

Key Terms:

When Bernadette uses the term “universal human nature” or “common human nature” she means those aspects of our D.N.A. that we all share.

When she uses the term “God” she means infinite uncreated existence (not a person, and not a being).

When she uses the term “Divine Christ” she means the *Logos*.¹

When she uses the term “Human Christ” she means the man Jesus.

When she uses just the term “Christ” she means the non-dual oneness of all opposites that is “known” only after consciousness has ceased. (That’s why you can’t really define it.)

When she uses the term “Resurrection” she means the body’s experience of universality and non-duality after consciousness has ceased. It’s not a conscious thing. It’s the body’s way of knowing.

When she uses the term “Ascension” she means the ending of even the body’s experience of life and existence.

When she uses the term “Trinity” she means the three ways God exists inseparably in Itself. In us, Trinity is experienced as either Other (Transcendent), Within (Holy Spirit), or Throughout (Logos).

When she uses the term “faith” she means the opposite of belief, and the “truth sensor” in each of us. It is the attitude of being open to not knowing and trusting rather than seeking constantly for understanding and certitude.

When she uses the term “man”, she means all of us.

When she uses the term “Formless Unmanifest”, she means the Transcendent beyond creation, beyond space and time, beyond the universe.

¹ More on that soon

When she uses the term “hypostatic union” she means humanity’s union with God, not in man, but in God. It is person less. More on that term soon.

When she uses “theosis” or “unitive state” she means our oneness with God as individuals on this earth. It is personal to the extent that we are persons.

When she uses the term “Kenosis” the term is used in two ways. The first is the process whereby the *Logos* takes on form, senses, then consciousness. The second is the process of consciousness becoming less and less necessary until it falls away because it is no longer needed.

When she uses the term “Incarnation” she means the process whereby the *Logos* created (or fashioned) for itself universal human nature which appeared as an individual. It does not mean creating or assuming a person.

When she uses the Christian term “person” she means that which is created by choices with free will.

Another important term one should have an understanding of when one reads this transcription is “hypostasis”. This is because it is the word the early fathers came up with to describe the distinctions in the Trinity as well as our union with God. It was the only accepted word in four of the five major Churches for centuries. Because the Eastern and Western churches were becoming increasingly estranged (mostly because of linguistic and cultural differences (not theological)), some (failed) attempts were made at mutual understanding. Someone at some council in the fifth century decided that what the Eastern Church meant by *hypostasis* was the same thing as what the Western Church meant by “person” (which it didn’t and still doesn’t). This is why we constantly hear of the Trinity being three persons instead of three hypostases.

Basically, *hypo* comes from the Greek for under and *stasis* means stable or standing. But instead of meaning “understand” hypostasis

means stand-under, or that which underlies, the foundation of the thing. It is what is most real about a thing. The *hypostatic* union with God is our **real** union with God, beyond ourselves, or how it might feel to us. It is personless because it is revealed after person is gone and because God is not a person.

The Logos

Central to Bernadette's understanding of the Trinity, and completely missing from church doctrine today, is an understanding of the role of the *Logos*. The *Logos* is central to a complete understanding of the Incarnation, Recapitulation Christology, the Resurrection, the Eucharist, and more. Without it, Christianity degenerates into a Jesus Cult full of people waiting to eat their pie in the sky.

The Stoics were the first ones to come up with term *Logos*. Stoicism was a world religion at the time of Christ. The goal of Stoicism was to become one with the *Logos*. Heraclitus of Ephesus (535-475 BC) played an important role in developing our (now largely lost) understanding of the *Logos*. Unfortunately, what remains of the writings of the mysterious man are only a few fragments. He claimed to know the *Logos* while the rest of men were asleep to it. He also said, "Men live as if each had a private intelligence of his own."² Bernadette concluded from this that it is man's awareness of himself that precludes awareness of the *Logos*. The Stoics believed that the *Logos* was the soul of the universe and that matter was its body. They believed that matter and spirit were inseparably united. The *Logos* is the aspect of God that is

^{21.} p. 58 of [The Real Christ](#)

^{1.} p. 58 of [The Real Christ](#)

3. <http://www.butler-bowdon.com/heraclitus---fragments.html>

united to matter. It is the organizing intelligence that guides the process of evolution.

Although he spoke like an ancient, let's listen to Heraclitus: "Listen not to me, but to the *Logos*, it is wise to agree that all things are one and one thing only..." and, "It is the power and knowledge that steers all things - the *Logos* knows...There is but one wisdom to understand the knowledge by which all things are steered through all...The *Logos* is always existent, but men fail to understand it both before they have heard of it, and when they have heard of it for the first time. For although all things happen through the *Logos*, men seem as if they had no acquaintance with such works and words as I expound, dividing each thing according to its nature and explaining how it really is. The rest of mankind are unconscious of what they do when awake, just as they forget what they do when asleep..." and, "Men are at variance with the *Logos* which is their most constant companion... Although the *Logos* is common to all, most men live as if each had a private intelligence of his own. Although intimately connected with it, men keep setting themselves against it". Bernadette calls attention to this living "as if each had a private intelligence of his own" and concludes that to follow the *Logos* is "contrary to any form of individualism."¹ To follow the *Logos* is to not worry about yourself. It is to chop wood when it needs to be chopped, and carry water when it needs to be carried. It is to follow a universal. It is to be in the flow or the "Tao". Notice that the emphasis is on **what** man is rather than **who**. This will be important later.

To help us understand the *Logos* further, we could also look to St. Athanasius (296-373): "Just as the *Logos* is the animating principle of the cosmos, it is of the rational soul of man. Christ's human nature was a part of the vast body of the cosmos. *Logos*, while present in the man Jesus, was **simultaneously present** everywhere else in the universe,

vivifying and directing it with its life-giving power.” Here we have two more closely related terms to ponder - “animating principle” and “life-giving power.”

The *Logos* is the answer to the philosophical problem of the One and the many. At least so says Maximus the Confessor (580-662): “The divine *Logos*, in whom all things were created, contains in himself the diversity of creation... by contemplating that diversity, who will not perceive that the single *Logos* is the multitude of *logoi* (singular form) and that, conversely, the multitude is one in the universal return toward Him?” Again Maximus, “This same *Logos* is manifested and multiplied in a way suitable to the Good in all beings who come from Him according to the nature of each, and He recapitulates all things in Himself. For all things participate in God by analogy insofar as they come from God.” The many participate in the One as their source and return to the One as their end. The *Logos* (the Divine Christ) is both the Alpha and Omega. The One is in the many and, in the end, the many become One.

The *Logos* is kind of a bridge between the Uncreated and the created. Here’s a quote from Philo of Alexandria³ (25 BC- 50 AD): “And I stood between the Lord and you - neither unbegotten as God or begotten as you, but midway between the two extremes serving as a pledge for both.” One is reminded of the curve that both separates and unites the constantly moving symbol of the Tao. A better analogy would be that the *Logos* (while remaining uncreated) is a kind of bridge between God within, and God Transcendent.

The *Logos* is a “union of opposites” (or non-dual as a Buddhist might say). Again, here is Philo commenting on Heraclitus’ notion of unity as, “the oneness of opposites, the hidden harmony is better than the visible, the fairest harmony makes the structure one. The interchange of opposites with one another is itself proof they are only different manifestation of the same thing, the changeless unity in which

³ Philo was Jewish contemporary of Jesus whom she regarded as “one of the greatest mystics of all time.”

all multiplicity inheres. *Logos* is the substance that creates, sustains, and in the end, perhaps, reabsorbs into Itself. The One is All and the All is one.” This aspect of the Logos reabsorbing all into Itself is where St. Paul probably got the notion that God will be “All in All” and is the reason for the Ascension.

As to why very few people have even heard of the *Logos* today, we have to point to the Fathers’ insistence on using the traditional biblical language of “Father and Son” as well as translating the word “*Logos*” as “Word”. Even Cyril of Alexandria had a more exalted understanding of “*Logos*” than most modern Christians. This is what he said, “the *Logos* of the Father of the universe is not the uttered word, but the wisdom and most manifest kindness of God, and His power too.” This egregious and ubiquitous mistranslation of *Logos* to “word” is not only an historical wrong turn, but a catastrophic disaster for a Christian understanding of Christ. Such an understanding is not possible without a thorough knowledge of the *Logos*.

One last word of introduction: This transcription is not just for Christians! In fact, most Christians will be so challenged by these ideas that they may become angry. No one likes to have their cherished beliefs called into question. Bernadette was talking about **universal** human experience. (basically, about spiritual life and spiritual death) Non-Christians and atheists with an open mind may very well get more from reading this than anyone. If you are afraid of new ideas, or don’t have an open mind, you should read no further.

