11. “¿[Q]ué bienes podéis buscar aun en esta vida dejemos lo que se gana para sin fin, que sea como el menor de éstos?” Teresa, *Vida*, 27.11.

<sup>263</sup> “I was dying with desire to see God, and I didn’t know where to seek this life except in death.” Teresa, *Life*, 29.8. “Veíame morir con deseo de ver a Dios, y no sabía adónde había de buscar esta vida, si no era con la muerte.” Teresa, *Vida*, 29.8.

<sup>264</sup> Teresa of Avila, *Poetry*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Three*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), Poem 19, “The Way of the Cross,” Kindle. “Después que se puso en cruz / el Salvador / en la cruz está ‘la gloria / y el honor’...y el camino más seguro / para el cielo.” Teresa de Jesús, *Poesías*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookclasicos, 2015), 19, “En la cruz está la vida,” Kindle.

<sup>265</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 13, “For Christmas.” “Pues ¿cómo, Pascual, / hizo esa franqueza, / que toma un sayal / dejando riqueza? / Mas quiere pobreza, / sigámosle nos; / pues ya viene hombre, / muramos los dos.” Teresa, *Poesía*, 13, “Para Navidad.”

<sup>266</sup> “He is our model.” Teresa, *Life*, 15.13. “El es nuestro dechado.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.13.

<sup>267</sup> “[T]he Lord Himself pointed out this way of perfection saying: *take up your cross and follow me*.” Teresa, *Life*, 15.13. “[E]l mismo Señor mostró ese camino de perfección diciendo: Toma tu cruz y sígueme.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.13, citing Luke 9:23, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>268</sup> Teresa of Avila, *The Book of Her Foundations*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Three*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 5.3, Kindle, citing Philippians 2:8, “[H]e humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross” (New Revised Standard Version); “humiliavit semet ipsum factus oboediens usque ad mortem mortem autem crucis” (The Latin Vulgate). “Y en lo que toca a la obediencia, no querrá que vaya por otro camino que El, quien bien le quisiere:

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obediens usque ad mortem.” Teresa de Jesús, *Fundaciones*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookklasicos, 2015), 5.3, Kindle.

<sup>269</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.2.5 citing Paul in Philippians 1:21, “For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain” (New Revised Standard Version). “Y también dice: Mihi vivere Christus est, mori lucrum.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.2.5.

<sup>270</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 1, “Aspirations toward Eternal Life” (italics in original). “[V]ida, no me seas molesta, / mira que sólo me resta, / para ganarte perderte. / Venga ya la dulce muerte, / el morir venga ligero / que muero porque no muero. / Aquella vida de arriba, / que es la vida verdadera.... / Vida, ¿qué puedo yo darle / a mi Dios que vive en mí, / si no es el perderte a ti, / para merecer ganarle? / Quiero muriendo alcanzarle.” Teresa, *Poesía*, 1, “Vivo sin vivir en mí.”

<sup>271</sup> Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Two*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2012), 6.3, Kindle. “Paréceme ahora a mí que cuando una persona ha llegado la Dios a claro conocimiento de lo que es el mundo, y qué cosa es mundo, y que hay otro mundo, y la diferencia que hay de lo uno a lo otro, y que lo uno es eterno y lo otro soñado.” Teresa de Jesús, *Camino de perfección, Códice Valladolid*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookklasicos, 2015), 6.3, Kindle. Unless otherwise noted, all Spanish citations from *Camino de perfección* will be from the *Códice Valladolid*.

<sup>272</sup> At times, Teresa equates the soul and spirit, saying, “I think the soul and the spirit must be one.” Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 59.11. “Paréceme que el alma y el espíritu debe ser una cosa.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 5.11. At other times, she places the spirit above the soul: “the soul seeks a remedy so as to live—much against the will of the spirit, or of its superior part.” Teresa, *Life*, 20.14. “[A]sí el deseo que el cuerpo y alma tienen de no se apartar es el que pide socorro para tomar huelgo y... buscar remedio para vivir muy contra voluntad del espíritu o de lo superior del alma.” Teresa, *Vida*, 20.14. For simplicity’s sake, I will treat them as a single essence of the eternal self.

<sup>273</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 30.6 and 31.11. Kavanaugh’s and Otilio’s translation of *prenda*.

<sup>274</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 262.

<sup>275</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 30.6. “[Q]ue posible sería, con el favor de Dios, venir un alma puesta en este destierro, aunque no en la perfección que están salidas de esta cárcel, porque andamos en mar y vamos este camino; mas hay ratos que, de cansados de andar, los pone el Señor en un sosiego de las potencias y quietud del alma, que como por señas les da claro a entender a qué sabe lo que se da a los que el Señor lleva a su reino. Y a los que se les da acá como le pedimos, les da prendas para que por ellas tengan gran esperanza de ir a gozar perpetuamente lo que acá les da a sorbos.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 30.6.

<sup>276</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 1, “Aspirations toward Eternal Life.” “¡Ay, qué larga es esta vida! / ¡Qué duros estos destierros, / esta cárcel, estos hierros / en que el alma está metida!” Teresa, *Poesía*, 1, “Vivo sin vivir en mí.”

<sup>277</sup> In her first redaction, she wrote, “so that you will understand me better, I mean the body [for some simpleton will come along who won’t know what ‘interior’ and ‘exterior’ means].” Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 31.2, brackets in translation (see following note in Spanish). “Es como un amortecimiento interior y exteriormente, que no querría el hombre exterior (digo) el cuerpo, porque mejor me entendáis.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 31.2. “El paréntesis contenía en la 1ª redacción una deliciosa ironía teresiana: digo el cuerpo, que alguna simplecita vendrá que no sepa qué es interior y exterior.” *Camino de perfección* (1565; Biblioteca Católica Digital, 2023), 31.2.n4, [https://www.mercaba.org/FICHAS/Santos/TdeJesus/camino\\_perfeccion\\_04.htm#CAP%C3%8DTULO%2031](https://www.mercaba.org/FICHAS/Santos/TdeJesus/camino_perfeccion_04.htm#CAP%C3%8DTULO%2031).

<sup>278</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 31.3. “Las potencias sosegadas, que no querrían bullirse, todo parece le estorba a amar, aunque no tan perdidas, porque pueden pensar en cabe quién están, que las dos están libres. La voluntad es aquí la cautiva, y si alguna pena puede tener estando así es de ver que ha de tornar a tener libertad. El entendimiento no querría entender más de una cosa, ni la memoria ocuparse en más.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 31.3.

<sup>279</sup> Howe, *Autobiographical Writing*, 91-92.

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<sup>280</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 231.

<sup>281</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 231.

<sup>282</sup> Slade, "Teaching Teresa," 129. She specifically compares Augustine's and Teresa's conversion narratives. I wish to emphasize the larger point, however, that Augustine's texts are primarily hermeneutical where Teresa's are (as Slade means it) mystical.

<sup>283</sup> "Perhaps this is what St. Paul means in saying He that is joined or united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him, and is referring to this sovereign marriage." Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.2.5. "Quizá es esto lo que dice San Pablo: El que se arrima y allega a Dios, hácese un espíritu con El, tocando este soberano matrimonio, que presupone haberse llegado Su Majestad al alma por unión." Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.2.5.

<sup>284</sup> Denise Dupont, "Teresa's Experiences," *Romance Quarterly: In Commemoration of the Fifth Centenary of Saint Teresa's Birth* 63, no. 1 (2016): 16, doi:10.1080/08831157.2016.1104216.

<sup>285</sup> For a discussion of *mysticism* as a Christological concept, see appendix B, "Was Teresa a Mystic?"

<sup>286</sup> DuPont, "Teresa's Experiences," 16.

<sup>287</sup> DuPont, "Teresa's Experiences," 16.

<sup>288</sup> DuPont, "Teresa's Experiences," 16, referring to Teresa's *Interior Castle*.

<sup>289</sup> Denys Turner cited in DuPont, "Teresa's Experiences," 17.

<sup>290</sup> "This feeling did not in any way spring from fear, but since I remembered the favors the Lord granted me in prayer and the many things I owed Him, and I saw how badly I was repaying Him, I could not endure it." Teresa, *Life*, 6.4. "Y no era poco ni mucho por temor jamás, sino como se me acordaba los regalos que el Señor me hacía en la oración y lo mucho que le debía, y veía cuán mal se lo pagaba, no lo podía sufrir." Teresa, *Vida*, 6.4.

<sup>291</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 32.11. "Mirad si quedaréis bien pagadas y si tenéis buen Maestro, que, como sabe por dónde ha de ganar la voluntad de su Padre, enseñanos a cómo y con qué le hemos de servir." Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 32.11.

<sup>292</sup> "May it please the Lord, since He is powerful and can hear me if He wants, that I might succeed in doing His will in everything." Teresa, *Life*, 40.24. "Plega al Señor, pues es poderoso y si quiere puede, quiera que en todo acierte yo a hacer su voluntad." Teresa, *Vida*, 40.24.

<sup>293</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 30.5 (italics added). "Ahora, pues, el gran bien que me parece a mí hay en el reino del cielo, con otros muchos, es ya no tener cuenta con cosa de la tierra, sino un sosiego y gloria en sí mismos, un alegrarse que se alegren todos, una paz perpetua, una satisfacción grande en sí mismos, que les viene de ver que todos santifican y alaban al Señor y bendicen su nombre y no le ofende nadie. Todos le aman, y la misma alma no entiende en otra cosa sino en amarle, ni puede dejarle de amar, porque le conoce. Y así le amaríamos acá, aunque no en esta perfección, ni en un ser; mas muy de otra manera le amaríamos de lo que le amamos, si le conociésemos." Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 30.5.

<sup>294</sup> Bernard McGinn, "Unio Mystica/Mystical Union," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism*, ed. Amy Hollywood and Patricia Z. Beckman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 205, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139020886.014>. McGinn traces the mystical concept of *union* from the Old and New Testaments through Madame Guyon in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He describes it as a "long history of understandings...and debates over its proper expression" (210), though the concept usually remains bound to Paul's union of spirits in Christ (202).

<sup>295</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 59.11-12. "...en lo interior del alma queda una certidumbre y seguridad con que se podía vivir." Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 5.12.



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<sup>296</sup> Edward Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila: Mystical Knowing and Selfhood* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2002), 33.

<sup>297</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 34.

<sup>298</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 137.

<sup>299</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 137. According to his example, it is the difference between momentarily perceiving the pain from touching a hot iron and having an intimate knowing in the manner of a seasoned, veteran wine taster. This accounts for her frequent statements that, without *experience* or *having experienced*, a person will not be able to understand what she means. For example, Teresa writes in the *Life*, “I pity those who begin solely with books because it is strange how different what one understands is from what one afterward sees through experience.” Teresa, *Life*, 13.12. “[H]e lástima a los que comienzan con solos libros, que es cosa extraña cuán diferentemente se entiende de lo que después de experimentado se ve.” Teresa, *Vida*, 13.12.

<sup>300</sup> “[Prayer] aimed to take the individual beyond discursive knowledge. This knowledge derived from contemplative (or mystical) prayer is characterized by its ineffability and is not transferable: it cannot be passed on from book to book without being experienced, since it needs to be experienced to be understood.” Carrera, *Teresa of Avila's Autobiography*, 45.

<sup>301</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 140. McGinn argues that Teresa was aware of Augustine’s forms of seeing—corporeal (images perceived through the eyes), spiritual (images formed supernaturally in the mind), and intellectual (imageless revelation of divine truth in the mind). I use the word *overflow* since, for Teresa, the spirit is not always the same as the soul, and though she frequently divides the faculties along Augustinian and Scholastic lines of will, intellect, and memory (*Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 133), these faculties are, as they were for Augustine, fallen and distinct from humanity’s spiritual center, the *imago dei*.

<sup>302</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 39.22. “[A]unque no lo vi, entendí estar la Divinidad.” Teresa, *Vida*, 39.22.

<sup>303</sup> “I want to advise you and remind you what His will is. Don’t fear that it means He will give you riches, or delights, or honors, or all these earthly things. His love for you is not that small. . . . He wants to repay you well, for He gives you His kingdom while you are still alive.” Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 32.6. “Pues quiéroos avisar y acordar qué es su voluntad. No hayáis miedo sea daros riquezas, ni deleites, ni honras, ni todas estas cosas de acá; no os quiere tan poco, y tiene en mucho lo que le dais y quiérooslo pagar bien, pues os da su reino aún viviendo. ¿Queréis ver cómo se ha con los que de veras le dicen esto? -Preguntadlo a su Hijo glorioso, que se lo dijo cuando la oración del Huerto. Como fue dicho con determinación y de toda voluntad, mirad si la cumplió bien en El en lo que le dio de trabajos y dolores e injurias y persecuciones; en fin, hasta que se le acabó la vida con muerte de cruz.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 32.6. Note that, for Teresa, a prosperity gospel is a thing to be feared. That gospel opposes a true gospel—that is, his kingdom (which here and elsewhere she describes as a relational union of wills).

<sup>304</sup> DuPont, “Teresa's Experiences,” 17-18.

<sup>305</sup> DuPont, “Teresa's Experiences,” 17.

<sup>306</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 36.29. “...que se ve muy bien es tolerable y se puede llevar con descanso, y el gran aparejo que hay para vivir siempre en él las que a solas quisieren gozar de su esposo Cristo; que esto es siempre lo que han de pretender, y solas con El solo.” Teresa, *Vida*, 36.29.

<sup>307</sup> Teresa cited in Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 96.

<sup>308</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 95-96.

<sup>309</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 122.

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<sup>310</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 19.2. “¡Bendito seáis, Señor mío, que así hacéis de pecina tan sucia como yo, agua tan clara que sea para vuestra mesa! ¡Seáis alabado, oh regalo de los ángeles, que así queréis levantar un gusano tan vil!” Teresa, *Vida*, 19.2.

<sup>311</sup> Deirdre Green, *Gold in the Crucible: Teresa of Avila and the Western Mystical Tradition* (Shaftesbury, UK: Element Books Limited, 1989), 34.

<sup>312</sup> Green, *Gold in the Crucible*, 34-35.

<sup>313</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 15.4, citing Proverbs 24:16. “Ayuda mucho traer consideración de lo mucho que se gana por todas vías y cómo nunca -bien mirado- nunca nos culpan sin culpas, que siempre andamos llenas de ellas, pues cae siete veces al día el justo, y sería mentira decir no tenemos pecado. Así que, aunque no sea en lo mismo que nos culpan, nunca estamos sin culpa del todo, como lo estaba el buen Jesús.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 15.4.

<sup>314</sup> Proverbs 24:16 (Douay-Rheims).

<sup>315</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 35.14. “El que os ama de verdad, Bien mío, seguro va por ancho camino y real. Lejos está el despeñadero. No ha tropezado tantico, cuando le dais Vos, Señor, la mano. No basta una caída ni muchas, si os tiene amor y no a las cosas del mundo, para perderse. Va por el valle de la humildad.” Teresa, *Vida*, 35.14.

<sup>316</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.2.1-9.

<sup>317</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 24.1. “Esta es la verdadera humildad, conocer lo que puede y lo que yo puedo.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 28.

<sup>318</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.2.6. “Pues ¡ea, hijas mías!, prisa a hacer esta labor y tejer este capuchillo, quitando nuestro amor propio y nuestra voluntad, el estar asidas a ninguna cosa de la tierra, poniendo obras de penitencia, oración, mortificación, obediencia, todo lo demás que sabéis.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.2.6.

<sup>319</sup> The Council of Trent, *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: C. Dolman, 1848), Sixth Session, “Decree on Justification,” V, <https://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html>.

<sup>320</sup> Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Sixth Session, “Decree on Justification,” VI-VII.

<sup>321</sup> Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Sixth Session, “Decree on Justification,” VI.

<sup>322</sup> The Inquisition did investigate Teresa for charges of heresy. The debate, however, concerned matters of interiority, visions, and her status as a woman writer. Jessica J. Fowler, “Questioning the 1623 Edict of Grace: Differentiating Between Orthodox and Heterodox Interiority,” *Culture & History Digital Journal* 6, no. 2 (2017): 6, <https://doi.org/10.3989/chdj.2017.015>. In such cases, the Inquisition itself was divided over the boundaries of orthodoxy. As Jessica Fowler describes, “While sharing an intellectual, religious, and legal culture, these men were no more monolithic than the religious orders or academic traditions from which they sprang. The idea of a unitary uncontested Catholic doctrine, even or perhaps especially among the religious and intellectual elite, was a myth both before and after the Council of Trent” (2). Yet, Teresa, for her part, strove to remain within what she understood as Catholic orthodoxy, consistently appealing to her strict adherence to Scripture and the Church. She concludes her *Interior Castle*, for example, with this concession, “I submit in everything to what the holy Roman Catholic Church holds, for in this Church I live, declare my faith, and promise to live and die” (Epilogue, 4). “[E]n todo me sujeto a lo que tiene la santa Iglesia Católica Romana, que en esto vivo y protesto y prometo vivir y morir.” Teresa, *Moradas*, epílogo, 4. Kieran Kavanaugh notes that, for Teresa, her faith was synonymous with “the truths of Sacred Scripture.” Kieran Kavanaugh, “The Interior Castle: Introduction,” in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Two*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodríguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2012), “Historical Context,” Kindle. Ultimately, the Inquisition exonerated Teresa and deemed her works orthodox (see Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 47-66). Teresa can, therefore, be seen producing her corpus *within* rather than *against* the dominant hierarchies of 16<sup>th</sup>-century Spain. As such, she represents a type of “protective umbrella” for feminine

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spiritual agency founded on strict Catholic orthodoxy. Julia Lewandowska, *Autoridad y autoría en la escritura conventual femenina de los Siglos de Oro* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2019), 254.

<sup>323</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 22.1. “Si hablando, estoy enteramente entendiendo y viendo que hablo con Dios con más advertencia que en las palabras que digo, junto está oración mental y vocal. Salvo si no os dicen que estéis hablando con Dios rezando el Paternóster y pensando en el mundo; aquí callo.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 22.1.

<sup>324</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 22.1. “Porque ¿cómo podéis llamar al rey Alteza, ni saber las ceremonias que se hacen para hablar a un grande, si no entendéis bien qué estado tiene y qué estado tenéis vos?” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 22.1.

<sup>325</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 22.1.

<sup>326</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 22.2. In the first redaction, later edited out, Teresa writes: “For, though being what I am, I would like to shout and argue with those who say mental prayer is not necessary” (*Way of Perfection*, 22.2, n2). “¿Qué es esto, cristianos, los que decís no es menester oración mental, entendéisos? Cierito, que pienso que no os entendéis, y así queréis desatinemos todos: ni sabéis cuál es oración mental ni cómo se ha de rezar la vocal ni qué es contemplación, porque si lo supieseis no condenaríais por un cabo lo que alabáis por otro.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 22.2. “La 1ª redacción proseguía: que querría dar voces y disputar -con ser la que soy- con los que dicen que no es menester oración mental.” *Camino de perfección* (1565; Biblioteca Católica Digital, 2023), 22.2.n3, [https://mercaba.org/FICHAS/Santos/TdeJesus/camino\\_perfeccion\\_03.htm#CAP%C3%8DTULO%2022](https://mercaba.org/FICHAS/Santos/TdeJesus/camino_perfeccion_03.htm#CAP%C3%8DTULO%2022). This is an example of her humility not as a pusillanimous or obsequious stance before men but rather as an indignation surging from her theology. For a discussion of Teresa’s headstrong stubbornness with her spiritual peers (men and women) that results from humility as a stance before God, see Rudder, “The Paradox of Humility” and Robert S. Rudder, “Will and Humility in Santa Teresa de Jesús” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1968), ProQuest (ID 302326018).

<sup>327</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 22.8. “No me estéis hablando con Dios y pensando en otras cosas, que esto hace no entender qué cosa es oración mental.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 22.8.

<sup>328</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 8.5. “[Q]ue no es otra cosa oración mental, a mi parecer, sino tratar de amistad.” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.5.

<sup>329</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 8.5. “...estando muchas veces tratando a solas con quien sabemos nos ama.” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.5.

<sup>330</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 1.2.3. “Mas si sobre un cristal que está al sol se pusiese un paño muy negro, claro está que, aunque el sol dé en él, no hará su claridad operación en el cristal.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 1.2.3.

<sup>331</sup> i.e., original sin or Adamic nature, as defined by Trent. See Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Fifth Session, “Decree on Original Sin,” 1-2.

<sup>332</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 147.

<sup>333</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 8.5. “...porque, para ser verdadero el amor y que dure la amistad, hanse de encontrar las condiciones: la del Señor ya se sabe que no puede tener falta, la nuestra es ser viciosa, sensual, ingrata.” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.5.

<sup>334</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 8.5. “...la nuestra es ser viciosa, sensual, ingrata.” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.5.

<sup>335</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 8.5. “...para ser verdadero el amor y que dure la amistad, hanse de encontrar las condiciones.” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.5.

<sup>336</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.12. “Debe ser por humillarnos para nuestro gran bien y para que no nos descuidemos mientras estuviéremos en este destierro, pues el que más alto estuviere, más se ha de temer y fiar menos de sí.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.12.

<sup>337</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 10.6, i.e., perfection is a directional path, not sinlessness.

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<sup>338</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 10.6. “Porque es tan muerto nuestro natural, que nos vamos a lo que presente vemos.” Teresa, *Vida*, 10.6.

<sup>339</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 4.1.11. “...y si es, como lo es, de la miseria que nos quedó del pecado de Adán con otras muchas, tengamos paciencia y sufrámoslo por amor de Dios.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 4.1.11.

<sup>340</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 42.4. “Cuán diferentemente se inclina nuestra voluntad a lo que es la voluntad de Dios! Ella quiere queramos la verdad, nosotros queremos la mentira; quiere que queramos lo eterno, acá nos inclinamos a lo que se acaba; quiere queramos cosas grandes y subidas, acá queremos bajas y de tierra; querría quisiésemos sólo lo seguro, acá amamos lo dudoso.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 42.4.

<sup>341</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 30.16. “El entendimiento e imaginación entiendo yo es aquí lo que me daña, que la voluntad buena me parece a mí que está y dispuesta para todo bien. Mas este entendimiento está tan perdido, que no parece sino un loco furioso que nadie le puede atar.... Acuérdomo mucho del daño que nos hizo el primer pecado, que de aquí me parece nos vino ser incapaces de gozar tanto bien en un ser.” Teresa, *Vida*, 30.16.

<sup>342</sup> Teresa, *Book of Her Foundations*, 5.10. “En lo que está la suma perfección, claro está que no es en regalos interiores ni en grandes arrobamientos ni visiones ni en espíritu de profecía; sino en estar nuestra voluntad tan conforme con la de Dios, que ninguna cosa entendamos que quiere, que no la queramos con toda nuestra voluntad,” Teresa, *Fundaciones*, 5.10.

<sup>343</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 16.1-2. “[D]aremos mate a este Rey divino, que no se nos podrá ir de las manos ni querrá. La dama es la que más guerra le puede hacer en este juego, y todas las otras piezas ayudan. No hay dama que así le haga rendir como la humildad. Esta le trajo del cielo en las entrañas de la Virgen, y con ella le traeremos nosotras de un cabello a nuestras almas. Y creed que quien más tuviere, más le tendrá, y quien menos, menos.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 16.1-2.

<sup>344</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 20.23. “Si entendiesen no nace de ella sino del Señor a quien ya ha dado las llaves de su voluntad, no se espantarían.” Teresa, *Vida*, 20.23.

<sup>345</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.5 (italics added). “Aquí está mi vida, aquí está mi honra y mi voluntad; todo os lo he dado, vuestra soy, dispoñe de mí conforme a la vuestra.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.5.

<sup>346</sup> Félix MálaX, “Humildad,” in *Diccionario de Santa Teresa: doctrina e historia*, ed. Tomás Alvarez (Burgos, Spain: Monte Carmelo, 2002), 347.

<sup>347</sup> “Dios es suma Verdad, y la humildad es andar en verdad.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 6.10.7, cited in MálaX, “Humildad,” 346.

<sup>348</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.14. “[C]uando es espíritu de Dios, no es menester andar rastreando cosas para sacar humildad y confusión, porque el mismo Señor la da de manera bien diferente de la que nosotros podemos ganar con nuestras consideracioncillas, que no son nada en comparación de una verdadera humildad *con luz que enseña aquí el Señor*, que hace una confusión que hace deshacer. Esto es cosa muy conocida, el conocimiento que da Dios para que conozcamos que ningún bien tenemos de nosotros, y mientras mayores mercedes, más.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.14 (italics added).

<sup>349</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 24.1 (italics added). “Hija, muy diferente es la luz de las tinieblas. Yo soy fiel. Nadie se perderá sin entenderlo.... [M]as nadie piense que por sí puede estar en luz, así como no podría hacer que no viniese la noche, porque depende de mí la gracia. El mejor remedio que puede haber para detener la luz, es entender que no puede nada y que le viene de mí.... Esta es la verdadera humildad, conocer lo que puede y lo que yo puedo.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 28.

<sup>350</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 19, “The Way of the Cross.” “En la cruz está «el Señor / de cielo y tierra», / y el gozar de mucha paz, / aunque haya guerra.... / Es la cruz el «árbol verde / y deseado» / de la Esposa, que a su sombra / se ha sentado / para gozar de su Amado.... / El alma que a Dios está / toda rendida, / y muy de veras del mundo / desasida,

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/ la cruz le es «árbol de vida» / y de consuelo.... / Después que se puso en cruz / el Salvador, / en la cruz está «la gloria / y el honor.» Teresa, *Poesía*, 19, “En la cruz está la vida.”

<sup>351</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 33.2. “Porque, aunque son una misma cosa, y sabía que lo que El hiciese en la tierra lo haría Dios en el cielo y lo tendría por bueno, pues su voluntad y la de su Padre era una, era tanta la humildad del buen Jesús que quiso como pedir licencia, porque ya sabía era amado del Padre y que se deleitaba en El. Bien entendió que pedía más en esto que ha pedido en lo demás, porque ya sabía la muerte que le habían de dar, y las deshonras y afrentas que había de padecer.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 33.2.

<sup>352</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 1.1.5-7.

<sup>353</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, Epilogue.2 (italics added). “Verdad es que no en todas las moradas podréis entrar por vuestras fuerzas, aunque os parezca las tenéis grandes, si no os mete el mismo Señor del castillo.” Teresa, *Moradas*, epílogo.2.

<sup>354</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 15.5. “Ya sabéis Vos, Bien mío, que si tengo algún bien, que no es dado por otras manos sino por las vuestras.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 15.5.

<sup>355</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.8. “No digo que con el favor del Señor, ayudándose muchos años, por los términos que escriben los que han escrito de oración, principios y medios, no llegarán a la perfección y desasimiento mucho con hartos trabajos; mas no en tan breve tiempo como, sin ninguno nuestro, obra el Señor aquí.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.8.

<sup>356</sup> Teresa of Avila, *The Constitutions*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Three*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1985), 40, Kindle. “La Maestra de Novicias sea de mucha prudencia y oración y espíritu, y tenga mucho cuidado de leer las Constituciones a las novicias, y enseñarles...de cómo aprovechan en la oración y cómo se han en el misterio que han de meditar y qué provecho sacan; y enseñarlas cómo se han de haber en esto y en tiempo de sequedades y en ir quebrando ellas mismas su voluntad, aún en cosas menudas.” Teresa de Jesús, *Constituciones de 1567*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookclasicos, 2015), 11.16, Kindle.

<sup>357</sup> Kavanaugh, “*The Interior Castle*: Introduction,” “The Synthesis.”

<sup>358</sup> Kavanaugh, “*The Interior Castle*: Introduction,” “The Synthesis.”

<sup>359</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 19.8. “[N]i creo llegaré, si Dios por su bondad no lo hace todo de su parte.” Teresa, *Vida*, 19.8.

<sup>360</sup> DuPont, “Teresa’s Experiences,” 16.

<sup>361</sup> Mary Frohlich, “Authority,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism*, ed. Amy Hollywood and Patricia Z. Beckman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 306.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139020886.023>.

<sup>362</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 25.1. “Son unas palabras muy formadas, mas con los oídos corporales no se oyen, sino entiéndense muy más claro que si se oyesen.” Teresa, *Vida*, 25.1.

<sup>363</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 25.3 (italics added). “[A] la primera [sus palabras] disponen un alma, y la habilita y enternece y da luz y regala y quieta; y si estaba con sequedad o alboroto y desasosiego de alma, como con la mano se le quita, y aun mejor, que parece quiere el Señor se entienda que es poderoso y que sus palabras son obras.” Teresa, *Vida*, 25.3.

