

THE MYSTERY OF DOXOLOGY

One of the most puzzling features of early Christian worship is the sudden appearance of doxologies in the liturgy of the church. Hymns of praise were sung daily by the Levitical choir in the daily service at the temple (Kleinig 1993, 100-131). In the temple and the synagogue the people acclaimed God with eulogies which acknowledged the Lord as the giver of blessing. In fact, eulogies were such an important part of Jewish prayer that the first tractate of the Mishnah was devoted to them. But at no time did the Israelites perform doxologies to the Lord in their worship. Yet, as far as we can gather from the New Testament and the apostolic fathers, the early church performed doxologies to God the Father from the very beginning of its existence. Indeed, the performance of doxology seems to be one of the unique ritual acts which distinguished Christian worship from its Jewish antecedents.

The performance of doxology is connected with the central mystery of the Christian faith, for it has to do with the presence of the risen Lord Jesus with the saints in their worship. In Col 1:25-27 St Paul presents himself as a divinely appointed mystagogue. He has been given the task of initiating the Gentiles into the mystery of Christ by the proclamation of God's word to them. Through the preaching and teaching of God's word, he not only discloses the presence of the risen Lord in the assembly of the saints but also divulges 'the riches of the glory of the mystery' of the risen Lord Jesus, who is 'our hope of glory'.

It is my contention that the performance of doxology is inseparable from that mystery. I would therefore like to play the detective in this essay and investigate the heavenly mystery of doxology. I do not, however, wish to solve it by explaining it away but intend to show how we participate in the mystery of Christ when we perform the doxology in the divine service.

This is a matter of some urgency since doxologies seem to have become fossilized ritual remnants in our liturgy from former ages. The only element of mystery which they evoke for most modern Christians is sheer mystification, blank incomprehension of their function and significance. They are therefore often among the first elements which are omitted by pastors when they alter or vary the traditional liturgy. So alien have they become to popular piety that their elimination occurs without much protest or any sense of loss. Yet at the same time, many of our congregations are replacing them, quite arbitrarily, with choruses of adoration and praise which are but poor, dysfunctional substitutes for the traditional forms of doxology. Nevertheless the popularity of these choruses may indicate that the time is ripe for a rediscovery of doxology and its recovery as the touchstone of orthodox worship and piety.

It is appropriate that this essay on the mystery of doxology should be offered as a personal tribute to Professor Kurt Marquart. My first encounter with him was at a service where he presided in the celebration of the eucharist. What struck me about him was the sense of reverence and awe which was evident in his leadership of the service. Here, I thought, was a man who acted as if he truly was in the presence of the Triune God. Only later did I discover his Russian Orthodox roots and his love for the Lord's house which is characteristic of that tradition. In the years when both he and I were pastors together in the Queensland district of the Lutheran Church of Australia, I came to appreciate him as an ardent 'steward of the mysteries of God' and a champion of orthodoxy as the right praise of the Triune God. I therefore now offer this investigation of the ritual function and theological significance of doxology in gratitude to him.

1. The Place of Doxology

Doxology can only be performed by those who stand in God's presence and share in his glory. It is a reaction to their access to his glory. It is 'nothing but a reflection of God's glory' (Brunner 210). By it they acknowledge his glorious presence and announce it to those who do not yet have access to God's glory.

Pagan religions in the ancient world recounted the theophanies of their gods in their glory to particular people in particular places. Through their idols which were dedicated to them and set up for them in those sacred places, pagan gods showed their faces and their glory to their devotees. The Lord, the God of Israel, however, did not make himself known to his people thus. When he appeared to them, they did not see his face or his form, but they heard his voice from heaven. He gave them access to himself through his name rather than through an idol. To be sure, he did show his glory to them, but that glory was always hidden in a cloud (Exod 16:10; 24:15). He revealed his glory to them paradoxically by concealing it from their eyes.