(Feel free to skip or ignore my “cheeky bastard” comments in parentheses. And this is where you are headed after the final transcription:)

Conclusion:

So what? Who cares? Did you just read a bossy, funny, spiritual old lady with a theological ax to grind, or did you just read something

completely new? Is it time for something new? I'm not going to tell you what to think. You are smart. You have a big heart. You tell me.

Sound Check: (Interestingly, this sound check sets the stage for the entire weekend discussion. The participants have some pretty fundamental differences of belief. Putting it mildly, Bernadette (hereafter B.) is not afraid of conflict and does not hesitate to point out the mutual exclusivity of certain beliefs. She does not sweep differences under the rug by calling them linguistic. Here she asks about the meaning of certain terms partly because she's curious, and partly because she wants to communicate clearly.)

A: testing...hello?...The Real Christ 1,2,3...

D: no, if people could just speak naturally I think that would...

B: until the cook comes.... Well, say something all of you!

A: Well B. how can you say that?!

All: Ha, ha, ha...

I: That's not right!

All: Ha, ha, ha...

A: You should speak in Sanskrit like you did at lunch today. My God!

B: You can speak Sanskrit?

D: I didn't know that.

B: Where did you learn?

A: In India!

I: I lived in an Ashram for a couple of years

B: Yea?

I: and studied Vedanta and Sanskrit and some of the things that we were talking about at lunch are more explicit in Sanskrit than they are in English.

B: interesting

I: They are.

B: You can speak it?

I: It's not really a spoken language. I remember the prayers. It was said with a cadence because it was written by poets so you could remember it. Today at lunch we were talking about some of the ideas in Sanskrit.

B: Would you say you know it well?

I: Yea. And that's why I went to the ashram because I didn't want to have to rely on anyone's translation of the Bhagavad Gita or Upanishads...

B: Well, what's the translation we have, it's a big issue here, that first Upanishad, thou art that?

I: *tatvam asi*

B: What does that mean?

I: *tat* means that

B: Well, what is that?

I: Generally, it's spoken about in the Rig Veda. He's talking to his son about the essence of God.

B: Brahman

I: Well Brahman is a class, he's trying to get to a point where his son is seeing something that's the essential nature of life.

B: But he said you. You are that. In other words, all this is life and you're life too.

I: Yea. What's wrong with that?

B: Well, the way that is usually understood is namely **that** is God and **you** are that. (B. had a difficult relationship with the East. Most of the people that found out about her did so while looking East because the only publisher she could find to take a risk on the idea of No-Self was

Shambala. Later SUNY picked up her first two books, but in terms of what kind of people would be drawn to her, the damage had already been done. Even today, her books are generally not placed in Christian Mysticism, but in Buddhism or Eastern Religions.)

I: Well, he's not talking about the self.

D: In that particular dialogue... where he's saying as the rivers all flow, blah, blah... the translation that makes more sense, at least the recent recommendation is that it be translated as "that is how you are" that being all that was said previously, all the multiple rivers flowing, etc., that is also how you are. There are several of these and this is a crescendo. I think what has happened is it has been yanked out of the context.

I: All the time

D: There is no context about what the **that** that he's talking about. But in the dialogue it's very clear what the that is, it's what I was saying previously, all the multiple tributaries of rivers flow into one, etc.

B: Could we then say that what you really are, your true nature, is what the Buddhists would call your Buddha nature? Is that what they are saying? All this life that's your Buddha nature...it's all just one but it's all your Buddha nature... in other words you see all this life around, that's your true nature all of that.

What do you think that would mean H.? Buddha nature... what's that? (Voraciously curious, B. launches into the sound check with some questions about Hindu and Buddhist doctrine. Spiritually, she never "went East" but she learned a smattering, just enough to defend herself against false accusations and misinterpretations.)

H: I think the mistake that is made about Buddha nature is people make it sound as if there is my Buddha nature and yours and yours...

B: No, there is only one. Universal Buddha nature...Well that would go with this thing here. You're just part of nature. That's it. Well that's so simple... and yet, that's the ultimate enlightenment, isn't it? (If this statement interests you, pay attention to what she says on Saturday night about the sensory form of awareness she calls "resurrection".) To realize that your Buddha nature... what's that realization like? I think

that's so easy. We're all alive here and that's your Buddha nature. Now what?

H: But to truly realize that the I am

B: But what does it do? Oh, forget the I am. Throw all that out. We are talking about all of us how we all have the same one nature and this is our real, whatever it is, this is our Buddha nature.

H: What's the question?

B: Well, so what?

D: There's a sense in which there is no great mystery about human nature by itself. I think that in this particular context...

B: Well it transcends my human nature or your nature and that's why we call it Buddha nature.

H: On the one hand there is the sense or realization that I in the sense of the absolute I that can never be the subject or object of awareness. (Maybe it's because this is just the sound check and B. doesn't want to scare everyone off before the weekend begins that she didn't call H. on this. When H. brings it up Saturday evening, B. certainly does.) I am Buddha nature and there are many other words for it. But that isn't the end of the story.

B: Well Buddhism says there is no I am.

H: I didn't say there was.

B: But you said in Buddhism that is who I am. Well "who" is going to be a particular individual.

H: Well let's say what I am. Now I'm not talking about the I am. But if I have your question right, that realization is not the end. The next thing is...

B: Oh! I thought that was the ultimate.

H: No.

B: Well, what's the ultimate?

H: The next thing is that the whole manifestation, the whole creation. And these two experiences happen boom! Boom! so and then they are identical. Buddha nature is identical with manifestation. It's a version of the mystery of the one and the many consecutively, the mystery of the oneness.

B: Well, o.k. because there is whole lot around that is obviously not a manifestation of that. For example, self?

H: What?

B: Is self a manifestation of that?

H: I know you say that, and there are probably a number of people who would disagree with you on that in that tradition, particularly Zen, that everything is a manifestation, including my delusion.

B: Including your delusion...

H: It's very striking when you say (God is) everything "but self". Whereas later in Zen tradition, particularly master Dogen in the 13th century, really gave a sense that even delusion is manifestation.

B: That makes no sense. Because look, then you can be happy with your delusion. There is no use going into Zen or into Buddhism... Hey my Buddha nature is part of that too! And now let's go down and have a drink!

H: That's not a realization. There is a difference between manifestation, the teaching of the party line, and the realization of the truth of it. They are two different things.

B: Oh! I couldn't understand that.

H: I know.

B: So, let's see what that thing (recording devise) did...

D: Oh. Yea.

Friday Afternoon: (Their discussion starts off with I. accusing B., in a Shakespearian tragic-comic sort of way, of being a Mormon! Then they

discuss tradition, human nature, unitive state, deification, free will, and the Eucharist.)

I: Do you know that the Mormons actually believe, now I'm not trying to be rude or talk bad about any religion, but did you know they actually believe, I didn't realize you've spoken quite affirmatively to me at times about the LDS faith, but did you know that God the father and the son and holy spirit have their own bodies?

B: Oh, yea!

I: All have flesh and blood? You know that?

B: Oh, yea!

I: How is that going to be helpful in transforming my human nature until...that they each have separate bodies of flesh and blood?

B: Now, that's what the MORMONS believe!

I: Right, yes.

B: Well, I'm not teaching Mormonism!

I: But you almost, when I first met you a couple of years ago, you almost convinced me to become a Mormon again.

B: Are you serious?

I: Oh, yes.

B: You sure don't know me!

H: You became a Mormon again?

I: You were going on and on about...

B: Well, I know all about Mormonism. There was this sister in the monastery. She was a sister of Romni, who was one of the twelve apostles, and after writing all these books and everything well she walked into a Catholic Church one day and just fell down and became a Carmelite nun. And her family would come out occasionally and they would do anything to get her out of the monastery because she was of

such worth to this Romni family, one of the apostles. She had contributed so much. Anyway, she wrote a book about the inner workings. Right now, we know a lot about the inner secrecy of the whole thing. And I remember she wrote a book, which will never be published, about the Mormon church. She would just sit around in recreation, (two hours every Sunday afternoon during which Carmelites sit around and enjoy spiritual chit chat or holy gossip) she told us all this stuff that the Mormons believe. In fact, I remember our monastery was on Holiday Rd. right there in Mormon territory. I invited them in and we were all sitting around the table there and I questioned them and I found out they didn't know a thing about Mormonism. They couldn't answer my questions. And they went out and got all their missionaries and I questioned them and found out that they couldn't answer my questions either. I mean it's a strange church, the stuff that they believe, it's unbelievable. I don't see how they. And yet, I gotta tell you this, they are the nicest, most generous people, most family orientated people you could ever meet. There is no Mormon on earth that doesn't have everything they need. The way they take care of their own. I don't know any group in the world. It's an extremely wealthy church. They own airlines and railroads and the kids have to earn their own money, at the age of ten they are out there. But how you would think that I would want anyone to become Mormon! It's unbelievable that you would even think that! I can't believe...