<sup>364</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.8. “Mas delante de la Sabiduría infinita, créanme que vale más un poco de estudio de humildad y un acto de ella, que toda la ciencia del mundo. Aquí no hay que argüir, sino que conocer lo que somos con llaneza, y con simpleza representarnos delante de Dios, que quiere se haga el alma boba, como a la verdad lo es delante de su presencia, pues Su Majestad se humilla tanto que la sufre cabe sí siendo nosotros lo que somos.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.8.

<sup>365</sup> Such modern or postmodern claims would negate her experiences.

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<sup>366</sup> Dionysius the Areopagite, *The Divine Names*, in *The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite*, trans. John Parker (London: Parker and Company, 1897), 7.1, Kindle.

<sup>367</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.1.10. “No digo que lo vio entonces, sino que lo ve después claro; y no porque es visión, sino una certidumbre que queda en el alma que sólo Dios la puede poner.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.1.10.

<sup>368</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.9. “[M]as la voluntad, con sosiego, con un no osar alzar los ojos con el publicano, hace más hacimiento de gracias que cuanto el entendimiento, con trastornar la retórica, por ventura puede hacer.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.9.

<sup>369</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 19.8. “[N]i creo llegaré, si Dios por su bondad no lo hace todo de su parte.” Teresa, *Vida*, 19.8.

<sup>370</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 10.4 (italics added). “No cure de unas humildades que hay, de que pienso tratar, que les parece humildad no entender que el Señor les va dando dones. Entendamos bien bien, como ello es, que nos los da Dios sin ningún merecimiento nuestro, y agradezcámoslo a Su Majestad; porque si no conocemos que recibimos, no despertamos a amar. Y es cosa muy cierta que mientras más vemos estamos ricos, sobre conocer somos pobres, más aprovechamiento nos viene y aun más verdadera humildad.” Teresa, *Vida*, 10.4.

<sup>371</sup> DuPont, “Teresa’s Experiences,” 16.

<sup>372</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.2.4.

<sup>373</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 6.10.5-6.

<sup>374</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 6.10.5 (italics added). “Es verdad que no puede faltar.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 6.10.5.

<sup>375</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 6.10.7. “[P]orque Dios es suma Verdad, y la humildad es andar en verdad.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 6.10.7.

<sup>376</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 6.10.5. “...así muy de presto y de manera que no se puede decir.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 6.10.5.

<sup>377</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 6.10.7. “[P]orque Dios es suma Verdad, y la humildad es andar en verdad, que lo es muy grande no tener cosa buena de nosotros, sino la miseria y ser nada; y quien esto no entiende, anda en mentira.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 6.10.7.

<sup>378</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 6.10.7.

<sup>379</sup> Louis Bouyer, *Women Mystics: Hadewijch of Antwerp, Teresa of Avila, Thérèse of Lisieux, Elizabeth of the Trinity, Edith Stein*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 109.

<sup>380</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 1.2.9. “[P]ues mientras estamos en esta tierra no hay cosa que más nos importe que la humildad.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 1.2.9.

<sup>381</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 1.2.9. “[M]irando su grandeza, acudamos a nuestra bajeza; y mirando su limpieza, veremos nuestra suciedad; considerando su humildad, veremos cuán lejos estamos de ser humildes.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 1.2.9.

<sup>382</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.14. “[E]l mismo Señor la da de manera bien diferente de la que nosotros podemos ganar con nuestras consideracioncillas, que no son nada en comparación de una verdadera humildad con luz que enseña aquí el Señor, que hace una confusión que hace deshacer.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.14.

<sup>383</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.14. “[N]ingún bien tenemos de nosotros.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.14.

<sup>384</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.14. “Esto es cosa muy conocida, el conocimiento que da Dios para que conozcamos que ningún bien tenemos de nosotros, y mientras mayores mercedes, más.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.14.

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<sup>385</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 22.11, citing Luke 5:8. “Mucho contenta a Dios ver un alma que con humildad pone por tercero a su Hijo y le ama tanto, que aun queriendo Su Majestad subirle a muy gran contemplación como tengo dicho, se conoce por indigno, diciendo con San Pedro: Apartaos de mí, que soy hombre picador.” Teresa, *Vida*, 22.11.

<sup>386</sup> Slade, “Teaching Teresa,” 125-126. Slade also notes here that Teresa never calls herself a sinner or casts herself as one. I would argue that she does, however, through (among other methods) juxtaposition such as when she discusses Augustine’s *Confessions* early in her *Life*, where she explicitly identifies herself with Augustine. Here she writes, “I am very fond of St. Augustine...because he had been a sinner, for I found great consolation in sinners whom, after having been sinners, the Lord brought back to Himself. It seemed to me I could find help in them and that since the Lord had pardoned them He could also pardon me.” Teresa, *Life*, 9.7. “Yo soy muy aficionada a San Agustín, porque...por haber sido pecador, que en los santos que después de serlo el Señor tornó a Sí hallaba yo mucho consuelo, pareciéndome en ellos había de hallar ayuda y que como los había el Señor perdonado, podía hacer a mí.” Teresa, *Vida*, 9.7. Given the way that Teresa locates her thinking within a larger theological and scriptural corpus and finds consolation in reading Augustine’s and others’ accounts of sin and redemption, one would have to ignore expressions like these or render them insincere to maintain the view that she doesn’t view herself as a sinner.

<sup>387</sup> Weber, “The Paradoxes of Humility,” 217.

<sup>388</sup> This follows the Council of Trent’s declaration: “If any one does not confess that the first man, Adam, when he had transgressed the commandment of God in Paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice wherein he had been constituted...let him be anathema.... If any one asserts, that the prevarication of Adam injured himself alone, and not his posterity; and that the holiness and justice, received of God, which he lost, he lost for himself alone, and not for us also; or that he, being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transfused death, and pains of the body, into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul; let him be anathema.” Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Fifth Session, “Decree on Original Sin,” 1-2.

<sup>389</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 20.28. “Es como el agua que está en un vaso, que si no le da el sol está muy claro; si da en él, vese que está todo lleno de motas. Al pie de la letra es esta comparación. Antes de estar el alma en este éxtasis, parécele que trae cuidado de no ofender a Dios y que conforme a sus fuerzas hace lo que puede; mas llegada aquí, que le da este sol de justicia que la hace abrir los ojos, ve tanta motas, que los querría tornar a cerrar; porque aún no es tan hija de esta águila caudalosa, que pueda mirar este sol de en hito en hito; mas, por poco que los tenga abiertos, vese toda turbia. Acuérdate del verso que dice; ¿Quién será justo delante de Ti?” Teresa, *Vida*, 20.28.

<sup>390</sup> Slade, “Teaching Teresa,” 125.

<sup>391</sup> Elizabeth Rhodes cited in Slade, “Teaching Teresa,” 125.

<sup>392</sup> Psalm 143:2 (New Revised Standard Version), Psalm 142:2 in the Vulgate. Teresa founded St. Joseph’s Convent in 1562 a little before she wrote the *Life*. Visiting the cell in which she lived, one finds a dimly lit room with a bed and space for a desk. The room is bright only where the sun shines through the window. One can imagine a moment of contemplation, a glass of water on the sill or a desk, the water seemingly clean in the dim light. As she prays, the sun runs its course, and the rays hit the glass. In that light, the specks of dirt and debris floating in the glass would have become clear—the metaphor for God’s sudden revelatory light into the soul.

<sup>393</sup> Augustine, *On Patience*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. H. Browne (N.p., 2019), 17, Kindle.

<sup>394</sup> Augustine, *De Patientia*, 17, <https://www.augustinus.it/latino/pazienza/index.htm>.

<sup>395</sup> Elizabeth Rhodes cited in Slade, “Teaching Teresa,” 125.

<sup>396</sup> “[T]rue humility is gained so that the soul doesn’t care at all about saying good things of itself, nor that others say them. The Lord, not the soul, distributes the fruit of the garden, and so nothing sticks to its hands. All the good it possesses is directed to God; if it says something about itself, it does so for God’s glory.” Teresa, *Life*, 20.29. “Aquí se gana la verdadera humildad, para no se le dar nada de decir bienes de sí, ni que lo digan otros. Reparte el Señor

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del huerto la fruta y no ella, y así no se le pega nada a las manos. Todo el bien que tiene va guiado a Dios. Si algo dice de sí, es para su gloria.” Teresa, *Vida*, 20.29.

<sup>397</sup> James 2:10 (New Revised Standard Version). The same degree of spiritual poverty is described in the sixth session of the Council, “[W]hereas all men had lost their innocence in the prevarication of Adam...they were so far the servants of sin, and under the power of the devil and of death, that not the Gentiles only by the force of nature, but not even the Jews by the very letter itself of the law of Moses, were able to be liberated, or to arise, therefrom; although free will, attenuated as it was in its powers, and bent down, was by no means extinguished in them.” Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Sixth Session, “Decree on Justification,” I.

<sup>398</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 2, “In the Hands of God.” “Soberana Majestad, / eterna sabiduría, / bondad buena al alma mía; / Dios alteza, un ser, bondad, / la gran vileza mirad.... / ¿Qué mandáis, pues, buen Señor, / que haga tan vil criado? / ¿Cuál oficio le habéis dado / a este esclavo pecador?” Teresa, *Poesía*, 2, “Vuestra soy, para Vos nació.”

<sup>399</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 29, “For a Profession.” “Si como capitán fuerte / quiso nuestro Dios morir, / comencémosle a seguir / pues que le dimos la muerte.” Teresa, *Poesía*, 29, “Para una profesión.”

<sup>400</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 39.16. “[E]s todo asco cuanto podemos hacer, en comparación de una gota de sangre de las que el Señor por nosotros derramó.” Teresa, *Vida*, 39.16.

<sup>401</sup> “Here I see the evil that sin causes in us since it so holds us in its power that we cannot do what we desire to do in order to be always occupied in God.” Teresa, *Life*, 17.5. “Aquí veo el mal que nos causa el pecado, pues así nos sujetó a no hacer lo que queremos de estar siempre ocupados en Dios.” Teresa, *Vida*, 17.5.

<sup>402</sup> “Oh, what a good friend You make, my Lord! How You proceed by favoring and enduring. You wait for the others to adapt to Your nature, and in the meanwhile You put up with theirs!” Teresa, *Life*, 8.6. “¡Oh, qué buen amigo hacéis, Señor mío! ¡Cómo le vais regalando y sufriendo, y esperáis a que se haga a vuestra condición y tan de mientras le sufrís Vos la suya!” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.6.

<sup>403</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 1.9. “Hame venido una determinación muy grande de no ofender a Dios ni venialmente, que antes moriría mil muertes que tal hiciese, entendiendo que lo hago.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 1.9.

<sup>404</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 5.10. “[Q]ue esta merced me hizo Su Majestad, entre otras, que nunca, después que comencé a comulgar, dejé cosa por confesar que yo pensase era pecado, aunque fuese venial.” Teresa, *Vida*, 5.10.

<sup>405</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 23.5. “Pensé en mí que no tenía remedio si no procuraba tener limpia conciencia y apartarme de toda ocasión, aunque fuese de pecados veniales, porque, siendo espíritu de Dios, clara estaba la ganancia; si era demonio, procurando yo tener contento al Señor y no ofenderle, poco daño me podía hacer, antes él quedaría con pérdida.” Teresa, *Vida*, 23.5.

<sup>406</sup> Kavanaugh, “*The Interior Castle*: Introduction,” “The Synthesis.”

<sup>407</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 13.15. “[D]espués que un alma se ve ya rendida y entiende claro no tiene cosa buena de sí y se ve avergonzada delante de tan gran Rey y ve lo poco que le paga lo mucho que le debe, ¿qué necesidad hay de gastar el tiempo aquí?” Teresa, *Vida*, 13.15.

<sup>408</sup> Augustine describes the Matthean concept as one who is not *puffed up*: “the soul [that] submits itself to divine authority” (*Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, According to Matthew*, 1.3). This, he writes, is why Christ began the beatitudes with humility (*Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, According to Matthew*, 1.3). As described in the last chapter, Augustine’s poverty of spirit thus means acknowledging the root of sin, or Adamic pride, and surrendering it to God. Pride, then, is, in a sense, a deceptive and counterfeit *wealth of spirit*, or as Bernard of Clairvaux defined it, “a love of your own excellence.” Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Steps of Humility*, trans. George Bosworth Burch (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940), 149. Its antithesis, humility, is the “contempt of your own excellence” (*Steps of Humility*, 149) because of a Christ-centered self-examination (*Steps of Humility*, 151). Perhaps because of Augustine’s influence on Teresa (see Eire, *The Life of Saint Teresa*, 19 and 64) and Teresa’s own



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descriptions of humility and wretchedness, Kavanaugh and Otilio, in the *Way of Perfection*, translate *poverty of spirit* and *humility* synonymously, “[I]f we serve with *humility*, the Lord in the end will succor us in our needs; but if this *poverty of spirit* is not genuinely present at every step..., the Lord will abandon us.” Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 38.7 (italics added). [By *abandon*, Teresa means that God will withdraw his favors (that is, a felt sense of his presence), which Teresa sees as a favor in and of itself since it brings greater poverty of spirit. By that favor, we again understand “that we have nothing we haven’t received” (Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 38.7).] “Verdad es que, sirviendo con *humildad*, en fin nos socorre el Señor en las necesidades; mas si no hay muy de veras *esta virtud*, a cada paso -como dicen- os dejará el Señor. Y es grandísima merced suya, que es para que la tengáis y entendáis con verdad que no tenemos nada que no lo recibimos.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 38.7 (italics added).

<sup>409</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 22.11 (italics added): “Lo que yo he entendido es que todo este cimiento de la oración va fundado en humildad y que mientras más se abaja un alma en la oración, más la sube Dios. No me acuerdo haberme hecho merced muy señalada, de las que adelante diré, que no sea estando deshecha de verme tan ruin.” Teresa, *Vida*, 22.11.

<sup>410</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 22.11 (first appearance of *son* not capitalized in original). “Mucho contenta a Dios ver un alma que con humildad pone por tercero a su Hijo y le ama tanto, que aun queriendo Su Majestad subirle a muy gran contemplación como tengo dicho, se conoce por indigno.” Teresa, *Vida*, 22.11.

<sup>411</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 28, “For a Profession.” “Ricas joyas os dará / este Esposo Rey del cielo. / Daros ha mucho consuelo, / que nadie os lo quitará. / Y sobre todo os dará / un espíritu humillado.” Teresa, *Poesía*, 28, “En una profesión.”

<sup>412</sup> Teresa, *Poetry*, Poem 31, “Against an Impertinent Little Flock.” “Pues nos dais vestido nuevo / Rey celestial, / librad de la mala gente / este sayal.” Teresa, *Poesía*, 31, “Pues nos dais vestido nuevo...”

<sup>413</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 33.14. “Parecióme, estando así, que me veía vestir una ropa de mucha blancura y claridad, y al principio no veía quién me la vestía. Después vi a nuestra Señora hacia el lado derecho y a mi padre San José al izquierdo, que me vestían aquella ropa. Dióseme a entender que estaba ya limpia de mis pecados.” Teresa, *Vida*, 33.14.

<sup>414</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 8.5. “...porque, para ser verdadero el amor y que dure la amistad, hanse de encontrar las condiciones: la del Señor ya se sabe que no puede tener falta, la nuestra es ser viciosa, sensual, ingrata.” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.5.

<sup>415</sup> Kavanaugh, “*The Interior Castle*: Introduction,” “The Synthesis.”

<sup>416</sup> Rudder, “The Paradox of Humility,” 342.

<sup>417</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 32.6. “[N]o os quiere tan poco, y tiene en mucho lo que le dais y quiéeroslo pagar bien, pues os da su reino aún viviendo.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 32.6.

<sup>418</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 37.4. “De ver a Cristo me quedó imprimida su grandísima hermosura, y la tengo hoy día, porque para esto bastaba sola una vez, ¡cuánto más tantas como el Señor me hace esta merced!” Teresa, *Vida*, 37.4.

<sup>419</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 37.5. “Comenzóme mucho mayor amor y confianza de este Señor en viéndole, como con quien tenía conversación tan continua.” Teresa, *Vida*, 37.5.

<sup>420</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 37.5-6. “Comenzóme mucho mayor amor y confianza de este Señor en viéndole, como con quien tenía conversación tan continua. Veía que, aunque era Dios, que era hombre, que no se espanta de las flaquezas de los hombres, que entiende nuestra miserable compostura, sujeta a muchas caídas por el primer pecado que El había venido a reparar. Puedo tratar como con amigo, aunque es señor... ¡Oh Rey de gloria y Señor de todos los reyes! ¡Cómo no es vuestro reino armado de palillos, pues no tiene fin! ¡Cómo no son menester terceros para Vos! Con mirar vuestra persona, se ve luego que es sólo el que merecéis que os llamen Señor, según la majestad mostráis... ¡Oh Señor mío, oh Rey mío! ¡Quién supiera ahora representar la majestad que tenéis! Es imposible dejar de ver que sois gran Emperador en Vos mismo, que espanta mirar esta majestad; mas más espanta, Señor mío, mirar con ella vuestra humildad y el amor que mostráis a una como yo. En todo se puede tratar y hablar con Vos como

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quisiéramos, perdido el primer espanto y temor de ver vuestra majestad, con quedar mayor para no ofenderos; mas no por miedo del castigo, Señor mío, porque éste no se tiene en nada en comparación de no perderos a Vos.” Teresa, *Vida*, 37.5-6.

<sup>421</sup> DuPont, “Teresa’s Experiences,” 16.

<sup>422</sup> As discussed in chapter 4, this aspect of gratuitous love will become the moral foundation of the self’s restoration with humanity through an *agape* love of neighbor.

<sup>423</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 37.7 (italics added). “Hela aquí los provechos de esta visión, sin otros grandes que deja en el alma. Si es de Dios, entiéndese por los efectos, cuando el alma tiene luz.” Teresa, *Vida*, 37.7.

<sup>424</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 37.2. “[P]ues veo que quien más le entiende más le ama y le alaba.” Teresa, *Vida*, 37.2.

<sup>425</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 125.

<sup>426</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 32.12. “Porque no contento con tener hecha esta alma una cosa consigo por haberla ya unido a sí mismo, comienza a regalarse con ella, a descubrirle secretos, a holgarse de que entienda lo que ha ganado y que conozca algo de lo que la tiene por dar.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 32.12.

<sup>427</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 32.12. “Hácela ir perdiendo estos sentidos exteriores, porque no se la ocupe nada. Esto es arrobamiento. Y comienza a tratar de tanta amistad, que no sólo la torna a dejar su voluntad, mas dale la suya con ella; porque se huelga el Señor, ya que trata de tanta amistad, que manden a veces -como dicen- y cumplir El lo que ella le pide, como ella hace lo que El la manda.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 32.12.

This section is evidence that Teresa views mystical experience not as an end but as one of several means the Lord uses to lead one to perfection—that is, the intimate friendship that comes from the union of wills. In the *Way of Perfection* (as I describe in the next chapter), Teresa’s *perfection* is synonymous with *union*. No doubt Teresa was influenced by the spiritual treatises available to her on the threefold way (*purgativa*, *iluminativa*, *unitiva*). One such treatise is the *Meditaciones* (1605-1607) written by her contemporary, Luis de la Puente (1554-1624). Though published after her death, one notes similarities in his description of the *vías* and Teresa’s understanding of *humility* and *union*. See especially Luis de la Puente, *Meditaciones de los misterios de nuestra santa fe con la práctica de la oración mental sobre ellos*, 10o ed. (Madrid: Apostolado de la prensa, 1953), 17 [Introducción, 4.1] and 64 [Parte 1, Intro.3]. Here, the first step of the *vía purgativa* is humility, which he defines as self-knowledge (*conocimiento propio*) and self-disdain (*desprecio de sí mismo*).

The similarities become more pronounced in de la Puente’s *Sentimientos y avisos espirituales* (published after his death), where he writes at length about humility and its path to union. Luis de la Puente, *Sentimientos y avisos espirituales*, in *Obras Escogidas Del V. P. Luis de La Puente*, ed. P. Camilo María Abad (Madrid: Atlas, 1958), 293-332. In it, he describes humility as God-given knowledge of oneself in his divine light (301-303) resulting in a consciousness of one’s vileness (“conocimiento de la propia vileza,” 303, all translations from *Sentimientos* are mine). Consequently, he is lifted up and experiences the presence of God (i.e., Teresa’s intimate *experimentar*), where he is filled with both love and awe, and he declares, “I will make mention only of your righteousness” (“haré memoria de sola tu justicia,” 305-306). Rather than wallow in vileness, he is filled now with an intimate experiential awareness of God’s omnipotence. In union with God, he participates in the one essence of the Trinity—in their omnipotence and perfect love—and he understands that all things are possible *in God* (306). His response: “*Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo, et in terra*” (309). As Christ taught in the *Our Father*, his will is united to God’s. Though he describes a self-hatred, he defines it as an abhorrence of sin in the self (311). In union with God, however, he is infused with a confidence in God’s mercy and a gratefulness that expresses itself doxologically (318-320). As Teresa does, therefore, he writes against pusillanimity (330), for his vileness does not end in self-hatred but rather leads him to perfection, praise, and love. In the final paragraph, he declares himself an *hombrecillo* (as Teresa is a *mujercilla*), for that is the state of all humanity (332).

<sup>428</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 32.13. “[S]ola humildad es la que puede algo, y ésta no adquirida por el entendimiento, sino con una clara verdad que comprende en un momento lo que en mucho tiempo no pudiera alcanzar trabajando la imaginación, de lo muy nonada que somos y lo muy mucho que es Dios.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 32.13.

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<sup>429</sup> “[C]uando es espíritu de Dios, no es menester andar rastreando cosas para sacar humildad y confusión, porque el mismo Señor la da de manera bien diferente de la que nosotros podemos ganar con nuestras consideracioncillas, que no son nada en comparación de una verdadera humildad con luz que enseña aquí el Señor.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.14.

<sup>430</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.14.

<sup>431</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 15.15. “En fin, por no me cansar, es un principio de todos los bienes.... Aunque almas hay que les aprovecha más creer cierto que es Dios, que todos los temores que la puedan poner; porque, si de suyo es amorosa y agradecida, más la hace tornar a Dios la memoria de la merced que la hizo, que todos los castigos del infierno que la representen.” Teresa, *Vida*, 15.15.

<sup>432</sup> *Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. “G5546 - *christianos* - Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV),” <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g5546/kjv/tr/0-1/>.

<sup>433</sup> María Morrás, “Saints Textual: Embodying Female Exemplarity in Spanish Literature,” introduction to *Gender and Exemplarity in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, ed. María Morrás, Rebeca Sanmartín Bastida, and Yonsoo Kim (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2020), 11.

<sup>434</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:1 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>435</sup> Augustine, *Of Holy Virginity*, 27.

<sup>436</sup> Morrás, “Saints Textual,” 11.

<sup>437</sup> Morrás, “Saints Textual,” 16.

<sup>438</sup> Morrás, “Saints Textual,” 17.

<sup>439</sup> Morrás, “Saints Textual,” 19.

<sup>440</sup> I am not arguing that Teresa’s theology—or Christology—eroded those differences. Rather, her theology eroded the *ontological basis* for perpetuating them. The notion of *woman* that had by her time developed as a theological concept had been taken from Aristotle and mediated through Aquinas. In this view, the *feminine* was sensual, passive, and internal, destined for the private sphere whereas the *masculine* was active and intellectual, designed for public spaces. Nevertheless, this view had its critics within the Church and in Church history (Lewandowska, *Autoridad y autoría*, 101). As Weber herself notes, early modern Spain saw a brief push against the idea of women’s intellectual and spiritual inferiority. Erasmus (1466-1536), for example, argued for women’s literacy so that women could study the teachings of Jesus and Scripture; and under Cardinal Ximénez Cisneros (1436-1517), the movement in Spain to make Scripture and devotional works more accessible flourished (*Rhetoric*, 20-22). This impulse toward literacy and accessibility implied, however, that women had the capacity to become learned and active. At the same time, it revealed that pagan philosophy—rather than Christological theology—had engendered this disparaging view of women as morally and spiritually inferior. Teresa, as a woman and visionary whose intimacy with God is at the core of her writings, resisted this view of *woman* while remaining theologically orthodox (Lewandowska, *Autoridad y autoría*, 254). Thus, the brief “evangelical democratization, transcending gender and class barriers” that Weber describes (*Rhetoric*, 21) would have been conceptually carried through Teresa not by her rhetoric but by her theology.

#### IV. TERESA'S LOVE OF NEIGHBOR AND THE MORAL OBLIGATION OF CHRISTIANITY

In chapter 1, I wrote that Teresa's concept of humility contains two core facets of her theology that address the three questions that guide this dissertation. The first is ontological equality and the second is a moral obligation to one's neighbor. Ontological equality is the self's stance before God. Love of neighbor is the self's stance toward every other self. I stated that I wished to demonstrate how these two facets—as orthodox positions shared by 16<sup>th</sup>-century Catholic readers—strip her and her readers of the exceptionality<sup>441</sup> that Weber proposes as fundamental. In this chapter, I examine how this shared un-exceptionality that anchors her theological positioning implicitly affirms her as a woman and a writer (despite her gender) and, in fact, allows for a vision of the future predicated on civil equality.

Having discussed Teresa's theology of humility at length, I now turn to the second facet: Teresa's understanding of *agape* love. Though she never uses the word *agape*, she privileges this New Testament concept of Christian love (what Augustine translates as *caritas*) in her writings. As I illustrate below, instead of *agape*, she writes of *perfect* love (“amor perfecto”<sup>442</sup>) or *spiritual* love (“amor espiritual”<sup>443</sup>). Yet, especially in the *Way of Perfection*,<sup>444</sup> it becomes clear she is describing *agape*; for it is Christ's infused love in the believer. Her spiritual love, therefore, must reflect God's nature, which is sacrificially others-centered, and shun favoritism and factions. It must love others without judgment or superiority.

In what follows, therefore, I address two points. First, for Teresa, humility and *agape* are inter-connected virtues. Humility opens the contemplative to union with God: a union, as Teresa defines it, that is mediated by and results in the integration of one's will with the will of God. For Teresa, God's will is *agape* because his essential being is *agape*. Second, this union of wills

reforms the desires of the self toward *agape* and generates humility's sister virtue: love of neighbor. Love of neighbor is the expression of God's *agape* love for all humanity but mainly (in the convents) for one's sisters. This chapter aims to examine these two distinct components of *agape* love—transcendental union and love of neighbor—in Teresa's writings and how they construct her moral obligation to humanity. I will also demonstrate why, for Teresa, these virtues are not merely monastic but universally Christian. Teresa is not writing a feminine theology (or presenting a rhetorical turn) in which the virtues of humility, submission, and conformity apply only to herself, her sisters, and the daughters of the Church. To the contrary, these virtues apply to Teresa's Catholic audience regardless of gender and status and have substantive implications for the self, be it feminine or masculine. If humility restores the self to God, humility also now constructs a self defined by love of neighbor, restoring one's relationship with others, for it reflects God's sacrificial love to humanity. As the queen of virtues, it dissolves one's alienation to God, to others, and to oneself through the re-direction of the self to its chief end. At the same time, where Teresa's humility implies a spiritual equality that undermines gendered hierarchies in theory, *agape* love does so in practice; for "perfect" love is the *doulos* servant's heart, where one's mysticism and love for God is measured through one's love for others. In this way, humility and love—and corresponding virtues of subordination, submission, service, and obedience—reflect a Christian spirituality rather than a feminine spirituality. As I discuss in the next chapter, gender-specific proscriptions, thus, potentially become undermined through a transformation of normative assumptions.

#### A. *Agape* Love as the Overflow of Humility and Union with God

In the context of gender, Teresa's understanding of Christian virtues cannot be contingent on gender because they are interdependent. They overflow from one to the other like a tiered

fountain within the soul. Humility opens the self to union with God, transforms the will, and aligns the will to God's will. This transformation, in turn, opens the self to God's infused nature, most importantly, his *agape* love. In this sense, there can be no feminine or masculine virtues; for humility, *agape* love, and every other Christologically-defined virtue are bound within an ontology and teleology that are themselves universal and are all synergic facets of *his* divine nature.