The worship of the Lord at the tabernacle and the temple depended on the hidden presence of God's glory there. Thus, when Moses had consecrated the tabernacle, the cloud which had appeared on Mt Sinai (Exod 19:17; 24:15-17), settled over the tabernacle, because God's glory filled the Holy of Holies (Exod 40:34-38). At the inauguration of the divine service, God's glory appeared to the congregation

in the guise of fire which came from the tabernacle and burnt up the sacrifices on the altar for burnt offering (Lev 9:1–24). Likewise, when Solomon dedicated the temple, the glory cloud filled it (1 Kings 8:10,11; 2 Chron 5:12–14). Yet, even though both the priests and the people had access to God's grace at the sanctuary, they did not have access to his glory. Even the high priest did not have access to it on the Day of Atonement, for when he entered the Holy of Holies on that day, it was completely enveloped in a cloud of smoke which hid God's glory from his sight (Lev 16:2,13).

Only three people were ever permitted to gain a glimpse of God's glory in the Old Testament. Moses was allowed to see God's back rather than his face when he asked the Lord to show him his glory (Exod 33:18–34:9). Isaiah had a vision of God the heavenly king and heard the song of the angels around his throne (Isaiah 6:1–5), while Ezekiel had a vision of God's throne with a figure seated on it which was something like his glory (Ez 1:1–28). But all these were exceptional cases which merely emphasized God's hidden presence with his people at the sanctuary where the choir sang songs of praise to proclaim him and his grace to the assembled congregation (Kleinig 1993, 133–181).

The brief reference in Psalm 29 to the liturgy performed in the heavenly temple stands in stark contrast to this (Spiekermann 165–179). In the heavenly realm the Lord, 'the God of glory' (Ps 29:3), is seen in all his glory and power. There the angels, his royal courtiers, the members of his heavenly council, have full access to his glory and share in it. They are therefore summoned to 'ascribe glory and power' to the Lord, even as they pay homage to him there by prostrating themselves before him (29:1–2). There in the heavenly temple they all perform doxology by naming him and giving glory to him (29:9). In that heavenly assembly they say: 'Glory to the Lord', even as the angelic throne bearers in Ez 3:12 say: 'Blessed be the glory of the Lord in his place'. The doxa of the Lord evokes their doxology. So then, heaven is the proper place for the performance of doxology. There the angels who are surrounded by God's glory, like people standing in the light of the sun, quite naturally give God the glory as they stand in his presence.

Yet, even though heaven is the place where the angels perform doxology in the Lord's presence, that is not the end of the matter in the Old Testament. Rather, the Old Testament looks forward to the universal theophany of the Lord in all his glory to the whole world and the involvement of all people with the angels in their performance of the doxology.

There are three intertwined strands in the development of this hope. First, the Lord himself declared to Moses in Num 14:20 that one day the whole earth would be filled with his glory, even as the tabernacle was filled with it (cf. Exod 40:34).

Secondly, the psalmists both prayed for the theophany of the Lord in glory over all the earth, like the rising sun, and anticipated its appearance (Ps 57:5,11; 72:19; 85:9; 108:5). When the Lord finally appeared to defeat his enemies and to vindicate the righteous, all the nations of the world would see his glory (Ps 97:6) and would glorify his holy name (Ps 86:9; cf 138:4–5). In anticipation of that day, Psalm 96 called on all the earth to 'declare his glory among the nations' (v.3) and invited all the ethnic communities on earth to perform the same doxology to the Lord (v.7–8) which the angels performed in heaven (Ps 29:1–2; cf. 1 Chron 16:23–33).

Thirdly, all these themes were further elaborated in the prophecies of Isaiah. In his great vision of the Lord, the heavenly king, Isaiah heard the angels making the prophetic announcement that the earth would be full of the Lord's glory (Isaiah 6:3; cf. Hab 2:14). In the latter days the whole of Jerusalem would replace the temple as the Lord's residence and be filled with his glory (Isa 4:5; 35:2; 60:1–2; cf 60:13; 62:2; 66:11). The Lord would appear in glory on Zion (24:23) and reveal his glory to all the earth through Zion (40:5), so that all the citizens of Zion (35:2) and all humanity (40:5; 60:2; 66:18) would see him in all his glory (cf 59:19). In fact, God would send out missionaries to all nations on earth to declare his glory to them, so that all people would come to heavenly Zion where they would see his glory and prostrate themselves before him (66:18–23). Then all the nations on earth would glorify the Lord (25:3; cf 24:15; 43:20) and give him glory in a new song of praise to him (42:10–12).