A: Well, I'm glad you didn't do it T.

B: Protestant churches do not recognize Mormonism as Christian.

F: Absolutely

B: So anyway, I don't know where you got that idea. What were we talking about anyway?

H: We weren't. We were just...

B: Christology from above and below. Paul started from above, Rahner is bringing out the Christology from below. He almost comes right out and says it but you have to understand how difficult it is for a theologian. Remember how scrutinized they could be. It's a terrible thing. Look at poor Eckhart. He only had about five or six sentences that were wrong. I understand this problem but what are we going to do about it. But we

are talking about the church as a whole. If you have a small congregation, you can do it. We have people who have been brainwashed. This particular view has been so out there. They think inside the box.

F: How do we do this without doing violence to the tradition? (This is his first question. F. is short for Fr. because he is a priest. He is taking the risk of censure by his Bishop by simply being there. He wants to be part of a transition to a new way of thinking in the Catholic Church. He doesn't want a rupture. You will read B.'s response to this attitude when he brings it up again later.)

E: It's cellular... they are a little bit more open minded...

D: Even in the book "there are two parts to the tradition." It seems to me that...

C: Well, the Eucharistic tradition would get us away from that.

E: The social gospel is what is talked about in my church.

J: I understand because I have had experiences of at least two of those modes. Until people understand the trinity, it's just reading a book...

C: You have the social activists on the left, and on the right you have people like catholic answers. (a radio talk show of Catholic apologetics)

B: I was just listening to them! They are onto Galileo now...

C: Who will say when we say Jesus Christ became incarnate that isn't exactly what we mean? So from the right and the left we have this cleave that seems to disallow a true understanding of the Real Christ.

B: The theologians are not dummies but they know that if they come out with a corrected creed... (The very idea is scary and therefore anathema and heretical to most.)

H: S. I think that is a really good point.

E: It's all about our experiences. That's the problem with the bible.

B: The trinity is the heart of Christianity and yet it is nowhere in the bible.

C: The Eucharistic Christ is nowhere in the bible. That's why we often hear 'receive the body of Jesus'.

B: Do some people actually say that?

C: This was one of the goals of Vatican II. They wanted to get back to the bible. They wanted to say...

B: Well, that's Protestant.

C: Right, the rich Trinitarian vision of the fathers has been set aside in favor of what can we find out about Jesus and the bible which disallows a kind of rich Trinitarian vision.

B: I question in the book the extent, most of the fathers didn't really articulate the Trinity very well. In a way, yes. There were big fights about this too. What do we call these Sabellianism? There was too much interpretation on the son and begotten, that's the Arian heresy. Who was the son? Who was begotten? The logos, or Jesus? Big fights! They were actually arguing one side, they knew the Logos. That's the second person, that's the divine. But look in our creed. It tells us that it was Jesus who was begotten. That's not the Logos.

D: That view is that Jesus is the Logos wrapped in flesh.

B: yea.

D: That's why it's easy to mix up God and Jesus because it's just, you know, God wrapped in flesh.

B: There were big fights about that. You have Antiochian view was the God-man, and then you have the Alexandrian was the God-flesh. To be human all you have to have is flesh? Well, that's like the animals. Even the animals have souls, you know the form. They fought for Jesus to have a soul!

D: The party line is written now from the point of view...

B: Yes, the wrong point of view. They fought over this stuff. It isn't just somebody came up with it. They fought over it and how to put it across and make it make sense.

D: Yes

B: I often wonder, who wrote up those final documents of the council? My view is that we don't have those original documents. They have been long destroyed. What we are given is what they say pretty much later. I don't trust them (Most Catholics strive to be in line with the *sensus fidelium*, as articulated by council documents. Bernadette didn't. She thought for herself.) But anyway, I understand F.'s problem. The book points out the problem but I don't think in itself, it doesn't present a problem. And this goes to E's um, you remember you all got a copy of E's question? What does all this have to do with us? The thing is this, what I would say, it's the same answer I give to father and anyone. I was raised with the party line, are you with me? I came upon the real Christ. (Not without the help of excessive grace, you didn't.) All I did was ask God what is my eternal existence with you and that's it. That's Christ. It never wavered, I saw it perfectly. It never bothered me.

You can know that truth and say it to other people. They will have their interpretations of it, but then let God take care of the rest of it.

G: Yea.

E: That's a good point.

B: Just let them hear a few words. That your eternal oneness with God, that's Christ and let them think about it. That's all, you know, to tell you the truth, a lot of it was in Latin and I didn't understand it anyway

G: Ha, ha, ha...

B: which is why it was terrible when they changed. Now, it's so boring when you hear it, it's so awful, it makes it worse.

All: Ha, ha, ha... (So she wasn't going to Mass to hear the priest, or the readings, or the prayers, only to receive the Eucharist. Since she chose to worship in an Eastern Rite, and since she said she missed benediction and adoration, one could probably assume that, for her, worship should reflect the beauty of the transcendent, refer to the other dimension, not be too wordy, and include time to merely sit in the presence.)

B: It's only after Vatican II, in my house there wasn't a lot of Jesus talk.

D: No, no.

B: My parents were above that mentality.

D: But I wonder, at least my personal experience is, which is one that the reasons why the readings don't bother me that much, because in the readings when you hear Jesus said this and Jesus said that, etc., you clearly know that the reference is being made to a human being, an historical person, etc. To me the problematic phrase is "Jesus Christ".

F: yea.

G: Yea, I agree. It's confusing.

D: Jesus is o.k. and if you have Christ and you have Jesus, it works o.k. It's the "Jesus Christ" word...

B: Well, it's supposed to be Jesus THE Christ because Christ is just a title.

H: What's the difference between um, you know, I remember always being so careful to say Jesus of Nazareth. You corrected me and said it's o.k. say Jesus Christ. What's the difference in hearing the reading...

D: The reading is not what God said.

H: No, I said what Jesus said. Is there a difference between looking at this man after the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and...

B: He's still not God!

H: I'm not saying anything. I'm asking is there a difference. Is there a difference in how the person is referred to?

D: No. No. When people hear the reading and they hear Jesus said this and Jesus said that I don't think people substitute God.

B: Well, now wait a minute! They hold up this book and they say this is the word of God. Now there are people who actually believe the literal truth that God actually said this, meant this. You don't dare question it or...

H: I think all I'm asking is, is there a proper use of the phrase "Jesus the Christ"?

B: Yes, as far as this world is concerned, with the historic man...

D: In fact, in that equation, "Jesus the Christ", we are still using Christ in that title way Jesus the messiah. That's how we're using it. We're not saying Jesus the oneness of the divine and human...

G: the anointed

D: That's the issue with the term Christ, right? On the one hand, it's a translation of messiah. On the other hand, we are saying that this reality of the oneness we are calling Christ. You cannot say Jesus is that oneness.

B: This is the whole issue that has to do with that. People want to know what is the difference between God's human nature, only one human nature God created for itself, and Jesus' human nature? What's the problem there?

G: It's not God's.

B: Let me ask you this, was Jesus' human nature, God? Was it God's human nature? (She loved to quiz people on their understanding.)

C: Yes.

G: no.

F: Jesus' human nature?

G: It was transformed.

B: There's only one human nature. So, if you're going to say Jesus' human nature, then you can say Mary's human nature and Paul's human nature. Is that our human nature? Is that God's human nature?

D: Right. It's not God's human nature it's to be transformed...

B: well, no wait a minute...

D: It's to be transformed INTO God's human nature.

B: Well, yes. But now in the case of Jesus though, how does that go? That is very important.

D: That is very important. Correct.

B: So we have, what it means is that Christ preexisted the man Jesus.

L: Yes, yep...

F: Right

B: Are you with me? At some point God united itself to humanity, we don't know when...we don't care. But now we have the revelation of it. Well, was this some coming down or was this actually God creating some, it had to be the same human nature.

F: Yes.

B: But is that God's human nature? That has come down and taken on, undergone this whole worldly thing and then returned to God. Is that God's one and only human nature?

G: I think that was the kenosis.

B: There you go! That's the kenosis.

G: That's the first kenosis! Not the one going back, but the one coming down.

B: O.k. this goes along with Paul. That's his view. A decision was made. There is no man up there making a decision but to be able to get involved with this world and be an example and whatever and then return that is a huge thing. Therefore, but we can't say it was Jesus' human nature.

D: no

G: no

B: Well, then to say that's God's human nature, um, that makes it very important, (If you are wondering how God can have a human nature, it is by possession or ownership.)

