

MAN FALLEN AND REDEEMED IN TILlich'S THEOLOGY

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To expound a Christian understanding of man, Paul Tillich gathered diverse kinds of observations about cultural phenomena into a unity governed by intra-ecclesial norms, the comprehensive whole comprising a significant contribution to contemporary man's self-understanding. Especially powerful is Tillich's interpretation of the evil consequences of sin and estrangement: the disintegration of self and world by the separation of the polar elements in finite being, leading to suffering, loneliness, despair, doubt and death. However impressive it may be in its own right, however, Tillich's interpretation of the human situation exhibits as well those insuperable difficulties which accompany his characterization of man's life as an active interpenetration of essential and existential modes, a distinction upon which his doctrine of man entirely depends. As the distinction functions in Tillich's system to express the meaning of the biblical doctrine of the Fall, by focusing upon his account of the latter and of the work of Jesus as the Christ for fallen mankind, this essay seeks to show that though Tillich's doctrine of man is persuasive in its psychological dimensions, ontologically construed its inadequacies threaten the structure of the system as a whole.

I. BEING AND FINITUDE

The dialectical structure manifest in all of Tillich's thinking is expressed especially clearly in his characterization of man's essential finitude in terms of a self-world polarity: man's selfhood eventuates in a world which in turn is always world-for-a-self; he is at once the integrated center of and participant in some environment, shaping his life in accordance with norms which at the same moment his vitality strives to shatter, free yet destined for making decisions and exercising responsibility. Essential man is finite, encompassing and encompassed by polar elements delicately balanced. But since for Tillich both the structure and the elements of being are understood only dialectically, it becomes necessary to discern that which contrasts with finite being as such if finite is to be comprehended. Tillich accomplishes the task by elucidating the ontological conditions for finite being as ground and abyss: ground is that unity which precedes all dualities, grasped

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through reason functioning ecstatically through empowering revelation, and abyss is the possibility of non-being directly experienced in finitude. It is this latter notion of the abyss which links essence and existence in Tillich's theology.

Tillich distinguishes non-being in two senses, absolute and relative; the former symbolizes that the essential structures of finite being have become distorted in existential disruption. Absolute non-being, experienced as threat, is the starting point of all ultimately concerned rational inquiry, motivating the ontological question which in turn inaugurates the quest for New Being. In the shock of confronting his absolute non-being as a real possibility, man becomes aware of the radical contingency of all forms of being, that everything except Being-itself has a beginning and an end, that everything participating in Being is mixed with non-being. In anxiety, the possibility of absolute non-being comes to be seen truly as an essential feature of finitude. But courage in the midst of such anxiety, also essential to finite being, is possible because finite being is also grounded in the power of Being-itself. To be finite is to be something whose thatness is threatened at every moment, as is everything which merely "is" and which need not "be" at all; nevertheless, that something is also grounded in Being-itself. To be finite is to be something whose thatness is threatened at historical man.

While essence is a "standing out" from absolute non-being in finitude, existence is a "standing out" from relative non-being, the non-being of this or that particular form of finite being, exhibited in the tendency of finite being's polar constituents to draw away from one another and to assert themselves independently of the others. Instead of balance, tension results which disrupts and distorts the essential character of man. Individualization tends toward atomism with concomitant dissolution of world and communion; participation becomes collectivization. Dynamics threatens the chaos of shattered norms; form tends toward stultification in irreformable norms. Destiny transforms man into objecthood in a matrix of determined events; freedom's striving for total contingency betokens the loss of structure altogether. Since the disruption is never total, man still retains a measure of selfhood and integration. However, in existence, standing-out-from his essential nature, his character becomes constantly threatened with even greater disruption. Tillich concludes his treatment in Volume I by characterizing essence as that which man really is and really ought to be and existence as distortion, a falling-away-into a condition of lesser worth than finitude as such.

