

Outline of Lecture

Chapter Four: Ray Anderson, *On Becoming Human* Humanity as Determined by the Other

p44 Recall human existence as co-existence: I am an individual only as I am a person(-in-relation). Therefore the individual always requires the other to be an individual.

Genesis 1: note the order of the creation sequence. "Man" (=male+female) is created, then appointed 'lord' over the non-human creation. Humans are *defined* w.r.t. not the non-human creation but God.

p45 W.r.t. revelation script. never moves from the possible to the actual but vv. The actual is the condition of the possible. It's the same w.r.t. anthropology: the W of God concretely renders us human. The possibility of this has to be understood retrospectively. I.e., in theol. we don't begin with the speculative.

(WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL PERSON?)

p45 "I" is immanent in "thou": I can never be self-determined. To be human requires fellow-humans.

(WE ARE TWO BEFORE WE CAN BE ONE)

NB Shepherd's distinction between individuation and individuality.

p47 It is the history of "I-thou" encounters that renders us individuals.

"History" presupposes capacity for finite self-transcendence: wherein [1] we can reflect on it, [2] we can understand it, [3] we can alter it (to some extent.)

In all of this von Balthasar is correct: human/human encounter is *above* nature (i.e., not hormonally controlled) and yet isn't *supernatural* (i.e., we aren't God, & aren't puppets of God.) Still, our h/h encounters occur in the world of nature yet are qualitatively different from animal/animal proximity. This means that nat'l sci. can never explain (away) what is uniquely human.

NB: the human isn't the natural elevated or perfected by grace -- otherwise, those lacking grace [i] aren't human

[ii] the church as 'dispenser' of grace has the cap. to confer humanness

[iii] the human is an animal infused with a substance, 'grace'.

However, [A] grace isn't a substance

[B] grace isn't infused

[C] humans are such by Word (divine/h encounter) and h/h encounter [D] the human is perfectly human as created.

In the Middle Ages, "grace perfects nature" had ontological significance: the "ladder of Being".

Result of all this: [1] the person who differs from us most is as human as we are.

[2] the person we can't stand is essential to us.

NB the role that incarcerated people play for us.

p48 Adam's relationship with God [i] is not a substitute for the human other [ii] doesn't presuppose the only form of Adam's differentiation. By his relationship with God A. is differentiated from (i) God (ii) the non-human. HOWEVER, there remains a differentiation of creatureliness which is *constitutive* of the human: Adam has to encounter himself in a *human* other who is essential to *his* humanness.

(i) this 'other' is A's gender-complement (true of all of us whether we are sexually active or not)

(ii) A. *names* the animal but not his wife: she doesn't do his bidding.

(iii) Eve is made from A. without thereby being A. or a clone. God could have brought forth

[A] another male as helpmate (thereby facilitating human reciprocity)

[B] a female *not* from A. (she'd be gender-complement but intrinsically alien to A.)

(iv) that "other" who isn't intrinsically alien are the two conditions for "one-flesh" union.

Note the five implicates of this union.

[A] man and woman need each other w.r.t. their humanness.

[B] in this union they aren't taking on an inherent alienation {contra many feminists today}

[C] in this union they gain what they can never have apart from it

[D] in this union they *don't* forfeit their respective identities and merge into a "blend."

[E] the rupture of this union is unspeakably grievous.

p49 To be human is to encounter the genitally differentiated 'other', and to encounter *oneself* in this other. The encounter is our history as humans: our history liberates us from creaturely determinism.

In this we are [i] dep. on nature

[ii] interdependent w.r.t. each other

[iii] made "one flesh" not by social proximity but by love. Where love isn't operative

[A] 'one-flesh' union doesn't occur

[B] what does occur is destructive

[C] our humanness is warped. Not to love each other is

[a] to be alienating the other forever

[b] to be alienating ourselves from ourselves. Von Balthasar is correct: only

as

love shines on us do we reach the core of our being.

In light of the above we should be careful about medical and sexual "histories."

Since humanness is other-determines, all efforts at "discrete individuality" entail [i] a contradiction in terms [ii] self-disfigurement. {Then is there such a thing as 'solitary confinement'? Wherein does solitariness differ from solitude?}

p49 "Can the 'I' be healed where there is no significant 'thou'?" Plainly not. But note:[a] the 'thou' with whom I am 'I' and 'healed'; this 'thou' may be ill. 'I' am healed too in meeting 'thou' bodily. (Suspicion arising from a friend's tel. conversation evaporates in face-to-face meeting.) [b] to treat humans dehumanizingly consistently we must first demonize them ('excremental assault').

p50 Anderson: *some* forms of psychotherapy might be sub-human. Note the peril of saying "the end justifies the means." [i] *any* means? [ii] what powers shall we allow the state?

p50 The therapist is never therapist only, but always human (Bernie Zelberstam, *The Shrinking of America*)

(MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM)

[i] *the* distinction built into the creation

[ii] gender stereotyping must be avoided

[iii] we can't specify in what the distinction consists (beyond genitalia), but are aware of it (mystery)

[iv] gender distinction is essential to our humanness and isn't a biological accident. It can't be reduced to genital particularity, but also doesn't transcend it.

We meet the 'other' in many different relationships, but the male/female relationship is primary and is *constitutive* of our humanness.

p54 To ignore the 'other' as essential to the human is to

[i] render concrete human existence unreal

[ii] be unaware that the therapist/client relationship is also (and fundamentally) human/h

[iii] to overlook the fact that protracted psychotherapy may foster narcissism and therein become (a) therapeutically counterproductive
(b) dehumanizing.