C: um hum

B: and I like that. Well I personally like it and I'll tell you why because I thought he (the person) was so wrong on so many things, and I thought, if that's God's human nature, well, good grief! We can all feel good about ourselves!

All: Ha, ha, ha...

D: There's a part in the book though where you say, Bernadette, that one way to think about Jesus is Jesus is the person of God's person-less human nature or something like that...I forget exactly how...

B: Yes, well I make him out as a full human person. I will not tolerate people saying he was not a human person, because you have to understand what a person is, it's the self. Jesus certainly had a self. It's the one who governs, who has a say, who's going to makes decisions, who thinks and feels, this is the self.

F: Could it be...

D: One thing I think would be clarifying, and this is a question more than anything else, on earth human nature is individual.

B: yea, individual that's in my research paper

D: human nature ... individual is universal and all that, but the only way human nature exists on earth is as an individual.

B: yes. it's with the self, more or less

D: One question... this was one of the things I had with the book is... God's own human nature, let me unpack this. There's a couple of things. One is, I can understand Christ as the oneness of divine nature and human nature, I don't quite get the idea of God's own human nature separate from Christ meaning the way I every time I read

B: Wait. Christ is God's own human nature, by definition

D: right

B: by definition

D: correct

B: well I said so!

D: Yes. Yes. But in ...now there is the eternal Christ, and there is the Christ on earth (Jesus)

B: yea

D: and it's, it's,

B: Well, you can say this is God's own human nature on this earth. But it wasn't Jesus'. He was the person. He was the self.

D: But then isn't that the case with every one of us?

H: Yes

B: Well, now that's a good question. No. Absolutely not.

D: Yea. Yes, no that's...

B: absolutely not!

H: And why not?

B: Because that's what we are to become. (We are not all Christ because we are becoming Christ.)

H: O.k.

B: I don't want to say none of us are God's incarnation, because that doesn't belong to individuals. There is no such thing as God's own human nature belonging to a single individual. When we come into this world we're all single individuals, are you with me? That's what we have to become, is the universal. We come into this world as individuals created with self. *And now we have to become a universal.* (I will italicize select phrases that I consider to be spiritual jewels.) Now we have to become that. Jesus had to go back and become that too! Are you with me? Jesus also had to take on a self, all that, become a person, then he had to get rid of all that, become person-less. Because God's human nature is person-less. (Person is what prevents us from being God's human nature?) We're not all the incarnation. We are not all God's one eternal...

I: so what's the difference between Jesus and us?

B: Oh, well I don't see any difference.

I: You just said it was very important.

B. No not Jesus! (**Who** he was, was not as important as **What** he was, or his nature, because it was God's.)

H: you're right.

B: Not Jesus. We're talking about the human nature. Big difference.

H: Jesus had to become Christ.

B: Yea. His human nature is no different than yours. Now he was born, then you have death, ascension, and in heaven yes but he isn't the Christ you don't get it, it's not him. Listen God owns that human nature, not Jesus. It's not Jesus' human nature. When you get up to heaven it's not going to be your human nature. We are going to be transformed into God's own human nature whatever that marvel is.

F: Would you say the self is our human perception, it's wrong, that we have our own human nature?

B: Yes, basically yes. For example, well I'll tell you on a philosophical level, it's obvious there is only one human nature, right?

F: Correct.

B: But a lot of people argue that a man and a woman have different natures. People used to argue that blacks had different natures! Right?

F: right

B: Don't you remember all this division?

I: yes

B: We're still going on it. You still have men who are heads of the Church and everything else, you know they're just different. That has to account for a lot of it. But to realize there is only one human nature. (Sounds like an argument for women priests.) Which is person-less and *it belongs to nobody but God and we have all got to become that.*

K: Bernadette...

H: K. wants to say something...

K: But Jesus was different because he was born in the state of theosis.

B: Oh, yes, that's different. That doesn't do away with the self. (It doesn't do away with the self completely. It only does away with the ego self. The apostles and early fathers probably had so little

experience of either, that they were not able to make this distinction. So they concluded Jesus had no self when, in fact, he had no ego.)

D: No

B: He was born more spiritually advanced. That is my view. And I'll tell you what gave me that view. I never paid any attention to the guy at all, until coming to the unitive state when I came to realize, now I'm beginning to understand. I can relate to that human being and his talking about oneness with God, and that's only because I was in that unitive state. He was born knowing his union with God. That's what the unitive state is!

In fact, I wanna tell you something, I'm convinced, the reason why God supplied the X chromosome, the reason why he was born of a virgin you might say, (banging fist on lap or table) so that Mary would TELL HIM God is your real (laughing) father! You are so one with God and you know who knows how they understood that years ago. They didn't know anything about Y and X chromosomes. That he came right from God.

When you know that your whole being comes right from God, that what the unitive state is! That's it's realization! That's the marvelous wonder of it! And so he knew he came straight from God from the time he was a baby. I can see this...and... as I say, that's my view. And I don't see anything in the Gospels that tells us otherwise. He never went around looking for some Rabbi to tell him or he was lookin' for God so he went off someplace. As far as we know. He wasn't a searcher.

K: The man Jesus. God could have picked anybody.

B: What do you mean? No, this is prior to his conception. He couldn't exist without that x chromosome. He never existed prior to that. God planned that whole thing. That was his conception.

K: Right but he could have been named anything. ("picked" was not the right word. I think the point K. was trying to make was the **what** Jesus was, was infinitely more important than **who** he chose to become.)

B: Yea, we don't care about the name.

C: That was Duns Scotus' point of view that there wasn't some uniqueness about Jesus that he was selected.

B: God planned this whole thing. We don't care about the name.

D: No, no, that's missing the whole point. What Bernadette is saying is there was no preexisting person to select.

B: Yea, well that's what he said and that was Cyril of Alexandria's thing. He was scared to death that people would think that God selected this man because he was good and everything else and Cyril said no way!

C: Can I make a point to connect this?

B: Yea.

C: O.k. You are really emphasizing again and again in the book there is one human nature.

B: Yea.

C: So I just want to follow that human nature from the highest and...so at the moment God, um...

B: Now wait a minute! Now we don't know when it happened. Are you with me?

C: Sure.

B: All right. God decided that he really loved and cared for man, he's not going to create a man here.

C: Right

B: *He's going to create right from Himself, a human nature created one with Itself.* It wasn't created **not** one with itself, are you with me?!

C: Right

D: Yes.

B: And not just that! It was created Hypostatically one with itself!

D: Yes.

B: Which is why we say that this Christ was created in the Godhead.

C: Yes.

B: You and I we're down here in our mom and dad. Are you with me?

C: Yea.

B: We belong to this dimension whereas this (Christ) belonged to that dimension. Now then, so that's that, whenever that happened. Now God wants to reveal to us all that man means (to God). In the meantime, all these people are walking around we're all here being born into this world. That's our end! This is what God has planned for us.

D: Right right. o.k. Can I just make one clarification here because I think it confuses people. There is a sense when we speak about being one common human nature to think that human nature was created once by God and no other human nature has ever been created again. By saying that there is one human nature we are not saying that there has been only one act of creation. What we are saying is the incarnation is the creation of human nature in this eternal oneness with God. But each one of us, still human nature, there is that one on one act of creating human nature.

B: It's the same human nature

D: But it's another act of creation

B: Yes

D: That human nature doesn't start there

B: It doesn't start there, but now we have this kenosis thing none of you went through kenosis being born in this world

C: That's the most important question it doesn't start there but let's say right now a baby is being born in the hospital. It's not Jesus, does this baby have the exact human nature

B: yes.

D: but it's in a different state

C: Because now we are talking about levels almost of human nature

B: No! you're way off!

C: O.k. so let's throw the idea of levels out for the moment o.k. So there is bare human nature which God creates for itself which we call the heavenly Christ, human nature in glory. Then there is also let's say a person being born down the block

D: That's a new act of creation

C: A new act of creation, but his human nature is no different, he's not experiencing God in glory but somehow he is experiencing the same human nature it's one human nature

B: That was my big question, how are you going to get from the one to the many?

C: O.k. Can I just continue?

B: I know where you are going.

C: All right, so that...

H: But we don't!

C: Let's go to another place, let's suppose that person at 35 years old comes to the state of theosis, it's the same human nature that began, he's not...

B: No, you are so off the cuff! You are off!

C: But you see I'm trying to affirm that there is one human nature.

B: You're off!

D: No, no, no the confusion seems to be that, you are equating, um by saying there is one common human nature, you are saying all human nature belongs to God.

C: Yes.

D: No, that's what we're saying. There is one human nature, now there is human nature one with God...

B: At the end for all of us, what we are to be transformed into, is this Glorious the Christ, are you with me? But you're off. Leave the divine Christ alone. Did you read my research paper?

