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The Interior Castle: The Soul and Competing Visions of the Church

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Abstract: The overarching question I am interested in is what it might mean to be part of the church, or the Body of Christ. This paper focuses on models of the soul and asks how each model might understand our unity as a church. I focus on two models, which I call a "castle model," in honor of Teresa of Avila's image of the soul as an interior castle, and a "capacity model," following the broadly Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition. Although these two models do not map perfectly onto any single thinker, they mark out tendencies and emphases that characterize a number of important thinkers, and they map, more or less, onto philosophical discussions of dualism and hylomorphism. In this paper, I articulate key features of each model, responding briefly to significant concerns relevant to ecclesiology, and then reflect on how adopting that model might shape ecclesiology.

When Luther and the Reformers set out—despite the subsequent history—their initial goal, that first passion, was *reform of the church.* Not beginning again but, rather, serving the church. The first Reformers were united in their conviction—as the church has taught throughout its history—that there is no salvation outside the church,[1] that, as St. Cyprian famously said, "you cannot call God your Father, unless you have the Church as your Mother," and as we are taught in Ephesians, Christ died for the church. Despite the ease of certain short-hand ways of speaking of salvation, Scripture does not teach that salvation comes simply through a direct conversion of individual souls. Nor should it be seen primarily as the individual's private relation to God. Rather, salvation must involve becoming a

[1] For example, John Calvin writes in the *Institutes*: "…beyond the pale of the Church no forgiveness of sins, no salvation, can be hoped for" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion,* trans. Henry Beveridge, ed. Anthony Uyl (Ontario, Canada: Devoted Publishing, 2016), IV.1.4).

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member of Christ's body, becoming part of that church for which Christ died.[2]

In some ways, it is deeply ironic—even if understandable—that Luther's heirs have been somewhat light on ecclesiology. There are so many questions, so many ways to unpack claims about the church—about the relation of our local gatherings and denominational affiliations, to the church universal, the key distinction between visible and invisible church, and the many bad versions of church relations throughout our history. It is little surprise that ecclesiology can strike fear in many a theorists' heart. Regardless of the challenges, however, I would like to begin by celebrating Luther's deep conviction that life in Christ is always life as part of Christ's Body. But what does it mean to be part of the church, the Body of Christ? In what ways or in what senses may we be united, becoming one, as Jesus and the Father are one? This is both a philosophical and theological question. It is the sort of question that asks us, among other things, to have an account of the kinds of beings we are (both individually and collectively) such that *we* might be a *we* and thus in what possible ways *we* could be united into what sorts of wholes.

I'd like to approach this question from the side of the person, reflecting on possible metaphysical accounts of the individual in order to reflect on the possible relations we might have with the church. Given who each of us is, the kinds of beings that we are, what types of unity are possible? And what might "the church" look like? One could get at these questions from many directions. For example, we might do an analysis of the teachings on church in Scripture and then ask what must then be the case regarding persons, in order to be the church we are taught about in Scripture. Surely a fully adequate account would require that we do this theological work, as well as much other philosophical work. There are also a number of philosophical ways we might proceed. Certainly, we could ask whether a metaphysical or phenomenological starting point is more appropriate, and there are many, many competing visions of the person that might be compared, providing differing points of entry.

I would like to approach this question in a fairly limited way, beginning with two models of the human soul and asking, given each of these models, how might we understand our unity within Christ's Body? This will by no means be an exhaustive study. Not all theorists are committed to the notion that human beings *have* souls, of any sort, and there is certainly a range of

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[2] One might, of course, understand by "church" simply the collection of individuals, all of whom have private, personal relationships with God. The focus in Scripture, however, on our unity in one body, the nature of Christ's prayer in the Garden prior to His crucifixion, and the long emphases within the Christian tradition (as well as a number of philosophical considerations) all have convinced me that this cannot quite be the right understanding of "church."