As soon as we come to the New Testament, we notice a shift in the location of doxology and in those who performed it. It is still axiomatic that doxology could only be performed where the Lord was present in his glory. Thus in Eph 3:14–19 Paul concludes his prayer 'before the Father' for provision from 'the riches of his glory' with a doxology to him (Eph 3:20–21). He quite naturally makes the correlation in Phil 4:19–20 between the presence of God's glory in Christ and the performance of doxology. Jude 24–25 connects the installation of the faithful 'in the presence of God's glory' with the performance of doxology. This association of God's glory with doxology is most evident in Luke 2:9–14. There the angelic doxology follows the appearance of the Lord's glory which shone all around the shepherds. Yet, even though these doxologies were performed in the Lord's presence, they were not performed in heaven but on earth.

With the incarnation of God's Son, the place for doxology changes. God's glory is now revealed in the face of Christ (2 Cor 4:6; cf. John 17:5). We therefore now behold 'his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son' (John 1:14; cf. 2 Cor 3:18), because we are where he is with the Father and share in his glory (John 17:22,24). The glory of God now resides in the body of the risen Lord Jesus. His body is the temple of the living God (John 2:21; cf. 12:41). Through him we have access to God's glory and are part of it (Rom 5:2; 2 Thess 2:14; Heb 2:10; 1 Pet 5:10; 2 Pet 1:3).

Since the glory of the Lord has been revealed in the incarnate Son, Luke tells us in his gospel that people 'glorified' God in the presence of Jesus because of his ministry to them (Luke 5:25,26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43; 23:47). Most remarkably, when Jesus taught God's word in the synagogues, those who heard his teaching even glorified him (4:15), even though he did not seek glory for himself but only for his heavenly Father. His work reached its goal when the people who benefited from it gave glory to his Father. Thus the New Testament often asserts that the purpose of Christ's mission and the involvement of his disciples in it was to evoke doxology from all human beings, whether Jew or Gentile (Matt 5:16; John 15:8; Rom 15:5-7,8; 1 Cor 6:20; 10:31; 2 Cor 1:20; 4:15; 8:19; 9:13; Eph 1:6,12,14; Phil 1:11; 2:11; 1 Pet 2:12; 4:11).

With the coming of Christ, doxology began to be performed by humans on earth together with the angels in heaven. In fact, in Eph 1:3-12 Paul declared that Christ had joined the human choir with the angelic choir through his resurrection and ascension (Hofius, 189; Pfitzner, 55). Together they formed one assembly before God and sang one song of praise. Both Jew and Gentiles joined together with the angels in the praise of his glory (Eph 1:6, 12, 14). So, as Paul notes in Eph 3:21, doxology to God is now performed 'in the church and in Christ Jesus'. The performance of that doxology by the saints shows that they have access to the glory of the Father in and through Jesus.

In this respect Christian worship differs from the daily services performed in the synagogue. This difference is most evident in the three forms of the Kedushah, the prayer of sanctification, which, like the Sanctus in our liturgy, is built around the angelic song in Isa 6:3 (Werner, 282-291). Unlike the Sanctus which we perform together with the angels in the presence of God's glory which fills both heaven and earth through the ascension of Jesus (Werner, 284), the synagogue performs the 'Holy, Holy, Holy' on earth parallel to, and yet apart from the angels in heaven (Ego, 68-72).

In all three versions of the Kedushah, the angelic song of Isa 6:3 is coupled with the angelic eulogy from Ez 3:12; 'Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place'. That place is understood as heaven, the divine abode. In the Kedushah at the end of the weekday morning service the praises of the angels are distinguished quite sharply from the praises of Israel by the claim that the whole earth is filled with radiance of his glory. Since the rabbis taught that the people of God in this age only experienced 'the radiance' of God's glory on earth, the Jews, unlike their Christian brothers and sisters, do not perform doxologies in their worship. And they cannot, for they do not yet have access to the heavenly sanctuary.

