

Second-Adam Typology and the Restoration of the Holy Spirit in Cyril of
Alexandria: Reasons for His Christological Defense

by

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DEDICATION

For Hannah, Frederic, and Gordon

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyse the merits of a scholarly position about Cyril of Alexandria's motivation for his Christology during the Nestorian controversy. The position holds that Cyril's Christology was influenced by and developed out of his eucharistic theology. I argue, however, that Cyril was motivated rather by what he saw as the redemptive deification of our human nature in the incarnate Christ. I hold that Cyril argued that the person of Christ had to be the single-Subject Word of God for two reasons: (1) Christ is referred to as the Second Adam while still being God, and so must be joined to our human nature hypostatically in order to be perfectly God and man without any absorption or mixture of the natures and (2) that He did so to restore to our human nature the Holy Spirit that was lost in Adam's fall.

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And, finally, my thanks and devotion to the God-man, Jesus Christ, Whose life, death, and resurrection paid for the life of this miserable sinner, and gave to him the Holy Spirit through Baptism. He has made me one with Him as He is one with the Father to Whom be glory and honour forever and ever, Amen.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is twofold: (1) to assess the merits of a position held by both Henry Chadwick and Ellen Concannon who argue that Cyril of Alexandria's chief motivation for his defense of his Christology during the Nestorian controversy was the Eucharist; and (2) to add further strength and consideration of sources to the thesis of Daniel Keating, who argues that the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our nature, which had lost the Spirit in our fall into sin, is of immediate importance to Cyril during the Nestorian controversy. I seek to argue that the latter is a much more convincing reason for Cyril's defense of his Christology than the former option.

I seek to demonstrate that Cyril's concern in the controversy-era writings is actually with the unity of the Word of God to His own flesh more so than the Eucharist, and that he emphasises this unity to prevent any duality in Christ, as he read in Nestorius, for a purpose that is twofold: first, because he has in mind the ramifications of a 'two-sons' Christology on the fact of Christ being the Second Adam, and, second, because he see Christ's Baptism as the way in which the Holy Spirit is restored to our nature, since it lost the Holy Spirit in Adam's Fall.¹ Put another way, I claim that Cyril has as his

¹ The matter of Nestorius himself endorsing a 'two-sons' Christology is vastly misunderstood. I do not side with Nestorius by any means (and I would note that McGuckin as well does not endeavour to side with Nestorius but only gives him the most generous reading that he can), but it should be noted that a closer reading of his writings shows that he did not subscribe wholeheartedly to a 'two-sons' Christology as theologians would have understood the term at the time, although his christological formulations certainly allowed for this if taken in certain ways. His manner of explaining his position was albeit confusing, even for his contemporaries, and there was a matter of a different use of terms on both sides, the one favouring *prosopon* and the other favouring *hypostasis*. See John McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria: The Christological Controversy: Its History, Theology, and Texts* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 142–145, henceforth cited in the short form as *The Christological Controversy*. In his seminal monograph on the Christological controversy of the fifth century, McGuckin writes this about Nestorius' Christology: "For Nestorius, there are two distinct genuses in Christ, the two *ousiai* of divinity and humanity. It follows from this, on his terms, that there must be two natures (*physeis*) corresponding to the distinct genuses. Accordingly, these two *physeis* will be apparent to the external observer in their respective *prosopa*." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 151). This ought to be read alongside what

primary concern the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit to our human nature in Christ, and that this can only be accomplished by an Incarnation in the manner that he explains, with Christ being the Second Adam.

Chapter one analyses the most recent attempt in the scholarship by Ellen Concannon to argue for a eucharistic foundation for Cyril's defense of his Christology. I evaluate some of the recent scholarship regarding Cyril's eucharistic theology to show the strengths and weaknesses of Concannon's position, and I attempt to show how Cyril is more concerned with the unity of the Word with His flesh more so than the eucharist in the same sources cited by Concannon.

Chapter two sets up the argument for chapter three by laying the foundation for it. I seek to demonstrate aspects of Cyril's anthropology and sacramental theology, taken from his *Glaphyra on the Pentateuch* and *Commentary on John* in order to show how Cyril's theology of human nature informs the great necessity he places on baptismal regeneration. Cyril's anthropology, I claim, forms the basis for his use of the Adam-Christ typology so present in his works, and informs the role that such typology plays in

McGuckin also says about Nestorius' prosopic theory: "In so far as a prosopon signifies 'observable aspect' or 'communicable external appearance' then perhaps we can sum up Nestorius' position so far as follows: The eyes of faith recognise in Christ two clearly observed aspects of his reality, which signify to the beholder divinity as well as humanity. Christ, therefore, has two prosopa. At the same time the eyes of faith recognise that this Christ who has two prosopa is not the same as those prosopa themselves. In other words Christ is not the Logos as such. [...] The word [Christ] connotes far more than the term 'the man Jesus'; in fact it connotes the whole mystery of the intimate relationship of this man with the divine Logos, and the union of the Logos with him." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 157). Also: "Nestorius' insistence that he did not mean to teach Two Sons, his use of the notion of worship to demonstrate and celebrate the unity of will and operations in Christ, and his argument that there was but one seat of understanding in Christ, amount to a considerable body of evidence demonstrating he had moved away from the crude and antique sense of Two Sons christology." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 172). It will be important, therefore, to maintain throughout that Cyril actually has in mind not only to eliminate Nestorius' position, but also the position of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, from whom came the 'two-sons' Christology that Cyril attacks. McGuckin says as much when he writes thus: "[Cyril] also argued from start to finish that he was attacking this whole tradition (Nestorius as well as Diodore and Theodore) because of fundamentally unacceptable implications in its doctrine." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 173–174).

the baptismal narrative and mentions of Baptism in the Gospel of John. In his *Commentary on John*, we see Christ as the Second Adam and the restorer of the Holy Spirit to our human nature by His Baptism, and how the image of God in man is renewed in us by the indwelling Spirit being restored to us by Christ's Baptism. This, I claim, informs his reasonings for his defense of his Christology once we get to the controversy-era writings in chapter three, since, as I argue, the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our nature by Christ's Baptism necessitates the Incarnation as he understands it—as an ineffable union where both elements, divine and human, make up the incarnate Christ, yet are neither mixed nor confused but perfectly united in Him.

Chapter three seeks to demonstrate in the controversy-era writings all that has been discussed and presupposed as conditions for the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our human nature in chapter two. My point here is that I find it quite evident that those dogmas about which Cyril made great exegeses in his *Glaphyra on the Pentateuch* and *Commentary on John* were so significant to him in their reliance on orthodox Christology that they were used as points of argument in his controversy-era writings such as his letters to Nestorius and others from shortly after the Council of Ephesus. The significance and importance he places on elements such as the unity of the natures in Christ—that the unity is hypostatic—as well as Christ as the Second Adam and restorer of the Holy Spirit causes me to believe that these were of far greater consequence and concern to him over and against the eucharistic implications of the 'two-sons' Christology that he saw Nestorius resurrecting from Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Obviously, Cyril expounds the great blessings of a faithful partaking of the Eucharist, but, as I show, this is not his primary concern during the controversy, and such eucharistic mentions do

not outrank the countless others that point his adversaries to Adam-Christ typology and baptismal regeneration and the necessary relation between the two.

1. 1 CHRIST AS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EUCHARIST: AN EXAMINATION OF THE SCHOLARLY CONSENSUS FOR CYRIL'S DEFENSE OF HIS CHRISTOLOGY.

In his monograph titled *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, Daniel Keating articulates Cyril's focus in deification by the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit cogently when he says that "[a]ccording to Cyril's narrative of divine life, in a first and primary sense we become partakers of the divine nature through the gift of the Holy Spirit in baptism and through the sanctification and new life the Spirit brings. This participation in divine life is renewed in a special manner through regular participation in Christ's life-giving flesh and blood in the Eucharist."² In other words, inquiring into Cyril's understanding of the reasons for why our participation in the divine nature by means of the Sacraments is effective will reveal to us that it is because the effectiveness of the Sacraments is determined by the One in whom they have their existence. This, then, might help in explaining why Cyril is so keen on maintaining the one subject referent in the incarnate Christ as against what he saw as the 'two-sons' Christology of Nestorius.³ The point being that he is concerned about our appropriation of divine life

² Daniel Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 129. "Cyril's primary use of term 'sanctification' is effectively equivalent to what is normally meant by the term 'divinization', and paired together they capture in more traditional terms the subject of our investigation." (p. 7, n. 14). The author explains that he is aware of "only twenty texts or so in Cyril's entire corpus that employ the characteristic vocabulary of divinization (θεοποιέω/θεοποίησις);" for the most part, he says, these precede the controversy period (p. 10).

³ Again, as a good summation of Nestorius' position alongside the consensus of it at the time of the controversy, McGuckin writes thus: "On the one hand Nestorius had presented an interesting doctrine of the single Christ (the prosopon of union) which rejected any form of synthesis by essence or nature. The unity of these two disparate essences was achieved at the level of prosopic manifestations. [...] On the

through the Sacraments and the precondition of this being the Incarnation as he understood it.

An inquiry of this type, then, would bring us back to the Incarnation: the defining focus of Cyril's exegesis and theological defense throughout his life. This is because, as I shall demonstrate, there is effectively a triangle of interdependent theological doctrines active in Cyril's corpus: The Incarnation, redemption, and Baptism, and that one requires a correct Christology in order for the Sacrament of Baptism to be redemptive and deifying.

Keating, in the above statement, makes the claim that Cyril is concerned with the deification of the Christian as an endpoint, and the Sacraments being the means by which the blessings of the Incarnation are delivered.⁴ The divinizing aspect of Cyril's theology would certainly be congruent with the ascetic influence from his young adult life, which can be seen in the earlier Festal Letters. At the same time, Christ and His incarnational existence out of the union of two natures forms the basis for not only the divine indwelling accomplished through the Sacraments, but also the fact of there being a deification of the Christian caused by this.

Keating outlines the way in which the deification of our human nature is initially accomplished by means of the life, death, and resurrection of the incarnate Christ. He says that these are "for Cyril more than just the means of our salvation" but that "Christ is

other hand, the clarity of his insistence on the oneness of Christ seemed hopelessly compromised to many, not only by his insistence on the abiding duality of discrete natures but also by his language on the duality of the natural prosopa abiding in Christ, which seemed to argue a plurality of subject. His frequent references to 'the man Jesus' did nothing to disperse such suspicions." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 170–171).

⁴ Norman Russell says that "*Theopoiēsis*, Cyril's preferred term for deification until the controversy with Nestorius, is the goal of human life." Norman Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2000), 21. I do not, however, follow all of Russell's conclusions.

for Cyril at one and the same time the agent of our redemption, the representative recipient of our redemption, and the pattern for our progress in the divine life.”⁵ Not only is our salvation accomplished by Christ, but there are specific details of the nature of His person, life, and the ‘how’ of the Incarnation that help us understand in what ways human nature is sanctified—in addition to being justified—and that this initial deification is for Cyril delivered by grace and received through the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.⁶

In the broader discussions of Christian deification, otherwise known by its standard Greek label *θέωσις* (*theōsis*), there seem to be two patterns into which deification may be said to fall. These are noted by Kharlamov in his summary of the recent scholarship on the doctrine of deification. Kharlamov notes that Norman Russell observes the following in his work titled *Fellow Workers with God: Orthodox Thinking on Theosis*:

[There are] two patterns that define the role of theosis within the divine economy. One, predominantly expressed by Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, is more biblically oriented, with emphasis on justification, sanctification, divine filiation, and participation in the divine nature. Another, represented by Maximus the Confessor and the later Fathers is more speculative and philosophical, with more explicitly stated eschatological cosmic fulfillment.⁷

⁵ Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, 191.

⁶ Keating argues that for Cyril the terms divinization and sanctification are for all intents and purposes equivalents (see p. 7, n. 14). See also at pp. 106–109 of Keating’s *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria* the importance and centrality of faith as that through which the divine life is received and appropriated by us. Ezra Gebremedhin (p. 88, n. 58) highlights the role of faith early in Cyril’s commentaries especially in an Old Testament context in *Amos* 5. 22 (PG. 71, 505D–508A) and *Zechariah* 11. 7 (PG. 72, 188B). Ezra Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing: An Inquiry into the Eucharistic Doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria*, *Studia Doctrinae Christianae Upsaliensia*, vol. 17 (Uppsala, 1977), 88. The commentary on the twelve prophets is dated to the earlier period of Cyril’s life (412–423 A.D.) and certainly before 428 A.D. See Robert C. Hill, trans. *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Commentary on the Twelve Prophets* Vol. 1 (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 3–5.

⁷ Vladimir Kharlamov, editor, *Theōsis: Deification in Christian Theology*, vol. 2 (Eugene, OR.: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 5. Another take on this is presented by Bernard Fraigneau-Julien. Fraigneau-Julien begins by stating the two differing redemptive theories that have their basis in John and Paul respectively. The first, which he calls the “physical or mystical” theory of the redemption, considers the divinization of

It is the former pattern that interests us in the present inquiry of this chapter; the deification of our human nature in Cyril's thinking follows this pattern and can equally be said in two ways, Keating argues: "a strict and narrower sense, and a broad and more comprehensive one."⁸

Briefly put, the narrower sense concerns deification by the reception of the Sacraments initially in Baptism, and thenceforth by a consistent, faithful partaking of the Eucharist, and the more comprehensive sense is more developmental, seen as both a progression in the blessings of the stricter sense and as a "faith-filled response to God and our growth in virtue through obedience to the divine commands, yielding a way of life (*πολιτεία*) pleasing to God."⁹ The latter is treated by Cyril in a handful of earlier texts,¹⁰ mostly in his exhortations to piety in his *Festal Letters*¹¹ and his exegesis of the

human nature in the incarnate Christ, as represented by John, and the second, which he calls the "moral or realist" theory of the redemption, considers the death of Christ as the atoning sacrifice, redeeming humanity to God. Bernard Fraigneau-Julien, "L'efficacité de l'humanité du Christ selon saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Revue Thomiste* 55 (1955): 615. Reprinted by Nendeln/Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1967. He goes on to claim that Cyril does not actually side with either of the two in particular, but upholds both, and I would agree with his evaluation.

⁸ Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, 192.

⁹ Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, 193. He elaborates at p. 192: "Cyril typically expresses this first sense of divinization through a collection of biblical expressions: justification, sanctification, adoptive sonship, participation in the Spirit, communion in the divine nature. These are distinguishable, but Cyril normally treats them as aspects of one work rather than as separable steps in our redemption. When applied to entrance into the kingdom of God through baptism, the expressions 'sanctification' (*ἀγιασμός*), 'participation in the Spirit' (*τὴν τοῦ Πνεύματος μέθεξι*), and 'partakers of the divine nature' (*θείας φύσεως κοινωνοί*) are especially closely linked, and together they capture this strict sense of divinization in Cyril's thought." Arguably, most of the modern discussions around deification mostly prefer the term 'theosis' and focus more so on the broader and more comprehensive manner of deification rather than the particular reception of the incarnate Christ and Holy Spirit in the Eucharist and Baptism. This makes Cyril's views markedly distinct in modern dialogues about deification.

¹⁰ These are noted by Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, 129–139.

¹¹ There are frequent calls to the living of a sanctified life (a life becoming of a Christian) in numerous *Festal Letters* of Cyril. See Philip R. Amidon, S. J., trans., *Festal Letters 1-12*, ed. John J. O'Keefe (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2009). In *Festal Letter I*, for example, he says "the divine and inviolate festival bidding us, as it were, to ascend at last to the spiritual Jerusalem and stirring us to hasten to enter upon a life of piety, let us listen to what we hear through the prophet" (p. 35) and the "holy festival therefore shining forth and calling us to an unblemished and prescriptive sanctity" (p. 38). There is equally a call to fasting in his earlier letters, and this as a result, says O'Keefe, of Cyril's ascetic

relationship between God's grace and human efforts—otherwise known as the relation between faith and works. Keating gives this aspect of Cyril's thinking about deification adequate attention, affirming that “for Cyril our share in the divine life is always by grace, and not by nature.”¹² Nonetheless, he shows that Cyril is primarily concerned with the former sense for most of his career.

It seems to be the case for Russell and Keating, then, that Cyril places his Sacramental and soteriological discussions at the forefront of the first pattern of humanity's deification, not necessarily because of the chronological order of God's plan of salvation, but in the sense of their importance.¹³ For him the former, stricter sense is the focus because its constituents entail the beginning of the Christian's life from Life in Baptism and the continued reception of Life in the two natures in Christ in the Eucharist. Both of these are means to the beginning of the Christian life, which then sees a continuous progression in the emulation of Christ and transformation of the mind of the

beginnings. Quasten summarises the letters thus: “they exhort to fast and abstinence, to vigilance and prayer, almsgiving and works of mercy” and “contain several dogmatic expositions, which reecho the christological controversies of the times.” Johannes Quasten, *The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature*, Patrology vol. 3 (Utrecht-Antwerp, 1975), 130.

¹² Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, 10. Later at p. 117, by piecing together from various primary sources Cyril's view of the relation between faith and works Keating remarks that “free will is, then, a ‘fellow-worker’ with divine grace in the work of salvation... Though Cyril makes no neat divide between the co-operation of grace and human response for the initial reception of grace on the one hand, and for the ongoing life and sanctification on the other, the latter seems to be in view throughout his commentary on John 17: 12–13, even when he speaks of the attainment of salvation.” See Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria*, pp. 114–118 for a fine analysis on how Cyril maintains salvation by grace through faith while allowing for human co-operation with the divine will through faith, fully acknowledging the logical tensions.

¹³ I mean here that Cyril's focus with respect to deification is more so on what the Word of God accomplishes for us by His life, death, and resurrection than an elaborate intellectual, philosophical ascent to the mind of God on our part. The former seems to Cyril to evidently be the chronological predecessor to the latter insofar as the religious life of the believer is concerned. I have in mind, for example, passages such as 1 Corinthians 12:3 (Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says, “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit), which suggest that intellectual fruit of faith presuppose faith, and so suggest that one is already Baptised.

believer, its object becoming the pursuit of the will of God, resulting in ongoing sanctification.

Now, one way I shall address the deification of our human nature in the Sacraments according to Cyril shall be somewhat indirect. This entails looking at Cyril's motivation for his defense of his Christology against that of Nestorius. There are two notions that are wrapped up in the assertion that our human nature is indeed deified through our participation in the Sacraments: the first is the concept of safeguarding the efficacy of the Eucharist,¹⁴ and the second notion follows from this in that it seems to be the case for Cyril that the efficacy of the Eucharist relies on his particular understanding of the union of the Word with His flesh in the Incarnation, the 'how.' In other words, that the two elements, or natures in Christ are united in the particular manner in which Cyril says that they are is foundational for his understanding of the ability of the Eucharist to have such a divinizing effect on those who faithfully partake of it.¹⁵

Treating the Eucharist before Baptism, while evidently in the reversed order of their usual reception, will serve the purpose of analysing and considering the topic that has caused what Keating calls an "imbalance" in how contemporary scholarship (essentially from the beginning of the twentieth century onward) has understood Cyril's

¹⁴ This claim is undisputed and in fact a position that is evident in Cyril, but, as we shall see, misrepresents the whole of Cyril's understanding of redemption and the reason for why he is so adamant about the one subject Christology.

¹⁵ Fraigneau-Julien writes that the doctrine of the deification of the Christian is not so much treated as an article of dogma on its own, but is often used to prove other elements of the faith such as the divinity of the Word or the Holy Spirit; he means to inquire here about Cyril's understanding of "la divinisation du chrétien par l'Incarnation," ("the divinization of the Christian by the Incarnation.") Bernard Fraigneau-Julien, "L'inhabitation de la sainte Trinité dans l'âme selon saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Revue de Sciences Religieuses* 30, no. 2 (1956): 135–136. Put simply, "La divinisation de l'humanité est en relation essentielle avec le mystère de l'Incarnation." ("The divinization of humanity is in an essential relationship with the mystery of the Incarnation.") (Fraigneau-Julien, "L'inhabitation de la sainte Trinité," 136). All translations of the French are my own.

emphases in the Christian's appropriation of divine life.¹⁶ This imbalance has seen such a great emphasis placed on the Eucharist as Cyril's purpose for his Christological defense that discussion about Baptism and the restoration to us of the Holy Spirit in Cyril's thinking, for example, has not received the attention that it deserves.¹⁷ So, although it would seem counterintuitive to begin this way, I have thought it best to proceed thus in order to clear the way, so to speak, for the following chapters, dealing with them with the conclusion of this chapter in mind.

For the moment, though, we shall treat Cyril's eucharistic theology as taken up by key scholars from the middle of the twentieth century to the present who have continued the push for a Cyrilline redemptive arc that sees the Eucharist as the end towards which Cyril argues his Christology during the Nestorian controversy.¹⁸ An element of this section will be to establish the ways in which this imbalance might be seen as favouring the Eucharist as Cyril's endpoint, essentially showing the strengths and weaknesses of some of the recent arguments for this position, and the textual support used for it. Finally, I shall demonstrate how the unity of the Person of Christ seems to be foremost for Cyril

¹⁶ Daniel Keating, "The Twofold Manner of Divine Indwelling in Cyril of Alexandria: Redressing an Imbalance," *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001): 543. He says that "the tendency to construe Cyril's narrative of redemption solely or primarily in terms of a eucharistic endpoint distorts the shape of his theology, and fails to accord to the pneumatic mode of divine indwelling through the Holy Spirit the prominence it deserves."

¹⁷ Keating cites similar sources as I have found in my own research, but they are still worth mentioning here since we shall encounter some of them later: Joseph Mahé, S. J., "L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 8 (1907): 677–696, esp. 681–687; L. Janssens, "Notre filiation divine d'après saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Ephemerides theologicae lovaniensis* 15 (1938): 233–278, esp. 251–253. Here, Janssens emphasizes the Eucharist in Cyril's thinking. Just prior to this, however, he by no means dismisses the participation in the divine nature by the Holy Spirit that is so prominent in Cyril: "Frères du Fils, nous sommes en même temps fils du Père. En effet, celui qui nous sanctifie, c'est l'Esprit du Fils et, étant en nous par participation, il nous rend semblables au Fils, dont il est la forme et l'image." (p. 249) and "c'est ainsi surtout qu'il [Cyril] identifie l'adoption à la conformité au Fils naturel par la participation du Saint-Esprit." (p. 250). There is also a very decisive and influential article by Henry Chadwick: "The Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy," *Theological Studies* 2, no. 2 (1951): 145–64. We shall see some citations from Chadwick below.

¹⁸ There will be brief mention, as well, of scholars before 1951 (Chadwick's article) to contextualize some information.

in a key letter to Nestorius, such that the necessity for a unity that provides the effectiveness of the Eucharist will emerge again as a similar condition for the effectiveness of Baptism and the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our human nature in Christ.

The overall goal of this chapter will be to challenge the claim that Cyril's Christology emerges from his eucharistic theology, and to show that it is in fact the opposite. As to the point about the Eucharist being a motivating factor for the defense of his Christology, I will not deny this; my only claim will be that it is not the chief motivating factor. Additionally, as much as it may seem that certain passages point to the Eucharist as the endpoint of Cyril's redemptive arc, I shall demonstrate that they do not account for the other modes by which the blessings of the Incarnation are appropriated to and by us. This is a topic that will be continued in Chapter two.

1.1.1 Diagnosing the Imbalance

Interest in the broad scope of Cyril's eucharistic theology has waxed and waned throughout the twentieth century, and this has entailed works mostly concerned with whether or not Cyril taught a real, corporeal presence in the Eucharist, the concluding chapters of the debates favouring the affirmative.¹⁹ Henry Chadwick's treatment of the matter, Concannon says, effectively changed the direction of the scholarship from whether Cyril believed in a substantial, physical presence of the Lord's body and blood in the Eucharist to how his eucharistic theology relates and fits into the rest of his

¹⁹ See the brief but detailed summary of scholarly interest in Ellen Concannon, "The Eucharist as Source of St. Cyril of Alexandria's Christology," *Pro Ecclesia* 18, no. 3 (2009): 318–319.

theological positions.²⁰ Concannon outlines the concern in the scholarship including and after Chadwick. She summarizes the problem at hand: “is Cyril’s presentation of the Eucharist a subsequent illustration of his Christology, or does his Christology have its source in his understanding of the Eucharist?”²¹

As an aside, it is one thing to say that the Eucharist is a motivating factor for Cyril in his defense against Nestorius, and this, I think, is indisputably correct. But it is another matter to say that his Christology flows out of his understanding of the Eucharist.

Concannon asserts that both these claims are true, but I disagree with the latter.

Moving on, though, Chadwick’s article more precisely concerns an analysis of the difference between Cyril and Nestorius’ Christologies, as well as how Cyril’s Christology has its start in his eucharistic theology, as he claims, because of the soteriological implications of the Antiochene dualism.²² I do not think, however, that Chadwick claims that this is the case systematically, as though his eucharistic theology was a condition for his Christology, but that he sees that this is how Cyril approaches the ‘two-sons’ Christology—by appealing to the ramifications it has on the Eucharist, rather than arguing from any Christological or scriptural fallacy as he does in his commentaries and

²⁰ Concannon, 319. The article cited is Henry Chadwick, “The Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy,” *Theological Studies* 2, no. 2 (1951): 145–164. This approach (that Cyril’s Christology begins out of his eucharistic theology) is challenged by Ezra Gebremedhin, who apparently argues for the reverse: “The eucharistic liturgy as a cultic prolongation of the Incarnation of the Logos also stands at the very centre of Cyril’s understanding of the remedy provided by God, for the restoration of Fallen Man.” Ezra Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing: An Inquiry into the Eucharistic Doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria*, *Studia Doctrinae Christianae Upsaliensia*, vol. 17 (Uppsala, 1977), 70.

²¹ Concannon, 319.

²² Welch adds that “Chadwick observed that the eucharist was at the very center of Cyril’s thought and piety and that the Antiochene Christology with its unsatisfactory concept of the unity of Christ denied the very center of Cyril’s theology.” Lawrence J. Welch, *Christology and Eucharist in the Early Thought of Cyril of Alexandria* (San Francisco: Catholic Scholar Press, 1994), 25.

in his later dogmatic treatises.²³ Chadwick is particularly interested in the motivation behind Cyril's objection to the Antiochene Christology. He finds that Cyril's chief concern is evidently that it compromises the effectiveness of the Eucharist.

By making Christ into two persons, he says that “[the Antiochenes] ended by making him into an impossible duality, an inconceivable psychological *monstrum*.”²⁴ He writes: “His fundamental objections to Antiochene doctrine [regarding the novel ‘two *hypostases*’ in Christ] lay rather in the repercussions of such thought upon the doctrines of the eucharist and the atonement.”²⁵ I would add to this statement the qualification that Cyril's concern with the inconsistencies in the doctrines of the Eucharist and atonement, were one to side with Nestorius, is that the effectiveness of the Eucharist, for him, necessitates a single-subject Christology—two natures with One single subject referent. Not only this, but because he also thinks that the Antiochene Christology is both ontologically and scripturally errant, which, again, makes their Christ in his mind ontologically impossible.

Chadwick argues to this effect that “[t]he eucharist is central for the comprehension of Cyril's religion. Every week, he writes, we hold our sacred meetings behind closed doors, and, as to the disciples, Christ comes among us all both visibly and

²³ These contrast with his commentaries, Festal Letters, and polemical letters. Some examples are the *De incarnatione unigeniti* and *Quod unus sit Christus* in the Sources chrétiennes series: Georges M. de Durand, *Deux dialogues christologiques*, Sources chrétiennes, vol. 97 (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1964).

²⁴ Chadwick, 152.

²⁵ Chadwick, 153. It should be noted that Nestorius preferred certain vocabulary over other terms: “For [Nestorius] hypostasis was not a particularly good term to speak of the ‘distinct reality’ of a thing—its individualness—and this because of the term's close semantic associations with the words for overall generic nature (*ousia*, *physis*). He found it made much more sense to apply a different word altogether to signify the distinct individualness of a thing, and this was to be *prosopon*.” (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 142). See also McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 138–145 for a discussion of the terms available to theologians at the time of the controversy and their meanings.

invisibly: invisibly as God, visibly as being again in the body.”²⁶ This seems to mean that if we are to understand the reasons for Cyril’s defense of the unity of Christ, we must understand that Cyril sees the Eucharist as foremost in the liturgical life of the Christian. This is certainly the case, but what is missed in both Chadwick’s and Concannon’s analyses is the admission that Cyril exposes the ramifications of Nestorius’ dualism on the Eucharist in order to demonstrate why his own Christology is correct, established by means of his argument that his own Christology assures the proper effectiveness of the Eucharist. In other words, I claim, he uses his Christology as evidence for the fact that any other Christology would take away the salvific and divinizing aspects of the Eucharist, not the other way around.

Surely it would be safe to say that Cyril thinks that the Eucharist is essential for the delivering of Christ’s sanctified human nature to us—and we shall see some citations that say as much—but, as I shall argue, Cyril is not only concerned about the effects of Nestorian Christology on the Eucharist; he seems to be fully aware of the redemptive deification that occurs to our human nature on account of the Incarnation, as he understands it. This, I think, is just as much a motivator for his defense of his Christology, if not more so than the implications of Nestorius’ Christology for the

²⁶ Chadwick continues: “And there he allows us even to touch his holy flesh, in the *ὁμολογία καὶ ἀνάμνησις* of his death and resurrection. Here is the heart of Cyril’s faith, the dynamic which imparted such intense religious fervour to his monophysite monks. Every eucharist is a reincarnation of the Logos who is there *πάλιν ἐν σώματι*, and whose *ἰδία σὰρξ* is given to the communicant,” 155. See especially 153; 152–57. Additionally, Chadwick says that according to Cyril’s understanding of Nestorius’ position, “To divide the natures is to separate the Lord’s flesh from the source of its lifegiving potency,” 156. This explains the importance of emphasizing the Eucharist in his polemic against Nestorius and the Antiochenes. Lionel Wickham puts it thus: “The argument from the eucharist is regular in Cyril’s anti-Nestorian polemic [...]. It is perhaps the most revelatory of the religious feelings he appealed to.” Lionel R. Wickham, ed., trans., *Select Letters* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1983), 23, n. 14.

Eucharist. Let us return for the time being, though, to Concannon's paper to give us a start.

Concannon argues that Cyril's Christological thought takes its shape and finds "its starting point" in his understanding of the Eucharist, and she says that in doing this she sides with Chadwick and Welch.²⁷ She says that it is in "the heart of his refutation of Nestorius' understanding of the natures and the person of Christ [that] Cyril turns to the Eucharist,"²⁸ and this is why in her consideration she decides to focus on the polemical texts against Nestorius.²⁹ Concannon references three works of Cyril: *The Third Letter of Cyril to Nestorius*,³⁰ *The Five Tomes against Nestorius*, and *On the Unity of Christ*. She discusses our participation in Christ by means of the Eucharist, saying that by "consuming the Eucharist, we are made participants (μέτοχοι) in the body and blood of Christ: we are enabling the mingling of like to like. When we eat the body and blood of Christ, we take his flesh into ourselves; we allow a somatic indwelling of Christ who can work on us because of his ontological kinship with us, a work that brings about participation in the divine because of his ontological kinship with God."³¹

Cyril proceeds from notes about the Passion to statements about the Eucharist at what

Concannon says is the turning point of his *Third Letter*, such that Cyril, as she says, sees

²⁷ Welch aims to do something more than Chadwick, however. He does not aim to demonstrate Cyril's Christology as founded in his eucharistic theology, but the purpose of his study is to show the "inter-connectedness between Cyril's soteriology, understanding of the eucharist and his Christology." (Welch, 36). This causes me to question the extent to which Welch would support Concannon's claim.

²⁸ Concannon, 320.

²⁹ She says that "[t]he polemical context of the Nestorian controversy forced Cyril to a clearer articulation of what he considered the fundamental points of doctrine, so it is within this context that I will study Cyril's Eucharistic doctrine." (Concannon, 320).

³⁰ *Ad Nestorium III*; *ACO* I. I. 1, pp. 33–42; Wickham, 12–33. The abbreviation *ACO* shall henceforth stand for the compiling work done by Eduard Schwartz and Johannes Straub in the *Acta* series of the Church documents surrounding the various councils of the early Church, as is standard. Eduard Schwartz and Johannes Straub, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum: Iussu atque Mandato Societatis Scientiarum Argentoratensis* (Berolini: W. de Gruyter, 1925).

³¹ Concannon, 325.

the progression from Passion to Eucharist as evidently necessary, which we shall also see elsewhere in the *Commentary on John*.³²

Additionally, in her analysis of the *Five Tomes*, Concannon emphasizes Cyril's use of an analogy of fire³³ to show how it "can change something contrary to its own nature into itself."³⁴ She shows that Cyril applies this to his understanding of the power of the Eucharist on account of it being the body and blood of Christ.³⁵ Likewise, in her section concerned with *On the Unity of Christ*,³⁶ she shows Cyril's use of the fire analogy, but this time it is paired with the element of iron, and this accomplishes two things: she says that it "illustrates not only the transformative effects of the Word upon his own flesh due to the union between them, but also the manner of Christ's suffering."³⁷

It seems clear to me that Concannon says that the Eucharist is only effective, according to Cyril, on two conditions: that the Incarnation be as Cyril argues—the Word of God ineffably united to His own human flesh—and that it be "adapted to our dual nature of body and soul," as opposed to being the flesh of a mere man or a soulless Christ,³⁸ meaning that Christ would require a body and soul in order for Him to truly

³² Concannon, 326. She adds in the same place: "The logic for the efficacy of the Eucharist is exactly the same logic we followed concerning the necessity of the Son of God's suffering in the flesh."

³³ She adds: "this analogy is no new invention on Cyril's part; rather, it has a long history, both philosophically and Christian." Concannon, 330.

³⁴ Concannon, 331.

³⁵ Concluding her section on the *Five Tomes*, she says that "[i]t is through the sacrament, particularly Baptism and Eucharist, that Christ gives us life, connects us to God, and makes us partakers of the divine nature. Salvation is participation and participation is accomplished through the Eucharist, rendered efficacious by the absolute indissolubility of the Word and his flesh." (Concannon, 332).

