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Evolution: A Divine Interaction Between God and Creation

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Evolution: A Divine Interaction Between God and Creation

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to provide a framework through relational theology for understanding the randomness evident in genetic variation which is an element within evolution. I propose that evolution can be incorporated into a theology of creation by placing evolution in context of the interaction of love between God and creation when interpreted through a framework of relational theology. Relational theology, as engaging God as primarily self-giving and holistically hospitable (towards God's self in the Trinity and towards creation), provides space for a theological understanding of randomness genetic variation and mutation within the evolutionary process. Chapter 1 discusses Ian Barbour's four methods of engagement (or disengagement) between theology and the empirical sciences, and concludes with Barbour's method of dialogue as the chosen method for continuing the discourse through a mutually illuminative conversation. Chapter 2 considers the central theme of kenosis in the nature and activity of the economic and the immanent Trinity (identified as existing in perichoretic harmony). The Triune God's self-limitation means that God to exist in authentic relationship with all that is created; hence, creation is also empowered to exist as a free agent. Ultimately, the kenotic perichoresis of the Trinity carries deeply embedded implications for the nature of creation and its evolutionary development. Chapter 3 addresses a theology of evolution, specifically the randomness of genetic mutation and variation, through a framework of relational theology which seeks to interpret God's power in terms of God's primary nature of love. God's love sustains creation's existence and simultaneously invites creation to participate in creating by empowering creation to become more of itself through the evolutionary process.

Key Terms: evolution, economic Trinity, immanent Trinity, perichoresis, kenosis, panentheism, critical realism, metaphysical naturalism

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Introduction

No man is an island entire of itself; every man
is a piece of the continent, a part of the main;
if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe
is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as
well as any manner of thy friends or of thine
own were; any man's death diminishes me,
because I am involved in mankind.
And therefore never send to know for whom
the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.¹

Those familiar with famed 16th century metaphysical English poet, John Donne, may recall one of his most famous poems, Meditation XVII, published in *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*. In fact, Ernest Hemingway published his book *For Whom The Bell Tolls* in honor of Donne for in the last two lines of Meditation XVII, Donne pens “And therefore never send to know for whom/the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”² Meditation XVII reflects the interconnectedness of humanity through a profound geographical metaphor. As every person is “a piece of the continent, a part of the main,” each individual belongs in community. If any aspect of this continent, representative of all of humanity, is affected then all of humanity is affected. Specifically, the last two lines relay that when the funeral bell may toll for one person, it tolls of all of humanity for the death of one involves the rest of humanity.

Similarly as “no man is an island,” no academic discipline should exist as an island. Change in one disciplines effects a change, to a degree, in other disciplines. Community is a place where conversations should flourish and growth should be

¹ John Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions Together with Death's Duel*, 1st ed. (Michigan: Ann Arbor Paperbacks: The University of Michigan Press, 1959), 108,109.

² William Harris, “For Whom the Bell Tolls,” accessed March 15, 2017, <http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/donne.html>.

spurred onward, interpersonally and ideologically. Differences provide a platform for discovery through a journey of seeking in order to better understand, seeking to teach and be taught. Existing in community enables the possibility of a safe space for disciplinary discourse and communication in order to advance forward. Isolation, on the other hand, may hinder potential for refinement through learning.

In academic studies, changes in one discipline have historically affected different fields. As John F. Haught proposes, discovery in evolutionary mechanisms should be an invitation for revisioning Christian theology.³ The Christian community has already witnessed individuals, who will be mentioned later, attempting to assimilate evolution into a deterministic theological model. In this process, the integrity of evolution within the scientific discipline is lost and compromised. Similarly, some evolutionary biologists go so far as to say evolution removes the need for any religious God since all of creation can be explained through this process. We will see how this extreme also violates the disciplinary boundaries of both empirical sciences and theology.

Those who never venture beyond an ideological bubble (in this instance the bubble of Christian theology and evolutionary biology) are limited to only addressing others located in that ideological bubble. Recognizing and acknowledging that which exists outside of one's preconceived boundaries enriches the ability to engage a variety of cultures (worldviews) and most importantly, people. As no one people group or ideology holds the complete answer for the complexity of life, tolerance and humility allow us to have receptive ears to listen and keen eyes to see.

³ John F. Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), ix.

Evolutionary biology has already contributed to improving antibiotics in medicine, agricultural yield in previously infertile regions, quality of energy sources (renewable and non-renewable energy), and other innumerable areas.⁴ Scientists consider evolution to be one of, if not the most important contribution to modern biology.⁵ Given its indispensable role in science, why are some Christians fighting so adamantly to keep evolution out of churches and Christianity? Have we hindered ourselves from an opportunity to even better understand the God whom we love and seek to continuously discover? This paper serves as an invitation to listen, rather than stubbornly galvanize our positions. We tread dangerous waters in assuming certainty, and maintaining a rigid religious stance in order to protect propositions which hold our paradigm about the world intact as if we had the power in our hands. In doing so, we isolate ourselves as a disjointed and uninformed island apart from the main continent of disciplines.

Henry M. Morris, president of the Institute for Creation Research and researcher, exemplifies a Christian anti-evolution crowd. In the foreword of *Scientific Creationism*, he makes a case for why creationism needs to be taught in schools. "Secularized schools have begotten a secularized society. The child is the father of the man and, if the child is led to believe he is merely an evolved beast, the man he becomes will behave as a beast, either aggressively struggling for supremacy himself or blindly following aggressive leaders."⁶ Morris first suggests a sociologically

⁴ "Teaching About Evolution and the Nature of Science," 4, accessed February 27, 2017, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.seu.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmx1YmtfXzkwNF9fQU41?sid=eba99a15-daa1-4b12-adbd-fe5b36d07fdf@sessionmgr4006&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>.

⁵ *Ibid.*, viii.

⁶ Henry M. Morris, *Scientific Creationism*, 2nd ed. (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2001), iii.

damaging effect of allowing evolution to ‘infiltrate’ public school curriculum.

Evolution carries the religion of nontheistic secular humanism, which he calls the "official state religion promoted in the public schools."⁷ Morris states that as creation is offered as an alternative to evolution, teachers who are in favor of evolution have "been indoctrinated with the evolutionary point of view in their studies in college."⁸ Morris peppers the book with this phrase.

Henry M. Morris’ authority to speak on creationism should be under suspect given the field of his training. He received his Ph.D. in hydraulic engineering, yet proceeded to publish in the disciplines of science and theology/philosophy without recognizing the disciplinary boundaries and limitations of each field of study. Morris’ lack of academic training in theological and philosophical discourse is evident in his approach to evolution/creationism discussions.

Stephen Jay Gould, evolutionary biologist and paleontologist, represents another community that understands evolution eradicates the need for any kind of God or religion. In his book *Full House: The Spread of Excellence from Plato to Darwin*, Gould deviates greatly from Morris in his approach by seeking to demystify any notion of progress interpreted into the evolutionary process. Gould claims that evolution, correctly understood in its plain meaning, is “profoundly antithetical to some of the deepest social beliefs and psychological discomforts of Western life –

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 3.

and that popular culture has therefore been unwilling to bite this fourth Freudian bullet” which seeks to ultimately dethrone human arrogance.⁹

Gould exemplifies false dichotomization by claiming that:

“only two options seem logically available in our attempted denial [of evolution]. We might, first of all, continue to espouse biblical literalism and insist that the earth is but a few thousand years old, with humans created by God just a few days after the inception of planetary time. But such mythology is not an option for thinking people who must respect the factuality of both time’s immensity and evolution’s veracity.”¹⁰

Furthermore, social and cultural biases, psychological preferences, and mental limitations are, according to Gould, nothing more than smoke and mirrors which cloud our vision and darken the glass from knowing nature which can be objectively known.¹¹ These qualities are minimized to social factors which Gould disputes may not be received as truths. By inferring that nature (which may be objectively known), the natural world as the end which we seek to ultimately understand, is only hindered by obstacles of the metaphysical disciplines, Gould implies a hierarchy of disciplines with science (investigating observable and empirical aspects of reality) as inherently superior. Gould challenges his readers to see beyond biased descriptions of evolution which pacifies the human fear of irrelevance and unimportance, hence the proposed

⁹ Stephen Jay Gould, *Full House: The Spread of Excellence from Plato to Darwin* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 19, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.seu.idm.oclc.org/lib/seu/reader.action?docID=3301009>.

Gould interprets major scientific revolutions as consistent in dethroning human arrogance. He follows psychologist Sigmund Freud in identifying four notable revolutions, which he numerically names in terms of Freudian bullets and the fourth of which is stated above. Gould does not delve deeper in to the first three Freudian bullets besides addressing Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton contributed to the historic and sequential dethronement of the human ego.

Ibid., 17.