Doxology then can only be performed where the glory of God dwells. Since the resurrection and ascension of the incarnate Son of God, the glory of God is located in the glorified body of Jesus (Peterson, 21). There the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit reveal their glory both to the angels in heaven and the saints on earth. There the angels and the saints gather in a single heavenly assembly, the church of the living God. There they acknowledge and acclaim God's glory as they perform a common doxology. There they no longer speak of themselves or even address God as someone apart from them, but speak adoringly of him who embraces them and includes them in himself (Schlink, 728). There God is acknowledged as the be-all and end-all of everyone and everything. In the light of that presence all shine with borrowed light, a secondary radiance which they reflect and which glorifies them with its own glory. They no longer speak of themselves but speak only of him in sheer amazement.

2. The Nature and Function of Doxology

There has been considerable discussion among scholars about the origin of doxology in the early church (Flusser, 129-152; Deichgräber, 35-40; Werner, 273-312). No clear antecedent to it has been discovered. It most nearly resembles the eulogies found at the end of each book in the psalter (Ps 41:13; 89:52; 106:48). Yet it differs from them by ascribing glory to God rather than by acknowledging him as the source of blessing.

The remarkable thing about the doxologies found in the New Testament and the early church is the basic pattern which was established from the first and persisted despite considerable variation. The stock formula is: 'to him/to God the glory for ever and ever. Amen'. It consists of four main elements: reference to God, ascription of glory to him, the eternal duration of the doxology, and the affirmation of it by the congregation. The reason for this stability seems to be that, while the last two elements were derived from the eulogies found in the Old Testament and used in the synagogue, the first two

foundational elements repeat the opening phrase from the song of the angels in Luke 2:14. The angelic song is not only the basis for the Greater Doxology (Jungmann 1950, 346–359; Deiss, 204–208) but also for all other doxologies in the early church.

The account of the appearance of the angels to the shepherds in Luke 2:8–20 is the foundational story for the performance of doxology in the early church. The angels not only performed their heavenly doxology in the presence of the shepherds but also invited them to join in its performance. The shepherds did not, however, do so immediately, but only after they had seen the incarnate Christ. After they had heard the gospel from the angels and seen the child, they too glorified God (Luke 2:20). The doxology of the angels is picked up again in an altered form in Luke 19:37,38. Luke reports there that the whole company of disciples welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem by eulogizing him as their king with the Benedictus from Ps 118:26 and by performing the heavenly doxology. They did this in anticipation of his exaltation as the heavenly king who reveals the glory of his heavenly Father and brings heavenly peace to all creation. Yet despite the theological importance of Luke 19:37–38 for the understanding of doxology, Luke 2:14 became the paradigm for doxology in the early church. It gave the warrant for the performance of doxology in its liturgy.

The doxology occurs in two basic forms in the New Testament. The standard form has no verb, even though we normally add the subjunctive form of the verb 'to be' to indicate that it is a performative utterance. This translation, however, is often misunderstood as it is taken to be a wish rather than an enactment. The so-called subjective form occurs in Rom 11:36; 16:25–27; Gal 1:5; Eph 3:20; Phil 4:20; 1 Tim 1:17; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:21; 2 Pet 3:18; Jude 25; Rev 1:6; 5:13; 7:12. The indicative form is found only in 1 Peter 4:11 and as a later addition to the Lord's Prayer in Matt 6:13 (cf Did 8:2; 9:4; 10:5; 1 Clem 58:2). The subjunctive form is therefore the one used in the actual performance of doxology.

The first and most important element in these doxologies is the reference to God in the third person dative case. Even though this is most often done by means of a personal pronoun 'to him' or relative pronoun 'to whom', it always depends on the prior naming of God or else actually names him. These doxologies ascribe glory to 'God' (Rom 11:35–36; Eph 3:19–21; 1 Pet 4:11), 'our God' (Rev 7:12), "our God and Father" (Gal 1:5; Phil 4:20), 'the God of peace' (Heb 13:20–21), 'the only wise God' (Rom 16:27), 'the only God our Saviour' (Jude 25), and 'the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God' (1 Tim 1:17) as well as the 'the Lord' (2 Tim 4:18), 'Jesus Christ' (Rev 1:5–6), and 'our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ' (2 Pet 3:18). The last three cases are particularly significant, because they confess Jesus as divine and the source of divine glory. His equality with the Father comes out most clearly in Rev 5:13 where both God the divine monarch and the Lamb together receive the universal doxology from all creation. In a number of instances this naming of God is also accompanied by reference either to the empowerment of the faithful by him (Rom 16:25–26; Eph 3:20; Jude 24; cf Mart Pol 20:2) or their consecration as priests by Jesus (Rev 1:5^b–6). Yet these references to what God does are not an essential part of a doxology which always concentrates on naming God.