C: I did!

B: That's exactly what that is all about! How are you going to get from the one to the multiple? I said for me you take the Eucharist, one Christ and billions and billions of hosts.

C: What I'm suggesting is, and if I could just be heard out on this point (In other words, "Please stop interrupting me.") The difference is not different human natures, there are different souls that have different capacities.

B: That's wrong. There are not different souls. Whatever human nature is- body, soul, psyche, I don't care what it is. Whatever it is there is no difference between you and me and all the rest of us here. No difference! You keep making differences!

C: I'm the one saying there is no difference!

E: This difference is "what".

B: That's it. And individual is who we are, and we make our own person. That's part of the function of the soul. Without that function of the soul a person couldn't even exist.

K: We don't know how your 35-year-old may have experienced theosis

B: Well that's besides the point.

C: I'm saying his human nature hasn't changed, his soul has changed, but it's not his human nature.

B: He has been transformed.

C: Yes, that's what I mean.

B: No!

C: I'm really trying to understand...

B: No. And you're not getting it and we are not going to spend any more time on you.

H: He may not be the only one.

B: Well I don't understand, did you read the research paper? (It's called "What is Self?" and can be downloaded for free from bernadetteroberts.blogspot.com)

C: Yes.

B: What was that about? How are you going to get from the one to the multiple? What causes this multiplicity? What causes these differences among us? It's self!

C: Yes!

B: Consciousness, all this kind of stuff here, and we have to live through that. This all has to be transformed. That has to be gotten rid of. Then we can enter into the ultimate state of Christ, that's where we're going.

H: Use the term human nature right there. Then we can enter into... how would you put...

B: Well the ultimate is Christ. Become ultimate Christ.

D: So, I think that...

B: *It's not we, it's the human nature.*

H: But would you say it's to **realize** that we are...

B: No, that word realize sticks in your brain (B. came to not like the word realize because of its intellectual connotations. However, she herself used the word seven times on pp. 33 through 41 of The Path to No-Self.)

D: This view of human nature is like a static view of human nature. It's just there, it never changes, it just sits there.

H: Yea.

D: That's the problem.

C: No, I'm not saying that.

D: You're saying nothing has changed.

C: I'm saying the soul is changing. The human nature is the same.

D: Human nature is part of the soul. The soul is part of human nature.

H: So let's say we go through the life and we get rid of, drops off, and we become personless. How then do you use the term human nature? Is it that we then, would you say it is revealed?

D: No it's transformed into that eternal oneness.

H: But is it the human nature that is transformed or...

C: The soul!

H: What is transformed?

D: The...

B: Well, whatever human nature is.

D: Could we just...

B: The body is transformed. (It's interesting that she says the body is transformed one second after C. says the soul is transformed.)

D: If by human nature we are talking about what we are, that is body, soul, and spirit. So it's pointless to say the soul is separate from human nature and the body is separate from human nature so you split body out of it, split soul out of it, split spirit out of it, then what is it?

H: What is transformed? What is the subject of the transformation?

D: The whole thing is transformed! Body, soul, and spirit.

H: And then into what?

L: If person "a's" human nature is transformed, and person "b" hasn't transformed, how are they the same human nature?

F: Experience.

L: Aren't their human natures now different?

B: Well, one is developed.

L: so both are human nature but...

B: Well, we can put it this way, one has gone on that path that has for it to be eternally one, to become Christ

L: So human nature incorporates the transformed and not transformed.

B: Now wait a minute! Who is going to govern this? Who is going to give themselves up to this? It's self! It's the person you are and it's what is going to make you who you are. You give your whole self to God, you're going to be transformed. If you go out and start murdering your neighbor hey, forget it!

L: Yes, but the question is: Is it human nature that is being transformed?

D: Can I just...

F: Is there a difference...

D: Can I do an analogy here?

H: See, that makes perfect sense.

D: Can I do...

H: Say it again. That's a logical thing he just said, Bernadette.

B: What did you say?

H: Say it again.

B: I didn't hear it.

L: If one person's human nature is transformed. They go through this process...

B: alright

L: And the other person's isn't transformed. Aren't their human natures now different?

B: Yes. Let me put it this way, one has gone on that path and become what God created it to be and one hasn't. We're not saying! Now, I like to think that every human nature is saved, but it may not be.

L: So human nature...

B: I don't believe in Hell. I do believe though that God can cut the cord and they cease to exist. Because to go to hell you've gotta save somebody for Hell. And God's not going to save any of that. No. You don't have different human natures. What you have are human natures in bliss, and you have human natures born in this world. We have to go through all this to reach the end. No man comes here at the end of the journey.

L: So when you say there is one human nature...

B: It makes it...

H: B. say again what the end is.

B: Christ

H: transformed into...

B: Christ

L: So when you say one human nature you're including both the untransformed and the transformed, that whole process of transformation is part of human nature...

B: Alright. One thing we've brought out constantly in this book, is, there is a difference between speaking of Christ's earthly life and the eternal, heavenly life. Are you with me? There is a huge difference!

H: You mean...

B: I don't care who it is. Human nature on this earth is not human nature in its ultimate glorious state. It's a different dimension. Different states.

D: Right

B: It's not that human nature is different, it's that it dwells in a different condition. Here it dwells in a human condition. (The condition of having a self. Apparently, it is also possible for there to be human nature without a self. That is it's heavenly condition.)

L: So the condition transforms.

B: Oh, well, forget it.

H: Wait. Hang on.

D: If we just take a scientific analogy

E: Slow

D: It's a ridiculous analogy but I'll do it anyway. If you take the ice, water, steam analogy, right? They are all the same essential...

B: chemical element

D: thing. It's all H₂O we're not saying the steam has a different make up.

B: That's a good analogy.

D: The chemical composition of steam is exactly the same as the chemical composition of ice.

E: Take this real slow, cause of something she just said. So now we are talking about the transformation of one thing in different states or conditions. The analogy is good. However, we can't say steam is the resurrected, it's the Christ.

D: no, no. It's a bad analogy

E: But we need to know, if that represents human nature to us, what is that transformed into, and I also want to know...

B: Well, it's gotta be perfect.

H: Wait, wait!

E: When you said a second ago if you start killing your neighbors...

B: sure

E: I've been working with a group of lifers who have all committed murder in San Quinten for years. It's amazing. Some of them are coming to Christ.

B: Well, good!

E: Yea, but you can also see on the yard those who are not.

B: Oh. Of course

E: You said a good thing. What someone who is becoming transformed and someone who is not, how do we talk about that? Are we are talking about transformation...

B: No. We are not talking about that.

E: We're talking about the transformation here, the nature...

B: We are talking about people who will leave themselves open to God to be transformed and those who won't, don't want it.

H: Let's stick with this good analogy.

D: No, but here's the other part of it right? Because we've made it very clear that the spiritual journey is a journey through self. Right?

C: Right.

D: And our free will makes the person that we are, which is different from human nature. So this whole thing of leaving open to transformation, and the will to God, etc. is part of this other dimension of the person we make ourselves to be. In that is where I think the journey is. The human spiritual journey is connected to will, and how we use it, how we respond to grace with it whatever else, you know?

H: To take the analogy let's say ice is the transformed human nature, and steam is the...

B: Well, the transformed would be air. (It's an analogy B!)

L: Ha, ha, ha...

H: That's the purpose of a metaphor.

E: Keep going.

H: So I'm not sure what your problem with that was. Namely steam which is, you know, the inmate murderer, is the person being transformed into water through the will, and then into ice, what's the problem there?

E: I have no problem with it. I just want to know what is that whole thing transformed into and you saying God can just pull the plug on...

B: yea! He's gone. He ceases to exist.

E: That's enough of that.

B: You would just cease to exist. There is nothing of necessity that makes the human nature. That's why it was a beautiful thing for God to make it eternal, to give us this chance.

F: An individual may devolve.

B: Well I suppose so.

L: yea

E: That's an example of it.

I: Do you believe that anybody could see God, and not want that?

B: I don't see how that could be possible. If he really thought and knew that he saw God and how he could run out and...

I: When you're talking about how God could cut...

B: Yes?

I: the cord and cause the person to cease to exist, and no longer animate them...

B: yes? So?

I: How could, you know his life is extremely hard...

B: yea...

I: and so there's a guy maybe he killed somebody...

B: Well, look, he could be sorry for it (sound of blinds being drawn) Hey! That's awful father! (laughter) Shut that! (blinds being drawn again) Alright, now sit down!

All: Ha, ha, ha...

B: Now I don't understand your problem with that.

I: Has anybody every been born that would not come to God if they saw God?

B: I don't see how it would be possible. But I don't know that everybody has seen God.