¹⁰ Gould, *Full House: The Spread of Excellence from Plato to Darwin*, 19.

¹¹ Ibid., 8.

motive for why humanity conjures up reasons to affirm humanity's evolutionary significance.¹²

To give Gould some credit for his response, few individuals from Christian circles have offered sound approaches and critiques to the evolution and theology debate, many of which did not surface or gain traction until later in the 20th century/early 21st century (these prominent figures will be addressed in later portions of this paper). Some streams within Christianity hold to a strict tradition of anti-intellectual, and pseudo-scientific approach in understanding evolution, which are subpar in quality and content.

While Gould's understanding of evolution's mechanisms is more accurate than Henry J. Morris' understanding, Gould unnecessarily attaches philosophical claims with his scientific findings and evidence. In doing so, he passively blurs the boundaries between disciplines of empirical sciences and that of philosophy and theology.

Moving beyond the creationism and the evolution debate seeks to understand how the theory of evolution can coexist with belief in God. Evolution does not need to be godless even if creation was not a literal six-day event.¹³ The given perspectival examples above clearly demonstrate the dichotomization of the disciplines into mutually exclusive binaries, leaving no room for interdisciplinary discourse and communication.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Denis O. Lamoureux, "Evolutionary Creation: A Christian Approach to Evolution," 2, accessed December 6, 2016, <http://site.ebrary.com.seu.idm.oclc.org/lib/seuniversity/reader.action?ppg=12&docID=10907228&tm=1480995123543>.

Denis O. Lamoureux identifies the categorization of Christianity versus evolution as a dichotomy that has constructed an endless war between science and the Christian faith.¹⁴ He proposes that creation and evolution have been falsely dichotomized into either/or and black-or-white categories which invalidate the wide spectrum of positions in between. Lamoureux approaches the discussion by outlining different kinds of concordism (theological, historical, and scientific), but I will begin my approach from understanding the interaction between the disciplines of the empirical science and theology, and inevitably invokes all three concordisms Lamoureux investigates.¹⁵

Arthur Peacocke, John Polkinghorne, and Ian Barbour approach the contentious divide by nuancing overlooked epistemological methods employed in this historical discourse, and proposing alternative and appropriate methods of addressing science and theology. This paper largely follows in their footsteps by seeking to define the proper ways in which science and theology should interact while retaining the integrity of each respective discipline.

Thesis Statement

The purpose of this paper is to provide a framework through relational theology for understanding the randomness evident in genetic variation which is an element within evolution. I propose that evolution can be incorporated into a theology

¹⁴ Ibid., 1.

¹⁵ Lamoureux further develops the conversation by nuancing evolution in terms of teleological or dysteleological as well as different types of concordism which seeks to harmonize the Biblical narrative concerning the natural world with findings in the empirical sciences. The scope of his book transcends beyond the purpose of this paper, but offers critical information regarding the relationship between theology and the empirical sciences. Ibid., 2.

of creation by placing evolution in context of the interaction of love between God and creation when interpreted through a framework of relational theology. Relational theology, as engaging God as primarily self-giving and holistically hospitable (towards God's self in the Trinity and towards creation), provides space for a theological understanding of randomness evident in genetic variation and mutation within the evolutionary process.

This paper seeks to focus on the role of genetic mutations in the evolutionary process, rather than addressing both genetic mutation and natural selection. While the emergence of genetic variations and mutations are random, natural selection is not.¹⁶ The framework of relational theology redefines the nature of power, energy, and God's involvement with creation that sustain the continuing and progressive evolutionary process. The Triune God's kenotic nature and activity, immanently and economically, makes room for evolution as an ongoing open and relational creative dynamic.

Furthermore, rather than simply interacting I propose science and theology can be mutually illuminative and informing when recognizing the two disciplines ask entirely different questions about reality. Conflict between science and theology, in particular evolution and Christian theology, emerge when the boundaries of each discipline are compromised and attempt to speak for the other.

In expounding this presented thesis statement, several critical questions arise:

- How should theology and the empirical sciences engage (or disengage) each other in order to continue in a constructive dialogue?

¹⁶ "Teaching About Evolution and the Nature of Science," 16.

- How does the nature of the Triune God (immanent and economic) affect creation through evolution?
- How can we understand evolution as a creative expression from a loving God?

In order to demonstrate the thesis' development, the purpose of each chapter will be outlined. Chapter 1 outlines Ian Barbour's four methodological approaches to faith and science by offering models that articulate different modes of intersection between theology and evolution. This paper employs Barbour's dialogical method which allows for informative conversation between theology and the empirical sciences by identifying the use of metaphors and analogies in conveying that which is discovered and analyzed in each respective discipline. The boundaries and scope of study of each discipline (theology and the empirical sciences) is demonstrated for the purpose of illustrating how the two disciplines can interact in a mutually illuminative conversation.

Chapter 2 discusses the central theme of kenosis in the nature and activity of the economic and the immanent Trinity (identified as existing in perichoretic harmony). The chapter begins with the advent of Christ's incarnation as a point of entry for acknowledging the Trinity's fully embodied expression, inwardly and outwardly, of kenosis and, therefore, relationality. The Triune God's choice to self-limit enables God to exist in authentic relationship with all that is created. Hence, creation is also empowered to exist as a free agent. Ultimately, the kenotic perichoresis of the Trinity carries deeply embedded implications for the nature of creation and its evolutionary development.

Chapter 3 addresses a theology of evolution, specifically the randomness of genetic mutation and variation, through a framework of relational theology which seeks to interpret God's power in terms of God's primary nature of love. God's love sustains creation's existence and simultaneously invites creation to participate in creating by empowering creation to become more of itself through the evolutionary process. Investigation of the proposed thesis statement will be conducted through a literature review as demonstrated through the provided outline.

Definitions

Before delving any further, I will first establish definitions for terms critical to this paper throughout each section. These definitions will ideally prevent misconceptions and miscommunication by clearly nuancing the usage of each term. Literature included in the footnotes may also provide to readers a clearer understanding of concepts and paradigms than what is expounded upon in this paper.

Evolution

The process of evolution helps scientists understand how geographical changes and the vast diversity of life has come to be what we observe today. In the mid-19th century naturalist Charles Darwin was one of the first individuals to identify and publish writings about slight differences among organisms in his revolutionary book *On the Origin of Species by Natural Selection*. One of the many phenomena he observed concerned the different species of finches on the Galapagos Islands.¹⁷

¹⁷ Ibid., 19.

Though these finches appeared similar, they differed in their beak size and structure and Darwin inquired about the strikingly similar yet distinct features. Later, researchers Peter and Rosemary Grant of Princeton University would discover the role of drought in driving the speciation of finches.¹⁸ Droughts caused nuts and seeds to develop hardy outer shells, thus finches with stronger beaks were naturally selected.

Darwin proposed there was a difference between surviving offspring, and offspring which did not. Heritable characteristics which better enabled organisms to survive and reproduce are likely to be passed on to future offspring. Over generations, individuals best suited to survive and reproduce in certain environments are selected through a process called natural selection.¹⁹ However, he remained unsure about how favorable and unfavorable heritable characteristics emerged in offspring.

Around the same time Gregor Mendel, Augustinian friar and scientist, had been crossbreeding pea plants and observing the role of genetics in passing on inheritable traits.²⁰ When crossbreeding pea plants in order to observe probabilities of traits emerging in subsequent generations Mendel identified the influence of discrete units of heredity, what would come to be known as genes.²¹ Then in the 1930s, a group of biologists discovered that phenotypic changes, changes in an organism's physiological construct, were due to genetic variations and/or mutations.²² The emergence of genetic variations and mutations seems to be a random and non-

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 13.

²⁰ Ibid., 14.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 14.

determinable process. External environments are not able to pressure favorable genetic changes in offspring.²³

With the discovery of DNA in 1953, scientists could identify that genetic variations and mutations occurred DNA's sequence of chemical bases. The sequence of chemical bases in DNA "determine which proteins are synthesized in which cells."²⁴ Changes in the arrangement of nucleic acids yield phenotypic changes in the offspring which may or may not contribute to its survival and reproductive capabilities. Hence, "the modification of DNA through occasional changes or rearrangements in the base sequences underlies the emergence of new traits, and thus new species, in evolution."²⁵

In short, beneficial mutations yield phenotypic changes which enable an offspring to survive and reproduce more effectively than other offspring of the same species, or undergo the process of natural selection. This effectively surviving and reproducing offspring is more likely to pass on its genes into future generations.²⁶ If there are enough offspring with this beneficial heritable characteristic, they may become a separate population and over time develop a separate gene pool no longer able to breed with the former population. This is an overview of the process of speciation or evolution through genetic variations and natural selection. In order to engage in cross-disciplinary discussion, I will need to define a number of theological concepts as well in the following sections.

²³ Ibid., 16.