For that reason, in the previous chapter, I described Teresa's engagement with the concepts of *wretchedness* and *humility* as theological and Christological. Teresa's wretchedness (*ruin*) is that aspect of humility in which the self recognizes its spiritual poverty before God. *Humility* is the virtue that ontologically disposes the soul to God and his redemption through Christ. For Teresa, these concepts address self-knowledge situated in truth, clearly comprehended in a moment by divine light.<sup>445</sup> It is, therefore, not an intellectual virtue derived from reason. Instead, it is a spiritual virtue emerging from a relationship with God, utterly transformative of the self's entire being through contemplative prayer. As Vilma Seelaus summarizes in her reading of Teresa's works, "Humility is never self-depreciation; rather, the self is within its center of truth."<sup>446</sup>

In the *Interior Castle*, therefore, Teresa's path to union begins through humility as self-knowledge. Humility is the first step on the road that leads to union, where, "[b]y gazing at His grandeur, we get in touch with our own lowliness; by looking at His purity, we shall see our own filth."<sup>447</sup> Yet, because humility is knowing what we can do and what God can do,<sup>448</sup> God is the one that leads the soul through each room and each prayer, deeper into him. The soul merely prepares and positions itself by maintaining that stance of humility. Through humility, it primes itself for the mystical path.<sup>449</sup>

This mystical path that begins with humility then leads to union in the most interior part of the castle. But union, for Teresa, is not merely a phenomenological experience. The experience itself may be fleeting but the soul in reality “remains with its God in that center.”<sup>450</sup> Spiritual union with God is permanent, just as marriage is permanent.<sup>451</sup> Like all of Teresa’s tests for the authenticity of an experience of God, she looks not to the experience but to the effects of the experience in the soul—the fruit. Union leaves the soul with lasting peace, an infusion of God’s love and virtue, and a strong desire to die to self and serve God, along with the strength to do it.<sup>452</sup>

The most important effect, however, is that the will joins with God’s will. In her *Spiritual Testimonies*, in fact, Teresa writes that union is, by definition, the joining of wills:

In explaining the nature of union to me, [Jesus] said: “Don’t think, daughter, that union lies in being very close to me. For those, too, who offend me are close, although they may not want to be. Neither does it consist in favors and consolations in prayer, even though these may reach a very sublime degree. Though these favors may come from Me, they are often a means for winning souls, even souls that are not in the state of grace.”<sup>453</sup>

Union, then, is not defined by mystical phenomena. Spiritual marriage is not an exalted state of the soul or its faculties. Instead, it is a transformation of the will:

I understood that [union] consists in the spirit being pure and raised above all earthly things so that there is nothing in the soul that wants to turn aside from God’s will; but there is such conformity with God in spirit and will, and detachment from everything, and involvement with Him, that there is no thought of love of self or of any creature.<sup>454</sup>

Union is thus marked as *conformity with God in spirit and will*. The self is now filled with God. The will is infused with divine virtue so that one *wants* to submit to his will without self-love or temporal desiderata. This submission, however, is to God. It is alignment with divine truth and his omnipotent being. It is not principally a submission to others. Deborah Ruddy notes how feminist scholars have, understandably, rejected terms such as *humility* and *submission* given the

weight of patriarchal ideology and its imposition of these “virtues” on women, demanding a one-gendered self-sacrifice, self-abnegation, and stripping of agency.<sup>455</sup> I propose, however, that Teresa’s submission of the will is not feminine within her ideological paradigm. It is Christian since, in her theological project, the pursuit of Christ and union with him are not ideologically constructed as gendered-conditioned practices. Nor are they self-erasing, pusillanimous, or obsequious, for they never relinquish human agency. As Teresa states above, the soul *wants* to conform to God in will and spirit. Teresa’s *submission*, therefore, is human agency (not female or male) displayed in willful conformity with God—a harmonious integration of one’s will with God’s.

Put another way: if humanity—men and women—is created in the image of God, so is its will. Through humility, one seeks integration of one’s will with God’s—a harmony of wills—for “[i]n order that love be true and the friendship endure, the wills of the friends must be in accord.”<sup>456</sup> Conformity is, thus, harmony and integration, not absorption or dissolution. One retains the integrity of one’s will, for that integrity is essential to genuine love and relationship with God, just as it is essential for a relationship with others.

Teresa’s union (as divine infusion and as self-submission) is Christian rather than feminine because of her understanding of the image of God in the soul. As discussed previously, she, like Augustine, understands the image of God as the ability of the soul to participate in God. In union, the created soul participates in the bond shared between the Trinitarian Creator—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—despite its infinite difference and being *other* to its Creator.<sup>457</sup> Thus, the relational aspect of Teresa’s theology becomes paramount. It is the *telos* toward which all virtues function.<sup>458</sup> As the core of Catholic theology, both the relationship and the virtues that



result are not contingent on gender. Teresa understands union, therefore, as a human *telos* rather than a feminine one.

The “overflowing nature of union,” as Edward Howells calls it,<sup>459</sup> becomes central to her theology because of the virtuous works that it allows. Union permits God to work in the deepest interior of the soul from the image of God within the self. He infuses that center with his nature and character. Teresa writes in the *Interior Castle* that his water—that is, his nature—flows from the “center of the soul” to every dwelling, or the faculties and body.<sup>460</sup> Yet, this overflow is not for the self to enjoy in a solitary inward manner. It is so that “the will...be united with God’s will,”<sup>461</sup> for “it is in the effects and deeds following afterward that one discerns the true value of prayer; there is no better crucible for testing prayer.”<sup>462</sup> As Howells explains, divinely-infused virtue (not human morality or goodness) overflows from the transformed center into the human exterior: “the soul has attained a Christological center and the exterior part has been included in union in the trinitarian overflow.”<sup>463</sup>

For this reason, Teresa’s death of self in union is not the destruction or annihilation of the self or of the will. It is transformative; her interior has expanded. Union (made available by humility) moves the self out of itself and into God. Nevertheless, in union, there remains a continuity of the self within a new self-with-God relationship. This is Teresa’s mystical knowing—being aware of God in the soul and of the self in God. Thus, “the mystical self knows both God and itself at once.”<sup>464</sup> Most importantly, it is a transformation that excludes the ideological import of female submission or worthlessness.

The relational self in union with God—because of the overflow of God’s virtue in its center—is, therefore, now empowered to both desire and do God’s will. The self remains sensory, but the sensory part of the self works with the transformed inner spirit in conformity

with God's will. Thus, union as conformity to God's will is more than mystical knowing and the beatific vision. Humility leading to union results in the overflow of virtues into temporal action<sup>465</sup>—the union of Mary (as contemplation and love for God) and Martha (as active works of love for others).<sup>466</sup>

## **B. Agape Love and the Love of Neighbor**

Although Teresa never uses the word *agape* (or Augustine's *caritas*), her definition of union theologically aligns and describes the concept. The elements of her *union* (the spirit being pure, the soul raised above temporal things, the end of self-love, a redirection of desire from earthly to eternal, and one's "involvement with Him"<sup>467</sup>) constitute the essential difference between the Hellenistic concept of *eros* and the Christian concept of *agape*. *Eros* is self-love. *Agape* is a sacrificial love centered on God. I would argue, then, that *agape* is vital for understanding how Teresa frames the virtue of love of neighbor in her writings. For her, one's love for others is the expression of God's *agape* love for humanity.

The principal characteristic of *agape* is that it is others-focused (particularly Other-focused) not self-focused. Though I have considered humility's effect on the *self*, and in particular the Christian non-gendered *self*, as Anders Nygren writes in *Agape and Eros*, the problem of the self is primarily a classical question. In Aristotle, for example, one finds the center of gravity in the self. The *telos* of the *self* is one of self-fulfillment, even if that fulfillment can only happen through one's relation to the *polis*.

In contrast, in Christian theology, the center of gravity is God. Thus, one finds *eudaimonia* in fellowship with God. That fellowship exceeds (but does not negate) one's *eudaimonia*, making Christianity theocentric rather than egocentric. This excess separates *agape* and *eros*—or, as Augustine would posit, Christological love from self-love, *caritas* from

*cupiditas*. Christianity, therefore, changed the question of ethics, making “fellowship the starting-point for ethical discussion”<sup>468</sup>—a fellowship that is first necessary with God and consequently with others. In sum, Christianity shifted ethical questions from a concern with the alienated self to *fellowship* with God and a return to prelapsarian unity with him.

*Agape* is, secondly, akin to humility in that it recognizes God’s sacrificial love by his descent to humanity. Where *eros* is an acquisitive self-love—humanity’s demand for self-ascension<sup>469</sup> through reason, pleasure, or even a self-centered religiosity that attempts to raise the self to God or the gods<sup>470</sup>—*agape* is conceptually *sacrificial*. It is the expression of God’s own “way of descent” in which he “comes down to the lost and sinful”<sup>471</sup> through his incarnation. This descent, in turn, makes possible humanity’s renewed fellowship with God.<sup>472</sup> As Slavoj Žižek remarked in his recent debate with Jordan Peterson, this element of God’s descent is unique to Christianity: “In other religions, you have God up there, we fall from God, and then we try to climb back.... [The formula] of Christianity is a totally different one.... You don’t climb to God.... You are *free* in the Christian sense when you discover that the distance that separates you from God is inscribed into God himself.”<sup>473</sup> In other words, Christ removed the distance between God and humans through *his* incarnation and *his* sacrifice. He, thus, exemplifies *agape* and establishes it as the fundamental tenet for Christian practice.

In lieu of *agape*, Teresa writes of “spiritual love” in the first part of the *Way*.<sup>474</sup> Spiritual love “imitates the Commander-in-chief of love, Jesus.”<sup>475</sup> It, therefore, has “no self-interest at all”<sup>476</sup> and merely wants other souls to be “rich with heavenly blessings.”<sup>477</sup> As Christ condescended to humanity, spiritual love expects that humans love each other without judgment or superiority. It is a love of *fellowship* and friendship and an others-centered *sacrificial* love. It necessarily, then, rejects “self-love, self-esteem, [and] judging one’s neighbors (even in the little

things).”<sup>478</sup> It demands charity and loving the other as oneself.<sup>479</sup> Imitating Christ’s love means embracing trials in one’s own life alongside the trials of others in patience and prayer. Both souls understand that they are walking in union on the same path towards grace and eternity.<sup>480</sup>

Against the backdrop of eternity, spiritual love brings knowledge about the nature of the world so that this world appears insignificant, comparing creation with Creator.<sup>481</sup> In other words, Teresa recognizes that self-love is the soul’s attachment to the “comforts the world has to offer.”<sup>482</sup> The self’s gravitation toward concerns for honor, wealth, and status is, in reality, its demand for what it deems it is due—to receive what it feels it deserves. One vision of the truth of eternity, however, brings understanding of the paltriness of temporal demands, “[O]nce we receive the payment [of temporal self-love], we realize that the pay is all straw; it’s all air and without substance so that the wind carries it away.”<sup>483</sup> In contrast, by embracing the Creator and recognizing the comparative insignificance of the creation, “His Majesty will infuse the virtues.”<sup>484</sup> The self then loves with a love that aligns with God’s view of love—the soul seeks to give rather than receive.<sup>485</sup>

Furthermore, it understands that God is eternal love, and it desires that others see God in this same way.<sup>486</sup> Therefore, one loves others not with emotional affection but with a love that transcends emotion and physicality and sees the image of God in others.<sup>487</sup> But God always remains in the center. This love desires to please God in all things, strives never to do what offends him, and prays “for the advancement of the honor and glory of His Son and the increase of the Catholic Church.”<sup>488</sup> In short, it is others-centered because it is Other-centered and keeps eternity as its focus. A reading of Teresa’s works as theology, then, will be grounded in this theocentric understanding of *agape*. Fellowship with God—the return *to* God away from one’s alienation, restlessness, and sense of not being at home in this temporal realm<sup>489</sup>—is the *telos*

that ultimately brings the self's fulfillment. For Teresa (following the Johannine formula), God's very nature is *agape*.<sup>490</sup> It is that nature with which she is in union. Thus, her will becomes integrated with an *agape* will. Her spirit becomes united with the *agape* Spirit. Through a humility that leads to union with God, therefore, one unites with and becomes infused with *his* love.

The infusion of his *agape* love is the heart of Teresa's mysticism. In her *Meditations on the Song of Songs*, she cites the *Song*, "He brought me into the wine cellar; set charity in order within me."<sup>491</sup> This wine, she writes, is his nature, his love. It allows her to act in his service—to love others just as he loves—for she drinks that love herself. Yet, that love is available to her only through union: "the Lord ordains that the soul function so wonderfully...that it is made one...with the very Lord of love, who is God."<sup>492</sup> The soul infused with God now *functions* actively—that is, it works outwardly (*obra*)—for the Lord has ordained it so from within. Therefore, for Teresa, the self's union with the God whose essence is love makes ethics (the basis of which is a love of neighbor) inseparable from the virtue of humility. Thus, we will see, one's eternal *eudaimonia* has temporal consequences.

### C. Love of Neighbor in Practice

Augustine and Teresa would have agreed with Marx at least on this: philosophy was not merely an interpretive act. The point was to change the world.<sup>493</sup> For Augustine, the *agape* (*caritas*) love that overflowed to the recipient of God's grace was neither intellectual nor affective. It was a spiritual residual—a spiritual *fruit* that one could not have apart from God.<sup>494</sup> It resulted from God's light revealing one's spiritual poverty as well as his forgiveness and mercy. This revelation, in turn, produced a spiritual love permeated with gratefulness.<sup>495</sup> Or put another way, those who were forgiven much loved much.<sup>496</sup> This transformation of the self in

union with God, his will, and his *agape* engendered the spiritual praxis of Augustine's Christological teleology. A sense of duty or service to God now expressed itself in the temporal sphere as an obligation to love others.<sup>497</sup> This sense of debt was not negative, however, emanating from fear. It was positive, deriving its potency from *agape*. One's *agape* towards others originated in one's *agape* towards God. That is, the *agape* love now endowed within the believer brought a reciprocal love toward God and towards one's neighbor, the expression of which marked the true believer. As Augustine writes in the *Tractates*, "So love we one another, and so love we God. For it would be with no true love that we loved one another, if we loved not God. For everyone loves his neighbor as himself if he loves God."<sup>498</sup> Through humility, one turned *theoria* into *praxis*. Just as Aristotelian virtue could not be true virtue except as expressed in the *polis*, Christian virtue could not be authentic unless expressed in love for one's neighbor. For "by this shall all men know that ye are...disciples, if ye have love one to another."<sup>499</sup>

Teresa likewise weaves humility with *agape* but in more doxological terms than Augustine. In the *Way of Perfection*, her *way* calls for three principal virtues: love of neighbor, detachment, and humility. The last is the "main practice" and encompasses the other two.<sup>500</sup> But who is Teresa's neighbor?

In the original Spanish of this passage, Teresa writes that the first necessary virtue is *amor una con otras*<sup>501</sup> ("love for one another"<sup>502</sup>). The feminine *una* and *otras* denote sisterly love among the nuns of her convents. Nevertheless, in the epigraph of this chapter<sup>503</sup> (as well as in the epigraphs of chapter six and nine of the *Códice el Escorial*), she specifically uses the phrase *amor del prójimo*<sup>504</sup> ("love of neighbor"<sup>505</sup>). As she describes this elsewhere in the *Way* and in her writings, she binds the terms *perfección* and *amor* to the word *prójimo*.<sup>506</sup> Etymologically, this Spanish word for the Christian concept of *neighbor* sprung from the Latin

*proximus*,<sup>507</sup> which can mean *nearest, closest, immediate*, or *next to* in time or place. It is anything adjacent or close at hand;<sup>508</sup> thus, in the gospel of Matthew, when Jesus declares that the greatest commandments are to love God and “love your neighbor as yourself,”<sup>509</sup> citing the Torah,<sup>510</sup> Jerome translates the Greek word for *neighbor* (πλησίον) as *proximum*.<sup>511</sup>

Teresa identifies herself with an *amor del prójimo* that surpasses a love for those that one considers equal—e.g., one’s family, friends, or social peers. Maria Lourdes Soler describes this love of neighbor as a “selfless love which...can never be and should never be reciprocated; it is a relationship among *unequals* that is directed to everyone in general without centering itself on one specific person.”<sup>512</sup> It, therefore, transcends questions of honor, class, and gender, goes beyond friendship, and includes one’s enemies.<sup>513</sup> It is the permanent and habitual practice<sup>514</sup> of enlarging one’s circle of obligation “beyond the limits of one’s immediate sphere of interests” to include all of humanity<sup>515</sup> and is, thus, the element within Christian thought that allows for universal harmony as a theoretical possibility and normative ethic.<sup>516</sup>

Teresa, therefore, follows Scripture and tradition: love of neighbor includes *everyone*. In the story of the Good Samaritan found in the gospel of Luke, Jesus shows one’s neighbor to include one’s enemies.<sup>517</sup> Similarly, in *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine looks to this parable and defines *neighbor* as anyone to “whom it would be our duty to help.”<sup>518</sup> Neighbor, then, is all humanity since “no exception is made of any one as a person to whom the offices of mercy may be denied when our Lord extends the rule even to our enemies.”<sup>519</sup>

Teresa defines *neighbor* (*prójimo*) in similar terms. In her second soliloquy, she writes that genuine love for God results in an intense desire for others to know God and love him: “the more lovers that love knows there are, the more [spiritual] love increases.”<sup>520</sup> But, in her view, what she is feeling is Christ’s desire. Her love for God becomes “love of neighbor,” because (as

she writes, praying) the latter is an overflow of “the love You [God] bear the children of the earth.”<sup>521</sup> She concludes: “Whoever fails to love their neighbor, fails to love You, my Lord, since we see You showed the very great love You have for the children of Adam by shedding so much blood.”<sup>522</sup> Though she never explicitly defines one’s neighbor as every person, she has defined *neighbor* as every child of Adam, which is, in fact, every human. Christ shed his blood for every descendent of Adam because of his love for all “children of the earth.”<sup>523</sup>

These “children” include her enemies. She views Lutherans, for example, as enemies of the Church and of the gospel, but she never condemns them. Instead, when she recounts her experience of hell in the *Life*, she writes of the “extraordinary pain that is caused me by the many that are condemned (especially the Lutherans).”<sup>524</sup> She describes that pain in terms of compassion and distress, desiring to do all she can on her part because she “was terribly wicked” and “merited greater punishment.”<sup>525</sup> In other words, her depravity has engendered compassion; a recognition of God’s love has produced the same love in her. Rather than wish or pray for their condemnation, she grieves for their souls. She wants to “help them understand their error,” for she sees that in recognizing “His goodness” they, like her, will love him more.<sup>526</sup> At the end of the *Interior Castle*, therefore, she asks all her readers to pray for the Lutherans<sup>527</sup>—in essence, to pray for their enemies.

An analysis of her use of the term *neighbor*, then, shows that it extends (as it does in Scripture and patristic writings) to every person, regardless of gender or social status. As Christological humility is a necessary human virtue because a relationship with God is a universal calling, love of neighbor is the moral obligation of all. It is a given and a constant in the equation of Catholic life. For that reason, though she addresses *love* of neighbor in the context of her reformed convents, she is applying the concept to *any* Catholic context, for it is



the foundation of any Christian society; and, Biblically, every Christian is called to *koinonia* fellowship.

*Koinonia*, or unity through *agape* love, is a major theme in the New Testament, especially in Acts and Paul's letters. Genuine *agape* foment unity and community consciousness,<sup>528</sup> and the New Testament uses the word *koinonia* (κοινωνία) to describe an *agape* community. The word denotes close and intimate relationship, partnership, and holding in common ideals and even property. In the second chapter of Acts, Luke writes that the Jerusalem church lived in *koinonia* and shared all things *in common*, or *koinos* (κοινός), and the church lived in this close fellowship because each had *koinonia* fellowship with God in Christ<sup>529</sup> through the Holy Spirit.<sup>530</sup>

Christologically, *koinonia* is participation with others for a common purpose.<sup>531</sup> It is never abstract but rather concrete and active. One first has *koinonia* with God, then others. It is a sharing in Christ with others—many vertical relationships with God linked horizontally through *agape* love.<sup>532</sup> *Agape* is the glue that, if truly present and active in *koinonia* fellowship, holds a Christian community together in covenant.<sup>533</sup> Covenant constitutionalizes a relationship, which then allows the relationship to be institutionalized—in that order.<sup>534</sup> But relationship comes first, one of shared worldview and goals (a point I will return to in the next chapter). As Mariana Dos Santos Barreto explains *agape* and *koinonia* as Christological concepts, one has “solidarity with all persons in [a] relationship of love. The heart of solidarity is the life of Jesus, because it is through incarnation that God is in a very real way in solidarity with humanity and that we are in solidarity with God. Everyone is formed in the image of God, and from God we learn to love our neighbor as an act of solidarity.”<sup>535</sup> In other words, this shared recognition of human ontology

(the image of God) and human teleology (love of God and neighbor) is the theoretical basis for solidarity in a Christian community.

Teresa, thus, writes at the beginning of the *Interior Castle* that the rules and constitutions of the order are for protecting and perfecting one's love of God and love of neighbor:

What the devil is hereby aiming after is no small thing: the cooling of the charity and love the Sisters have for one another. This would cause serious harm. Let us understand my daughters, that true perfection consists in love of God and neighbor; the more perfectly we keep these two commandments the more perfect we will be. All that is in our rule and constitutions serves for nothing else than to be a means toward keeping these commandments with greater perfection.<sup>536</sup>

The order is dedicated to prayer and to a life of sanctification (or *perfection*). Teresa, therefore, writes much about love of neighbor in the *Way* and *Interior Castle*, where she expounds on prayer and union (though the concept also appears in the *Meditations* and other works). In these works, I identify at least four themes that encompass her concept of love of neighbor.

First, for Teresa, love of neighbor is overflow. It is God's *agape* expressed through the Christian self—a spiritual spilling out of God's love from the center of the soul into the natural life. It is, therefore, a result of spiritual knowledge gained through experience, not just learning or intellectual consent. For her, seeing is believing; but, like Augustine's knowing, Teresa's knowing comes from revelatory light captured through spiritual eyes *in the spirit*. She writes in the *Way*: “[T]hose whom God brings to a certain clear knowledge love very differently than do those who have not reached it. This clear knowledge is about the nature of the world, that there is another world, about the difference between the one and the other, that the one is eternal and the other a dream.”<sup>537</sup> She repeats this juxtaposition in nearly every work. It is an experienced juxtaposition revealing the “nature of loving the Creator” as a revelatory understanding of what God's love looks like as compared to natural love or passions.<sup>538</sup> Thus, in the *Meditations*, it is the King who sets love in order within the soul. Because it is his love experienced within, an

appetite for the world's pleasures and pursuits wanes. Love for self "turns to disregard."<sup>539</sup> Love for family or friends changes from a natural attachment to a spiritual love that desires their eternal good. Love for one's enemies becomes "unbelievable unless experienced."<sup>540</sup> In short, God's love in the soul flows out and compels the soul to manifest his "strong" and "boundless" love in and through "its lowly nature."<sup>541</sup>

In tandem, Teresa recognizes that her readers might be concerned that active work would become an obstacle to the contemplative life. A sister may fear that she "will become more active than contemplative."<sup>542</sup> Teresa assuages those fears by emphasizing the union of Mary (the contemplative life) and Martha (active works).<sup>543</sup> If one is active, the "soul is working interiorly," for "active works rise from this interior root...of God's love and are done for Him alone, without any self-interest."<sup>544</sup> At the end of the *Interior Castle*, she therefore writes, "This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works."<sup>545</sup> Mental prayer and spiritual marriage intimately correspond to each other producing ("birthing") the natural and necessary result of good works.

Along with one's intimacy with Christ, one's union will be marked as genuine by the spiritual fruit of service in *agape* love that one bears. For Teresa, Christians only become "truly spiritual" by becoming "slaves of God."<sup>546</sup> Without this spiritual fruit, Teresa casts doubt on one's claims of Christian authenticity. The interior castle itself is built on a foundation of humility that results in service. Through humility, sisters will not only become slaves to God but also to others, "striv[ing] to be the least and the slaves of all."<sup>547</sup> Though one's *telos* is friendship with Christ, that friendship cannot be considered genuine (that is, contemplation and mental prayer cannot be outwardly discerned) without this manifestation of service, especially as exhibited by those who hold authority. As she writes at the end of the *Interior Castle*, "[L]et us

desire and be occupied in prayer not for the sake of our enjoyment but so as to have this strength to serve.” In this way, Mary and Martha “join together in order to show hospitality to the Lord.”<sup>548</sup> This relationship between prayer and service is why McGinn calls Teresa a “contemplative in action.”<sup>549</sup> The contemplative life of seeking God demanded an active life of seeking the welfare of one’s neighbor:

For the Greeks, the contemplative life was that of the philosopher, a person separated from the ordinary demands of society (literally “without a place,” *atopos*) in his gaze (*theoria*) toward ultimate Truth. The practical life was that of the citizen engaged in the life of the city (*polis*). Christian use of this paradigm, stretching back to Clement of Alexandria and Origen, and moving through the Fathers of East and West, adopted the two forms of life to help explain the dual commands required of all believers: love of God in contemplative absorption and love of neighbor in active works of charity. Unlike the Greeks, Christians considered both forms of life necessary—love of God and love of neighbor could never be separated.<sup>550</sup>

McGinn thus outlines three principles developing in Christian mysticism concerning love of God and neighbor: that both were indispensable, that the contemplative life was greater and was the *telos* of Christianity, and that Mary must yield to the Martha of active life in loving one’s neighbor, bearing the other’s burden when necessary.<sup>551</sup>

In the *Interior Castle*, I would add, Teresa works out a synthesis of the contemplative and the active. God does not give favors and experiences merely for one’s pleasure. He gives them so that love for God can increase and so that, from that increase, love can “overflow from the center”<sup>552</sup> and empower the faithful to do good works. The two are interwoven. Active life can be a form of meeting God since, as she reminds her sisters in the *Foundations*, “the Lord walks among the pots and pans helping you both interiorly and exteriorly.”<sup>553</sup> McGinn likewise cites the passage from the *Interior Castle*, where good works are “the reason for prayer...[and] the purpose of...spiritual marriage;”<sup>554</sup> thus, “Martha and Mary must join together.”<sup>555</sup> Even though Christ indeed said that Mary had chosen the greater part, she had already actively shown her love

by washing Jesus' feet.<sup>556</sup> Thus, Teresa never presents the active and contemplative life as disassociated elements of a Christian walk. Rather, as McGinn indicates, she makes a significant contribution to Christian mysticism by providing the "theological grounding for the embodied nature of Christian life."<sup>557</sup> As a metaphor for the submitted will, Mary provides Martha with the spiritual energy to act, surging from union at the soul's center.<sup>558</sup>

For Teresa (and for Christian mysticism), active love and mystical contemplation are, therefore, expressions of a complete being rather than a contrarian choice one makes: "[A] careful study of the [*Interior Castle*] shows that it is fundamentally not a record of ecstatic gifts but a journey with Jesus Christ, God and man, to the center where he brings his followers into the inner life of the Trinity."<sup>559</sup> The love of God that then indwells the believer engenders "impulses of love," which Teresa likens to overflowing springs:

These impulses are like some little springs I've seen flowing; they never cease to move the sand upward. This is a good example of, or comparison to, souls that reach this state: love is always stirring and thinking about what it will do. It cannot contain itself, just as that water doesn't seem to fit in the earth; but the earth casts it out of itself. So is the soul very habitually, for by reason of the love it has it doesn't rest in or contain itself. It is already soaked in this water; it would want others to drink, since it has no lack of water, so that they might help it praise God.<sup>560</sup>

In other words, in the faithful, *agape* is not action but reaction. Through humility, the soul has fulfilled its eternal teleology of spiritual union with the Triune Creator God. But this results in a doxological praxis. Or, to put it another way, the soul filled with love desires others to experience the same love. Therefore, Teresa ends this passage in the *Life* with the story of the Samaritan woman: upon meeting Jesus and being spiritually transformed, she runs to her town and brings her neighbors so that they too may encounter and know him.<sup>561</sup> The contemplative life that comes from divine humility and prayer is an overflow expressed as friendship with and adoration of Christ, which then empowers and enables the soul for the active life of serving

Christ. That is, it empowers one to serve others in the spirit of Christ, a praxis of love that is “always stirring and thinking about what it will do.”<sup>562</sup>

Second, because love of neighbor is God’s *agape* love overflowing from the soul, it is sacrificial. As she writes in the *Way*, it “costs dearly” because it imitates Christ’s sacrificial love.<sup>563</sup> It wants to give more than receive—both to God and to others.<sup>564</sup> It makes no demands about being loved in return.<sup>565</sup> It endures the faults of others<sup>566</sup> such that “there is nothing annoying” that one cannot suffer.<sup>567</sup> Love looks beyond the natural—the body—and sees what there is to love in the soul. It knows that the image of God can be found there, even if in the natural “there isn’t anything lovable.”<sup>568</sup> Though love judges right action and intention, therefore (Teresa frequently writes of mortal and venial sin), it is not judgmental. Teresa recognizes depravity within the self and that one must be on guard to not offend God; love and a reverent fear for God go together. But because humility is self-knowledge and the recognition of one’s own depravity, a non-judgmental love for others is “affable and understanding” and “pleasing to persons with whom we deal.”<sup>569</sup> One is, therefore, approachable because of one’s equal status and spiritual state before God.