II. EXISTENCE AND FALL

Having distinguished existential being as a falling away from essential being, Tillich now must account for the disruption, a very difficult problem for any Christian theology whose key concepts are informed by Platonic thinking. The dilemma is exacerbated in the Tillichean scheme because (a) Tillich insists vehemently that the transition from essence to existence is in no sense necessitated by the nature of being as such, but (b) he denies emphatically that the transition is to be understood in any ordinary sense as an historical event: the biblical story of the fall is to be understood as a myth expressive of a universal ontological condition and not as a depiction of an event occurring "once upon a time." The perplexing character of these claims arises out of Tillich's awareness that temporal connotations cannot be wholly expunged from the biblical account unless the fall is said to be necessitated. To be sure, given the concerns which dominate Tillich's thought, he could not have avoided these difficulties; to be forced to concede the ontological necessity of the transition from essence to existence would entail a denial of freedom as an essential character of man, and to maintain the transition as an inner-historical phenomenon would constitute that very sort of anthropomorphism which the system goes to such great lengths to overcome.

As a consequence, the expositions of volume II become highly ambiguous. Earlier, "essence" pointed to a higher form of being: man's fundamental character and norm. Here, Tillich emphasizes "existence" as the fulfillment of radical creation, actuality which represents an increment over mere potentiality. The juxtaposition of "essence" and "potentiality" pervades the whole of Volume II, eventually conjoining these terms along with "dreaming innocence." This means that essence becomes progressively devalued while existence, once seen as a lesser form of being, becomes a crucial stage in the perfecting of human nature, the actualizing of mere potentiality, a higher mode than that of dreaming innocence among undecided potentialities. The danger here is obvious: if existence is a fulfilling of essence, then the transition to existence is necessitated and its completion, in good Hegelian fashion, must be projected also within history, if not in the present at least *within* the future. While Tillich denies the implication, it is difficult to see how the system can avoid such a conclusion. If essence is conceived as the real and the normative, as Tillich also supposes, then no reason can be forthcoming for the primordial disruption of finitude. If an account is undertaken by devaluing essence and introducing value into man's existential state, then the system fails to pre-

clude the Utopianism it strives consciously to oppose; the fall is anything but a distortion of something originally better. If it is the conscious union of existence and essence which is perfection, Tillich's complete statement of the matter, both terms then refer to mere stages in a transition to something other than themselves. Salvation is not a restoration of lost nature but a transmutation of the ontological polarities into something utterly new; essence no longer is that from which one falls, and existence no longer is a distortion; both comprise stages to be transformed by the New Being into new being.

Clearly, the system cannot avoid teaching that man's fall is necessitated, a conclusion drawn by almost all of Tillich's serious critics. That the system could entail such is singularly ironic in the light of Tillich's repeated insistence on human responsibility for the fall. The possibility of the fall is grounded in human freedom which is one component of man's finite structure; within a structure which imposes a destiny upon men, man nevertheless retains freedom, both because the destiny is *his destiny* and because he has power to deny his destiny by repudiating selfhood. The givenness of freedom is beyond question to Tillich, and with it the possibility of self-denial as its necessary condition. Man need not be what he is essentially; he is always, as a condition of his finitude, tempted with the possibility of self-denial and concomitant fall from essence to existence.

Certainly Tillich is justified in taking the biblical account to refer to those possibilities and temptations which confront every man, the universal conditions for finite being as such. Furthermore, his attempt to see the fall in cosmic terms, while not so obviously biblical, is commendable in its own right: since man is not discontinuous with the whole of reality, his actions must have implications for the whole; his sins somehow plunge the universe as such into a fallen condition. But Tillich goes further: in asserting the biblical story to be about Man and not individual men, about ontological rather than historical possibilities, by which assertion he denies "Utopias" both in the past and in the future, he concludes that there is *no* point in time and space in which created goodness ever was fully actualized. *Contra* Tillich's own intentions, however, this must mean that the biblical account of the fall is unintelligible if it is about states of affairs which are *not* necessarily exemplified, as, for example, the result of decision by individuals occupying a particular space and actualizing their potentialities in and through a particular time. Tillich's clear intent is to affirm the fall as a leap rather than as structurally necessitated; but by eliminating from his system the very spatio-temporal, historical basis which alone could make the affirmation possible, he precludes any coherent understanding of a fallenness for which man could be said to be re-

sponsible. Unless Adam is in some sense an actual individual "before" the fall, it makes no sense to affirm the fall as a result of man's free decisions. Essential being must be construed *historically* if Tillich is to sustain this crucial feature of his doctrine of the fall.