³⁶ Concannon, 332–36.

³⁷ Concannon, 333.

³⁸ Cyril shows the dual nature of the Eucharist, and one of the key reasons for this dual nature. Using imagery, he claims that in the same way as cold water becomes mixed and becomes one with the hot wattle in a kettle, so, too, "we, even though we are corruptible because of the nature of our flesh, leave our own weakness by being mixed with life and are transformed into the property of that life. It was necessary—necessary—not only that the soul be recreated in newness of life by the Holy Spirit but also that this coarse earthly body be sanctified and called to incorruption by a coarser participation that is of the same kind as

possess a full human nature. If He did not have these, the Incarnation would not impart any spiritual or physical benefit because of its incompatibility with our nature. It is on account of this “union between the Word and his flesh, by participating in the flesh of Christ [that] we participate also in his divinity.”³⁹ This seems to me to imply that Cyril’s Christology does not necessarily have “its starting point” in the Eucharist—admittedly such a statement is rather ambiguous—but that a prime motivator for his defense of his Christology (what he sees as Nicene Christology)⁴⁰ is the effect that Nestorius’ Christology has on the Eucharist, not that his Christology has its starting point in the Eucharist.⁴¹

As mentioned above, Concannon’s purpose in demonstrating Cyril’s reliance on the Eucharist is to show that such a reliance is at the heart of the development of his Christology in that it forms the purpose for his defense of it. Chadwick precedes Concannon in this assertion, as does Russell to a certain degree.⁴² As much as this is an

the body.” *In Jo.* 6:53. From *Commentarii in Joannem* in P. E. Pusey, ed. Sancti Patris Nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini. *In D. Joannis Evangelium. Accedunt Fragmenta Varia Necnon Tractatus Ad Tiberium Diaconum Duo*; Edidit Post Aubertum Philippus Edvardus Pusey. (England: E Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1872), *In Jo.*, v. 1, 531. Translation is from David R. Maxwell, *Cyril of Alexandria: Commentary on John*, vol. 1, ed. Joel C. Elowsky (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 237. Henceforth, references to Cyril’s *In Joannem* will follow the format of citing the manuscript designation of the work and the passage of scripture that it treats (i.e., *In Jo.* 17:18–19) followed by Pusey’s critical text and Maxwell’s translation.

³⁹ Concannon, 328. Just before this, she says that “The flesh of Christ gives life to our soul by sanctifying it and drawing it closer, not only to the immortality and incorruptibility of the *flesh* of the Word, but even into the perfection of the divine person.”

⁴⁰ Cf. *Ad Nestorium III*; PG. 77: 109A–B.

⁴¹ She goes on to clarify within the context of *On the Unity of Christ* that “Cyril shows [...] that the motivation behind his defense of the unity between the Word and his flesh is the protection of the efficacy of the Eucharist.” Concannon, 333. This seems to me to entail that a ‘one-son’ Christology is already assumed in order to protect the efficacy of the Eucharist, not that Cyril’s Christology is informed by the Eucharist.

⁴² Norman Russel, *Cyril of Alexandria* (New York: Routledge, 2000). Russell says this about the Eucharist and the Church’s participation in Christ: “This spiritual Israel, which is the Church, is characterised by a double participation in the divine life, a corporeal one maintained through the Eucharist and a spiritual one brought about by the reception of the Holy Spirit at Baptism. The eucharistic body is the real body of the Word endowed with his power. [...] ‘When we taste of it, we have that life in ourselves since we too are

accurate proposal for Cyril's motivation for his defense, I would argue that the motivation for his defense is not so unidimensional.

The complete scope of the sacramental life of the Christian does not simply entail participation in the Eucharist. Cyril is just as adamant about emphasizing Baptism as a means by which to participate in the salvation and deification of our human nature.⁴³

Similar to the Eucharist, Baptism becomes effective for our human nature purely because of the joining of the Word to our human nature in the Incarnation. Our Baptism follows the Baptism of the Word, and imparts His Spirit—the Holy Spirit—to the new creation, and forms part of the arc of salvation.⁴⁴

Russell remarks that the perennial presenting of the Festal Letters, for example, provided Cyril a suitable occasion to emphasise this arc, understood in four phases:

The first is the human condition after the Fall, dominated as it is by the devil, sin and corruption. The second is the incarnation of the Word, who reveals God and liberates us from sin. The third is the redressing of the situation. [...] The final phase is the resurrection of Christ and his ascension to the Father as the first-fruits of a new humanity. This is followed by the gift of the Spirit, which incorporates believers into the new humanity and assimilates them to Christ.⁴⁵

Russell says that “soteriological concerns [for Cyril as a theologian] are uppermost. It is these that determine his christology, just as his christology shapes his trinitarian

united (*synenoumenoi*) with the flesh of the saviour in the same way that the flesh is united with the Word that dwells within it.’ [...] The Eucharist lies at the heart of Cyril’s piety.” (Russell, 19–20). Wickham says the following: “It is the descent of the eternal Word of God into human conditions and limitations in order radically to alter and restore them, without annihilating them. God remains God and his manhood is manhood still, but now charged with divine power and capable of restoring to fullness of life the believer who shares in it *sacramentally*.” Lionel R. Wickham, ed., trans., *Select Letters* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1983) xxxiii. Emphasis added.

⁴³ See a detailed list of the occurrences of Cyril emphasizing the Spirit in relation to divine indwelling in Keating, “The Twofold Manner of Divine Indwelling in Cyril of Alexandria: Redressing an Imbalance,” 545.

⁴⁴ Russell, 20.

⁴⁵ Russell, 14.

theology.”⁴⁶ In other words, soteriology, for Cyril, is the umbrella under which the Eucharist, Christology, and any other contributing factor to one’s salvation lies.

1.1.2 A Response to Chadwick and Concannon

In his *Third Letter to Nestorius*, for example, he is evidently concerned (briefly, I might add) with the ramifications of a poorly ordered Christology on the efficacy of the Eucharist, but it seems to me in this letter that he is equally concerned with and more focussed on showing how Nestorius’ Christology disagrees with Nicene Christianity, at least initially.⁴⁷ It should go without question that condemning Nestorius on the grounds that he is teaching and preaching something against Nicene Christianity would be the best initial course of action for Cyril, which seems to be why he does it; however, in the letter he is quick to move on from catechizing Nestorius on what the Creed means to giving a collection of arguments about the nature of the union of the Person of Christ—in other words, the ‘how’ of the Incarnation.

Although it is not quite at this point in his career that Cyril conducts a highly detailed exegesis of the unity of the Word of God with His flesh—he shows his concern

⁴⁶ Russell, 14.

⁴⁷ In Cyril’s *Ad Nestorium III*, he is immediately concerned with Nestorius’ Christology disagreeing with the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and he effectively cites the Creed in its entirety with brief commentary from the outset. His point is that Nestorius is introducing something novel and alien to the tradition of the Church: “We have been taught to have these thoughts by the holy apostles and evangelists, and by all the divinely inspired Scripture, and by the true confession of the saintly Fathers. It is necessary that your reverence also consent to all these and agree to every one without deceit.” *Ad Nestorium III*, PG. 77. 109A–B. This follows with what he says in his *Second Letter to Nestorius*: He exhorts Nestorius to accept and adopt the teaching of the hypostatic union, since “the doctrine of the precise faith everywhere maintains this,” and to do this “in order that the peace of the churches may be saved and the bond of concord and love between the priests of God may continue unbroken.” *Ad Nestorium II*, PG. 77. 48C–49A. Translations taken from John I. McEnerney, trans., *Letters 1–50* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1987).

for this unity as against what he saw as the ‘two sons’ Christology of Nestorius.⁴⁸ Despite this, Concannon proposes that Cyril’s foremost concern in the *Third Letter to Nestorius* is the safeguarding of the Eucharist, and she argues this from a theological perspective as well as a structural perspective.⁴⁹ It is the structural perspective that she relies on as quite suggestive of the Eucharist’s importance. She writes that there is significance in its placement at the center of the letter, but I think that there is a far greater emphasis in the letter that coincides with similar emphases in other letters of the same period in Cyril’s life.⁵⁰

As mentioned above, Chadwick says that Cyril in his polemical writings is primarily concerned with safeguarding the Eucharist and atonement from the consequences of Antiochene Christology, and he gives a very detailed description of many places in Cyril’s pre-controversy writings that demonstrate his awareness of such Christological errors in relation to these two subjects.⁵¹ In these examples, though, Cyril seems to focus on eucharistic implications over other ramifications; examples that Chadwick highlights but are not representative of the entirety of Cyril’s pre-controversy thought as concerns Christology.

It is a chief point of mine in this thesis that it ought not be overlooked or understated how much Cyril emphasizes the fact that the economy of salvation,

⁴⁸ Such exegetical works as the later *Quod unus sit Christus*, the *de Incarnatione Unigeniti*, and the *de Recta Fide ad Theodosium*.

⁴⁹ She says that it is significant and suggestive that Cyril places this in what is effectively the middle of the letter: “Cyril underscores the importance of the Eucharist by its strategic placement within the argument: the Eucharist—immediately preceded and intricately tied with a discussion of the manner of Christ’s suffering—is exactly at the midpoint or centre of the letter itself.” (Concannon, 321). Also, that it “serves quite literally as the pivot upon which the argument turns.” (Concannon, 322).

⁵⁰ For example: The first and second letters to Succensus (*Ep. 45, Ep. 46*), *Ad Acacium Beroense* (*Ep. 33*), *Ad Ioannem Antiochenum* (*Ep. 39*).

⁵¹ See pp. 153–155, especially the footnotes giving selections from Cyril’s commentaries, which predate the controversy (*In Matt. xxvi. 26; In Jo., vi, 35; In Luc. xxii, 19; et. al.*).

communication of idioms,⁵² and deification of Christ’s human nature are delivered to us just as much pneumatically as somatically because of the manner of the union as Cyril understands it.⁵³ While Chadwick thinks that during the Nestorian controversy “[i]t does not seem clear that Cyril had any real interest in maintaining the unity of Christ’s Person in our modern sense,”⁵⁴ I tend to disagree with this assertion, and we shall eventually see that it is because of the great emphasis, in fact, that he places on the unity of Christ both before and during the controversy that challenges Chadwick’s conclusion.

Looking again at the *Third Letter*, the unity of the two natures in Christ or the oneness in Christ is mentioned six times: five times directly and one indirectly. The majority of the mentions of unity appear to be made in order to emphasize the truth of the Scriptures about the oneness of Christ as well as the metaphysical impossibility of dividing Christ into two persons in light of the truth of Scripture, as Cyril understands the matter. Additionally, these mentions emphasize the One Subject referent in the person of Christ in opposition to the ‘two-sons’ position. He evidently mentions the unity to demonstrate *his* faithfulness to the Nicene Creed, as anyone who reads the letter could surmise, but this is not the point I am making here. I am suggesting that he is occupied with the unity of the natures in Christ, and that at this specific point in the letter he uses

⁵² See Georges Jouassard, “Saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie aux prises avec la ‘communication des idiomes’ avant 428 dans ses ouvrages antiariens,” *Studia Patristica* 6 (1962): 112–121.

⁵³ Chadwick does not dismiss that there can possibly be other reasons for Cyril’s defense against Nestorius, but he remains steadfast on his assertion that it is chiefly motivated by a desire to preserve the effectiveness of the Eucharist. He says this, for example: “That such considerations [that Christ must be a single unity out of two natures, or, in other words, a psychological unity] may have played some part in Cyril’s polemic is not to be denied.” (Chadwick, 153).

⁵⁴ Chadwick, 153. Perhaps not the unity, but Lunn is quick to point out that Cyril focuses in the *Glaphyra* on not only the spiritual meaning of the text, but especially on “drawing out ‘the mystery of Christ’ hidden in the text.” Nicholas P. Lunn, trans., *St. Cyril of Alexandria: Glaphyra on the Pentateuch*, vol. 1 (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2018), 11. Evidently—and we can see with the parts of the New Testament commentaries that deal with the person of Christ—Cyril was aware of the centrality of Christ for Christian scripture and theology, even though the targeted dogmatic style of his post-431 treatises is not as prominent earlier.

the previous arguments for Christ's unity to demonstrate the foundation for the Eucharist's essence and effectiveness, which suggest that his Christological presuppositions precede his eucharistic theology, not the other way around.

The passages from the *Third Letter* that apply to this argument are the following:

(1) "Because we acknowledge that the Word has been substantially *united* with flesh it is *one* Son and Lord Jesus Christ we worship without separating and parting man and God as though they were mutually connected by unity of rank and sovereignty";⁵⁵ (2) "There is, then, one Christ, Son and Lord";⁵⁶ (3) "We do not term the Word of God the Father Christ's 'God' or 'Master'—again to avoid the obvious division of the one Christ, Son and Lord into two";⁵⁷ (4) "but recognition is given to one Christ Jesus, Only-begotten Son, venerated with his flesh in a single worship";⁵⁸ (5) "The one, unique Christ has no

⁵⁵ *Ad Nestorium III*, 4; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 35–36; Translation belongs to Wickham, *Select Letters*, 19. All subsequent translations of *Ad Nestorium III* are from Wickham. Cf. McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 166: Nestorius' understanding of the 'how' of the union was seen "to have been a dynamic concept (based on power, might, will, prosopic manifestation) rather than an essentialist one. The force of the prosopic union was supplied by the moral power of the adhering love of God to the human life he had chosen to adopt as his manifestation to the world. The theory, to that extent, had a long pedigree behind it. Its problematic was that it was unclear, at least as far as the majority of its hearers were concerned (including Antiochenes as well as Alexandrians), on how far the humanness with which the Logos united was so discrete a reality as to be more than a merely grammatical subject of reference."

⁵⁶ *Ad Nestorium III*, 5; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 36; Wickham, 19.

⁵⁷ *Ad Nestorium III*, 5; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 36; Wickham, 21. Cf. McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 159: "For all the force Nestorius brings to insisting that there are two prosopa in Christ, the divine Logos and the human Jesus (which certainly appeared to suggest, on first reading, that he may be talking about two subjects), he time and again stressed that the church's experience of Christ is as a single prosopon—a single subject of reference. What seems to be at issue, however, is that he approaches the concept of subjectivity largely in semantic terms, as the grammatical subject of reference in discourse, whereas Cyril tended to understand the subject primarily as the initiator of actions, especially the spiritually dynamic action of redemptive restoration of communion."

⁵⁸ *Ad Nestorium III*, 6; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 21. Cf. McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 165: "The unitive function of worship should not be underestimated in Nestorius' Christology, for he believed that it was in the church's confession of praise that the true understanding of Christ's oneness was maintained. [...] The worship addressed to the one Christ thus draws into its ambit even the manhood, because the disparate essences have been joined, but even in the oneness of worship the difference of the natures is not abolished. But he expressed this in syllogism that was to give his hearers the great suspicion that he had Adoptionist intentions, or at least was indisputably wedded to the idea of Two Sons, no matter how many protestations he gave to the contrary."

duality though he is seen as compounded in inseparable unity.”⁵⁹ He addresses Christ’s unity indirectly when he says that “[i]t is a horrible thing to add to this, ‘the assumed is called God along with the assumer’. To say this is once more to divide him into two Christs and to posit man separately on his own and to do the same with God.”⁶⁰

Only one of these mentions is connected to the point he makes about the ramifications on the Eucharist, the preceding context of which is Cyril’s explanation of how Christ accomplished our redemption. He, by means of the Incarnation, “suffered in flesh for our sake”⁶¹ so that He might trample death in order “to become in his own flesh first the ‘*first-born of the dead*’ and ‘*first fruits of those asleep*.’”⁶² This He did so that we might be granted a way for our human nature to return to its former incorruptibility (be recapitulated) and be capable of resurrection. Accordingly, the power of death was broken by Him and a way of return to incorruptibility was paved through Him.⁶³ Essentially, in the same way that He arose from the dead so shall humanity rise from the dead, and this is *because* He rose from the dead bearing our human nature.

With this in mind, the short but pertinent points about the Eucharist come after this at *Ad Nestorium III*, 7. Cyril seems to suggest that it is for the aforementioned reason

⁵⁹ *Ad Nestorium III*, 8; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 38; Wickham, 23. Cf. McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 164: “Nestorius laid stress on prosopic association, despite his opponent’s objections, precisely in order to refute the notion of union at any natural level. God did not take to himself another nature, Nestorius tells us (directly contradicting Cyril’s central thesis) but rather took up into an intimate union of love another prosopon. This he regarded as synonymous with the biblical phrase (Phil. 2.7) ‘assuming the form of a slave’.”

⁶⁰ *Ad Nestorium III*, 6; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 21. Cf. McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 144–145: “[Cyril] was appalled by the way Nestorius kept referring to different prosopa as well as to the prosopon of union. Far from proving a consistent doctrine of single subjectivity Cyril felt this level of variability in key words at the very central point of the whole debate demonstrated that it was not Nestorius’ intention to teach a single personal centre in any real sense at all, only in the apparent sense that Christ ‘seemed’ to unite two realities.”

⁶¹ *Ad Nestorium III*, 6; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 21.

⁶² *Ad Nestorium III*, 6; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 21.

⁶³ *Ad Nestorium III*, 6; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 23.

that we commemorate and “proclaim the fleshly death of God’s only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, [and that] we confess his return to life from the dead and his ascension into heaven when we perform in church the unbloodied service, when we approach the sacramental gifts and are hallowed participants in the holy flesh and precious blood of Christ, saviour of us all, by receiving not mere flesh (God forbid!) [...] but the personal, truly vitalizing flesh of God the Word himself.”⁶⁴ By participating in the vivifying flesh of Christ, we, in turn, are vivified.

To make it even clearer, we are sanctified whenever we become participants in the holy flesh and blood of Christ, which occurs whenever we perform the unbloodied service, which is done to proclaim the death of Christ according to the flesh, by which we were redeemed. Cyril here establishes the source of our redemption, the reason for proclaiming it, and the manner by which we receive its blessings. Concannon believes that from the centrality of the section within the letter, the conclusion that this is the core reason for his Christological defense appears quite persuasive, but I think this to hardly be a persuasive argument, since it appears as one of the handful of arguments that Cyril makes.⁶⁵ It would seem that his “narrative of redemption” relies heavily on a “eucharistic endpoint,” but there are other matters to consider.⁶⁶

The fact of the Eucharist following statements about such a central reality in Christianity—the redemption of humanity—does not necessarily mean that the pinnacle of Cyril’s discussions of Christ’s unity is the Eucharist. Certainly, the Eucharist is one way in which the blessings of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection are received, but the

⁶⁴ *Ad Nestorium III*, 7; *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 37; Wickham, 23.

⁶⁵ Concannon, 321.

⁶⁶ Keating, “The Twofold Manner of Divine Indwelling in Cyril of Alexandria: Redressing an Imbalance,” 543.

very essence of the effectiveness of the Eucharist points back to who Christ is—back to Christology. Cyril says that it is not *mere* flesh but that of God the Word that is present in the Eucharist. The Logos is the subject of the incarnate Christ, and the Incarnation must certainly not be an apparent duality of the likes of Nestorius, but a perfect and ineffable unity. Systematically, an effective Eucharist presupposes a united Christ in Cyril’s thinking.

What this seems to presume—that is the argument that we are vivified through participation in Christ’s flesh and blood—is that the one who receives the vivification is both dead and unable to enliven himself. I speak of our human nature, and Cyril sees our human nature as similarly corrupted by the Fall, a subject which will be taken up later.⁶⁷ This enlivening of our human nature is evidently an important point in Cyril’s thinking, and, as I mentioned above, Chadwick makes the case for the importance and existence of this in Cyril’s thought prior to the Nestorian controversy. Nonetheless, the point that I am making is that the emphasis on unity in this letter is not merely for the sake of what is mentioned about the Eucharist, but for the sake of a handful of other ramifications that Cyril later takes up in his polemical writings of the same era, and I think that this is a viable deduction if we can consider the controversy-era works in light of some pre and post-controversy writings.

1.2 THE RICHNESS OF THE EUCHARIST FOR CYRIL

⁶⁷ He says as much in *Glaphyra* 1: 2 when he writes concerning the consequence of the fall into sin that “human nature was straightaway condemned to death,” and that “there remained, it would seem, absolutely nothing for them in their extreme state of wretchedness.” Lunn, 57; PG. 69: 21A–B.

The culmination of the reasons for why the unity of the two natures is so important for Cyril in the *Third Letter* appears just after the fourth mention of unity (*Ad Nestorium III*, 6; Wickham, 21) but before *Ad Nestorium III*, 7. While on the one hand he speaks of how Christ taking on our human nature “might blaze the trail for human nature’s return to incorruptibility”⁶⁸ so that the resurrection might be said to have been brought about through man, he speaks also, on the other hand, about one way in which this return is actually effected in the lives of the faithful: “when we approach the sacramental gifts and are hallowed participants in the holy flesh and precious blood of Christ, saviour of us all.”⁶⁹

I do not wish to distance myself, however, from the high position Cyril places the Eucharist in his understanding of the appropriation of divine life in us. I think it will be important to see exactly what Cyril has to say about this, and how it may be construed that he places the Eucharist at such a determining position within his discussion of Christ’s unity. It may seem that in doing so I might contradict my point that the Eucharist—the manner by which we receive the body and blood of Christ, therefore being vivified—is not Cyril’s chief concern during the Nestorian controversy. I would not say that it contradicts it because I am not denying that the Eucharist is *a* chief concern for Cyril. Reading this section of the *Third Letter* on its own may very well hold such a

⁶⁸ *Ad Nestorium III*, 6; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 23.

⁶⁹ *Ad Nestorium III*, 7; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 23. The entire section of importance reads thus: “We proclaim the fleshly death of God’s only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, we confess his return to life from the dead and his ascension into heaven when we perform in church the unbloody service, when we approach the sacramental gifts and our hallowed participants in the holy flesh and precious blood of Christ, saviour of us all, by receiving not mere flesh (God forbid!) or flesh of a man hallowed by connection with the Word in some unity of dignity or possessing some divine indwelling, but the personal, truly vitalizing flesh of God the Word himself.” (*Ad Nestorium III*, 7; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 37; Wickham, 23). Of note, also, is the term used for “the Sacramental gifts.” Cyril here uses the terms ταῖς μυστικαῖς εὐλογίαις to refer to the sacramental mysteries or gifts.

conclusion, but when one considers the refining of Cyril's Christology in his later writings as well as the theological presuppositions of his earlier writings, some of which we shall see in chapter two, one sees far more reasons than eucharistic for why he maintains the hypostatic union.

It seems to me, though, that if the effects of Nestorian Christology on the Eucharist were Cyril's foremost concern during the time of the controversy, then it would make more sense for this to occupy greater parts of his treatises after it, since he would take more time to articulate precisely what he means and bury the heresy with its effect on the Eucharist even deeper. This is not the case, however.⁷⁰ In Cyril's dogmatic treatises written after the controversy to defend against Nestorianism on the one hand and Apollinarianism on the other, the concern is primarily with Christology, and he rarely delves into the Eucharist as a motivation for his defenses in such writings; rather, he is concerned with the technicalities of Christ's person and the two natures that are hypostatically united in the incarnate Lord. He desires to preserve the suffering divinity and the incorruptible humanity in Christ.⁷¹

Certainly, as Chadwick says, the effect that Nestorius' Christology has on the Eucharist—the fact of effectively dividing Christ's two natures, as Cyril understands it, and making Christ's human nature that of a mere man—is that this separates “the Lord's flesh from the source of its lifegiving potency,”⁷² making it no better than any other

⁷⁰ Especially the *Quod unus sit Christus*, where on multiple occasions his focus is on the unity of the person of Christ and the fact that there do not remain two persons in Christ after the Incarnation, but that the natures are united in such a way that they are distinguishable only at the level of the abstract. See *Chr. Un.* 724a; 728d–e; 733a–d; et. al.

⁷¹ This is a manner of speech that was welcomed by Cyril, for he saw that in order to confess the full divinity and humanity of Christ, one must ascent to the conclusions of the ineffable union, that God is able to suffer, and that man is able to rise from the dead. Cf. McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 185–187. In other words, he reinforces the *communicatio idiomatum*.

⁷² Chadwick, 156.

human flesh even if it is elevated to a higher regard because of its relation to the Son of God.⁷³

The fact that Cyril does not focus on the Eucharist as much during and after the Nestorian controversy does not necessarily lend credence to the assertion that Cyril's eucharistic theology comes out of his Christology, an assertion against which Concannon argues. She takes issue with Gebremedhin, asserting that he is mistaken in saying that Cyril's Christology precedes the development of his eucharistic theology, citing certain statements.⁷⁴ It seems to me that Gebremedhin is not so much saying that Cyril articulates his Christology chronologically before his eucharistic theology, but that Cyril's writings present his eucharistic theology as informed by and dependent on his Christology (whether in the form of the lesser-developed pre-controversy era writings, or in its extensively articulated controversy/post-controversy era writings). In other words, it seems that Cyril's Christology both *does* and systematically *must* precede discussions about the nature and effectiveness of the Eucharist, and that, according to Cyril, any

⁷³ Equality of honour between Christ's human nature and divine nature is an outcome of the hypostatic union, not a precondition for it. In other words, His human nature does not need to be elevated to a divine level before the Incarnation; it is made so by the Word's union with it, despite its exact likeness to us, yet it is without sin. The position of Christ taking on our human nature by taking on 'a man' as opposed to living humanly, which meant living as One who had taken on our flesh, is anathema for Cyril, since even though the union would seem to elevate the man to a place of honour, it would still not eliminate the fact that a man dies and not the Logos. Cf. *Chr. Un.* 730b: Cyril speaks again of the Nestorian position that "in their estimate a man is exalted into the glory of the Godhead and into preeminence over all things; he receives the form of God and is raised on high incomes to be enthroned alongside the Father." Translation is from John McGuckin, *On the Unity of Christ* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 70. The result is that "[i]f we are to believe what these perverted people say about a man assumed and united to God the Word by a relationship, that he died and came back to life, and was exalted to heaven, then how is the mystery of religion any longer great or admirable or extraordinarily wonderful?" (*Chr. Un.* 731a; McGuckin, *On the Unity of Christ*, 71).

⁷⁴ "We intend to show that Cyril's understanding of the Person of the Incarnate Word is the dominant feature of his entire theology and that his Christological emphases are vigorously applied to his understanding of the Eucharist." (Gebremedhin, 12). "It is the union of the divine and human natures—the hypostatic union, a dogmatic principle—which Cyril underlines also in his understanding of the eucharistic liturgy. For Cyril the life-giving efficacy of the Eucharist lies in the mystery of the union of the two natures." (Gebremedhin, 69).

technical discussions of the Eucharist at any rate require an understanding of the incarnate Christ. As in the *Third Letter* examples above, arguing for the importance of the Eucharist can and does inform one's discussions of Christology.

What I would like to do at this point is evaluate and discuss certain occurrences of the Eucharist in Cyril's pre-controversy writings to see how exactly he understands its effectiveness. After this I shall aim to show the necessary connection between Cyril's Christology and his understanding of the Eucharist in order to demonstrate that there was already present in his thinking the necessity for a one subject referent Christology as a condition for an effective and valid Eucharist.⁷⁵ To do this I shall primarily be looking at the eucharistic mentions in his *Commentary on John*.

1.2.1 The Eucharist in Cyril's *Commentary on John*

As Cyril's eucharistic doctrine is not the centre of this thesis, I shall avoid a long list of citations here that explain his thoughts on its effectiveness,⁷⁶ but there are a few that pertain to our discussion that are worth mentioning. These include some that are mentioned by Mahé, who distinguishes the references to the Eucharist in Cyril's pre-controversy works as either brief, passing remarks or detailed exegeses of a particular

⁷⁵ I shall side with those who argue that Cyril believed in a physical, real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist, as opposed to a solely spiritual or solely dynamic presence. The prevailing position about Cyril's view in the scholarship is that he did believe in such a substantial, corporeal presence of the Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine. The arguments on one side favour the affirmative, but there do exist prominent voices on the other side, and it is debatable whether the point is settled (evidently, it is not) but I should think the evidence in the affirmative to be quite compelling, and I shall consider it as such. Concannon does well here to note the prevailing scholarship on the matter (p. 318, notes 1–2) and directs the reader to Gebremedhin (pp. 75–85), who concludes, given the rather detailed analysis he has made of the foremost scholarly work on the question, that “one who is aware of the effort Cyril puts into applying his theology of Incarnation into his eucharistic theology cannot lightly accept the view that Cyril did not teach a participation in the body and blood of Christ believed to be present substantially and essentially—even if this presence is designated as pneumatic or mystical,” and that for him “it is the *whole* Christ, Spirit and flesh who is present and is received in the Eucharist.” (Gebremedhin, 84–85).

⁷⁶ For this, one need only go to Mahé, “L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie,” 678–679.

passage on the topic.⁷⁷ We shall record the more detailed exegeses worth mentioning, which are found mostly in his commentaries on the Gospels. Our priority, however, will be his *Commentary on John*.⁷⁸

In his *Commentary on John*, arguably the last commentary Cyril wrote before the Nestorian controversy,⁷⁹ he focuses his discussion of the Eucharist primarily in John chapter six. We see elements of Cyril's interpretive style, which include allusions to the typology that he sees as present in the Old Testament, and the redemptive focus of this typology that points to the fulfillment of all things in Christ. In the particular examples below, Cyril does this by connecting Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist to the manna eaten by the Israelites in the desert.

In explaining Christ's statement that He is the Bread from heaven, Cyril speaks in Christ's stead, acting as though Christ urges us not to believe that He was only a type of the manna from heaven, and that He will forever be the Bread from heaven in precisely the same way. Indeed, says Cyril, there will remain the element of a nourishing food that is Christ, because He is life itself, but Cyril says that this means "not bodily bread, which puts an end only to suffering from hunger and frees the flesh from perishing of it; rather," he says, "I remold the whole living being completely onto eternal life and render

⁷⁷ Mahé, "L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," 678–679.

⁷⁸ Another reason that this commentary is a priority is that Cyril is focused neither on elements of particular philological nor Hellenistic importance, as says Russell (p. 96), but is completely concerned with doctrinal matters. Russell says that Cyril's motive was to "reveal its doctrinal and theological purpose and refute those who express erroneous opinions about the nature of the second and third persons of the Trinity." (Russell, 97).

⁷⁹ Jouassard dates the commentary to the last literary period of Cyril's pre-controversy life, 425–428 A. D. Georges Jouassard, "L'activité littéraire de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie jusqu'à 428: Essai de chronologie et de synthèse," in *Mélanges E. Podechard: Études de sciences religieuses offertes pour son émerit* (Lyon: Faculté Catholiques, 1954), 170–172. Quaesten suggests a similar timeline, dating its completion to no later than 429 A. D. Johannes Quaesten, *The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature*, Patrology vol. 3 (Utrecht-Antwerp, 1975), 123.

humanity, which was created to exist forever, superior to death. By this [Christ] also hints at the life and grace that comes from his holy flesh, by which the property of the Only Begotten, that is, life, is introduced into us.”⁸⁰

This focus on Christ as the embodiment of Life itself or Life as such is quite prominent in Cyril’s thinking here. He focuses on this aspect of the Eucharist to show what its inherent nature is: life-giving or enlivening because it is Christ, and Christ is Life as such. He says the following:

What then is Christ promising? Nothing corruptible; rather, he is promising that blessing in the participation of his holy body and blood, which raise a person completely to incorruptibility so that they need none of the provisions that drive away the death of the flesh. [...] The holy body of Christ then gives life to those whom it enters and preserves them to incorruptibility when it is mixed with our bodies. After all, it is understood to be the body of none other than him who is life by nature. It has in itself the full power of the Word, who is united to it. It is endowed with the Word’s qualities, as it were, or rather it is filled with his activity by which all things receive life and are kept in existence.⁸¹

Continuing the imagery of Christ as the new Bread from heaven, Cyril brings attention to what the desert bread was unable to do, and what the new Bread is able to do. The manna was mere physical bread, only able to feed the body for the body’s sake, but the new Bread from heaven enlivens both the body and the soul.⁸² For him the meaning of Christ’s words is obvious (that He is the bread of life):

[H]e takes the shell completely off of his words and removes the entire wrapping, so to speak, and he now shows himself unveiled to the Israelites by saying, ‘I am

⁸⁰ *In Jo.* 6:35; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 472; Maxwell, v. 1, 211.

⁸¹ *In Jo.* 6:35; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 475; Maxwell, v. 1, 212–213.

⁸² Having spoken about the healing of Jairus’ daughter and the son of the widow of Nain in another work, and how Christ physically touches rather than only speaking, Fraigneau-Julien takes Cyril’s reference to this to indicate that he indicates that their ought to be an even greater power to the body and blood of Christ ingested by the faithful. “Il ajoute à cet exemple celui de la resurrection du fils de la veuve de Naïm et conclut en affirmant que si le simple contact de la chair du Christ possédait un tel pouvoir, la manducation de son corps dans l’Eucharistie produit un effet plus abondant.” (“He adds to this example the one about the resurrection of the widow of Nain’s son, and concludes by affirming that if the mere contact of the flesh of Christ possessed a certain power, the eating of his body in the Eucharist produces an even more abundant effect.”) (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’efficacité de l’humanité du Christ selon saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie,” 617).

the bread of life,' that they may learn that if they have the desire to be stronger than decay and to strip off death itself, which fell on us because of transgression, they will have to come to participation in the one who can give life [ζωοποιεῖν], who both destroys decay and nullifies death. This work is truly most fitting and proper to life by nature.⁸³

Briefly, Cyril also draws attention to the redemptive power of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and then to the bodily mode in which it is delivered to us and benefits us. "I die, he says, for all that I may give life to all through myself, and I made my flesh a ransom for the flesh of all. Death will die in my death, and fallen human nature will rise with me, he says. For this reason I have become like you, a human being, that is, and of the seed of Abraham, that I may be made like all my brothers."⁸⁴ Here Cyril addresses the soteriological purpose of the death of Christ in the flesh, as well as confirming that what occurred to Christ's body—that is was resurrected—will occur to every body, though not all will rise to life eternal.⁸⁵

Shortly after this, he connects the enlivening power of the Eucharist to the One Who joined Himself to the flesh; the same connection that he draws in his *Third Letter to Nestorius*.⁸⁶ This he does in order to show how the flesh of Christ can be effective at enlivening; he does this through a short excerpt concerning the communication of idioms:

⁸³ *In Jo.* 6:48–49; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 514; Maxwell, v. 1, 229. Of note here is the language of 'giving life.' I much prefer to think of ζωοποιέω as enlivening or as God enlivening that which is dead rather than simply giving life as though it were something separate from Himself. Surely, since Cyril thinks that Christ is life by nature and enlivens those who are dead in their trespasses, he intends for the meaning of the word to transmit to the reader thus. See Lampe, sections A.1 and A. 2. b. of ζωοποιέω. G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 597. There are also other meanings in Lampe that may offer a different colour to the word, which may or may not produce a more accurate reading.