It does not, however, merely endure others. It seeks their spiritual (not necessarily temporal) best. Love of neighbor is, therefore, not emotionally passionate but instead helps others to conquer destructive passions.<sup>570</sup> It has no self-interest. Consequently, it seeks not what it can get from others but what it can give to others. It shuns favoritism and works against (and prays against) factions, ambition, and concerns for “little point[s] of honor.”<sup>571</sup> As Christ did, it preaches and teaches to pull others out of sin, ignoring “human considerations” for gain and honors such as canonries and the approval of kings and nobility.<sup>572</sup> It does not fear persecution or indiscretion in proclaiming “beneficial truths,” even if it means displeasing men (*hombres*).<sup>573</sup>

Indeed, to draw a neighbor's soul out of mortal sin for love's sake is worth both persecution and martyrdom;<sup>574</sup> for love wants others to progress in God and his virtue. It, therefore, does what it can to contribute to that progress, "desiring to see the other soul rich with heavenly blessings."<sup>575</sup> Thus, love understands that if another suffers trials, it may be "good for the one loved" and beneficial for her "enrichment in virtue."<sup>576</sup> Love, therefore, asks not that God take the trial away but rather that the other have patience in it, embracing all trials as Christ did.<sup>577</sup> Moreover, since love of neighbor manifests itself first in the soul (as a desire that others prosper spiritually), it does not necessarily manifest itself through obvious works publicly seen, especially in the case of the cloistered. Instead, love for others can be expressed as prayer for others.<sup>578</sup> In fact, in her view, prayer is the greatest work<sup>579</sup> and prayer in humility a recognition that God is the one working in their lives.<sup>580</sup> In short, *agape* is fundamentally and inherently communal. Thus, love of neighbor must not primarily reflect the *eros* of individualized self-regard. Instead, the person acting in love will, like Jesus, do "everything he can for the other's benefit; he would lose a thousand lives that a little good might come to the other soul."<sup>581</sup>

Third, because love of neighbor imitates Christ, it serves from a position of humility, not seeking its own honor. In her *Meditations of the Song of Songs*, she discusses the love between the bride and Christ allegorically portrayed in this Biblical Song of Solomon. She recalls a sermon on love given on Maundy Thursday—the day of Holy Week that commemorates the last supper and the moment that Jesus washed his disciples' feet. This passage comes from John 13:

[Jesus] got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.... After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you."<sup>582</sup>

Alfred Edersheim notes that the Greek word that John uses for *towel* is *lention* (λέντιον). This denotes that, in girding the towel and stooping to wash his disciples' feet, Jesus was taking up a task relegated to the lowest slave.<sup>583</sup> In his *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Augustine considers this act an example of Christ's divine humility and strength. By washing their feet, Jesus demonstrated that "strength is in humility" and that "all pride is fragile."<sup>584</sup> In the *Meditations*, Teresa expands this sense by defining this act as an example of Christ's *agape* love and as the consequent love that a Christian should have for another. The Maundy Thursday sermon about love was appropriate, she writes, because on the commemoration of Christ's washing of his disciples' feet, "one shouldn't be speaking of anything else."<sup>585</sup> Etymologically derived from the Latin *mandatum novum* ("new commandment"), Maundy Thursday commemorates not just the example of *agape* modeled by Christ but also what he says immediately after: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."<sup>586</sup> Jesus gives this command as the disciples are arguing about which of them will be the greatest in the Messiah's kingdom (which they believe to be political and immanent).<sup>587</sup> He, therefore, admonishes them concerning the social structure of a kingdom founded on *agape*. In other words, *agape* love of the other must be especially evident in the life of one in authority, for authority originates from God.<sup>588</sup> By citing this passage, Teresa reminds her contemporary readers (not just those in her convents but every confessor and inquisitor that reads her works) of the structure of authority that Christ mandated: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves."<sup>589</sup> Thus, the *agape* community that Teresa



imagines is the greatest serving the least in humility and, therefore, in *agape* love. It is with this allusion to the *mandatum novum* that she begins her description in the *Way* to “the love I want practiced here” in her reformed convents.<sup>590</sup>

Lastly, love of neighbor provides Teresa with a type of certainty and conviction in faith. On this point, Mark McIntosh, in his book, *Mystical Theology*, writes that love of neighbor becomes the vital element for epistemology in Christian mystical traditions. In Christianity, “knowledge or wisdom is never a merely noetic factor but involves a new way of living.”<sup>591</sup> In this new way, the mind perceives truth through an inner transformation by love. In mystical theology, then, knowing comes through *agape*. Mystical knowing, therefore, does not seek to defend itself against some form of empirical or subjective knowing. Rather, it measures itself in justice and love towards others.<sup>592</sup>

Teresa follows this tradition in her view that love of neighbor is the sole measure and evidence of one’s Christianity. As she implies in the *Meditations*,<sup>593</sup> this is the meaning of, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another”<sup>594</sup> and “you will know them by their fruits.”<sup>595</sup> Love of neighbor and its manifest virtues bring certainty about one’s own justification and that of others. On this point, Teresa must contend with the prevailing view on the uncertainty of justification found in the Council of Trent:

For even as no pious person ought to doubt of the mercy of God, of the merit of Christ, and of the virtue and efficacy of the sacraments, even so each one, when he regards himself, and his own weakness and indisposition, may have fear and apprehension touching his own grace; seeing that no one can know with a certainty of faith, which cannot be subject to error, that he has obtained the grace of God.<sup>596</sup>

Thus, in the *Interior Castle*, as she describes the concept of loving one’s neighbor, she admits, “We cannot know whether or not we love God.”<sup>597</sup> Nevertheless, she circumvents the conclusions of Trent by arriving at a form of certainty through practiced *agape*. She admits that

one cannot know for sure that one's love for God is genuine (even though "there are strong indications for recognizing that we do love Him"<sup>598</sup>). But, on the other hand, "we *can* know whether we love our neighbor. And be certain that the more advanced you see you are in love for your neighbor the more advanced you will be in the love of God."<sup>599</sup> She adds, "I cannot doubt this."<sup>600</sup>

Teresa's love of neighbor is, therefore, epistemic. It leaves no doubt about one's state before God and one's relationship with him, for *agape* love for one's neighbor is only possible through God's *agape* love at work in the soul.<sup>601</sup> *Agape* love for others, in this sense, becomes the only true sign of one's Christianity, for that *agape* is Christ's likeness. She reasons her confidence this way: first, as stated above, being conformed to God's will is *perfection*. The way to perfection is through prayer. Through prayer, one comes into union (fellowship, friendship) with Christ, "who would teach us the way."<sup>602</sup> That way has two principle elements: "love of His Majesty and love of our neighbor."<sup>603</sup> But one only becomes perfect in loving one's neighbor if that love is rooted in the love of God. One knows that one's love is *of* God because any virtue from God will be free of self-seeking, self-esteem, and pride. By being "perfect" in loving one's neighbor, therefore, (that is, without arrogance or selfishness) one knows that one's love *for* God is genuinely rooted in him.<sup>604</sup> In other words, though one is justified by the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ (as acknowledged by the Council of Trent<sup>605</sup>), genuine faith is evidenced by works of charity. Yet this *agape*—like all divine virtues, including humility—can only have God as its source. Thus, if one lives a life of *agape* in relationships with others, as defined by Christ, one can know that one's faith in Christ and one's justification through Christ are established. *Agape* is the *everything* (the "*todo lo tenemos hecho*"<sup>606</sup>) that translates into the foundation of certainty about one's inner relationship with God. It confirms to others and to oneself the spiritual and

empirical test of John 13.<sup>607</sup> Though Teresa never contradicts the Council's decree concerning confidence in one's own justification, she offsets its doubts by emphasizing the Council's conclusions that follow, "Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. And this increase of justification holy Church begs, when she prays, 'Give unto us, O Lord, increase of faith, hope, and *charity*'."<sup>608</sup> Teresa echoes the Council's misgivings about the Lutheran position on faith and justification: though faith is certain, certainty about one's faith and one's standing before God is not. Nevertheless, one can achieve certainty by the evidence of *agape*, the sister virtue inherently bound with humility.

#### **D. Agape Love as a Universal Moral Obligation**

Teresa's *agape* love of neighbor is God's *agape* love working in and through the believer. It is an overflow of Christ's sacrificial love; and, therefore, it is one's evidence of authenticity, no matter one's temporal station or status. God's love is love of neighbor and vice versa. Both are possible by the soul's spiritual union with God in the center of the soul. This union—which is submission to God and conformity with his will—is made available only through one's spiritual poverty before God, or humility.

Wretchedness, vileness, submission, conformity, humility, gratitude, sacrificial love: Teresa writes of these concepts throughout her writings—works addressed to her sisters and daughters yet monitored by male inquisitors and confessors. Do these concepts, then, as she inscribes them theologically, apply only to the women she is teaching? Are they "feminine" concepts that apply only to the "weaker" sex? Did Teresa employ them rhetorically to shield herself from the Inquisition? Or, theologically, did Teresa understand these concepts as applying equally to every Christian self?

An analysis of Teresa's *humility, submission, and love* clarifies that she is not writing a theology for women. She is a woman writing theology. In her orthodoxy, however, she emphasizes Christianity's most egalitarian elements. Humility and love of neighbor (as she defines them) are essential virtues to a genuine Christianity. They are also the moral obligation of every believing Christian, not just women monastics of her convents. Teresa does not state that these concepts or the *agape* power structure she desires for her convents should apply to a broader Catholic society. She has no need to. If Christianity is *Christ-likeness* expressed as his humility and love, then the *agape* manifested in her convents should, likewise, be manifest in the palaces and courts of Christian magistrates and clergy. What defines Christianity should also define Christendom. If *agape* love is sacrificial, evidenced by "what our Spouse's love for us cost Him,"<sup>609</sup> then that others-centered love will define every Christ-follower.

This universal (catholic) obligation is especially evident in the *Way*. In the prologue, she states that the book is a treatise on prayer.<sup>610</sup> Prayer is the essential rule of the Carmelite order. Prayer is the *means* for perfection, or for the *way* of perfection. Yet *perfection* and *union* are, for her, synonymous. In her *Spiritual Testimonies*, she describes *union* as "conformity with God in spirit and will."<sup>611</sup> In her *Foundations*, she describes *perfection* in the same terms: "The highest perfection obviously does not consist in interior delights or in great raptures or in visions or in the spirit of prophecy but in having our will so much in conformity with God's will that there is nothing we know He wills that we do not want with all our desire."<sup>612</sup> In the *Interior Castle*, she also states: "The whole aim of any person who is beginning prayer...should be that he work and prepare himself with determination and every possible effort to bring his will into conformity with God's will. Be certain that...the greatest *perfection* attainable along the spiritual path lies in this *conformity*."<sup>613</sup> Thus, one can define Teresa's way of perfection as a spiritual path of prayer

and the necessary virtues that lead to union with God. This union requires having one's will conformed to God's will so that one becomes a vessel of his desires expressed on this earth. Humility and love of neighbor are the necessary virtues that engender that conformity.<sup>614</sup>

As I discussed in the previous chapter, Teresa defines genuine prayer as intimate friendship with God and humility as the virtue that disposes the soul to God. Moreover, that friendship is a universal calling. Her *way of perfection*, then, is both inclusive and universal. In the above passage, one could, in fact, read *any* person as *every* person. For if, as Teresa writes, “in perfect conformity to God's will lies all our good,”<sup>615</sup> a teleological sense of what is *good* is necessarily universal.<sup>616</sup> What defines *her* Christianity defines *all* Christianity and would include every person that identifies as a Christian. This broad application becomes apparent later in the *Way*:

I do not call “giving up everything” entering religious life, for there can be impediments to entering religious life, and the perfect soul can be detached and humble anywhere; although this latter may involve greater trial, for being in a monastery is a big help. But believe me in one thing: if there is any vain esteem of honor or wealth (and this can be had *inside monasteries* as well as *outside*, although inside the occasions for it are more removed and the fault would be greater), you will never grow very much or come to enjoy the true fruit of prayer.<sup>617</sup>

What Teresa suggests is that the perfect soul *should be* detached and humble anywhere. The true fruit of prayer rooted in humility is, as she writes in the *Life*, a love for the one who gave the soul its being, died for every soul, and now desires to give the poor of spirit spiritual riches.<sup>618</sup> As she writes above, however, a monastery is not a litmus test of this spiritual state. Instead, it is a temporal cocoon where one can develop virtue for that greater purpose—the fruit of prayer. Monasteries may be a “big help,” but they are not a necessary condition for the way of perfection. Knowing God intimately and experientially should be a goal for all the faithful. It is

not, for her, an exclusively monastic goal. But prayer is the practice that engenders that knowledge.

As Dicken observes, Teresa's definition of *perfection* (as conformity to God's will through genuine prayer) is "the key to the whole doctrine...without which much that is integral to [Teresa's] teaching becomes quite unintelligible."<sup>619</sup> *Integral* are the teachings on union, humility, and *agape* love because they are

the indispensable safeguard against the mistaken belief that the valuable element in their message is in some way alien to that faith which is expressed in the Scriptures and which is upheld and taught by the Church. On the contrary, the saints firmly repudiate the suggestion that they have anything to say but what is scriptural and doctrinally orthodox. They have no exciting, esoteric knowledge to propound, nor do they offer occult insight or magical power.<sup>620</sup>

Teresa's *perfection* that, through humility, leads to conformity with God's *agape* is, therefore, 1) an inclusive and universal aim within Christianity and 2) contains orthodox teachings of humility and love of neighbor intended to aid that path.

As I described in the previous chapter, her understanding of *wretchedness* as a recognition of one's spiritual poverty before God and of *humility* as the virtue that makes one ontologically disposed toward God would have been orthodox views upheld by the Church: this, despite the religious, social, cultural, and ideological forces that simultaneously promulgated gendered distinctions and exclusions. As well, Teresa's description of love of neighbor never deviates from Church doctrine. Taking her at her word, then, she presents a theology of love and humility that would apply not only to her reformed convents but to every Christian reader. Teresa indeed expresses her desire that it be so, not only in her convents but among Church leaders and Christian magistrates. For her, *agape* love emerges from genuine humility in the form of submission to God. This precept undergirds and encompasses the monastic life. But it is no less applicable to those in political and ecclesiastical authority. Yet, Teresa writes in the *Life*,

“[A]ll of earthly life is filled with deception and duplicity.”<sup>621</sup> Kings (and their subjects) pursue earthly honor and power rather than the honor that comes from seeking a kingdom without end.<sup>622</sup> Here begins her critique of “intrigue”<sup>623</sup> in this life and in political affairs; for, as she writes, these things should be absent in a society bearing the name of Christ.

On the contrary, having an eternal perspective in humility is the only state fit for kings.<sup>624</sup> As she states in the same passage, “How much more worthwhile it would be for them to strive for this stage of prayer rather than for great dominion! What righteousness there would be in the kingdom! What evils they would avoid and have avoided!”<sup>625</sup> Thus, she finds the answer to life’s inequities and injustices not in mere systemic change. For her, evil is not systemic. Evil is spiritual, exacerbated by and through systems. Kingdoms are not inherently evil, else the kingdom of God would be evil. But they are *prone* to evil because of the pride and self-seeking of those in power. The remedy is humility and prayer, where kings and subjects submit equally to God in love. By embodying humility and seeking union, they will consequently choose justice rather than injustice; for, if by one drop of God’s kingdom water (that is, his manifest presence), one regards every temporal pursuit (such as riches, honor, power, and status) as repulsive, “[h]ow much more if the soul be immersed in this water?”<sup>626</sup> In other words, for Teresa, societal change happens through a spiritual transformation that brings the eternal perspective.

Thus, though she describes favors, union, and rapture—the pledges of heaven that have allowed her to see with spiritual eyes—she expresses regret that she does not have a degree of temporal authority. She desires authority not for power’s sake but because of her “great consuming impulses to tell these truths to rulers,” even though they will not listen or believe.<sup>627</sup> She insists she would give up mystical favors and give them to these rulers so that they would not consent to the injustice committed in their name. She offers no names or specifics. But her

contemporary reader would know she refers to the self-focused pursuits she has witnessed in the convents, in Avila, and in Catholic Spain.<sup>628</sup>

She, therefore, exclaims, “Give kings an understanding of their obligations!”<sup>629</sup> By this, she means the obligations of Christ’s reverted pyramid<sup>630</sup>—that of the greater, grounded and supporting the lesser from the bottom, serving them in *agape* love of neighbor and humility. Only by exhibiting that humility and active love as modeled by the “King of Glory and Lord of all kings”—who himself needed no “artificial displays...of grandeur” here on earth<sup>631</sup>— would there be an end of evils. It is, therefore, the obligation of Christian kings and leaders to be “imitators” of *their* King, who served his subjects even to the point of death.<sup>632</sup>

According to Teresa, this is the faith that Christendom proclaims. One who claims to be a Christ-follower attests to it. It is the faith that Christian kings, clergy, and inquisitors claim to defend. What Teresa implies, then, in these descriptions of theological *agape* and humility is that the magistrate, as well as the monastic, should exhibit these virtues. What is valid for her convents should be valid for Avila, Spain, and all of Christendom. Conflicts based on class and gender have no place in a Christian society, for ontological equality and one’s subsequent moral obligation to humanity constitute what it means to be essentially Christian.

#### **E. Conclusion**

Ontological equality and moral obligation have implications for the modern *self* as Teresa constructs the self in her theology. As I discussed previously, Teresa affirms rather than negates the self by describing a humility that restores the self in union with God. That restoration of the self, as I argue here, also results in a love of neighbor that restores the self’s relationship with others. In both cases, the self is now communal and relational. At the same time, this relational aspect prompts McGinn to argue that the modern self and Augustine’s and Teresa’s mystical self



are antithetical. Both Augustine and Teresa concern themselves with a self that makes it difficult to speak of individual autonomy and authenticity in a modern sense. For Augustine and Teresa (following Paul), to become an authentic version of oneself—to be what one was created to be—is to be hidden (etymologically *mystical*) in Christ. It is the self in relationship with God, a self “transcendentally relational, constituted by the interaction of the self and God.”<sup>633</sup> McGinn observes:

For Christians, the ultimate goal of this transformative and de-centering process will only be attained after death, but in the present it can lead to what can be called the ‘mystical self’—that is, a mode of consciousness in which through the saving work of Christ the Trinitarian God becomes co-present with the created ego as the transcendent source of its being and action.<sup>634</sup>

As such, Augustine’s and Teresa’s mystical self is, first, Christological. Therefore, to speak of the mystical self is to speak of the Christian self. Second, it is communal: first with God, then with others. Lastly, it is dependent. That is, the self is dependent on God, infused by God, for good works.<sup>635</sup> Thus, one’s relationship and dependence on God empowers the “historical self” (as McGinn refers to Augustine’s and Teresa’s mystical self). It is this infusion of God’s character that makes the self capable of effective service for others in this life. Moreover, that communal relationship with God and others allows the self to recognize the equality and dignity it shares with others.<sup>636</sup>

I have, therefore, argued here that Teresa holds up this ideological mirror to her contemporary readers. She implicitly asks them to examine themselves in the light of the faith they claim to uphold. That faith maintains that all are equally in need of God’s grace and equally in need of humility to find it. It then assumes that all have a responsibility to love others as themselves. It is a theology of equal position and equal duty before God.

In what follows, I discuss how these two elements of Teresa's theology—humility and love of neighbor—are key elements that, in the West, helped lay the foundations for secular liberalism and the formation of the individual in modernity. Teresa's writings, therefore, represent a link in the modern chain of dialectical questioning that undermined gender and class hierarchies based on ancient ontological and cultural assumptions. In that light, I hope to offer an alternative view of Teresa's legacy than that of Weber's—one in which Teresa neither sanctioned paternalistic authority nor wrote as an exceptional woman but where she, in her own right, as Weber proposes, represents a *theological* “vision of the future predicated on the civil equality between the sexes and among all classes.”<sup>637</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> i.e., the view among Teresa's male contemporaries that her literary persuasiveness *as a woman* was both anomalous and miraculous.

<sup>442</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6. “Torna a la materia que comenzó del amor perfecto.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.

<sup>443</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7, epigraph. “En que trata de la misma materia de amor espiritual, y da algunos avisos para ganarle.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7, epígrafe.

<sup>444</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.1-7.11.

<sup>445</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 32.13. “[S]ola humildad es la que puede algo, y ésta no adquirida por el entendimiento, sino con una clara verdad que comprende en un momento lo que en mucho tiempo no pudiera alcanzar trabajando la imaginación, de lo muy nonada que somos y lo muy mucho que es Dios.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 32.13.

<sup>446</sup> Vilma Seelaus, “Teresa, Suffering, and the Face of God,” in *Carmel and Contemplation: Transforming Human Consciousness*, ed. Kevin Culligan and Regis Jordan (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2000), 152-153.

<sup>447</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 1.2.9. “[M]irando su grandeza, acudamos a nuestra bajeza; y mirando su limpieza, veremos nuestra suciedad; considerando su humildad, veremos cuán lejos estamos de ser humildes.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 1.2.9.

<sup>448</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 24.1 [*Relaciones espirituales*, 28].

<sup>449</sup> Green, *Gold in the Crucible*, 41.

<sup>450</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.2.4. “[P]orque siempre queda el alma con su Dios en aquel centro.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.2.4.

<sup>451</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.2.3. “[P]orque de tal manera ha querido juntarse con la criatura, que así como los que ya no se pueden apartar [los que ya han consumado matrimonio], no se quiere apartar El de ella.” Teresa, *Moradas*,

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7.2.3. Teresa later edited out the sexual connotations. Kavanaugh and Otilio note, “[S]he changed what she had previously written, ‘those who have consummated marriage,’ to the present reading” (*Interior Castle*, 7.2.3n8).

<sup>452</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.2.6-11. Deirdre Green in her book, *Gold in the Crucible*, argues that Teresa breaks with the tradition of the *Via Negativa* and that her path of mystical progress is not always consistent. Green traces Teresa’s mystical path through contemplative prayer to the Prayers of Quiet and Union. She argues that Teresa does not use the term *union* as mystics before her meant the term, as *oneness with God*. That, for Teresa, is the final goal of spiritual marriage. I do not wish to dispute this or enter the finer points of mystical practice, its stages, or divisions. As Green recognizes, their descriptions in mystical texts are fluid and not formulaic. My understanding of Teresa’s *union*, however, is similar to Green’s: “the will, but also the other faculties...lifted above everything earthly, and absorbed in the divine.” Green, *Gold in the Crucible*, 36-43.

<sup>453</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 25.1. “No pienses, hija, que es unión estar muy junta conmigo, porque también lo están los que me ofenden, aunque no quieren; ni los regalos y gustos de la oración, aunque sea en muy subido grado, aunque sean míos, medios son para ganar las almas muchas veces, aunque no estén en gracia.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 29.1.

<sup>454</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 25.2. “Tornando a la unión, entendí que era este espíritu limpio y levantado de todas las cosas de la tierra, no quedar cosa de él que quiera salir de la voluntad de Dios, sino que de tal manera esté un espíritu y una voluntad conforme con la suya, y un desasimiento de todo, empleado en Dios, que no haya memoria de amor en sí ni en ninguna cosa criada.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 29.2.

<sup>455</sup> Ruddy, “A Christological Approach to Virtue,” 33-47.

<sup>456</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 8.5. “[P]ara ser verdadero el amor y que dure la amistad, hanse de encontrar las condiciones.” Teresa, *Vida*, 8.5.

<sup>457</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 121.

<sup>458</sup> Another way to see this, as I wrote in the last chapter, is through Teresa’s *telos* of friendship. Mental prayer is “an intimate sharing between friends” (*Life*, 8.5). For that friendship to endure, however, “the wills of the friends must be in accord” (*Life*, 8.5). The two wills must be joined. She knows that God’s will (because he is God) has no fault. Yet, sin and pride—fallen humanity—have made the human will “vicious, sensual, and ungrateful” (*Life*, 8.5). Humility, then, detaches the willful soul from the broken, Adamic desires, allows a healing transformation of one’s being, and reattaches the soul’s desires to God. In short, the human will conforms to the will of God. Thus, mental prayer begins with humility and ends with union as a harmonious integration of the human will into God’s will. This, in turn, results in the intimate, enduring friendship between God and the soul whose wills are now in accord. This friendship is the reason for humanity’s being. It is the reason for mental prayer; and because her convents are meant to be fortresses of mental prayer, as she writes in the *Way*, it is also the reason for her reforms (*Way of Perfection*, 3.1). “[V]iéndose el Señor de ella apretado se recoge a una ciudad, que hace muy bien fortalecer, y desde allí acaece algunas veces dar en los contrarios y ser tales los que están en la ciudad, como es gente escogida, que pueden más ellos a solas que con muchos soldados, si eran cobardes, pudieron, y muchas veces se gana de esta manera victoria.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 3.1.

<sup>459</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 123.

<sup>460</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 4.2.4-5. “[D]ebe ser el centro del alma.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 4.2.5.

<sup>461</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 4.2.8. “La voluntad bien me parece que debe estar unida en alguna manera con la de Dios.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 4.2.8.

<sup>462</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 4.2.8. “[M]as en los efectos y obras de después se conocen estas verdades de oración, que no hay mejor crisol para probarse.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 4.2.8.

<sup>463</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 124-125.

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<sup>464</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 126-127.

<sup>465</sup> Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila*, 128.

<sup>466</sup> It is important to remember that she is yielding her will to God, not relinquishing it. She retains the integrity of her will and, therefore, of her individuality—for (as I will argue in the final chapter) the *individual* in a Christian sense is a self-consciousness that has been created in the image of God and ever retains its capacity and agency to commune with God in its most interior being. Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 105. The Trinity communicates with the soul. It does not annihilate, absorb, or exhaust it. Self-denial, therefore, is not Buddhist self-erasure. Marriage requires two individuals whose wills and individuality remain intact. Teresa, therefore, writes of the seventh dwelling of the interior castle that, “just as those that are married cannot be separated, He doesn’t want to be separated from the soul” (*Interior Castle*, 7.2.3). Her concern over separation implies the possibility of separation. But, she adds, to be *in Christ* is to be in union with the Trinity in the same way that they are in union with each other—that is, distinct individuals in friendship and unity of purpose (*Interior Castle*, 7.2.5-7). In every case, the integrity of the self and of the will remain intact—and they must so that they can enjoy the union of fellowship. Any loss of individuality would negate the possibility of friendship.

<sup>467</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 25.2 [*Relaciones espirituales*, 29.2].

<sup>468</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 45.

<sup>469</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 195.

<sup>470</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 207.

<sup>471</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 195.

<sup>472</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 206.

<sup>473</sup> Slavoj Žižek, “Slavoj Žižek vs Jordan Peterson Debate in FULL,” Peterson–Žižek Debate, “Happiness: Capitalism vs. Marxism,” held at the Sony Centre in Toronto, Canada, streamed live on April 19, 2019, uploaded by Richard Matthews, YouTube video, 2:37:55. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdSNrXhgFo8>. Quote found at 2:03:50-2:04:40.

<sup>474</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.1-7.11.

<sup>475</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.9. “¡Oh precioso amor, que va imitando al capitán del amor, Jesús, nuestro bien!” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.9.

<sup>476</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.1. “Es -como he dicho- amor sin poco ni mucho de interés propio.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.1.

<sup>477</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.1. “Todo lo que desea y quiere es ver rica aquella alma de bienes del cielo.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.1.

<sup>478</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.6. She uses the word *propio* in Spanish. Etymologically tied to *propiedad*, or *property*, she is rejecting a rightful ownership or demand for self and self-regard. Instead, she relinquishes ownership of her *self* and gives her *self* to God, his nature and virtues, and his rightful ownership of her. “¡Oh!, que quedan unos gusanos que no se dan a entender, hasta que, como el que royó la yedra a Jonás, nos han roído las virtudes, con un amor propio, una propia estimación, un juzgar los prójimos, aunque sea en pocas cosas, una falta de caridad con ellos, no los queriendo como a nosotros mismos.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.6.