The ambiguities in Tillich's account become more apparent still when he turns from the possibilities of the motivations for the fall. Having already characterized essence in terms of potentiality, Tillich now introduces an image drawn consciously from psychology, "dreaming innocence," to express man's state "prior" to the fall. In the state of dreaming innocence, lacking experience, responsibility, and guilt, man oscillates between the temptation to preserve his innocence and the temptation to become an actual self in freedom. Threatened by the prospect of losing his selfhood both by not actualizing his potentialities and also by succumbing to the consequences of worldly actualization, man decides for self-actualization and therefore a disruption of his essential being. Realizing that actualization and estrangement are one and the same, man nevertheless chooses both. But how can "dreaming innocence" be comprehended at all apart from some historical context in which the condition is the condition of concrete individuals? Further, if essence is *less* than existence, as Tillich must hold in order to account for a fall at all, then surely "Man" cannot be said to have open to him the option *not* to choose actualization unless a radical sundering of Being and Value is also presumed possible, an implication which Tillich's thinking cannot uphold. Either the transition from essence to existence is not a fall at all, or else it is a fall necessitated by the very structures of finitude itself. By equating actualized creation and estranged existence and by reducing essential being to sheerest potentiality, Tillich comes to the second option (rightly) by virtue of the demands of the system as a whole.

The same conclusion follows when Tillich's essence-existence distinction is interpreted ontologically rather than psychologically, along the line of Volume I. Here, essence is the polar elements maintained in balance, always threatened with the possibility of imbalance, the imbalance never necessitated. But once these polarities are scrutinized carefully, it becomes clear that, given freedom as one polar constituent, they *cannot* be maintained in balance. Man is *required* to disrupt his very selfhood through his own freedom; his destiny must overcome his freedom.

In sum, if essence is construed as potentiality, actual tensions cannot arise within its polar structure. Dreaming innocence, and the free decisions against it, cannot be conceived at all in the context of potentiality alone, "prior" in some sense to historical actualities (especially in a theology which, in defining God as ground of being,

cannot posit the potentialities as "in" divine understanding). But for Tillich, reason, manipulating *universals*, could never rest content with mere inner-historical distinctions. On the one hand, Tillich's treatment of existence in terms of estrangement allows for a peculiarly suggestive description of man's actual condition; it has already been maintained that the real strength of Tillich's doctrine of man lies in his elaboration of the marks and consequences of estrangement and sin. But on the other hand, does it not make the "New Being" an impossibility instead of a mere paradox? If to be an existent *is* to be in estrangement, how could Jesus at once be an actual man and at the same time the One in Whom unity with God is never disrupted? Given Tillich's meanings for "existential being," there cannot be an *individual* who is what he ought to be under the conditions of existence. This contention must be established now by examining Tillich's Christology.

III. THE NEW BEING IN JESUS AS THE CHRIST

Foundational to Tillich's Christology is the distinction between "Jesus" and "the Christ": by "Jesus" is meant that particular man who lived in Nazareth, to whom the title "Christ" is given by men responding in faith; "Jesus the Christ," or more specifically, "Jesus who is called the Christ" (S.T., II, 98). For Tillich, Jesus is an historical figure about whom knowledge is always tentative and uncertain, mediated through historical documents whose trustworthiness as to detail is always open to question. The Christ, on the other hand, is the name given to Jesus by the faithful as an expression of their response to him; though occasioned by the historical figure, the response is directed not exclusively to the man Jesus but to "saving-events" occurring in their lives and world as they gathered remembering Jesus. In distinguishing "Jesus" from the "new reality" symbolized in the term "Christ," however, Tillich does not intend to make the historical figure wholly incidental: Jesus of Nazareth is essential in that it is he alone who is "the Christ":

Jesus as the Christ is both an historical fact and a subject of believing reception. One cannot speak the truth about the event on which Christianity is based without asserting both sides. (*Ibid.*)

It must be recalled, however, that in lectures and in conversations with colleagues, Tillich always displayed interest in the possibilities of a theology *without* references to Jesus. In *The Interpretation of History* Tillich explicitly contended that Jesus of Nazareth was not as important to faith as was the event in which man's existential being

became reconciled with his essential being. Tillich argued that such saving events have occurred whether Jesus lived or not; even if Jesus were *only* the content of a myth, the myth itself exhibits that salvation has broken in upon men. It is possible, of course, to maintain that Tillich later viewed the matter differently; if the *Systematic Theology* alone is consulted, this seems to be the case. Nevertheless, in a comparatively late sermon, Tillich said:

As Jesus the man Jesus is neither an authority nor an object of faith. None of His superior qualities—neither His religious life, nor His moral perfection, nor His profound insights—make Him an object of faith or the ultimate authority.¹

In another later statement, Tillich returned to his former position unambiguously:

Faith can say that the reality which is manifest in the New Testament picture of Jesus as the Christ has saving power for those who are grasped by it, no matter how much or how little can be traced to the historical figure who is called Jesus of Nazareth.²

Thus, one is never really certain what would have happened in Tillich's own mind if evidence had become overwhelming either that Jesus of Nazareth never lived or that his character were altogether different from the picture sketched in the Scriptures. In principle, the system could affirm that the "new reality" still breaks in on men; but at other points Tillich insists that theology is Christocentric precisely in the sense that *Jesus* is the new reality. And this *must* be so; the system requires that unless redemption is concretely embodied, then one is forever uncertain whether "new being" is *his* as an experiential possibility about which *concern* can be generated. But, as will now be shown, the system also requires that the historical Jesus be dispensable, with enormous consequences for Tillich's understanding of man.

Tillich's equation of "Christ" and "New Being" is intended to express the fact that as men associated with or remembered Jesus of Nazareth they were grasped by the power of a new reality in which questions asked about finitude were answered from beyond finitude by divine revelation. Christ becomes the New Being because in him the problematic about the nature and meaning of man's own being is resolved: for men the message of Christianity is not about Jesus of Nazareth, but about the "new reality" which has broken in upon men, healing the estrangement between finite existence and essential being,

¹"He Who Believes in Me. . .," *The New Being* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 98.

²*Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1957), p. 88.

filling a succession of purposeless historical events with new meaning and direction. In the appearance of Jesus as the Christ, the triumph of essential being over estrangement is revealed to be possible in concrete historical situations; in Jesus as the Christ, the cleavage between man's essential being and his historical existence is overcome: man is "saved." He who is saved no longer merely hopes for a new reality in a futile quest for transcendence; he is already grasped by the power of that reality through which all is to be transformed. While it is crucial that the new reality comes in the life of a man, it is nevertheless that reality, *and not that man*, which is the focal point of theology and the message of preaching. "The appearance of the New Being in the Christ" is for Tillich a symbol expressing that ideals and possibilities have become actualized, that every quest in every age for new being is fulfilled in the concrete experience of the One who remained perfectly reconciled with his essential being even in the midst of estranged finitude.

IV. THE PERSON OF JESUS

The key to Tillich's understanding of Jesus of Nazareth is to be found in a statement in the first volume of the *Systematic Theology*: Jesus is the *medium* through which the new reality is manifested and known (p. 133). As an historical person, Jesus himself is not the new reality, but is the "bearer" of that reality, the occasion for its coming to men. Though his life is remembered because it was in it that the new reality, reconciliation, broke in upon men, his person remained wholly human, by pointing always beyond itself participating in the new reality transcending present estrangement, important only as it literally annulled its own character to become "transparent" to God's revelation.

Tillich's distinction between the medium and the content of revelation is integral to his Christology, by which he hoped to preserve the Christian message against every possibility of being overturned through historical research. If Jesus of Nazareth is the content of revelation, then the revelation of God is bound wholly to the facticity of the biblical accounts about Jesus; such an incommensurateness between the grounds for and the claims of revelation is unthinkable for Tillich. If, however, Jesus is only the bearer or an instance of God's revelation, then historical research could render all beliefs about Jesus problematic without negating the new reality in which man now participates. *Contra* the Barthians, Tillich refuses to reduce revelation to Jesus alone, holding instead that in Jesus as the Christ, God's revelation, known in part by men through many media, is now *wholly manifest*; all other partial revelations are now "fulfilled." But how can it be, then, that Jesus alone becomes wholly "transparent"?

Tillich's answer is through Jesus' complete self-surrender to the reality whose power was disclosed to him. Jesus wholly rejected every attempt of others to make him the object of ultimate concern. His intentionality is especially evident in the story of Peter's confession: in the light of what he knows must happen in his own life and in Peter's Jesus rejects the confession, construing it as merely preparatory to a genuine faith in the One to whom Jesus must become wholly transparent by his absolute surrender on the cross. The cross most completely symbolizes Jesus' function in the life of faith as medium for revelation: there, Jesus of Nazareth offers himself so completely that the new reality becomes totally transparent:

he who sees Him sees the Father. There are not two faces. In the face of Jesus the Christ, God "makes his face to shine upon us." For nothing is left in the face of Jesus the Christ which is only Jesus of Nazareth, which is only the face of one individual besides others. Everything in His countenance is transparent to Him who has sent Him.³

In that Jesus on the cross has faded away in complete transparency to the divine, he has become the Christ. But how is it that Jesus' transparency is *uniquely* revelatory of God? In attempting to cope with this question, Tillich's Christology suffers its first tremors.