²⁴ Ibid., 15.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 14.

Economic and Immanent Trinity

In particular, a Trinitarian theology is critical to this paper as it occupies an essential space within the theological aspect of the argument. To gain a better understanding of the Trinity, theologians have identified the interconnected nature of the Trinity's inner life among all three Beings (God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and Holy Spirit), and outer life as the Trinity interacts with the created other (humanity and creation).²⁷ Pentecostal theologian Steven Studebaker in *From Pentecost to the Triune God* articulates the interaction between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity through a Pentecostal/charismatic tradition for the contribution of a formal Pentecostal theology and introduction of Pentecostal theology into academic circles.²⁸ Studebaker begins his discussion with the role of Spirit baptism (a function of the economic Trinity) as a point of entry into the Trinity's inner life. This paper will draw on Studebaker's proposed theological Trinitarian principle "economic activity arises from immanent identity" as a method of describing the relationship between the economic and immanent Trinity.²⁹ Karl Rahner, in *The Trinity*, more explicitly states "the 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity."³⁰

²⁷ Joseph A Bracken, "Trinity: Economic and Immanent," *Horizons* 25, no. 1 (1998): 32, 33.

²⁸ Steven M. Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 2.

This paper does not seek to justify the legitimacy of Pentecostal theology occupying space within ecumenical discussions. Theologians including (but not limited to) Walter J. Hollenwager, Frank Macchia, Keith Warrington, and Frederick D. Bruner have already undertaken the effort of presenting the validity and vibrancy of a formalized Pentecostal theology.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁰ Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Danceel (Great Britain: Herder & Herder, 1970), 22, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/seuniversity/reader.action?ppg=1&docID=10250734&tm=1481320922844>.

Joseph A. Bracken presents a case for the mutual necessity of both the economic and immanent Trinity in his paper “Trinity: Economic *and* Immanent” through a historical analysis of Trinitarian theology, analysis of epistemological models in understanding the Trinity, and proposing a Trinitarian model upholding the necessity of both aspects of the Trinity.³¹ He criticizes theologians who ignore the importance of the Trinity’s inner life, and exclusively prioritize the economic Trinity as the only relevant aspect of the Trinity as it relates to Christianity. While the scope of Bracken’s argument exceeds the purpose of this paper, his definitions of the economic and immanent Trinity will be engaged.

The economic Trinity concerns the methods of God’s outward creativity and self-expression to humanity and creation, and provides the point of entry into understanding the Trinity’s inner life.³² God expresses God’s self through Christ and Holy Spirit.³³

Rahner gives the examples of salvation, and the incarnation of Jesus (theological implications of Christ’s incarnation will be addressed later in the paper) as functions of the economic Trinity, while Studebaker offers that of Spirit baptism.

Rahner then makes the connection that the immanent Trinity is “the necessary condition of the possibility of God’s free-self communication.”³⁴ Since the immanent Trinity only concerns the inner life among God the Father, God the Son, and God as Holy Spirit this aspect leans towards a theoretical and abstract endeavor. Studebaker adds that the immanent Trinity is more than the economic Trinity because while the

³¹ Bracken, “Trinity.”

³² Rahner, *The Trinity*, 82.

³³ *Ibid.*, 84.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 102.

economic Trinity draws from the immanent Trinity, it is not exhaustive of the immanent Trinity's qualities.³⁵

Bracken describes the relationship between the immanent and economic Trinity as a balance between the Trinity's metaphysics of being and the Trinity's metaphysics of becoming "as the appropriate conceptuality for an understanding both of the doctrine of the Trinity and of the God-world relationship."³⁶ Again, theological reflection necessarily begins with the economic Trinity since humanity has no access to the Trinity's inner life.

Perichoresis

To continue nuancing the discussion on Trinitarian theology, the immanent Trinity's inner life will be described in terms of perichoretic harmony. The immanent Trinity as existing in perichoresis, *peri* – around and *choreo* – 'to go' or 'to contain,' may serve as the best model depicting the Trinity's equal and interpenetrating relationship with each other.³⁷ Perichoresis is the mutual openness and involvement within and between Persons of the Trinity so they exist as distinct from each other, yet equal.³⁸ It affirms God's existence as divine relationality.³⁹ More specifically, this metaphor describes the Trinity as existing in an ongoing circling dance where

³⁵ Stuebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology*, 4.

³⁶ Bracken, "Trinity," 8.

³⁷ Scriptural references include, but are not limited to John 14:11; 10:30,38; and 17:21.

Karen Kilby, "Perichoresis," ed. Ian A. McFarland and David A. S. Ferguson, *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), <https://seu.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/cupdct/perichoresis/0?institutionId=1038>.

³⁸ David T. Williams, "Kenosis and the Nature of the Persons in the Trinity," *Koers: Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 69, no. 4 (2004): 636.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

each Being can be identified from the other, yet necessarily exists within the Others. Perichoresis describes how the inner Trinity relates to each other while kenosis relates how the Trinity interacts with creation.

Other metaphors convey Beings in the Trinity as static and disparate entities which lean into tritheistic models of the Trinity. These images lack appreciation for the coherence and ground of commonality among the Godhead. Contrastingly, metaphors may also lean into a monotheistic understanding of God which ignore the vibrancy and difference of Beings in the Trinity. Though the term was originally coined to describe Christ's dual nature of humanity and divinity, in the 8th century it was picked up into Trinitarian theological discussions.⁴⁰

Kenosis

Jürgen Moltmann is arguably one of the most prolific contemporary theologians exploring the kenotic nature of the Trinity. He expressed that his experiences as a prisoner of war, and living in a war torn European landscape in the mid-1990s shaped and influenced his theological view of kenosis and its implications (though not exclusively) for creation. Moltmann was challenged to reconcile his experiences in the socio-political climate of Europe with his experiences with a radically loving God.⁴¹ He raises the question of “who is God in the cross of the Christ who is abandoned by God?” in developing the theological concept of kenosis.⁴² Rather than theology stopping short of discovering liberation through the

⁴⁰ Kilby, “Perichoresis.”

⁴¹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1974), 2.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 4.

crucified Christ, Moltmann proposes that the cross is “the beginning of a specifically Christian, and therefore critical and liberating, theology and life.”⁴³

Kenosis challenges the notion of God’s immutability because love is suggested as the only immutable quality of God.⁴⁴ In later sections of this paper, I will describe how Christ’s mutually divine and human nature as a kenotic economic expression of the Trinity sheds light on the kenotic nature of the immanent Trinity, and expound upon the qualities of both interactions. As Jesus did not cease to be God nor lose his divinity in becoming human, kenosis as a voluntary self-limitation does not impose any change in the essential nature of God.⁴⁵ Models of kenosis vary in their interpretation of this theological concept. For example, essential kenosis requires limitation to be a necessary quality of God rather than a voluntary attribute.⁴⁶ This paper engages kenosis in terms of a voluntary expression of God, since discussing the variants of kenosis models may be an extensive undertaking on its own.

God’s voluntary self-limitation makes possible the ability to exist in true relationship with God’s self in the Trinity and with creation through the freedom to love and the freedom to respond. The Triune God’s kenotic interaction with creation enhances relationship. God’s power filtered through love influences creation, and creation influences God as the two exist in an open, and loving relationship. God’s choice in self-limiting respects the freedom of creation’s agency to exist and become.⁴⁷

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Williams, “Kenosis and the Nature of the Persons in the Trinity,” 628.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 630.

⁴⁶ Thomas Jay Oord, *The Uncontrolling Love of God: An Open and Relational Account of Providence* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015), 161.

⁴⁷ Williams, “Kenosis and the Nature of the Persons in the Trinity,” 636.

*Panentheism*⁴⁸

Towards chapter 2 and chapter 3, panentheism will contribute to a theological and ontological understanding of evolution as an interaction between God and creation. Panentheism (*pan en theos* in Greek) as defined by Philip Clayton is “the view that the world is contained within God, although God is also more than the world as a whole.”⁴⁹ Although various models of panentheism exist, they do overlap in sharing similar features. For instance, God is immanently existing with and within creation. This model places all of creation within God, though creation does not become God nor does God lose divinity (they relate in mutual coinherence).⁵⁰ It serves as the middle ground between the extremes of radical transcendence, God is wholly distant and disjointed from creation, and pantheism, which blurs the line between Creator and creation.⁵¹ While God exists throughout creation, creation’s expression does not exhaust the presence and nature of God. This paper additionally affirms that God’s panentheistic interaction with creation allows for the “divinely endowed potentialities of the universe” to unfold and become actualized over time.⁵²

While this paper engages panentheism as an ontological reality, it will not interpret the cosmos as God’s body, as if God functions as the mind or soul of

⁴⁸ While this paper strictly addresses panentheism in terms of God’s interaction with creation, panentheism may also serve as a foundation or point of entry in addressing issues and/or concepts concerning theodicy, and human suffering.

