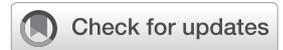


Deification for all in and through reformed sacramental liturgy

**Author:**Dieter de Bruin¹ **Affiliation:**

¹Department of Practical Theology, Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Dieter de Bruin,
dieter.debruin@up.ac.za

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This article proposes a theological reformation within the Dutch Reformed Church by advocating for the integration of three interrelated concepts: *Theosis* [deification], a fully sacramental liturgy centred on the Eucharist and *Apokatastasis* [universal restoration]. It argues that the Dutch Reformed Church's Missional Theology, rooted in Trinitarian participation, implicitly aligns with the doctrine of *Theosis* yet requires explicit embrace to fully realise its soteriological potential. By restoring the Eucharist as the heart of worship and reimagining Mission as a bidirectional movement towards the world and back to God, the Dutch Reformed Church can embody a vision of salvation that encompasses all creation. This gesture towards reform seeks to align the Dutch Reformed Church's practices with its theological suppositions and ignite a broader ecumenical conversation about the nature and scope of divine love and human flourishing.

Intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary implications: The argument is made that by embracing a version of the doctrine of *Theosis* and *Apokatastasis* along with restoring the Eucharist to the centre of worship, the Dutch Reformed Churches and Missional discourse will also become more congruent with its suppositions.

Keywords: *Theosis*; *Apokatastasis*; Missional Church; Dutch Reformed Church; eschatology.

Introduction

I cannot but lament that I have bitten off more than I can chew in the limited space of a journal article. Perhaps I was tempted by Zwingli's airing of his Protestant inclination, with 'the affair of the sausages', to make a grand gesture by pricking at three 'sausages' that might create controversy in the Reformed tradition, namely: (1) deification [*Theosis*]; (2) in and through Reformed sacramental liturgy (making the Eucharist an essential and constituent element of the liturgy); and (3) for all *Apokatastasis*.

I accept that sinking your teeth into these topics is exceedingly challenging while digesting them properly in one article is well-nigh impossible. Why attempt such a folly, then? I am engaging with such complex topics because this article is a gesture in the strict sense that it is 'an action that expresses your feelings or intentions, although it might have little practical effect' (*Cambridge English Dictionary*).

Indeed, in what follows, I certainly want to indicate my strong feelings and intentions. Beyond this, I hope this article might have some practical import; its desired effect can be found in the gesture's primary meaning, namely 'a movement of the hands, arms or head etc. to express an idea or feeling' (*Cambridge English Dictionary*). In this case, the 'etc.' would refer to what I think should be further explored in the Reformed tradition, which this article outlines.

This article's aim, therefore, is not to delineate in any comprehensive or even remotely satisfactory way all (or any) of these subjects; instead, it is to invite the Dutch Reformed Church to open a window that has hitherto been carefully – by prudence or by ignorance – left enticingly ajar.

The three theological reforms advocated here are implicit in each other: the telos, to which the Dutch Reformed Church is invited, is *Theosis*; the scope and nature of deification are all-encompassing [*Apokatastasis*], and the way of participating in the *Telos* for the church is sacramental worship. These three aspects of theological reform pleaded for are to be distinguished but not treated as disjunct from one another. Their interrelation could make a meaningful contribution in the context of the theological practice of the Dutch Reformed Church and the broader church.

A gesture would not be worth the name had it not an intended audience. I wish to invite the discourse of Missional Theology in the Dutch Reformed Church to look into a mirror and ask it to see what, till now, has remained either unobserved or unacknowledged. I am slightly uncomfortable

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with the positioning of Missional Theology as the dominant theological discourse, but it is a boon to the church in many ways.

However, I want to focus on the discourse's unrecognised (or at least unnamed) beauty. Specifically, I would like either to emphasise a neglected theme of Missional Theology or to push Missional Theology in the Dutch Reformed Church to consider making what is possibly implicit explicit and encourage partakers of this conversation to be bold enough to embrace a somewhat controversial but crucial, position concerning soteriology, specifically the doctrine of deification – or *Theosis* – which envisions humanity's participation in the divine life of God, a concept that, while unconventional in Reformed circles, aligns with the Trinitarian impulses already present in Dutch Reformed Church theology.