⁸⁴ *In Jo.* 6:51; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 518; Maxwell, v. 1, 231.

⁸⁵ *In Jo.* 6:51; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 520; Maxwell, v. 1, 232.

⁸⁶ *Ad Nestorium III*, 6. That there is a physical efficacy to Christ's humanity is a direct consequence of the Incarnation itself, and the Incarnation renders His humanity effective because of the communication of idioms between the natures in Christ—His flesh becoming vivified and vivifying. See Fraigneau-Julien, "L'efficacité de l'humanité du Christ selon saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," 615.

Therefore, Christ has given his own body for the life of all, and through it he makes life dwell in us again.⁸⁷ How he does this I will explain as I am able. Since the life-giving Word of God has taken up residence in the flesh, he has transformed it so that it has his own good attribute, that is, life. And since, in an ineffable mode of union, he has completely come together with it, he has rendered it life-giving, just as he himself is by nature. For this reason, the body of Christ gives life to those who participate in it. His body drives out death when that body enters those who are dying, and it removes decay since it is fully pregnant with the word who destroys decay.⁸⁸

At the risk of replicating the exact type of analysis performed by the very cogent Joseph Mahé, S. J., I shall mention only a few conclusions that he makes in his paper.

The work in question seeks to evaluate two points about Cyril's eucharistic theology, although it is the former that will serve our purposes here: how he understands the nature of the effectiveness of the Eucharist, and the matter of the real presence as against the positions of Michaud, Steitz, and Harnack.⁸⁹ I will not delve into the finer details of the paper (and, really, there are no heavily philosophical arguments), but I shall simply skim

⁸⁷ Two notes on the terminology here: (1) *τοιγαροῦν* (translated here as “therefore”) also bears the translation of “for this reason,” which may be a better rendering here because Cyril seems to be showing a causal relationship between the Eucharist and its effective source in Christ and His death and resurrection. One counterargument to this, however, would be Cyril's use of a more precise manner of saying “for this reason,” which, in the example of *τοιγαροῦν* extends out the translation from the one word, but in the example of “*Διὰ γὰρ ταύτην...*” (*In Jo.* 6:51; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 523) completely captures Cyril's intention. So, my suggestion may be a stretch and may not capture Cyril's intention in the paragraph above. (2) *ἐνοικίζω* (translated here as “dwell”) has a particular meaning of “causing to dwell in” and “inhabiting,” which all draw attention to the *κοινωνία* with Christ. For (2) see Lampe (p. 477), sections 1. and 3. of *ἐνοικίζω*.

⁸⁸ *In Jo.* 6:51; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 520; Maxwell, v. 1, 232. “[T]he nature of the flesh itself by itself would not be able to give life, since what would be left for the one who is God by nature? It should not be considered alone and by itself in Christ, however, because it has the Word, who is life by nature, united to it. So when Christ calls it life-giving, he is testifying that the power to give life belongs not so much to it as to himself or to his Spirit. Because of him, his body is life-giving since he transformed it so that it has his own power. But how this is so cannot be grasped by the mind or spoken by the tongue but must be honored by silence and faith that is above the mind.” *In Jo.* 6:63; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 553; Maxwell, v. 1, 247.

⁸⁹ E. Michaud, “Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie et l'euchariste.” *Revue Internationale de Théologie* 10 (1902): 599–614; 675–692. G. E. Steitz, “Die Abendmahlslehre der griechischen Kirche,” *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie* 12 (1867): 235–45. Adolf von Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Freibourg: Akademische Verlagsbuchhandlung von J.C.B. Mohr, 1887), 436–438. For an apt summary of this side of the debate, see Gebremedhin, 75–80.

the conclusions that Mahé makes about Cyril's eucharistic theology in the passages that he cites, which are primarily from Cyril's *Commentary on John*, especially chapter six.⁹⁰

There are several conclusions that Mahé draws about Cyril's understanding of the Eucharist, excluding those about the real presence, which I have already discussed above. Some may be inferred from the citations already taken from *In Joannem.*, but others are particular to Mahé and therefore have not been treated in the extracts above: (1) It is a superior life that the Eucharist gives;⁹¹ (2) the Eucharist heals all of the illnesses of our souls;⁹² (3) it gives to the body the power to be resurrected unto life at the last day;⁹³ (4) it vivifies and transforms our entire being in an undetectable way;⁹⁴ (5) it unites us to

⁹⁰ Chapter six of John's Gospel has been in recent history especially (1500 A. D.-present) a chapter that has caused some rather charged debates on whether Christ spoke literally or figuratively. See Vernon Ruland, S. J., "Sign and Sacrament: John's Bread of Life Discourse (Chapter 6)," *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology*, 18, no. 4 (1964): 450–462. Cyril no doubt was aware of solely symbolic interpretations of the chapter existing at his time, as well as the separation of the spiritual from the physical in the thought of the Gnostics that was directly treated by Irenaeus in *Adversus Haereses* when speaking about the Eucharist. See *Adversus Haereses* IV, XVII.5 (PG. 7: 1023C–1024A) and IV, XVIII. 4–5 (PG. 7: 1026C–1029A). Having been influenced by Irenaeus' theory of recapitulation, Cyril was doubtless aware of the solely symbolic interpretation of this chapter in John. In other words, he interprets such saying as "eat of my flesh" and "drink my blood" as the Lord saying what He means and meaning what He says. Mahé makes it clear that Cyril took the words of the Lord as they were, without further interpretation: "Dans le commentaire du texte de saint Jean, 6 [...] il semble bien prendre strictement à la lettre la parole de Notre-Seigneur." ("In his commentary on the text of Saint John, 6 [...] he seems to take strictly to the letter the words of Our Lord"). (Mahé, "L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," 682). This and all translations of French henceforth are my own.

⁹¹ "C'est une vie bien supérieure à la vie charnelle et matérielle, que nous donne l'Eulogie mystique." ("It is a life far superior to the fleshly and material life that the mystical eulogy [the Eucharist] gives to us"). (Mahé, "L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," 680).

⁹² "L'Eucharistie, en pénétrant en nous, guérit toutes les faiblesses et les maladies de nos âmes." ("The Eucharist, by entering into us, heals all of the weaknesses and illnesses of our souls.") (Mahé, "L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," 681).

⁹³ "L'Eulogie mystique est le germe de vie qui donnera au corps de pouvoir ressusciter au dernier jour." ("The mystical eulogy is the seed of life that will give to the body the ability to be resurrected on the last day.") (Mahé, "L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," 681).

⁹⁴ "Ces affirmations [i.e., la purification des âmes et la participation dans la communion vivifiante] [...] montrent du moins en quelle haute estime Cyrille tenait la vivification eucharistique. [...] Cette sublime transformation de tout notre être ne se voit pas et ne se sent pas: c'est une mystère qui n'a rien de matériel ni de palpable." ("These affirmations [i.e., the purification of souls and the participation in the vivifying communion] [...] show at least to what high esteem Cyril held the Eucharistic vivification. [...] This sublime transformation of our entire being is neither seen nor felt: it is a mystery that has nothing material nor palpable about it.") (Mahé, "L'Eucharistie d'après Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," 683).

Christ and to other communicants;⁹⁵ (6) and it establishes both a spiritual communion and physical participation with Christ.⁹⁶ He summarizes his section on the effects and benefits of the Eucharist thus: “Union intime avec le Christ, par suite union entre nous, et vivification de tout notre être, tels sont, d’après saint Cyrille, les inestimables bienfaits de l’Eulogie mystique.”⁹⁷

The citations from *In Jo.* and all of the above conclusions tell us something very integral about Cyril’s eucharistic theology: that his Christology does not grow out of his eucharistic theology, but that how he understands the Eucharist necessitates the Christological presuppositions that he makes about Christ as the Bread of life Who replaces and supersedes the manna from the desert. Consequently, we are in a good position to proceed to a consideration of Cyril’s understanding of Baptism and the Holy Spirit’s role in the economy of salvation, since we have established here the following: since the Eucharist finds its source of effectiveness in the Incarnation, it is clear also that

⁹⁵ “Impossible de concevoir une union plus intime: nous ne faisons plus qu’un, comme deux morceaux de cire fondus ensemble, comme le levain et la pâte qu’il a fait lever. Ce sont là des comparaisons sans doute, des métaphores, comme en exige notre langage humain pour exprimer les choses surnaturelles. Mais ce qu’elles cherchent à faire comprendre, c’est une union bien réelle, une union plus profonde même que l’union morale par la charité. Saint Cyrille tranche le mot: C’est une communion, une participation physique (μέθεξις φυσική).” (“It is impossible to conceive of a more intimate: we are no more than one, like two pieces of wax melted together, like the sourdough and dough that he made rise. Here are doubtless some comparisons, some metaphors, as our human language requires to express supernatural things. But what they seek to make understood, is a very real union, a union that is even deeper than the moral union by charity. Saint Cyril minces the word: It is a communion, a physical participation (μέθεξις φυσική).”) (Mahé, “L’Eucharistie d’après Saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie,” 684).

⁹⁶ Mahé cites Cyril’s *Commentary on John* 15:1 where he says that “the substance of our doctrine will in no way deny that we are united spiritually with Christ by a disposition of perfect love, by a right and uncorrupted faith, and by a virtuous and pure mind. But we will show that the bold claim that there is no reference to a union according to the flesh between us and him is completely out of harmony with the divinely inspired Scriptures.” Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 541. David R. Maxwell, *Cyril of Alexandria: Commentary on John*, vol. 2, ed. Joel C. Elowsky (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 214.

⁹⁷ “An intimate union with Christ, followed by union between us [communicants], and vivification of our entire selves, as they are: such, according to Cyril, are the invaluable benefits of the mystical eulogy.” (Mahé, “L’Eucharistie d’après Saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie,” 687).

Baptism should also find its effectiveness in the Incarnation, since both are given and instituted by Christ Himself and dependent on His ineffable union with our human nature.

Considering the conclusions above, however, it would seem unnecessary to analyse Cyril's writings on Baptism and the Holy Spirit during the controversy era, since it would seem that the Eucharist is all that one needs for communion with Christ and for the forgiveness of sins. As much as this is case, my position is not to disregard the emphasis that he places on the Eucharist as a mode of unification between Christ and His Church. No, what I wish to show in the following chapters is twofold: (1) that there are just as many mentions of baptismal regeneration and the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our human nature in Christ in his biblical commentaries; and (2) that we find a greater focus of these subjects in his writings of the controversy-era than the Eucharist, causing me to think that he relies more heavily on what these accomplish: the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit to our human nature in Christ's Baptism, according to His human nature, so that He can then sanctify our human nature by the giving of the Spirit as God.

Considering his contrast between Christ as the Second Adam and Him as the one who restores to our human nature the Holy Spirit that was lost in the fall, I propose that this forms a greater reason for the defense of his Christology, as we shall see in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 2: THE HOLY SPIRIT'S ROLE IN THE ECONOMY OF SALVATION: ANOTHER PLAUSIBLE REASON FOR HIS DEFENSE OF HIS CHRISTOLOGY

In the previous chapter, I sought to assess the merits of and reject the position supported by Chadwick and Concannon who argue that Cyril's motivation for his defense of his Christology was the Eucharist. I attempted to demonstrate that Cyril did not presuppose any eucharistic positions to support his Christology, but that his emphasis was rather on the unity of the Person of Christ, with the effects of a 'two-sons' Christology on the Eucharist occupying a place of secondary importance in some of the controversy writings. I claimed that his understanding of the Eucharist did not precede, either in the chronology of his writings or systematically, his articulation of the Person of Christ. In other words, I argued that his Christology must precede any eucharistic formulations if the Eucharist is to be valid and effective. This seems to me to be the more accurate position to take, as opposed to saying that he did not have a clearly articulated Christology prior to the Nestorian controversy, such that he was arguing for the unity of Christ on the basis of his understanding of the Eucharist, as though the Eucharist were his starting point.

To say that Cyril did not have his Christological position articulated before the Nestorian controversy would be to disregard the clear indications of the importance he places on the unity of the Word with His flesh in his pre-controversy biblical commentaries. Evidently, he understood that the unity of Christ was the central point of argumentation rather than the argument about the consequences of a 'two-sons' Christology on the Eucharist, as though the latter were even more grave than the former. My argument was that if you say something about Christ in the same light as did Nestorius, then the effectiveness of the Eucharist, for Cyril, is not only put into question,

but it *must* be put into question if one is to follow the reasonings laid out by his interlocutors as he understood them. Such is the centrality of his Christology, that almost everything else in his theology flows from it within the arc of salvation.

The centrality of the unity of the Word with His flesh in the Incarnation speaks to the emphasis that Cyril places on the Incarnation. The Incarnation is at the heart of his understanding of the redemptive arc of salvation—the economy of salvation—because what Christ does not assume He does not save, as Gregory of Nazianzus so famously said. The previous chapter dealt with the notion that the Eucharist is the chief motivation for Cyril’s defense of his Christology, but this chapter will argue that the Incarnation and the manner in which the natures are united, understood in terms of the hypostatic union, has another objective that I think has been underrepresented in the scholarship and that forms a greater motivation for Cyril leading up to and during the Nestorian controversy. I believe that this particular end is not only as important to Cyril as the Eucharist, but that it is equally supported by his further articulation of the Incarnation as Christ not having assumed a man or a body, but having become exactly as we are yet without sin.

The Incarnation is at the centre of many integral themes in Cyril’s biblical exegesis, and especially at the centre of the redemptive deification that occurs to our human nature. It is this deification of our human nature, first accomplished in the incarnate Word, that I shall argue acts as a greater motivating factor for his defense of his Christology during the controversy.⁹⁸ Why is this the case, however? I shall show that Cyril’s primary concern is actually the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our human nature:

⁹⁸ “The divinization of humanity is in an essential relationship with the mystery of the Incarnation.” (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’inhabitation de la sainte Trinité,” 136).

the Spirit that was first lost in the garden of Eden and is restored to all flesh in Christ, since He bears our human nature as the Second Adam and accomplishes all righteousness on our behalf, crediting it to us as if it were our own.

There are a handful of preliminary questions, however, to bring to the fore: How does Cyril understand this restoration of the Holy Spirit to have occurred in Christ? How does the Spirit become ours through Christ? Is it a universal offering of grace, or is it gifted on certain conditions? Cyril answered these questions by showing the reader that the Holy Spirit, for him, actually plays a greater part in the economy of salvation than one might initially think. Cyril understands the Holy Spirit as belonging to the Son as He does to the Father. He clearly articulates that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son and that He belongs equally to the Son as to the Father, because the Son is in the Father, being the fruit of His essence; therefore, the Holy Spirit belongs to the Son as much as to the Father.⁹⁹ In this way, when one receives the Holy Spirit, one receives Christ, albeit pneumatically.¹⁰⁰

This emphasis on the Holy Spirit's role in the economy of salvation and specifically our deification will see Cyril's comments on the Second-Adam typology, the loss and re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit, Christ's Baptism, and the final giving of the Spirit to the Apostles at Pentecost occupy a key purpose in his arguments for the

⁹⁹ Commenting on Cyril's *Commentary on Luke* 3:21–22, Keating writes that “Cyril then gathers biblical evidence (Rom. 8:8; Gal. 4:6) to show that, though the Spirit proceeds from the Father, he is also the Spirit of the Son and belongs to him by nature.” (Daniel Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” *Pro Ecclesia* 8, no. 2 (1999): 210).

¹⁰⁰ “Since the disciples, who keep my word, have been sent on a mission in the world in imitation of mine, he says, ‘Protect them, holy Father, by your truth,’ that is, by your Word, in whom and through whom the sanctifying Spirit both exists and proceeds.” (*In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 719; Maxwell, v. 2, 297). Cf. also *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 720; Maxwell, v. 2, 297: “Since his Spirit is the perfect image of the essence of the Only Begotten, according to what Paul wrote, ‘For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,’ he makes those in whom he dwells to be conformed to the image of the Father, that is, the Son.”

Incarnation prior to the Nestorian controversy, for he appears to frequently connect these topics with incarnational language. The way in which these will be shown to be related to the writings of the controversy period will be through demonstrating that the same manner of unity of the two natures that he articulates in his controversy period writings is what is presupposed for the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit through Christ's Baptism, and the blessings that come to us both by His Baptism and ours. In other words, the role of Christ as the Second Adam, and as the receiver of the Spirit as man and giver of Him as God would have informed his understanding of the Incarnation as he understood it, such as to be able to better account for his insistence on it.¹⁰¹

We shall see in Chapter Three that in the controversy-era writings the redemption of the human race through Christ played a crucial role in Cyril's discussion of the unity of the Person of Christ, and I shall add that a key motivator for his insistence on the unity of the natures was Cyril's understanding of the redemptive role played by the Holy Spirit through Christ's Baptism, necessitated by the Incarnation. Additionally, it is notable that such insistence was motivated by the restoring to human nature what it once had in the garden of Eden but was taken away by our disobedience. We shall see that Christ is a mediator of His Spirit to our nature in Himself, and that this revitalizing, divinizing effect of His baptism, necessitated by the Incarnation, forms a great part of the economy of salvation for Cyril, so that whenever he emphasizes the unity of the natures in Christ, in

¹⁰¹ The language of 'Christ as the receiver of the Spirit as man and giver of Him as God' is taken from Keating, "The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race," 210: "Two seemingly contrary truths present themselves: On the one hand, only God can impart the Spirit, but on the other, it must nonetheless be a man who dispenses the Spirit (as the Baptist testifies in Jn. 1:30). The only possible solution, argues Cyril, is to recognize that the one who imparts the Spirit as God is the very same one who receives the Spirit as man."

defending against Arianism on the one hand and Nestorianism on the other, it can be seen that he has in mind the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit by our human nature in Christ.

Admittedly, this chapter is indebted to the great work of Daniel Keating, who compiled many citations and made many conclusions upon which I shall base this section.¹⁰² The influence of his work on my own will and should be evident throughout, with the exception of the way in which the argumentation is presented, as well as the use of sources beyond Cyril's *Commentary on John* to make my arguments. Many of Keating's conclusions are merely derived from a close reading of the baptismal narratives and references in Cyril's commentaries on Luke and John—the same narratives and references that I shall make use of—which make his conclusions equally plausible for other careful readers of such passages. Nonetheless, the way in which he aptly draws the necessary connections between Cyril's interpretation of biblical imagery and his thoughts on the Holy Spirit's role in our redemption has been a great benefit to the study of the Church father's thoughts on deification and his theology.

The way in which we shall proceed here is first to provide a brief, running commentary on a few key passages of Cyril's *In Joannem* followed by an overview of Cyril's anthropology as seen in his *Glaphyra in Genesim* influenced by his later interpretation of the same passages. This will help to explain Cyril's understanding of Christ's Baptism, why it is necessary, and the place it takes in the economy of salvation in relation to our own Baptism. Also, it will help establish what he presupposes about our

¹⁰² I refer here primarily to two of Daniel Keating's articles: "The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race," *Pro Ecclesia* 8, no. 2 (1999): 201–222, and "The Twofold Manner of Divine Indwelling in Cyril of Alexandria: Redressing an Imbalance," *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001): 543–549, as well as sections from his monograph entitled *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 27–54.

human nature and its need to re-acquire the Holy Spirit in order to support the importance he places on Christ being the Second Adam, which, as I shall demonstrate, relies on the Incarnation as Cyril understands it in order for it to be effective and perfectly accomplished for us in Christ.

2.1 THE HOLY SPIRIT'S NATURE AND PURPOSE IN CYRIL'S *COMMENTARY ON JOHN*

Some brief preliminary matters must be attended to before we proceed with a discussion of Baptism and the indwelling Spirit: Who exactly is this Spirit? This may seem a rather redundant question, as Cyril would have been a subscriber and confessor of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, but further definitions of the Spirit's essence and operations in Cyril's own words will help us see the Holy Spirit's role in the economy of salvation with respect to Baptism, and His essential connection with the Son. I shall not endeavour, however, to go into nearly as much detail as Boulnois's exhaustive study on Cyril's understanding of the Trinity—and the extracts on the Holy Spirit—¹⁰³ for a few short excerpts from the *In Joannem* will suffice to demonstrate what is necessary for our purposes.

As we shall see below, the first point is that the Holy Spirit is of the same Godhead and one essence with the Father and Son, and the second is that He has a significant role in making us partakers of the Godhead by virtue of His procession from

¹⁰³ See Marie-Odile Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie: Herméneutique, analyses philosophiques et argumentation théologique*, Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité, vol. 143 (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1994). Boulnois's work has in such a short time become somewhat of a seminal work in the study of Cyril's Trinitarian theology; Daley calls it a "magisterial study." Cited from Brian E. Daley, "The Fullness of the Saving God: Cyril of Alexandria on the Holy Spirit," in *The Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation*, eds. Thomas Weinandy and Daniel Keating, 113–148 (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 115.

the Father through the Son. The manner by which Christ's Incarnation enables us to partake of the divine nature will be treated later, and will operate on the conclusions of this present section on the Holy Spirit's mediation in Baptism of Christ's divine and human natures, which explains the immediate importance of the Holy Spirit's role in the economy.

First, speaking to the essence of the Spirit, Cyril places Him on the same degree of Godhead as the Father and the Son when he says that He proceeds from the Father's essence, and that He both belongs to the Father and comes to us through the Son, being the Paraclete and Comforter having been sent as Christ had promised.¹⁰⁴

The Spirit belongs to God the Father, but he no less belongs to the Son as well. However, they are not one and another, and neither is the Spirit understood to subsist divisibly in another, nor does he actually do so. Rather, since the Son is from the Father and in the Father by nature, as the true fruit of his essence, the Spirit, who belongs to the Father by nature, is brought upon us. He is poured out from the Father and supplied to creation through his Son, not in the manner of a servant or as an underling but, as I just said, proceeding from the very essence of God the Father, poured out on those who are worthy to receive him through the Word, who comes from the Father and is of the same substance with him.¹⁰⁵

The Spirit's place in the Trinity and the source of His being in the Father is by *nature*, not merely according to dignity or rank. In other words, He subsists in His own *hypostasis*, but is of the essence of the Father. For the purposes of this inquiry, however—and the baptismal narratives, especially—Cyril is focused more on the relation of the Holy Spirit

¹⁰⁴ “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” (John 14:26). Cf. John 20:22.

¹⁰⁵ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 718; Maxwell, v. 2, 296. See Daley, 116: “It is in the context of this style of thought [that the economy of salvation is rooted in a paradox—that of the Trinity], and of his broad concern for affirming the full reality of the salvation worked by Jesus Christ, that we must situate Cyril's attempts to speak of the role and the distinctive character of the person of the Holy Spirit, and of the manner in which the Spirit takes his origin within the Mystery of God.”

to the Son, for it is through the Son that the Father accomplishes His will to save humanity.¹⁰⁶

In this regard, such a relation is treated in detail in the later part of *In Jo.* 1:32–33. Here Cyril is explicit about the Spirit’s relation to the Son: that He is *His own* Spirit. In the same way that the Spirit has an essential relation to the Father, He shares equally in the nature of the Son. This is because the Spirit flows out of the Father through the Son: “The Spirit comes forth through him and is in him by nature so that the Spirit is not understood to be something else besides him, both because of the identity of activity and the unchangeable quality of the nature itself.”¹⁰⁷ Here Cyril emphasizes the mode of procession of the Spirit in relation to the Son and notes the identity of activity between the Son and Spirit.

Christ is Truth, and so His Spirit must be called the Spirit of Truth. Cyril understands the Spirit to be in the possession of the Son, so to speak, though still of His own distinct *hypostasis*. He uses simple deduction to imply that the Spirit is Christ’s

¹⁰⁶ “As is true of his Trinitarian theology as a whole, Cyril’s pneumatology cannot simply be identified with the positions taken by either his Alexandrian or his Cappadocian predecessors in the controversies just prior to Constantinople I; it must be seen as part of a larger conception of God’s life-giving activity and presence in the world, which also became the driving idea behind his struggle against the Antiochene conception of the person of Christ and which seems to have remained consistent throughout his theological career.” (Daley, 116).

¹⁰⁷ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 187–188; Maxwell, v. 1, 84. Cyril clarifies a handful of times that this is not the case only in the Incarnation, but that we must say so prior to the Incarnation also. (See Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 180–181, 189; Maxwell, v. 1, 80–81, 84). Cf. also *In Jo.* 20:21–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369: “The Father has his own Spirit from himself and in himself. The Son has this Spirit in himself as well, since he is of the same substance with the Father and comes from him essentially.” Russell adds: “The most fruitful way of approaching the Spirit’s proper mode of being is perhaps through his role in the economy of salvation. As the ‘quality of the deity’, the *idion* of the Father and the Son, the Spirit is entrusted with the communication to human beings first of the knowledge of God and secondly of participation in him. [...] As the last in the order of processions from the Godhead, he is the first to initiate their return to God.” (Russell, 29–30). Fraigneau-Julien confirms this rather interesting observation. He writes, and Russell agrees with this, that the connection made between humanity and each Person of the Trinity is made in the opposite order of the eternal procession of the Trinity Itself, in that “l’Esprit-Saint transformant l’homme à l’image du Fils et celui-ci produisant en lui l’image du Père.” (“the Holy Spirit, transforming man into the image of the Son and this, in turn, producing in Him the image of the Father.”) (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’inhabitation de la sainte Trinité,” 145).

because Christ is the Truth, and there is no other truth. Citing John 14:15–17, Cyril writes: “See, he explicitly calls the Holy Spirit ‘the Spirit of truth.’ But we know that the Savior and no one else is the truth. Listen to what he says: ‘I am the truth.’ Therefore, since the natural Son is and is called the truth, see how great the unity is which the Spirit has with him.”¹⁰⁸ Reflecting again on the procession of the Spirit and the One from Whom He proceeds, Cyril reminds us that the Spirit “proceeds [προϊὸν] from the divine nature substantially [οὐσιωδῶς],”¹⁰⁹ appearing to speak here of the intra-Trinitarian relations instead of God’s *oikonomia* relationship with the world.¹¹⁰

This brings us to our second point: the Holy Spirit’s purpose, which will require a greater length of exegesis. Cyril says at *In Jo.* 3:4–5, shortly after the above cited passage, the very reason for why the Spirit is sent. He says that a transformation occurs to

¹⁰⁸ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 188; Maxwell, v. 1, 84.

¹⁰⁹ *In Jo.* 3:4–5; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 219; Maxwell, v. 1, 98. Προϊῆμι: Not only ‘proceeds’ but that something is ‘sent out’ or ‘emitted’. This may be an example of his awareness of contemplating the Trinity both in Itself and in relation to creation, especially with respect to the economy of salvation.

¹¹⁰ Cyril’s conception of the Holy Spirit as one substance with the Son, and, therefore, with the Father, in the Triune God, is influenced by Athanasius and Didymus the Blind. The nature of the Spirit within the Trinity is the same as that of the Son and Father. “In his four letters to Serapion of Thmuis, written sometime between 356 and 362, St Athanasius argues earnestly that, given a Christian understanding of redemption and sanctification through baptism and the life of the Church, faith in the full divinity of the Son implies the confession that the Spirit through whom he continues to act is also fully divine, also ὁμοούσιον with Father and Son. His reasoning is that the picture of God’s activity presented in the Christian Scriptures and the Church’s liturgy implies an inseparable unity of operation, and therefore of being, among the three Persons mentioned in the Triadic formula.” (Daley, 119). In proving the divinity of the Holy Spirit and His unity in the Trinity, Athanasius in turn goes on to explain how the Son is in us whenever the Holy Spirit is in us, and vice versa, applying this by deduction to the whole Trinity. Cyril has precisely the same formulations, and one can be confident that his reasonings for these are similar to those of Athanasius. See Daley, 119–120: “Athanasius’s argument for the full divinity of the Spirit is mainly to draw the analogy with earlier arguments for the full divinity of the Son; as a result, his normal pattern of conceiving Father, Son and Holy Spirit is perhaps less Trinitarian than doubly dyadic: as Son is to Father, so Spirit must be to Son, and through Son to Father.” In this brief treatment of Cyril’s understanding of the Holy Spirit’s place in the Trinity, it is integral to keep in mind going forward that “[t]he central concern of Cyril’s reflections on the Trinity, the rhetorical goal of most of his discussion of biblical passages that suggest the relationships of Father, Son and Spirit, is both to continue his predecessors’ resistance to any theological position that would weaken the identification of Jesus or the Spirit with the transcendent God - the positions of various schools of ‘Arians’ and ‘Spirit-fighters’ - and to emphasize the saving, life-giving, immediate presence of that God, through Jesus and the Spirit, within history and at the heart of the Church’s daily life.” (Daley, 129).

us, but he does not specify yet at this section exactly *what* must be transformed,¹¹¹ although he does specify that into which we are to be transformed: “we are transformed through him [the Spirit] and in him to the archetypal beauty, and in this way, we are reborn into newness of life and refashioned into divine sonship.”¹¹² We are to become sons of God through the Spirit, but according to what part of us? The spirit or the flesh? Nicodemus appears to be just as confused, although his concern, says Cyril, is more so about the fact of being born from above, and how at any rate one might be born again.

Cyril proceeds by lifting the veil, as it were, on Christ’s words, as Christ Himself does. He attempts to make clear those things about us that receive the waters of Holy Baptism, leaving out for the moment the subject of forgiveness, sanctification, and the mystical union, to name a few.

He [Christ] removes the veil that seems to be thrown over his words and now says openly, ‘Unless one is born again by water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’ Since human beings are composite and not simple by nature, mixed from two things—namely, a body with senses and an intellectual soul—they need a twofold healing for the new birth, corresponding to both of the aforementioned. So the human spirit is sanctified [ἀγιάζεται] by the Spirit, and the body is sanctified by the water, which in turn is also sanctified.¹¹³

¹¹¹ He does this in a running commentary at the beginning of his section on *In Jo.* 1:32–33, which will be treated below. This is treated here not in chronological sequence in order to build the case that I am making about the indwelling Holy Spirit in relation to the Incarnation.

¹¹² *In Jo.* 3:5; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 219; Maxwell, v. 1, 98. It is in and by the Holy Spirit that we come to know the Father and the Son, so sharing in the Holy Spirit grants us to share in the divine being. He has a “distinctive personal role, within the history of salvation and even within the inner life of God, as being ‘the one who brings the Trinity to its completion (συμπληρωτικόν),’” meaning that He fulfills and completes the economy of salvation and the economy of the Holy Trinity. (Daley, 133). As Fraigneau-Julien rightly observes in Cyril, “Des trois personnes divines, le Saint-Esprit apparaît dans la théologie cyrillienne comme celle qui met l’homme en relation avec les deux autres.” (“Of the three divine Persons, the Holy Spirit appears in Cyrilline theology as the one who puts man in relation with the other two.”) (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’inhabitation de la sainte Trinité,” 143). Integral to this remark is the emphasis that Cyril places on the pneumatic mode of divine indwelling. It is precisely by the Holy Spirit that we are joined in relation to the Father and the Son. Here both faith and baptism are key components to the indwelling of the Trinity in the faithful.

¹¹³ *In Jo.* 3:4–5; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 219; Maxwell, v. 1, 98. Cyril here does not appear to distinguish between the soul and spirit. It seems that he treats these as synonyms.

The emphasis here is both on the twofold nature of humanity as well as the necessity for a twofold healing that results in the new birth as sons of the Most High.

Cyril has defined the Holy Spirit's place in the economy to be the One who effects the cleansing of body and soul by means of His presence in the water.¹¹⁴ It is not mere water, however, but water that has been transformed through the activity of the Spirit [διὰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος ἐνεργείας], such that it has been “transformed into a divine and ineffable power,” like the water in a pot becoming hot by its entanglement with the flames.¹¹⁵ Thus Cyril makes clear the manner by which the water becomes sanctifying and the human spirit and body become sanctified. In other words, he shows how the Holy Spirit affects the new birth through Himself and the physical, tangible water,¹¹⁶ and that the elements of Baptism are twofold because the human is twofold. He expounds further the twofold nature of humanity, and it is at this point that Cyril really begins to get at the heart of his understanding of the reason for Baptism, and the Incarnation as a whole.

Nicodemus, says Cyril, is brought by Christ to an even higher degree of understanding, beyond the stumbling block of a birth from above. He understands the matter as Christ putting the emphasis on the spiritual rebirth, plainly because the flesh has already experienced its birth but not its physical death; on the other hand, however, the

¹¹⁴ The entire Trinity is involved, nonetheless, in our sanctification. There exists a unity of operation between the Persons, but Cyril distinguishes their roles by varying prepositions, as seen above. See Fraigneau-Julien, “L’habitation de la sainte Trinité,” 146.

¹¹⁵ “Just as water that is poured into a kettle receives an impression of the fire’s power by association with the tips of the flame, so also through the activity of the Spirit, perceptible water is transformed into a divine and ineffable power and sanctifies those with whom it comes into contact.” (*In Jo.* 3:4–5; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 219; Maxwell, v. 1, 98).