I: Well maybe they haven't seen God but they will see God.

B: Oh, well, now that's in the future depends on you maybe, I don't know.

D: I think maybe there is an element of response here. Revelation can come our way, grace can come our way. There is an obligation of responding to it that we have. I can see how some people may choose to sit on their bottoms.

E: It's God who determines what we do.

D: No. Then it's not free will. How is it free will if God ultimately determines what we do?

E: It's what Augustine called irresistible grace.

D: No, I think our will is free. We are free to reject God obviously.

E: No one would.

D: What's that?

E: No one would.

B: See I would agree.

I: If they saw God, if they actually saw God...

B: But they haven't seen God.

I: God is able to be revealed to everybody.

B: You know what? Now let's think of this, we want to think well of God so let's say... thinking that God will give everybody a chance.

D: yea

B: Are you with me?

D: Yea

B: God doesn't want anybody getting to heaven and saying, "Oh, gee! I didn't know!"

D: exactly

B: Everybody will be given a chance.

D: right

B: So when you talk about somebody seeing God, well now what's he going to do?

D: Exactly because, no...

I: But you couldn't see him without being involved.

D: I., let me tell you why that's problematic. O.K.? We know that everybody, um, that there's a lot of people who are disconnected from God, right? So we can say two things. Either God chooses to reveal to some people and not to others - stingy God, particular God, special favor God - let's dump that. Now if we say God reveals to everybody but some people do and some people don't (respond well) free will. The alternative is stingy God. So you've either got free will, or stingy God.

L: But I tell you what. Let me describe something to him. I think what you're saying is there are people that are born without certain parts of their brain functioning properly...

B: Oh, well forget them completely!

L: But society is filled with them!

D: But, it's got nothing to do with your brain!

L: It does, because there are parts of your brain that enable you to, there are people with no empathy.

B: If somebody is insane, they are not responsible.

L: But it's not just sane or insane, there are variations. Some people are just born in such a way that they are not receptive.

B: Now I don't know...

L: Biologically, the way they have been created.

I: I saw a documentary a couple of months ago it was called, "What happened to Johnny?" The horrific story Johnny is this kid that was twelve years old and kidnapped, taken away by like professionals, raped repeatedly, and became a male prostitute, this whole thing was about his mom seemed to kind of go crazy too, he came back for a moment, but he was not able to stay...

B: So?!

I: Anyway, the guy that actually kidnapped him came forward. This guy was all, you could tell his mind was all dark and um...

B: So what?! We're talking about normal people.

I: I'm talking about a person whose life has been one hell after another...

B: God takes all that into consideration. God knows about all that. Anyway, I just wanted to tell you, all those things we just have to leave them in God's hands. It's terrible, awful things happen here, constantly. Look, the only thing we can do is make sure our lives are totally given to God.

F: What about L's point?

B: Thomas Merton said this, and I believe it too. The only reason why God does not destroy us all it's because of the good ones, a relative handful, he thinks that the whole world is saved because of these few good people, you know there might be thousands, that God is allowing this, that we're all actually in good hands. Otherwise God would destroy them all. But you do that, and you destroy the good. God's not going to let that happen.

F: And about L's point?

L: I feel it was resolved when she said God takes all that into account.

E: I see that at prison.

B: yea

E: There is this element of will. There are numerous opportunities for every human. There is just something about the darkening of the soul, just too much violence...

B: Yea, how are you going to get out of it? But you know, we hear stories again and again of people coming out of that.

E: And some of them can't.

D: We forget that both Paul and Moses were murderers.

B: Who?

D: Paul and Moses

B: Paul killed people?

D: He was responsible for it.

F: Paul didn't kill anyone. He just held the cloaks.

B: That was different. That was before his conversion. When did Moses kill anyone?

A: He killed that Egyptian guy.

C: B. can I bring up something?

B: Yea

C: The letter said we might break up into discussion groups.

B: The letter said that?

C: possible sub groups

H: I prefer to keep going like this. We are a sub group.

B: That reminds me, how did you know there would be a meeting?

L: I assumed that it was simply a mistake.

B: What do you mean?

L: I last looked at the blogsite and didn't see anything in January and thought it was full.

B: This is a tall story.

L: but a true one.

A: But then he said as an afterthought he asked me if there was any room in this one that's coming up...

B: Wait a minute, you only asked five days ago. How did you know?

H: Does it matter?

L: I was asking...She assumed I knew what I was talking about when I didn't.

E: Don't make him leave!

All: Ha, ha, ha...

E: What I wanna know is, the last discussion was really good. One of the main points we got when we looked at with the will, what did we really learn there?

D: What I was trying to say was, I was responding to I. because I. was saying that everyone who encounters God will turn to Him. What we can say is that God is not stingy and that if they do not turn to God it's got to be something on their side, not God's side. (To be human is to have free will. God "wills" the transformation of all.)

L: I don't see that everyone has been given equal, but I do like what it says in the Bible... from he to whom much has been given, much will be expected.

D: Why would Got not...

B: Now listen! Don't ever quote the bible to me.

E: Ha, ha...

D: But, why would?

B: I'm not a biblical person!

E: I can quote Bernadette to you.

B: Well, that's o.k. because I can always refute it.

All: Ha, ha, ha...

G: God always reveals itself at least once to every person.

B: Well basically I kind of believe that. Just because I said it doesn't make it so.

E: I don't think God is counting how many times God reveals Itself...

B: I'll tell you one of the problems, we have to have a true understanding of the term revelation. Now a lot of people think all you have to do is read the bible and there is the revelation. That the bible or some missionary will reveal God to you. This is not revelation at all. For God to be revealed to you, it's one on one. You'll never get it any other place. And it can't come through your brain, or you figuring it out, or anything else. A revelation is a real revelation of God, and you know it. And if you don't know it, then it's not a revelation.

E: I don't think you have just one chance.

B: Oh, I don't care. Who cares about that? I can't believe that God would condemn somebody that he never gave a chance to.

C: I was going to make, can I make a little point?

B: Sure!

All: Ha, ha, ha...

C: Maybe I misunderstood but I thought that at some point we were going to break into subgroups and

B: Where did you get that? Now you, F. in your discussion groups, you had them divide into groups. And then they all come together and discuss, like this.

F: Yes. We start with them coming together each week and then we break up into five smaller groups. Then they read and discuss the book (The Real Christ) then they bring what they learn to the early part of the next week's discussion then they break into smaller groups again. It's working pretty well except for one group has no spark in it. They haven't really dug into it. But the other groups do a really good job.

B: Do you assign chapters?

F: Yes.

B: And this is going on for weeks?

F: eleven weeks

C: I still think a lot of us are not clear about human nature. We've heard some nice things from D. A good analogy, I personally, and I've really thought about this...

B: Did you read the postscript of the thesis? Where I said this. I'll find it.

C: How many of you are still unclear about human nature?

H: Well, what about it?

C: B. hammers over and over again there is one human nature. But then all of a sudden we hear there is individual human nature.

D: Stop right there. And I'll tell you why, the way human nature exists on earth is as individual.

B: And what causes that?

C: I still don't find that persuasive.

B: It's self.

D: Do you think human nature can exist on earth as some, one amorphous common...

C: Human nature is a mystery.

D: Human nature is not a mystery.

B: All right. Can I read this? This is the last paragraph of the thesis of the book.

C: O.k.

B: By and large, however, the mystery of man is bound up in the true essence of human nature. Essence being a universal and never a particular. Though man has various definitions of human nature, he doesn't even know the true nature of matter, much less the nature of an

immaterial soul. The bottom line, since only God knows the true essence of what God creates, then only God knows the true essence of human nature and what it is destined to become. Nobody of course waits for a definition before he starts to live. Yet even in the living, man does not really know all there is to know. In the long run, however, man's definitions are irrelevant. Because as the early fathers held, man was created to be more than he is now. As the apostle said, we don't know what we are now, we only know what we shall be. Be Christ, that is. So, no use getting stuck in what man is now, but keep your eyes ahead to what man shall be. *Be Christ*. This is why the revelation of Christ is the most meaningful of all God's revelations. Christ reveals that whatever the essence of God is, and whatever the essence of man, the two will be united and one for all eternity. Beyond this, what else does man need to know about God and man? Compared to the revelation of Christ, everything else is meaningless. What more do you want to know? Why are you making this big fuss about what is human nature?

C: I agree with everything you said there.

B: Oh! Listen! That's human nature.

D: C. let me give you simple analogy, all right? We've got ten-to-the-power-of-something oxygen atoms around. Are they all anything other than oxygen atoms?

C: no.

D: O.k. Do they exist as one big giant oxygen something?

C: I don't understand.