The three aspects implicate one another, and I will argue for them in turn:

- The Dutch Reformed Church, with its Trinitarian Missiology, emphasises union with the Triune God and has, in some sense, already embraced the doctrine of deification.
- In further elaboration on this theme, I contend that the recovery of the fully-fledged sacramental nature of the worship service (already officially embraced) in the Dutch Reformed Church should be the church's encompassing and overriding priority precisely because the church has already adopted an implicit form of the doctrine of deification.
- Then, perhaps most controversially, the celebration and the way of deification should be for all and on behalf of all. Suppose the Dutch Reformed Church is to embrace NT Wright's metaphor of the church living out an unscripted Act 5. In that case, the Reformed Tradition

should unequivocally embrace and proclaim the gospel of universal salvation – the doctrine of Apokatastasis – the restoration of all things, in the drama's final Act.

The movement of Missional Theology

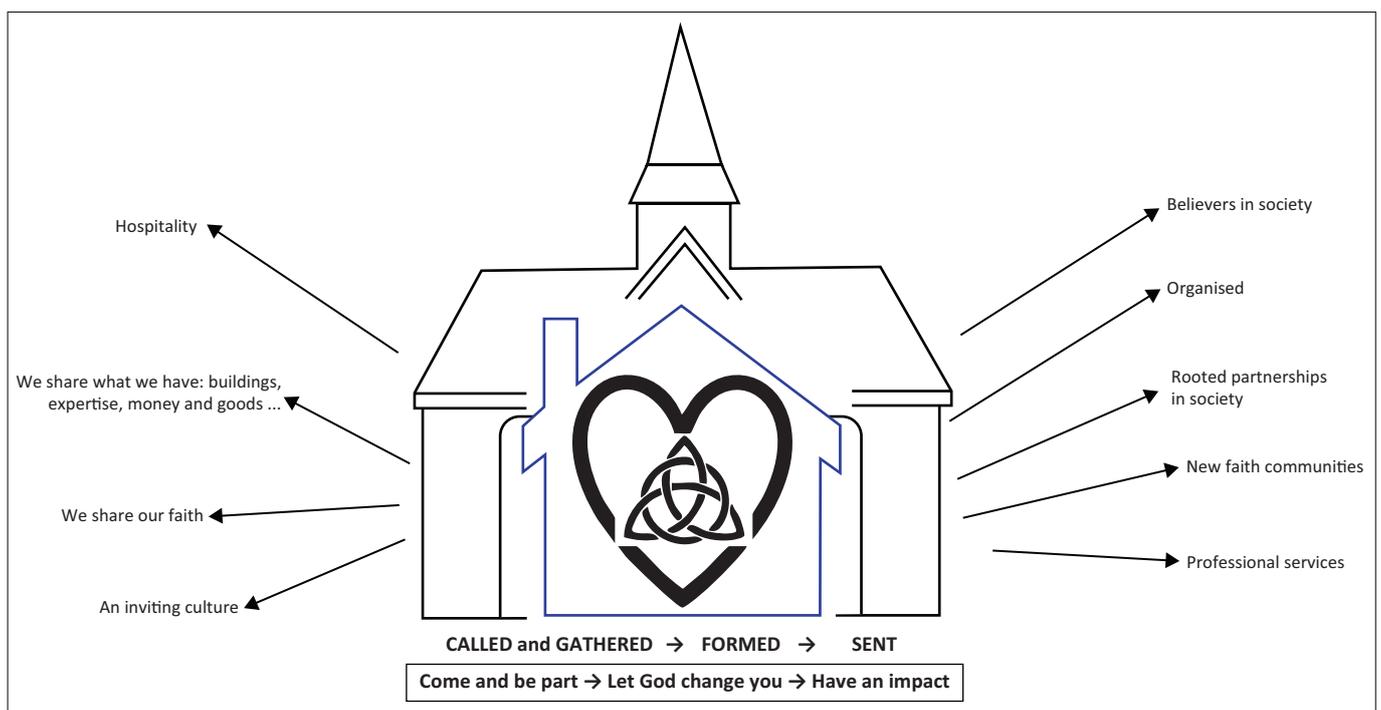
Foundational to the Missional discourse in the Dutch Reformed Church is the Trinitarian Nature of God and the fact that Mission is God's movement to the world. Mission means participating in the Trinitarian life of God, and Niemandt (2019) epitomises this consensus:

Missional Theology builds on the understanding that God is Trinity and Missional and is characterised by love. The Trinitarian God is a God of boundless loving and endless life, and the Mission is participation in the infinite love and endless life of the Triune God. (p. 2)

Franke (2020:32) summarises this grounding in Missional Theology by way of seven statements:

- God is Love.
- God is a sending God.
- Difference and Otherness are part of God's nature.
- Creation as a manifestation of God's love.
- Human beings rebelled against God.
- Jesus is sent into the world to bring about salvation.
- The Spirit is sent into the world to call, guide and empower Jesus's followers to continue his revolutionary Mission.

I do not want to criticise the Missional Theology and movement *en masse*. I have a somewhat contingent and parochial fish to fry. I merely wish to indicate a lacuna in the Dutch Reformed



Source: NG Kerk, 2019, *AGENDA vir die 17de vergadering van die ALGEMENE SINODE van die NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK*, p. 185, viewed 20 March 2024, from <https://ngkerk.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/AGENDA-2019-small.pdf>

FIGURE 1: An illustration of how we understand the Missional Church currently.

Churches reflection of its Missional Theology. To wit, it tends to almost exclusively paint a picture of God's love moving to the world, a 'bidirectional' movement from God to the world and the world back to God is lacking.

Note the focus of the summary: *Jesus is sent into the world*, and the Spirit is *sent into the world*; in Franke's synopsis of Missional Theology, this Mission could be described as a movement from God to the world. As Franke (2020) puts it:

From this perspective, Mission no longer finds its basis in the church. Instead, it is understood as a *movement from God to the world*, with the church functioning as a participant in that mission. (p. 4 [author's own emphasis])

Dawid Bosch (1991:390) also emphasises this movement from God to the world: 'Mission is the movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission'. Or one could look to Frost and Hirsch (2003:18) '...a sent church, a going church, a movement of God through his people, *sent to bring healing to a broken world*'.

This movement from God to the world is also described by NG Kerk (2013):

Die roeping van die kerk kan as gestuurdes van God omskryf word. Die kerk behoort in wese altyd op die wêreld gerig te wees en op pad na die wêreld te wees. (p. 202)

If you had to schematically portray this Theology (see Figure 1), as the General Synod did in one of its reports (NG Kerk 2019), you would have a picture of the Trinity's love flowing into the world through the church while transforming the church, households and individuals.

Figure 1 indicate that individuals, households and the church are called, gathered, then formed and then sent. Or put in a more invitational register: *come in* and *become a part* of our community, then *allow God to change you*, and then *make an impact*. The end of Mission or its impact has, especially of late, been described as the flourishing of creation (Niemandt 2020), or as the fullness of life itself (Commission on World Mission and Evangelism n.d.).

While no one would quibble with the construal that the end of Mission would be 'Life in abundance for the whole of creation' or the 'Kingdom of God', the crucial question is: What, at its deepest level, would life in abundance or the flourishing of creation entail? Furthermore, while the movement from God to the world as the *missio Dei* is not to be questioned or to be relativised, it should be supplemented with the world's movement (in)to God, and the final end of Mission should be reconceptualised and recovered as primarily an Eastern conception of salvation but with growing ecumenical appeal as *Theosis*.

We will now turn first to why formulating *Theosis* as the end of the Mission would be advantageous to the Dutch Reformed Church and why a 'bidirectional' movement between God and the World is essential. Finally, given the reformulation of

Missions End and the dynamic of Mission, we can consider the weekly celebration of the *Eucharist* as a critical practice of embodying this Missional Theology.

Trinitarian missiology and the doctrine of deification

The counterquestion that immediately follows is: What exactly is meant by *Theosis*, and what variety of *Theosis* are we talking about? To answer this question comprehensively here is quite impossible, but what if we just take on board the working definition that deification is:¹ 'the process by which the action Holy Spirit unites us to the Father by one conforming us to Christ' (ed. Ortiz 2020:4).