¹¹⁶ “The point of the image [that of the Holy Spirit as the fragrance of God’s substance] is not simply to emphasize the paradoxical unity-in-distinction that is one of the main themes, as Boulnois shows, in Cyril’s Trinitarian theology, but also to suggest that the distinctive role of the Spirit is to be even more intimately present in the experience of the creatures God calls to salvation than is the Father or the Son: to be precisely the point of living contact between God and the creature, the active means by which the whole Trinity dwells in us.” (Daley, 132).

spirit in us has experienced its fall and this fall has been inherited by all humanity in Adam, explaining the need for spiritual rebirth.¹¹⁷ “Just as it is surely necessary, he says, that offspring of flesh are flesh, so also offspring from the Spirit are plainly spirit. When things have different modes of being, their modes of birth certainly will not be the same.”

Since Baptism is a participation in the divine nature, we are brought up to a different mode of being, or, more so, we begin to exist in a different manner—according to a different source of life.¹¹⁸

We must note, however, that we say the human spirit is an offspring of the Spirit not as if it were from him by nature—that is impossible—but in the first place, it refers to what did not exist being called into being through him, and in the second place, in the *oikonomia*, it refers to our transformation through him toward God in which he stamps his own impression on us and transforms our mind to his own quality, so to speak.¹¹⁹

By saying that our spirit is not from Him by nature, Cyril seems to mean that our spirit is not a result of some sort of pantheism, where we exist by the energy of God continuously permeating our person. Cyril, on the other hand, speaks about the Spirit being in us initially according to God’s design,¹²⁰ and then being in us (restored to us) by participation (μέθεξις).

This is where a discussion of Cyril’s anthropology will be integral to understanding the necessity for and mode of God’s divine indwelling in us through the Spirit, both of which presuppose the breath breathed into Adam to be the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit was lost due to sin. Of the utmost importance, here, is Cyril’s use of

¹¹⁷ The narrative of the fall and our inheritance of Adam’s sin will be treated below in due course.

¹¹⁸ “Through partaking of the Spirit and the body of Christ, devout Christians are lifted up to a new level of being. If the Word has not already deified by nature the flesh that he assumed at the Incarnation, Christians cannot become gods by adoption and participate in the divine life. Cyril’s single-subject Christology is the necessary presupposition for his transformational spirituality.” (Russell, 45–46).

¹¹⁹ *In Jo.* 3:6; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 220; Maxwell, v. 1, 98.

¹²⁰ Holy Spirit as the breath.

the Adam-Christ typology and Christ as the Second Adam. Detailing Cyril's understanding of Adam and the particulars of his creation in God's image alongside the fall into sin and ensuing loss of the Holy Spirit will help serve as a precursor to understanding why the Incarnation is so important for this aspect of Cyril's theology. Let us therefore look at his commentary on Genesis in the *Glaphyra* so that we can better comprehend how he understands the nature of the first man, his fall, and the necessity for the restoration of the Holy Spirit, and what this restoration means for the importance of Cyril's two-nature Christology.¹²¹

2.2 ADAM'S CREATION AND FALL, AND THE PROMISE OF A SAVIOUR

In Cyril's *Glaphyra in Genesim*, we see his exegesis of humanity's beginnings take on a particularly Christ-centred interpretation.¹²² At the beginning of his section on Adam (*De Adam*)¹²³ Cyril makes some brief remarks about the newness in Christ of those who are in Christ. He cites 2 Cor. 5:17 when he explains that "Paul, who himself had been brought up on the divine oracles, also indicated that the things prophesied in them

¹²¹ Of importance is what Cyril says in his *Dial. Trin.* VII, 637b (Durand, *SC* 246 (1978), 158): "Yes, since in no other way are the saints enriched with participation in God than in the obtaining of the Spirit, for we are rendered 'partakers of the divine nature,' according to the Scriptures."

¹²² The *Glaphyra* are a set of running commentaries on the Pentateuch that give literal and allegorical interpretations, and serve as a work that pairs with Cyril's other work from the same period, the *De Adoratione*. The Christ-centred tone of the *Glaphyra* is addressed by Lunn who notes that Cyril focuses in this work on "drawing out 'the mystery of Christ' hidden in the text." (p. 11). Both works are dated by Jouassard to at least the period before 423 A.D., with the earlier *De Adoratione* taking a more moralizing tone in a dialogue form, whereas the latter *Glaphyra* are semi-commentaries that Jouassard say point back to the *De Adoratione*. See Georges Jouassard, "L'activité littéraire de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie jusqu'à 428: Essai de chronologie et de synthèse," in *Mélanges E. Podechard: Études de sciences religieuses offertes pour son éméritat* (Lyon: Faculté Catholiques, 1954), 161; 168–170.

¹²³ I shall follow the section divisions in Migne's edition of the *Glaphyra* (e.g., *Glaph. in Gen.* I, *De Adam*, 3, followed by the location in Migne). In translations, there exists the same type of breakdown of the sections, despite some scholars giving only either the broad *Glaph. In Gen.* with the book number or the page in Migne. Only using Migne is fine, but it does not help as much when flipping through translations of Cyril, which often make use of the further section separations.

had now been fulfilled,” meaning that “in Christ we have been transformed and have become a new creation.”¹²⁴ He attributes this to the recapitulation of all things both in heaven and on earth (ἀνακεφαλαίωσιν ἐν αὐτῷ γενέσθαι φησὶ τῶν τε ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς). He defines recapitulation (ἀνακεφαλαίωσιν) as “the reformation of all things and the return of what has become corrupted to how things were in the beginning.”¹²⁵ This will figure prominently in Cyril’s understanding of the Holy Spirit’s role in the economy, as we shall see below.

Cyril now aims to outline the creation of humanity, the fall into sin, and the promise of the restoration of the Holy Spirit, which he sees primarily in and through the incarnate Christ as the Second Adam.¹²⁶ This arc of salvation is summed up thus:

So let us now examine the old state of affairs that once existed, and let it be stated how, out of that which was utterly powerless and defective, that is, out of that which was corrupted and which was unexpectedly brought down to a different state from how things were in the beginning, the reformation to something better came about.¹²⁷

Of note, here, will be the way in which Cyril speaks about the loss of the Holy Spirit and the restoration of the Spirit by grace. On the contrary, we shall see how for Cyril the Incarnation is an act of God’s grace necessitated by God keeping His own word with creation in the promise of the Messiah. In other words, that God promised the sending of a saviour to destroy sin, death, and the power of the devil for our sake presupposes the

¹²⁴ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam*, 1; *PG*. 69, 16D; Lunn, 53.

¹²⁵ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam*, 1; *PG*. 69, 16C; Lunn, 53.

¹²⁶ Cyril, on more occasions than is possible to mention, takes this cue from 1 Cor. 15:45–49 and Rom. 5:12–19, both of which speak about Christ as the ‘second man,’ and Cyril more times than not takes this language to mean Second Adam, for he sees Adam as a type of the Messiah. Cf. *In Jo.* 1:29; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 170; Maxwell, v. 1, 76 as well as *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 724; Maxwell, v. 2, 299. Also in *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam*, 5; *PG*. 69, 28D–29A.

¹²⁷ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam*, 1; *PG*. 69, 17A; Lunn, 53–54.

way in which it would be accomplished: through His Only-begotten Son taking on our human flesh in an ineffable union.

After a brief treatment of the days of creation prior to the creation of humanity, Cyril proceeds to his analysis of the initial purpose and state of humanity, and our human nature. He writes that God, “being in nature good,” made it a part of our nature that we know who He is—that He is the Lord and creator of the cosmos, and the One to be worshipped and called Father.¹²⁸ On the one hand, “[i]t was necessary that the earth be filled with those who knew how to give him glory,” and, on the other hand, it was necessary for those who filled the earth not to be ignorant about their creator, but to be made aware of His lordship over them and His presence among them.¹²⁹ In this way, one of humanity’s purposes was to know God. Eventually we would lose this knowledge because of sin, says Cyril.

Having made humanity out of the dust and soil and fashioned it with an image and likeness patterned after His own nature,¹³⁰ Cyril says that “God honored the making

¹²⁸ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 2; PG. 69, 20A; Lunn, 55.*

¹²⁹ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 2; PG. 69, 20A; Lunn, 55.*

¹³⁰ Walter Burghardt remarks that Cyril really does not distinguish between the terms. He offers a brief but comprehensive summary of how the terms ὁμοίωσις and εἰκόν were distinguished throughout the period prior to Cyril, showing that he adopted a neo-Alexandrian position of effectively foregoing any distinction between them. Walter J. Burghardt, *The Image of God in Man according to Cyril of Alexandria*, (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1957), 1–7. Nonetheless, he says, “Cyril is aware of the thesis which held that the image was given man in the world’s beginning, while the likeness is reserved for the world’s end.” (Burghardt, 7). Interestingly enough, says Burghardt, Cyril is in agreement with modern exegetes who do not make any distinction between the two terms. (Burghardt, 8). Later, he will clarify: “It is (a) his emphasis on ontological holiness, (b) his unmistakable identification of ontological holiness with the image of God in man, and (c) his insistence that in holiness lies man’s most significant resemblance to God—this it is that distinguishes Cyril from his Alexandrian predecessors. It is a question of stress, yes; but the difference in stress is striking.” (Burghardt, 83). See also Lars Koen, *The Saving Passion: Incarnational and Soteriological Thought in Cyril of Alexandria’s Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, *Studia Doctrinae Christianae Upsaliensia*, vol. 31 (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1991), 44. Koen writes: [Cyril] is among the first of the fathers to drop the distinction between image (εἰκόν) and likeness (ὁμοίωσις), and that, in spite of its heavy entrenchment in the teaching of fathers like Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Origin – and also among the Cappadocians even Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil.”

of this masterpiece with his own deliberation and personal involvement.”¹³¹ Part of this personal involvement was to create the human as a “rational creature [...] in order that he might replicate the rationality of his [God’s] own nature,” and this was done through God enlivening humanity with “an immortal (ἄφθαρτον), life-giving (ζωοποιὸν) Spirit (πνεῦμα),”¹³² after which he cites Gen 2:7: “And he breathed upon his face the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” After the giving of the Holy Spirit, the first man was given dominion over the earth, and he embodied on earth the glory and authority of God, yet he was to be obedient to all the laws of nature. At this point, then, it could be said confidently that “man was the image of the highest glory, and the representation of divine authority on earth.”¹³³

Lest the man should, however, become too proud, says Cyril, God implemented a limit on his nature and experience of life: that he should not be allowed to possess the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day that he would eat of that tree in the garden he would surely die, and he did, in a way. The death he died, however, was not necessarily a consequence whereby he would simply drop dead. No, the promise was such that the

¹³¹ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 2; PG. 69, 20B; Lunn, 56.*

¹³² *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 2; PG. 69, 20B; Lunn, 56.* Lunn remarks that Cyril interprets the ‘breath’ as the Holy Spirit, and that the fact of this πνεῦμα being life-giving and immortal is enough to infer that Cyril here means the Holy Spirit (see p. 56, n. 28). Of interest, as well, is how he later will use the term ψυχή when speaking about man as a ‘living being.’ At least that is how Lunn translates it, and I should think it more accurate than simply ‘soul.’ It would seem that Cyril has in mind the entire animating faculty of the body, which is the soul, yes, but may also imply the personality and other characteristics implicit in human nature. The contrast between the two terms is even more distinguishable in Cyril’s use of 1 Cor. 15:45, where he cites the passage, saying that “‘the first man, Adam,’ it says, ‘became a living soul (ψυχήν ζῶσαν), the last Adam a life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν).’” (*Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 28D–29A; Lunn, 63*). See Marie-Odile Boulnois, “Le souffle et l’Esprit: Exégèses patristiques de l’insufflation originelle de Gn 2, 7 en lien avec celle de Jn 20, 22,” *Recherches augustiniennes* 24 (1989): 3–37.

¹³³ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 2; PG. 69, 20C; Lunn, 56.* Burghardt writes that “any reconstruction of Cyril’s theology of sin and the image must begin with two general principles. On the one hand, despite sin ‘we have lost none of our essential components,’ no possession that is indispensable if man is to remain human, if he is to be a ‘rational, mortal animal, capable of understanding and knowledge.’ [...] On the other hand, Adam’s sin did affect the image adversely: [in that it] marred the beauty of the godlike image.” (Burghardt, 143).

wages of sin was death in the manner both of an impending bodily death, as well as a spiritual death. The latter is what interests Cyril, since it has everything to do with his understanding of the Spirit's role in the economy.

When Adam fell with his wife, "human nature (ἡ φύσις) was straightaway condemned to death," and both childbirth and any other labour was no longer pleasant but tedious and painful.¹³⁴ Additionally, the pair was cast out of the garden of Eden to live apart from the presence of God, from Life itself, and wither away in a newly-corrupted world, for Cyril says that "they were consigned to mother earth, and brought low by the cords of corruption. So there remained, it would seem, absolutely nothing for them in their extreme state of wretchedness."¹³⁵

Cyril, then, enters into a digression of a philosophical sort: he deals with a rebuttal that suggests that it would have been better, therefore, not to have existed, given that God knew that he would fall into sin and perish. Cyril thinks, though, that it is, on the one hand, both foolish and dangerous to question God's foreknowledge and His purposes, and, on the other hand, that it is far better to exist than not, since to exist entails an experience of God's goodness.¹³⁶ He then briefly clarifies the position of the angels and the devil in the hierarchy of creation, saying that these are certainly greater in abilities than humans, yet even the devil and all his angels were capable of falling.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 2; PG. 69, 21A; Lunn, 57.* Notice here that he does not mention merely Adam or his body, or soul, but human nature in general. This was the extent of the damage wrought by sin; that without which a human cannot be what he or she is (the essence) was condemned to death. It would seem impossible to think of a more thorough condemnation with the exception of pure annihilation.

¹³⁵ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 2; PG. 69, 21A; Lunn, 57.*

¹³⁶ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 3; PG. 69, 21A–24A; Lunn, 57–58.*

¹³⁷ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 3; PG. 69, 24A–B; Lunn, 58–59.*

In the next section, Cyril gives more detail about the nature of humanity's intellectual and spiritual disposition.¹³⁸

In the beginning man was made with control over his own will and with a disposition that was free to do whatever he chose, for the Deity, in whose likeness he was formed [πρὸς ὃ καὶ μεμόρφωτο], is free. In no other way than this, it seems to me, could he obtain an excellent estate—if he was seen to be a willing doer of virtuous deeds, resolved to be fruitful, being pure in his actions, not performed as the product of natural compunction, by no means allowing himself to be drawn away from that which was good, even if he had the desire to do that which was not so.¹³⁹

Humanity was both intellectually and spiritually free, able to choose good and will itself to do good. And this willing to do good was pleasing to God because it was according to His will and done both in faith and without the curse of sin. His inclination was controlled at will, although it was inclined to goodness because of the One in Whose image he was made and because of the lack of the knowledge of evil, which impeded his ability to know evil, since it would seem that he knew nothing negatively.¹⁴⁰ Nonetheless, his capacity to disobey was perhaps in Cyril's view not motivated by malicious intent, but by a desire to be like God—closer to God than he was designed to be. Cyril appears

¹³⁸ In defining Cyril's thoughts on paradise, Adam, and sin, Burghardt highlights six aspects of Cyril's understanding of human nature as it was intended to be by God's design: (1) that man is a reasonable being, filled with the light of reason, which "is a participation in Him who is Light, who is Reason, the Logos; [...] a mind germinally virtuous, open to the divine, in quest of God;" (2) that man was free, which he defines as "the power to elect one object in preference to another," and in this respect Adam was always intended to act in accordance with goodness, since "man is divinely oriented towards good by the indeliberate drive of his will," citing Cyril's *Glaphyra in Genesim* 1, 9 (PG. 69, 24) and *De adoratione* 1 (PG. 68, 145). (Burghardt, 141). (3) That he was given dominion over all the earth. (4) That he possessed ontological and dynamic holiness: ontological by a participation in God's nature through the Spirit dwelling in him, and dynamic by his natural inclination to goodness. (5) That he was incorruptible, both with respect to bodily degeneration and to concupiscence, not being tyrannized by the natural inclinations to feed the appetites, which would later become passions against which he and his descendants would struggle. (Burghardt, 142). And, finally, (6) that his sonship was by grace one of imitation of the Only-begotten Son, neither an adopted son (θετός), nor *naturally* a son (υἱός) like the Son, but a child of God (τέκνον τοῦ Θεοῦ) by "a participation in the Son through the Spirit." (Burghardt, 142).

¹³⁹ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam*, 4; PG. 69, 24C; Lunn, 59. Lunn implies 'likeness' here from πρὸς ὃ as the object of μεμόρφωτο, which may not be inaccurate, but certainly fills a void where Cyril does not speak specifically about 'likeness' or 'image.'

¹⁴⁰ I mean here that he would not have known 'not-good' or 'not-free,' because his mind was virtuous and pure, always inclined to goodness, in Cyril's eyes.

to confirm this when he says that “by the trickery of the serpent he was witlessly carried away into improper actions and committed transgression without any justification.”¹⁴¹

At this point, Cyril begins to involve the promise of the Messiah as the One Who would destroy the powers of sin, death, and the devil. Speaking to God’s foreknowledge of humanity’s fall into sin, Cyril says the following:

That in the meantime the living creature would in fact experience corruption, the Maker was not unaware, but he well knew that together with this there would be deliverance from those things that were improper and the removal of corruption, as well as the return to a better state and the restoration of those good things that were there in the beginning.¹⁴²

Cyril says that God “knew that he would later send his own Son in human form to die on our behalf, and to destroy the power of death, so that he might have dominion over the dead and the living.”¹⁴³ He cites Romans 8:28–30 to show that neither was God ignorant of the fact that humanity would fall into corruption, “[n]or was he ignorant of the manner in which this could be cured.”¹⁴⁴ Since we could not with our efforts bridge the gap between the created and Uncreated, the fulfilling of the Law in our nature required the life of Another One Who would not only fulfill the Law as a human, but bring to humanity grace and truth enfleshed (Jn. 1:17), descend to our human nature, join Himself to it, and live the life that we could not. A Second Adam was needed.

In addition to the salvation of the human race being foreknown and planned by God, Cyril emphasises also the reality of the Incarnation as present in the mind of God as the manner by which He would accomplish this. He says that “the manner of the

¹⁴¹ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 4; PG. 69, 24D; Lunn, 59.* “Man is not compelled to sin; still, the dominion of Satan did inhibit Adam’s liberty, his openness to the divine, his response to the spiritual. This is the freedom which only an Incarnation would restore.” (Burghardt, 145).

¹⁴² *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 4; PG. 69, 25A; Lunn, 60.*

¹⁴³ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 4; PG. 69, 25A; Lunn, 60.*

¹⁴⁴ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 4; PG. 69, 25C; Lunn, 61.*

Incarnation, as I said, was foreknown, and the deliverance from infirmity was administered at the proper time.”¹⁴⁵ This he says after citing Paul, who “testifies unambiguously to the antiquity of salvation through Christ [...] according to his [God’s] own purpose and the grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before all ages and that has been revealed in the last ages through the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ’.”¹⁴⁶ Cyril points us both to the fact that our salvation had been part of God’s plan since the beginning, and the way in which He would accomplish was equally present in God’s good wisdom.

Having fallen into sin, therefore, and having transmitted the punishment to the generations after him,¹⁴⁷ the first Adam lost the original gift of the Holy Spirit and became the source of death to humanity;¹⁴⁸ Christ, however, was to become the Second Adam and source of life to our human nature.¹⁴⁹

[God] prepared for us a second root, as it were, of a race that would raise us back up to our former incorruption. So, as the image of the first man taken from the ground was imprinted upon us, which had to suffer death and be ensnared in the cords of corruption, thus also in the case of our second beginning after that first one, that is to say, Christ, in whose likeness we are made through the Spirit, incorruptible nature is impressed upon us.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 28A; Lunn, 61.*

¹⁴⁶ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 25C–D; Lunn, 61.*

¹⁴⁷ “Then the punishment passed upon all men, this condition coming forth just as things grow out of a root. ‘For death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam’s transgression.’” *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 28C; Lunn, 62.*

¹⁴⁸ When the Holy Spirit left Adam because He could not dwell in one who had sinned, “Adam lost, therefore, the ontological as well as the dynamic [holiness].” (Burghardt, 146). “What he did lose was the supernatural relationship, the unmerited kinship, which had accrued to him through the indwelling Spirit.” (Burghardt, 147). “It was ‘man’s nature’ that ‘sold the gift’ which is resemblance to God through sanctification, and consequently was condemned to death and enslaved to sin. But perhaps the most expressive proof that human nature lost holiness is the fact that human nature lost the Spirit of holiness.” (Burghardt, 149). Cf. Koen, 42: “The fall from the original grace is expressed in a rare manner by Cyril. The fall made the Spirit flee from man because of sin. Interpreting Gen 2,7, Cyril says that the loss of the Spirit made man not only subject to corruption but also prone to all sin. This picture of the departure of the Spirit of God from man due to the fall is unique. Most of the eastern fathers talk about the fall resulting in the loss of original justice.”

¹⁴⁹ “The tragedy of Adam’s sin is that ‘in Adam, in the one, Satan conquered the whole nature of man.’” (Burghardt, 147).

¹⁵⁰ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 28D; Lunn, 62–63.*

This second root was to be of the root of Jesse, and, as he says, would raise us to our former incorruption. We receive our *former* incorruption by our corrupted human nature inherited from the first Adam, but the fact of there is a Second Adam appears to imply that there would be a restoration (recapitulation) of our human nature as it was intended to be, as well as a re-conforming to the divine image, in conformity to which we initially made.¹⁵¹ Cyril locates the manner by which this occurs in the incarnate Christ: he says that this is mediated “through the Spirit,” and we shall see below that he involves the Spirit in the restoration of incorruption to our human nature by restoring Him to Christ, bearing our human nature as the second Adam. Let us finish up this section, however, before we get to his thoughts on the matter in *In Jo.* 1:29 and 1:32–33.

Cyril concludes his section on Adam with a series of comparisons between Adam and Christ, evidently drawing out in more blatant terms the Second-Adam typology

¹⁵¹ Some distinctions must be made in order to understand exactly how Cyril’s sees the divine image having been lost: Burghardt says that the “aspects of the image which are part and parcel of man’s essential structure—basic rationality and psychological freedom—were not lost. Those facets of the image which owe their existence to the indwelling of the Spirit—holiness, incorruptibility, kinship with God—were lost.” (Burghardt, 153). This would explain the role played by the Holy Spirit in sanctifying our human nature a second time, making us children of God by grace: “So, then, we must draw the conclusion—though Cyril does not—that the image of God is to be found in Old Testament times, but on a distinctly low level at best: in all men, basic rationality and psychological freedom; in the just, a dynamic imitation of God by the practice of virtue, and a sonship which is simply type and figure. We do not discover the ontological holiness which is oneness with the indwelling Spirit, the incorruptibility which is the effect of the Spirit’s self-communication, the sonship which is the gift exclusively of the Spirit of adoption.” (Burghardt, 159). Burghardt mentions earlier, although certainly along the same line of thinking as above, Janssens’s exquisite study of divine filiation in Cyril, noting that divine adoption never belonged to Adam so it was not possible for human nature to lose this, which explains why our adoption as sons through Baptism is such an important part of Cyril’s anthropology and soteriology. “What human nature did lose in its root was the supernatural kinship which is the effect of the indwelling Spirit.” (Burghardt, 153). Russell adds: “We do not merely become images of the image. Through Christ we participate in the source of divine being itself, sharing a community of life with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as gods and sons of the Most High.” (Russell, 21). On Adam and the first man and Christ as the Second Adam: “Par ce don le premier homme possédait pour lui-même et pour sa race le privilège de l’incorruptibilité (ἀφθαρσία) et avait en lui en conséquence toutes les vertus d’une manière permanente.” (“By this gift the first man possessed for himself and for his race the privilege of incorruptibility, and consequently had in himself all the virtues in a permanent manner.”) (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’inhabitation de la sainte Trinité,” 136).

implicit in the text as well as expounded explicitly in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. In this respect, he cites sections of 1 Cor. 15:45–49, drawing out the contrasts thus: the first Adam was a living soul, while the second Adam became a life-giving Spirit; the first was of dust, while the second is Lord from heaven; the first cursed us, while the second became a curse for us that we might be redeemed.¹⁵²

Finally, he brings the section to a head and demonstrates the central importance of the Second-Adam typology and Christ as the Second Adam:

And the Only-Begotten Word of God voluntarily came down into our estate, not that he might be ruled over by death along with us, through Adam transmitting deadness to him, since he himself is the one who makes all things alive, but that having manifested that nature which was subject to corruption, he might transform it into life. This is the reason he became flesh.¹⁵³

In short, Christ transforms into life our human nature which was dead in its trespasses.¹⁵⁴

By making it His own, it receives through the communication of idioms the vivifying attribute of his divine nature and is, in turn, vivified in Him. If it is vivified or enlivened with the life of God, then it is surely sanctified.¹⁵⁵ How, though, does Cyril explain the mechanism by which this occurs? For him it is a matter of generation, or re-generation.

¹⁵² “For ‘the first man Adam,’ it says, ‘became a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit.’ It also explains this to us in other words when it says, ‘The first man was from the dust; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the heavenly man, so too are those who are heavenly. And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly man.’ And again, ‘Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.’ For ‘he humbled himself,’ as it is written.” *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 28D–29A; Lunn, 63.*

¹⁵³ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 29A; Lunn, 63.* “In that divine decree [that God would send a saviour], as Cyril sees it, the central themes were image and Incarnation. Redemption is recapitulation (ἀνακεφαλαίωσις), and recapitulation means ‘restoration to original state.’” (Burghardt, 160). Additionally, he writes: “He is the archetype; we are the images. The consequence, the implication, of so intimate a relationship is that our brotherhood with Christ is not merely a thing of the flesh; it is divine, suprasensible.” (Burghardt, 165).

¹⁵⁴ “For in Christ we have in fact been restored to our original estate.” *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 28B; Lunn, 62.*

¹⁵⁵ “Unless the incarnate body of Christ was filled with divine life we cannot ourselves be transformed.” (Russell, 45).

As we saw above, what is of flesh is flesh and what is of spirit is spirit,¹⁵⁶ and keeping this understanding of Cyril’s philosophy of generation in mind will contextualise how he intends for his comments about the Spirit’s role in the economy of salvation to be understood. Put simply, what is of one kind can only beget that same kind. Accordingly, Cyril says that it would be foolish to think that while Adam, being a man, could transmit his sin to the entire human race, Christ, being Emmanuel the God-man, could *not* do so with His grace.¹⁵⁷ One must accept both propositions, the latter of which can be understood to occur through two means.

The first is quite simple and was treated in the first chapter of this thesis: the matter of being joined to Christ through participation of His body and blood in the Eucharist, or mystical blessing (εὐλογία μυστική), as Cyril sometimes calls it.¹⁵⁸ This is the somatic mode of indwelling by which we become one body with Christ.¹⁵⁹ He is quick, though, to add the second mode of indwelling on which he seems to place an even greater emphasis: “Yet we have also been united with him in another way, because we have become ‘partakers [κοινωνοὶ] of his divine nature’ through the Spirit. For he resides

¹⁵⁶ See *In Jo.* 3:6–8; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 220; Maxwell, v. 1, 98.

¹⁵⁷ “It is absurd to think that Adam, who was earthly and human, when the curse came upon him, could spread its effects upon the whole of the race, as a kind of inheritance, while Emmanuel, who was from heaven above and God by nature, who also possessed our likeness, having become a second Adam for us, could not make the very ones who wished to participate in a relationship with him by faith to share abundantly in his own life.” *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam*, 5; *PG.* 69, 29B; Lunn, 62–63.

¹⁵⁸ “Σύσσωμοι μὲν γὰρ γεγόναμεν αὐτῷ δι’ εὐλογίας τῆς μυστικῆς.” *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam*, 5; *PG.* 69, 29B; Lunn, 64.

¹⁵⁹ Lunn translates Σύσσωμοι as “fellow members of his body,” which certainly leaves open the interpretation for both a unity with Christ and a unity with fellow believers (the body of Christ) through the Eucharist. Either meaning is appropriate, although I much prefer a translation that highlights the matter of “unity in one body.” See Lampe (p. 1348) section B. (esp. 1, 2, and 4) of σύσσωμος, for more possibilities and their contexts. See Russell, 20: “Such participation [somatic participation by means of the Eucharist, that is] in Christ is made possible by the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that restores us to the divine image and likeness.”

in the souls of the saints, as the blessed John also says, ‘By this we know that he is in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.’”¹⁶⁰

In this way, Cyril makes direct reference to the two modes of divine indwelling in the Christian and writes how the Spirit is the mediating Person through Whom the Son enables us to partake of Him pneumatically. The exact way in which we come to partake of the Son pneumatically, however, is treated in detail elsewhere, and for this we must return to Cyril’s *In Joannem* to get a clearer picture of the integral nature of the Holy Spirit’s mediation between creation and the Son. By looking at the Baptism of Christ, we shall see that for Cyril this is a key moment in initiating the Spirit’s dwelling with our human nature, first accomplished in Christ and eventually accomplished in His giving of the Spirit to the Apostles at Pentecost.

2.3 BAPTISM AND THE INDWELLING SPIRIT IN CYRIL’S *COMMENTARY ON JOHN*

Cyril begins his section on the Baptism of the Lord as recorded in John’s Gospel¹⁶¹ by noting John the Baptist’s place as both prophet and apostle.¹⁶² This appears to be for the sake of confirming the reliability of the Baptist’s witness.¹⁶³ Shortly after, he

¹⁶⁰ *Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 29C; Lunn, 64.* He adds: “For Adam was the beginning of the race, with respect to death, the curse, and condemnation. But Christ was the complete reverse, bringing life, blessing, and justification. Adam received the woman as one flesh with himself, and came to ruin through her. Yet Christ, uniting the church to himself through the Spirit, rescues and saves her, and accomplishes better things for her than the devil did in his deceit.” (*Glaph. in Gen. I, De Adam, 5; PG. 69, 29D; Lunn, 64*). For Cyril, “Baptism is so significant for the recovery of the image because it is in baptism that we receive the Spirit of Christ.” (Burghardt, 161). Also, Burghardt: “For Cyril, it is obviously faith that is the perfection of light in man here below; for it is faith that conforms man’s intelligence to divine Wisdom, to Christ. In sum, likeness to God is restored through faith; it is more perfect, the more perfect our faith; it is made abortive through loss of faith.” (Burghardt, 162).

¹⁶¹ *In Jo. 1:29–1:34; Pusey, In Jo., v. 1, 169–190; Maxwell, v. 1, 75–85.*

¹⁶² *In Jo. 1:29; Pusey, In Jo., v. 1, 169; Maxwell, v. 1, 75.*

¹⁶³ “Therefore, the witness is most credible, the sign is supernatural, and the Father who revealed it is above all things.” *In Jo. 1:32–33; Pusey, In Jo., v. 1, 175; Maxwell, v. 1, 77.* Consider as well: “Therefore, when the blessed Baptist says that he does not know the Lord, he is not lying in the least. In accordance with

makes a few remarks on the title of “lamb” which the Baptist attributes to Christ, relating this directly to Christ as the Second Adam:

The lamb is to become the second Adam, not from earth but from heaven, and to become the source of all good for human nature, the deliverance from imported corruption, the bestower of eternal life, the basis for transformation into God, the source of piety and righteousness and the road to the kingdom of heaven.¹⁶⁴

That Christ is the Second Adam renders some of the consequent benefits even closer to us than if He were not one with us according to the flesh. What I mean is that it is not the case that the blessings of the Incarnation are given abstractly or solely at the level of the intellect, but that they are, in fact, given through Christ’s ineffable yet substantial union with our human nature, such that what becomes of His flesh becomes of ours: essentially all the particulars of the latter portion of the above list. That Cyril mentions Christ as the Second Adam this early in the narrative is significant for our inquiry, for it will figure later as we consider his use of the creation account of Adam that we treated above.¹⁶⁵

For the sake of our inquiry, I shall bypass Cyril’s rather lengthy digression against a supposed Arian heretic who, through various argumentation, attempts to demonstrate that the Spirit cannot belong to the Son, that the Son cannot be divine, and that the Spirit

what belongs to humanity and the measure that is proper for creation, he attributes the knowledge of all things to God alone who through the Holy Spirit enlightens a person with the understanding of hidden things. He benefits the hero greatly by saying that he does not know Christ on his own, but he has come strictly for this reason: that he might ‘reveal him to Israel.’ In this way, he makes clear that it was not his idea to rush into bearing witness, so no one thinks he is serving his own will; rather, he is just a worker in the divine plan of salvation and a servant of the will from above which reveals to him the ‘lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.’” *In Jo.* 1:31; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 172; Maxwell, v. 1, 77.

¹⁶⁴ *In Jo.* 1:29; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 170; Maxwell, v. 1, 76.

¹⁶⁵ Here Keating notes about the beginning of this section: “In a significant exegetical maneuver, Cyril begins the account of Jesus’ baptism by appeal to the creation of man in Genesis 1–2.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 205). The way that I have proceeded, then, has been both necessary and logical in preparing the arguments for my position.

is not one with Him.¹⁶⁶ Suffice it to say that Cyril settles the matter by citing Philippians 2:5–8, as he often does.¹⁶⁷ The emphasis here being that Christ possesses the Spirit from eternity according to His divine nature, but received the Spirit in time at His Baptism according to His human nature, even though the Spirit was already His.¹⁶⁸

What is of concern to us is how Cyril incorporates the exact narrative about the loss of the Spirit in Adam in order to demonstrate how much more Christ is the Second Adam, and it is no coincidence that he does this in the narrative of Christ’s Baptism. That Cyril sees Christ as the Second Adam is fulfilled in part in his Baptism, since it is here that Cyril sees the precise moment when the sanctification of our nature is delivered in a tangible way to it.¹⁶⁹ Christ’s union to our flesh in the womb of the Virgin is an initial moment of sanctification, but the Baptism of the Lord is a sacrament that eventually connects to us in *our* Baptism.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 175–182; Maxwell, v. 1, 77–81. Keating treats this with sufficient detail in “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 203–205.