The naming of God in these doxologies serves a very important ritual and theological function. It identifies him by name and accounts his presence. More importantly, it also acknowledges that access to his divine presence and glory is gained by the invocation of that name rather than by contact with an idol, for just as the Lord had revealed his glory to Moses by the proclamation of his holy name (Exod 33:18–34:7), so the glory of the Triune God is revealed in the church by the proclamation and confession of his name (Kleinig 1992, 27–34).

The second element in all these doxologies is their ascription of glory to God. This gives them their name and describes their function. Now the simple ascription of glory to God the Father or to Jesus is by far the most common practice in the New Testament which is still close enough to the Old Testament and its Jewish roots to understand the Greek word *doxa* liturgically and theologically as God's manifest presence (Rom 11:36; 16:27; Gal 1:5; Eph 3:21; Phil 4:20; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:31). Even though the doxology is performed in God's presence by those who have access to his glory, it is not addressed to God but to the congregation and the world. It acknowledges and confesses, announces and proclaims, mirrors and reflects God's glory verbally to the world. It does not therefore focus on God's qualities, deeds and gifts but on God himself and his name. It is sheer praise.

In his letters Paul makes mention of how the saints in their worship enjoy 'the riches of God's glory' (Rom 9:23; Eph 1:18; 3:16; Phil 4:19; Col 1:27) and 'the power of his glory' (Col 1:11). This sense of enrichment and empowerment from access to God's glory resulted in the expansion of the basis doxology. The simple ascription of glory to God was explicated by the multiplication of terms which were either synonyms for glory or else descriptions of its effect on those who had access to it. Thus we find the pairs: 'the honour and the glory' (1 Tim 1:17) and 'the glory and the power' (1 Pet 4:11; Rev 1:16); the triplet: 'the kingdom and the power and the glory' (Matt 6:13); the quartets: 'glory, majesty, power, and authority' (Jude 25) and 'the blessing and the honour and the glory and the power' (Rev 5:13); and, most fulsomely, the septet: 'the blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the

thanksgiving and the honour and the strength and the might' (Rev 7:12). All these affirm in their profusion that there is nothing greater or richer or more wonderful than God's super-abundant presence. They show that the greatest joy comes from the self-oblivious enjoyment of God himself in all his glory.

The third stock element in these doxologies is the mention of the eternal duration of doxology. This is expressed in a number of ways. Most simply, glory is to be given to God 'forever', ie 'for the aeons' and 'throughout all the ages' of world history (Rom 11:36). But this phrase is most commonly expanded to 'forever and ever', ie 'for the aeons of the aeons' (Rom 16:27; Gal 1:5; Phil 4:20; 1 Tim 1:17; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 4:11; Rev 1:6; 5:13; 7:12). It is to be understood in the rabbinical sense as all the ages in both this age and the age to come. This is evident from its paraphrase in 2 Pet 3:18 as 'both now and for the day of eternity' (cf Mart Pol 14:3).

This reference to the duration of doxology is varied to two significant ways. On the one hand, Eph 3:21 adds 'for all generations' to 'the aeons of the aeons' to indicate that, since the church spanned by aeons, every generation of human beings in both aeons and from both aeons would join the angels in their performance of doxology (cf 1 Clem 61:3; Mart Pol 21). On the other hand, Jude 25 insists that the doxology, now performed in the church, was already performed before the first aeon of human history and would continue to be performed for all aeons. He obviously refers to the performance of the doxology by the angels in God's presence before the creation of the world.

The reference to the eternal duration of the doxology serves two important liturgical functions. On the one hand, it shows that the doxology is the eternal song sung by church as a heavenly community on earth. It has always been sung in God's presence by the angels and will always be sung in God's presence by the saints in time and for all eternity. It is the song that never ends, even as God's glory never diminishes or ends. On the other hand, it acknowledges and announces that the eternal glory of God has been made manifest to the saints here on earth in time and space. Its epiphany divides human history into two aeons. The performance of doxology by humans in their worship here on earth announces that the iron curtain between heaven and earth, the gulf between time and eternity, has been breached and is bridged by the risen Lord Jesus. Those who sing this doxology show that they have access to God's heavenly glory already now here on earth. Wherever it is sung the new age has begun.