<sup>479</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.6.

<sup>480</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.3-4.

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<sup>481</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.3. “Paréceme ahora a mí que cuando una persona ha llegado la Dios a claro conocimiento de lo que es el mundo, y qué cosa es mundo, y que hay otro mundo, y la diferencia que hay de lo uno a lo otro, y que lo uno es eterno y lo otro soñado, o qué cosa es amar al Criador o a la criatura (esto) visto por experiencia, que es otro negocio que sólo pensarlo y creerlo), o ver y probar qué se gana con lo uno y se pierde con lo otro, y qué cosa es Criador y qué cosa es criatura, y otras muchas cosas que el Señor enseña a quien se quiere dar a ser enseñado de él en la oración o a quien Su Majestad quiere, que aman muy diferentemente de los que no hemos llegado aquí.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.3.

<sup>482</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.6. “Ahora noten que, como el amor, cuando de alguna persona le queremos, siempre se pretende algún interés de provecho o contento nuestro, y estas personas perfectas ya todos los tienen debajo de los pies los bienes que en el mundo les pueden hacer y regalos, los contentos ya están de suerte, que, aunque ellos quieran, a manera de decir, no le pueden tener que lo sea fuera de con Dios o en tratar de Dios. Pues ¿qué provecho les puede venir de ser amados?” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.6.

<sup>483</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.7. “Como se les representa esta verdad, de sí mismos se ríen de la pena que algún tiempo les ha dado si era pagada o no su voluntad. Aunque sea buena la voluntad, luego nos es muy natural querer ser pagada. Venido a cobrar esta paga, es en pajas, que todo es aire y sin tomo, que se lo lleva el viento.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.7.

<sup>484</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 8.1. “Aquí digo está el todo, porque abrazándonos con solo el Criador y no se nos dando nada por todo lo criado, Su Majestad infunde de manera las virtudes.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 8.1.

<sup>485</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.7. “Y estas tales almas son siempre aficionadas a dar, mucho más que no a recibir; aun con el mismo Criador les acaece esto.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.7.

<sup>486</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.4-5.

<sup>487</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.8-9. “Luego éstos, si aman, pasan por los cuerpos y ponen los ojos en las almas y miran si hay qué amar; y si no lo hay y ven algún principio o disposición para que, si cavan, hallarán oro en esta mina, si la tienen amor, no les duele el trabajo.... Ahora, pues, aquí -si tiene amor- es la pasión para hacer esta alma para ser amada de él; porque, como digo, sabe que no ha de durar en quererla. Es amor muy a su costa. No deja de poner todo lo que puede porque se aproveche. Perdería mil vidas por un pequeño bien suyo. ¡Oh precioso amor, que va imitando al capitán del amor, Jesús, nuestro bien!” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.8-9. One notes here that she writes “amada de él.” When writing about *agape*, she is not just addressing her sisters and daughters.

<sup>488</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 4.1.7. “Quizá no sabemos qué es amar, y no me espantaré mucho; porque no está en el mayor gusto, sino en la mayor determinación de desear contentar en todo a Dios y procurar, en cuanto pudiéremos, no le ofender, y rogarle que vaya siempre adelante la honra y gloria de su Hijo y el aumento de la Iglesia Católica.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 4.1.7.

<sup>489</sup> Carter Lindberg, *Love: A Brief History Through Western Christianity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 56.

<sup>490</sup> Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 47, citing 1 John 4:8.

<sup>491</sup> Teresa of Avila, *Meditations on the Song of Songs*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume Two*, ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2012), 6.3, Kindle, citing Song of Solomon 2:4. “Dice que la metió en la bodega del vino; ordenó en mí la caridad.” Teresa de Jesús, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookclasicos, 2015), 6.3, Kindle, citing Cantares 2:4.

<sup>492</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 6.3-4. “[S]in entender cómo obra, ordene el Señor que [el alma] obre tan maravillosamente, que esté hecho una cosa con el mismo Señor del amor, que es Dios, con una limpieza grande.” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 6.4.

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<sup>493</sup> Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach, 1845*, in *Collected Works of Karl Marx*, trans. Carl Manchester (Hastings, UK: Delphi Classics, 2016), 11, Kindle.

<sup>494</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 87.1.

<sup>495</sup> Hanby, *Augustine and Modernity*, 2.

<sup>496</sup> Augustine, *The Harmony of the Gospels*, 2.79.154, citing Luke 7:47.

<sup>497</sup> Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 1.6.13.

<sup>498</sup> Augustine, *Tractates*, 87.1.

<sup>499</sup> Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan*, in *The Complete Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Richard Stothert (N.p., 2019), 17.6, Kindle, citing John 13:35.

<sup>500</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 4.4. “No penséis, amigas y hermanas mías, que serán muchas las cosas que os encargaré.... Solas tres me extenderé en declarar, que son de la misma Constitución, porque importa mucho entendamos lo muy mucho que nos va en guardarlas para tener la paz que tanto nos encomendó el Señor, interior y exteriormente: la una es amor unas con otras; otra, desasimiento de todo lo criado; la otra, verdadera humildad, que aunque la digo a la postre, es la principal y las abraza todas.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 4.4.

<sup>501</sup> Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 4.4.

<sup>502</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 4.4.

<sup>503</sup> Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 4, epígrafe.

<sup>504</sup> Teresa de Jesús, *Camino de perfección, Códice el Escorial*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookklasicos, 2015), 6 y 9, epígrafes, Kindle.

<sup>505</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 4, epigraph.

<sup>506</sup> “Entendamos, hijas mías, que la perfección verdadera es amor de Dios y del prójimo, y mientras con más perfección guardáremos estos dos mandamientos, seremos más perfectas.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 1.2.17. See also Teresa, *Camino de perfección, Códice el Escorial*, 34.2; *Camino de perfección, Códice el Valladolid*, 33.1; *Moradas*, 1.1.3; *Moradas*, 5.2.14; *Moradas*, 5.3, epígrafe; and *Moradas*, 5.3.7-12.

<sup>507</sup> *Diccionario de la lengua española*, s.v. “prójimo,” accessed August 4, 2022, <https://dle.rae.es/pr%C3%B3jimo?m=form>.

<sup>508</sup> *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (1982), s.v. “proximus.”

<sup>509</sup> Matthew 22:37-39 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>510</sup> “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.” Leviticus 19:18 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>511</sup> “secundum autem simile est huic diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum.” Matthæum 22:39 (The Latin Vulgate).

<sup>512</sup> María Lourdes Soler, “El amor y el matrimonio profanos vistos por Santa Teresa,” *Letras Femeninas* 16, no. 1/2 (Primavera-Otoño 1990): 5 (my translation and italics).

<sup>513</sup> Lourdes Soler, “El amor,” 1-6.

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<sup>514</sup> Celia Cabrera, “Acerca de la normatividad del amor y el alcance universal del amor al prójimo en Husserl,” *Ideas y Valores* 68, no. 169 (2019): 115, <http://doi.org/10.15446/ideasyvalores.v68n169.62107>.

<sup>515</sup> Cabrera, “Husserl,” 125-126 (my translation).

<sup>516</sup> Cabrera, “Husserl,” 128-129.

<sup>517</sup> Luke 10:25-37. In the gospel narrative, Jews and Samaritans are understood to be historical enemies. Likewise, in John 4, Jesus as Jew, man, and rabbi converses with a Samaritan woman shunned in her own village, thus bridging marginality on three levels.

<sup>518</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.30.31.

<sup>519</sup> Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.30.31.

<sup>520</sup> Teresa of Avila, *Soliloquies, The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, Volume One*, 2nd ed., ed. and trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1987), 2.1, Kindle. “¡Oh, amor poderoso de Dios, cuán diferentes son tus efectos del amor del mundo! Este no quiere compañía por parecerle que le han de quitar de lo que posee; el de mi Dios mientras más amadores entiende que hay, más crece.” Teresa de Jesús, *Exclamaciones*, in *Obras completas*, 4th ed., ed. Vicente de la Fuente (N.p.: Ebookklasicos, 2015), prólogo, 2.1, Kindle.

<sup>521</sup> Teresa, *Soliloquies*, 2.2. “¡Oh Jesús mío!, cuán grande es el amor que tenéis a los hijos de los hombres, que el mayor servicio que se os puede hacer es dejaros a Vos por su amor y ganancia y entonces sois poseído más enteramente.” Teresa, *Exclamaciones*, 2.2.

<sup>522</sup> Teresa, *Soliloquies*, 2.2. “Quien no le amare [al prójimo], no os ama, Señor mío; pues con tanta sangre vemos mostrado el amor tan grande que tenéis a los hijos de Adán.” Teresa, *Exclamaciones*, 2.2.

<sup>523</sup> Teresa, *Soliloquies*, 2.2. “¡Oh Jesús mío!, cuán grande es el amor que tenéis a los hijos de los hombres...pues con tanta sangre vemos mostrado el amor tan grande que tenéis a los hijos de Adán.” Teresa, *Exclamaciones*, 2.2.

<sup>524</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 32.6. “De aquí también gané la grandísima pena que me da las muchas almas que se condenan (de estos luteranos en especial).” Teresa, *Vida*, 32.6.

<sup>525</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 32.6-7. “Pues acá con saber que, en fin, se acabará con la vida y que ya tiene término, aun nos mueve a tanta compasión, estotro que no le tiene no sé cómo podemos sosegar viendo tantas almas como lleva cada día el demonio consigo. Esto también me hace desear que, en cosa que tanto importa, no nos contentemos con menos de hacer todo lo que pudiéremos de nuestra parte. No dejemos nada, y plega al Señor sea servido de darnos gracia para ello. Cuando yo considero que...era tan malísima, traía algún cuidado de servir a Dios.... y veo adonde me tenían ya los demonios aposentada, y es verdad que, según mis culpas, aun me parece merecía más castigo.” Teresa, *Vida*, 32.6-7.

<sup>526</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 3.8. “Paréceme a mí que contra todos los luteranos me pondría yo sola a hacerles entender su yerro. Siento mucho la perdición de tantas almas. Veo muchas aprovechadas, que conozco claro ha querido Dios que sea por mis medios, y conozco que por su bondad va en crecimiento mi alma en amarle cada día más.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 3.8. In the *Way*, she calls them “traitors” (*traidores*) and a “miserable sect” (*desventurada secta*) and condemns the “havoc” (*estrage*) they are causing (*Way of Perfection*, 1.2). There again, however, she frames her concern in terms of anguish, of seeing Christ re-crucified, of souls being lost, and of how she can take part in the spiritual battle through prayer (*Way of Perfection*, 1.2-6). Though she condemns their “evil”—churches destroyed, priests murdered, sacraments stopped (*Way of Perfection*, 35.3)—and though the first chapters of the *Way* imply a degree of consent to the temporal battle being waged, she never condemns them but rather sees the spiritual battle of prayer as one for their souls.

<sup>527</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, Epilogue.4. “[O]s pido que en mi nombre, cada vez que leyereis aquí, alabéis mucho a Su Majestad y le pidáis el aumento de su Iglesia y luz para los luteranos.” Teresa, *Moradas*, epílogo.4.

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<sup>528</sup> See Philip E. Hickey, “The Theology of Community in the Rule of Saint Benedict” (master's thesis, Marquette University, 1967), 21-46, [https://www.marquette.edu/library/theses/already\\_uploaded\\_to\\_IR/hicke\\_p\\_1967.pdf](https://www.marquette.edu/library/theses/already_uploaded_to_IR/hicke_p_1967.pdf).

<sup>529</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:9: “God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship [*koinonia*] of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (New Revised Standard Version); 1 John 1:7: “[B]ut if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship [*koinonia*] with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>530</sup> 2 Corinthians 13:14: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion [*koinonia*] of the Holy Spirit be with all of you” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>531</sup> Mariana Dos Santos Barreto, “The New Testament KOINONIA as a Model for Consecrated Life” (PhD diss., Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2015), 3-13, <https://repositorio.ucp.pt/bitstream/10400.14/18989/1/18989.pdf>.

<sup>532</sup> Dos Santos Barreto, “New Testament KOINONIA,” 9-10.

<sup>533</sup> Dos Santos Barreto, “New Testament KOINONIA,” 37.

<sup>534</sup> Daniel Judah Elazar, *Covenant & Polity in Biblical Israel: Biblical Foundations & Jewish Expressions*, vol. 1 of *The Covenant Tradition in Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 24.

<sup>535</sup> Dos Santos Barreto, “New Testament KOINONIA,” 37.

<sup>536</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 1.2.17. “Lo que aquí pretende el demonio no es poco, que es enfriar la caridad y el amor de unas con otras, que sería gran daño. Entendamos, hijas mías, que la perfección verdadera es amor de Dios y del prójimo, y mientras con más perfección guardáremos estos dos mandamientos, seremos más perfectas. Toda nuestra Regla y Constituciones no sirven de otra cosa sino de medios para guardar esto con más perfección.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 1.2.17.

<sup>537</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.3. “Paréceme ahora a mí que cuando una persona ha llegado la Dios a claro conocimiento de lo que es el mundo, y qué cosa es mundo, y que hay otro mundo, y la diferencia que hay de lo uno a lo otro, y que lo uno es eterno y lo otro soñado...que aman muy diferentemente de los que no hemos llegado aquí.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.3. She discusses detachment in similar terms. Though I have chosen not to examine detachment in this dissertation, the concept is integral to her theology, especially in the *Way*. This virtue is likewise a result of juxtaposing temporal things with eternal things. Detachment flows from (rather than results in) the visions and mystical experiences that give revelation about “what everything is” in comparison to eternity (Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 2.6). Divine favors give her tastes of heaven and of what awaits her in eternity, fomenting a re-alignment of the soul with God’s interests and viewpoint. Detachment is essential, she writes, because “if we embrace the Creator and care not at all for the whole of creation, His majesty will infuse the virtues” (Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 8.1; “abrazándonos con solo el Criador y no se nos dando nada por todo lo criado, Su Majestad infunde de manera las virtudes.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 8.1). By removing not possessions but a right to inward possessiveness, the soul is prepared to receive from God. For that reason, she writes, one can ultimately be detached anywhere even though “being in a monastery is a big help” (Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 12.5; “No llamo ‘dejarlo’, entrar en religión, que impedimentos puede haber, y en cada parte puede el alma perfecta estar desasida y humilde; ello a más trabajo suyo, que gran cosa es el aparejo.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 12.5).

<sup>538</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.3. “[C]uando una persona ha llegado la Dios a claro conocimiento de...qué cosa es amar al Criador o a la criatura (esto) visto por experiencia, que es otro negocio que sólo pensarlo y creerlo), o ver y probar qué se gana con lo uno y se pierde con lo otro, y qué cosa es Criador y qué cosa es criatura... aman muy diferentemente de los que no hemos llegado aquí.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.3 (parentheses in original).

<sup>539</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 6.13. “Ordenó en mí el Rey la caridad, tan ordenada, que el amor que tenía al mundo se le quita; y el que a sí, le vuelve en desamor.” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 6.13.



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<sup>540</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 6.13. "...el que a sus deudos, queda de suerte que sólo los quiere por Dios; y el que a los prójimos y el que a los enemigos, no se podrá creer si no se prueba." Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 6.13.

<sup>541</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 6.13. "[E]s muy crecido; el que a Dios, tan sin tasa, que la aprieta algunas veces más que puede sufrir su bajo natural." Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 6.13.

<sup>542</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 7.3. "Entiendo yo aquí que pide hacer grandes obras en servicio de nuestro Señor y del prójimo, y por esto huelga de perder aquel deleite y contento; que aunque es vida más activa que contemplativa y parece perderá si le concede esta petición." Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 7.3.

<sup>543</sup> From Luke 10:38-42. When Jesus visits the home of Mary and Martha in Bethany, Mary ignores first-century Jewish cultural expectations and sits at Jesus' feet with the men, listening to his teaching. Martha complains and asks Jesus to make her sister help with the serving. Jesus refuses and says, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42, New Revised Standard Version). By Teresa's time, Mary had come to represent the contemplative life of prayer and Martha a life of service. Teresa, however, sees synthesis rather than conflict between the two expressions of Christian life. Furthermore, she writes, Jesus was able to say that Mary had chosen the greater part because of the service she had already shown Jesus by washing his feet three chapters before in the house of the Pharisee (*Interior Castle*, 7.4.13, citing Luke 7:36-38). "María había escogido la mejor parte. Y es que ya había hecho el oficio de Marta, regalando al Señor en lavarle los pies y limpiarlos con sus cabellos." Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.4.13.

<sup>544</sup> Teresa, *Meditations* 7.3. "[N]unca dejan de obrar casi juntas Marta y María; porque en lo activo y que parece exterior, obra lo interior, y cuando las obras activas salen de esta raíz, son admirables y olorosisimas flores; porque proceden de este árbol de amor de Dios y por sólo El, sin ningún interés propio." Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 7.3.

<sup>545</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.4.6. "Para esto es la oración, hijas mías; de esto sirve este matrimonio espiritual: de que nazcan siempre obras, obras." Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.4.6.

<sup>546</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.4.8. "¿Sabéis qué es ser espirituales de veras? Hacerse esclavos de Dios, a quien, señalados con su hierro que es el de la cruz, porque ya ellos le han dado su libertad, los pueda vender por esclavos de todo el mundo, como El lo fue." Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.4.8.

<sup>547</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.4.8. "Así que, hermanas, para que lleve buenos cimientos, procurad ser la menor de todas y esclava suya, mirando cómo o por dónde las podéis hacer placer y servir." Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.4.8.

<sup>548</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.4.12. "Marta y María han de andar juntas para hospedar al Señor y tenerle siempre consigo." Teresa, *Moradas*, 7.4.12. Augustine writes in the *City of God*, "No man has a right to lead such a life of contemplation as to forget in his own ease the service due to his neighbor; nor has any man a right to be so immersed in active life as to neglect the contemplation of God" (19.19).

<sup>549</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 121, citing Ignatius of Loyola.

<sup>550</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 121-122.

<sup>551</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 122.

<sup>552</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 206.

<sup>553</sup> Teresa, *Book of Her Foundations*, 5.8. "[E]ntended que si es en la cocina, entre los pucheros anda el Señor ayudándoos en lo interior y exterior." Teresa, *Fundaciones*, 5.8.

<sup>554</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.4.6, cited in McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 206.

<sup>555</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.4.12, cited in McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 206.

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<sup>556</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 206, citing Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 7.4.13, reference to Luke 10:38-42. Teresa joins many of her contemporaries in seeing Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany as the same person.

<sup>557</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 206.

<sup>558</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 207, citing Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 59.5 [*Relaciones espirituales*, 5.5].

<sup>559</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 207.

<sup>560</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 30.19. “Es como unas fontecicas que yo he visto manar, que nunca cesa de hacer movimiento la arena hacia arriba. Al natural me parece este ejemplo o comparación de las almas que aquí llegan: siempre está bullendo el amor y pensando qué hará. No cabe en sí, como en la tierra parece no cabe aquel agua, sino que la echa de sí. Así está el alma muy ordinario, que no sosiega ni cabe en sí con el amor que tiene; ya la tiene a ella empapada en sí. Querría bebiesen los otros, pues a ella no la hace falta, para que la ayudasen a alabar a Dios.” Teresa, *Vida*, 30.19.

<sup>561</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 30.19. “¡Oh, qué de veces me acuerdo del agua viva que dijo el Señor a la Samaritana!” Teresa, *Vida*, 30.19. The addition of this story, just before she begins discussing the founding of St. Joseph’s, would have compelled her readers to remember that the first recorded evangelist in the gospels was a woman. In the *Meditations*, she expounds on this story, “This holy woman, in that divine intoxication, went shouting through the streets. What amazes me is to see how the people believed her—a woman. And she must not have been well-off since she went to draw water” (7.6. “Iba esta santa mujer con aquella borrachez divina dando gritos por las calles. Lo que me espanta a mí es ver cómo la creyeron, una mujer, y no debía ser de mucha suerte, pues iba por agua.” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 7.6). She then adds, “[S]he was very humble because when the Lord told her faults to her she didn’t become offended (as the world does now, for the truth is hard to bear)” (*Meditations*, 7.6. “...de mucha humildad, sí, pues cuando el Señor le dice sus faltas, no se agravió (como lo hace ahora el mundo, que son malas de sufrir las verdades), sino dijole que debía ser profeta.” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 7.6). In other words, in her discussion of love in this section, genuine humility (as self-knowledge revealed by Jesus) and love of neighbor (as overflow) have caused a woman of the lower class to proclaim, utter, and speak—to not be silent—and be “believed” by “a large crowd, on her word alone” (*Meditations*, 7.6. “En fin, le dieron crédito, y por solo su dicho salió gran gente de la ciudad al Señor.” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 7.6). Her emphasis on these aspects follows immediately after her description of love of neighbor (*Meditations*, 7.5) as proclaiming truth to others without a fear of men (*hombres*). She uses the word *hombres* rather than an inclusive or generic word such as *otros*, *otras personas*, or *nadie*: “Por contentar más a Dios, se olvidan a sí por ellos, y pierden las idas en la demanda, como hicieron muchos mártires, y envueltas sus palabras en este tan subido amor de Dios, emborrachadas de aquel vino celestial, no se acuerdan; y si se acuerdan, no se les da nada descontentar a los hombres” (Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 7.5). Her call to ignore the reaction of *hombres*, followed by her description of the Samaritan woman as a *de facto* teacher, is one example of where Teresa contradicts *theologically* the so-called Pauline dictum of her day.

<sup>562</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 30.19. “...siempre está bullendo el amor y pensando qué hará.” Teresa, *Vida*, 30.19.

<sup>563</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.9. “Es amor muy a su costa. No deja de poner todo lo que puede porque se aproveche. Perdería mil vidas por un pequeño bien suyo. ¡Oh precioso amor, que va imitando al capitán del amor, Jesús, nuestro bien!” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.9.

<sup>564</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.7. “Y estas tales almas son siempre aficionadas a dar, mucho más que no a recibir; aun con el mismo Criador les acaece esto.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.7.

<sup>565</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.7. “Así que, si no es para provecho de su alma con las personas que tengo dichas, porque ven ser tal nuestro natural que si no hay algún amor luego se cansan, no se les da más ser queridas que no.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.7.

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<sup>566</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.7. “Y sabed entender cuáles son las cosas que se han de sentir y apiadar de las hermanas, y siempre sientan mucho cualquiera falta, si es notoria, que veáis en la hermana. Y aquí se muestra y ejercita bien el amor en sabérsela sufrir y no se espantar de ella.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.7.

<sup>567</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 4.5. “Cuanto a la primera, que es amaros mucho unas a otras, va muy mucho; porque no hay cosa enojosa que no se pase con facilidad en los que se aman y recia ha de ser cuando dé enojo. Y si este mandamiento se guardase en el mundo como se ha de guardar, creo aprovecharía mucho para guardar los demás.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 4.5.

<sup>568</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.8. “Luego éstos, si aman, pasan por los cuerpos y ponen los ojos en las almas y miran si hay qué amar; y si no lo hay y ven algún principio o disposición para que, si cavan, hallarán oro en esta mina, si la tienen amor, no les duele el trabajo.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.8. See, for example, the discussion above concerning Teresa’s description of the Lutherans (see note 526). Though she depicts Lutheranism as a growing evil in the Church—though they are “traitors” and a “miserable sect” wreaking havoc within Christendom (*Way of Perfection*, 1.2)—rather than condemn them, she declares her desire for them to understand their error and, like her, grow in love for Christ by his goodness (*Spiritual Testimonies*, 3.8 [*Relaciones espirituales*, 3.8]). In other words, she sees through the evil to view their worth in God.

<sup>569</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 41.7-9.

<sup>570</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 4.6. “[C]uando es para servir a Su Majestad, luego se parece, que no va la voluntad con pasión, sino procurando ayuda para vencer otras pasiones.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 4.6.

<sup>571</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.10. “Si por dicha alguna palabrilla de presto se atravesare, remédiese luego y hagan gran oración. Y en cualquiera de estas cosas que dure, o bandillos, o deseo de ser más, o puntito de honra...cuando esto hubiese, dense por perdidas.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.10. These are “the main evil in monasteries” (“el principal mal de los monasterios”) for by them convents are lost, throwing Christ “out of His own house” (“han echado a su Esposo de casa”). Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.10. Earlier in the *Way*, she uses love of neighbor synonymously with “love for one another” (*Way of Perfection*, 4.4), that is, those in the convents. Here, love of neighbor means avoiding favoritism or special friendships because of the possible division and discord that results. In her view, the devil uses favoritism to promote religious factions (*Way of Perfection*, 4.6). “Porque estas amistades grandes pocas veces van ordenadas a ayudarse a amar más a Dios, antes creo las hace comenzar el demonio para comenzar bandos en las religiones.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 4.6.

<sup>572</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 7.4. Here, she compares *agape* with a love tainted with self-interest. In the latter, “Someone preaches a sermon with the intention of benefitting souls, but he is not so detached from human considerations that he doesn’t make some attempt to please, or to gain honor or credit; or he had his mind set on receiving some canonry for having preached well.” Teresa, *Meditations*, 7.4. “Predica uno un sermón con intento de aprovechar las almas; mas no está tan desasido de provechos humanos, que no lleva alguna pretensión de contentar, o por ganar honra o crédito, o que si está puesto a llevar alguna canonjía por predicar bien.” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 7.4.

<sup>573</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 7.4-5.

<sup>574</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 7.5, 8.

<sup>575</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.1. “Todo lo que desea y quiere es ver rica aquella alma de bienes del cielo.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.1.

<sup>576</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.2-3. “Estotra voluntad no es así. Aunque con la flaqueza natural se siente algo de presto, luego la razón mira si es bien para aquel alma, si se enriquece más en virtud y cómo lo lleva, el rogar a Dios la dé paciencia y merezca en los trabajos.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.3.

<sup>577</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.3-4. “Torno otra vez a decir, que se parece y va imitando este amor al que nos tuvo el buen amador Jesús; y así aprovechan tanto, porque no querrian ellos sino abrazar todos los trabajos, y que los otros sin trabajar se aprovechasen de ellos.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.4.

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<sup>578</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 2.29. “[A]unque sean religiosos, si no pueden aprovechar a los prójimos, en especial mujeres, con determinación grande y vivos deseos de las almas, tendrá fuerza su oración, y aun por ventura querrá el Señor que en vida o en muerte aprovechen.” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 2.29.

<sup>579</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 3.4-6.

<sup>580</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 24.1 [*Relaciones espirituales*, 28].

<sup>581</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 6.9. “No deja de poner todo lo que puede porque se aproveche. Perdería mil vidas por un pequeño bien suyo.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.9. Kavanaugh and Otilio translate this passage with the universal, gender-neutral *he*. In the original Spanish, Teresa is not only addressing her sisters on this point. She is addressing all Christians. She writes, for example, that “es imposible durar a quererse el *uno* al *otro*, porque es amor que se ha de acabar con la vida si el *otro* no va guardando la ley de Dios” (Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 6.8, italics added).

<sup>582</sup> John 13:4-5, 12-15 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>583</sup> Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, 5.10.

<sup>584</sup> Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Psalm 93.3. Peter, self-confident in this moment but later weak in his three denials, demonstrates this fragility.

<sup>585</sup> Teresa, *Meditations*, 1.5. “Por cierto que me acuerdo oír a un religioso un sermón harto admirable...porque hablaba de amor (siendo sermón del Mandato, que es para no tratar otra cosa).” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 1.5.

<sup>586</sup> John 13:34-35 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>587</sup> Luke 22:24-27.

<sup>588</sup> Monica Migliorino Miller notes in her book, *The Authority of Women in the Catholic Church*, that *authority* is, theologically speaking, held only by the Triune God; for he who *authored* life gives authority. Representatives of that authority must, therefore, express authority according to the heart and desire of the original author. Monica Migliorino Miller, *The Authority of Women in the Catholic Church* (Steubenville, Ohio: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2015), 16-17. Thus, if one takes Christ’s example as a slave-servant, Christian authority means always the greater serving the least. It is not, Miller writes, “the wielding of power” in a “Nietzschean world without ontological truth or harmony,” where leader and group are separate and the greater exert dominance through raw power (*Authority of Women*, 16). Rather, just as Christ was equal to the Father and to the Spirit—yet submitted to the Father (and likewise the Spirit lifted up Christ)—Christians who are in covenant with God and with each other (and are morally equal with each other) submit to each other and serve each other in love, even where they are in positions of authority (*Authority of Women*, 19-21). Authority implies sacrifice, service, and the responsibility to shepherd and spiritually feed those in one’s care (*Authority of Women*, 81). This is the ideal (if not always realized) world of ontological equality and practiced harmony among Christ-followers.