¹⁶⁷ “We bring up once again what Paul says. ‘Each one of you think this among yourselves,’ he says, ‘which is also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God did not consider equality with God something to be exploited, but he emptied himself, taking on the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself.’” *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 181; Maxwell, v. 1, 80. The ESV text reads thus: “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

¹⁶⁸ See the rhetorical questions he asks the hypothetical Arian interlocutor at *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 179–182; Maxwell, v. 1, 79–81.

¹⁶⁹ Mahé writes to the effect that we receive the Spirit in Baptism and it truly dwells in us thereafter in a substantial way, just as it did with Adam. He therefore sees the connection with the loss of the Spirit in Adam and restoration of it to us in Christ: “Le baptême nous met donc en possession de l’Esprit sanctificateur. Désormais, le Saint-Esprit habite réellement en nous, comme il habitait en Adam.” (“Baptism puts us in possession of the sanctifying Spirit. Henceforth the Holy Spirit dwells in a real way in us, as it did in Adam.”) (Mahé, “La Sanctification d’après Saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie,” 36).

¹⁷⁰ “Cette participation au Saint-Esprit apparaît comme un effet particulier de la grâce, produit par le sacrement de baptême et désignant la grâce elle-même au même titre que la participation à la nature divine et que l’adoption surnaturelle.” (“This participation in the Holy Spirit appears as a particular effect of grace, produced by the sacrament of Baptism and designating grace itself in the same manner as the participation to the divine nature and to the supernatural adoption.”) (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’inhabitation de la sainte Trinité,” 145).

Cyril's comments on Christ as the Second Adam follow his section refuting the Arian accusations that the Spirit could not possibly be Christ's, and they are, in effect, an expounding exegesis of 2 Corinthians 8:9.¹⁷¹ The section following the address to the Arian interlocutor is truly an extension of the prior argumentation, but the conclusions drawn help us in our inquiry, even though Cyril appears to be concerned to prove the unity of the Spirit in the Son not by participation but essentially.¹⁷² This is still integral, however, because it will be used to show how the Incarnation is so integral to the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our nature, and that it is only Christ who can both receive the Spirit in our nature and dispense Him according to His divine nature.¹⁷³ The Incarnation understood in the manner in which Cyril proposes is precisely what must be presupposed in order for the above to function.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ "Come then, let us take our mind captive in the subject before us and submit it to the glory of the Only Begotten, bringing all things wisely into his obedience, that is, into the way of his incarnation. 'Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich.'" *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 182; Maxwell, v. 1, 81. The ESV text reads thus: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich." He also treats the section about the ark of humanity's creation, fall and subsequent loss of the Spirit as being "our proof in the matter before us," meaning our proof of Christ's ability to receive what He already had. *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 182; Maxwell, v. 1, 81.

¹⁷² "[T]he Son must have the Holy Spirit essentially in himself." (Keating, "The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race," 204).

¹⁷³ See Keating, "The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race," 210; 213–216 on receiving the Spirit as man and giving Him as God. Cf. Koen, 67–68: Citing Cyril's *In Jo.* 6:63, Koen writes that "Cyril says: 'For as God He has unceasingly the Spirit who is essentially of His nature and His own. He is anointed for our sakes and receives the Spirit as man, not for Himself, but for the nature of man.' Cyril separates the works of the Son, saying that He has the Spirit *ὡς Θεός*, but He receives the Spirit for the anointing in view of His passion as man, *ὡς ἄνθρωπος*."

¹⁷⁴ Concluding Cyril's remarks on deification and created grace, Fraigneau-Julien notes the centrality of the Incarnation as Cyril understands it, writing that "l'Incarnation en faisant posséder une nature humaine par le Verbe est la condition première et fondamentale de notre divinisation, le principe de cette ressemblance spirituelle avec Dieu qui sera produite dans l'âme par la grâce créée et sera le fondement de la vie morale propre du chrétien." ("the Incarnation, making itself to possess a human nature by the Word is the first and fundamental condition of our deification, the principle of this spiritual resemblance with God that will be produced in the soul by created grace and will be the foundation of the proper moral life of the Christian.") (Fraigneau-Julien, "L'inhabitation de la sainte Trinité," 155).

The expounding requires Cyril to recite in brief his extensive comments in the *Glaphyra in Genesim* seen above concerning the same subject, but this time he connects it to its fulfillment in Christ, and the restoration of the Holy Spirit in Him. He details the whole arc of the creation of Adam, breathing in of the Holy Spirit, and eventual loss of the Spirit, beginning with a statement regarding our being made in the image and likeness of God:

Holy Scripture testifies that humanity was made in the image and likeness of God who is over all. Indeed, the one who drew up the first book for us, Moses, who was known by God ‘above all,’ says, ‘And God made the man; according to the image of God he made him.’ He taught us that through the Holy Spirit he was sealed in the divine image, saying, ‘And he breathed into his face the breath of life.’ At the same time the Spirit put life into the one who had been formed, he also imprinted his stamp on him, in a manner appropriate to God.¹⁷⁵

Here we learn that the Holy Spirit is the One whose imprint on us grants to us the image of God, since He is God by nature.¹⁷⁶ According to Cyril, therefore, the Holy Spirit is the One by whom God the Father imprints His image onto humanity, enlivening us by the indwelling of His Spirit.¹⁷⁷ It must equally be acknowledged that the role of the Word is

¹⁷⁵ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 182; Maxwell, v. 1, 81.

¹⁷⁶ “Two features of the creation are particularly noted and linked together. First, we are reminded that man is made ‘in the image and likeness of God’ (Gen. 1:27). And secondly, from Gen. 2:7, ‘And he breathed into his face the breath of life,’ the Spirit is said to seal the divine image by ‘putting his life’ into the figure of man and ‘impressing his own characteristics in a God-befitting way’ (I, 182). Cyril seemingly has in mind a two-stage process here, or at least two distinguishable aspects of the one creation: man is made in the image and likeness of God *and* the Spirit breathes life into man, impressing his own divine characteristics upon him. [...] Cyril then identifies a third aspect of the original creation, the giving of the ‘saving commandment’ to the ‘reasonable living creature.’ [...] The divine image, then, is in some sense a gift, guaranteed by the indwelling Holy Spirit, a gift that needs to be guarded, lest it be lost.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 205–206).

¹⁷⁷ “Although the immediate focus of the controversy was how rightly to conceive and express the personal and natural identity of Christ the Savior, the issue was as much Trinitarian and soteriological, even ecclesiological and anthropological, as it was ‘simply’ a matter of Christology.” (Daley, 141).

to be the One through whom the Father creates; He is the very words spoken to create and the very rationality imposed on our human nature.¹⁷⁸

Cyril confirms all the more the connections between the divine image imprinted in us and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit when he writes that “[Adam] was in the garden, as it is written, still keeping the gift, and was illustrious in the divine image of his maker through the Holy Spirit who dwelt in him.”¹⁷⁹ I recognize great significance in this part of the narrative because of both the emphasis that Cyril places on it as a preface to the fall into sin and recovery of the Spirit, but also because of how it plays into the role of the Incarnation in restoring the lost Spirit to our human nature by being the Mediator of the Spirit.¹⁸⁰ This will play a significant role when we look at Cyril’s comments on the High Priestly Prayer, especially at John 17:18–19, and the final “breathing” of the Holy Spirit onto the Apostles at Pentecost at John 20.

Following Cyril’s comments on the indwelling Spirit, he immediately proceeds to an overview of the fall into sin and the promise of the Messiah. He says that “he was [then] led astray by the deception of the devil, [and] he despised the creator.”¹⁸¹ Consequently, God “took back the grace that was given to him,” and “the likeness to God was then marked with a false stamp through the sin that rushed in, and the engraving was

¹⁷⁸ Cf. John 1:3. “All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Cf. *In Jo.* 20:21–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 134–135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369: “And it was necessary that those who believe in him understand that he is the power of the Father, which created all things and brought humanity from nonexistence into existence. God the Father, through his own Word, took the original dirt from the ground, as it is written, and fashioned a living creature (I mean the man), endowed him with a soul according to his own will and enlightened him by participation in his Spirit.”

¹⁷⁹ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 81.

¹⁸⁰ “At stake for Cyril was a right understanding of just what it means for humanity that Jesus, named at his baptism ‘beloved Son’, received the Spirit at that moment, and breathed the Spirit forth on his disciples on Easter night: by actually becoming one of us, by receiving the Spirit into our flesh and communicating it to the founders of the Church in which we live and worship, God the Son has made it possible for humanity once again to share - by participation, yet genuinely, even substantially - in the life of God.” (Daley, 141).

¹⁸¹ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 81.

no longer distinct.”¹⁸² Sin in Adam “darkened” the image, but by the time humanity had multiplied greatly, “sin ruled over all of them, [and] it thoroughly plundered the soul of each one, and nature was stripped of the original grace.”¹⁸³ Cyril appears to show the loss of the Spirit as progressive, because its loss is not as immediate as the loss of the image.¹⁸⁴ He says following this that “[t]he Spirit also departed completely, and the rational creature fell into utter irrationality, not even recognizing the creator himself,”¹⁸⁵ adding that “human nature was shown to be stripped of the indwelling [ἐνοικισθέντος] Holy Spirit.”¹⁸⁶

Humanity, however, was not to remain in such a spiritually destitute state, for God, “after enduring for a long time, finally had mercy on the corrupted world.”¹⁸⁷ God’s goal, says Cyril, was to restore the lost, original image back to humanity through the Spirit in order for the “divine imprint” to shine forth again in us.¹⁸⁸ This meant nothing other than for us to be saved from our condemnation by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, which entails the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our human nature in Christ. Where the Holy Spirit is, there is the Son, for He is His Spirit, and where the Son is there

¹⁸² *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 81.

¹⁸³ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 81.

¹⁸⁴ “Corruption and death follow immediately upon Adam’s transgression, but the complete loss of the original grace occurs only by stages. And crucially, the final stripping of grace is marked by the decisive departure of the Holy Spirit. For Cyril, the creation and fall are cast here in terms of the gift of the Holy Spirit and its subsequent loss. Other traditional elements are included and important, but the decisive feature of this account is the acquisition and forfeiture of the Holy Spirit.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 206).

¹⁸⁵ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 81.

¹⁸⁶ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 184; Maxwell, v. 1, 82. See Koen, 42–43.

¹⁸⁷ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 81–82.

¹⁸⁸ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 82. At work here, also, is the concept of recapitulation: “Therefore, we next discuss how he planned to do this, how he implanted in us the grace that is our refuge, how the Spirit was rooted once again in humanity and how our nature was *transformed to its original state.*” *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 183; Maxwell, v. 1, 82. Emphasis added. Burghardt notes the following: “Concretely and individually, the image of God is recovered in baptism.” (Burghardt, 160). Of note here is what Cyril says in his *In psalmos*, Ps 44:12–13 (PG. 69, 1044), that you face the West and bid adieu to the devil.

is the Father. In other words, when the Spirit dwells in us, there is God dwelling in us.¹⁸⁹

The coming of the Son as the Second Adam is the answer to the question of how God would restore the original, divine image in us again. This is why I think that the restoration of the Holy Spirit for Cyril implies also our salvation.

Cyril says that Adam was of the earth and that Christ is from above, which precedes the same contrast that we saw above in his comments on John 3:4–5. Adam, he says, “fell to the earth, the mother from which he came” and that “he conveyed his penalty to the whole race.”¹⁹⁰ It would, then, be necessary for Christ to be equally as much man as Adam in order to receive the Spirit on our behalf, while being as much God in order to give the Spirit.¹⁹¹

God the Father planned to send us the second Adam from heaven. He sent his own Son, who is by nature without variation or change [ἄτρεπτόν τε καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον], into our likeness [ὁμοίωσιν]. He knew no sin at all so that, just as through the disobedience of the first we came under God’s wrath, so through the obedience of the second, we might escape the curse, and its evils might come to nothing.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Connecting the unity of the Holy Spirit with the other Persons in the Trinity, Daley highlights the connection of this to the Incarnation: “Cyril’s main concern in dealing with the person of the Holy Spirit is to show his natural and substantial unity with both Father and Son, and the consequent ability of Jesus, as the Son of God who has ‘emptied himself’ to take on human ‘flesh’ and assume substantial unity with the whole of humanity, to bestow the Spirit in fullness as belonging properly to him.” (Daley, 141). Cf. Fraigneau-Julien: “Ainsi peut-on dire que la divinisation de l’humanité est produite par son insertion dans la Trinité au niveau du Fils, chacun de ses membres devant reproduire pour sa part sa perfection filiale. L’Esprit-Saint est alors donné comme source de cet esprit filial, le produisant en toute l’humanité et en chacun de ses membres en raison de son caractère hypostatique d’expression, de manifestation de l’union du Père et du Fils. Devenu filiale par l’action de l’Esprit, l’humanité fait ainsi retour au Père.” (“Therefore, we can say that the deification of humanity is produced by its insertion into the Trinity at the level of the Son, each of its members having to reproduce for its part the filial perfection. The Holy Spirit is, therefore, given as the source of this filial spirit, producing it in all of humanity and in each of its members by reason of His hypostatic character of expression, [the] manifestation of the union of the Father and the Son. Having become filial by the action of the Spirit, humanity in turn makes the return to the Father.”) (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’inhabitation de la sainte Trinité,” 156).

¹⁹⁰ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 184; Maxwell, v. 1, 82.

¹⁹¹ This was part of the argumentation in his rhetorical discussion with the Arian in *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 179–182; Maxwell, v. 1, 79–81. Some of the same conclusions that show the unity of the Son and Spirit can be used to show how it is possible for Christ to both receive the Spirit as man and give the Spirit as God.

¹⁹² *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 184; Maxwell, v. 1, 82.

While being the perfect replacement for the first Adam according to His human nature, Christ is the exact opposite of Adam, in that, while being as free as Adam was, He is perfectly obedient to the Father's will, whereas our first parent was disobedient.

The precise manner by which the Holy Spirit is restored to us according to Cyril is exactly in Christ through His Incarnation,¹⁹³ for he writes:

When the Word of God became human, he received the Spirit from the Father as one of us. He did not receive anything for himself personally because he himself is the supplier of the Spirit. But the one who knew no sin received the Spirit as man in order to keep the Spirit in our nature and root in us once again the grace that had left us. [...] The Spirit flew away from us because of sin, but the one who knew no sin became one of us so that the Spirit might become accustomed to remain in us, since the Spirit finds no reason in him for leaving or shrinking back.¹⁹⁴

As earlier, the Spirit would not dwell in a body that is corrupted or enslaved to sin.¹⁹⁵

Before the Fall, the Spirit evidently did dwell in us but could no longer do so after Adam fell, which is why the Spirit departed. In Christ, however, Cyril makes it clear that there was obviously no corruption or sin, so the Spirit, then, was pleased to dwell with our human nature again in One in whom there was no sin or corruption, and we see this especially in the descent of the Holy Spirit on Him and the fact that He remains on

¹⁹³ Connecting our deification with the Incarnation, Russell writes that “[t]he deification of the believer is correlative to the incarnation of the Word, the working out in the individual of the descending and ascending pattern of salvation which we have already noted with regard to the true Israel. Like Athanasius, Cyril sees in Christ a paradigmatic transformation of the flesh, the promotion of our nature in principle through union with the Word from corruption to incorruption, from human inadequacy to the dignity of deity.” (Russell, 21). See Koen 45–48, esp. p. 47: “The Incarnation as a fact is established between the Word Incarnate and human beings as a twin relationship: exchange and solidarity. First the Incarnation is an exchange: the Son of God became man in order that man might be deified and become sons of God. God the Word took what belonged to us and gave us what is from Him. The requirement of this exchange is the solidarity of all mankind with Christ. This significance of solidarity lies in the virtue that God the Father restored human nature to its primeval state. The origin of the solidarity is the human nature of Christ.”

¹⁹⁴ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 184; Maxwell, v. 1, 82.

¹⁹⁵ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 184; Maxwell, v. 1, 82.

Him.¹⁹⁶ “Therefore, he receives the Spirit through himself for us, and he restores to our nature the original good.”¹⁹⁷

Cyril ties in the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our nature with the redemption accomplished by Christ’s death and resurrection, and we see this especially in the next section we are to treat.¹⁹⁸ “Although he was life by nature, he died for our sakes according to the flesh in order to conquer death for us and to raise our entire nature with him. (We were all in him because he became human.) In the same way also, he received the Spirit for our sakes in order to sanctify our entire nature.”¹⁹⁹

Cyril then underlines that this is one of the most integral aspects of the plan of salvation, as accomplished by the Incarnation: “The great mystery of the incarnation is truly recognized as wisdom and as fitting to God.”²⁰⁰ The union with our nature is such that Christ “thereby preserves for humanity a fitting order, and along with humanity, he

¹⁹⁶ This has to do with the moral stability of Christ, since He is God. “Cyril defends the natural identity of the Son with the Father, not only to preserve the doctrine of the Trinity and the divine nature of the Son, but also because the Son’s moral stability *as man*, as the second Adam, is required for the restoration of the Spirit to the human race.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 207). Also Keating: “The descent of the Spirit on Jesus represents *the* decisive return of the Spirit to the human race, now abiding in one who can reliably ‘preserve it,’ unlike the first Adam. The Spirit ‘flew away’ from the human race in the first man because of sin, and now, as a dove, settles back upon the human race in the person of Jesus.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 207).

¹⁹⁷ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 184–185; Maxwell, v. 1, 82. Cf. Keating: “The Son who lacked nothing as God became flesh so that he could receive as man what *we* needed for our renewal. He receives the Spirit for us, and renews our nature to its original state. [...] For Cyril, the baptism of Jesus is fundamentally a revelation of the goal and strategy of the incarnation in the plan of redemption.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 208). In this way, we see that the Incarnation, redemption, and the necessity for Baptism are all tied together.

¹⁹⁸ On *In Jo.* 17:18–19, Keating says that “Cyril’s earlier emphasis, that by his incarnation and especially through his baptism, Christ receives the Holy Spirit and preserves it for our nature, is now connected with Christ’s reconciling death.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 213).

¹⁹⁹ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 185; Maxwell, v. 1, 82. “*Because* Jesus represents the whole human race, when he receives the Spirit, the Spirit can rightly be said to be poured out on ‘all flesh.’” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 212).

²⁰⁰ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 185; Maxwell, v. 1, 82. Concerning the Incarnation, Cyril speaks of the spiritual marriage between Christ and his flesh. He says that “the human nature is reasonably called the bride and the Savior the bridegroom.” (*In Jo.* 2:11; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 203; Maxwell, v. 1, 91).

makes his own the qualities that belong to it for our sakes.”²⁰¹ Further clarity about the above can be sought in Cyril’s comments on John 17:18–19, a particular section of the High Priestly Prayer wherein Christ says that “for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

The restoration of the Holy Spirit to our fallen human nature permeates Cyril’s commentary on the High Priestly Prayer at *In Jo.* 17:18–19, verses which speak of Christ sanctifying himself for our sakes so that the church may also be sanctified in the truth.²⁰² Running parallel to this is the imagery of Christ as the Second Adam. These two parts work in unison here to support the importance he places on the Incarnation: the original man was breathed on by God, filling him with the Holy Spirit, as we have seen above, but the Holy Spirit was lost when humanity fell into sin. The only way for the Spirit to be restored to human nature was for Christ to restore it first in Himself by sanctifying Himself in the flesh.²⁰³ Cyril later explains how this was possible, that is for Christ to sanctify Himself, given that the Spirit is His own and that for Him to require

²⁰¹ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 187; Maxwell, v. 1, 83.

²⁰² Fraigneau-Julien writes, citing Cyril’s commentary on John 17:18–19, that the Holy Spirit is the image of the Son, and the Son is the image of the Father; therefore to be made in the image of the Holy Spirit, is to be made in the image of God. “Puisque nous sommes formés selon le Christ et qu’il est gravé et reproduit en nous par l’Esprit qui lui est naturellement semblable, l’Esprit est donc Dieu, nous façonnant selon Dieu, non par une certaine grâce ministérielle, mais faisant à ceux qui en sont dignes le don de lui-même comme une certaine participation à la nature divine.” (“Since we are formed according to Christ and that He is engraved and reproduced in us by the Spirit who is naturally similar to Him, the Spirit is, therefore, God, shaping us according to God, and not according to a certain ministerial grace, but making to those who are worthy the gift of Himself as a certain participation in the divine nature.”) (Fraigneau-Julien, “L’habitation de la sainte Trinité,” 143–144).

²⁰³ “The Son is able to supply the Spirit to the saints on the economic level because on the theological level the Spirit is the proper (*idion*), not the extrinsic (*ouk exōthen*), possession of both the Father and the Son.” (Russell, 29). Keating remarks that Cyril’s discussion on *In Jo.* 17:18–19 is concerned overall with connecting the Lord’s Baptism to His reconciling death. He writes: “Cyril’s earlier emphasis, that by his incarnation and especially through his baptism, Christ receives the Holy Spirit and preserves it for our nature, is now connected with Christ’s reconciling death.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 213).

sanctification would lead to the impossible conclusion that He was not holy beforehand and, therefore, not the divine Son of God.²⁰⁴

Many of the same points seen in the above passages of the commentary will be brought out here, but they will serve as opportunities, as we shall see, for Cyril to further articulate himself about these matters, and to further connect the restoration of the Holy Spirit in Christ and His reconciling death and resurrection. Especially with respect to His reconciling death and resurrection we shall see Cyril confidently place the restoration of the Holy Spirit within the economy of salvation, as accomplished only by a Christ who is incarnate in the manner that Cyril argues.

Interestingly enough, Cyril adds certain comments about the call of the Apostles to sanctification in the Spirit, eventually finding its fulfillment at Pentecost. He will later extend this call to the calling of every Christian. In the same way that He gave the Spirit to the Apostles, Cyril discusses how the Spirit is then brought to us through the means of grace in the Church.

He says that once they had been selected, they needed to be sanctified by the holy Father, who implants the Holy Spirit in them through the Son. In truth the disciples would never have reached such a level of glory that they would be lights for the whole world, and neither would they have withstood the temptations of the tempter or the assaults of the devil, if their minds were not sealed by participation in the Spirit [τῆ τοῦ Πνεύματος μετουσίᾳ] and empowered by him to carry out an unheard-of and superhuman command, as they were led easily by the light of the spirit to perfect knowledge of the divinely inspired Scripture and the holy dogmas of the church.²⁰⁵

In addition to the notable and blatant remark about the Holy Spirit being mediated to us through the Son, Cyril highlights here the necessity of being sanctified. This appears here

²⁰⁴ Again, reference the argumentation with the hypothetical Arian interlocutor. *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 179–182; Maxwell, v. 1, 79–81.

²⁰⁵ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 717–718; Maxwell, v. 2, 296.

for two purposes: the first is so that they may finally be cleansed of the slavery to sin acquired through their father, Adam, and the second follows from this, in that they would require sanctification if they were to be able to possess a “perfect knowledge of the divinely inspired Scriptures and the holy dogmas of the church.”²⁰⁶ The first is both for themselves and for the sake of the Church, while the second is more for the sake of their mission of spreading the Gospel, something to which all Christians are called whether by their conduct or by their active witness.

This point of witnessing about Christ—at least for the Apostles—is made explicit when Cyril says “the Savior gathered them together after the resurrection, as it is written, and instructed them to proclaim grace through faith throughout the whole world.”²⁰⁷

Along with the promise of the Spirit and His reception comes the mission of evangelization, or witnessing to the Truth whether in word or in deed according to His good will.

Cyril writes that Christ wants for us exactly what we had in the beginning, which is the indwelling Spirit of God to be restored to us so that we would possess the divine nature in ourselves. “He wants what we had from the beginning of our creation when we were first created by God to be rekindled in us.”²⁰⁸ This sanctification was part of God’s creation of humanity.

He then proceeds to discuss the shaping of the first man and, as is his fashion, equates the breath of life breathed into the man as the Holy Spirit. This indicates, he says, “that the soul was not given to the man without sanctification through the Spirit and that

²⁰⁶ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 717–718; Maxwell, v. 2, 296.

²⁰⁷ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 718; Maxwell, v. 2, 296

²⁰⁸ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 719; Maxwell, v. 2, 297.

the soul was surely not bare or devoid of the divine nature.”²⁰⁹ If Cyril means that the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit into the first human deified him, or in other words filled him with the divine nature, then surely what he means when he equates the giving of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, and consequently to the rest of the church, is that the giving of the Holy Spirit makes divine that which receives it.²¹⁰

We see in this section another digression on the creation of humanity, the fall into sin, and the need for the restoration of the Spirit, therefore highlighting the importance of this imagery and of Christ as the Second Adam—the perfect man. Here, Cyril writes that the reception of the Spirit was for Adam the only way he could be made in the image of God, and that in order for humanity to be renewed again the reception of the Spirit by One in Whom there was no sin was necessary.

That which has such an earthly origin could never be seen to be in the image of the highest unless it had obtained and received its shape through the Spirit, like a beautiful mask, by the will of God. Since his Spirit is the perfect image of the essence of the Only Begotten, according to what Paul wrote, ‘For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,’ he makes those in whom he dwells to be conformed to the image of the Father, that is, the Son. So also all things are brought up by the Son to the Father, from whom he comes, through the Spirit. He desires, then, the nature of humanity to be renewed and reshaped into its original image by communion with the Spirit [μετουσίας τοῦ Πνεύματος] so that, by being clothed with that original grace and being shaped again in conformity with him, we may be found superior to and more powerful than sin, which reigns in this world, and we may devote ourselves only to the love of God.²¹¹

The re-acquisition of the Spirit grants us the Spirit of righteousness, cleansing us from all of our unrighteousness and granting us the original grace we possessed in the

²⁰⁹ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 720; Maxwell, v. 2, 297.

²¹⁰ See Daley, 142: “By receiving God’s own Holy Spirit from Christ, in other words, the believer becomes himself or herself not simply a transformed creature, but a participant in God; and the effect of this astonishing gift is not simply individual but ecclesial: all those who receive the Spirit are ‘bound together’ with Christ as a new race, a new humanity, a new Body.”

²¹¹ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 720; Maxwell, v. 2, 297.

garden so that we may be able to be consecrated for the work of God in Christ. The original image can only be restored by the re-acquisition of the Spirit first by Christ, and later attributed to us through Faith and Baptism. Having completed it first, Christ re-acquires the Spirit in our nature, because of the Incarnation, therefore acting as the sure promise of our eventual reception of the same Spirit, since our nature is sanctified in Him. Whereas we were children of Adam according to the flesh, we are then made children of the Spirit according to the spirit.

Cyril has a specific manner of writing about Christ's sanctification of our nature. Christ offers our nature to God as a gift, and this, in turn, makes it sacred. He understands the sanctification of our nature to be according to the "customary usage of the law" wherein "whatever is brought to God by someone as an offering or gift sacred to him is said to be sanctified."²¹² Christ does precisely this with our human nature, and it is in His power to do so because "[t]he power to sanctify through communion with the Spirit belongs only to the nature that rules all things."²¹³

Indeed, our reconciliation to God through Christ the Savior could have been accomplished in no other way than through communion in the Spirit and sanctification. That which knits us together, as it were, and unites us to God is the Holy Spirit. When we receive the Spirit, we are made participants and sharers in the divine nature, and we receive the Father himself through the Son and in the Son.²¹⁴

How exactly does Cyril explain, though, that Christ's sanctification of His human nature becomes ours? It appears that in this instance, when commenting on John 17:18–

²¹² *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 721; Maxwell, v. 2, 297.

²¹³ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 721; Maxwell, v. 2, 298.

²¹⁴ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 722; Maxwell, v. 2, 298. Additionally: "What kind of addition would it be, and how could we have been shown to be sharers in the divine nature, if God were not in us and we were not in him by being called through participation in the Spirit?" (*In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 722; Maxwell, v. 2, 298).

19, Cyril finds it necessary to include the central part of the arc of salvation—that is the redemptive death and resurrection of Christ in the flesh. In addition to the sanctification of His nature, we see Cyril deploying the redemption of our nature also through the sacrifice of Christ.

We have been justified by faith in Christ, ‘who was handed over for our trespasses,’ as it is written, ‘and was raised for our justification.’ The whole of human nature was restored in him, as the first fruits of the race, to newness of life, and by ascending to its own beginning, as it were, it was refashioned into sanctification. ‘Sanctify them, O Father,’ he says, ‘by your truth (that is, by me); for your Word is truth (that is, again, I am),’ because I have sanctified myself for them, that is, I have offered and presented myself, one dying for all, that I may transform them into newness of life and they may be sanctified by the truth, that is, by me.²¹⁵

Again, we find also the Second Adam imagery in the following passage, shortly after he mentions how Christ “ineffably [ἀρρήτως] united himself to our nature of his own will that he might restore it first in himself and through himself to that beauty that it had in the beginning.”²¹⁶ Part of this imagery involves mention of the communication of idioms between Christ’s sanctified human nature and our fallen human nature, doubtless because of the communication of idioms from Christ’s divine nature to His human nature. He writes that “this he did so that he might convey his good attributes through himself to the entire race. That is why, even though he was life by nature, he came to be among the dead, so that by destroying our death in us, he may refashion us into his own life.”²¹⁷

²¹⁵ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 723; Maxwell, v. 2, 298–299.

²¹⁶ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 724; Maxwell, v. 2, 299.

²¹⁷ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 724; Maxwell, v. 2, 299. Also, he writes the following: “And here too, even though he is holy by nature as God, he is sanctified for us in the Holy Spirit in the sense that he gives all creation participation in the Holy Spirit for its continuance and preservation and sanctification. [...] He did this for us, not for himself, so that originating from him and in him the grace of sanctification might extend to the entire race.” (*In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 724; Maxwell, v. 2, 299). As well: “Since the flesh was not holy of itself, it was therefore sanctified—even in the case of Christ—by the Word dwelling in it and sanctifying his own temple through the Holy Spirit and transforming it to carry out the activities of his own nature. That is why the body of Christ is understood to be holy and sanctifying.” (*In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 726; Maxwell, v. 2, 300).

All of this comes full circle when Cyril connects Christ's Incarnation and the atonement to His Baptism, in that all the blessings of the former (the Incarnation, His death, and resurrection) are given to us by the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our human nature first in Himself at His Baptism, and then to us through faith and Baptism.²¹⁸ He writes:

Just as he died for us according to the flesh as a human being [...] so also he maintains that he sacrificed himself for us, so that this act may extend to us in the first fruits of our renewed nature, and in him we too may be 'sanctified by the truth,' that is, by the Holy Spirit.²¹⁹

In his extensive section on John 17:18–19 especially, we can see how the redemption of our nature by the death and resurrection of Christ and the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit by His Baptism are inextricably linked because of the Incarnation; because of the fact that Christ takes on our human nature and performs and does all this for us in our nature.²²⁰

To conclude this chapter, let us follow Cyril's narrative of the Spirit's role in the ark of salvation to its natural end: the giving of the Spirit to the Apostles at Pentecost, especially at John 20:21–23.²²¹ Here we see Cyril affirming the giving of the Spirit to the Apostles for the sake of both confirming their apostleship, but more importantly giving

²¹⁸ "One would receive the Spirit by faith in Christ and by holy baptism." (*In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369). "Concretely and individually, the image of God is recovered in baptism." (Burghardt, 160). Also, Burghardt: "In Cyril's theology, faith, the perfection of knowledge, is at once a principle and a facet of human resemblance to the divine. Divine light effects likeness to God and it is itself participation in divinity." (Burghardt, 162).

²¹⁹ *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 727; Maxwell, v. 2, 301. Cf. also *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 188; Maxwell, v. 1, 84.

²²⁰ "What is the true significance, then, of [Christ's] baptism? It appears to be the *revelation* to the Baptist of the sanctification of Jesus by the Spirit. The baptism of Jesus, therefore, becomes a revelatory event for Cyril which witnesses to the re-acquisition of the Spirit and the sanctification of the human race in Christ." (Keating, "The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race," 214).

²²¹ The text in Cyril's commentary reads thus: "When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'" *In Jo.* 20:21–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 131; Maxwell, v. 2, 367.

them the required Spirit to be able to perform whatever miracles were necessary for the propagation of the Gospel²²² and to “overcome the snares of sin,” which was something they could not do “until they were ‘clothed with power from on high’ and transformed into something other than what they were.”²²³

For anything to be pleasing to God and for any man to be a pastor to His flock, the Spirit is required, so that it may be the grace [χάρισμα] of God at work, and this is a result of the sanctifying reality of the restoration of the Spirit to us. Cyril gives a few examples to demonstrate how and why this is the case, highlighting that all the while it is God accomplishing any growth as concerns His Church.²²⁴

Such would involve being able to say that Jesus is Lord, as Cyril notes, which cannot be done “as Paul says, ‘except by the Holy Spirit.’ Since [therefore] they were going to say that Jesus is Lord, that is, they were going to proclaim him as God and Lord, they had to receive the grace of the Spirit along with the honor of apostleship.”²²⁵ In other words, only by the Spirit would they be able to be confessing Christians, and this equally applies to all Christians. For most of his section on John 20:21–23, Cyril writes about how Christ gives the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, but there is a moment where he changes the object from the Apostles to “us.” For Cyril the Apostles are those who are the first

²²² Cf. the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles.

²²³ *In Jo.* 20:21–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 132; Maxwell, v. 2, 367.

²²⁴ “That is why it was said to someone of old, ‘The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will be turned into another man.’ The prophet Isaiah also declared to us that those who wait on God will ‘renew their strength.’ And when the most wise Paul mentioned that he had surpassed some in his labors (that is, in his apostolic work), he immediately added, ‘Not I, but the grace of God that is with me.’” *In Jo.* 20:21–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 132; Maxwell, v. 2, 368.

²²⁵ *In Jo.* 20:21–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 132; Maxwell, v. 2, 368.

fruits of the sanctified, those who will first receive the Holy Spirit, but for all intents and purposes their reception of the Holy Spirit can be applied to the rest of the Church.²²⁶

Cyril returns again to the manner by which this would occur, so that he may place the source of our righteousness and sanctification in the pneumatic indwelling of Christ according to the will of the Father through the incarnate Christ, saying that “the Spirit could not come to us from the Father in any other way than through the Son.”²²⁷ This confirms what we had discussed above: the mode of operation and procession of the Holy Spirit, and the return of the endpoint of this procession—us—back to communion with God through the restoration of the Holy Spirit.