⁴⁹ Philip Clayton, “Panentheist Internalism: Living within the Presence of the Trinitarian God,” *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 40, no. 3 (2001): 208.

⁵⁰ Michael W. Brierley, “Panentheism, Science, and Religion,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*, ed. Philip Clayton (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 640.

⁵¹ John Polkinghorne, *Faith, Science, and Understanding* (New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 2000), 90.

⁵² A. R. (Arthur Robert) Peacocke, “Biology and a Theology of Evolution,” *Zygon* 34, no. 4 (December 1999): 704.

creation. This analogy might also suggest God emerges from the cosmos as some scientific models would claim a person emerges from the body.⁵³

Michael W. Brierley terms the created universe existing as in God eschatological panentheism (or soteriological panentheism) for “all is not yet ‘in God,’” but all is moving towards total inclusion in God as God exists within creation. Paul Tillich advances discourse on panentheism by couching panentheistic language in referring to God as the Ground of Being rather than *a* being.⁵⁴ God, with the Power of Being, grants *being* to creation for creation to exist and be.⁵⁵

Critical Realism

Critical realism assists in framing how theology and the empirical sciences should be addressed and considered as this philosophical concept recognizes the extent to which the disciplines can investigate and convey information about reality. Critical realism falls under Ian Barbour’s dialogical method of engagement which will be further expounded in later sections of this paper.

Arthur Peacocke claims critical realism “recognizes it is the aim of science to *depict reality as best as it may*,” yet acknowledges more may exist than what science can convey.⁵⁶ Science can be confident in that which scientific theories describe while knowing theories and models as analogies may be revised in order to better convey reality.⁵⁷ The limitations of scientific disciplines reveal the space in academia

⁵³ Brierley, “Panentheism, Science, and Religion,” 638.

The Oxford Handbook of Science and Religion introduces several other panentheistic analogies.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Brierley, “Panentheism, Science, and Religion,” 640.

⁵⁶ A. R. (Arthur Robert) Peacocke, “Science and God the Creator,” *Zygon* 28, no. 4 (December 1993): 471.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

for theology and philosophy, and vice versa. Critical realism recognizes that reality cannot be known objectively, but nevertheless attempts to discover reality as it exists while critically assessing limitations of knowing. Critical realism regards “theological concepts and models... as partial and inadequate, but necessary and, indeed, the only way to referring to the reality that is named ‘God.’”⁵⁸ As science relies on theories and models to function as analogies, theology engages in metaphors which function as the discipline’s analogies.⁵⁹ For instance, while one can talk about her religious experience, the full extent of the religious experience transcend linguistic capabilities and function. While neither science nor theology or philosophy can directly convey or investigate reality in totality, both are necessary for engaging in constructive dialogue.

Metaphysical Naturalism

Metaphysical naturalism is the worldview to which some evolutionary biologists (e.g. Stephen Jay Gould) ascribe and some conservative Christians immediately and uncritically associate with evolution, thus contributing to the misinformed conflict between theology and evolution. Understanding the limitation of metaphysical naturalism as a worldview independent of the findings from the scientific method helps untangle the misunderstanding between evolution and theology.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 472.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Metaphysical naturalism, or ontological naturalism, is a belief or worldview confining reality to simply only that which is observable and quantifiable.⁶⁰ Physical entities constitute the entirety of all that exists. Metaphysical naturalism reductionistically relies on causal influences as explanations for phenomena.⁶¹ Explanations without physical contingencies are immediately discredited since they are immeasurable and incalculable. In short, physical effects can only have physical causes. Metaphysical naturalism philosophically limits the possibility of existence to that which concretely and materially exists.⁶²

Disciplines of empirical science rely on this mode of thinking to properly assess and quantify observable events. For instance, Newtonian physics and the law of the conservation of energy reflect this philosophical model.⁶³ The whole is nothing more than the sum of the parts. To provide one point of contrast, theories of emergence ascribe the whole to be greater than the sum of the parts and thus make room for the existence of immaterial qualities to exert influences on physically observable events. Metaphysical naturalism opposes theories of emergence in philosophy and science. These offered definitions serve to better nuance common and critical terms to this paper's development.

⁶⁰ David Papineau, "Naturalism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2016 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2016), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/naturalism/>.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

I. The Relationship of Theology and the Empirical Sciences

“Far from being a threat, the scientific vista for the twenty-first century constitutes a stimulus to theology to become more encompassing and inclusive.”⁶⁴

Theologians, scientists, and philosophers alike endeavor to present viable ways theology and the empirical sciences should (or should not) engage each other. Of particular importance to this paper, Ian Barbour’s four methods of engagement (conflict, independence, dialogue and integration) are expounded upon, with dialogue as ultimately the chosen method of engagement for further developing upon the thesis statement. The nature of the disciplines of theology and the empirical sciences are described in order to properly appreciate their own unique functions, and retain the integrity of their disciplines while engaging each other.

Before one can discuss various methods of engagement between theology and the empirical sciences, one must understand the nature and function of these disciplines on their own. Empirical sciences are confined to strictly observing the empirical world and that which is quantifiable.⁶⁵ It is the empirical study of nature’s order through a prescribed methodology known as the scientific method.⁶⁶

Theology as a discipline dealing with metaphysics⁶⁷ offers meaning and significance to what is observed, and measured.⁶⁸ It engages in critical reflection of

⁶⁴ Peacocke, “Biology and a Theology of Evolution,” 697.

⁶⁵ Terrence Ehrman, CSC, “Evolution and Providence: Discovering Creation as *Carmen Dei*,” *Theology and Science* 13, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 273, doi:10.1080/14746700.2015.1053758.

⁶⁶ Ian Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science: The Gifford Lectures, Volume One*, vol. 1 (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990), 1.

⁶⁷ While employing the term “metaphysics,” I am not affirming a bifurcation of reality between that which is strictly physical and metaphysical. I draw on the term of metaphysics to describe the study which “is concerned with ourselves and reality, and with the most fundamental questions regarding existence.”

Peacocke, “Science and God the Creator,” 469.

the life and thought of a religious community, as well as qualitatively analyzing characteristics of reality.⁶⁹

As previously stated, Ian Barbour's four methods of interaction will be summarized here. Dialogue will be the prescribed method of interaction in further developing the thesis statement.

Conflict: Conflict as a mode of approach between the empirical sciences and theology claims that empirical sciences challenge the notion of God. Not only are these two disciplines incompatible, but also data rendered by the empirical sciences (including evolution) challenges biblical literalism.⁷⁰ This view assumes a fundamentalist interpretation of God through Scriptures, which is believed to be the inerrant word of God. Fundamentalists for example would hold to the 'literal' interpretation of the universe's creation in six days based on the account of creation in Genesis, thus tossing aside the possibility for evolution.⁷¹ God as the omnipotent and omniscient orchestrator of reality seems to challenge the unpredictable changes within evolution.

Perceived conflicts between theology and the empirical sciences are partially due to overstepping the boundaries between these disciplines. Theology and the empirical sciences are not inherently antagonistic, but rather theology and scientism, which is a philosophical position stating that all that is real can be deduced by using

⁶⁹ Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science: The Gifford Lectures, Volume One*, 1:1.

⁷⁰ Jayna L Ditty and Philip A Rolnick, "Keeping Faith: Evolution and Theology," *Logos* 13, no. 2 (2010): 139.

⁷¹ Gregory R Peterson, "Whose Evolution? Which Theology?" *Zygon* 35, no. 2 (June 2000): 223.

the scientific method.⁷² When one draws on the empirical sciences in order to impose meaning on measurable mechanism, then one beings engaging theology (and/or philosophy) and transcends the boundaries of the empirical sciences.⁷³

Independence: The independence method asserts that issues addressed by each discipline do not directly affect the other, and should not interact with each other.⁷⁴ Under this method, theologians assert the Biblical text neither offers anything informative, nor contains anything to communicate to the empirical sciences because the disciplines are fundamentally different. Joseph A. Bracken suggests both scientists and theologians remain the ‘independence camp’ because neither may desire to spend time and effort investigating the divide, nor see the value in the communication of these disciplines.⁷⁵

Essentially, “biologists can have their evolution and theologians can have their Bible.”⁷⁶

Theologians who hold an independent view of theology would not consult other disciplines in order to better understand God. Some will acknowledge scripture as the central and main medium through which humanity can receive God’s revelation.⁷⁷ The empirical sciences cannot speak to the transformative power of Jesus in a person’s life, but neither do they diminish it.

⁷² Ehrman, CSC, “Evolution and Providence,” 273.

⁷³ Ibid., 280.

⁷⁴ Ditty and Rolnick, “Keeping Faith,” 144.

⁷⁵ Joseph A. Bracken SJ., “Contributions From Philosophical Theology and Metaphysics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 347.

