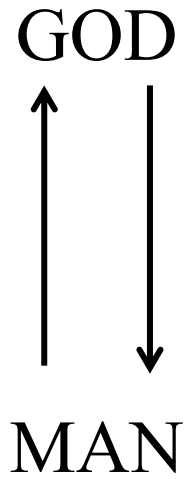


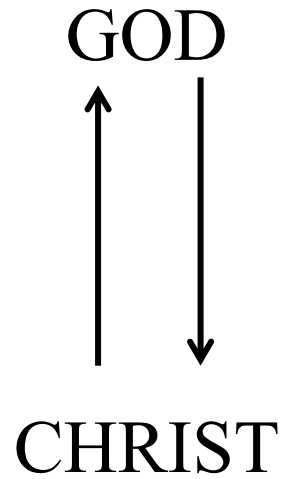
THE ARCHITECTONIC STRUCTURE OF THOMISM

Figure 1



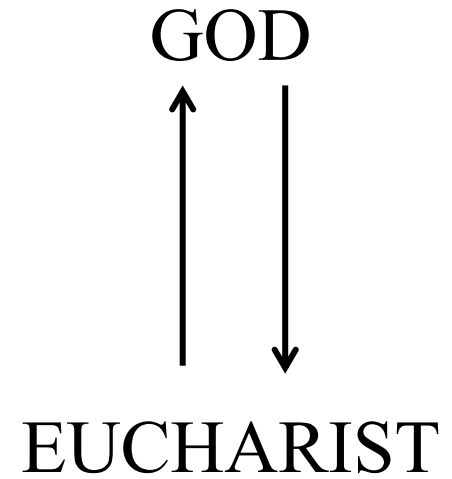
- Disproportionality
- Reportioning Grace

Figure 2



- Dual Nature
- Sacrifice

Figure 3



- Transubstantiation
- Sacrifice

Participation in the Divine Life

2018 Reformed Forum Conference

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1. What is Reformed Thomism?

2. The Architectonic Structure of Thomism

A. “From God considered in himself and in his being, we pass to God as efficient and redemptive cause, in order to come back to him as the object of happiness after the glorious resurrection. So it is that the golden circle of theology is closed.”—John of St. Thomas

B. “Just as the procession of persons is the reason of the production of creatures by the first principle, so too this same process is the reason for the return of creatures to their end; since, just as we have been created by the Son and Holy Spirit, so too it is by them that we are united to our ultimate end.”—Thomas Aquinas

3. The Problem of Disproportionality

A. “It should be evident that to be able to see God face to face, to know Him as He knows Himself, is not an end that could correspond naturally to any creature, no matter how exalted his nature. To see the essence of God is proper only to God. In fact, God’s own eternal beatitude lies in His infinite act of knowledge of His own infinite Goodness and His eternal act of love of that same Goodness, in which consists the ineffable interior life of the Holy Trinity, engendering the eternal procession of the Son and the Holy Spirit. The beatific vision, therefore, is an absolutely mysterious participation or sharing of the rational creature in God’s own divine life and beatitude.”—Lawrence Feingold

B. “Now the end to which man is directed by the assistance of divine grace is above human nature. Therefore there needs to be added [*superaddatur*] to man a supernatural form and perfection, by which he may be fittingly ordered to that same end”—Thomas Aquinas

4. The Person and Work of Christ

A. “He first points out that the hypostatic union itself is a grace, as an unmerited gift that elevates Christ’s holy humanity at the instant of its conception to perfect union with the divine nature in the Person of the Word. As a result of that perfect union, Christ as human receives the full influence of the Holy Spirit upon his soul, filling it with the charity and wisdom that befit such a union. Given his uniqueness, Christ in his holy humanity receives a graced participation in God’s life that includes ‘everything that could pertain to the nature of grace’. Created nature could not receive a higher participation in the divine life than Christ’s humanity receives, as befits the union, at the instant of his conception.”—Matthew Levering

Participation in the Divine Life

B. “Because the flesh of Christ is united to the Word of God, his flesh is life-giving. Thus, his body, sacramentally received, is also life-giving, for Christ gives life to the world through the mysteries that he accomplished in his flesh.”—Thomas Aquinas

C. “He shows that even his flesh is life-giving, for it is the instrument (*organum*) of his divinity. And since an instrument acts by the power of the agent, then just as the divinity of Christ is life-giving, so too (as Damascene says) does his flesh give life by the power of the Word to which it is united.... What he is saying here pertains, then, to the sharing in his body, i.e., to the sacrament of the Eucharist.”—Thomas Aquinas

5. Thomas’s Eucharistic Theology

“There is, indeed, a theology of sacraments in Aquinas. It does not, however, come in the form of a “treatise on sacraments.” Thomas Aquinas, like other Scholastic masters, was not writing a theology of this or that. The subject of his theology was God. When he dealt with this or that, it was as it comes forth from God and returns to God.”—Liam Walsh

6. Thomism and the Deeper Protestant Conception