In Volume I Tillich made plain his view that it is by virtue of a unique self-possession that Jesus is able to surrender himself completely, and that that self-possession is grounded in the reality of his own existential being wholly united with his essential being:

He who is the bearer of the final revelation must surrender his finitude—not only his life but also his finite power and knowledge and perfection. In doing so, he affirms that he is the bearer of final revelation. He becomes completely transparent to the mystery he reveals. But, in order to surrender himself completely, he must possess—and therefore surrender—himself completely who is united with the ground of his being and meaning without separation and disruption. In the picture of Jesus as the Christ we have the picture of a man who possesses these qualities, a man who, therefore, can be called the medium of final revelation. (p. 133)

In order to deny oneself, Tillich reasons, one must possess oneself; that is to say, one must be reconciled to one's essential being. Since Jesus who is the Christ is wholly reconciled in his own being, it becomes possible to affirm of him a self-surrender qualitatively different from that of any other man. The differences in degree of self-denial are

³"He Who Believes in Me. . .," *op. cit.*, p. 100.

absolute and not relative between Jesus and all other men precisely because only this Jesus is reconciled in his own being. Though it is on the Cross that men come to know Jesus as the Christ fully, Tillich argues, his capacity for self-denial has always been present in him precisely because he has been the Christ all along. Tillich has no intention of localizing the moment of reconciliation in the crucifixion; he wishes to conceive the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus as one event in its entirety, the Christ-event, in which, preserved in the corporate memory of the believing community, the New Being appears.

But Tillich *cannot* argue the Incarnation as God's becoming a "person." In his exposition of the Trinity he contends explicitly that within God are not three beings, but three manifestations of inner movement in the divine life: there is no divine "person," therefore to become a man. The meaning of Incarnation is simply that existential being and essential being are reconciled in concrete historical situations. Thus, his laborious distinctions will be unable to preserve what he cannot bring himself wholly to dispense with, the historical figure of Jesus of Nazareth.

Tillich's discussions of Jesus' self-surrender are an attempt to root the New Being solidly in a specific historical context, the life and work of Jesus, showing how it is possible that this Jesus could be the medium through whom men come to participate in the New Reality. To the distinction that Jesus is the medium and not the content of revelation, Tillich had to add the notion of Jesus' self-surrender in order to show how Jesus could be the medium through which the new reality appears. But Tillich also knew that Jesus is not the only one who has denied himself and in so doing become transparent to a transcendent reality. He is committed to showing that the clue to New Being is in *Jesus'* self-denial and not that of anyone else, that there is some infinite qualitative difference between the character and degree of Jesus' surrender and that of other prophets and saints. To accomplish his aim Tillich considers how any genuine self-denial is possible by referring to the meaning of self-possession; only he who is in possession of his essential being can truly surrender himself in order that the essential being might become fully expressed in him. Since all prophets and saints are to some degree, however small, estranged from their true being they are unable to effect total surrender and total transparency. Since Jesus as the Christ is the One in whom existential and essential being are reconciled, he alone possesses himself sufficiently to deny himself totally. Hence, the denial of Jesus can be said to be absolutely different in kind and degree from all other forms of self-surrender through which the new reality is made partially manifest.

Subtle as it is, Tillich's argument is developed at the expense of

the entire prior discussion of the self-surrender of Jesus. He began by arguing that man knows the real dimensions of Jesus' suffering only if he *already* knows (is grasped by) the New Being. But if New Being must already be mediated in order for one to comprehend the real meaning of the Cross, then surely the picture of the Cross cannot itself make intelligible the New Being. Thus, the reference to Jesus of Nazareth in Tillich's theology reduces to peripheral status, of incidental consequence only; man's salvation is already effected by the breaking in of the new reality, intelligible apart from Jesus in the immediate participation of the believer who is grasped by the power of that new reality. For Tillich the real wonder of the Incarnation is not that God in some sense became man, or that Jesus of Nazareth, a finite, historical individual, *is* God's revelation to man, but that the contradiction between essential manhood is overcome and that man may participate in the overcoming. Committed to a view of undefinable, undifferentiated Being-itself which *cannot* become Incarnate in history as *a* being, Tillich can describe an Incarnation of meaning only and not being, an Incarnation in which the historical Jesus is wholly obscured.