The above-stated does not seem that different from the Dutch Reformed Church (NG Kerk 2019:182) would describe as *Verbondenheid met Christus* or *Christus-gelykvormigheid* [Union with Christ or Christlikeness]. And when the committee speaks about God calling us to live in deep communion with Godself [*God roep ons om in diep gemeenskap met God self te leef*], it resonates deeply with the respected Reformed Theologian Thomas Torrance's (1992:72) formulation of the end of God's Reconciliatory:

Yet, it is not atonement that constitutes the goal and end of that integrated movement of reconciliation but union with God in and through Jesus Christ, in whom our human nature is not only saved, healed, and renewed but also lifted up to participate in the very light, life, and love of the Holy Trinity. (quoted in Crisp 2021:23)

Although Torrance, like the committee of the General Synod, does not use the word deification, Crisp (2021:25) is indubitably correct when he judges that Torrance's stance clearly indicates a doctrine of *Theosis*.

At stake here is the notion that the Trinity is not only the source of Mission but also its end. This has also been recognised by influential Missional scholar Michael Gorman (2018) when he speaks about 'Missional *Theosis*'.

One could riposte with strategic Juliets that any other theological nomenclature could convey the sweet concept of unity with Christ and communion with the Trinity, and that refraining to use a (to some sensibilities) fraught, theological word would not be a loss. There might be something to this argument, especially if your target audience is a church community that is ostensibly suspicious of anything that might suggest anything Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox. What one loses rhetorically on the denominational swings, however, one gains on the ecumenical roundabouts: using the language of *Theosis* would help the Dutch Reformed Church engage meaningfully in the burgeoning ecumenical conversation (Mosser 1999, 2021a, 2021b; Zorgdrager 2014). Moreover, there is more at stake than just linguistic consistency. Reforming the Dutch Reformed Church's Missional imagination to include *Theosis* would mean reconfiguring its official and functional schema, according to which the 'Missional transformation' of the church is understood.

1.1 use the terms divinisation, *Theosis* and deification interchangeably.

The reform pleaded for is to change the Dutch Reformed Church's imagination from a *unidirectional* understanding of the Mission of the Trinity as flowing from the Godhead to the world to a 'bidirectional' movement, where participation in the life of God means participation in the Son's Mission to the world in the power of the Spirit *and* participation in the Son's return to the Father in Sacrifice through the Spirit. The argument is that it is not the 'impact' that God makes through the church in the world or the flourishing of creation of the giving life of creation that is the *final end* of 'the mission of God', but rather that the final end of the Mission of God is that the whole of creation is in the words of Torrance (1992:65–66): 'not only saved, healed and renewed but lifted up to participate in the very light, life and love of the Holy Trinity' (quoted in Crisp 2021:23).

It could be argued that the giving of life, the 'flourishing of creation', 'the coming of the Kingdom of God' and so forth are simply different understandings of participating in the life of the Trinity, which would be a welcome gloss, to be sure. This is not, however, necessarily the case. Consider the direction that the committee conveys with a statement such as this: 'The aim of God's life-giving Mission *to the word* is flourishing people in a flourishing environment' [*Die mikpunt van God se lewegewende beweging na die wêreld is florerende mense in 'n florerende omgewing.*] (NG Kerk 2019:180 [*author's own emphasis*])

The language of being saved, healed and renewed – 'flourishing' – abounds. The Mission of God is to bring this flourishing to fruition, and the church is called to participate in this Mission. Still, the explicit language of 'return' – or that the flourishing of creation is not an end in itself, but that creation needs to be lifted up to participate in the life of the Trinity – is conspicuously absent for the Dutch Reformed Church's reflections on the Missional nature of the church. To put it in a different theological-philosophical platonic framework (Boersma 2011), the notion of *exitus* from God is strongly featured, but the *reditus* is absent from the imagination of the Missional discourse in the Dutch Reformed Church.