D: They are all oxygen atoms and they exist individually. The nature of oxygen is to exist as an individual atom. The way human nature exists on earth is as an individual. You get it?

C: I'll have to give further thought, but I think it breaks down because that's empirical and what God has created it's human nature and only God knows...

D: Who created the oxygen atom?

C: God.

D: So, what's the difference? That's oxygen nature, this is human nature.

C: Because human nature is a spiritual reality and oxygen is not a spiritual reality.

E: Oh?

H: Maybe it is.

C: Maybe there is something wrong with the way I am thinking towards it.

D: I think it's what Bernadette said. You can't see the universal.

B: I think you two should go to the library.

D: We'll stop.

H: B. can I ask...

B: and you go with them!

All: Ha, ha, ha...

D: I think the sub groups have formed.

All: Ha, ha, ha...

H: D. I need your help here. Both of you. So is there, in the transformation, it's as if what makes us the individual, the person is gradually shed.

B: Strictly speaking yes. First you have to know it. Yea. Then gradually, you don't need it any more.

Alright, now listen. Let's get somebody else in here. A., do you have something?

A: I do.

B: Alright. This is P.'s thing here that she picked up from the book that she wants to discuss.

A: O.k. Originally, I had like seven sentences. It started off by considering anthropolatry and how could such a thing happen and why

would people worship a person as God in those days to cause the church fathers to come up with what became the father son problem. It looked to me like the miraculous conception of Jesus was very much in the service of anthropolatry. In other words, if you look at the resurrection, the ascension, etc., these were all God's ways to reveal man to himself. As you've said. To reveal man to man. But the miraculous conception or virgin birth did not seem to me to reveal anything about man in particular. And the fact that it actually led to the father son problem, in the sense that if there hadn't been this...

B: a natural son

A: right.

B: Well, first of all, you can't have a divine son. What do we call that eternal regression?

I: Eternal progression?

B: No. It's eternal regression, because if God can have a son, then he can have a grandpa, and a great grandpa. So who is God? So who is the Uncreated? Who is infinite existence? Who is the beginning of it all? This is a Mormon problem, by the way. They can't tell you. Whoever goes the highest. You don't know who's on top of that ladder!

That anybody could think, as one of the fathers said, who ever heard of God begetting? Look! That means, Arius is the one that said Look! That before the son was conceived he did not exist. So he couldn't be eternal, couldn't be divine. That was Arius' argument.

So, when you talk about Jesus, well it's obvious he's the natural, physical son. And not the divine son. So I don't see how that would lead to anthropolatry. So I don't see how God providing a leg and an arm would make him divine.

A: No, that's not what I meant. If you think of it from the point of view of the simple folk, and how they looked at Jesus and all these miracles and how he died and how he was born of a virgin...

B: Does that smack to anybody, today we have these invitro fertilization, they don't even know who the father is these days. But

does that make somebody divine? Creating a physical body. How could it?

A: I don't think I'm expressing it well.

D: I think what A. is saying is that people take the miraculous birth of Jesus as an indication of his divinity.

B: Well, It's certainly an indication of a miracle, right? Well, we've all experienced miracles! (oh, really?) That doesn't make you divine. Look at Jesus and all the miracles to people, that didn't make any of them divine. I don't see how you go from God providing the male aspect of conception to thinking he's God. He's gotta be God.

F: They were polytheists and worshiped idols and now the idol became flesh.

A: Born of a virgin usually had to do with people being a god or demigod.

H: Biblical scholars will say it is very common.

A: The idea of virgin birth?

H: Yea.

D: I can imagine then people worshiping Jesus as small-g-god, in a polytheistic world.

A: To me that could be easily what the simple folk were trying to do with him, and they had to pull him out of that and say he is greater than that.

The other thing was to me, if the things that happened in Jesus' life, the incarnation was to reveal man to man, our way, our destiny,

B: Are you calling that annunciation the incarnation?

A: I'm asking what did that annunciation reveal to man about man.

B: Well, the whole purpose of it was to reveal Christ. What other purpose was there for this man in this life. Can you think of another purpose? He didn't think he was supposed to save anybody. He lived a good life and that's where you're going to get the social doctrine. He was the model of...

F: a just person

D: When I hear what you're saying, and it's linked to what you've said before B., that it was for him

B: to let him know that he was one with God

D: exactly

B: and that's the exact message that God wanted to get across to us! And that not only was he one with God, *so can you be, and so we are all going to be. That's the message.*

C: I actually asked a professor of Jewish studies at Cal State Fullerton this question, if this would have been impressive to Jews at the time, the idea of a virgin birth.

B: No! It wouldn't have.

C: Well, he's well aware of the problem that word "maiden-virgin", but he said as a Jewish scholar...

B: The messiah was supposed to have had a normal mother and father.

C: There would have been Jews who would have read into that a virgin birth and seen it as a sign of the messiah. It would not have been persuasive to all, but perhaps to some. It might have inspired some people to follow him. It didn't make him a God-man because the Jews would never have had that thought, but it might have been a messianic sign. Now Jesus himself probably never thought that but he did get a group of followers...

B: I really wonder if the apostles knew anything about his virgin birth, apart from Luke.

C: I think it's both in Matthew and Luke.

A: That's right.

B: both

A: But it's interesting because in Matthew they show the messianic progression where Joseph is actually the father. He does tell the story of

Joseph and the angel but he does show the lineage coming down through Joseph...

H: About this I have a question. And it's about the end of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. And his somehow knowing what's going to happen.

B: yea

H: The last supper. Who was speaking when he said, "Take this. This is my body. This is my blood."?

B: He was speaking.

H: Jesus

B: yes

H: Take my body. Is this o.k. for everybody?

B: For example, remember Zeno? The stoic philosopher. This is the Logos. And Jesus said, this is the Logos. I can get it. However, there's a little more to it.

F: For me, isn't it Christ who instituted the Eucharist, or Jesus?

H: That was really my question. Who is speaking?

E: It's more of a universal.

D: It's always Jesus speaking. Does anybody think that God is speaking? Does anybody think anybody but Jesus is speaking?

H: That's not my...

D: We don't know what he said...

H: My issue has to do with the notion of Christ. This is someone who knew...

D: Then you get into the communication of properties. If you start to say the things Jesus said can be attributed to God saying them...

H: No, I'm not saying that.

B: There's a whole chapter in here called the Communication of Properties.

E: Sometimes I think I hear the more universal Christ speaking through Jesus. And sometimes you hear Jesus. That's how I get it.

F: Paul said that too.

G: It's very clear to me.

F: Paul said this is me speaking. And then there would be this universal speaking.

B: One of the biggest things here was Hillary with his three states of Christ. Before the incarnation, now on this earth, and then afterwards. We mix them all up and that's a mistake and don't do it. He keeps talking about that.

G: But when you're reading scripture sometimes it seems very clear to me that it is Jesus, this guy, talking and sometimes it feels like the universal Christ speaking through him.

B: That's it.

G: And it's not confusing unless you think it is all Jesus. Then it gets very confusing.

D: No, why is it confusing? It was obviously all Jesus, but Jesus obviously knew the reality of Christ.

G: Well, that would still be...

B: Well, I don't know. That's interesting.

D: To me, I cannot imagine Christ speaking. Because this is making Christ into a being, into some individual something that's speaking, a subject...

H: You misunderstood. It's not saying that the person sitting there at this meal is God. It's rather that there's something about the end of the life of this person Jesus of Nazareth where there is this knowing, this expectation of the resurrection, about what was going to happen to him with the crucifixion and resurrection.

D: But that's the knowing that he participates in.

H: What then is the last supper?

B: You see this is a seder meal.

H: Yea.

B: We need to go over there and get one of their leaflets. Because this was the blessing of that manna come down from Heaven. That was his reference. They understood him perfectly.

G: But then he instituted the Eucharist

H: Nobody would say that at a Seder!

B: That's a later understanding

G: yes

H: It's not Jewish, to say this is my body.

G: Take this, drink...

B: He took the bread and the wine. In the Seder they are not going to say this is **my** body.

H: That's right!

B: But they are going to say this is the bread came down from Heaven. Maybe that's exactly what Jesus said. But the bible...

H: The question is what's the meaning. My question is a simple one. I don't wanna say this is God. I don't want to say anything like that. Something different is happening here. It's different from his middle and early life. It's different from a Jewish Seder.

B: Well, I don't know...

H: The question is, "How do we understand it?"

E: It's new. It's the start of something new.

B: It's not. Listen this was a Seder meal! They got together for this reason.

H: Nobody would speak those words at a Seder!

F: Yes.

B: What did the bread of life mean to them?

H: This is MY body.

B: Now look if I pick this piece of bread up and say this is my body, what are you guys going to think of that? Do you think that they thought for one minute that this was his body?