<sup>589</sup> Luke 22:25-27 (New Revised Standard Version). Peter Kaufman argues that, for Augustine, there existed no paradox or contradiction in exercising temporal power and living in humility. Kings and emperors (or anyone with temporal power) could be useful by taking on the attitude of a sinner redeemed. At issue was not the honor, power, or status that came with positions of authority but rather the coveting of those things. Therefore, from the king to the peasant, an offering of repentance to God involved not only acts of contrition but a contrite heart itself. True humility allowed one to live with honor, power, and status without lusting after them. For in death, one took nothing but the righteousness of faith given by God. Peter I. Kaufman, “Deposito Diademat: Augustine’s Emperors,” *Religions* 6, no. 2 (2015): 321-322. Teresa likewise views authority, humility, and love as compatible.

<sup>590</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 4.10-11. “Tornando al amarnos unas a otras, parece cosa impertinente encomendarlo.... En cómo ha de ser este amarse y qué cosa es amor virtuoso - el que yo deseo haya aquí -...de esto querría yo decir ahora un poquito.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 4.10-11.

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<sup>591</sup> Mark A. McIntosh, *Mystical Theology: The Integrity of Spirituality and Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1998), 29.

<sup>592</sup> McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, 29.

<sup>593</sup> “[The priest] was speaking about love since the sermon was on Maundy Thursday, when one shouldn’t be speaking of anything else.” Teresa, *Meditations*, 1.5. “Por cierto que me acuerdo oír a un religioso un sermón harto admirable...porque hablaba de amor (siendo sermón del Mandato, que es para no tratar otra cosa).” Teresa, *Conceptos del amor de Dios*, 1.5. In other words, on this day, Christ gave the command, “[A]s I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34, New Revised Standard Version). He subsequently makes clear that this is the mark of a true disciple (John 13:35).

<sup>594</sup> John 13:35 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>595</sup> Matthew 7:20 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>596</sup> Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Sixth Session, “Against the Vain Confidence of Heretics,” IX.

<sup>597</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.8. “[P]orque si amamos a Dios no se puede saber.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.8.

<sup>598</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.8. “...aunque hay indicios grandes para entender que le amamos.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.8.

<sup>599</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.8 (italics added). “[M]as el amor del prójimo, sí. Y estad ciertas que mientras más en éste os viereis aprovechadas, más lo estáis en el amor de Dios; porque es tan grande el que Su Majestad nos tiene, que en pago del que tenemos al prójimo hará que crezca el que tenemos a Su Majestad por mil maneras.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.8.

<sup>600</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.8. “En esto yo no puedo dudar.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.8.

<sup>601</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 7.5. “Esta manera de amar es la que yo querríauviésemos nosotras. Aunque a los principios no sea tan perfecta, el Señor la irá perfeccionando.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, 7.5.

<sup>602</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.7. “[B]asta lo que nos ha dado en darnos a su Hijo, que nos enseñase el camino.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.7.

<sup>603</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.7. “Acá solas estas dos que nos pide el Señor: amor de Su Majestad y del prójimo, es en lo que hemos de trabajar.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.7.

<sup>604</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.6, 9. “...amor propio, una propia estimación, un juzgar los prójimos, aunque sea en pocas cosas, una falta de caridad con ellos.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.6.

<sup>605</sup> Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Sixth Session, “On Justification,” Canon I.

<sup>606</sup> Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.9.

<sup>607</sup> John 13:35: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>608</sup> Council of Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, Sixth Session, “Decree on Justification,” X, citing James 2:24 (italics added).

<sup>609</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 5.3.12. “Mirad lo que costó a nuestro Esposo el amor que nos tuvo, que por librarnos de la muerte, la murió tan penosa como muerte de cruz.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.12.

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<sup>610</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, Prologue.1. “Sabido las hermanas de este monasterio de San José cómo tenía licencia...para escribir algunas cosas de oración...me han tanto importunado les diga algo de ella, que me he determinado a las obedecer.” Teresa, *Camino de perfección*, prólogo.1.

<sup>611</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 25.2. “...un espíritu y una voluntad conforme con la suya.” Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 29.2.

<sup>612</sup> Teresa, *Book of Her Foundations*, 5.10. “En lo que está la suma perfección, claro está que no es en regalos interiores ni en grandes arrobamientos ni visiones ni en espíritu de profecía; sino en estar nuestra voluntad tan conforme con la de Dios, que ninguna cosa entendamos que quiere, que no la queramos con toda nuestra voluntad,” Teresa, *Fundaciones*, 5.10. Theologian E. W. T. Dicken observes that, in this passage, what Teresa calls *perfection* is, in fact, *sanctification*, or as he defines it, “complete conformity with the will of God.” E. W. T. Dicken, *The Crucible of Love: A Study of the Mysticism of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963), 39.

<sup>613</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 2.1.8 (italics added). “Toda la pretensión de quien comienza oración (y no se os olvide esto, que importa mucho) ha de ser trabajar y determinarse y disponerse con cuantas diligencias pueda a hacer su voluntad conformar con la de Dios; y como diré después estad muy cierta que en esto consiste toda la mayor perfección que se puede alcanzar en el camino espiritual.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 2.1.8.

<sup>614</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 4.2-4.

<sup>615</sup> Teresa, *Interior Castle*, 2.1.8. “...en esto [i.e., hacer su voluntad conformar con la de Dios] consiste todo nuestro bien.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 2.1.8.

<sup>616</sup> In Matthew 5:48, Jesus tells the disciples to be *perfect* as the Father in heaven is *perfect*. The Greek word used is *teleios*.

<sup>617</sup> Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 12.5 (italics added). “No llamo ‘dejarlo’, entrar en religión, que impedimentos puede haber, y en cada parte puede el alma perfecta estar desasida y humilde; ello a más trabajo suyo, que gran cosa es el aparejo. Mas créanme una cosa, que si hay punto de honra o de hacienda (y) esto tan bien puede haberlo en los monasterios como fuera, aunque más quitadas están las ocasiones y mayor sería la culpa)...nunca medrarán mucho ni llegarán a gozar el verdadero fruto de la oración.” Teresa, *Way of Perfection*, 12.5.

<sup>618</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 10.5. “He aquí una joya que, acordándonos que es dada y ya la poseemos, forzado convida a amar, que es todo el bien de la oración fundada sobre humildad. Pues ¿qué será cuando vean en su poder otras joyas más preciosas, como tienen ya recibidas algunos siervos de Dios, de menosprecio de mundo, y aun de sí mismos? Está claro que se han de tener por más deudores y más obligados a servir, y entender que no teníamos nada de esto, y a conocer la largueza del Señor, que a un alma tan pobre y ruin y de ningún merecimiento como la mía, que bastaba la primera joya de éstas y sobraba para mí, quiso hacerme con más riquezas que yo supiera desear.” Teresa, *Vida*, 10.5.

<sup>619</sup> Dicken, *The Crucible of Love*, 39.

<sup>620</sup> Dicken, *The Crucible of Love*, 39.

<sup>621</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.1. “...que está toda la vida llena de engaños y dobleces.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.1.

<sup>622</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.1. “Un reino que no se acaba.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.1.

<sup>623</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.1. Kavanaugh’s translation of *tráfago*.

<sup>624</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.1. “¡Oh, qué estado éste para los reyes!” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.1.

<sup>625</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.1. “¡Cómo les valdría mucho más procurarle, que no gran señorío! ¡Qué rectitud habría en el reino! ¡Qué de males se excusarían y habrían excusado!” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.1.

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<sup>626</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.1. “Que con sola una gota que gusta un alma de esta agua de él, parece asco todo lo de acá. Pues cuando fuere estar engolfada en todo ¿qué será?” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.1.

<sup>627</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.2. “¡Oh Señor! Si me dierais estado para decir a voces esto, no me creyeran, como hacen a muchos que lo saben decir de otra suerte que yo; mas al menos satisficérame yo.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.2.

<sup>628</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.2 “[B]ien sabéis Vos que muy de buena gana me desposeería yo de las mercedes que me habéis hecho, con quedar en estado que no os ofendiese, y se las daría a los reyes; porque sé que sería imposible consentir cosas que ahora se consienten, ni dejar de haber grandísimos bienes.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.2. Also see Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014). Bilinkoff provides the social and historical context for Teresa’s reforms. She portrays an Avila rife with special interests that had penetrated the convent of *La Encarnación* (where Teresa began her monastic life in 1535) and had perverted the original purpose and mandate of the Carmelite order.

<sup>629</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.3. “¡Oh Dios mío! Dadles a entender a lo que están obligados.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.3.

<sup>630</sup> I do mean *reverted*, not *inverted*: etymologically, the turning back to what was before, or even a legal restoration, rather than turning upside down or corrupting.

<sup>631</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 37.6. “¡Oh Rey de gloria y Señor de todos los reyes!.... Con mirar vuestra persona, se ve luego que es sólo el que merecéis que os llamen Señor, según la majestad mostráis. No es menester gente de acompañamiento ni de guarda para que conozcan que sois Rey. Porque acá un rey solo mal se conocerá por sí. Aunque él más quiera ser conocido por rey, no le creerán, que no tiene más que los otros; es menester que se vea por qué lo creer, y así es razón tenga estas autoridades postizas, porque si no las tuviese no le tendrían en nada. Porque no sale de sí el parecer poderoso. De otros le ha de venir la autoridad.” Teresa, *Vida*, 37.6.

<sup>632</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 21.3. “Que, cierto, cuando pienso esto, me hace devoción que queráis Vos, Rey mío, que hasta en esto entiendan os han de imitar en vida, pues en alguna manera hay señal en el cielo, como cuando moristeis Vos, en su Muerte.” Teresa, *Vida*, 21.3.

<sup>633</sup> Bernard McGinn, “True Confessions: Augustine and Teresa of Avila on the Mystical Self,” in *Teresa of Avila: Mystical Theology and Spirituality in the Carmelite Tradition*, ed. Peter Tyler and Edward Howells (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017), 16-17.

<sup>634</sup> McGinn, “True Confessions,” 17.

<sup>635</sup> McGinn, “True Confessions,” 17. The modern person, writes McGinn, might be tempted to ask, “What use is [Augustine’s and Teresa’s mystical self]?” (17). It is of no use, he concludes, in the modern sense of authenticity or autonomy. The Christian mystical self, however, is not concerned with authenticity or autonomy. It is concerned with the restoration of the communal/covenant relationship with God (16-17). He writes, “[Both Augustine] and [Teresa] argue that the fundamental element in the construction of the self is not other people, but one’s relation to God. To become the true self, the self that we are meant to be, is not to achieve inner autonomy or to realize our ‘individuality’ (whatever that might be) by interacting with other people, but is rather to work on the deepening appropriation of our image-nature, our being created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26)” (17).

<sup>636</sup> Along these lines, Robson et al. write, “The Teresian Carmel has only one purpose: union with God combined with a strong apostolic outreach through prayer” (“Living the Teresian Tradition,” 126). Teresa’s legacy to postmodernity is that the postmodern subject now understands she is not alone but is in Levinas’ intersubjective relationship: the self engaged with the “radical alterity of the other” (Robson et al., “Living the Teresian Tradition,” 131). Through her encounter with God and his infused attributes in the soul, Teresa envisions a community that engages with every difference of every other that “won’t go away”—that other that must simultaneously “encounter me in all my peculiar oddness” (Robson et al., “Living the Teresian Tradition,” 133). This is Teresa’s *agape* love of neighbor as an infused *agape* of God in her.

<sup>637</sup> Weber, “Women Religious,” 45.

## V. CONCLUSION

Having discussed Christological humility and *agape* love in Teresa's works, I return to the three original points I introduced in chapter one. First, do Teresa's writings, specifically her theology of humility, negate or affirm the feminine self? Second, do her theological writings sanction the paternalistic authority of the Church? Finally, as Weber suggests, does she offer "an alternative vision of the future predicated on the civil equality between the sexes and among all classes"?<sup>638</sup>

I have argued that Teresa's theological humility affirms the self in general. It opens the self to restoration and wholeness by removing the self's alienation from God and others. I demonstrated that because Teresa's human ontology was eternal (the soul/spirit created in the image of God), its teleology was also eternal. God designed the self to share in the eternal relationship already known by the Trinity. Sin and pride, however, had corrupted the self, incapacitating the will. Humility was the spiritual "cure" that re-directed the will to God. From a Christological perspective, then, Teresa's humility *as a virtue* was divinely endowed, erasing hierarchical and biased distinctions between the status of male and female souls. In short, humility as a virtue is infused by divine design in the spirit/soul of all "selves" seeking to affirm themselves in God's grace. Thus, by definition, it was God-granted self-knowledge: a certainty concerning one's wretchedness in the light of God. As discussed in chapter 3, her example of the glass of water in the sunlight illustrates that divine revelation is necessary for the self to measure its imperfection accurately alongside God's purity.

Wretchedness, then, was spiritual poverty: an infused understanding that no one is righteous before God and an awareness of one's spiritual need for God's righteousness. Wretchedness as spiritual poverty, however, did not end in despair or the dissolution of the self.



With the need came the turning—the end of which was spiritual wealth in Christ through redemption and salvation. One’s poverty ended in the riches of his righteousness. In this way, humility could neither be self-deprecation nor pretense. On the contrary, Christological humility was necessary for the regenerative transformation of the human soul: the spiritual wealth (or friendship with Christ) that fulfilled human teleology. Thus, Teresa’s humility affirmed the self; for by humility, union with the self’s eternal *telos* (God) was restored as was the fruit of that *telos* (experiencing and enjoying him in this life and the next).

Following this argument, in chapter 4, I proposed that Teresa’s humility affirmed the self by its potential to remove one’s alienation from God and, consequently, from others. Restoring one’s union with God ultimately meant union with the God who embodied *agape* love. Being conformed to his will meant being conformed to his *agape* because he was *agape*. One’s vertical relationship with God would, therefore, overflow into one’s horizontal relationship with others. Thus, loving God meant loving one’s neighbor.

Furthermore, one’s love for others evidenced one’s love for God. One’s duty to others on the temporal plane, expressed by good works and acts of charity, mirrored one’s restoration with God on the spiritual plane. Consequently, *agape* union with God and with others—both rooted in humility—dissolved the self’s alienation from both. Her theology of humility, therefore, rooted in her *Christology*, affirms the human self in general.

How, then, Teresa’s theology of humility might affirm the feminine self specifically or, conversely, sanction the paternalistic authority of the Church is directly related to this argument. I suggest that it affirms the *feminine* self for two reasons. Primarily, as Weber writes, the Church’s paternalistic authority in the sixteenth century pivoted on a “belief in feminine spiritual inadequacy”<sup>639</sup> and on interpretations of the Pauline dictum that served to relegate women to the

margins of public discourse.<sup>640</sup> From my perspective, Teresa's theology of humility undermines both. Regarding feminine spiritual inadequacy, she reiterates the Church's teaching on what it means to be human. Laying aside aspects of her writings that can be read as approximating Calvinist<sup>641</sup> or Lutheran positions,<sup>642</sup> her theology of humility is well within the orthodoxy of the Church, as is her understanding of human *being*. Her eternal ontology, her understanding of the *need* for redemption, her recognition of the fallen state of humanity apart from that redemption, her emphasis of God's grace and love, and her conviction that love toward others was a Christian duty: all these were fundamental tenets of established doctrine from Paul and the patristics to the Council of Trent. In this Christological view of humility, there was nothing with which to disagree.<sup>643</sup> Her theology pivoted on her orthodox view of fallen humanity, disregarding all particularities of gender and class. For Teresa, *all* had fallen short of the glory of God: none were righteous.<sup>644</sup> Men and women were equal in spiritual poverty. However, they were also equal in consequent spiritual wealth. Teresa's wretchedness, therefore, negated spiritual inadequacy as unique to women.

In sum, women could not have more nothing than men. Human *being* was the same, regardless of gender or class. The need was the same. The Father's poured-out riches—in Christ—were the same. Yet, should patriarchal views point to women's expressed propensity toward *moral* weakness rather than spiritual inadequacy, she reminds her readers (beginning in the *Life*) of the moral corruption that has occurred among male authorities: a confessor that loses his honor and reputation because of an illicit relationship,<sup>645</sup> a priest who is "obliged to be good" but is living in mortal sin,<sup>646</sup> and magistrates that are obsessed with trifles and artificial pomp.<sup>647</sup> Thus, she concedes to the weakness of women. But it is evident by her examples and her theology that the weakness is shared.

Furthermore, Teresa implicitly engages the Pauline dictum as questionable theology—at best, a flawed interpretation among the learned and the lettered. On this point, rather than taking on the dictum herself, she appeals to the voice of Jesus. The authoritative voice of Jesus rarely appears in her writings, mostly in her *Spiritual Testimonies*. However, when it does, its presence provides definition and authority to crucial concepts. What is humility? What is union? In this case, what is systematic theology? In this testimony, she expresses self-doubt about her reforms and temporal work because she is a woman. The prevailing interpretation of Paul’s words to the Corinthians<sup>648</sup> has caused her to wonder: should she only be engaged in prayer within the convent, not out founding monasteries? Jesus corrects her, “Tell them they shouldn’t follow just one part of Scripture but that they should look at other parts, and ask them if they can by chance tie my hands.”<sup>649</sup>

She also leaves unexplained the “other parts” of Scripture to which Jesus refers. Perhaps they are the other writings of Paul, such as the kenotic hymn of Philippians 2 or the *agape* chapter of 1 Corinthians 13. Whatever the case, she affirms the feminine self in Christ, deriving her authority not through any exceptionalism but rather through the Church’s teaching on *being* and *purpose*. Thus, her fundamental theology becomes a mirror and authoritative voice that Catholic readers (including ecclesiastical authorities) would come to read as indisputable and be confirmed by her sainthood. Inquisitors might attack the authenticity of her experience but not the doctrine by which she reminds her readers of their equality before God and their obligation to others. Her discursive ideology would have been shared (a simple yet essential point I will return to below).

Weber’s critical framework seems to ask or hope that Teresa’s theology and autobiography explicitly posit or demand gender and social equality.<sup>650</sup> As one might conceive of

contemporary political movements regarding gender or class, Teresa did not; but her theology of humility did contain the foundational tenets of an alternative vision. Scholarship in premodern history and political science has undermined the notion that the early modern period witnessed the creation of the modern individual and secular liberalism *ex nihilo*. The ideological foundation that allowed their creation had already been seeded and nurtured within Torah, nascent Christianity, and the medieval Church. Two key pillars of that foundation were Christianity's fundamental tenets that every human was ontologically equal before God and, subsequently, shared the moral obligation of *agape* love toward every other. A third pillar was that these notions constituted a potential covenant of equals.<sup>651</sup>

Larry Siedentop's *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism* traces the development of the *individual* in the West as an ontological and moral concept. He argues that Christianity's normative assumptions concerning ethics and ontology were preserved, by inheritance, through modern liberal secularism. He begins his examination of the idea in the ancient world, where a duty to family or the *polis* defined the self in relation only to one's immediate surroundings (i.e., pagan *paterfamilias*, clan, tribe, or caste). Reason was also hierarchical and reserved for elites of means. Here, the *individual*, as modernity would understand the term, was non-existent.<sup>652</sup> Paul's idea of *Christian liberty* broke radically from the ancient view, laying the foundation for the *individual* (as a concept) through a moral agency already resident in the self as the redeemable will. For Paul, "Christ is potentially present in every believer," and the "sacrificial nature of love is open to everyone."<sup>653</sup> Augustine developed the concept of the redeemable will further. As Siedentop explains, Aristotle's (and paganism's) hierarchy of rationalism had carried with it an implied natural inequality and elitism. For the ancient, only a rational *self* could be a realized *self*, yet not all beings were capable of that kind

of moral agency: thus, the need for philosopher-kings and the few *polis* citizens. Augustine, however, rejected pure rationalism and, once converted to Christianity, developed Paul's notion of the will as needing to be reunited with God's will.

Nevertheless, the will did not automatically engender virtue since sin had corrupted the will. One needed *humility* and God's *grace* acting on human will. But unlike pagan (or pagan-inspired) rational virtue that fostered a philosophical exclusivity in which only an elite were capable of being morally strong, Christian virtue, by contrast, could be spiritually developed through a rational will supported by God's *grace* through *humility*; and it was available to all. Yet, if that were true, this implied both universal moral agency *and* moral equality. All were equally capable of moral agency, and all were equally in need of grace, having done away with the "unequal distribution of reason among men."<sup>654</sup> As Christianity became codified and institutional, canonists began to develop and transform *jus naturale*, integrating into this pagan concept the Biblical *golden rule*: that is, the duty of every individual to every other moral equal. Siedentop provides this example from Gratian's *Decretum*: "Natural law [*jus*] is what is contained in the Law and the Gospel by which each is to do to another what he wants done to himself and forbidden to do to another what he does not want done to himself."<sup>655</sup> Thus, the commandment found in Torah and the gospel narratives—love thy neighbor—imposed itself on the concept taken from Greek philosophy and Roman law. It transformed it "so that equality and reciprocity [were] made the main-springs of justice."<sup>656</sup>

Eventually, medieval canonists defined natural law as an individual's capacity for choice (or free will), and the golden rule became the ideal for social and political relationships.<sup>657</sup> One's equality in Christ and the role of the redeemed will through humility, thus, implied a moral autonomy that gradually asserted the idea of individual rights and private choice. In a Christian

society, then, freedom in Christ would reconstitute ideals of justice and equality in the social and political spheres: freedom as a *right* established on the precept of moral agency.<sup>658</sup> As summarized by Siedentop, “We have seen that in the ancient world belief in natural inequality contributed to a teleology which associated rationality with hierarchy.... [B]y contrast, Christian understanding of the soul’s relationship to God founded the claim of ‘equal liberty’. Rational agency became a birthright, shared by all humans equally.”<sup>659</sup> Siedentop, therefore, maintains that the so-called *renaissance* of ancient humanism in modern times is misleading. That rebirth would not have been possible without “recasting” the concepts of rights and reciprocity that medieval canonists had already made normative assumptions. *Individuality* as an aesthetic notion became available to Renaissance humanists because of the moral concept of the *individual* as Christianity had framed it.<sup>660</sup> In other words, “Christian beliefs provided the ontological foundation for the individual as a moral status and primary social role.”<sup>661</sup>

He concludes that modernity<sup>662</sup> in the West resulted from a long, dialectical process that converted moral assumptions about the equality of souls into social and political appeals for individual autonomy and freedom.<sup>663</sup> In the end, Western “liberalism rests on the moral assumptions provided by Christianity,” for it “preserves Christian ontology without the metaphysics of salvation.”<sup>664</sup> Borrowing from Marx’s distinction between a *class in itself* and *class for itself*,<sup>665</sup> Siedentop writes in *Democracy in Europe*:

Christianity took humanity as a species in itself and sought to convert it into a species for itself. Thus, the defining characteristic of Christianity was its universalism. It aimed to create a single human society, a society composed, that is, of individuals rather than tribes, clans or castes. The fundamental relationship between the individual and his or her God provides the crucial test, in Christianity, of what matters. It is, by definition, a test that applies to all equally. Hence the deep individualism of Christianity was simply the reverse of its universalism. The Christian conception of God became the means of creating the brotherhood of man, of bringing to self-consciousness the human species, by leading each of its members to see him or herself as having, at least potentially, a

relationship with the deepest reality – viz., God – that both required and justified equal moral standing of all humans.<sup>666</sup>

This equal moral standing that Augustine, in the *City of God*, understood as contrary and subversive to the localism and tribalism of the City of Man consisted of the ontological status and the ethical duty that resulted from that potential relationship with the Creator<sup>667</sup> and was the “revolutionary promise of Christian beliefs.”<sup>668</sup> Essential to this equal moral standing was its Christology—the foundational creed of Christ’s incarnation as “the root of Christian egalitarianism”<sup>669</sup> responsible for transforming natural law into natural rights. “Christ with us” broke the divide between gods and humanity, divine agency and human agency. In this Christological core, deity was no longer foreign or far from human agency. The incarnate Christ was intimate and intrinsic to the human spirit, giving humanity the right to exercise free will as individuals.<sup>670</sup>

Within this framework, I have argued for reading Teresa’s writings through her Christology—her eternal ontology and her teleology of relationship. Her Christology was her discursive ideology.<sup>671</sup> More importantly, it was an ideology *shared* by her sisters, confessors, and ecclesiastical authorities. It provided theological definitions for theological terms. This third pillar—a shared, discursive ideology—is a point that Siedentop implies but does not develop. Yet, by not deviating from established orthodoxy, Teresa did more than authorize her own writings. Through her theology of humility, with its implications of equality and reciprocity, she inadvertently inscribed what was essentially a political covenant.

Daniel Elazar wrote extensively on the notion of covenant and its importance in developing liberal democracy in the West. I wish, however, to emphasize only one element relevant to Teresa’s theology and the question of civic equality. One finds that element in Elazar’s definition of *covenant* as a political ideal:

A covenant is a *morally* informed agreement or pact based upon voluntary consent, established by *mutual* oaths or promises, involving or witnessed by some *transcendent higher authority*, between peoples or parties having independent status, *equal* in connection with the purposes of the pact, that *provides for joint action or obligation* to achieve defined ends (limited or comprehensive) under conditions of mutual respect, which protect the individual integrities of all parties to it.... [T]hey are political in that their bonds are used principally to establish bodies political and social.<sup>672</sup>

Elazar locates the ideals of ontological equality and moral obligation farther back than the New Testament. He finds them in the Torah, forming the political constitution of the nation of Israel.<sup>673</sup> He, therefore, emphasizes a point that Siedentop only hints at. It is the salient point: the transcendent foundation of the covenant ideal was a *shared* one. It was a moral promise between equals. But because it assumed ontological equality under a transcendent power, it allowed for mutual oaths and promises as political equals. Thus, the core element of Biblical covenant politics is that, because of a *shared* relationship with God, those appealing to that transcendent relationship also enter a political relationship—an oath of equals—understanding that in breaking that oath, one answers ultimately to God.<sup>674</sup>

This shared foundation (or discursive ideology) was the one to which Teresa appealed. Never straying from orthodoxy or that shared interpretation of theological humility and *agape*, she made an implicit appeal to what that theology inferred: that the moral promise between ontological equals denoted a mutual obligation between political equals.<sup>675</sup> Teresa scholars justifiably call attention to a persistent ambivalence toward equality—particularly gender equality—in Church history, especially in post-Tridentine Spain’s political and historical climate.<sup>676</sup> Nevertheless, Teresa constitutes a link in a dialectical questioning of subordination<sup>677</sup> that developed over millennia. The moral intuitions that would become normative assumptions in modernity had to compete with deeply-rooted ancient cultural prejudice and practice, resulting in a schizophrenia within Christian societies. Yet, the core elements of Christian theology created a



public role for conscience, laying the ideological framework to both criticize and combat those prejudices and practices.<sup>678</sup> Thus, in his book *Dominion: How the Christian Revolution Remade the World*, Tom Holland concludes, “Any condemnation of Christianity as patriarchal and repressive derived from a framework of values that was itself utterly Christian.”<sup>679</sup>

Teresa’s writings represent one moment in the steady ideological flow over time that developed, codified, and made that framework of values normative in Western culture. Thus, if the invention of the modern individual resulted from the acknowledgment of “the equality of humans in the face of their maker” and the “creation of a self-consciousness that undercuts merely social identities”;<sup>680</sup> if ontological equality and the duty to love one’s neighbor were the fundamental elements within Christian theology that constructed the modern individual; and if once secularized, they became the foundation for Western liberal democracy, where “equality and reciprocity [were] made the main-springs of justice,”<sup>681</sup> then Teresa’s theology, contrary to Weber, indeed represents an alternative vision of a future founded on civil equality.<sup>682</sup>

Though Teresa employs a rhetoric of humility in her writings at times, it would be wrong to ascribe all her utterances of wretchedness and humility to a *sermo humilis* that was ultimately self-serving.<sup>683</sup> And though Teresa’s writings and reforms contain a proto-feminism in practical terms,<sup>684</sup> it was not merely her pragmatic stance *despite* theology that made Teresa subversive. Rather, Teresa inscribed an utterly orthodox theology that was subversive to debatable and questionable strains of Church doctrine concerning women’s nature and their role in the Church.