We see the same emphasis on the redemptive death and resurrection of Christ in this section as we did in *In Jo.* 17:18–19. Here, Cyril connects the redemption of our flesh in Christ directly with the restoration by the Holy Spirit of the image of God in us. This, he says, occurs first in Christ, and then is passed on to the Church through the disciples. The disciples act as the paradigm of the reception of the Spirit, at least as concerns the mystical body of Christ.²²⁸

And when it happened that he fell from obedience into death and humanity fell from that original honor, God the Father re-created it and brought it back to newness of life through the Son, just as in the beginning. How did the Son bring it back? By the death of his holy flesh he killed death and carried the human race back to incorruption. After all, Christ was raised for us. In order that we may learn that [...] he was the one who sealed us with the Holy Spirit, the Savior once again grants us the Spirit as the first fruits of our renewed nature by distinctly breathing on the disciples.²²⁹

²²⁶ Keating highlights as much when he writes thus: “The breathing of Christ upon the disciples on Easter (Jn. 20:22), then, is the precise point at which the Spirit is passed on to the human race.” (Keating, “The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race,” 213).

²²⁷ *In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 132; Maxwell, v. 2, 368. “δύηκοι γὰρ ἄν οὐχ ἑτέρως εἰς ἡμᾶς παρὰ Πατρὸς εἰ μὴ δι’ Υἱοῦ.”

²²⁸ Christ’s Baptism being the chief paradigm for our own Baptism.

²²⁹ *In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369.

Here we see that the killing of death in the flesh was necessary for the restoration to incorruption, because of the slavery to sin that Adam's disobedience caused. Spiritual, eternal death as the wages of sin needed to be eliminated from the debt that stood against humanity. In fact, the debt as a whole needed to be atoned for, explaining why Christ had to die according to the flesh.

To end, let us note that Cyril emphasizes the breathing on the disciples of the Holy Spirit in the same way that he does for the creation of Adam in both the *Glaphyra in Genesim* and the earlier sections of *In Joannem*. Coming full circle, he sees both the re-acquisition of the Spirit by Christ in our nature and the breathing onto the Apostles of the Holy Spirit as the fulfilment of the restoration of the image of God in humanity: "In order that we may learn that from the beginning he was the creator of our nature and that he was the one who sealed us with the Holy Spirit, the Savior once again grants us the Spirit as the first fruits of our renewed nature by distinctly breathing on the disciples."²³⁰ He

²³⁰ *In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369. Daley remarks on Cyril's use of the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit by the apostles in John 20:22–23: "The significance of Jesus' gesture on that first Easter night, for Cyril, was not only to show the holiness and prophetic power with which the Apostles were necessarily endowed in order to carry out their mission, nor simply to anticipate the bestowal of the Spirit on people of every nation, through the Apostles' witness, at Pentecost, but also to reveal that the risen Jesus is himself the giver of the Spirit, breathing from his own transformed flesh the divine Spirit who eternally 'belongs' to him as divine Son, who 'comes forth' from him because of their shared divine nature." (Daley, 139). Jesus gives the Spirit not in part, but in His fullness because the Spirit belongs to Him and He gives Him from His own fullness. Cf. also Daley later in his article: "Cyril is not primarily interested in developing a precise theological description of the personal or hypostatic origin of the Spirit, let alone of the mutual relations of the hypostases in the Trinity; he is, instead, concerned to insist, against Arians and Antiochenes, that the Spirit truly comes from, and shares, the divine substance which Father and Son possess as their own, and that the Spirit therefore properly 'belongs to' the Son, even in his incarnate state, and so is both received and sent forth by Jesus as 'his own'." (Daley, 145). Keating concludes his article with this consideration of the ramifications of this part of Cyril's theology: "If the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit is an essential element in the created order, in the original casting of man in the image and likeness of God, this would then imply that to be fully human is to be in possession of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, on this account, is not an added-extra, but the original gift of God, given in creation, essential to being human, now re-acquired only in Christ the Second Adam. Cyril's theology of redemption, thoroughly Christological, is also deeply pneumatological. The divine life of the Trinity, made available to the human race through the incarnation of the Son, now resides in us again through the Holy Spirit who takes up his abode in us." (Keating, "The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-creation of the Human Race," 222).

references Moses to complete the thought: “Moses writes of our creation of old ‘he breathed into his face the breath of life.’ Therefore, just as humanity was formed and came into being in the beginning, so also it is renewed.”²³¹ And he elaborates for the sake of precision, adding material about the restoration of the image by the indwelling of the Spirit: “just as then it was formed into the image of its creator, so also now it is refashioned by participation in the Spirit to the likeness of its maker.”²³² And all of this cannot occur without Christ first being the Second Adam, perfectly man so that He can receive the Spirit, and perfectly God so that He can give the Spirit.

²³¹ *In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369.

²³² *In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369.

CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSION

The goal of this chapter is to demonstrate how closely Cyril places the oneness of the incarnate Christ with His being the Second Adam as well as Him being the initial receiver of the Holy Spirit in our nature and the One who gives the Holy Spirit. I argue that Cyril uses the imagery of Christ as the Second Adam as a way to argue for the oneness of the incarnate Christ—since He must not be a deified man or God-inhabited man, but the God-man, having a complete human nature united ineffably to His inherent nature of deity. Additionally, in his writings of this era, Cyril tends to argue that it is a condition of His receiving and giving the Holy Spirit that He be fully man and fully God united in the manner that he says, in order that our human nature might perfectly be cleansed and sanctified in Christ as the first-fruits of our redeemed nature.

3.1 CHRIST AS THE SECOND ADAM AND THE RESTORATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HUMAN NATURE IN THE WRITINGS OF THE CONTROVERSY-ERA

We shall begin with a key section from the first official anti-Nestorian treatise that Cyril published, the *Adversus Nestorii blasphemias*, otherwise printed in the *Acta* as the *Contra Nestorium I-V*.²³³ In book III, we find Cyril taking particular aim at some of Nestorius' assertions about what he deems as the duality of the Incarnation. I have selected chapter two, admittedly a rather short portion of the book, to act as an initial representation of the theology that forms the foundation of Cyril's concern.²³⁴ Though

²³³ Quasten writes: "The first of the anti-Nestorian treatises is the *Five Tomes against Nestorius* composed in the spring of 430. They represent a critical examination of a collection of sermons published by Nestorius in the previous year. His name does not appear in Cyril's work but many quotations from his homilies. Thus the first book refutes selected passages attacking the Marian title *theotokos*, the four others, those defending a duality of persons in Christ." (Quasten, 126).

²³⁴ The passage in question is cited from the *ACO* I. I. 6, pp. 58–62. The accompanying translation is from Russell, 160–167.

short, there is much to examine and elaborate on, and the connections to what was discussed in chapter two of this thesis will be made evident. Additionally, *Contra Nestorium III, 2* will serve to lead well into the further correspondence with Nestorius to be discussed, particularly Cyril's letters *Ad Nestorium II* and *III*.

3.1.1 An Overview of *Contra Nestorium III, 2*

In the first section of the chapter, Cyril is initially concerned with the fact that Nestorius attributes the name of 'high priest' "simply to the man born of a woman, detaching it from the only-begotten Word of the Father."²³⁵ He cites from one of Nestorius' own homilies, as catalogued in the edition by Friedrich Loofs:

Is the seed of Abraham the deity? And listen to the next verse: 'Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect' (Heb. 2:17). Did God the Word have any brothers resembling the deity? And note what he immediately appends to this: 'so that he might become a merciful high priest in the service of God. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted' (Heb. 2:17, 18). Therefore he who suffers is a merciful high priest. It is the temple that is capable of suffering, not the life-giving God of him who suffered. [...] It is he who assumed brotherhood of a human soul and human flesh who is like his brethren, not he who says, 'Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father' (Jn. 14:9).²³⁶

Cyril here takes issue with a handful of statements. He asks the following question: "How then is the descendent of Abraham still seen to be the possessor of deity if he was assumed by God and did not himself assume deity?"²³⁷ In other words, if God the Word took on a man, the man-Jesus, and assumed this man unto Himself, how would it be possible for the man to have received any idioms from the Word if he did not in turn assume the Word, given the fact that Nestorius admits that he was assumed by the Word?

²³⁵ *Contra Nestorium III, 2*; ACO I. I. 6, p. 58; Russell, 160.

²³⁶ Friedrich Loofs, *Nestoriana. Die Fragmente des Nestorius* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1905), 234.5–235.1.

²³⁷ *Contra Nestorium III, 2*; ACO I. I. 6, p. 58; Russell, 161.

How, then, could he possess deity if he did not assume it? The conclusion being that the man-Jesus would possess no divine thing, and would therefore not have any of the Word's qualities. This, Cyril believes, is one of the conclusions of Nestorius' Christology. The subject (the seed of Abraham, in this case) having been assumed by the object [the Word], would appear not to maintain its independence from the object in this schema, as Nestorius seems to think, separating between the two subjects the actions that he mentions. And these are truly the problems: Nestorius, as Cyril sees it, does not allow for the human nature (or the man-Jesus in Nestorius' Christology) to be deified, and he introduces two subjects into the person of the incarnate Christ, whereas the one hypostasis of the Word of God is the Subject of the Incarnation.²³⁸

Cyril's point is that "[t]he seed of Abraham would not then be confused in the least with the nature of deity, but rather has become the body of God the Word, according to the Scriptures, and his own distinctive property."²³⁹ Although using the Scriptures as the authoritative condition for his argumentation, Cyril still approaches the debate with a philosophical pre-condition to the words of Scripture: that Christ be in a perfect unity

²³⁸ It is important to mention here that there existed at the time some serious problems of semantics and terminology. For example, McGuckin writes that "When Nestorius did speak of the term [hypostasis] it was only to make two points: firstly that the word was highly 'physical' in its associated meanings and utterly inappropriate for use in the Christology debate since it could suggest an organic or chemical model of union; and secondly that any ousia without a hypostasis of its own would, therefore, not be a real existent. The latter point was a significant attack on Cyril who had argued that Christ's humanity did not have a corresponding human hypostasis of its own (and thus Christ was not an individual man, rather God the Word enfleshed). Cyril saw this argument as crucial in defending the single subjectivity of the incarnate Lord; Nestorius attacked it on the logico-semantic grounds that if Christ's humanity did not have its own hypostasis then that humanity was only notional, not real. Whereas Nestorius demanded logical exactitude in the theological exchange, Cyril preferred to defend an intuited principle of single subjectivity regardless of the strains his varied use of technical terms placed on his hearers or upon logic itself." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 143). Additionally, "Cyril wanted a word to define the personal-centre of Christ which was as ontologically grounded as possible, or in other words as 'substantial' a word as possible. This for him was admirably done by hypostasis." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 144). There is a divide here, then, regarding their respective understandings of the nature of the union, whether it occurred at an observational level with respect to the prosopa, as Nestorius held, or at the essential level with respect to the hypostasis of the Word. Cyril favoured the latter.

²³⁹ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 58; Russell, 161.

with the flesh that He assumes, and not in a duality. The point being that the Word of God must be united hypostatically and ineffably with the flesh that He fashioned for Himself from the Virgin in order for our salvation to not be in a questionable but firm state of assurance. He writes that “when he who in his capacity as God is not to be classified with creation as regards his own nature became man, who *is* a part of creation, then and only then he very appropriately deigns to call us brothers, saying, ‘I will proclaim thy name to my brethren.’”²⁴⁰ Again, it appears that Cyril brings a pre-condition of a particular type of unity in the incarnate Christ to his interpretation of the Scriptures.

He also goes on to say that it is by reason of the self-emptying (κένωσις) that this occurs, and that the scriptural authority ought to, effectively, be enough to support his claims. He cites again from Paul’s letter to the Hebrews: “‘For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, ‘I will proclaim thy name to my brethren’” (Heb. 2:11, 12).” That Cyril sees unity between the incarnate Word and the rest of humanity at the level of the Word’s incarnate humanity rather than proposing that the Word assumed a man appears to be a position that Cyril casts on to the text, and which he sees to be a perfectly reasonable exegesis.²⁴¹ The point here being that Cyril, although making a philosophical argument,

²⁴⁰ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 58; Russell, 161. Citing Heb. 2:12.

²⁴¹ Highlighting that Christ lived humanly rather than ‘as a man’ was a slight exegetical maneuver favoured by the Alexandrians for the sake of preserving the subject of the Incarnation while retaining that He still became enfleshed and lived a full human experience, save for sin. “Following on from this [the view of absorption theory, wherein the humanness is absorbed in the presence of the deity], the more moderate view that proposed Christ could be conceived as fully human since he was the divine Logos who truly shared ‘our flesh’ was also challenged by Nestorius. This was a view that had long been classical in the school of Alexandria, taught by Athanasius and maintained by Cyril.” (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 132). “On this view, neither Docetic nor Apollinarist, it was enough for the divine Logos to know bodily experience. He himself did not suffer (qua God) but in so far as his body suffered he can be said to have suffered-in-the-body. Such an approach can maintain that Christ is fully human, but it would never choose to say (without qualification) that Christ is a man, in case the statement was heard to imply either that he was ‘only’ a man, or that he was a man alongside the divine Word in a bi-polarity of subject.

places the Scriptures as the foremost authority to determine the orthodoxy of his position, treating scriptural authority as the only authority that he needs to support his claims over those of Nestorius.

He then takes the argument in a slightly different direction, but one that follows naturally from what he has just said:

For if he is sanctified with us, in that he became man, even though he was God by nature [θεὸς ὧν φύσει] and himself the giver of the Spirit, how if he should also be called a brother will this not be perfectly reasonable? For it was on account of this reason that he became as we are, that he might make us brothers and free men.²⁴²

Cyril's point here is that if God the Word is called our brother by Paul, then we must take it on scriptural authority that He is joined not to a separate man but to our flesh as the sole Subject of it—an even closer union to our nature—and that this type of union is what was necessary to save us and for Him to be both the receiver and giver of the Spirit, a point that we have seen in chapter two of this thesis.

He makes this point about our reception of the Spirit—made possible by the Incarnation as he understands it as against Nestorius' position—even more evident and prominent in his argumentation when he writes the following:

For the Word of God the Father was born according to the flesh in the same way as ourselves, so that we too might be enriched with a birth which is from God through the Spirit, no longer being called children of flesh but rather, having been

To avoid any risk of such misunderstanding the Alexandrian tradition consistently preferred to talk of the Word's humanity, and in all statements dealing with the subject of the incarnation, the personal pronoun referred strictly and unfailingly to the divine Lord who had assumed the flesh." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 132-133). Cf. this in relation to the following: "As Nestorius had ruled out any approach that envisaged a unification (henosis) of natures producing a God-Man, he proposed instead the notion of 'conjunction by interrelation' (schetike synapheia) of the respective prosopa of the two natures. His preferred terms to describe this association and bonding were: conjunction (synapheia); indwelling (kat' enoikesin); appropriation (oikeosis); or by the habituated possession (schesis) of the human prosopon by the prosopon of the Logos. In each of the analogical models one discerns the central element of his thought to be an emphasis on the divine prevenience and initiative whereby the Logos binds himself to the man Jesus in an unassailably intimate union, without destroying any of the free capacities of the human life he graces with his unlimited power and presence." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 161).

²⁴² *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 59; Russell, 161.

transformed into something that transcends nature [μεταστοιχειούμενοι δὲ μᾶλλον εἰς τὰ ὑπὲρ φύσιν], being called sons of God by grace. For the Word, by nature and in reality [κατὰ φύσιν καὶ ἀληθῶς] the only-begotten and true Son, became like one of us. Of this the divine Paul will convince us, where he says: ‘And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’’ (Gal. 4:6).²⁴³

That all those who have been sanctified by Baptism are enriched with a birth from above is taken as a matter of fact for Cyril, as we saw in chapter two, but the reason why it accomplishes this is because the Word of God shares in the same flesh as us as the sole Subject of the Incarnation. If He is not the only Subject in the Incarnation, but that the man, in Nestorius’ thinking, joined with the Word forms a two-subject Christ, then that man would not have participated in the Word in the same way the Word participated in that man, so the man (the man-Jesus in Nestorius’ framework) would not enjoy the sanctifying relation with the Word that Cyril’s Christology provides. The Word, therefore, took on human flesh as the sole Subject of it, rather than a man joined to the Word to form a two-Subject Christ, which would deprive that man of any of the Word’s qualities, contrary to Cyril’s Christology.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 59; Russell, 161–162.

²⁴⁴ One way the Alexandrians interpreted the humanity of the union—that the Word lacked no humanness in the Incarnation and that there was no absorption that occurred—was by arguing that “In this school of thought the divine Christ was said to be authentically human in so far as deity undergoes a more or less full range of bodily experiences. On these terms humanness is not so much defined as deficient in some sense (missing a mind or soul, for example, as with Apollinaris) but rather as entirely there but radically transformed by the incomparably greater power of the divinity which has assumed the flesh into its own orbit. A key element of such ‘transformation theory’ was the notion of the ‘deification’ of the Lord’s flesh (and by implication that of the believer) which was achieved in the act of incarnation. This is one of the most dynamic insights of the Alexandrian school, and their chief goal in incarnational language. For Nestorius it was a lamentable deduction from a reliance on ‘absorption theory’. And as he opposed the latter firmly and strictly, so he tended to disparage the former.” (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 133). “For Nestorius,” writes McGuckin, “if the relationship between the divine and human aspects of Christ was so unequal as absorption theory suggested (such as the analogy of the mingling of a wine drop in an ocean: the wine drop of humanity in the ocean of deity) then a full range of authentically human experiences would have been impossible for Christ.” (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 133). Therefore we can see that Nestorius, in attempting to retain the full humanity of Christ, erred in allowing for the room of a two-subject Christ by emphasizing the ‘different prosopa’ in the ‘prosopon of union.’

Responding to the points about whether the seed of Abraham is the deity and whether he had brothers resembling the deity, Cyril writes that “we acknowledge that, according to the nature of the body or to the principle of the humanity that is perfect in itself, the Word of God the Father put himself alongside us and became like us in every respect except sin.”²⁴⁵ So Cyril answers that the seed of Abraham is both deified and has a filial relationship with the Saints, and that this is the case if the Word joins Himself to human nature, Himself being the Subject rather than a human nature or man with its own subject. He thinks it is absurd to draw the conclusion that the Word therefore joins Himself to a man, the man-Jesus, rather than furnishing for Himself from the flesh of the Virgin a body of His own and becoming enfleshed.

The fact that we are able to say that the Word was made like us and has any filial connection to us—meaning that we can properly call Him our brother—is supported by the scriptural texts that suggest, for Cyril, that we are made to conform to Him by means of His participation in our human nature. Again, Cyril argues from the basis of the scriptural text, essentially saying that if the text says it, then we can confidently believe it. He writes:

What did the most holy Paul have in mind when he wrote to certain people: ‘My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!’ (Gal. 4:19), and indeed in another passage to those who through faith had attained perfection in the Spirit: ‘And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord who is the Spirit; now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom’ (2 Cor. 3:18, 17)? [...] Indeed how will not everybody, I suppose, say unequivocally that all who are on earth are conformed to one another, and to Christ himself insofar as he is conceived of as being a man like us and with us? [...] Therefore, as I have just said, insofar as he became man and was of the seed of Abraham, we are all conformed to him.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 59; Russell, 162.

²⁴⁶ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 59; Russell, 162–163.

Put simply, if we are conformed to Him, then He must be a human in the same way that we are, except for sin; and this means that He shared in a fleshly birth like we did.

Cyril proceeds by highlighting the second point that we discussed in chapter two of this thesis, which is the matter of Christ not only being one with us according to the flesh, but being the Second Adam. This imagery that figured so prominently in the sections of his *Commentary on John* that we treated earlier appears as integral notions both here and elsewhere in the controversy-era writings, a further collection of which we shall see in due course.

With respect to all humanity being conformed to Christ because of the Incarnation, Cyril clarifies that not all were predestined to be cleansed and made righteous:

But not all were predestined; not all were sanctified and glorified. Therefore the phrase ‘conformity to the Son’ is not to be understood only in a physical sense or as referring to the humanity, but in a different manner. And this the blessed Paul sets before us when he says: ‘Just as we have borne the image [εἰκόνα] of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven’ (1 Cor. 15:46), signifying by the man of dust Adam and by the man of heaven Christ.²⁴⁷

In the same way that he conforms Himself to us (i.e., by the Incarnation), we are conformed to Him. This has to do with the communication of His divine attributes to His human nature by virtue both of His being the Word of God and the closeness of the ineffable union, which is not characterized by mixture or a union any less than ineffable.

²⁴⁷ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO* I. I. 6, p. 60; Russell, 163. Cf. also Janssens: “Ainsi l’Incarnation est présentée comme un échange. Nous participons aux prérogatives du Fils, parce qu’il a lui-même partagé notre conditions, parce que, tout en étant Dieu, il a pris la forme de l’esclave, pour nous gratifier de ses propres biens ‘et qu’il a assumé en lui ce qui est à nous, afin de nous assurer ce qui est à lui’. Toutes ces affirmations, par lesquelles Cyrille assigne un admirable échange comme but à l’Incarnation, ne sont, somme toute, comme il le répète souvent, que des variations sur la phrase de saint Paul : ‘Vous avez la grâce de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, qui pour vous s’est fait pauvre, de riche qu’il était, afin de vous faire riches par sa pauvreté.’” (p. 235).

The matter of our conformity to Him is significant here because it allows Cyril the opportunity to address the importance of Christ being the Second Adam, which has a direct connection with His Christology. As we saw above, Cyril interprets the man of dust as Adam and the man of heaven as Christ, so he takes this imagery to be not only figuratively significant, but directly applicable on the basis of the authority of Scripture. We shall look at the Second Adam imagery in the later letters, but for now let us see how Cyril uses this imagery as a preface to his points on how this is even accomplished, as well as how the many blessings attributed to our human nature through Christ are made possible in the Incarnation.

He therefore has brothers like him who bear the image of his divine nature [τῆς θείας αὐτοῦ φύσεως] in the sense of having been made holy. For this is how Christ is formed in us, the Holy Spirit as it were transforming us from what belongs to the human to what belongs to him. On this point the blessed Paul said to us: ‘You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit’. Therefore the Son does not change the least thing belonging to the created order into the nature of his own deity (for that would be impossible) but there is imprinted in some way in those who have become partakers of the divine nature [τοῖς τῆς θείας φύσεως αὐτοῦ γεγονόσι κοινωνοῖς], through participating [διὰ τοῦ μετασχεῖν] in the Holy Spirit, a spiritual likeness to him [ἢ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐμφέρεια νοητῆ], and the beauty of the ineffable deity illuminates the souls of the saints.²⁴⁸

Implied in what he says about the Holy Spirit transforming us “from what belongs to the human to what belongs to him” is the understanding that Christ has already done this first in Himself. Not, of course, to His essence, for He is the Word of God and requires no sanctification, but His flesh is deified by virtue of its union with the Word, and Cyril here intends for us to understand that the same blessings occur to our human nature by virtue of our union with Christ through the Spirit.

²⁴⁸ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 60; Russell, 163.

This hearkens back, also, to Cyril's point about the seed of Abraham not being assumed in its union with the Word, which he sees as the logical conclusion if he were to follow Nestorius' arguments about the seed of Abraham being assumed, yet still being a possessor of deity, which cannot function in Cyril's estimation. If this were the case, that the seed of Abraham was assumed, then the human nature in Christ would no longer be a possessor of the deity because it would not have assumed anything divine. This does not function, according to Cyril, because it does not agree with the rest of the scriptural statements above about our conformity and filial union with Christ.

In the above quotation, it would appear that Cyril directly implies our reception of the Holy Spirit through Baptism. Although he does not explicitly state it, this would be the primary manner of our reception of the Holy Spirit leading to us being "in the Spirit." This is what I think he means when he makes reference to "those who have become partakers of the divine nature, through participating in the Holy Spirit," and I think that what we have seen in this respect in chapter two of this thesis supports my position.

Another aspect of our participation in Christ by the Holy Spirit is the fact that we, therefore, "bear the image of his divine nature." This, says Cyril, is imprinted of those who are sanctified by participation in the Holy Spirit. No longer, therefore, does the image of Adam in us define our relation to God. It is not the case that it is completely and utterly destroyed, for Cyril will say shortly that we certainly still sin, and that we are deserving of the very suffering that Christ endured, but by participation in the Holy Spirit we are restored to what we were originally meant to be in the garden of Eden. This restoration to our original state, as we saw in chapter two, is accomplished, as we have been saying, first in Christ as the bearer of our human nature, and then to us by faith and

Baptism, with the Apostles being the first to receive the breath of life again, having been breathed on by the Truth Himself, as we have seen.

The necessity of unity in the incarnate Word, beyond the reasonings detailed above, has to do also with the influence that our old Adam has on our nature, and this is the topic that occupies the final part of this chapter of the *Contra Nestorium III*: the matter of the incarnate Word suffering on our behalf to blot out our transgressions, and thereafter remain our High Priest, interceding for us as the God-man, perfectly One, yet with two natures only being distinguishable at the level of our intellect, not substantially in Himself, for in Himself the Word is the direct personal subject and the One subject referent of the Incarnation.

But he [Nestorius], depriving us of all that is most beautiful, says that an ordinary man has become our brother, and thinking that he has demonstrated this by a solid argument, adds: ‘And note what he immediately appends to this: [...] It is the temple that is capable of suffering, not the life-giving God of him who suffered.’ No one, I suppose, will have the least doubt that by choosing to think in this way, and moreover by expressing it, he separates the Word of God again into two distinct [ιδικάς] hypostases [ὑποστάσεις] and indeed two persons [πρόσωπα]. And this is the Word whom he has just presented to us as a God-bearing man, seeing that he who suffers is a separate subject, and he who is life-giving is another.²⁴⁹

In addition to our filial connection to Christ being one that is to the Word of God and not to a mere man, Cyril here highlights another effect that Nestorius’ ‘two sons’ Christology has not only on our sanctification, as accomplished through our union to Christ through the Holy Spirit, but our justification, accomplished by Christ’s death and resurrection. In Cyril’s mind, the One who is life-giving—God the Word—must be the One who suffers.

[Nestorius], rejecting the way in which the dispensation of the Incarnation took place as something unattractive, strips the Word of God of the human element, with the result that he then appears not to have benefited our condition in any way

²⁴⁹ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO* I. I. 6, p. 60; Russell, 164.

at all. For he does not say that it is he who became a merciful and faithful high priest, but attributes this title to him who suffered as if to someone else.²⁵⁰

This suffering actually benefits us and is endured by the very Subject of the Incarnation in order that He might make it His own, so that what is His own might become ours. The human element of the Incarnation—that the Word be joined not to a mere man but that He make flesh His very own, thus having a human nature—is, therefore, essential to Christology as Cyril understands it, for it is another way of Christ communicating to us what belongs to His human nature; what belongs to His human nature is effectively whatever He communicates to it from His divine nature.

Having therefore seen how he finds the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our human nature in Christ essential to his arguments for a single-subject Christology, we come to another set of arguments that are equally as integral: that the Word of God Himself lives, dies, and is resurrected in our stead and for our sake. On the one hand, He restores to us by faith and Baptism what we had lost in the garden, that is the Holy Spirit, and, on the other hand, He accomplishes and fulfills for us that which was impossible for us to do on account of sin, that is living the perfect life in accordance with all of God's laws and precepts, as well as loving both God with all our heart, mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves.²⁵¹ It is to this fulfilling of the Law in our nature that Cyril turns in order to add further strength to His Christological arguments.

Cyril proceeds to explain how the suffering can and must be attributed to the Word, but if only understood correctly through the lens of the communication of idioms and the self-emptying. He knows full well that the divine nature in Itself did not suffer,

²⁵⁰ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 61; Russell, 164–165.

²⁵¹ Cf. Deut. 6:5; Matt. 5:17; Mk. 12:30–31.

but, if he is to remain consistent with his Christology wherein Christ is fully God and man, we must be able to say that God suffered, yet with the correct understanding of saying according to what nature He suffered.²⁵² Here he turns the table on Nestorius, who highlights the fact that Christ was a faithful high priest.

His point is that the Word did not become a high priest by taking on the body of a man, but Himself became the high priest by taking on our flesh in the ineffable union, making our nature a high priest in Him, and being the One who both suffered in the flesh and became our high priest, being both the sacrifice and the One making the sacrifice. In doing this, Cyril highlights how Scripture testifies that Christ both pays for sins as man, and reconciles us to the Father as the perfect, unblemished sacrifice as God incarnate. The Law condemned to death those who were under it, but Christ brought grace, mercy, and peace to all through faith.

The God of all things delivered the law to the ancients in an oracular manner through the mediation of Moses. [...] And I hear him [Paul] say: ‘We know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and that the whole world may be held accountable to God. For no human being will be justified [οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ] in his sight by works of the law’ (Rom. 3:19, 20). [...] And as he says somewhere, ‘A man who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses’ (Heb. 10:28). Seeing then that the law condemned sinners and sometimes imposed the supreme penalty on those who disregarded it and was in no way merciful, how was the appointment of a truly compassionate and merciful high priest not necessary for those on earth [...]? ‘I,’ says the text, ‘I am [ἐγὼ γάρ φησιν, εἰμὶ] he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins’ (Is. 43:25).²⁵³

²⁵² “Nor because he is God by nature will he be incapable of enjoying a likeness with us and have to reject being a man. Just as he remained God in his humanity, so too in the nature and pre-eminence of deity he was nonetheless man. Therefore in both these Emmanuel was at the same time both one God and man.” (*Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 60–61; Russell, 164).

²⁵³ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 61; Russell, 165.

Cyril shows his agreement with Paul's statements that no one can save himself from the condemnation that the Law brings on sinners, and that the condemnation is so severe that the wages of sin is death, just as it was for Adam. There is no mercy with the Law, and its demands are only possible to meet and uphold if one is perfect. This is why he asks how such a thing was *not* necessary. It is evident to him why it would be necessary, given the above. Poor, miserable sinners require a saviour, not only to restore to them the Holy Spirit that was lost, but to live the perfect life and die the perfect death so that Death would die with Him, and so that we would rise with Him because we are in Him through Holy Spirit.

Lastly in this passage, Cyril makes sure to highlight the matter of the first-person, singular pronoun used in the text from Isaiah. He takes this to be a messianic prophecy directly linked to the Word, and so treats the speaker of the utterance as the Word. Whether he thought that this should have been equally obvious to Nestorius is unclear, but the emphasis that he places on the "I" appears to be an attempt on Cyril's part to both see the utterance as something that the Word Himself said through Isaiah (as a descriptor of what He would do), and to connect it also to how He would do it, meaning by means of divine condescension. In other words, not only was the Word going to be the One able to *say* that He had blotted out transgressions and would remember them no more, but that He would be the One to *effect* the blotting out of transgressions.

Cyril agrees with Nestorius that Christ became the high priest, but not with the manner in which Nestorius says, not by taking on a mere man who was called the high priest but by truly becoming flesh and high priest in the One subject referent of both natures.

Therefore contrasting the harshness, so to speak, of the severity of the law with the salvation and grace that comes through Christ, we say that Christ has become a merciful high priest. For he was and is a God who is by nature good and compassionate and merciful, and he did not become this in time but has been shown to us to have always been such.²⁵⁴

The Incarnation occurs in time, but the fact of God being so compassionate as to send His only-begotten Son to die in the place of sinners, says Cyril, has been a quality of His since eternity. He has remained thus, and Cyril wishes for us to keep this in mind as he writes: “That the Word of the Father remained God, even though he became a priest, as Scripture says, in the form and measure that befitted the dispensation of the Incarnation, the word of blessed Paul will suffice to assure us.”²⁵⁵

Adding to this, he says that not only during the time that the Word became incarnate was He this way, but that He both arose from the dead and reigns from on high as God and man since the time of His ascension. This would seem to be a rather elementary confirmation of the latter part of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed’s section on the Son, but, as we shall see with Cyril’s third letter to Nestorius, written later in the same year as the *Contra Nestorium*, he will make it a point to effectively re-catechize Nestorius on the meaning of the various parts of the Creed, especially those petitions concerning the Son. “Observe, then, the Word begotten of the Father, magnificent as God in his supreme glory and seated on the thrones of deity, and the same Word as man officiating as a priest and offering to the Father not an earthly sacrifice but rather a divine and spiritual one, and observe how he has heaven as his holy tabernacle.”²⁵⁶

²⁵⁴ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I. 6*, p. 61; Russell, 166.

²⁵⁵ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I. 6*, p. 62; Russell, 166.

²⁵⁶ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I. 6*, p. 62; Russell, 166.

Again, his emphasis here is on the fact that the Subject of the One who restored to us the Holy Spirit, and who lived the perfect life as the Second Adam and served as the perfect sacrifice (as well as being the high priest), was none other than the Word of God incarnate, having joined Himself to human flesh, living not as an individual man but as God the Word enfleshed, for none of this would have its effect without Christ being perfectly God *and* man, with a human nature of His own and not that of another. In this way, the human nature that is His is deified, and all the benefits that belong to it through His reception of the Holy Spirit and perfect, sacrificial life, death, and resurrection are all ours by means of His conformity to us in the Incarnation and our conformity to Him through our participation in the Holy Spirit. “For,” as Cyril says, “by his own blood and ‘by a single offering has he perfected for all time those who are sanctified’ (Heb. 10:14).”²⁵⁷

3.1.2 Cyril’s Second and Third Letters to Nestorius

By the end of the year 430, Cyril’s *Contra Nestorium* had had its impact on theologians observing from the sidelines the brewing disagreement between him and Nestorius. Being the much longer work, the *Contra Nestorium* provided an extensive discourse of Cyril’s thoughts about Nestorius’ positions, and also gave any who read it the time to ponder Cyril’s argumentation. Later in the same year, however, Cyril decided to address Nestorius directly via a series of letters, all of which summarise to varying degrees certain contents of the *Contra Nestorium*, but mostly provide Cyril with the opportunity to stand Nestorius’ positions up to the standard by which any past, present, or

²⁵⁷ *Contra Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 62; Russell, 166–167.

future developments in theology, in Cyril's eyes, would have to be judged: the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed.²⁵⁸

Consequently, we see Cyril focusing on Nestorius' lack of adherence to the Creed in these first letters, with a particular concern with the 'two sons' Christological framework, while in the letters that he sent out to others we see greater emphasis on clarifying his Christological positions. It is in the later letters in answer to inquiring theologians that we see Cyril highlight Christ as the Second Adam and how this is a condition for the work of the Holy Spirit in the economy of salvation. First, though, let us look at some of the philosophical and metaphysical details about the Subject of the Incarnation that he draws out in his second and third letters to Nestorius, since these will help inform his thought in the later letters.