D: no

B: Of course not. This was heavenly bread. It's not his body.

H: Take and eat in remembrance of me. No Seder ever says that!

D: I think there is a different question.

B: And all this shouting! And it's 6 o'clock...

H: We just finished talking about transformation and this man is on the verge of losing the self in that crucifixion and there is something that is different from the middle of his life. Then he also said take this cup from me...

B: Listen you guys because we can't read during the meals X asked me if they could serve it in there buffet style. But now wait a minute, by the time everyone is done being served, there is no use saying grace. So let's say grace now but I'll be the last one because my teeth are falling out.

All: Ha, ha, ha...

B: Say grace for us...

A: In the name of the...for the gathering we thank you... all of us. amen. (many animated conversations happening at the same time) Come on in and eat everybody. It's ready.

Friday evening: (We finally hear B.'s reply to the question of being faithful to the current tradition. Then they talk about God's own human nature, God is a gas, Hindu junk, kenosis, a fierce Jesus, and crucifixion.)

B: Can you imagine the fathers of the Church sitting around wondering, well, how about this? And what about that? Some of them got stabbed to death!

F: There were political considerations behind it.

B: Oh, they had everything.

A: You'd have to have a metal detector!

F: About the understanding that we are the inheritors of a living tradition, I want to introduce these ideas in a way that doesn't do violence to the tradition, doesn't separate it...

B: Well, you may not be able to.

F: Well, I'm trying, one of the things...

B: Well, *knock yourself out!*

F: In the invocation I used to say in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Now it's in the name of the father Transcendent, the son Omnipresent, and spirit Imminent so that we are joining old terms with...

B: Did you say the son?

F: Omnipresent

B: The son?

F: Well, that's what the familiar terms are.

B: Well, I would throw out the son.

F: Nobody would know what we were talking about!

B: We've all got to learn the term that John used in the gospel. Logos

F: The word.

B: And that's what all the fathers said. They used the term Logos.

E: Where did the shift come in? Who made that shift?

B: The best I could research it was when it really started was way back there with the Stoics. See that was an eastern philosophy, eastern

religion, but when it came to the west, these people in the west, they didn't have any background in the Logos. They didn't know what that meant. They weren't sure of that. So they kind of figured it out it kind of comes from logic and intelligence, so it means something like it's a word. That's how it happened because they never knew the Logos, period. They didn't have Zeno, they didn't know Heraclitus. Therefore, they started to use the term word. I was thinking the other day the term Christ is just a title. And you might say it's nothing but a word that signifies something else. It doesn't signify anything God said or did, it signifies something else. If you have to use the term word, which I'm against, well the Logos is that which is one with matter, are you with me? This is Greek philosophy. This was the Stoics. This is why they used the term incarnation. One with matter. It's like saying our body is not divorced from the Divine Logos. And this was their understanding of the incarnation. If you want to understand the incarnation, it includes matter. Matter is also saved. Matter is important. This was stoicism and then it came over into Christianity. Which is why incarnate really matches the Logos, are you with me? Not the Holy Spirit. In other words, Christ is not one with the Transcendent or the Holy Spirit, but is one with the Logos, one with the flesh.

I'm talking about a new Christology which would also include the soul which is one with the Holy Spirit and they are both in the Transcendent, the whole of creation is in the Transcendent. That's the best I can research the term.

H: Did you just said the whole of creation is in the Transcendent?

B: Yea.

H: Could you say some more about that?

B: Well, it's the ground of all being, that's our ground! That's the Transcendent and the Holy Spirit is one with that, and also with the matter is the logos. You've got the soul, the Logos, and the source or ground of our being.

A: Is that how matter is saved B?

B: See, to me, the word salvation means nothing.

E: You just said matter is saved.

B: That was the Stoics, not me. You've got to get rid of this, there is no salvation.

H: You just said that even matter is saved.

B: Well, even matter is made divinized. I don't like the word saved. It sounds like, saved from what?! Saved from eternal dirt?

A: B. did you once say that the Logos was all that was manifest of the Unmanifest? Is that one way you talked about it?

B: Well, it's the form of the formless. That's how I saw it. How all form came from divine form, the Logos is divine form and all form came from the Logos and I saw how they are absolutely one.

A: That was really helpful to me.

B: Well I regard the Transcendent as formless but somehow that Logos it has a form inherent. It's the form of God, and it doesn't mean shape.

A: No, right. In fact, there are these great findings in physics where they are going down smaller and smaller and smaller, you know, past the atoms down smaller and they are finding this mysterious thing that they can't define, it doesn't move by laws, it seems to...I mean I know we couldn't see the Logos, I understand that, but I...

B: The big question in science today, in physics today they are wondering how can light be conducted through empty space, a void, are you with me? And, um, they have this theory out there is this thing out there called ether and that transmits light, energy, and so forth, from one thing to another. The reason why ether is the medium is I hold there is no such thing as space or emptiness there is no such thing as a void. It doesn't exist. And yet, the scientists say that there is, that you've got empty space out there.

(While she enjoyed a lively interest in astronomy from childhood, I don't think B. ever studied physics, much less the relationship between the two fields. Probably what she is talking about is not the debunked hypothesis of ether, but rather what physicists call "dark matter" or what Bohm calls "the implicate order".)

What is space? It's what's between objects, that's what it is. So, there is that theory out there about ether, it's something you can't detect. How can that light get to the earth? How can you get it if there is just a void? There has to be something there to conduct it.

Did you have a particular care you wanted to bring up?

C: I had a question. We kind of already hit on it. And that is God's universal human nature.

B: yea

C: I don't understand that. I understand what human nature is.

B: Well, there's only one. Because it's one it has to be something universal. It's not particular. In a way I shouldn't say that because look, whenever you say something is one, we think of a numerical one. Are you with me? A quantitative being. Well, I'm not so sure we can do that with human nature. Because we don't know it that well. *It can be infinite...* the way that, um, who was my favorite... Duns Scotus put it. He said forget the term universal because that's in your head. There is no such thing as a universal. What a human nature is, a universal, is what we all have in common.

By definition a universal cannot be quantitated. That's why he stressed what we have in common. Universal is abstract whereas common brings it down to matter, to the reality of the thing. That's what he wanted was the reality of the thing.

H: Well you mentioned several times...

B: Well I do use the term.

A: Because then you say God created a human nature for itself.

B: Do I say that?! Where is it? I'd like to know. (This discussion could also be called a final editorial meeting for her last book.)

A: It's all throughout the book. Page 112 is one of the first places.

B: I'll knock it out.

H: But you've said it many times.

E: Yea

A: Very first line of p. 112. You say “a human nature” that’s the language that we found confusing.

B: I’ll knock it out.

H: God’s own. We had so much trouble with that.

B: Well, that’s o.k.

H: I’ll tell you how we got confused. You’re using it differently. That’s why “own” is misleading.

B: God’s own human nature, I don’t see what’s the problem with that. Christ is not my human nature. It is not Jesus’ own human nature. Christ is God’s own human nature.

H: Why say “own”? What happens if you get rid of the word own? Why not just say God’s human nature? (This is where B.’s unique education and particular way of speaking become problematic. The apostrophe “s” after “God” renders “own” redundant and unnecessary.)

B: A theologian sitting here would say that is exactly why we say God is a person because he owns that human nature. Well I don’t mind you calling God’s human nature a person, but calling God a person? Because God owns a human nature? Does God own its own nature? This stuff is picayune. This book could have been ten times longer if I took all these little things and...

H: This is a key thing B. that is introduced at the beginning of the book and appears throughout. Does anyone else have a problem with this? I don’t want to be the only one relegated...

G: It sounds like there is...

B: It’s not Jesus human, it’s not your human nature.

G: It sounds like there...

H: Say that again B.

B: Christ is not my human nature, not Jesus’ human nature. Christ is God’s own human nature.

G: Christ is God's own human nature.

H: So then if this transformation happens to this individual or any individual...

B: Who cares?

H: Into Christ...

B: yea

H: Is that the same as saying can we then say that they have been transformed into God's own human nature?

B: yes

H: So what makes my human nature...

B: You can't talk about your own human nature.

H: Yes, we are transformed into God's human nature. Does that mean that my human nature...

B: no.

H: Now we are back to the fact that human nature changes.

B: No!!

H: We are to be transformed into God's human nature.

B: No!

H: Hang on! Let me finish! Does that mean that my human nature is no longer mine?

B: She can't even ask the question. If I say there is no self, then she would ask well who is talking. She can't even ask the question! (B. is saying as long as there is a "you" or "my" there, there is not Christ. Self and Christ are mutually exclusive.)

H: Does that mean that what was my human nature because of the self becomes God's human nature because of the divesting of all of that? Is that correct?

B: No.