⁷⁶ Ditty and Rolnick, “Keeping Faith,” 144.

⁷⁷ Ian G. Barbour, *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, rev. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), 84.

Dialogue: The dialogical method recognizes similarities in approaching the empirical sciences and theology. Neither science nor religion are *as* objective or subjective as previously thought. Both require a measure of interpretation through creative imagination, analogies, and models.⁷⁸ In the empirical sciences, data is interpreted and explained through theories. In religion and theology, religious experiences are interpreted and described through religious beliefs.⁷⁹ That which is observed and experienced may neither be literally conveyed nor entirely encapsulated through language. As data in the empirical sciences is not objectively interpreted, neither do religious experiences communicate one dimension ‘truths.’ Ian Barbour clearly expresses that “all data are theory-laden. There is simply no theory-free observational language.”⁸⁰

Integration: Lastly, the integrative method involves greater overlap and involvement than any of the previous models. An example of integration is natural theology, which claims God’s existence can be derived from nature.⁸¹ An argument for intelligent design, for instance, will look to the complexity of creation and arrive at the conclusion of a Grand Designer. Ian Barbour identifies three prominent theological modes within the integration model which shall be briefly stated here. First, natural theology proposes God’s existence can be “inferred from evidences of design in

⁷⁸ Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science: The Gifford Lectures, Volume One*, 1:20.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:31.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1:33.

⁸¹ Barbour, *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, 98.

nature” which are further elucidated through science.⁸² A theology of nature is similar to natural theology by claiming scientific theories can inform theological discourse and development of doctrine.⁸³ Lastly, a systematic synthesis seeks to converge the realities which science and religion address. This method presents an inclusive metaphysics, which Barbour likens to process philosophy.⁸⁴ The model of pantheism describing creation as God’s body, and God existing as the mind or soul of creation, would fall in this method of engagement.

Expounding Upon the Dialogical Method

The dialogical method deconstructs the notion of objectivism in science, and recognizes both are, to an extent, subjective and require a degree of interpretation of perception through metaphors and models. The metaphors, analogies, and models which describe scientific phenomenon may not be so rigidly concrete and inflexible since they do not completely relate how nature functions. In fact, describing reality through descriptive symbols and imagery invites future reformulations of the metaphors and models in order to better convey the nature of reality. Ultimately, this method proposes that the empirical sciences can communicate pertinent information to how theology is conducted, and theology can inform how the empirical sciences are interpreted.

In the midst of interdisciplinary dialogue, the boundaries of the empirical sciences and theology should be mutually respected in order to be mutually

⁸² Ibid., 98.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

illuminative.⁸⁵ Arthur Peacocke, while recognizing the empirical sciences are concerned with “finite, observable reality”⁸⁶ and theology with “infinite, unfathomable reality,”⁸⁷ proposes both disciplines address a valid aspect of reality. For instance, Peacocke gives the example that while scientists may agree on methodology and observable findings about the natural world, they may starkly disagree on its theological and philosophical significance.⁸⁸ Gregory R. Peterson makes the claim that scientific theories on their own are theologically ambiguous.⁸⁹ Theologians then assume the task of teasing out theological implications from natural phenomenon. While the disciplines address different aspects of the same reality, they should engage in dialogue to properly and holistically describe and investigate the nature of reality.

Nancy Murphy in her paper “Is Altruism Good? Evolution, Ethics, and the Hunger for Theology” identifies the distinct functions and inherent limitations of theology/philosophy and the empirical sciences, biology in particular here. A common [mis]understanding of social Darwinism, a social ethic where the most economically fit have better chances of survival, is that it was a direct interpretation of the struggle-driven evolutionary process.⁹⁰ However, socialism and liberalism also drew on evolution as ‘scientific’ foundations for their socio-philosophical

⁸⁵ Gloria L Schaab, “Evolutionary Theory and Theology: A Mutually Illuminative Dialogue,” *Zygon* 43, no. 1 (March 2008): 12.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Peacocke, “Science and God the Creator,” 469.

⁸⁹ Peterson, “Whose Evolution?,” 223.

⁹⁰ Nancey Murphy, “Is Altruism Good? Evolution, Ethics, and the Hunger for Theology,” *Zygon: Journal of Religion & Science* 41, no. 4 (December 2006): 986, doi:10.1111/j.1467-9744.2006.00793.x.

frameworks. While proponents of social Darwinism, socialism, and liberalism may agree how evolution functions, they differ to an extent on its implications.

James Van Slyke in “Cognitive and Evolutionary Factors in the Emergence of Human Altruism” also discusses the limitations of biology as a discipline with regards to the role of genuine altruism in evolution. Selfishness and self-seeking tendencies are common interpretations of evolution which leave no room for the validity of genuine altruism as motivational factors.⁹¹ However, Van Slyke argues that human altruism is an emergent factor which cannot be reduced down to any strict evolutionary explanation.⁹² The emergence of altruism can be accounted for through multi-level approach of the hierarchy of sciences and a theological framework of kenosis.⁹³

A mutually illuminative dialogue means that while sciences investigate and observe the means throughout which creation operates, theology seeks to procure its significance in light of a Creator.⁹⁴ Peacocke couches this mutually illuminative dialogue within the philosophical framework of critical realism, in which practicing scientists recognize the limitation of empirical sciences and its methods in describing reality.⁹⁵ Similarly, critical realism recognizes the limitation of models and analogies within theology in adequately referring to God’s nature, and expression in creation.⁹⁶ Within critical realism scientific theories, theological claims, and

⁹¹ James A Van Slyke, “Cognitive and Evolutionary Factors in the Emergence of Human Altruism,” *Zygon* 45, no. 4 (December 2010): 841.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 842.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 856.

⁹⁴ Schaab, “Evolutionary Theory and Theology,” 12.

⁹⁵ Peacocke, “Science and God the Creator,” 471.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 472.

metaphors/symbols/analogies are recognized as carrying vital, though ultimately confined roles in communicating the nature of reality.

Peacocke recognizes that while the empirical sciences may not impose meaning, theology may not adequately disqualify the scientific method and its findings. Theology seeks to understand and interpret the nature of *why* something is, while the empirical sciences investigate the *means* of *how* something is. Experts in theology and the empirical sciences must first respect each other, in order to properly and fruitfully communicate.

Summary

Ian Barbour's four methodological approaches to faith and science offers models for articulating the intersection between theology and evolution. The current discourse between evolution and Christian theology within conservative Christianity largely remains in the conflict model. A fundamentalist reading of Scripture is believed to invalidate scientific theories and discoveries, and would rather ascribe to a six-day process of creation than crediting evolution. The independent model, while not accusing either discipline to diminish the validity of the other, puts further discussion at a stalemate by assuming one discipline cannot inform the other.

Christian theology is challenged to move beyond the "conflict" of theology and evolution by first recognizing the boundaries of each respective discipline. Ian Barbour's proposed method of dialogue allows for conversation between theology and the empirical sciences in identifying the use of metaphors and analogies in conveying that which is discovered, and analyzed. Metaphors and analogies

employed in each discipline allow for revisions in order to more accurately portray that which is further investigated and discovered. In assessing how theology and the empirical sciences can adequately advance in conversation, the next chapter can begin addressing the theological component of the argument towards proposing a theological understanding through a framework of relational theology concerning the random genetic mutation and variation within the process of evolution.

II. Kenosis and Perichoresis in a Framework of Relational Theology

“What the doctrine of the Trinity is telling us is that God is fundamentally a relational being... The Father, Son and Spirit live in conversation, in a fellowship of free-flowing togetherness, and sharing and delight – a great dance of shared life that is full and rich and passionate, creative and good and beautiful.” – Baxter Kruger

The internal nature of the immanent Trinity as expressed in the economic Trinity is vital in conveying a theology of evolution. I propose a consistency in nature between the immanent Trinity and God’s expression displayed through the economic Trinity. I will endeavor to present the kenotic and perichoretic nature of the immanent Trinity between the Persons of the Triune God in order to demonstrate in the subsequent chapter the relationship between theology and evolution in terms of the Trinity’s economic expression.

I will quickly offer brief definitions of terms employed in this chapter which were more defined and nuanced in the introduction. The immanent Trinity refers to the Triune God’s inner life, or how members of the Trinity relate to each other within themselves.⁹⁷ The economic Trinity is defined as how the Triune God relates and interacts with humanity and creation.⁹⁸ Perichoresis is the mutual openness and involvement within and between Persons of the Trinity so they exist as distinct from each other, yet equal.⁹⁹ I will engage kenosis as explained by David T. Williams: kenosis is God’s voluntary self-limitation in order to allow the genuine freedom of choice of the other, whether it is God, humanity, and/or creation. While God self-limits, God also gives of God’s self to the other whether that is creation or God within the Trinity.