In his second letter, or *Ad Nestorium II*, Cyril enters into theological specifics and philosophical particulars to demonstrate the manner of the Incarnation. It is his assertion that Christ is One subject both before and after the Incarnation, and that, although He took on human flesh and the various attributes and characteristics of it, He remained nonetheless the same Word begotten of the Father from eternity. In other words, the subject of the Incarnation never changed and no other person entered into unity with

²⁵⁸ "First class sources for the history of dogma are those addressed to Nestorius, among them especially *Ep. 4*, the so called *epistola dogmatica*, which represents the second of those he wrote to this heretic. The first meeting of the Council of Ephesus on June 22, 431, approved it solemnly by a unanimous vote of all the bishops present. Each of the 125 ecclesiastical rulers recommended the acceptance of this letter as in full agreement with the Nicene Creed and a true expression of the Catholic doctrine; the very wording of their endorsement is still preserved. Leo the Great in 450 (*Ep. Contra Eutychn. Haer. I*) subscribes to their judgment of the epistle, 'evidentius fidem Nicaenae definitionis exponens'. The Councils of Chalcedon in 451 and of Constantinople in 553 also approved it for the same reason. The third letter to Nestorius (*Ep. 17*), which Cyril sent in the name of the Alexandrian synod at the end of 430, created great difficulties on account of the twelve anathemas attached to it and the peculiar terminology used by the author. Although it was added to the *Acta* of the Council of Ephesus, it did not receive formal ratification by vote. Nevertheless, the opinion prevailed later on that this letter and the anathemas had been adopted by the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon." (Quasten, 133–134).

Him, only a body with a human nature that He issued for Himself from the flesh of His mother, the holy Virgin.²⁵⁹

These declarations and these doctrines we too must follow, taking note of the Word of God's 'being incarnate' and 'being made man'. We do not mean that the nature of the Word [ἡ τοῦ λόγου φύσις] was changed and made flesh or, on the other hand, that he was transformed into a complete man consisting of soul and body, but instead we affirm this: that the Word substantially [καθ' ὑπόστασιν] united [ένώσας] to himself flesh, endowed with life and reason [ψυχῇ λογικῇ], in a manner mysterious and inconceivable, and became man, and was called 'Son of Man' uniting it substantially, not merely by way of divine favour or good will, yet neither with the assumption merely of an outward appearance; and that though the natures joined together to form a real unity are different, it is one [εἷς] Christ and Son coming from them—not implying that the difference between the natures was abolished through their union but that instead Godhead and manhood have given us the one Lord, Christ and Son by their mysterious and inexpressible unification.²⁶⁰

Cyril's point is to make clear that it was not the case that a man was born of the Virgin and was then inhabited by God the Word. Cyril wishes to make clear that his position is that God the Word joined Himself to human flesh in the Virgin's womb in order that He might have a fleshly birth. There was no change or transformation in the Word, but His union with our human nature is both ineffable and inconceivable yet revealed by the Scriptures.

He wishes to highlight the fact that the Word joined Himself to our human nature via the flesh substantially (καθ' ὑπόστασιν) and not in a manner that would suggest any mixture or adoption that would cause change to the Subject, as said above. This type of language is a marker that Cyril hoped to distance himself from the thoughts of both Apollinarius and the Docetists in general.²⁶¹ In this union, therefore, the Word remained

²⁵⁹ *Ad Nestorium II*, 4; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 27; Wickham, 7.

²⁶⁰ *Ad Nestorium II*, 3; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 26–27; Wickham, 5–7.

²⁶¹ McGuckin notes here that the document's "stress on the 'consubstantiality' of the manhood was designed to excise any room for a Christology which harboured lingering docetic elements, such as that

both untainted and impassible as God, while taking on human flesh that possessed life, reason, and corruptibility, yet without sin.

We might include here a brief but helpful citation about terminology here.

Wickham clarifies something about Cyril's use of the terms such as φύσις and ὑπόστασις:

Cyril here equates φύσις and ὑπόστασις [...]. The terminology is loose and not to be judged by the standards of neo-Chalcedonian orthodoxy. For Cyril, ὑπόστασις only has a technical meaning within the context of 'theology' (i.e. the doctrine of God in Trinity) where it means distinguishable and distinct 'person'. When we look at the actual Jesus Christ, according to Cyril, we see one πρόσωπον, ὑπόστασις, φύσις, or πράγμα; if we enter into metaphysical subtleties about the mode of union of Godhead and manhood in Christ we are bound to think in terms of two φύσεις, πράγματα, or ὑποστάσεις (Cyril never speaks of two πρόσωπα) in mysterious union like the union of body and soul.²⁶²

As in the above citation from *Ad Nestorium II*, 3, use of two nature language, or, at least the use of the plural "natures," is at one time present in Cyril's writing, but is simultaneously to be understood as a way of discussing the metaphysical subtleties of the union, not the entire person of the incarnate Christ since the Incarnation. At the time of His conception by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin, He begins to exist in a different manner than before the union with the flesh, but He remains the Word of God, yet joined substantially, that is according to the hypostasis, with our human nature. Of course, there

witnessed by Apollinaris or such as Eutyches later manifested in their unwillingness to admit that in his manhood Christ was 'the same as us'." (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 344–345, n. 3). Here McGuckin comments on the *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 5, which reads thus: "And so we confess that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, is perfect God and perfect Man, of a rational soul and body. He is born of the Father before the ages according to the Godhead, and the same one in these last days for us and for our salvation was born of the virgin Mary according to the manhood. The same one is consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the manhood, for there was a union of the two natures, and this is why we confess One Christ, One Son, One Lord." (*ACO I. I. 4*, p. 17; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 344–345). The same, however, can be said to apply here.

²⁶² Wickham, p. 50, n. 30, commenting on *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 14; *ACO I. I. 4*, p. 26–27; Wickham, 51: "The inquisitive as to the mode of his incarnation and becoming man may contemplate God the Word of God who, as Scripture has it, 'took the form of a slave and was made in the likeness of men'. By this very fact alone the difference between the natures or subjects [ἢ τῶν φύσεων ἢ γοῦν ὑποστάσεων] will be appreciated."

is one “πρόσωπον, ὑπόστασις, φύσις, or πρᾶγμα,” but at the level of abstract thought, we are able to speak of the two natures in Christ with the understanding that they are ineffably united in the hypostasis of the Word of God, and Cyril appears to agree whenever he writes of a duality of natures in the union.

This is important to keep in mind because this is the same fine distinction that Cyril has in mind that permits him to write about the suffering of Christ that it was not the case that “God the Word suffered blows, nail-piercings or other wounds in own nature (the divine is impassible because it is incorporeal) but what is said is that since his own created body suffered these things he himself ‘suffered’ for our sake, the point being that within the suffering body was the Impassible.”²⁶³

Cyril therefore hints at the motivation for his defense here, that Christ’s sacrificial death in the flesh is cause for our redemption. He does not delve into this in as much detail here, but he adds it here to demonstrate the extent of the damage to the Church’s beliefs Nestorius’ Christology poses: if Christ be not God the Word perfectly joined to our human nature in the Incarnation, then His sacrificial death is not a redeeming one, and does not deliver to us the reconciliation with God the Father, because He would not have died in our place, taking away the sins of the world. This blessing would not be delivered or transmitted to us if the Word did not conform Himself to us in order that we might be conformed to Him by participation in His holy body through the Holy Spirit.

The Word of God is by nature [κατὰ φύσιν] immortal and incorruptible, is Life and life-giving [ζωὴ καὶ ζωοποιός], but since, again, his own body ‘*tasted death for every man*’, as Paul says, ‘*by the grace of God*’, he himself suffered death for our sake, not as though he had experience of death with respect to his nature [...] but because his flesh, as I have just said, tasted death.²⁶⁴

²⁶³ *Ad Nestorium II*, 5; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 27; Wickham, 7.

²⁶⁴ *Ad Nestorium II*, 5; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 27; Wickham, 9.

For Cyril, then, if the flesh of Christ tasted death, then one must say that Christ tasted death, for the two are inseparable since the Incarnation.

Additionally, given that the incarnate Lord is both Life itself by virtue of His divine nature and subject to death according to His human nature, Cyril is able to establish the dichotomous but essential characteristic of the incarnate Word: that though He is God and impassible, He suffers because of His union with our human nature, and, more importantly, is the giver of life because of His divine nature, and dispenses that life first to His own human nature by virtue of the union, and secondly to us both by the same union as well as our conformity to Him through faith and Baptism—by participation in the Holy Spirit.

It is not only for the sake of our reception of Life by participation in the Holy Spirit that concerns Cyril enough to see the ‘two sons’ Christology as having any problematic outcomes, but Chapter six is where Cyril begins to address the ‘two sons’ position that he believes Nestorius holds. His point here is that if one should deny *his* position, then the one who follows Nestorius’ positions to their logical conclusions must admit of two sons instead of the one Son in unity, and Cyril makes a concerted effort to highlight the oneness of the incarnate Christ:

In this way we shall confess one Christ and Lord, not ‘worshipping’ a man ‘along with’ the Word [...] but worshipping one and the same Christ because the Word’s body is not dissociated from him; with it he presides jointly with the Father himself—not that there are *two* jointly presiding sons, but that there is one [ἐνὸς] in union with his own flesh. Deny substantial union [καθ’ ὑπόστασιν ἕνωσιν] as a crass impossibility and we fall into talk of two sons, for we shall be forced to assert a distinction between the particular man honoured with the titles ‘Son’ on the one hand, and the Word of God, natural possessor of both the name and the reality of sonship, on the other. The one Lord Jesus Christ must not therefore be divided into two sons.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁵ *Ad Nestorium II*, 6; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 28; Wickham, 9.

There is no man beside the one Christ who deserves the worship that we give to the Son, yet the One that we worship is, in fact, a man, yet that He is the God-man, united to His own flesh. He is single and not out of two substantially different entities, but is always One with respect to His person or subject, as much in the Incarnation as He was before the Incarnation. If one adds into the equation a man that He assumed, then there are evidently two subjects, and therefore two sons.

The effect that this has on our nature, according to Cyril, has to do first with the proximity of our nature to the nature of deity, and secondly to the activity of the Word of God. Although the human nature is ours according to the order of creation, the Son makes it His own in the sense that He joins Himself to it through His conception by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin, and it becomes filled with His divine personality and characteristics to the degree that He permits. The flesh that He takes on reflects that it belongs to the Word of God because it does not have the personality or *persona* of anyone else. This *persona* or πρόσωπον demonstrates the distinct characteristics of the Son that He causes it to participate in, such as having a distinct walk, manner of speech, and mannerisms that are distinct from any other human.

At the same time, it must equally be emphasized that the human nature that He takes on is still ours by nature according to the order of creation and not His by nature. It is foreign to Him but He makes it His own. Meanwhile, what are foreign to us—the qualities of the divine nature—are made familiar to our nature by grace in Christ, for a union that conforms each nature to one another while maintaining their distinct qualities provides for us a way to partake of the divine nature while remaining human, which is

exactly what is accomplished by our reception of the Holy Spirit in faith and Baptism all because of Christ's initial union with our nature.

Returning briefly to the second point about the Son's activities, we have discussed above the importance of Christ's perfect life, death, and resurrection and how they were all done for our benefit and on our behalf. This point is substantial because it highlights Cyril's insistence on the matter of Christ being the Second Adam, able to finally fulfill the Law's requirements of living a perfect life, dying an atoning death, and rising from the dead as a promise to us that our bodies would also rise from the dead. In other words, if it was done by Him in our nature, then it is counted to our nature, but only through faith and not without it, meaning that the benefits are only truly ours through faith, the same faith that the Nicene fathers summarised and confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed, which brings us to Cyril's use of the Creed in the *Ad Nestorium III*.

Cyril begins his third letter to Nestorius with a call to repentance, that he might return to the catholic doctrines of the Church. He calls him to abandon his heretical thoughts and return to "the orthodox faith transmitted originally to the churches by the holy apostles and evangelists who were made the '*eyewitnesses and stewards of the Word*'.²⁶⁶ He references the Nicene Creed specifically, for in doing so he is able, in his eyes, to demonstrate to what degree Nestorius is a heretic. Although Nestorius confesses the Creed, as Cyril admits, the condemnation of his 'two sons' Christology is made all the stronger because he argues that Nestorius effectively corrupts the Creed rather than not confessing it. Cyril writes that doing this "will not be sufficient for your Piety simply

²⁶⁶ *Ad Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 34; Wickham, 15.

to confess the Creed duly set out with the authority of the Holy Ghost by the holy and great Council assembled in time past at Nicaea (you interpret it not in an orthodox but in a twisted sense even though you confess it verbally).”²⁶⁷

Cyril then proceeds to lay out the Nicene creed, though not in as much detail as he does in *De Symbolo*. He does this, obviously enough, to demonstrate “the faith of the Catholic and Apostolic Church to which all orthodox bishops throughout West and East assent.”²⁶⁸ We shall bypass his comments on the Father, for I should think that the manner of the relation of the Son to the Father to have been sufficiently explored in chapter two of this thesis. Nonetheless, the following passage will demonstrate both some passing remarks about the nature of that relation with the Father as well as the manner of the conception and Incarnation.

We follow at every point the confession of the holy fathers [...] and we declare that the only-begotten Word of God, begotten from the very substance [οὐσίας] of the Father, true God from true God, light from light, the one through whom all things both in heaven and earth were made, who came down for our salvation, emptying himself [καθεὶς ἑαυτὸν εἰς κένωσιν], he it is who was Incarnate and made man [ἔσαρκώθη τε καὶ ἐνηθρώπησε], that is to say, took flesh of the holy Virgin, making it his own from the womb, and underwent our human birth and came forth as man from woman without abandoning what he was but remaining, even when he has assumed [γέγονεν ἐν προσλήψει] flesh and blood, what he was, God, that is, in nature and truth [φύσει τε καὶ ἀληθείᾳ]. We declare that the flesh was not changed into the nature of Godhead and that neither was the inexpressible nature of God the Word converted into the nature of flesh. He is, indeed, utterly unchangeable and immutable ever remaining, as the Bible says, the same; even when a baby seen in swaddling clothes at the bosom of the Virgin who bore him, he still filled the whole creation as God and was co-regent with his sire—for deity is measureless, sizeless and admits of no bounds.²⁶⁹

The identity of the One who became incarnate and who is the subject of the Incarnation is never doubted by Cyril: it is and always has been the Word of God, the

²⁶⁷ *Ad Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 34; Wickham, 15.

²⁶⁸ *Ad Nestorium III*, 2; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 34; Wickham, 17.

²⁶⁹ *Ad Nestorium III*, 3; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 35; Wickham, 17.

Second Person of the Trinity. Nestorius would evidently agree to the extent that he would say that the Word was *a* subject of the Incarnation, but what Cyril emphasizes is the fact that He is the *only* subject that participates in the Incarnation. The manner of the Incarnation is this: that He “took flesh of the holy Virgin, making it his own from the womb, and underwent our human birth and came forth as man from woman without abandoning what he was but remaining, even when he has assumed flesh and blood, what he was, God, that is, in nature and truth.”²⁷⁰

An Incarnation in the manner proposed by Nestorius of the Word assuming our flesh to live as an individual man as opposed to living as the Word of God enfleshed would not have had the same effect for our human nature. Adding to this, he qualifies the Incarnation such that neither of the natures of the union—divine and human—mix or join together to make a new substance (although He joined to the Virgin-derived flesh hypostatically), but that the union is ineffable and a mystery, yet can be understood as God the Word enduring *kenosis* and making what was not His now His own for our sake and living as God the Word enfleshed.

He places great emphasis on the oneness of the incarnate Christ, and the inexpressible unity of God the Word with His flesh in the Incarnation:

Because we acknowledge that the Word has been substantially [καθ’ ὑπόστασιν] *united* with flesh it is *one* Son and Lord Jesus Christ we worship without separating and parting man and God as though they were mutually connected by unity of rank and sovereignty (pure nonsense that!) or applying the name ‘Christ’ in parallel fashion both to the Word of God on his own and to a second woman-born ‘Christ’, but recognizing the Word of God the Father with his own flesh as one Christ and one only.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ *Ad Nestorium III*, 4; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 35–36; Wickham, 19.

Again, Cyril is here trying to strengthen his argument that there is no other subject in the Incarnation but the Word of God, and that He wills it to take on all of our qualities from conception save sin, so that He might have a completely human experience and life, even though He is Life itself. Additionally, to worship Christ is to worship the God-man, not just the divine nature in Him. This appears to be the emphasis when he says that “we worship without separating and parting man and God.”²⁷² As much as this may seem to be idolatry, since it appears that we would worship something from the created order, it does not become idolatry because the flesh belongs to the Word of God; in fact, in the Incarnation it is as much Him as His divine nature. This reflects a major point of Cyril’s emphasis on the oneness of the incarnate Christ: that it is a God-man who lived a righteous life on our behalf, took on our sin on the cross, and conquered sin, death, and the devil all in our nature, so that, by His rising from the dead, He might show Himself to be the first fruits of the new life in Him, and a living proof that death has been conquered, since it could not hold Him.

He qualifies the oneness and unity even more when he writes against those who would say that the Word of God dwelled in a man or that the Christ should be deemed a deified or “divinely inspired man,” arguing that “we recognize that ‘being made flesh’ is not to be defined by us as meaning a residence of the Word in him precisely comparable with his residence in the saints. No, he was actually [κατὰ φύσιν]²⁷³ united with flesh, without being changed into it, and brought about the sort of residence in it which a man’s soul can be said to have in relation to its body.”²⁷⁴

²⁷² *Ad Nestorium III*, 4; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 35–36; Wickham, 19.

²⁷³ Wickham remarks that “κατὰ φύσιν means the same thing, for Cyril, as καθ’ ὑπόστασιν.” (See p. 19, n. 10, which has more detailed cross-references to pursue).

²⁷⁴ *Ad Nestorium III*, 4; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 36; Wickham, 19.

Cyril says here that the relation of the Word with His flesh is not like His dwelling in those who are the temples of the Holy Spirit—the saints. The union with the latter is one of participation, while the former is a substantial union that defines the Word’s existence in time from the time He is conceived by the Holy Spirit.

He lists a handful of philosophical reasons for why the above cannot be the case. He says that “equality of honour does not unite real things,” citing the example of Peter and John both sharing in apostleship but not in one another’s personal, characteristic identifiers, therefore keeping them substantially separate as opposed to substantially united like God the Word with His flesh.²⁷⁵ Nor is the union understood in the manner of “juxtaposition” [παράθεσιν] or “participation” [μέθεξιν], for both of these are “insufficient for actual union [ἔνωσιν φυσικήν].”²⁷⁶

After addressing the oneness of Christ without any room for a ‘two-son’ Incarnation, Cyril moves on to what I believe is a central reason for his denial of a ‘two-son’ Christ and favour for a single-subject Christ: the matter of Christ being both the Word and Second Adam simultaneously and perfectly, in order that He might be both the giver of the Law, and fulfiller of the Law, as well as the giver of the Spirit and the first receiver of the Spirit in our nature through His Baptism. It must be the perfect Son of God living the life we ought to have lived according to the Law but could not because of sin, not an individual, deified man. “Accordingly [that is, since His humanity was subject to God on account of its natural design and purpose] as man and with due regard to the conditions of his self-emptying he declared himself subject to God along with us. In this

²⁷⁵ *Ad Nestorium III*, 5; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 36; Wickham, 19.

²⁷⁶ *Ad Nestorium III*, 4; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 36; Wickham, 19.

way he is even under law though he himself pronounced the law and is as God law-giver.”²⁷⁷

Cross-reference this with what we saw at the beginning of Cyril’s *Commentary on John* at *In Jo.* 1:32–33:

When the Word of God became human, he received the Spirit from the Father as one of us. He did not receive anything for himself personally because he himself is the supplier of the Spirit. But the one who knew no sin received the Spirit as man in order to keep the Spirit in our nature and root in us once again the grace that had left us. [...] The Spirit flew away from us because of sin, but the one who knew no sin became one of us so that the Spirit might become accustomed to remain in us, since the Spirit finds no reason in him for leaving or shrinking back.²⁷⁸

Of relevance also are his comments on the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our nature in the High Priestly prayer:

He desires, then, the nature of humanity to be renewed and reshaped into its original image by communion with the Spirit [μετουσίας τοῦ Πνεύματος] so that, by being clothed with that original grace and being shaped again in conformity with him, we may be found superior to and more powerful than sin, which reigns in this world, and we may devote ourselves only to the love of God.²⁷⁹

And, finally, there are his comments on the giving of the Spirit to the Apostles at *In Jo.* 20:22–23, and how a single-subject Christology and Christ’s Baptism are prerequisites for the benefits of this:

And when it happened that he fell from obedience into death and humanity fell from that original honor, God the Father re-created it and brought it back to newness of life through the Son, just as in the beginning. How did the Son bring it back? By the death of his holy flesh he killed death and carried the human race

²⁷⁷ *Ad Nestorium III*, 5; *ACO I. I.* 1, p. 36; Wickham, 21.

²⁷⁸ *In Jo.* 1:32–33; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 1, 184; Maxwell, v. 1, 82.

²⁷⁹ *In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369. Cf. *In Jo.* 17:18–19; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 2, 724–725; Maxwell, v. 2, 299: “Just as through the transgression and disobedience of Adam, the first fruits of the race, our nature was condemned to death and heard through the first man the sentence, ‘Earth you are and to earth you will return’; in the same way, I think, through the obedience and righteousness of Christ, insofar as he was under the law even though as God he was the lawgiver, blessing and restoration of life through the spirit could extend to our entire nature. The Spirit refashions to incorruption that which had been utterly corrupted by sin and remolds to newness of life that which was decrepit from sluggishness and verging on obliteration.”

back to incorruption. After all, Christ was raised for us. In order that we may learn that [...] he was the one who sealed us with the Holy Spirit, the Savior once again grants us the Spirit as the first fruits of our renewed nature by distinctly breathing on the disciples.²⁸⁰

It is my assertion that Cyril is without a doubt aware of and evidently proactive in using this imagery in his third letter to Nestorius to reflect exactly what He says in his earlier commentary: that Christ is the giver of the Law and Spirit as God and fulfiller of the Law and receiver of the Spirit as man, as the Second Adam. I see that it is present both in the *In Joannem* and in his letters to Nestorius, such that I conclude that it forms a major part of his defense of his single-subject Christology.

Taking the above citations further—in that Christ being the Second Adam implies His capacity to suffer for our sake—Cyril goes on to detail a confession to which he and his colleagues submit, which is to confess the following:

[T]he very Son begotten of God the Father, the Only-begotten God, impassible though he is in his own nature [φύσιν ἰδίαν], has (as the Bible says) suffered in flesh for our sake and that he was in the crucified body claiming the sufferings of his flesh as his own impassibly [ἀπαθῶς]. By nature Life and personally the Resurrection though he exists and is, ‘by God’s grace he tasted death for every man’ in surrendering his body to it. With unspeakable power he trampled on death to become in his own flesh first the ‘first-born of the dead’ and ‘first fruits of those asleep’ in order that he might blaze the trail for human nature’s return to incorruptibility.²⁸¹

Cyril references here the concept of theopaschism, which is something introduced as novel by Athanasius. At first glance, the idea appears to mean that God in Himself is capable of suffering, but Cyril would never say this. Rather, he affirms that God is capable of suffering insofar as God the Word has become incarnate and permits what belongs to His own flesh to belong to Himself, meaning even suffering. This is the extent

²⁸⁰ *In Jo.* 20:22–23; Pusey, *In Jo.*, v. 3, 135; Maxwell, v. 2, 369.

²⁸¹ *Ad Nestorium III*, 6; *ACO I. I.* 1, p. 37; Wickham, 21–23.

of the communication of idioms in the incarnate Lord, which brings Cyril to a discussion about ascribing the correct actions to the corresponding nature to which such actions naturally belong.

He draws our attention to the duality of actions and sayings in Christ to argue, again, for the oneness of the Person. We see in the following statement the use of some particular language that demonstrates Cyril's insistence on the oneness, which he does to show shortly after that it was this same Subject that was sacrificed in our stead.

As for our Saviour's statements in the Gospels, we do not divide them out to two subjects [ὑποστάσει] or persons [προσώποις]. The one [εἷς], unique [μόνος] Christ has no duality though he is seen as compounded [συνενηνεγμένος] in inseparable unity out of two differing elements [διαφόρων πραγμάτων] in the way that a human being, for example, is seen to have no duality but to be one, consisting of the pair of elements, body and soul. We must take the right view and maintain that human as well as divine expressions are from the one speaker.²⁸²

Although two natures are present, resulting in the one Christ being able to both hunger and walk on water, for example, the union is one of a compounding "in inseparable unity out of two differing elements"²⁸³ similar to the way in which a human is compounded out of body and soul yet is one.

He knew no sin and yet took on our sin on the cross. Cyril points the reader back to this fact in order to highlight the redemptive nature of the Incarnation, that Christ fulfilled what was necessary for us to fulfill but what we could not due to sin. He says that, "If 'all sinned and are deprived of God's glory' in the sense that we have become prone to stray and that man's nature became utterly sick with sin but if this is not *his* condition and that is why we yield to his glory, what doubt remains that the true Lamb

²⁸² *Ad Nestorium III*, 8; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 38; Wickham, 23.

²⁸³ *Ad Nestorium III*, 8; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 38; Wickham, 23.

has been sacrificed on our account and our behalf?”²⁸⁴ Christ heals our nature by His union with it, and reconciles us to God the Father not only in a spiritual way but in a substantial, corporeal way, such that our bodies would now be cleansed to be able to participate in the resurrection rather than remaining in the ground. In a way, then, the Incarnation fulfills the promise that our bodies would rise from the dead because Christ Himself rose from the dead as the first in our nature to do so.

By doing this, Christ deprives death of its hold over us and endeavours to restore our human nature to its original righteousness, in that “he meant to bless the very origin of our existence, through a woman’s giving birth to him united with flesh, meant too [*sic*] that the curse on the whole race which dispatches our earthly bodies to death should cease.”²⁸⁵ The restoration of our human nature to its initial sanctity, specifically by the restoration of the Holy Spirit, is highlighted one chapter earlier when he writes that “[The Holy Spirit] is called ‘*Truth’s Spirit*’ and Christ is the Truth; he is poured out by Christ [προχεῖται παρ’ αὐτοῦ] just as he is poured forth from God the Father [ἀμέλει καὶ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρός].”²⁸⁶ The giving of the Holy Spirit is made an essential activity of the Son’s incarnate life, as has been argued above.

3.2 CHRIST AS TRUE MAN, SECOND ADAM, AND THE RESTORATION OF THE SPIRIT IN OTHER CYRILLINE LETTERS OF THE CONTROVERSY-ERA

To complete this chapter and the thesis as a whole, I shall briefly treat some of the other Cyrilline letters of the controversy era and those which appear shortly after the resolution of the Council of Ephesus. At this time, Cyril fielded questions both from his

²⁸⁴ *Ad Nestorium III*, 9; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 39; Wickham, 27.

²⁸⁵ *Ad Nestorium III*, 11; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 40; Wickham, 29.

²⁸⁶ *Ad Nestorium III*, 10; *ACO I. I. 1*, p. 39; Wickham, 27.

opponents and those simply asking for clarification. It is in these letters that we find Cyril approaching the topics with a far less polemical attitude (in general) and a more refined exegesis of his Christology and the implications of the ‘two-sons’ Christology on Christ as the Second Adam who enables the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit in our nature.

In these writings we find Cyril being able to expand on and clarify the necessary subtleties of his Christology that, as I argue, enable his emphasis on Christ as the Second Adam and restorer of the Holy Spirit to our human nature. Here we find even more evidence for a motivation other than eucharistic for his defense of his Christology.

Although at times repetitive in contrast to what we have seen in Cyril’s *Contra Nestorium III*, 2 and his *Ad Nestorium II* and *III*, I bring this repetition to the fore to demonstrate my conviction that his emphasis on the single-subject Christology is concerned with ramifications that a ‘two-sons’ Christology has on Christ being the Second Adam that restores to us the Holy Spirit, a union that was intended to be from the beginning. This recapitulation and restoration is, I think, of far greater concern than the Eucharist in terms of his defense of his Christology.

3.2.1 *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum*

Cyril’s *Letter to John of Antioch* is considered to be the third of the ecumenical letters, along with *Ad Nestorium II* and *III*, and Cyril attaches to it what has come to be known as the *Formula of Reunion*.²⁸⁷ Dated to the spring of 433 A.D., this letter addresses succinctly the language of one Christ out of two natures, and dispels any ideas

²⁸⁷ Quasten, 134. “Here the patriarch of Alexandria expresses his joy and satisfaction that peace has been restored between himself and the bishops of Antioch.” The letter is dated to the Spring of 433. (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 343, n. 1).

that Cyril was either a secret Docetic or Apollinarianist.²⁸⁸ In order to clarify and dispel any accusations against himself that Christ's body descended from heaven and was not truly an earthly body, Cyril writes a section of the letter addressing this very subject. It does not begin the letter but summarizes that their struggle (that of the members of Cyril's camp) has been to clarify that Mary was the Mother of *God*, so to say, therefore, that Christ's body was from heaven and not from her would be to undermine their own position. He then asks rhetorically, given the above, "Who was it, then, that she bore if she did not give birth after the flesh to Emmanuel?"²⁸⁹

The foundation for this explanation is the Christological doctrine of the formula that he attaches to the letter, parts of which read thus:

This is not our new invention but rather a full exposition of what we have received from the outset from the divine scriptures and from the tradition of the holy Fathers. We add nothing at all to the faith set out by the holy Fathers at Nicaea, for as we have just said this suffices for a complete knowledge of piety and for the denunciation of every heretical false opinion.²⁹⁰

And following this:

And so we confess that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, is perfect God and perfect Man, of a rational soul and body. He is born of the Father before the ages according to the Godhead, and the same one in these last days for us and for our salvation was born of the virgin Mary according to the manhood. The same one is consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the manhood, for there was a union of the two natures [δύο γὰρ φύσεων ἕνωσις γέγονεν], and this is why we confess One [ἕνα] Christ, One Son, One Lord.²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ Cf. McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 344–345, n. 3. "Cyril [...] was no Docetic or Apollinarianist, despite what his enemies said, or despite how would-be followers such as Eutyches later misinterpreted him. [...] It was Cyril's central argument that the Redeemer was certainly not like any ordinary man, but as Son of God was sinless and deifying even in his flesh."

²⁸⁹ *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 7; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 18; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 346.

²⁹⁰ *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 4; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 17; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 344.

²⁹¹ *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 5; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 17; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 344–345.

Cyril claims that he and his supporters are not proposing anything novel, but are simply outlining a Christology that is in complete agreement with the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed. He details this Christology in the second citation, writing that the incarnate Christ is the God-man, possessing a rational soul and a body that is His own, and that the One Christ is the One Subject, the Word of God, existing since the time of the Incarnation in two natures, divine and human, distinguishable only intellectually and abstractly.²⁹² Cyril is explicit here about the use of the ‘two natures’ formula.²⁹³

We see the same argumentation being made in his *Letter to Eulogius* when he writes that “[w]e unite these [the nature of the flesh and the nature of the Logos], acknowledging one Christ, one Son, the same one Lord and, further, one incarnate nature of the Son in the same way that the phrase can be used of ordinary man.”²⁹⁴ This ought to be carefully cross referenced with how Cyril qualifies his statements about the manner of Christ’s union and the resulting way in which Christ exists after His union with the human nature He acquired through Mary. “The point,” he says, “is that man results from two natures—body and soul, I mean—and intellectual perception recognizes the

²⁹² “In his Paschal homily for 421 Cyril has an attack on those who divide the one Christ. It is only in mind (*μόναις ταῖς ἐννοίαις*), he says, that we may divide the natures, for it is written that ‘the Word was made flesh’, though not so as to be transformed into flesh. As our father Athanasius said, *δύο πραγμάτων ἀνομοίων κατὰ τὴν φύσιν ἐν τάντῳ γέγονε σύνοδος*, and therefore Christ is *εἷς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ*. The manner of this *ἀνάκρσις* is wholly incomprehensible, and must be accepted in simple faith; yet we must believe that by the union the Logos made the flesh to be his *ἴδιος ναός*.” (Chadwick, 150).

²⁹³ Later he writes: “(for he is changeless and unalterable by nature) and this is why he is said to have ‘come down from heaven’ and is understood now to be one with his own flesh and is called the ‘man from heaven’. The same one is perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, and we understand him to be in one prosopon, for there is One Lord Jesus Christ, even though we do indeed take cognisance of the difference of natures out of which we say the ineffable union was formed.” (*Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 8; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 18; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 346–347).