If one follows the perspective of return to God, of the true end of humans and creation as *Theosis*, it would no longer be necessary, as Franke (2020:31) pleads in an echo of Bosch (1991:390), to situate the doctrine of Mission in the Trinity rather than ecclesiology or soteriology. Schlesinger (2017) argues that in the Trinitarian understanding of salvation, the dual movement towards God and the world originates from the life of the Trinity. The Son's offering of himself back to the Father through the sending of the Holy Spirit is both a return to the Father and a departure from Him. This shared sending of the Spirit represents the greatest distance from the Father while also, in completing the Mission, the final step towards and into Him, revealing that the path away from God is ultimately the path to Him. Consequently, worship directed towards God and Mission directed towards the world cannot be set in opposition, as Christ has united them.

Therefore, it is unnecessary to relocate the doctrine of Mission in the Trinity rather than in soteriology or eschatology;

situating Mission within soteriology *is* situating it within the Trinity. If, as Schlesinger (2017: Structure of the Argument section) puts it, soteriology concerns creation being brought into communion with the divine life through the mediation of the incarnate Son (in other words, creation divinised); the question is how the Dutch Reformed Church participates in this Missional mediation? Please enter the Liturgical-Missional Dutch Reformed Church with Eucharistic worship at the centre of its life in the world.

Sacramental liturgy

With the above-mentioned 'double-barrel' modifier, the reform that the Dutch Reformed Church is invited to undertake is to reimagine itself not only as a *Missional* church, under which the liturgy of the church is assumed or subsumed² but also to take Schlesinger's (2017) persuasive argument on board and recognise that the markers *Missional* and *Liturgical* are co-constitutive and apposite. Both are ways of participating in the larger Paschal Mystery. For Schlesinger (2017: Structure of the Argument section), the Paschal Mystery is the 'mystery of Christ's life, death, resurrection, ascension, bestowal of the Holy Spirit, and future *parousia*'. For him, this complex of events is at once the revelation of God to humanity, the way through which humanity and creation find salvation and the reality at the heart of the Church's Mission. It is by participating in the paschal mystery that one partakes of the divine life (*Theosis*).

Schlesinger (2017) argues in *Baptised into Christ's Death: Christian Initiation as Missional Vocation* section that participation in this divine life is both symbolised and realised through the sacraments of initiation. Christian initiation involves both entering into the paschal mystery and joining in the Church's Mission. This twofold nature creates a connection between Mission and Liturgy. To participate in the church's life is to partake in the paschal mystery, to engage in God's Mission and to share in the divine life itself.

I would like to make the crucial point that participation in the life of the Trinity, as in Mission, is mediated liturgically, not just through Liturgy in a general sense but specifically through *sacramental worship*. To put a rather fine point on it, we are speaking here of the celebration of the Eucharist as a constitutive part of *every* worship service. The reason, among other things, and especially with regard to our argument so far, is that the Eucharist, in particular, is associated with the 'upward vector' (Hunsinger 2008:34–35) of this 'bidirectional' movement between God and the world. As Laura Smit (2005:215 [*author's own emphasis*]) puts it: 'the movement of the Lord's Supper is not a downward movement, of Christ being drawn to us, but an *upward movement*, as we are lifted to him as participants in his nature'. Again, the link between eucharistic celebration and *Theosis* (as it is conceived here as participating in the life of the Trinity) is sounded (Smit 2005 [*author's own emphasis*]):

²Schlesinger (2017) argues that liturgy cannot be subsumed under mission; he disagrees with Missional scholars, such as Schattauer (1999:1–6), Bevans and Schroeder (2004:348–394) and Meyers (2014:29–45) who, according to him, consider Liturgy but one aspect of Mission.

Calvin teaches that Christ is ascended in the body and, *through the sacrament*, draws all believers into union with him and thus into communion with the inner life of the Trinity. (p. 215)

The problem with some of the Missional discourses in the Dutch Reformed Church is that the discussion of worship tends to be non-specific towards the essential quality of worship, where the sacraments of initiation and the Eucharist, in particular, should play a crucial part.