⁹⁷ Bracken, “Trinity,” 9.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Williams, “Kenosis and the Nature of the Persons in the Trinity,” 634.

As Christianity expanded into the West, the image of Caesar took priority over the shepherd of Nazareth in imaging God.¹⁰⁰ This shift in imaging God colored ensuing theological developments in the West, such as overtones of absolutism in defining the nature of God.¹⁰¹ God's omnipotence implies God's deterministic control over all that happens and transpires. Determinism, or coercion, would remove creation's freedom of and ability to respond.¹⁰² Immutability claims God does not change, and is not affected by creation. This characteristic ascribed to God was intended to reinforce the nature of his Deity, and power over creation; these qualities ascribed to God are present within Medieval and Reformation thought.¹⁰³ Christian fundamentalists who ascribe to a theological framework of/similar to classical theism are ones likely to experience tension as they may also encounter sociological and scientific theories, including evolution, which contradict a scientific and historical reading of the Bible. Aspects of kenosis in this paper challenge classical theism's notions of God as omnipotent, and immutable.

However, prior to the Westernization of Christianity the notion of God's self-limitation was not alien, or entirely foreign. Impressions of God's self-limitation may even find roots as far back in Jewish Kabbalistic traditions through the Shekinah.¹⁰⁴

God, who was understood as infinite, expressed God's self in the limited temple

¹⁰⁰ John F. Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 48.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁰² Joshua D. Reichard, "Relational Empowerment: A Process-Relational Theology of the Spirit-Filled Life," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 36, no. 2 (September 2014): ?, doi:10.1163/15700747-03602004.

¹⁰³ Ian Barbour, "God's Power: A Process View," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. John Polkinghorne (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdsman, 2001), 1.

¹⁰⁴ Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 87.

where God dwelt with Israel. This theme of self-limitation resurfaces in the notion of kenosis.

Some theological overlaps exist between the Eastern Orthodox tradition and relational theology. The Eastern Orthodox tradition similarly understands the Triune God to be essentially communal and social.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, God's primary nature as Love presupposes the other since Love cannot exist in isolation.¹⁰⁶ God, who is Love, is intrinsically and extrinsically relational since the Triune God is social, and economically manifests this sociality. God exists as, but is not limited to, ontological relationality. In the next chapter, I will describe how relationship within the Trinity becomes the model for God's relationship with and within creation.

Within the Trinity's unity is a diverse coexisting community, rather than uniformity, among the distinct members of the Trinity. Though the members of the Trinity are distinct from each other, they remain to be of the same essence, or *homoousios* as explained in the Council of Nicea and Council of Constantinople, and therefore equal to each other.¹⁰⁷ Each Being of the Trinity carries distinct, yet interconnected, roles. While Christ is equal with the Spirit and the Father, Christ neither is nor functions as the Father and the Spirit are or function. Similarly, Christ the Son cannot exist solely without agency from the Father and the Spirit. Bishop Kallistos Ware speaks of the Trinity's perichoretic unity as a "circle of love within God."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Bishop Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, New rev. ed (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996), 27.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

Perichoresis can be described as the mutual interpenetration, and mutual involvement within and between all members of the Trinity.¹⁰⁹ As existing in relationality, the Trinity is intrinsically open and vulnerable to each other. Vulnerability includes the ability to be affected by the Other, and indicates a degree of passibility which starkly contradicts tenets of classical theism. God the Father makes room within God's self for God the Spirit, and God the Son. Similarly, the Spirit makes room within for the Son and the Father, and so on with the Son. In this mutual and voluntary self-limitation, members of the Trinity submit to one another in humility to allow for the genuine and authentic expression of the Others. Love and relationship require all participants to respond freely.¹¹⁰ Love intentionally seeks to decenter self-interest. Beings in the Trinity are inherently hospitable to the Others in allowing Them to harmoniously and mutually coexist within.¹¹¹ The Trinity exists in an ongoing eternal divine dance with and within each other. Moltmann relates this phenomenon as God withdrawing within God's self from God for God.¹¹² God creates room within God's self for God to exist, and be. For Moltmann, the withdrawing of God in order to create is as kenotic event in where God self-limits for the freedom of others.¹¹³

Kenosis may enter theological discussions from Philippians 2:7 within what is known to be the kenosis hymn (Philippians 2:5-11), or hymn to Christ.¹¹⁴ Though this

¹⁰⁹ Williams, "Kenosis and the Nature of the Persons in the Trinity," 636.

¹¹⁰ John Polkinghorne, "Kenotic Creation and Divine Action," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 128.

¹¹¹ Daniela C. Augustine, *Pentecost, Hospitality, and Transfiguration* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2012), 59.

¹¹² Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 87.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹¹⁴ Williams, "Kenosis and the Nature of the Persons in the Trinity," 624.

passage addresses Christ's voluntary self-emptying and self-limitation, it sheds light on the nature of the immanent Trinity since Christ is an equal participant in the Triune God.¹¹⁵ The incarnation of God through Jesus, as well as Jesus' suffering and crucifixion reveals the kenotic nature of the Trinity.¹¹⁶ As revealed in Jesus, God accepted limitations of the created order, including suffering and death, yet did not cease to be God.¹¹⁷ In Jesus willingly acquiescing his power, He still served and gave of himself to others.¹¹⁸ Jesus, God incarnate, submitted unto death and embodied this self-emptying as conveyed in Philippians 2:7.¹¹⁹ Earthly structures of authority as existing in hierarchies (and unequal power differentials), whose authority and power are associated with control and coercion, may be challenged by Jesus, who maintains the identity of God while relenting his power in becoming fully human. However, relational theology invites people to recognize that perhaps God's divinity and nature of Being is not fundamentally rooted in exercising infinite and exhaustive power and knowledge. As a Grand Master, relational theology challenges people to look to the surprisingly moving power of vulnerability, humility, and other-preferring as exemplified in the power of Christ's self-giving nature beginning before the incarnation and to the point of the cross.

Jesus' kenotic, voluntary self-giving nature reveals this same characteristic of the Trinity. Christ gave of himself to the point of death; the Father and the Spirit continued this giving to creation through the Spirit as another Paraclete (John 14:16).

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 625.

¹¹⁶ Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*, 46.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 51.

¹¹⁸ Oord, *The Uncontrolling Love of God: An Open and Relational Account of Providence*, 154.

¹¹⁹ Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*, 48.

John 3:16 discloses how God the Father gave the Son to the world so that world might be reconciled to God through God.¹²⁰ As Christ loved through giving without reserve and calculation, so does the Trinity, existing as Love itself, give to each other. The divine communion who exists in perfect relationship is humble, mutually self-giving, and other-preferring.

Self-limitation in love necessarily coincides with self-giving. In addressing a theology of God's love, Moltman in *The Trinity and The Kingdom* describes how "love is the self-communication of the good," and this 'good' is God.¹²¹ God empowering creation as seen through the model of panentheism is an economic expression of God's self-giving. Yet in God's self-giving God never ceases to be God's self nor is exhausted in this self-giving, suggesting kenosis is immanent as well as economic. In God empowering creation to exist, God does not coerce creation to actively respond, but rather willingly participate in this divine invitation to life and creativity to freely develop, progress, evolve, or even de-evolve accordingly.

Summary

The central theme of kenosis identified within Christology is an economic expression and dimension of kenosis in the immanent Trinity.¹²² As Jesus experienced suffering and crucifixion, so does the Triune God suffer – a quality that is part and parcel of kenosis. Jesus' choice to self-limit for the purpose of entering in

¹²⁰ David N. Power, *Love Without Calculation* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, n.d.), 134.

¹²¹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and The Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl, 1st ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 57.

¹²² Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*, 48.

authentic relationship with humanity reflects on the Trinity's kenosis for the purpose of existing in relationship with creation. By limiting God's self, creation is empowered to be a free agent.¹²³

In terms of perichoresis and kenosis, God's identity can be primarily understood as relational. The Triune God exists in divine relationality. God's relationality therefore impacts God substantively.¹²⁴ A God who is capable of suffering with humanity and creation can be affected by humanity and creation. This responsiveness, inherent to the nature of relationship, between Creator and created requires freedom of choice. The kenotic perichoresis of the Trinity carries deeply embedded implications for the nature of creation and its evolutionary development.

¹²³ Williams, "Kenosis and the Nature of the Persons in the Trinity," 630.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 636.

III. A Theology of Evolution

*“The play of life is not the performance of a pre-determined script, but a self-improvisatory performance by the actors themselves.”*¹²⁵

The kenosis and perichoresis of the immanent Trinity extends to the economic Trinity’s relationship with creation in the process of evolution. This chapter will expand upon theological implications from the framework of relational theology as they concern God’s relationship to creation through the ongoing process of evolution, in particular the emergence of genetic variations through random mutations. Ultimately, I propose a theological understanding of evolution as a dynamic creative process expressing the love and creativity of God as Creator. Evolution can also be understood as an expression of God’s relationship with creation.