Her wretchedness and humility recognize spiritual poverty as universal and genderless; her call for union with Christ and conformity with his will and the subsequent *agape* love understood as an ethical duty is equally genderless. These theological concepts, in turn, imply two equally orthodox positions. First, if spiritual poverty is genderless, the notion of feminine

moral inferiority is baseless. Second, if spiritual wretchedness renders humanity as ontological equals, so does the humility that leads to grace and redemption. Christ alone rescues the wretched soul; Christ authorizes the prophetic voice. Thus, though Teresa accepted a difference in the genders regarding educational opportunities, she rejected any ontological difference.<sup>685</sup> Simply put, men and women were both prone to moral and spiritual imperfection. She, consequently, pushed literacy and education in her convents, both as a protection for her daughters and sisters against incompetent confessors and directors as well as against their own potential for straying from orthodoxy.<sup>686</sup> As Sonya Quitslund observes, “Teresa’s occasional disparaging remarks about being a woman are to be understood in the light of the limitations society placed on women.... [T]he whole psychological conditioning by culture and the Church kept women psychologically immature.”<sup>687</sup> Her insistence, then, that her nuns be versed in spiritual classics and any Scripture they could glean was meant to guide them toward the spiritual maturity that ecclesiastical culture ironically stifled.<sup>688</sup>

Spiritual maturity implies spiritual agency. By her descriptions of her obligation to love others, Teresa evidently understands herself and those in covenant with her (i.e., believing Catholics) to be legitimate moral agents and, by extension, political and social agents, even if she never defines herself (or her Catholic readers) in those terms. Her theology reminds her readers of their responsibility before God. This alone justifies practical action in civic terms.<sup>689</sup> Her implicit argument—never stated—is that equality before God and one’s consequent duty make one a moral agent. In this understanding, to be a moral agent is not necessarily to act morally. But it is to be *capable* of acting morally and, thus, accountable to do so.<sup>690</sup> It is, therefore, not that she pushes back against patriarchal oppression despite theology. Rather, her theological positioning is itself the pushback.

I would add this final observation. A reading that privileges the rhetorical strength of Teresa's writings over their theological substance depends on one fundamental assumption: namely, that despite her lack of resources and education, Teresa "absorbed" a facility for rhetoric from the sermons and debates she was witness to<sup>691</sup> and was, therefore, able to fool, dupe, and charm her confessors and inquisitors. What makes this assumption puzzling is that, unlike Teresa, her exclusively male audience would not have merely absorbed an acumen for rhetoric. They would have explicitly studied the *trivium* of grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

One such expert was the Spanish historian and Carmelite monk, Jerónimo de San José (1587-1654), who, perhaps anticipating the conclusion that Teresa would persuade her readers through style rather than substance, wrote of Teresa a half-century after her death:

She speaks familiarly with her daughters, and yet she teaches the greatest sages of the world.... With what flowing authority she declares hidden and high things? With what propriety and subtlety does she explain them? With what order and harmony does she arrange them? With what vitality does she present them? And with what energy and yet gentleness does she assert them? There is no human rhetoric that can achieve such a powerful efficacy of speech. To captivate and to move: those are the most characteristic effects of that art. Yet, in none of these for which the world praises even masters of rhetoric do they shine as much as they do in the words of Santa Teresa de Jesús. Masters of rhetoric are notorious for their fustian and their gimmicks and are, therefore, less effective. For the nobility of human will is such that, when it recognizes traps and artifice in an opposing argument, it will withdraw or resist, and then "in vain is the net baited while the bird, fast of wing, is looking on."<sup>692</sup>

Jerónimo de San José, who studied these arts in Segovia and theology and Scripture in Salamanca,<sup>693</sup> is representative of an entire class of readers versed in classical rhetoric and intimately familiar with the substance of Scripture. The notion, therefore, that classically-trained experts would fail to see through Teresa's rhetorical "artifice" is problematic.

I have, therefore, argued that Teresa's theology of humility and its relation to the self allowed for the deconstruction of a culturally-constructed misogyny and class consciousness

masked in doctrine. The Christological ontology of humanity found in Teresa's writings would, as a logical conclusion, make it increasingly difficult to justify hindering a Christian woman's intellectual freedom or reinforce her exclusion from the public sphere without doing the same to Christian men.<sup>694</sup> Nor would it be possible to use the concept of humility as the means to reinforce a patriarchal subjugation of women in society without paradoxically subjugating men under the same logic.<sup>695</sup> Furthermore, because humility initiated this ontological leveling, what Teresa's conceptual framework offered was a foundation for reforms that implied a political and social leveling in terms of class and gender. What she won for herself could, therefore, be won for her sisters as well as her brothers, sons, and daughters.

The Christological core of her theology—not her rhetorical shrewdness—made Teresa subversive. She used the orthodoxy *of* the Church to attack abuses *within* the Church. As such, she was a mirror, not a manipulator. For that reason, her continued influence—not only among Catholics but among Protestants and Orthodox—can be found in her spiritual candor; for the essence of her writings applies to the most basic of Christian creeds, including that of 16<sup>th</sup>-century Catholic Spain and the Inquisition. In answer to Weber, then, I agree: Teresa indeed wrote with a golden pen. But because the vitality of her writing flowed from her theology rather than her rhetoric, the golden pen with which she wrote was placed in her hand by the Church itself.

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<sup>638</sup> Weber, "Women Religious," 45.

<sup>639</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 20.

<sup>640</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 18-20.

<sup>641</sup> For example, total depravity and irresistible grace.

<sup>642</sup> "How true that there is no need for intermediaries with you!" Teresa, *Life*, 37.6. "¡Cómo no son menester terceros para Vos!" Teresa, *Vida*, 37.6.

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<sup>643</sup> This would leave the Inquisition questioning her phenomenological experience and her potential heterodoxy concerning ecclesiastical matters (such as her view on intermediaries and women's authority).

<sup>644</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 20.28. "[El alma e]s como el agua que está en un vaso, que si no le da el sol está muy claro; si da en él, vese que está todo lleno de motas. Al pie de la letra es esta comparación.... Acuérdate del verso que dice; ¿Quién será justo delante de Ti?" Teresa, *Vida*, 20.28.

<sup>645</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 5.3-6.

<sup>646</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 38.23. "Entendí bien cuán más obligados están los sacerdotes a ser buenos que otros, y cuán recia cosa es tomar este Santísimo Sacramento indignamente, y cuán señor es el demonio del alma que está en pecado mortal." Teresa, *Vida*, 38.23.

<sup>647</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 37.6.

<sup>648</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:34: "[W]omen should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says" (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>649</sup> Teresa, *Spiritual Testimonies*, 15.1. "Diles que no se sigan por sola una parte de la Escritura, que miren otras, y que si podrán por ventura atarme las manos." Teresa, *Relaciones espirituales*, 19.

<sup>650</sup> Weber, "Women Religious," 45.

<sup>651</sup> In what follows, I do not present an argument of "Jesus: therefore, civil rights." Rather, as Alasdair MacIntyre notes in his *Short History of Ethics*, what began in the gospels and in Paul's letters as principles addressed to individuals and small communities slowly developed into codes for societies. These principles or doctrines, as he writes, "successfully define a life for Christians informed *both* by the hope of [Jesus's] Second Coming *and* by a commitment to this-worldly activity in and through which human beings rediscover the true nature of their natural ends and of those natural virtues required to achieve those ends, as a result of coming to understand them in the light of the theological virtues identified in the New Testament" (vi, italics in the original). As he implies, these New Testament virtues (anticipated and paralleled in Torah) potentially bind a community together horizontally through the individual's commitment to God's law vertically (vi-vii). In his discussion of Christianity (71-77), MacIntyre writes, "Even if, from St. Paul to Martin Luther, this conviction [that all are equal before God] appeared compatible with the institutions of slavery and serfdom, it provided a ground for attacking those institutions whenever their abolition appeared remotely possible" (74). What follows below is a summary of the evolution of this ideal.

<sup>652</sup> Siedentop's definition of the modern individual: "rational agents whose ability to reason and choose makes it right to attribute to them an underlying equality of status, a moral equality." In contrast, the ancient "individual" was a member of a family or group, where each member had an "assigned status" (*Inventing the Individual*, 13-14). The ancient, thus, assumed an inequality of status, agency, and ability to reason (*Inventing the Individual*, 36). Siedentop makes this subsequent point throughout the book, "We are...inclined to see this moral equality [of the modern individual] as a fact of perception rather than a social valuation, so ingrained is our assumption that rational agency demands equal concern and respect" (*Inventing the Individual*, 14).

<sup>653</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 59.

<sup>654</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 298-304.

<sup>655</sup> Gratian, *Decretum* 3, cited in Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 216.

<sup>656</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 216. See pp. 245-247 for a summary of how Paul's and Augustine's idea of Christian liberty (that is, the ability and freedom of the rational, individual will to discover God's will) developed into a legal system based on natural rights.

<sup>657</sup> For Siedentop, the climax of this story is William of Ockham; for though he represents a nominalism that leads away from rationalism toward empiricism in the West, culminating in a now materialist empiricism that he would

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never have condoned, he also represents a line from Paul to Augustine through the Franciscans that develops a crucial belief in universal moral agency that ultimately implies moral equality. Siedentop pits Ockham against Aquinas, as they respectively represent Augustine and Aristotle (or the Franciscans and Dominicans). For Siedentop, Aquinas's ideas could not have culminated in the modern individual because of his reliance on Aristotle and his "rationalist account of natural law" (*Inventing the Individual*, 313). In contrast, Ockham's does because he further develops Augustine's understanding of the will and of rational and moral agency. The core of Christianity for Ockham and his followers was that God through Christ offered grace to all equally, permitting any willing soul a friendship with God that transcended every other relationship. See Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 306-320.

<sup>658</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 306-320.

<sup>659</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 311.

<sup>660</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 337-338.

<sup>661</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 355.

<sup>662</sup> Defining modernity as "an individuated model of society – a model in which the individual rather than the family, clan or caste is the basic social unit;" where experience is the "experience of individuals," rights are normative and fundamental to protecting "individual agency," and "final authority of any association is to be found in its members" (*Inventing the Individual*, 337-338).

<sup>663</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 339.

<sup>664</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 338.

<sup>665</sup> i.e., a class that merely exists and a class that is conscious of itself.

<sup>666</sup> Larry Siedentop, *Democracy in Europe* (London, UK: Allen Lane, 2000), 195.

<sup>667</sup> Siedentop, *Democracy in Europe*, 195.

<sup>668</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 354.

<sup>669</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 247.

<sup>670</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 247.

<sup>671</sup> See Knoblauch, *Discursive Ideologies*.

<sup>672</sup> Elazar, *Covenant & Polity in Biblical Israel*, 22-23 (italics added).

<sup>673</sup> Also see Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010). Nelson rejects a view of modernity that is the result of a "Great Separation", where science and philosophical skepticism began to overturn religious claims. He writes, "It is this separation, we are told, that is responsible for producing the distinctive features of modern European political thought, including (but by no means limited to) its particular notion of individual rights, its account of the state, and its embrace of religious toleration. These innovations could not appear on the scene until religion had effectively been sequestered from political science" (1-2). He argues, however, that this traditional view of modernity is backwards and that a "Hebrew Revival" occurred in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in which European Christians began to "regard the Hebrew Bible as a political constitution" and rediscover and interact with rabbinic commentaries (3-4). Although his central argument is that this rediscovery led to the rise of a radical republicanism, particularly in protestant nations, among other effects on political thought were the convictions that individual freedom of conscience and collective civil liberty were intertwined (120-122) and that toleration was ultimately authorized by God (139).

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<sup>674</sup> Elazar, *Covenant & Polity in Biblical Israel*, 22-24. According to Elazar, the covenant idea found in Mosaic Law and the Bible seeded modern constitutionalism in the West (*Covenant & Polity in Biblical Israel*, 1) and particularly flourished within Protestant countries. Daniel Judah Elazar, *Covenant and Civil Society: The Constitutional Matrix of Modern Democracy*, vol. 4 of *The Covenant Tradition in Politics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 7. Covenant tradition found its greatest expression in modernity in Swiss, Dutch, Scottish, and English Puritan civil societies then in the British colonies and especially in the American Revolution (Elazar, *Covenant & Polity in Biblical Israel*, 20). In Puritan England of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, early feminists appealed directly to covenant tradition to argue for political and social equality [see Mark Gismondi, *Ethics, Liberalism and Realism in International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2008), 40-42], as did civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. See Barbara Allen, "Martin Luther King's Civil Disobedience and the American Covenant Tradition," *Publius* 30, no. 4 (2000): 97-106, doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.pubjof.a030109. Though Teresa as a Spanish nun in the 16<sup>th</sup> century falls far outside this Protestant tradition, her theology of humility contains three elements that form the core of covenant political ideology: specifically, that it is a *shared* theology that demands both the *ontological equality* and *moral obligation* that Siedentop and Holland identify from medieval Catholicism.

<sup>675</sup> See Anthony D. Smith, *The Cultural Foundations of Nations: Hierarchy, Covenant and Republic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008). Though the scope of his book concerns nations and nationalism, his discussion of the role of covenant ideology in the formation of normative assumptions in modernity is enlightening (107-134). In covenant ideology, the pertinent component was not baseless, assumed equality but rather transcendent equality before God: "God, not the nation, was sovereign" (132). In other words, the transcendent nature of covenant bound many equals in civic and political union. Ultimately, the appeal to transcendent authority—one nation *under* God—made a nation indivisible and was the guarantor of the promise of liberty and justice for all.

<sup>676</sup> See, for example, Weber, *Rhetoric*, 17-41; Ahlgren, *Politics of Sanctity*, 6-31; Howe, "Let Your Women Keep Silence," 123-137; Sonya Quitslund, "Elements of a Feminist Spirituality in St. Teresa," in *Centenary of St. Teresa*, ed. John Sullivan (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1984), 21; and Hufton, *Prospect Before Her*, 332-358.

<sup>677</sup> Mark Gismondi's phrase in *Ethics, Liberalism and Realism in International Relations*. He writes of a type of proto-feminism in Puritan England, "The Puritan period was most decidedly not a comprehensive moment of liberation for women or, for that matter, poor men. Over time, however, the radical ideological components of Puritanism, particularly the ontological equality implied by the structure of covenants, became the basis for a dialectical questioning of the subordination of women" (Gismondi, *Ethics, Liberalism and Realism*, 42). For a discussion of how the concept of *childhood* similarly developed in early Christianity, see Odd Magne Bakke, *When Children Became People: The Birth of Childhood in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005). Bakke argues that an anthropology of children as separate beings with potential rights of life and liberty (as opposed to the Greco-Roman anthropology of children as beings with undeveloped *logos* or as the property of an estate or clan) arose from early Christianity and its central tenet that all were created in the image of God. This new anthropology had ethical consequences. For example, the number of boys and girls being coerced into sexual relationships with men declined. Such relationships gradually became viewed as abusive rather than natural—as the greater preying upon the least (284-285).

<sup>678</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 355. Also see Martin Luther King, Jr., "The American Dream," in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, ed. James Melvin Washington (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), 208-216. More philosophical than his "I Have a Dream" speech at the Washington Mall in 1963, King's greater point in this sermon is that, though the American founders allowed slavery, thus creating the need for the Civil Rights Movement of the sixties, they also laid down the political and ideological foundation needed for the movement. He says, "[E]ver since the Founding Fathers of our nation dreamed this noble dream, America has been something of a schizophrenic personality, tragically divided against herself. On the one hand we have proudly professed the principles of democracy, and on the other hand we have sadly practiced the very antithesis of those principles" (208). In *Inventing the Individual*, Siedentop traces this schizophrenia in the Christian West from the early church through the medieval period and into modern liberalism.

<sup>679</sup> Tom Holland, *Dominion: How the Christian Revolution Remade the World* (New York: Basic Books, 2019), 532. Holland also outlines a Western *ethos* that developed from Paul through the patristic writers and canonists into secular modernity, and he arrives at similar conclusions as those of Siedentop. Of contemporary feminism he writes that, despite the ambivalence of patristic and medieval theologians that conflated Aristotelian gender biology with

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conflicting interpretations of Scripture about the role of women in the Church (273-276), it was Christianity's assumptions of equality and moral obligation laid down by medieval canonists that eventually eroded those interpretations. For Holland, concepts such as human rights, gay rights, feminism, and democracy (as a universal right) would have made little sense in antiquity. They would be impossible in modernity without the moral and legal foundation laid down by Christianity's human ontology and moral obligation of love before the modern era secularized that foundation. He offers, as examples, both the pro-life movement and the pro-choice movement—as well as the *Me Too* movement and the sexual revolution of the seventies—as equally democratic expressions that rely on the *ethos* and hidden assumptions that Christianity provided. Harvey Weinstein, in contrast, best represents the *ethos* of antiquity, where sexual freedom was “the perk of a very exclusive subsection of society: powerful men. Zeus, Apollo, Dionysus: all had been habitual rapists” (527).

<sup>680</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 105.

<sup>681</sup> Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, 216.

<sup>682</sup> In this dissertation, I have not argued that Teresa understands or is self-conscious of this subversive move. I do argue, however, that her theology of humility represents a link in the chain of dialectical questioning that led to, as Siedentop and others have argued, the normative assumptions about rights, authority, and equality taken for granted in Western liberalism.

<sup>683</sup> I would add that doing so ignores Teresa's continued popularity. Why, in fact, does she still resonate strongly in a postmodern era that rejects women's spiritual inferiority and subordination? Though a rhetoric of femininity might reveal why she survived her own era, it fails to answer Weber's initial question: how can we account for Teresa's *continued* survival? What explains the resonance of her writing and theology today? As Kimberly Winston observes, Teresa is still relevant, for she speaks to Protestants as well as Catholics, liberating the Christian seeker by simplifying prayer and making contemplative prayer accessible. In that way, she makes “God a little more approachable.” Kimberly Winston, “Answering St. Teresa's Call,” *Publisher's Weekly*, July 28, 2010, EBSCOhost. At the same time, she embodies “modern liberal ideals of tolerance and individualism” rather than the intolerance and reactionary inflexibility often ascribed to the pre-modern. Erin Kathleen Rowe, *Saint and Nation: Santiago, Teresa of Avila, and Plural Identities in Early Modern Spain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 228.

<sup>684</sup> Barbara Mujica notes, for example, Teresa's intellectual strength and her push for education and women's literacy within her convents. She states, however, “I think she's clever enough to realize that certain kinds of rhetorical expressions can keep her out of trouble. At the same time, she can really be striving toward humility.” Barbara Mujica, “Teresa as Feminist,” lecture recorded at Carmelite Monastery of Baltimore on the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Santa Teresa's birth, 2015, 18:41-18:58, <https://www.baltimorecarmel.org/to-the-holy-mountain/>. Mujica also notes how Teresa “turned women's supposed imperfections into a defense of their special spiritual aptitude” (“Was Teresa of Ávila a Feminist?” 81). It has been my intention to demonstrate how Teresa ascribed humility, imperfections, and spiritual aptitude to both genders.

<sup>685</sup> Quitslund, “Elements of a Feminist Spirituality,” 30.

<sup>686</sup> Mujica, “Was Teresa of Ávila a Feminist?” 79-80.

<sup>687</sup> Quitslund, “Elements of a Feminist Spirituality,” 30.

<sup>688</sup> Quitslund, “Elements of a Feminist Spirituality,” 30-32.

<sup>689</sup> Michael Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 90.

<sup>690</sup> Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution*, 91.

<sup>691</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 51.



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<sup>692</sup> San José, Jerónimo de San José, *Historia del Carmen Descalzo* (Madrid, 1637), 919, <https://books.google.com/books?id=VTRRAAAAcAAJ>. The final quote is his citation of Proverbs 1:17. I use the New Revised Standard Version with my own translation of *ligeras* added. The rest of the text is my translation (and edit) of the following passage: “Su estilo es llano, sencillo i casero, i juntamente alto, misterioso y divino: propiedades en que esta escritura semeja a la Sagrada. Habla familiarmente con sus hijas, i enseña a los mayores Sabios del mundo. Corre discurso, i los periodos sin tropieço, con una facilidad, i lisura no imitable. Comiença una razón, i cuando se le ofrece otra de inportancia, interrunpe aquella, i sigue esta, i vuelve a la primera, i las enlaça de tal arte, que siendo a vezes cosas diversísimas, hacen un textido i consonancia maravillosa; con que prende la voluntad, i enbebece el discurso del que va leyendo. Con que desembaraço declara cosas obscurisimas, i altísimas? Con que propiedad i sutileza las esplica? Con que orden i concierto las dispone? Con que viveza las representa? I con que energia i suavidad las persuade? No ai Retorica humana, que llegue a tan poderosa fuerça de dezir: porque el deleitar i mover, que son los efetos mas propios de aquella arte, en ninguno de los que el mundo celebra por Maestros della, tanto resplandecen, como en las palabras de Santa Teresa de Iesus. Es la elocuencia de aquellos, con su artificio, mui conocida, i por eso menos eficaz: porque la nobleza del alvedrio humano, cuando conoce las asechaças i batería de la contraria persuasión, se retira, o resiste, i en vano se tiende la red ante los ojos de las aves ligeras.”

<sup>693</sup> *Gran Enciclopedia Aragonesa*, s.v. “San José, fray Jerónimo de,” accessed April 15, 2023, [https://www.ecured.cu/Jer%C3%B3nimo\\_de\\_San\\_Jos%C3%A9](https://www.ecured.cu/Jer%C3%B3nimo_de_San_Jos%C3%A9). “Estudió en Huesca y en Zaragoza y, más tarde se trasladó a Salamanca, donde cursó las carreras de más prestigio en la época: Cánones y Leyes. En esta misma ciudad y en el Colegio Carmelitano tomó el hábito el 20-V-1609. Sus estudios se completaron en Segovia, donde cursó Artes, y, de nuevo en Salamanca, Teología y Sagrada Escritura.”

<sup>694</sup> It will also open a space for legitimizing her prophetic and even apostolic role within the Church, thus planting the ideological seeds for subsequent women to do the same.

<sup>695</sup> These two points are taken from Ruddy, “A Christological Approach to Virtue,” 235.

## Appendix A: Why Augustine (and Four Objections)

I would like to address four objections to my approach in this dissertation. First, why include Augustine? Or rather, why *specifically* include Augustine as a means of analyzing Teresa's Christological humility over and apart from other Christian mystics, Church fathers, or Scripture itself? Carole Slade has noted the usefulness of teaching Teresa's *Life* along with Augustine's *Confessions* to "demonstrate Teresa's profound understanding of Christianity."<sup>696</sup> Teresa herself, early in the *Life*, also discusses the influence of Augustine's *Confessions* on her spiritual thinking.<sup>697</sup> Nevertheless, the purpose of this dissertation was not to locate exactly where Teresa drew from Augustine or measure Augustine's influence on her writings. Rather, principally, I draw from Augustine's conception of humility as a heuristic tool with which to compare and find parallels with Teresa's Christological view of humility. Though Augustine cannot be said to be the "father" of the concept, he is perhaps the virtue's greatest proponent and apologist. In his letter to Dioscorus, for example, in which he instructs Dioscorus on the path to Christ, he famously writes, "In that [path] the first part is humility; the second, humility; the third, humility: and this I would continue to repeat as often as you might ask direction," for humility precedes, accompanies, and follows every other Christian virtue.<sup>698</sup> Within the conceptual landscape that Augustine provides, therefore, it is easier to locate Teresa's own understanding of Christological humility.

At the same time, Augustine is in dialogue with Aristotle through much of his corpus, especially as regards virtue. Augustine often expresses humanity's being, teleology, and consequent ethics in Aristotelian terms. Though I do not mean to suggest that Teresa does the same, her experiential descriptions of humility and of humility's place in the Christian life nevertheless result in a similar conceptual and theological framework. Since my thesis rests on a

demarcation between a rhetorical humility that serves as a defensive posture and a Christological humility that opens a space for mystical union, Augustine becomes useful for describing Teresa's humility in the same terms. Thus, where Aristotle might be considered the father of Western rhetoric, I (for the purpose of this dissertation) follow Bernard McGinn in considering Augustine as the "Father of Christian Mysticism."<sup>699</sup> In his work examining the foundations of Western mysticism, McGinn writes the following concerning Augustine's fundamental notion of mysticism within the Christian tradition:

The *visio [dei]* involves the restoration of the *imago dei* to its original goal, but it is not just an uncovering of a hidden divine spark within, as the Gnostics had held. Our restoration reactivates the powers that were originally intended to lead humanity to God, before the wounding in Adam's sin made this impossible. Through the gift of grace these powers can attain a temporary, direct, and ineffable experience of the presence of the triune God. This experience, one that apparently admits of many degrees, is open to all faithful Christians. This is why Augustine is so insistent on excluding all esotericism from the call to Christian perfection.<sup>700</sup>

In other words, because the restoration of the image of God within humanity is a *supernatural* restoration initiated and accomplished by and through the triune God, the *mysticism* of Augustine is Christianity itself. It is, as McGinn writes above, available to all Christ-followers.

Consequently, once relationship is restored, the direct and ineffable presence of God can be discerned and known by each one though the experiential aspect of it may vary. This means that Teresa's mystic raptures and visions are distinguished from every other Christian's discernment of the presence of God only by degree rather than kind. The Edenic fellowship with God now known within the soul is, therefore, both mystic and Christian, making the terms synonymous. This experiential knowing is, for Augustine (as for Teresa), a foretaste of the heavenly fellowship to be known eternally.<sup>701</sup> Augustine's mysticism (as well as Teresa's) is thus exclusive in the initial restorative work of Christ through grace, but it rejects esotericism by its

universalism upon entrance through the narrow gate of Christ in humility.<sup>702</sup> Augustine, therefore, addresses the common Christian, not a spiritual or philosophical elite;<sup>703</sup> and Teresa will do the same in her own writings.

Second, do I argue that Teresa merely follows Augustine as some spiritual mimic or simulacrum? If so, is this then not another case of denigrating the work of a woman as exceptional and “virile”? My intent is not to argue that Teresa follows Augustine as though parroting him. I seek to demonstrate, rather, that they both affirm a theological doctrine that is foundational for Christian mysticism as well as for Christianity: namely, that sin (rather than sins) causes an ontological rupture between God and humanity; that humility is an initial recognition of that sin and of the rupture and, therefore, of one’s need for redemption; that from this recognition follows an ontological renewal of the self that recovers the Edenic union with God; and that this union results in a doxological response that overflows into one’s relationship with others. In this understanding, Teresa follows Augustine only in the same way that Augustine can be said to follow Paul: not in the sense of a child following a father into a chapel but rather as one parishioner following another through the same door because they share the same destination.

Though I do not designate Augustine or Teresa as representative of a true or core Christianity (a point extrinsic to my thesis), my assumption is, nevertheless, that they represent a strain of Christian theology that has found continuity (in Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism) from the early church until now. As McGinn notes, Christian mysticism is merely an element within this strain rather than a religion by itself. It is, at its core, *Christian*, which is to say, Christ-centered. For that reason, though it is a theology that contains the rudimentary principles of the previous paragraph, it is also a “total process” (rather than a series of ecstatic

moments) that prepares the Christian for “what the mystics understand as a direct, immediate, and transformative encounter with the presence of God.”<sup>704</sup> For Teresa especially, the requirement that this process be spiritually transformative is the cornerstone of her mysticism and reforms. Yet, also important is that both the process and its practices (i.e., reading and praying Scripture, asceticism, self-denial, receiving the sacraments, contemplation, and the rest) are a means toward the end that Teresa shares with the Christian mystics before her: namely that they all “took finding deeper contact with God as the central goal of their lives.”<sup>705</sup>

Thus, though Teresa writes of the practices and experiences of mystical theology—and in more experiential language than Augustine—she nevertheless inscribes a *theology*. The doctrinal elements of her writings, therefore, deserve more than cursory attention. Mark McIntosh, in his book *Mystical Theology*, warns of the danger of separating the spiritual from the theological within Christian mysticism. As he writes, “[T]heology without spirituality becomes ever more methodologically refined but unable to know or speak of the very mysteries at the heart of Christianity, and spirituality without theology becomes rootless, easily hijacked by individualistic consumerism.”<sup>706</sup> At the same time, the contemporary impulse to divorce the mystical from the theological as categories that are separate and mutually exclusive rather than to treat them as two aspects of the same truth facilitates the antiquated bifurcation that regards mysticism as a practice for affective women and theology as a discourse for practical men. The fact that mystics were both men and women, however, precludes this division. As McIntosh affirms: “Contemplation...is in fact the normal perfection of theology.”<sup>707</sup>

Though I do not argue that Augustine divorces spirituality from theology or that Teresa moves beyond Augustine in any alteration of doctrine, I do argue that Teresa both follows and transcends Augustine through her representation of the unity of contemplation with doctrine,

such that contact with the divine presence emerges as a practice that is both accessible and recognizable even where it is incommunicable.<sup>708</sup> In this light, Teresa's writings exceed a modern privileging of experience or post-modern concerns for the body. They also surpass a mere phenomenological analysis that, as McIntosh notes, makes "theological language and trajectory...a secondary accretion."<sup>709</sup> Though Teresa had neither the means nor the opportunity to present herself as a theologian as Augustine did, she nevertheless presents a theology that is both rich and developed in its own right (as recognized by the Church in 1970 when Pope Paul VI declared her a Doctor of the Church).