²⁹⁴ *Ad Eulogium*; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 35; Wickham, 63.

difference; but we unite them and then get one nature of man. So, recognizing the difference of natures is not dividing the one Christ into two.”²⁹⁵

While he and his companions say that He descended from heaven where He dwelt according to His divine nature and that He came to dwell on earth by taking on our human flesh, Cyril clarifies in his *Letter to John of Antioch* that the Word of God takes on neither a man nor does He undergo some ineffable mixture or collision of natures that produces something novel in God’s cosmos. “So,” he says, “when we say that Our Lord Jesus Christ is from heaven and from above, we do not mean that his holy flesh was brought down from above and from heaven; No, we followed the divine Paul who so clearly cried out: ‘The first man is of the earth, earthly, but the second man (the Lord) is from heaven’.”²⁹⁶

The mention of Christ as the second man, the Second Adam in contrast to the “first man” is crystal clear, and it follows just after his statements about the nature of the Incarnation and its purpose: “for us and for our salvation [He] was born of the virgin Mary according to the manhood.”²⁹⁷ Additionally, he says that “God the Word came down from above and from heaven and emptied himself [κεκένωκεν ἑαυτὸν], taking the form of a slave, and was called Son of Man while he remained what he was, that is God.”²⁹⁸ He becomes so conformed to our nature by His union with it that He takes for Himself the name ‘Son of Man,’ implying in Cyril’s estimation the direct connection

²⁹⁵ *Ad Eulogium*; ACO I. I. 4, p. 35; Wickham, 65. Cyril believes that the Easterners (the Anatolians) do not actually fall in the same line of thinking as Nestorius concerning the Person of Christ. He says that by distinguishing between the expressions of Christ, they are only distinguishing the natures, and that they would never say, like Nestorius, that the expressions are distinguishable by the two son who say them, not the two natures in the one Son. “It is one thing to recognize difference of expressions and another thing to divide them out to two different and distinct persons.” (*Ad Eulogium*; ACO I. I. 4, p. 36; Wickham, 67).

²⁹⁶ *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 8; ACO I. I. 4, p. 18; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 346.

²⁹⁷ *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 5; ACO I. I. 4, p. 17; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 344–345.

²⁹⁸ *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 8; ACO I. I. 4, p. 18; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 346.

between the incarnate Lord and the first man, according to whose ancestry He is born; not only according to His human nature, but equally according to the flesh from whose parentage He comes.²⁹⁹

Concerning the suffering He endures for our sake, Cyril highlights his subscription to a Theopaschite theology, but, again, qualifies this by confirming that it is by no means according to the divine nature that Christ suffers, “for he is changeless and unalterable by nature,”³⁰⁰ but according to His flesh, which still retains the capacity to suffer despite its union to His divine nature. Additionally, Cyril still emphasizes that the Subject of the Incarnation is the One who suffers, so the suffering is truly His own and He endures it, but this is enabled by the way that His flesh is united in the ineffable union and the fact that he makes it His own.³⁰¹ He writes that “the all-wise Peter says: ‘And so Christ has suffered for us in the flesh’, and not in the nature of the ineffable deity. He bears the suffering of his own flesh in an economic appropriation [οικείωσιν οικονομικήν] to himself, as I have said, so that we may believe him to be the Saviour of all.”³⁰² Again, it is our flesh that suffers, but in the Son and not ourselves, yet it is as though it were ourselves that benefitted from this suffering because Christ endures it on our behalf.

²⁹⁹ Cf. the ancestries of both Matthew 1:1–17 and Luke 3:23–38.

³⁰⁰ *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 8; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 18; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 346–347.

³⁰¹ Cf. *De Symbolo* 24; *ACO* I. I. 4, 58; Wickham, 123: “God’s Word is, of course, undoubtedly impassible [ἀπαθής] in his own nature and nobody is so mad as to imagine the all-transcending nature capable of suffering; but by very reason of the fact that he has become man making flesh from the holy Virgin his own, we adhere to the principles of the divine plan [οικονομίας] and maintain that he, who as God transcends suffering, suffered humanly [ἀνθρωπίνως] in his own flesh.”

³⁰² *Ad Iohannem Antiochenum* 9; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 19; McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 347. Cf. *Ad Successum* II, 2; *ACO* I. I. 6, p. 158–159; Wickham, 87: Cyril writes that “it is silly nonsense for people to talk of his undergoing suffering in his own nature as being an unnecessary consequence, when the flesh should be seen as the basis for the occurrence of the suffering whilst the Word is impassible. Yet we do not therefore exclude him from the attribution of suffering. Just as the body has been made his own possession, so all features of the body (with the sole exception of sin) are to be attributed to him in accordance with God’s plan of appropriation [κατ’ οικείωσιν οικονομικήν].”

3.2.2 *Ad Successum I and II*

In another attempt to safeguard the fullness of Christ's humanity, Cyril begins his *First Letter to Succensus*³⁰³ by clarifying that his position is not Apollinarian. He wants to maintain the existence of the human nature both in and after the Incarnation, with the understanding that both natures are united in such a manner that they are inseparable after the Incarnation except for in theoretical contemplation. There is no new nature or *monstrum*, however, but One subject referent out of a union of two natures—divine and human.

He says that he is all too aware of the misrepresentation against the Alexandrians that paints them as Apollinarians.³⁰⁴ To these accusations—that Cyril admits of a mixture or merger—he writes this response:

[W]e are fully conscious of rebutting this slander when we affirm that the Word from God the Father united to himself in some inscrutable and ineffable manner, a body endowed with mental life [ψυχῆν νοεραῖν]³⁰⁵ and that he came forth, man from woman, become what we are, not by change of nature but in gracious fulfillment of God's plan. In willing to become man he did not abandon his being God by nature; though he descended to our limited level and wore the form of a slave,

³⁰³ Both letters are dated to somewhere between 434 and 438 “when Cyril is engaged in combatting the continuing opposition of such Antiochenes as Theodoret.” (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 352, n. 1).

³⁰⁴ “Seeing, though, that certain people are implicating us in Apollinarianism alleging that: if your calling the Word from God the Father who became man and incarnate ‘one Son’ means a strict and tight union, you may well have some fanciful notion there occurred a merger, mixture or mingling of the Word with the body or a change of the body into the nature of Godhead.” (*Ad Successum I*, 5; *ACO I. I. 6*, p. 152–153; Wickham, 75). Cyril explains his awareness of the same accusations to Acacius of Melitene in the *Ad Acacium Melitenensem*: “your Perfection is not unaware that they had cast the aspersion of Apollinarianism on my letters and believed that I declared the holy body of Christ inanimate and that a mixture, merger, mingling or change of God the Word into flesh or transition of flesh into the nature of deity had occurred, so that nothing would remain intact or be what it is. They believed besides that a refusal to recognize a difference in expressions and declare some to be divine and some human belonging rather to the incarnate dispensation would mean my sympathy with Arius’ blasphemies.” (*Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 20; *ACO I. I. 4*, 29; Wickham, 57).

³⁰⁵ McGuckin translates this as “rational soul.” See McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 354.

even in that state he remained in the transcendent realms of Godhead and in the Lordship belonging to his nature.³⁰⁶

Rather than in a change of nature, the Word of God became man in fulfilment of the plan of salvation, which meant that the Word of God should become human just as we are, live a perfect life, and die an atoning death.

On the topic of possessing a real, substantial body and a rational soul, Cyril reinforces this aspect of the Incarnation when he writes in *Ad Successum II* that “if one says the Word became incarnate one is not agreeing with the view that the flesh united to him lacked mental life.”³⁰⁷

Cyril intends for the perfectly lived life of Christ to be credited to us through the Word’s union with our nature—the same nature that we inherited from our first parent, Adam, and which is sanctified both by the Word’s union with it and His Baptism. The difference, however, is that we inherited Adam’s sin and corruption whereas Christ was without sin.

We affirm, then, that because human nature underwent corruption as a result of the transgression in Adam and our understanding was being dominated by the pleasures, the innate impulses, of the flesh, it was vital for the Word of God to become man for the salvation of us earthly men and to make human flesh, subject to decay and infected with sensuality as it was, his own and (since he is Life and Life-giver [ζωὴ καὶ ζωοποιός]) that he should destroy the corruption within it and curb the innate, the sensual, impulses. [...] In view of the fact, then, that human flesh has become the Word’s own flesh it has stopped being burdened with corruption, and since as God, conscious of no sin, he appropriated it and displayed it as his own (as I have said) it has ceased to be infected with sensuality.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁶ *Ad Successum I*, 5; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 152–153; Wickham, 75. Cf. *Ad Eulogium*; *ACO I. I.* 4, p. 35–36; Wickham, 65: “Since all the Easterns reckon us orthodox as following the opinions of Apollinarius in thinking that there occurred a mixture or merger [ὅτι σύγκρασις ἐγένετο ἢ σύγχυσις] (such are the terms they have employed, implying that God the Word changed into the nature of flesh and the flesh was turned into the nature of deity) we yielded to them not to the extent of dividing the one Son into two—far from it!—but only to that of affirming that no merger or mixing occurred: the flesh was flesh assumed of woman and the Word was Word begotten of the Father.”

³⁰⁷ *Ad Successum II*, 2; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 158; Wickham, 85.

³⁰⁸ *Ad Successum I*, 9; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 155; Wickham, 79.

Human flesh has therefore become cleansed from all corruption by its union with God the Word. By the ineffable union of the Incarnation, human flesh is no longer subject to decay without exception. The exception now is that Christ has reconciled us to the Father, cleansing us from sin and enabling the resurrection of our flesh unto eternal life through His own resurrection and ascension into heaven. The blessings of this, nonetheless, are credited to us by faith and Baptism.

Accordingly, we find Cyril saying that, “If we have been subject to the evils following upon the sin in Adam the benefits in Christ must attend us also—I mean, incorruption and the doing to death of sin. That is why he has become man.”³⁰⁹ He sets the two men up in perfect contrast, stating that since our nature is related to both Adam and Christ in the Person of Christ, then just as much as whatever was made ours by natural inheritance is made ours by divine inheritance through our participation in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

In his *Second Letter to Successus*, the latter portion of the letter is concerned with the same type of suffering-God language that appears in his *Letter to John of Antioch*. He writes that “the Only-begotten Son of God did not personally experience bodily sufferings in his own nature, as he is seemed to be and is God, but suffered in his earthly nature.”³¹⁰ This appears to show Cyril’s familiarity and understanding of his opponents’

³⁰⁹ *Ad Successum I*, 9; *ACO I. I. 6*, p. 155; Wickham, 79. Of note: Wickham here captures the Perfect tense of γίγνομαι in his translation, with the original being “οὐκοῦν γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος,” while McGuckin decides on a less progressive translation of the verb: “This is why he became man.” (McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, p. 357). As subtle as it seems, I tend to side with Wickham’s translation, since it captures what Cyril appears to have been emphasizing, especially later in *Ad Successum II*, that Christ’s two natures endured after the Incarnation only on a theoretical level, making it possible to continue saying ‘one Incarnate nature of the Son,’ since, as he says, “all things regularly distinguished at the merely speculative level isolate themselves completely in mutual difference and separate individuality.” (*Ad Successum II*, 5; *ACO I. I. 6*, p. 161; Wickham, 93).

³¹⁰ *Ad Successum II*, 4; *ACO I. I. 6*, p. 161; Wickham, 91.

position, which is that of divine impassibility. Cyril thinks that this, though an attempt to be pious, is erroneous and heretical, on the basis of his understanding of the Incarnation.

He writes:

Both points, indeed, must be maintained of the one true Son: the absence of divine suffering and the attribution to him of human suffering because his flesh did suffer. These people, though, imagine that we are hereby introducing what they call ‘divine impassibility’ [θεοπάθειαν]; they fail to bear in mind God’s plan and make mischievous attempts to shift the suffering to the man on his own, in foolish pursuit of a false piety. Their aim is that the Word of God should not be acknowledged as the Saviour who gave his own blood for us but instead that Jesus, viewed as a distinct individual man, should be credited with that.³¹¹

Again, the point here is that the Word of God, the Subject of the Incarnation, suffered. Not simply according to His human nature, but in His flesh, so that no one can mistake that the Word has been inseparable from His humanity since His conception in the Virgin and even after the resurrection. He does this to emphasize the one Subject of Christ—the Word, and that there is no man that He assumed, but that He only assumed a nature. He clarifies his rejection of the inseparability of the natures one from the other in the Incarnation or even in their experience of whatever the One Subject of the Incarnation experiences when he writes the following:

And that the Lord suffered in flesh we affirm. It is futile, then, for them to talk of his suffering in the nature of the manhood separating it, as it were, from the Word and isolating it from him so as to think of him as two and not one Word from God the Father yet incarnate and made man. The extra word ‘inseparable’ they add may seem to have our orthodox sense, but that is not how they intend it. [...] They say that the man in whom the Word has made his home is inseparable from him in equality of honour, identity of will and sovereignty.³¹²

³¹¹ *Ad Successum II*, 4; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 161; Wickham, 91.

³¹² *Ad Successum II*, 5; *ACO I. I.* 6, p. 162; Wickham, 93.

According to Cyril, therefore, the human nature of the Word is inseparable from His divine nature in the Incarnation. The union is substantial and *not* according to honour or identity of will, as Nestorius believes.³¹³

3.2.3 *Ad Acacium Melitenensem*

Cyril's *Letter to Acacius of Melitene* is one which provides a concise summary of his previous statements and positions on the two natures in Christ. Cyril provides us with a handful of citations from Nestorius' own homilies, and critiques what he finds problematic. Mostly he is concerned with speaking about two natures in a substantial way *after* the Incarnation. Cyril would not speak this way. He makes this clear when he writes about the Gnostic position that states that Christ took from His divine nature in order to make a body for Himself, instead of taking from the holy Virgin. On the contrary, he says, "when we have the idea of the elements of the one and unique Son and Lord Jesus Christ, we speak of two natures being united [δύο μὲν φύσεις ἡνωσθαί φαμεν]; but after the union, the duality has been abolished and we believe the Son's nature [φύσιν] to be one [μίαν], since he is one [ένός] Son, yet become man and incarnate."³¹⁴ At the same

³¹³ Cf. *Ad Eulogium*; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 36; Wickham, 65–67: "For in his sermons, Nestorius pretends to say 'one Son and one Lord' but attributes the sonship and lordship to the Word of God only and when he comes to the dispensation speaks of another 'lord', the woman-born man on his own, connected with the Word by dignity or equality of honour."

³¹⁴ *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 12; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 26; Wickham, 49. See Hubert Du Manoir, *Dogme et spiritualité chez Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique, 1944), 124–143, esp. 126–132. "Le Christ étant un seul sujet, un seul individu, il ne peut y avoir en lui qu'une seule φύσις, une seule ύπόστασις existent d'une manière indépendante; cette unique nature ou hypostase ne peut être que celle du Verbe divin, puisqu'elle a toujours existé et toujours immuable en elle-même. La formule μία φύσις (ou ύπόστασις) τοῦ θεοῦ Λόγου désigne donc la nature concrète, l'hypostase indépendante, la personne du Verbe, le Verbe lui-même. [...] Cyrille déclare qu'il n'y a dans le Christ qu'une seule φύσις (une φύσις-πρόσωπον) celle de Dieu le Verbe; mais pour marquer que cette φύσις s'est approprié l'humanité, il ajoute l'épithète σεσαρκωμένη." (Du Manoir, 131–132). See also McGuckin's discussion of the *mia physis* terminology in McGuckin, *The Christological Controversy*, 207–212. He will say later, adding to this point, that "[Nestorius], for his part, makes a pretense of affirming that the Word was incarnate and became

time, however, he also says that “[t]he nature of the Word is, by general consent, one but we recognize that he is incarnate and became man, as I have already stated.”³¹⁵

While maintaining that Christ took on our human nature in the Incarnation and now exists in a new manner than He did before the Incarnation, Cyril clarifies that these natures that constitute the incarnate Lord are distinguishable only at the abstract and dialectical level, not in any substantial way. Simultaneously, however, we are able to attribute the power and authority by which certain actions and sayings are accomplished to each nature, yet it is always the one Subject of the Word who is the originator of such actions and sayings. This appears to be the inverse of the conclusion that Cyril tries to reject through the above reasoning: that if you say that Christ has two natures after the Incarnation and you accord certain sayings and actions to one or the other nature and not to the Subject of the Incarnation, then you effectively admit of two Christs. Earlier in the letter, for example, Cyril cites some of Nestorius’ works, arguing the following:

Nestorius then, on the one hand, is discovered to be totally destroying the incarnate birth of the Only-begotten Son of God—he denies that he was born of a woman in accordance with the Scriptures. This is what he said: ‘That God entered from the Virgin Mother of Christ I was taught by divine Scripture; that God was born of her was I nowhere taught.’³¹⁶ And again in another sermon: ‘Accordingly nowhere does divine Scripture say God was born of the Virgin Mother of Christ, but Jesus Christ Son and Lord.’³¹⁷ How can anyone doubt when he all but shouts the very thing out clearly, that when he says these things he is dividing the one into two sons and is asserting the personally distinct existence of a Son, Christ and Lord, the Word begotten of God the Father and in addition that of a different separate and personally distinct Son, Christ and Lord, born of the holy Virgin?³¹⁸

man whilst being God, and failing to recognize the meaning of being incarnate he uses the word ‘two natures’ but sunders them from each other, isolating God and a separate man connected with God in a relation only of equal honour or sovereignty.” (*Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 15; *ACO I. I. 4*, 27; Wickham, 51).

³¹⁵ *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 13; *ACO I. I. 4*, p. 26; Wickham, 51.

³¹⁶ Cited from *Contra Nestorium* I. 1. 2 (*ACO I. I. 6*, p. 20).

³¹⁷ Cited from *Contra Nestorium* I. 1. 2 (*ACO I. I. 6*, p. 18).

³¹⁸ *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 9; *ACO I. I. 4*, p. 24; Wickham, 45–47.

Here Cyril takes on the very conception of the Word in the Virgin, remarking how Nestorius claims quite clearly that it was not God that was born of her but Jesus Christ. In Cyril's estimation, to say this is equivalent to saying that Christ is *not* God. So even though Nestorius has a disagreement with both the language and the theological possibility of God permitting Himself to be born of a woman, a creature, the conclusion of his position, according to Cyril, evidently means that he does not think that the incarnate Christ is the hypostasis of God the Word, but that He becomes an individual man, Jesus, son of David, therefore allowing for an additional hypostasis.³¹⁹

Cyril takes issue with this as he does with anything else that lessens the humanity of the incarnate Lord, and responds with distinct philosophical terms: "The Word, according to the Scriptures, became flesh and we declare that there was truly created a divinely planned and mysterious concurrence [σύμβασιν οικονομικὴν καὶ ἀπόρρητον ἀληθῶς πεπραχθαι] of dissimilar realities [ἀνομοίων πραγμάτων] in indissoluble union [ἔνωσιν ἀδιάσπαστον]."³²⁰ In other words, both during His life and after His death, resurrection, and ascension the Word of God remains incarnate and conformed to our human nature as much as He permits it to be.

³¹⁹ Cyril exploits Nestorius' writings even more when he writes the following statements about the consubstantiality of Christ with the Father in Godhead and with us in respect of his manhood according to Nestorius: "Preaching in church he declared: 'For this reason also God the Word is called 'Christ', since he has continuous connection with Christ.' [Cited from *Contra Nestorium* II. 7. 8; *ACO* I. I. 6, p. 45]. And again: 'Let us, then, keep the connection of natures unconfused [καὶ πάλιν Ἀσύγχυτον τοῖνυν τὴν τῶν φύσεων τηρῶμεν συνάφειαν]! Let us confess God in Man! Let us worship the man adored along with the omnipotent God in divine connection [σέβωμεν τὸν τῆ θεῖα συνεφεία τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον ἄνθρωπον]!' [Cited from F. Loofs, *Nestoriana* (Halle: 1905), 249]. [...] He says, on the one hand, that the personally distinct Word of God is called 'Christ', but, on the other hand, that he has continuous connection with Christ. Then is he not very clearly saying 'two Christs'?" (*Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 11, *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 25; Wickham, 47–49).

³²⁰ *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 11; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 25; Wickham, 49.

Cyril is quite aware of the difference between saying ‘two natures,’ both having one subject referent, and saying ‘persons’ or ‘subjects.’ A hypothetical opposer says that Cyril does “not allow of allocating the terms to two persons [προσώποις] or subjects [ὑποστάσεσι].”³²¹ In response he writes that “[b]y no manner of means have we abolished the difference between the terms though we have caused their separate division to a Son, the Word of the Father, and to a man thought of as a separate woman-born son, to be discarded.”³²²

As much as the complexity of the union is difficult to understand—as well it should be—Cyril continues to hold to his position, yet still being able to admit the difficulty of approximating a clear and concise description of the manner of the Incarnation, writing that while “for some the phraseology and choice of language may lack the last degree of refinement and precision, there is no cause for surprise—things like this are very hard to put into words.”³²³ As much as Cyril talks about the technical nature of the union in this letter, though, I think that the Adam-Christ typology and its necessary relation to the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our nature in Christ may be deduced from his reasonings here. He does not want to see Christ ever divided, such that the conformity of our human nature to Him by the communication of idioms is compromised and made futile.

To conclude the thoughts of chapter three, let us take a quick glance at Cyril’s thoughts about the Incarnation, the Second Adam, and the Holy Spirit’s restoration to our

³²¹ *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 13; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 26; Wickham, 49.

³²² *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 13; *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 26; Wickham, 51.

³²³ *Ad Acacium Melitenensem* 18, *ACO* I. I. 4, 28; Wickham, 55.

nature in his letter concerning the Creed, the *De Symbolo*.³²⁴ I find this a fitting conclusion because Cyril's first exchanges with Nestorius through his letters to him are concerned with encouraging him to return to the catholic faith, the faith of the Church Father as recorded in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.³²⁵

3.2.3 *De Symbolo*

Cyril spends the greater portion of the *De Symbolo* on the Second Person of the Trinity. The Word of God occupies *De Symbolo* 11–29, with special emphasis on the nature of the Incarnation and the fact that He possesses at the Incarnation a real and substantial human nature, one that He makes His own, fashioned from the holy Virgin, not acquired by inhabiting an individual man with a separate hypostasis.

On the one hand, he remarks and affirms that the Son is of the Father's substance, confirming His divine parentage,³²⁶ and, on the other hand, he confesses the Word's

³²⁴ No clear dating, but estimated to be a short time after the Council of Ephesus since he says that “the holy synod too (I refer to the one assembled by God's will at Ephesus) gave a hallowed and precise judgement against Nestorius' evil dogmas.” (*De Symbolo* 5; *ACO* I. I. 4, 50; Wickham, 99).

³²⁵ In the creed set out at Nicaea, says Cyril, “One sees no essential omitted, nothing worthwhile overlooked, in the confessional statements the fathers produced dealing with correct and unadulterated faith. Their aim was the refutation and rebuttal of all heresy and blasphemous nonsense on the one hand, and on the other the confirmation and security of those who tread straight the path of faith, people on whom the morning star has arisen and day dawned (as the Bible says) and in whom the grace which comes through the Holy Ghost is infusing truth's light.” (*De Symbolo* 4; *ACO* I. I. 4, 50; Wickham, 99).

³²⁶ “For they affirm he has been begotten not made, recognizing that because of his not being made he does not belong at the level of substance in the same class as creation; instead they maintain that he sprang in some incomprehensible, non-temporal way from God the Father's substance [οὐσίας]—the Word was ‘in the beginning’. Next they finely indicated the genuineness of the birth (the fact must be stated in the available human terms) by declaring the Son to have been begotten, ‘God from God’; for where birth is completely real it necessarily follows that we must think and speak of what is born as proper to, not alien from, its parent's substance because it derives from it in accordance with the substance's suitably appropriate condition. The incorporeal will not give birth corporeally but like light from light so that the light emitted is perceived in the light which radiated it, both *from* it by way of inexpressibly mysterious procession and *in* it by way of union and natural identity [ένωσιν και ταυτότητα φυσικήν]. This is what it means to talk of the Son being in the Father and the Father in the Son—the Son in his own nature and glory delineates his sire.” (*De Symbolo* 11; *ACO* I. I. 4, 52–53; Wickham, 105). These titles, says Cyril, are not metaphorical for the Son as they are for creatures (e.g., a father begetting children), but are real and true of

consubstantiality with us by the Incarnation, thus following the pattern of the Creed itself.

He says concerning the Fathers who authored the Creed that after showing his

consubstantiality with the Father,

they give a valuable reminder of his being made man and put the mystery of his incarnate dispensation in plain terms fully recognizing that the tradition of the faith would thus omit nothing in its total completeness”; however, this is not enough, he says: “[believers] must realize as well that he humbled himself to the point of self-emptying [καθεὶς ἑαυτὸν εἰς κένωσιν] for the salvation and life of all, took slave’s form and issued as man in fleshly birth from woman.³²⁷

The extent of His human nature (its fullness and completeness) as well as its conformity to ours is reaffirmed here by Cyril in his highlighting of this in the Creed. He wants to say that the nature that He endows Himself with is in our image and likeness. “The point of their saying ‘he came down’ is that we should see that it was he, he who transcends all in nature and glory, who descended for us—meaning that he voluntarily took on our likeness and dawned with flesh upon the world.”³²⁸ That He is human like us is unquestionable.

He goes on to clarify, dispelling any Apollinarian or Docetic accusations again, that the human nature He took on was very much ours and appropriated by Him, yet He remained fully God having endured a *kenosis*, and He did this “for the sake of the divine plan [οἰκονομίαν].”³²⁹

For the very reason that it was the Word who is God that wore our flesh yet that even so has continued to be God, most holy Paul affirms that it was God who was ‘made in man’s likeness’ and ‘was found in fashion as man’. He was, as I said,

the Son. “So anyone predicating birth or sonship of him speaks without shadow of falsehood, for he is personally the Truth.” (*De Symbolo* 11; *ACO* I. I. 4, 53; Wickham, 105).

³²⁷ *De Symbolo* 13; *ACO* I. I. 4, 53; Wickham, 107.

³²⁸ *De Symbolo* 13; *ACO* I. I. 4, 53; Wickham, 107.

³²⁹ *De Symbolo* 14; *ACO* I. I. 4, 54; Wickham, 111.

God in human shape, by taking not inanimate flesh (as some heretics have seen fit to imagine) but flesh endowed with mental life [ψυχῆν νοερά].³³⁰

Only God could live the perfect life in our behalf and rise from the dead, but the only way for Him to be able to die is to join Himself to our human flesh, flesh that was endowed with mental life, patterned exactly after us and our first father, Adam, while this new life, this new Adam, that was Life itself proved to not be held by death in His rising from the dead, showing what our flesh would experience after our own deaths.

Cyril highlights the tension of the Incarnation in Paul's epistles when he mentions both that Christ "is the image of the invisible God" and "the first-born of all creation."³³¹

He explains:

The Word of God the Father is Life and life-giving, springing as he does from the life of his parent; how then can he have become the first-born from the dead and first-fruits of those asleep? The answer is that after he had made flesh capable of death his own, he did by God's grace, as Paul so utterly wise affirms, 'taste' death for every man in flesh able to experience it, without ceasing personally to be life. Consequently although it is affirmed that he suffered in flesh there is no question of his suffering in the Godhead's nature but, as I just said, in his flesh which is capable of suffering.³³²

He tasted death as well as knew all our infirmities and anxieties of spirit so that He might be able to more perfectly and thoroughly say that He was made man and endured our human sufferings to the end that he would endure the greatest suffering on the cross.

How, then, do Baptism and the restoration of the Holy Spirit to our nature enter into Cyril's thoughts on the unity of Christ's Person? By being a man according to His human nature (and a perfect one at that, according to the deifying effect of His divine

³³⁰ *De Symbolo* 13; *ACO I. I.* 4, 54; Wickham, 109. He adds: The Logos, then, became "man without departure from being what he was; for even in manhood he has remained God, even in slave's form master, even in human self-emptying possessor of full deity, even in fleshly weakness lord of spiritual powers and even within the compass of manhood owner of transcendence over the whole creation." (*De Symbolo* 14; *ACO I. I.* 4, 54; Wickham, 109).

³³¹ *De Symbolo* 25; *ACO I. I.* 4, 58; Wickham, 123–125.

³³² *De Symbolo* 25; *ACO I. I.* 4, 58–59; Wickham, 125.

nature by its communion with His human nature), He is the Second Adam as Cyril argued in his *Glaphyra* and commentaries. Consequently, His sanctified human nature is not only the perfect sacrifice (as much as the reconciling nature of this is a large part of what benefits our relationship with the Father) but it is what sanctifies *our* human nature. He restores to it the Holy Spirit by His Baptism, and in this way, we are sanctified by our Baptism, because we are baptised into His Baptism, life, death, and resurrection.

Cyril comments on the passage that says that there is One Lord, one faith, and one baptism, saying that a person

would doubtless answer that lordship over us and faith on our part attach to the Word who is of God the Father, and that the performance of saving baptism has him in view. [...] Inspired Paul makes clear the glory of lordship, the acknowledgment of faith and holy baptism's power when he says: 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is to bring Christ down) or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is to raise Christ from the dead). But what does Scripture say? 'The word is near you in your mouth and in your heart'—because if you say 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved.' He writes again: 'Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?' Note how clearly and skillfully he attaches the acknowledgment of lordship and faith, and the very grace of holy baptism, to him who suffered death and has been raised from the dead.³³³

Christ's Baptism and its connection with the Incarnation as a necessary condition for the effectiveness of our Baptism relies on Christ being fully God—having put on human nature and not a mere man—for it to be effective and deliver the sanctified human nature that Christ takes on, as well as restore to us the Holy Spirit we lost by the first Adam.

He is one Son and Lord—not, as some fools have asserted in writing, as being the Word who assumed man by way of conjunction, made him a partner in his dignities and shared his sonship and lordship with him, but as being the Word personally [αὐτὸς], God of God, light of light, who was made man and incarnate [ἐνανθρωπήσας καὶ σαρκωθείς]. Into his death we have been baptized, his who

³³³ *De Symbolo* 27; *ACO* I. I. 4, 59; Wickham, 127.

suffered humanly in his own flesh yet has remained divinely impassible and always alive, because he is Life from God the Father's Life. This is the way Death has been vanquished, which had made bold to attack the body of Life; this is the way corruption in us too is being annihilated [καταργεῖται]³³⁴ and Death's power enfeebled.³³⁵

If we have been baptised into His death, we are surely baptised into His life and resurrection, so just as He received the Spirit as man and gives it as God, so too do we receive it as humans because He first received it again, making it possible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in us again.

In fact, Cyril concludes with a description of the Spirit that provokes such baptismal imagery that it is frankly unmistakable. Concerning the procession of the Spirit, Cyril writes that

He is consubstantial [ὁμοούσιον] with them; he pours out [προχεῖται] (or proceeds) [ἐκπορεύεται] from, as it were, the fount [πηγῆς] of God the Father and is bestowed on creation through the Son—he breathed, remember, on the holy apostles saying: 'Receive the Holy Ghost.' The Spirit, therefore, is God and from God, not alien to the substance transcending all substances [οὐκ ἀλλότριον τῆς ἀνωτάτω πασῶν οὐσίας] but from it, in it and belonging to it.³³⁶

He reminds us of Christ breathing the Holy Spirit onto the Apostles, expounded in his *Commentary on John 20:21–23*, as we have seen above in chapter two, forming an inextricable link between his thoughts here and those in his *Commentary on John* regarding the Lord's Baptism and the re-acquisition of the Spirit in our nature.

3.3 SUMMARY CONCLUSION

³³⁴ Wickham translates the verb progressively rather than as a simple present. Of course, the Greek allows for both readings, but this poses the question of whether Cyril counts the annihilation of corruption in us as either progressive and never complete until death or as completed in this life with the condition that one does not fall away from the faith and lose such blessings. I shall not enter this discussion, but it would be of interest to highlight some key texts to see Cyril's view on this.

³³⁵ *De Symbolo* 28; *ACO I. I. 4*, 59–60; Wickham, 127–129.

³³⁶ *De Symbolo* 30; *ACO I. I. 4*, 60; Wickham, 129.

In chapter one, I sought to demonstrate the shortcomings of the proposal that the Eucharist formed the greatest part of Cyril's Christological defense during the controversy era. I do not deny that Cyril was a great proponent of the rich sacramental reality of the Eucharist, but I endeavoured to show that his concern seemed to have been over the unity of the person of Christ, that there was no duality. Certainly, he saw many implications for the Eucharist, if Nestorius' Christology was adopted, but, again, I do not think that there is enough evidence in the controversy-era writings or even the pre-controversy-era writings to support the position that this formed the chief motivation for his theological defense.

On the contrary, I think that the evidence evaluated in chapter two and three demonstrates that Cyril's anthropology and the loss of the Spirit in Adam's fall into sin informed his concern for a single-subject Christology, because it required that the incarnate Christ be God the Word enfleshed, united hypostatically with His flesh, instead of a duality of God the Word and the man-Jesus united in honour and will. This is because he saw the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit in our nature to be of the utmost importance, and a significant part of the economy of salvation.

In chapter two, I evaluated the key texts that I believe form the basis for Cyril's understanding of the initial purpose and design of humanity, our fall into sin, as well as the need for both a Second Adam and the restoration of the Spirit that we lost. In Cyril's *Commentary on John*, we saw that Cyril's baptismal narrative, as well as the passages concerning the Spirit's involvement in the economy of salvation, rely heavily on the presuppositions that he makes in his *Glaphyra in Genesim* with respect to the recapitulation of our nature. I argued that one could see a persuasively consistent

narrative spanning from his *Glaphyra in Genesim* all the way to his *Commentary on John*, with the later commentary's proximity to the Nestorian controversy close enough for us to presume that such conclusions made there would have been fresh in Cyril's mind and part of his theological commonplaces.

In chapter three, I sought to tie together the presuppositions and conclusions of chapter two with the writings of the controversy era, demonstrating how these same conclusions were present in his controversy-era writings with goal of proving that this subject matter was presupposed and used during the controversy-era writings. This was done so that I could show that one of his chief motivations for the defense of his Christology as he understood it was the re-acquisition of the Holy Spirit in our nature by Christ, and how this applies to all human nature universally because of Christ's Baptism but the benefits are given to each particularly according to their faith and whether or not they have been baptised. Undergirding the effectiveness of the restoration of the Spirit to our human nature by Christ's Baptism is the fact of Christ being the God-man, perfect God and perfect man, united in an ineffable union out of two 'elements,' and made perfectly one in the Incarnation, such that our nature, the very nature that was previously corrupted in Adam, is cleansed of all impurity and made incorruptible by its communion with the Son of God.

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