Evolution interpreted through the lens of metaphysical naturalism reduces the process and its emerging organism populations as meaningless products from the rolling dice of chance.¹²⁶ Organisms’ genes experience unplanned genetic mutations and variations which may or may not benefit the organisms in reproduction and survival.¹²⁷ Genetic mutations yielding phenotypic advantages generationally passed on to successive populations are strictly accidental. Randomness implies that any sense of purpose to life is diminished. For example, the advent of humanity is received as an unintended result of evolution and, according to Stephen Jay Gould, may not ever occur again if the evolutionary clock reset a million times.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Polkinghorne, “Kenotic Creation and Divine Action,” 94.

¹²⁶ Ehrman, CSC, “Evolution and Providence,” 276.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 277.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 276.

Theologians and evolutionary scientists can agree on the element of randomness within evolution, but diverge when seeking to interpret its significance (or lack of significance). I propose that randomness within genetic variation/mutation in evolution can be affirmed without jumping to the conclusion of metaphysical naturalism.¹²⁹ Associating meaninglessness with randomness and chance is a false dichotomy for one does not assume or necessitate the other. At the same time, to assume the existence of total randomness or total determinism would also be a false dichotomy. Complexities of biological structures are able to continue through a balance of regularity and chance, both of which may coexist with the framework of relational theology.¹³⁰ Randomness and chance within evolution can be affirmed within models of Relational Theology where God is primarily Loving and Relational.

Humanity and creation engages in genuine relationship with God, who is passible and mutable, because they can influence God's passion and choices, though God's primary nature as Love remains steadfast. Love requires the free choice of participants in relationship.¹³¹ Both God and creation freely subject themselves to the choices of the other. True relationship requires mutual vulnerability, and relinquishes control and coercion.¹³² Relationship makes no guarantees, as the outcome of rejection by the other is entirely possible.¹³³ Participants in relationship take risks in

¹²⁹ In later works, I hope to incorporate a theological understanding of natural selection along with genetic variation/mutation to holistically address the entire process of evolution in moving away from a metaphysical naturalistic philosophy into a relational theology immersed with God's love and relationality.

¹³⁰ Oord, *The Uncontrolling Love of God: An Open and Relational Account of Providence*, 151.

¹³¹ Michael Welker, "Romantic Love, Covenantal Love, Kenotic Love," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. John Polkinghorne (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 127.

¹³² Barbour, *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, 251.

¹³³ Oord, *The Uncontrolling Love of God: An Open and Relational Account of Providence*, 134.

responding to the other in vulnerability.¹³⁴ Classical theism which is governed by laws of determinism and immutability leaves no space for risk, and therefore does not engage in a true sense of relationship or responsive love.

God influences the created other through persuasive love which draws humanity and creation to willingly and freely respond (or ignore). Love initiates progress in relationship through motivation, and cooperation.¹³⁵ Rather than seeking to control creation, God invites creation to participate in the process and reality of God's love. God opens up God's self for the possibility of the created other to share in God's loving relationality.

God's internal condition of self-limitation informs God's willful act of creating.¹³⁶ God's primary nature as Loving influences the nature of God's power and agency. As the Triune God makes room within God's self for all Members (Father, Son, and Spirit) to freely exist, so does God make room for creation within God's self. God's kenosis, giving up "divinity to make space for creation and finitude," is evident in Christ's incarnation and death on the cross, and God's relationship with creation.¹³⁷ God's allowance for randomness in genetic variation/mutation through evolution, and Christ's incarnation and crucifixion are examples which demonstrate the consistently kenotic nature of God between God's inner life and economic expression.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 134.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 135.

¹³⁶ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 88.

¹³⁷ Nicola Hoggard Creegan, "A Christian Theology of Evolution and Participation," *Zygon* 42, no. 2 (June 2007): 505.

God engages creation through panentheism, perichoresis, and immanence. Panentheism places all of creation within God, though God is ultimately more and greater than all of creation.¹³⁸ God as Creator dwells in and with creation, yet remains distinct from creation which relatively retains its autonomy and freedom. Panentheism may serve as the middle ground between radical transcendence, and pantheism which blurs the line between Creator and creation.¹³⁹ God's internal perichoretic interrelatedness is reflected in God's interaction with the world.¹⁴⁰ In the midst of God's embed-ness within creation, God is neither exhausted nor entrapped within creation.¹⁴¹ God who remains the Other is able to love creation as both exist as distinct participants and agents who respond to each other in relationship.

Arthur Peacocke offers the beautiful image of a mother pregnant with a child to illustrate the panentheistic nature of God's immanence within and empowerment of creation.¹⁴² Creation is in God simultaneously while God is in creation. God does not become creation (or vice versa) like the mother does not become the child, but the child necessarily exists within the mother. The child cannot exist or grow without the mother's body offering nourishment, as creation cannot exist or be sustained apart from her Mother. Metaphorically, creation exists within the womb of God. Creation stands somewhat autonomously from God, the Creator, yet cannot exist without God's will and Providence.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ Clayton, "Pantheist Internalism: Living within the Presence of the Trinitarian God," 208.

¹³⁹ Polkinghorne, *Faith, Science, and Understanding*, 90.

¹⁴⁰ Creegan, "A Christian Theology of Evolution and Participation," 504.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 505.

¹⁴² Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science: The Gifford Lectures, Volume One*, 1:177.

Philip Clayton also offers this panentheistic analogy in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*, 638.

¹⁴³ Ehrman, CSC, "Evolution and Providence," 281.

The language of theology is inherently saturated with models, symbols, and analogies when referring to God who extends beyond the scope of language and humanity's realm of ontological realm of existence.¹⁴⁴ Language both drives and is driven by theological reflection. Paul D. Avis in *God and the Creative Imagination* argues that people draw from nothing more than their own human experiences to speak analogically of God who is ineffable.¹⁴⁵ Humanity is *not able* to draw on anything more than their own experiences. Avis states that "there is an 'infinite qualitative distinction' [about God] analogy cannot bridge,"¹⁴⁶ though analogies are the only means for humanity to dialogue about God who is eternally transcendent. Analogies and metaphors are by no means limiting God's identity and being. In reference to the aforementioned metaphor, while God may be conceived as mother, God is also not and more than a mother. God is both Shepherd, and not a shepherd because God is more than this role. God is ultimately a mystery who cannot not be mastered by rote linguistics and imagery, but can be known through these elusive windows.¹⁴⁷ Theologians must learn to value the role of analogies and metaphors, yet critique and understand their limitations lest we become crystalized in our thinking and models. Theology suffers when humanity attempts to remain within the rigid confines of metaphoric language and project these metaphors as exclusive ontological realities without realizing the limited role of metaphors and analogies.

¹⁴⁴ Paul D. Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination : Metaphor, Symbol and Myth in Religion and Theology* (London, UK: Routledge, 1999), 60, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.seu.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzkwNjgyX19BTg2?sid=eb7fab76-f611-4d9b-aeb3-d0ffc2eef518@sessionmgr102&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 63.

God is not only Creator, but also Sustainer of creation. Creation is then contingent upon God for both its nature and existence.¹⁴⁸ God empowers creation's existence without entirely controlling, to an extent, creation. Therefore, within God is space where something other than God can exist while being empowered by God to exist. Some streams of classical theism emphasize God's transcendence, whereas models of relational theology will place emphasis on God's nearness and immanence. Not only does God desire to be intimately present within and with creation, but also to invite creation and humanity into the divine dance of the Trinity's perichoresis.¹⁴⁹

Theologian and sociologist Peter Althouse, in *Implications of the Kenosis of the Spirit for a Creational Eschatology*, delves deeper into the concept of the Triune God's self-giving, sacrifice, and suffering for and with creation as an expression of God's power.¹⁵⁰ Because God loves, God provides a "space for creation [involving] a divine self-limitation in which omnipotence is restricted in the outflow of love."¹⁵¹ God's loving self-limitation and self-surrender allows for the outpour of unfettered love from God towards creation.¹⁵² Although Althouse discusses God's kenotic nature conveyed through creational eschatology from a Pentecostal vista by specifically articulating the Spirit's role, his identification of God's consistently kenotic nature towards creation can inform God's participation in relationship with creation as expressed through evolution. Furthermore, the Spirit's participation in and

¹⁴⁸ Paul Tillich's panentheistic theology of God as the Ground of Being who has the Power of Being expounds on this concept of God as the Source of Being.

¹⁴⁹ John Mahoney, "Evolution, Altruism, and the Image of God," *Theological Studies* 71, no. 3 (September 2010): 698.