While much is made of the role of Christian Worship as formation for Mission in the work of James KA Smith (2009, 2013, 2016) among others, around the importance of practices and the enthusiastically appropriated liturgical anthropology and appreciation for the sacraments are expressed, no explicit call has been made in the Missional reports (NG Kerk 2013, 2015:114–143, 2019:173–228, 2023) of the Dutch Reformed Church to return the Eucharist to the essence of the Liturgy.³

If the formation has as its end the participation in the life of the Trinity, it is in and through sacramental worship that our participation in the life of the Trinity is confirmed and strengthened. In other words, if the Eucharist is *the* way through which our union with Christ is celebrated and affirmed – and, through our participation in Christ, we are also partaking in the life of the Trinity together with baptism, which it implies – it then follows that there cannot be a more pressing concern for the Dutch Reformed Church than the reintegration of Word and sacrament in her worship services.

One of the formative ‘keystone habits’ that the Dutch Reformed Church could cultivate is not only for members to be sent out ‘to love and serve the Lord’ but also to ‘lift up their hearts’ in preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist.

If the Eucharist is a vital means of participating in the divine life of the Trinity – a participation that both embodies and enacts the bidirectional movement of Mission towards the world and back to God – the question arises: If the sacramental Liturgy, centred on the Eucharist, is the heartbeat of a Missional church that seeks the flourishing of creation through Theosis, who is included in this flourishing, and how far does the restorative love of the Triune God extend?

What is the eschatological horizon of God’s redemptive drama? This is precisely where the doctrine of Apokatastasis emerges as a rather bold yet fitting culmination of the Reformed vision of salvation, challenging the Dutch Reformed Church to reimagine the final Act of God’s story as one of universal restoration.

Universal salvation

If the heart of Missional Theology is God as, ‘... Trinity and Missional ... characterised by love’, at stake here is the *nature* of God in Godself as Trinity, as *love* itself. In this instance, we

³The closest it came was to call for the classical structure of the Worship service to remain and that ‘all transformative elements of the worship service should be present’ (translated from the Afrikaans: ‘n Volledige erediens is waar al die transformatiewe elemente teenwoordig is ... Dit beteken dat die klassieke struktuur en inhoud van die erediens behoue moet bly’ [2016:142]).

will go into conversation with Marius Nel, a New Testament scholar who has made a significant contribution to the Missional conversation in the Dutch Reformed Church and beyond (Nel 2013, 2017, 2021a, 2021b). He proposes that to renew the mission of the church, a new ‘Root Metaphor’ (Nel 2023:9) is needed.

It is vital for the church, according to Nel, to change the Root Metaphor to enable it to help its members profess their faith in, for example, the resurrection of Jesus of salvation in a post-Christian world (Nel 2023:10). The specific Root Metaphor that Nel (2023:11,161–69) suggests is that of a play that misses an Act. It is this metaphor that Nel suggests that will help the ‘church participate in the *missio Dei*’. If one were to change the church’s Root Metaphor, ‘it would result in a new understanding [...] of the church and its mission’ (Nel 2023:10).

Nel (2023:162) expands NT Wright’s metaphor for understanding the authority of Scripture as ‘living in the original unscripted Act 5 of God’s unfinished story’ to also include the Mission, message and praxis of the church. This metaphor is based on the narrative of God: the biblical metanarrative recounts the creation of everything (Act 1); the corruption of creation (Act 2); God’s new beginning through Abraham and Israel (Act 3); the surprising development of the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus (Act 4); and the Mission of God through the church and the restoration of creation (Act 6). This metanarrative of the story of God determines the message of the church.

Because Act 5 is unscripted, the church needs to improvise its performance. Although not much emphasis is laid on Act 6 of the play, how one understands the final Act will have profound implications for how one lives and understands the Mission in Act 5.

Nel (2023:168) does describe Act 6 in Pauline terms, ‘The defeat of death and the restoration of *all* of creation is the essence of Paul’s proclamation (1 Cor 15:1–58)’. Nel (2023:168 [*author’s emphasis*]) further states that ‘the Christian hope is ultimately that what God did for Jesus, He would in Act 6 do for everyone who is in Christ’. In the questions that Nel (2023) offers for reflecting on the resurrection of Christ, he asks:

Does the Christian hope for an embodied life (after the general resurrection) instead of only a spiritual one after death change the way that we proclaim the gospel and live our lives in the present? (p. 171)

This question illustrates that the way in which Act 6 of the metanarrative is scripted has an impact on how the unscripted Act 5 is improvised.