The fourth element in these doxologies is their conclusion with 'Amen' in all cases except 2 Pet 3:18, and that only in some manuscripts. In fact, liturgically speaking, 'Amen' has its proper place and performs its proper function as the congregational response to the performance of the doxology in the divine service (2 Cor 1:20). By joining in the Amen, the congregation participates in the doxology and affirms it. It acknowledges that it stands together with the angels and all the saints in the presence of God's glory.

The nature of doxology is clarified by the addition, in a few places, of the phrase 'through Jesus Christ' (Rom 16:27; 1 Pet 4:11; Jude 25; cf 1 Clem 58:2; 61:3; 64; 65:2; Mart Pol 14:3; 20:2; Diag 12:9). This is not just a simple way of christianising a Jewish formula, as Deichgräber claims (40), but is, as Jugmann has shown impressively (1965,3–171), a profound acknowledgement of Jesus as the great high priest and liturgist in Christian worship. Jesus therefore does not just reveal the Father's glory to the saints but also leads them in their performance of doxology to his heavenly Father (cf Heb 13:15), even as he leads them in their petitions (Heb 7:25) and thanksgiving (Rom 1:8; 7:25; Col 3:17; cf Eph 5:20). In fact, the saints do not just glorify God the Father 'through Jesus' but also 'in Jesus' (Eph 3:21; cf Phil 14:19–20 where 'in Christ Jesus' could refer either to God's provision or the performance of doxology). Corriveau (1970,116) sums up this reality quite succinctly: 'As the glory of God has been manifested in Christ, so it is in Christ that glory is rendered to him'.

With these affirmations about the role of Christ in the enactment of doxology, we reach the most profound depths of its mystery. This is explained most fully in St John's gospel where doxology is envisaged as a circular inter-trinitarian interchange between the Father and the Son and as the involvement of Christ's disciples in that interchange. The Father glorifies the Son (John 8:54; 17:1,5), even as the Spirit glorifies the Son (16:14,5). The Son in turn does not glorify himself (8:54) but glorifies the Father (17:1,4; cf 13:21, 32; 14:13). As the Son reveals his glory to his disciples by sharing his position in the godhead with them (17:22,24), he is glorified in them (17:10). So then, the Father glorifies his holy name on and through the Son (12:28). When the church prays in the name of Jesus, it joins with Jesus in glorifying his heavenly Father (14:3). Since it shares in the glory of the Son, it glorifies the Father together with him.

Doxologies are found just as frequently in the apostolic fathers as in the New Testament (Did 8:2; 9:2, 3, 4; 10:2, 4, 5; 1 Clem 20:12; 32:4; 38:4; 45:7; 50:7; 58:2; 61:3; 64; 65:2; 2 Clem 20:5; Mart Pol 14:3; 20:2; 22:1, 3; Diag 12:9), for as Ignatius had urged (Eph 13:1), Christians assembled each Sunday to perform doxology as well as thanksgiving (eucharist) to God. As is shown by Justin (Apol 1:65), the

performance of doxology to 'God the Father in the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit' was a regular part of the eucharist liturgy in Rome by the middle of the second century. The same was most likely the practice everywhere.

These doxologies follow the same pattern and perform the same function as the doxologies in the New Testament. But they also exhibit three significant developments. First, when they were used, as they often were, to conclude liturgical prayers, they were addressed directly in the second person to God the Father (Did 8:2; 9:2; 3, 4; 10:2, 4, 5; 1 Clem 61:3; Mart Pol 14:3). Secondly, while they often gave glory to God the Father 'through Jesus Christ' (Did 9:14; 1 Clem 58:2; 61:3; 64; 65:2; Mart Pol 14:3; 20:2; cf Diag 12:9), in Mart Pol 14:3 glory is said to be given 'together with' (Greek *meta*) Jesus. The faithful were therefore held to join with Jesus as he gave glory to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Lastly and most significantly for the future development of the doxology, Jesus does not just lead the faithful in giving glory to the Father and to the Holy Spirit (Mart Pol 22:1); he also receives glory from the faithful 'together with' (Greek *syn*) the Father and the Holy Spirit, even as he leads the faithful in giving glory to the Father and the Holy Spirit (Mart Pol 14:3; 22:3). Thus by the end of the first century the doxology took on a Trinitarian shape both in its mode of operation and in its content.