¹⁵⁰ Peter Althouse, "Implications of Kenosis of the Spirit for a Creational Eschatology: A Pentecostal Engagement with Jürgen Moltmann," in *The Spirit Renews the Face of the Earth* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009), 155.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 157.

through evolution may be considered as an ongoing event within Althouse's concept of creational eschatology.¹⁵³

Eastern Orthodoxy also presents the possibility of continuous creation (as evident in evolution), creation advancing beyond the Genesis narrative.¹⁵⁴ St. Basil the Great in his "Hexaemeron" affirms this on-going process of creation.¹⁵⁵ Creation is able to continue creating because of the living image of Creator within itself. This concept of co-imagedness carries consistencies with an Eastern Orthodox understanding of *imago Dei*, which stands in contrast to other interpretations claiming humanity's *imago Dei* is ascribed to the capacity to reason, and other cognitive capacities. Eastern Orthodoxy establishes an intimate sense of unity between God and creation. God's unity within and immanence in creation, "he is before all things, and in him all things hold," is reflected in Colossians 1:17.

Evolution is a process of continuous creation where creation is able to make itself through God's empowerment of being and agency to creation.¹⁵⁶ Through evolution, new genus and species make an appearance on earth as expressions of divine creativity, and fruits of loving relationship between God and creation. Matter exhibits self-organizational properties in progressing from simple to more complex structures.¹⁵⁷ Rising emergent characteristics include "self-reproducing cells, organisms that adapt more and more miraculously to their environments over time,

¹⁵³ While this paper recognizes the potential contextualization of evolution within creational eschatology, it does not currently assume the task of doing so.

¹⁵⁴ Gayle E Woloschak, "The Compatibility of the Principles of Biological Evolution with Eastern Orthodoxy," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2011): 220.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Polkinghorne, "Kenotic Creation and Divine Action," 95.

¹⁵⁷ Clayton, "Panentheist Internalism: Living within the Presence of the Trinitarian God," 209.

highly complex social behaviors, and finally conscious beings.”¹⁵⁸ This paper ascribes the freedom of creation through creative agency and self-organization rather than free will and choice which is ascribed to humanity.

God, who is Love, empowers creation to exist (in freedom) through persuasive love. Persuasive love does not seek to control, coerce, and determine the outcome of creation, but rather empowers creation to both exist and exercise the freedom of choice (self-organization in the context of evolution).¹⁵⁹ The Spirit as the continuing presence of Christ on earth participates in this manifestation of divine love on and through creation.¹⁶⁰ Love seeks to motivate the other instead of coercing into compliance. The randomness in mutation and genetic variation found in evolution reflects God’s noncoercive and other-empowering interaction with creation through continuous creation.

Ian Barbour suggests through chance, the potential forms of matter are explored.¹⁶¹ Creation not only exists, but is endowed by God with ongoing creative potentialities.¹⁶² God allows creation to freely participate in its own unfolding creation instead of controlling the outcome and development of creation.

Summary

Rather than remaining within classical theism’s understanding of God’s power through control, models of relational theology seek to interpret God’s power in terms

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Reichard, “Relational Empowerment,” 4.

¹⁶⁰ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 97.

¹⁶¹ Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science: The Gifford Lectures, Volume One*, 1:178.

¹⁶² Ibid.

of God's primary nature of love. God's love is not only an emotive component of God, but is an influential reality. God's love sustains creation's existence, and simultaneously invites creation to participate in creating by empowering creation to become more itself through the evolutionary process. Creation's is empowered because God shares power with the creation which is the truly other.¹⁶³ God's love is also a "powerful force [with] the intrinsic capacity to overwhelm, consume, and compel to response action."¹⁶⁴

However, creation's existence is made possible through reliable constants and predictable qualities in nature. Regularities measured through laws of physics (e.g. gravity, wind resistance, water's adhesive, and cohesive properties, etc.) allow plants to grow, people to survive, and the earth to maintain a habitable global environment. Neither total randomness nor total determinism exist.¹⁶⁵ Models of relational theologies affirm the mutual coexistence of law-like regularities and genuine randomness in creation.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Polkinghorne, "Kenotic Creation and Divine Action," 95.

¹⁶⁴ Reichard, "Relational Empowerment," 230.

¹⁶⁵ Oord, *The Uncontrolling Love of God: An Open and Relational Account of Providence*, 151.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 152.

Conclusion

Creation's vibrant and complex spectrum of diversity is proposed to be a fruit of God and creation's participation and response to each other in relationship. Through models of relational theology, and placing primacy on God's loving nature the unnecessarily controversial topic of evolution may contribute to paving the way for a refreshingly integrative understanding of God. While evolution comprises of two ongoing processes, genetic variation/random mutation and natural selection, this paper addresses a theological interpretation of the former process. Currently, the causes of these genetic mutations which spur evolution onward remain unknown and emerge randomly.

Through a respectful dialogical approach (found within Ian Barbour's four methods of disciplinary engagement between the empirical sciences and theology), these two disciplines may function as mutually illuminative while remaining within the boundaries of their own disciplines. Critical realism as a philosophical approach recognizes that both science and theology employ metaphors, models, and analogies in their language when referring to their respective areas of investigation and research. Models, metaphors, and analogies may be changed in order to more accurately represent reality as discoveries and research continues. The empirical sciences set out to investigate the nature of *how* natural processes occur through quantitative methods of measurements and observation, and the scientific method. Theology seeks to interpret or identify meaning as centered around God. Theology as a primarily qualitative discipline cannot override quantitative scientific theories. Thoughts, ideas, and beliefs cannot be measured using rulers or scrutinized under

microscopes, and neither can theology employ these means when addressing abstract concepts. Similarly, science cannot offer philosophical or theological conclusions to its own discoveries for these queries cease to be quantifiable. Science cannot give philosophical and theological meaning to its mechanisms and processes.

Relational theology affirms God's identity as a primarily loving and relational being whose power is filtered through this quality of love. Love is both self-limiting and self-giving to the other. Because God loves, God engages in kenosis, or voluntary self-limitation, for the purpose of enhancing relationship with creation. God gives by empowering creation to exist freely, and inviting creation to God's self. Creation also pantheistically exists within God without creation becoming like the Divine, or the Divine becoming creation. The kenosis of Christ's incarnation and crucifixion sheds light on the Trinity's nature of love and voluntary self-limitation. Whereas kenosis is God's self-limitation when engaging creation, perichoresis is God's voluntary self-limitation and self-giving within the Trinity. God is consistently self-limiting and self-giving out of love immanently and economically. In God self-limiting, creation is enabled to freely respond to God and God can authentically respond to creation. Relationship requires the inherent freedom of choice in all participants.

God's foundational loving nature as "deep openness, relationship, and interaction with the created world" finds its (though not its only) expression through the evolutionary process.¹⁶⁷ Random genetic mutations and variations within evolution may be contextualized within a consistently loving and relational concept of God without compromising the authority of the empirical sciences to speak

¹⁶⁷ Reichard, "Relational Empowerment," 4.

concerning transpiring natural phenomena. Randomness can be understood as creation's expression of freedom (through self-organization) to which God freely responds. God's love is further expressed through creation's divinely empowered existence and continuous creation. God is participating with creation in creation's own unfolding. The diversity of creation from plantae and animalia to geographical landscapes may be accounted for through the loving engagement of evolution and God as loving Creator.

Continuing Research and Final Thoughts

As this paper seeks to address the role random genetic changes/mutation in a theological framework, a continuation of this research may involve addressing the theological significance of natural selection within evolution. Though the mechanisms of natural selection operates differently from genetic variations, it occupies a critically vital space within evolutionary theory and warrants an interaction with Christian theology as genetic variations alone do not constitute all of evolutionary theory. Natural selection exists in the flux of life and death between the emergence of new species and the extinction of non-successful populations. Environmental factors placing limitation pressures on habitats restrict how many individuals and populations can coexist in the same habitat. It begs the question of addressing the role of death, and the potential suffering of creation within the framework of a loving God. I hope to tackle this aspect of evolution in the future to properly address the entirety of the evolutionary process through a theological framework of love and relationality.

Another area of expansion through this discourse includes addressing the theological significance of continuing creation through evolution. Questions that arise include what does an evolving world and universe imply for God and humanity? Can humanity bring demise upon itself and draw the short end of the evolutionary stick, and face extinction? Should humanity cease to be evolutionarily significant, in what ways would this affect God and what theological implications can be drawn? These questions carry ecological implications that await exploration.

Much potential exists for the reconciliation of the empirical sciences with theology. While evolution is a prominently addressed point of conflict with Christian theology, other topics within the empirical sciences and entire disciplines lie in the shadows. In order for theology to be taken seriously as an academic discipline, it must participate in academic discussions along with other disciplines and fulfill its interconnected and interrelated potential. For when the bell tolls for one discipline, it rings for all.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions Together with Death's Duel*.

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