Here, we come to the nub of the issue. Even though Nel and other South African Missional theologians do not address the issue directly, the metanarrative of the play NT Wright scripts, Act 6 does not involve the restoration of the *whole* of creation. I have written about the matter elsewhere (De Bruin 2023). Still, it will suffice to let the following quotation of

Wright illustrate that the metanarrative of the story of God (if we follow the script of NT Wright) is a tragedy rather than a comedy (Leithart 2006), with Act 6 ending not with the joy of *everyone and everything* in creation being restored but as Wright (2012) states in the *Purgatory, Paradise, Hell* section:

God is utterly committed to set the world to right in the end. Like that of resurrection itself, this doctrine is held firmly in place by the belief in God as creator on the one side and in his goodness on the other. And that setting-right must necessarily involve the elimination of all that distorts God's good and lovely creation, and in particular of all that defaces his image-bearing human creatures. (n.p)

For Wright (2012), however, that 'elimination' will, in the end, include 'image-bearing creatures' themselves:

I find it quite impossible, reading the New Testament, on the one hand, and the newspaper, on the other, to suppose that there will be no ultimate condemnation, no final loss, no human beings to whom, as C.S. Lewis put it, God will eventually say 'Thy will be done'. (n.p.)

In the climactic ending of Act 6, Wright foresees a 'final loss', 'a final condemnation' where there will be, because of their stubborn refusal to worship God, 'beings that once were human but now are not, creatures that have ceased to bear the divine image at all'. These creatures will not only be 'beyond hope' but also 'beyond pity'.

Whichever way one judges the reasonableness of such an eschatology, it will be difficult to argue that when creatures that were created in God's image lose that image in the final Act of the story and become hopeless and pitiless creatures for all eternity, that God will be 'all in all'. One could ask analogously to the question of the resurrection posed earlier: How would the ending of the play, contra Wright, where everyone and everything – even creatures who have committed the worst, most inhumane atrocities – is healed and restored to perfect communion with God, one another and creation change the way that we proclaim the gospel and live our lives in the present?

Conclusion

By concluding this gesture towards possible reforms in the Missional discourse of the Dutch Reformed Church, we could, in the spirit of reframing the mirror so that it might become a window into glorious vistas, ask the following questions. How would it change the way we proclaim the gospel and live our lives in 'Act 5' if the script of the other Acts of the play, especially Act 6, makes the following possible: would answer the following four questions with a resounding 'Yes!' and the last question with a firm 'No':

- What if it were true without reserve that Christ 'through his Passion [...] will indeed draw *all* of humanity and the entire cosmos to himself' (Kimmel, Jersak & Hart 2022:10 [*author's emphasis*])?
- What if it were true that 'Death has been defeated, so that a free and willing post-mortem response is possible' (Jersak 2022:12)?

- What if it were true that the 'judgements of God are restorative and penultimate rather than retributive and ultimate' (Jersak 2022:12)?
- What if the 'human will is healed and freed from its delusions, so we can freely respond to perfect Love when we see Christ face to face' (Jersak 2022:12)?
- Is it at all congruent to proclaim that in the final Act of the grand story of everything, the 'hyper-relational effect of sin' will be undone and 'humanity's relationship with God, themselves, the created world, and all others that have been tarnished by sin will be fully restored and renewed at the same time to believe that some of these others who have tarnished by sin' (Nel 2023:54) (and have tarnished others) will end up beyond hope and pity?

In essence, if one chooses to ignite the imagination of the church with the Root Metaphor of a play with an unscripted Act in which the church plays a pivotal role, would it not make all the difference if the church lives and moves in the faith that not dependent on its contribution, but not without it either, God will indeed, to put it colloquially, let everything (and *everyone*) be alright in the end?

If one could fancifully conjecture that Zwingli set off the whole Reformation by eating sausage during Lent, perhaps we could ask ourselves what would happen if Missional Dutch Reformed Churches in Act 5 would start eating bread and drinking wine every Sunday as a sacramental participation in the Triune God in anticipation of the final Act, where all of creation and everyone in it will be lifted up to participate in the life of God?

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