Third, why not include Aquinas, who perhaps enjoyed greater influence than Augustine in Teresa's day through Scholastic intellectual hegemony and the theological corpus circulating Spain at the time? I recognize the influence of Aquinas on the Scholastics and on the theological corpus of the 16<sup>th</sup> century as well as the controversy concerning views of human anthropology, justification, and the order of salvation (*ordo salutis*). My aim, however, is not to address nuances in the order of salvation, the soteriological effects on the faculties after salvation, or the meritorious nature of one's works—points that merit studies in Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin and the debates surrounding the Protestant and Catholic Reformations. My aim instead is to demonstrate Teresa's understanding of humanity's *wretchedness* apart from the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit in the soul.

Aquinas and Calvin (as well as Augustine) agree that the perfection of Christian love (or any spiritual virtue) can never be reached in this life. For that reason, the Spirit's infusion of the nature of Christ into the believer remains a continued necessity.<sup>710</sup> Thus, whatever the debate concerning the order of salvation and the meritorious nature of works after salvation, Aquinas and Calvin at least agree (with each other and with Augustine) on this fundamental issue: that the

*fomes peccati*—the disease in the soul that inclines one toward sin as a result of the fall—has brought about a need *for* salvation and justification through faith in Christ. They furthermore agree on the restorative effect of God’s grace on the will in causing the soul to be disposed toward his perfect will and Christian love.<sup>711</sup>

Aquinas scholar Charles Raith notes that Aquinas and Calvin agree on the meaning of *wretchedness* for Paul: “[as] long as Paul remains in the flesh he remains a sinner in his struggle with his disordered desires. It is impossible to rid oneself entirely of the *fomes* in this life.”<sup>712</sup> This is the *wretchedness* of Romans 7 and the *wretchedness* that Teresa describes in her writings. It is not *wretchedness* where the self wallows hopelessly in the disease of the Adamic nature. Rather, it expresses itself as a need for God’s restorative grace. As a result, having been infused with divine virtue by his Spirit, the believer is able to “truly fulfill the law even while struggling with the flesh and hoping for greater love in the future.”<sup>713</sup>

At the same time, this view of *wretchedness* and humility is not antithetical to the one stated at the Council of Trent. In that description of original sin, the Council presents humanity’s natural state since the fall as that of a hopeless sinner. This makes a relationship with God impossible—a state not only injurious to oneself but also to others. One cannot free oneself from sin by self-effort but rather is set free through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ. Baptism is that way of mediation, but it is the grace of Christ that remits sin, even though an inclination to sin remains until death. Thus, free will remains, and the self can choose to submit to God’s purpose or not.<sup>714</sup>

There is nothing in Teresa’s writings that would suggest that she disagrees with this description of humanity’s nature and spiritual need. She never deviates from this aspect of orthodoxy. I, therefore, argue that where the Council of Trent, Augustine, Aquinas, and even

Calvin intersect concerning the depth of humanity's post-Edenic wretchedness (as they describe it) and the consequent need for God's redemptive grace, Teresa's understanding of that need can also be found in descriptive and experiential terms. Even venial sins are abhorrent for her and cannot be discounted as minor or merely rhetorical (though they certainly have, in her emphasis of them, a rhetorical effect).

Though Aquinas' relationship with Aristotle is also well established, for the sake of this dissertation, I nevertheless begin with Augustine for reasons that Aquinas himself cites. First, "[t]he Philosopher [Aristotle] intended to treat of virtues as directed to civic life, wherein the subjection of one man to another is defined according to the ordinance of the law, and consequently is a matter of legal justice. But humility, considered as a special virtue, regards chiefly the subjection of man to God."<sup>715</sup> In other words, Aquinas contrasts horizontal, social virtues—for civic and legal purposes—with virtues whose aim is vertical: that is, those virtues that position the self to receive the things of God by subjecting the will to him. As Aquinas notes above, the two types are distinct in direction and purpose. Aquinas recognizes how types of humility can be conflated, but he never negates the primary theological humility spoken of by Augustine. Indeed, he agrees with Augustine that "[it] is contrary to humility to aim at greater things through confiding in one's own powers," and "to aim at greater things through confidence in God's help, is not contrary to humility...since the more one subjects oneself to God, the more is one exalted in God's sight."<sup>716</sup> Furthermore, he follows Augustine in defining that "special" theological virtue of humility residing in the soul<sup>717</sup> as a "poverty of spirit" that reverences God and comes into agreement with the divine view of sin and grace.<sup>718</sup>

Thus, though Aquinas locates humility within temperance, he nevertheless recognizes it as a suppressing virtue that moderates the spirit.<sup>719</sup> This could indeed be expressed as a voluntary



submission to another. But, as a theological virtue, it was first a submission to God and recognition of one's abject state before God. He, therefore, ends his section on humility this way:

It is possible, without falsehood, to deem and avow oneself the most despicable of men.... Again, without falsehood one may avow and believe oneself in all ways unprofitable and useless in respect of one's own capability, so as to refer all one's sufficiency to God, according to 2 Corinthians 3:5, "Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God."<sup>720</sup>

Here is wretchedness—and sufficiency in God—as Teresa will describe them.

For that reason, I again follow McGinn in locating Carmelite mysticism closer to Augustine than Aquinas. This was certainly true for Teresa's spiritual son and confessor, St. John of the Cross. McGinn notes that John shares a view of human anthropology more Augustinian than Thomist (such as the threefold view of the faculties rather than Aquinas' and Aristotle's two-fold intellect and will),<sup>721</sup> and he describes John's main influences as the Bible, Augustine's *Contra Haereses*, and the *Flos Sanctorum*. Despite his education at Salamanca, therefore, the influence of Aquinas on his thought was peripheral at best.<sup>722</sup> McGinn furthermore maintains that those that try to press John into a Thomist mold tend to tie themselves in knots.<sup>723</sup> I would argue the same for his spiritual mother, Teresa.<sup>724</sup>

As I note above, for the purpose of this dissertation, I follow McGinn in his description of Augustine as the Father of Mysticism because of Augustine's emphasis on "the restoration of the *imago dei* to its original goal."<sup>725</sup> McGinn notes the centrality of this theme in the works of the Spanish mystics. Teresa and John of the Cross, he writes, particularly offer "an invitation to take up, once again, something that can be considered integral to a fully lived human life—the task of searching for a deeper consciousness of the presence of God."<sup>726</sup> Though this theme is not absent in the works of Aquinas, it emerges as the essence of Augustine's and Teresa's writings. This makes understanding the role of humility in that search of vital importance.

Finally, do I argue that Teresa's utterances of *ruin* contain no rhetorical value whatsoever? Do I imply that Teresa never engages in rhetorical maneuvers or that affected modesty or other humility *topoi* are absent in her corpus? On the contrary, I do not dispute that Teresa frequently employs rhetorical maneuvers that critics such as Weber and Ahlgren identify. Barbara Mujica notes, for example, that in the apophatic-kataphatic debate concerning Christ's humanity and corporeal images, Teresa contradicts the apophatic learned and then asserts that she is not,<sup>727</sup> "I am not contradicting this theory; those who hold it are learned and spiritual men and they know what they are saying."<sup>728</sup> Mujica cuts the quote there. But Teresa continues, "[A]nd God leads souls by many paths." The first half of the quote demonstrates, as Mujica observes, a position of humility.<sup>729</sup> No doubt, as rhetorical deference and self-limiting, Teresa has shielded herself from criticism. But we should not confuse this with legerdemain nor conflate it with spiritual humility. The second half of the quote, in fact, is an example of Teresa's spiritual humility that complements the rhetorical. She acknowledges the grandeur of God and the smallness of humanity, for God has multiple paths that lead to him and infinite ways to reveal himself. Rather than contradict these *letrados* or herself, she has (from a position of humility) reminded them of that.

I also recognize that Teresa's insistence on her own *ruin* may have resulted in disarming her readers. But I argue that her utterances of humility and wretchedness cannot *merely* be seen as exaggerated rhetoric. Emphasized, yes. But not crafty artifice. Weber herself briefly acknowledges the theological and doctrinal elements present in Teresa's writings.<sup>730</sup> Nevertheless, she leaves those elements undefined as theological concepts, focusing instead on their rhetorical and persuasive strength. By not acknowledging their theological value, however, she fails to appreciate how theology itself might contribute to Teresa's own understanding of

ontological equality as it flows into the praxis of her reforms—or of any Christian community—through love of neighbor.

As I note in chapter 1, Weber views Teresa's legacy as lamentable: "With her golden pen she won a public voice for herself, if not for other women."<sup>731</sup> The questions that result from such a conclusion, however, are potentially as wretched as Teresa claims herself to be. For, if her motives were ultimately self-centered, why read her at all? What can a contemporary reader—especially a woman—glean from Teresa other than a sense of regret? Might it not be better to relegate Teresa to the periphery rather than to a position of prominence in the literary canon? Though I do not presume to rescue or recover Teresa from previous interpretations, what I do hope to offer is a reading that results in different conclusions concerning her legacy.

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<sup>696</sup> Slade, "Teaching Teresa," 123. Slade also writes that doing so helps demonstrate Teresa's "gender-inflected readings of scripture" (123) and "the role she writes for herself in the Christian narrative of salvation" (123). I would argue that her *expression* of those readings is *influenced* by gender, not that her readings are inflected, which etymologically implies an alteration or bending. I also argue throughout this thesis that she writes the Christian narrative of salvation onto herself rather than vice-versa.

<sup>697</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 9.7-8.

<sup>698</sup> Augustine, *Letters of Saint Augustine*, "Augustin to Dioscorus," Letter 118.3.22.

<sup>699</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 231.

<sup>700</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 255-256.

<sup>701</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 240.

<sup>702</sup> In this dissertation, therefore, I place the term *Christological* before *mysticism* and *humility* to emphasize the person of Christ central to the theologies of both Augustine and Teresa.

<sup>703</sup> Bernard McGinn and Patricia Ferris McGinn, *Early Christian Mystics: The Divine Vision of the Spiritual Masters* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003), 10-11.

<sup>704</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 237.

<sup>705</sup> McGinn et al., *Early Christian Mystics*, 12.

<sup>706</sup> McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, 10.

<sup>707</sup> Thomas Merton cited in McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, 10.

<sup>708</sup> McGinn et al., *Early Christian Mystics*, 11.

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<sup>709</sup> McIntosh, *Mystical Theology*, 139.

<sup>710</sup> Charles Raith, "Portraits of Paul: Aquinas and Calvin on Romans 7:14–25," in *Reading Romans with St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 256–57, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>711</sup> Raith, "Portraits of Paul," 248–49.

<sup>712</sup> Raith, "Portraits of Paul," 249.

<sup>713</sup> Raith, "Portraits of Paul," 257.

<sup>714</sup> Benedict J. Endres, "The Council of Trent and Original Sin," *Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Annual Convention, Catholic Theological Society of America, June 1967*, 22 (September 2012): 89, <https://ejournals.bc.edu/index.php/ctsa/issue/view/259>.

<sup>715</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (N.p.:e-artnow, 2013), 2-2.161.1, Kindle.

<sup>716</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2-2.161.2.

<sup>717</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2-2.161.3

<sup>718</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2-2.161.2.

<sup>719</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2-2.161.4.

<sup>720</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2-2.161.6.

<sup>721</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 255.

<sup>722</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 243–245.

<sup>723</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 307.

<sup>724</sup> In McGinn's 115-page discussion of the Carmelites and Teresa (*Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 114–229), Augustine makes frequent appearances where Aquinas does not.

<sup>725</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 255–256.

<sup>726</sup> McGinn, *Mysticism in the Golden Age of Spain*, 424.

<sup>727</sup> Barbara Mujica, "Beyond Image: The Apophatic-Kataphatic Dialectic in Teresa de Avila," *Hispania* 84, no. 4 (2001): 746, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3657835>.

<sup>728</sup> "Yo no lo contradigo, porque son letrados y espirituales, y saben lo que dicen, y por muchos caminos y vías lleva Dios las almas." Teresa, *Vida*, 22.2.

<sup>729</sup> Mujica, "Beyond Image," 746.

<sup>730</sup> Weber, "The Paradoxes of Humility," 229n.

<sup>731</sup> Weber, *Rhetoric*, 165.

## Appendix B: Was Teresa a Mystic? A Christological View of Mysticism

Teresa never refers to herself as a mystic, and she mentions mystical theology (“*mística teología*”) only four times in her entire corpus, all in her *Life*.<sup>732</sup> Even then, it is an extraneous concept, where she uses language such as, “I think they call this mystical theology,”<sup>733</sup> or, “In mystical theology *it is declared*.”<sup>734</sup> Her use of the passive voice and generic attribution thus make the concept appear distant or irrelevant (though not contrary) to her central purpose, which is, as she writes in her *Soliloquies*, “that I may know who my Creator is in order to love Him.”<sup>735</sup>

Is it fair then to label Teresa as a mystic—even a Christian mystic? What do we mean by that? Mysticism as an academic concept has arisen relatively recently and has been constructed in ways that make the term too broad to be meaningful.<sup>736</sup> Teresa and other Christian mystics have, therefore, been lumped into spiritual categories that they would never have condoned. The conceptual construction of the term has consequently made negating or ignoring her core purpose an easier task, such that the term masks or erases her own understanding of what it means to be a Christian.

To the first point, McGinn argues that the terms *mysticism* and *mystic* have often been applied in undefined or ambiguous ways. The question, “Was he or she a mystic?” becomes answerable only because of the critic’s often unstated and assumed understanding of the term. It can, therefore, only ever be applied as a heuristic tool.<sup>737</sup> McGinn himself repeatedly argues for a broad and flexible use of the term, and thus one finds in his work the inclusion of both pagan and Christian names under the same mystical umbrella, while others such as the apostles John and Paul are excluded.<sup>738</sup> McGinn admits that the term is slippery, but he nevertheless attempts a contextual definition: that is, mysticism can only be studied as a *written tradition* rather than as an approach to understanding the mystic experience. It is, therefore, primarily an exegesis of

texts that attempt “to express a direct consciousness of the presence of God.”<sup>739</sup> The term *God*, however, refers to an entity whose *being* varies so widely from Western to Eastern, pagan to Christian, and ancient to contemporary that the only element one finds in common is a vague consciousness of a non-material, transcendent being.

Others, such as Paul Oliver, view mysticism precisely in experiential terms. In religious contexts, these experiences step outside the normative boundaries of orthodoxy. That is, the mystic will not only feel constrained by normative religious practices but will actively seek that which is outside those rites and rituals to find a “more direct and personalized religious experience.”<sup>740</sup> Celia Kourie, in her survey of the academic study of mysticism historically, finds that (as an academic notion) *mysticism* has generally been viewed as “*consciousness of union with the Divine, or the Ground of Being, or Ultimate Reality*,”<sup>741</sup> depending on the religion or philosophy that a particular mysticism springs from, and as having an experience of inner union that “results in a reorganization of belief systems and lifestyle, coupled with a transmutation of character.”<sup>742</sup> Because of this effect on the cognitive and social functions of the mystic, the mystical experience and the mystical lifestyle cannot be separated.<sup>743</sup>

One of the difficulties of definition may come, as Kourie observes, from the fact that the very concept of mysticism itself resists academic notions of epistemology and methodology. The academic, who depends on empirical evidence (or else denies its possibility), must approach mysticism as a subject that is inherently ephemeral, transcendent, and subjective and, therefore, wholly interpretive and self-authenticating.<sup>744</sup> The temptation has, therefore, been to equate *non-rational* with *irrational*, leading to the rejection, neglect, or misconception of that which fails to fit neatly within philosophical and materialist categories. As Kourie contends, however, this is actually a contemporary prejudice that fails to consider the classical definition of reason, which

had two forms—the discursive *episteme* and the intuitive *nous* that grasped the whole.<sup>745</sup>

Contemporary academia has favored the discursive element, attempting to compartmentalize and describe an intuitive phenomenon that exceeds rational and linguistic capabilities. Thus, the concept of *mysticism*, as an area of study, has taken the supra-rational and supernatural practices and phenomena of many faiths over millennia and grouped them into a syncretistic category that is, in actuality, nothing more than a reification.<sup>746</sup> Concerning this, Paul Oliver reflects that, while this should not undermine the study of mysticism, it nevertheless serves as a reminder to the observer that the term is merely an “academic category created by human beings.”<sup>747</sup>

Regarding Teresa as a mystic, Megan Loumagne, therefore, argues, “While it can be tempting in reading Teresa’s works to focus solely on her extraordinary experiences of rapture, consolation, and delight in prayer, this would be to miss the ultimate *telos* of prayer for Teresa, which is to have union with God.”<sup>748</sup> Indeed, Teresa’s visions, locutions, and other mystical experiences all constitute important elements of her work and of the mystic tradition in general. Yet, Christian mystics themselves contend that these experiences do not represent the essence of what it means to see and love God. Instead, they emphasize the deeper relationship with God and knowledge of God that result from those experiences.<sup>749</sup> This, I maintain, would include Teresa.

In reading Teresa’s works, her *telos* becomes important for the sole reason that, by defining her primarily as a mystic, she has been grouped together with pagan and Eastern mystics which, although sharing much in common with Teresa (such as the language of detachment and union), ultimately conflict with her stated *goal*. This *goal* is neither enlightenment, non-attachment, inner peace, or spiritual equilibrium for the sake of those things themselves but is rather the *person* of Jesus Christ, the knowledge of whom makes these former things consequent. As Joseph Maréchal affirms, “[T]he most authoritative witnesses of Catholic

mysticism unanimously affirm the existence of a strictly intellectual intuition in the high states of contemplation, the object whereof is not the pantheistic Absolute, but the personal God of Christianity, the indivisible Trinity.”<sup>750</sup> Failing to recognize this *Christological telos* removes a vital concept from the Teresian formula—knowing Christ means intimate friendship with the God who is love. As she herself defines it, *mystical theology* means being immersed in the presence of God.<sup>751</sup> Furthermore, the spiritual relationship that Teresa describes imbues the believer with God, and therefore with God’s love, through the perfect union of two beings *who retain their distinct personalities* (just as union among the Trinity). What results is that God’s love can now overflow on earth through the believer with potentially cumulative effects in the civil and social spheres.

I refer to Teresa’s *mysticism* using the definition James Stewart provides in his work on the apostle Paul: “In some degree...every real Christian is a mystic in the Pauline sense.”<sup>752</sup> Stewart observes that, without a Christological core, mystics have been accused of self-absorption, of living in a shadowy and nebulous spiritual fervor at the expense of earthly praxis. Though the spirit may be willing, the flesh is weak and is nevertheless relegated to this temporal realm. Mysticism, however, as it is conceived in some traditions, has at times sought emotion and experience for their own sake while neglecting moral duty to the *other* in the temporal realm. It has been guilty of a superiority complex, even while espousing a type of humility.<sup>753</sup> The very term *mystic* has pagan, not Christian, roots, etymologically rooted in the Greek *mysterion* (μυστήριον), or secret and exclusive rites available only to an initiated elite.<sup>754</sup> Thus, as McGinn notes, Plotinus’ salvation (as it were) was gained neither by an external liberator nor savior but rather through an internal liberation of the self by the recognition of the transcendent One both within and beyond the soul—a liberation that is *exclusively* limited to an elite group of



philosophers with both the means and knowledge to realize this goal.<sup>755</sup> For Philo also, though apprehension of the divine was the goal of all religions, that goal was only attainable for a small minority of elect and initiated, where God was only an intermittent presence.<sup>756</sup> As Stewart contends, this type of mysticism was “too esoteric to be a Gospel [and] far too restricted and aloof to be good news for a perishing world.”<sup>757</sup>

Pauline, Augustinian, and Teresian mysticism, however, is both exclusive and inclusive. It is Christological, available only through communion with Christ. But, at the same time, this communion is available to everyone. Thus, writes Stewart, though Paul describes a moment when he was caught up into the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12) and writes of gifts of the spirit that include visionary and other revelatory and supernatural experiences, “it was in the daily, ever-renewed communion, rather than in the transient rapture, that the inmost nature of Christianity lay.”<sup>758</sup> Daily communion with Christ—“the steady radiance of a light unsetting, filling the commonest ways of earth”<sup>759</sup>—marked Paul’s mysticism, which was available to any soul that sought a relationship with Christ. It was this communion (the believer abiding in Christ and Christ in the believer), the spiritual union of two discreet personalities,<sup>760</sup> that brought creative dynamic power (*dunamis*/δύναμις) and spiritual energy (*energeia*/ἐνέργεια)<sup>761</sup> to the believer, granting the believer the ability to live out the *caritas* love of God in gratitude. It was a *reacting* mysticism in which Christ had the initiative to reach out to the soul rather than an *acting* mysticism in which the soul sought spiritual ascent through spiritual exercises and self-effort. Union was thus a gift of grace rather than of human achievement.<sup>762</sup>

This is how Paul uses the word *mystery* (*mysterion*) in the New Testament. The mystery results *in* and is the result *of* humility.<sup>763</sup> The mystery is God’s to reveal,<sup>764</sup> and yet it is revealed to all believers of the *ecclesia*,<sup>765</sup> Jews and Gentiles.<sup>766</sup> Most of all, it is explicitly relationship,

communion, and spiritual union with Christ himself.<sup>767</sup> This is what Stewart means by Pauline mysticism, for the *mystery* is an initiation not merely into the *ecclesia* but into Christ through spiritual death and renewed life, represented in the rite of baptism.<sup>768</sup> The mystical element *per se* is that this *mystérion* of Christ is made readily accessible to any believer such that she gains that intimate, experiential contact with the divine. Augustine will exegete that experience. Teresa will describe the experience itself. She will celebrate its origins and its spiritual consequences—which is to say, God and tangible friendship with God.

Was Teresa a mystic? Yes, but in the Christological sense that Stewart and McGinn note above: by degree, not kind.<sup>769</sup> Because of Christianity's *Christology*—the *mystérion* of Christ hidden through the ages but now revealed—every Christian is, in this sense, a mystic. The mysticism Teresa describes is for every Christ-follower, not for a spiritual or philosophical elite.<sup>770</sup> Christ is revealed to the believer (with or without raptures), and the theological vessel of that supernatural (*mystical*) revelation is humility.

She also recognizes that faith—the certainty that comes from revelatory light—is itself a supernatural work. It is experiential contact with the divine. For this reason, in this dissertation, I examine Teresa's writings through the lens of her orthodox Christology. Her mysticism is mediated through Scripture and the Church, and it never fails to point to Christ. It is catholic rather than esoteric—an understanding that the fruit of Christ's incarnation and kenotic offering is the supernatural restoration of the *imago dei* in the self and of the soul's ability to experientially see God in this life.

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<sup>732</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 10.1, 11.5, 12.5, and 18.2.

<sup>733</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 10.1. "[C]reo lo llaman mística teología." Teresa, *Vida*, 10.1.

<sup>734</sup> Teresa, *Life*, 18.2. "En la mística teología se declara..." Teresa, *Vida*, 18.2.

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<sup>735</sup> Teresa, *Soliloquies*, 5.2. “Que me deis, Dios mío, qué os dé con San Agustín para pagar algo de lo mucho que os debo; que os acordéis que soy vuestra hechura y que conozca yo quién es mi Criador para que le ame.” Teresa, *Exclamaciones*, 5.2, citing Augustine, *Confessions*, 10.29, “[G]ive what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.”

<sup>736</sup> Celia Kourie, “Mysticism: A Survey of Recent Issues,” *Journal for the Study of Religion* 5, no. 2 (1992): 83-84.

<sup>737</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, xiii-xv.

<sup>738</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 69-79.

<sup>739</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, xv-xvi.

<sup>740</sup> Paul Oliver, *Mysticism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum Publishing, 2009), 7.

<sup>741</sup> Kourie, “Mysticism,” 86 (*italics in original*).

<sup>742</sup> Kourie, “Mysticism,” 87.

<sup>743</sup> Kourie, “Mysticism,” 87.

<sup>744</sup> Kourie, “Mysticism,” 87.

<sup>745</sup> Kourie, “Mysticism,” 88.

<sup>746</sup> Oliver, *Mysticism*, 17.

<sup>747</sup> Oliver, *Mysticism*, 17.

<sup>748</sup> Megan Loumagne, “Teresa of Avila on Theology and Shame,” *New Blackfriars* 99, no. 1081 (2018): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nbfr.12235>.

<sup>749</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, xvii-xviii.

<sup>750</sup> Joseph Maréchal, *The Psychology of the Mystics*, trans. Algar Thorold (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne Ltd., 1927; New York: Dover Publications, 2004), 196. Maréchal offers five characteristics of Christian mysticism (196-204). Their sum differs little with what I observe in James Stewart’s and Bernard McGinn’s descriptions: that to be a faith-filled Christian is to be a mystic, that experiences differ in degree not kind, that all experience depends on the grace of God working in and on the soul, and that the *telos* of those experiences is God himself. Most importantly, “charity [is]...the measure of final beatitude, of the supernatural possession of God” (198). In other words, love is the temporal measure of spiritual experience with the Godhead, as Christ says in the gospel of John, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35, New Revised Standard Version); and as Teresa writes in the *Interior Castle*, “[B]e certain that the more advanced you see you are in love for your neighbor the more advanced you will be in the love of God” (5.3.8). “Y estad ciertas que mientras más en éste [el amor del prójimo] os viereis aprovechadas, más lo estáis en el amor de Dios.” Teresa, *Moradas*, 5.3.8.

<sup>751</sup> “I sometimes experienced, as I said, although very briefly, the beginning of what I will now speak about. It used to happen, when I represented Christ within me in order to place myself in His presence, or even while reading, that a feeling of the presence of God would come upon me unexpectedly so that I could in no way doubt He was within me or I totally immersed in Him. This did not occur after the manner of a vision. I believe they call the experience ‘mystical theology.’” Teresa, *Life*, 10.1. “Tenía yo algunas veces, como he dicho, aunque con mucha brevedad pasaba, comienzo de lo que ahora diré: acaecíame en esta representación que hacía de ponerme cabe Cristo, que he dicho, y aun algunas veces leyendo, venirme a deshora un sentimiento de la presencia de Dios que en ninguna manera podía dudar que estaba dentro de mí o yo toda engolfada en El. Esto no era manera de visión; creo lo llaman mística teología.” Teresa, *Vida*, 10.1.

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<sup>752</sup> James S. Stewart, *A Man in Christ: The Vital Elements of St. Paul's Religion* (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., 1935; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1975), 162 (italics in original).

<sup>753</sup> Stewart, *A Man in Christ*, 160-161.

<sup>754</sup> “[I]n classical Greek a hidden thing, secret, mystery...confided only to the initiated and not to be communicated by them to ordinary mortals.” *Blue Letter Bible*, s.v. “G3466 - *mystērion* - Strong’s Greek Lexicon (KJV),” <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g3466/kjv/tr/0-1/>.

<sup>755</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 55.

<sup>756</sup> Stewart, *A Man in Christ*, 162.

<sup>757</sup> Stewart, *A Man in Christ*, 163.

<sup>758</sup> Stewart, *A Man in Christ*, 162.

<sup>759</sup> Stewart, *A Man in Christ*, 163.

<sup>760</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 55.

<sup>761</sup> “[I pray that you may know] what is the immeasurable greatness of his power [δύναμις] for us who believe, according to the working [ἐνέργεια] of his great power.” Ephesians 1:19 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>762</sup> Stewart, *A Man in Christ*, 163-164.

<sup>763</sup> “So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery.” Romans 11:25 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>764</sup> “But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.” 1 Corinthians 2:7 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>765</sup> “[H]e has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ.” Ephesians 1:9 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>766</sup> “For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16 (New Revised Standard Version). “Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ.” Ephesians 3:8 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>767</sup> “I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself.” Colossians 2:2 (New Revised Standard Version).

<sup>768</sup> Colossians 2:1-14.

<sup>769</sup> See appendix A.

<sup>770</sup> McGinn, *Foundations of Mysticism*, 237.

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