V. Conclusion

It can now be seen clearly why Tillich's doctrine of symbol must support his entire theological system: God's revelation to man is not in the concrete historical existence of Jesus of Nazareth at all, but in the symbol "Jesus as the Christ." This is possible in Tillich's system because symbols, participating in the reality they symbolize, mediate that reality to men who are in some way grasped by the power of the reality in which the symbols participate; symbols for Tillich, by virtue of their participation in reality, evoke their users' participation in that reality also. Insofar as the concrete details of Jesus' life elicit participation in the new reality, they are important to faith; but precisely because it is the symbol "Jesus as the Christ" which ultimately calls forth the religious experience, it is that symbol and not those concrete historical events which is central in Tillich's Christology. Confronted only with the details of Jesus' life, the believer remains haunted by the doubts which historical research breeds continually. Grasped by the power mediated through the symbols in which the name of Jesus appears, man experiences salvation whether or not man's essence ever was actualized concretely under the condition of historical existence.

Whether Tillich's doctrine of symbol possesses sufficient resources for the task which has befallen it cannot be explored here. What can be noted is what the doctrine implies for a Tillichean doctrine of redemption, the consideration with which this essay closes. Tillich's

view of religious symbols is an outgrowth of an epistemology consciously grounded in the assumption that reason is capable of grasping a reality whose essence is its intelligible structure: upon Tillich's view, self and world come to be related through reasoning whose thinking about universal characteristics of reality-as-such is logically prior to its applying itself to the concrete world of historical experience. Thus, every statement about particular realities logically entails prior assumptions about the character of Being-in-itself; all thought presupposes an ultimate concern about Being prior to any concern about particular beings. Because this kind of thinking which strives for the highest degree of universality cannot have as its constitutive content that which is derived from the universe of concrete things, but because it must nevertheless have *some* determinative content if it is to exhibit that about which human concern is possible, it must be symbolic in character, its content the concretes transformed by virtue of their participating directly in the reality which they represent and mediate. "Power," "ground," even "Being-itself," in spite of Tillich's denial, become symbolic terms derived from a world of concrete phenomena taken up into the reality which at once transcends all thought and yet is mediated in thought by symbols which share in the power of that reality. It is of utmost importance to note that the ideal of thought in Tillich's system is the universal, the reality which transcends all particularity and is yet partially expressed through particulars functioning as symbols. Man participates in that which transcends thought through symbols operative in his own thinking. Particulars as such have no power to mediate Being-itself, and consequently are peripheral, except as they come to function as symbols and not signs.

If taken seriously, then, symbols mediate New Being which is not to be identified with any particular characteristic or group of characteristics of Jesus of Nazareth; the New Being "shines through" the symbols from beyond them. (II, 138, 121) Thus, Tillich's theological system must speak of the distinctively particular and contingent elements in Christianity as instances only of a more universal reality, knowable in the final analysis apart from any combination of enumerated instances. Such a conclusion holds both for Tillich's account of man's fallenness and for his soteriological doctrine.

To the last, it must be noted, Tillich hesitated to affirm the conclusions of this theological system in wholly unambiguous terms. He continued to waver on the question of the historical Jesus, refusing to let the historical narratives become wholly symbolical in the sense of wholly unhistorical, refusing to translate completely the stories about Jesus of Nazareth into the abstract language of ontology. This restlessness in Tillich's thought is a result of his belief in the decisive signifi-

cance Jesus of Nazareth must have for Christian faith. In his life and death and resurrection men's lives are transformed: in *Jesus* men are made whole. This is nothing more than a Jesu-ology of the sort Tillich constantly desired to avoid, yet Tillich was unwilling to give up Jesus of Nazareth entirely, with the resulting systematic ambiguity to his entire program. Tillich needed a conceptual framework determined by historical categories in order to say what he feels must be said about fallen and redeemed mankind. But it is just such a conceptual framework which his system does not and cannot provide.

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