From these beginnings three basic Trinitarian forms of doxology were accepted and used as the epitome of orthodoxy in the early church. The first was the functional mediatorial form which was patterned on Eph 2:18: 'Glory to the Father through he Son in (or by) the Holy Spirit....'. It showed how doxology was actually performed in the liturgy with the risen Lord Jesus as the leader and liturgist. Since this form of doxology was used by the Arians to champion their cause, it gradually fell into disuse despite its antiquity and utility (see Jungmann 1965, 172–190). The second was the intra-trinitarian doxology: 'Glory to the Father with (meta) the Son together with (syn) the Holy Spirit....'. Like the functional, mediatorial doxology, it focused on the Father as the source of glory in the godhead and emphasised the participation of the faithful in the common doxology offered to the Father by both the Son and the Holy Spirit. The third form was the extra-trinitarian confessional doxology: 'Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit....'. It came into prominence as the essence of orthodoxy in the wake of the Arian heresy. Its wording was fixed at the Council of Vaison in 529 AD. The focus in it was on who should receive glory rather than on how glory was to be given in the liturgy. St Basil maintains that it was derived from the baptismal mandate in Matt 28:19 and so echoed the baptismal confession of faith (1955, 'On the Spirit,' par 60:37; par 68:43; Letter XCI, 177). This became the standard formula for doxology in the west where it is known to the present day as the Lesser Doxology to distinguish it from the Great Gloria.

From these beginnings the doxology has come down to us as one of the best known and most utilized parts of the liturgy. It has been used liturgically by the Lutheran Church in six basic forms: the Great Gloria in the entrance rite for the Service with Communion; the Lesser Doxology at the conclusion of an introit or a psalm or a canticle or the vesicles for Matins and Vespers or the responses for Matins and Vespers; the gospel acclamation: 'Glory be to you, O Lord'; the doxological conclusion to the Lord's Prayer; the doxological ending to many traditional collects and prayers; and the oblatory doxology at the end of the eucharistic prayer in the LBW. Its simplicity belies its profundity. In all its varied forms it proclaims the wonderful mystery of God's incarnate presence with the saints in the divine service.

3. Conclusion

The performance of the doxology is a unique feature of Christian worship. In the early church it served to distinguish Christians from Jews as well as the orthodox from the heterodox. It was therefore rightly regarded as the epitome of orthodoxy, for orthodoxy is right praise, the correct performance of doxology to the Triune God. The glory of God was therefore never understood in the early church as an abstract principle for the motivation of a right attitude to life and for submission to the sovereignty of God, as it has become in many western churches under the influence of Calvin, but was acknowledged and celebrated ritually in the eucharistic liturgy.

The performance of the doxology in the liturgy involves us in the central mystery of the divine service which, as Paul reminds us in 1 Tim 3:16, revolves around the physical assumption of Jesus into glory. He is now both seen by angels and is preached among the nations. In the divine service where 'the gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor 4:4) is proclaimed and enacted, we who see 'the glory of God in the face of Christ' (2 Cor 4:6), we who are being 'transformed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another' (2 Cor 3:18), perform the doxology together with the angels. Even more wonderfully, we join with the risen Lord Jesus as he gives glory to his heavenly Father.

By performing that doxology, we tell the world that in and through the risen Lord Jesus we have access to heaven here on earth; we acknowledge, laud and proclaim the gracious presence of the Triune God with us. And as we perform that doxology in the very presence of the living God, we who have been called by the gospel to 'share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ' (2 Thess 2:14), are

glorified as we glorify him. In amazement we forget ourselves. We do the only thing that we can do in God's presence and say all that we can ultimately say about God. As Brunner (211) says:

'In this final word which the creature may say about God, the creature exists only for God....., fulfilling its own essence by the fact that it is no longer, and needs no longer to be, anything but the perfect mirror of God's glory'.

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