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positions regarding soul, among those who do. Thus, a focus on soul and a focus on these two particular models is not itself fully adequate even to a limited philosophical question.

Nonetheless, there are some advantages to this approach. First, the notion of *soul* has been an important idea among Christian philosophers throughout church history. Second, there are some Biblical and theological reasons for affirming a soul, even if it is not universally held by faithful Christians. Third, the notion of soul has played an important role in traditional understandings both of how we relate to God and how we relate to each other. Thus, theories of the person that affirm a human soul are at least *among* the significant conversation partners in the discussion of how anthropological theories and ecclesiology fit together.

I've titled the two models of soul I'd like to consider: (i) castle models, in honor of Teresa of Avila's image of the soul as an interior castle, and (ii) capacity models, following the broadly Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition. I'd like to note, first, that the two models will not map perfectly onto any single thinker, but they mark out tendencies and emphases that characterize a number of important thinkers. Second, each of these models is importantly related to classic dualist and hylomorphist understandings of soul, but they bring out slightly different features than have generally been emphasized in the dualist and hylomorphist conversations, and I think that they indicate some flexibilities available to both traditions.

I'll begin with the castle model, articulate 3 key features of that model, at least as I am understanding it here, respond briefly to two significant concerns, and then reflect on how adopting it might shape our ecclesiology. Then I would like to present a similar reflection on the capacity model, with an eye to how it contrasts with the castle model, and how it would impact our possible understandings of church.

Castle Models of the Soul

Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle* is the clear origin for the castle image of soul. As used by Teresa of Avila, it is not clear whether it is primarily a metaphor for her religious experiences or a metaphysical model of soul. I'd like to use it here not as a metaphor, but as a metaphysical model, a metaphysical understanding of soul. I've been pushed in this direction by Edith Stein, the twentieth-century phenomenologist-turned-metaphysician. She explicitly takes Teresa's image to contain a metaphysical account, and I have found thinking of it as a way of understanding the structure of soul to be useful as we interpret

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other thinkers, such as Augustine, Luther, and the broadly Augustinian tradition.

Among the features of soul in this model are:

1. The soul is understood as an immaterial and (more or less) independent substance. It is not a physical castle, but an immaterial, individual, and private analog. That is, it has its primary structural features independent of any bodily life and could—in part or in whole—be separated from the body, while retaining its fundamental structure.

2. It is understood to have its own (either individual or species-specific) character, independent of both our conscious awareness and our bodily life. Various theorists will fill out the character in different ways, and some take the soul to have more or less detailed character.

   Teresa of Avila famously articulated our soul's character as one with both more exterior and interior rooms, and—on her account—one can describe the various rooms, the features and characteristics of those rooms as well as the processes of moving from one room to another. Given the character of soul, notions such as *exploring* and *discovering* one's soul are fit to this model, and these are emphasized by thinkers such as Stein and Augustine.

3. Related to point two, growth in one's spiritual life is importantly about coming to know one's own soul and moving gradually to dwell in the more interior rooms. Teresa understands the most interior room to be the dwelling place of God within the soul and movement to that room involves a spiritual marriage of the soul with God. We can see a similar image in Augustine's *Confessions*, as he speaks of his own mystical experiences in Book IX as well as his repeated call to "return to his own soul." Other thinkers use the language of "possession" of one's soul or "abiding" in one's interior,[3] and, as with Augustine's language, the focus is on a soul as that which has its own identity distinct from other things, an identity to be explored, understood, and returned to, possessed, or in some sense lived out

[3] See Edith Stein, "The Image of the Trinity in the Created World," in *Finite and Eternal Being*, trans. Kurt F. Reinhardt, (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2002), 355-467.

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> of—and in that dwelling and possession, one develops spiritual maturity.

I am intrigued by this model, in part because it appears to have informed the spiritual life of a significant number of religious giants. If Augustine, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Martin Luther, and other Christian heroes describe their most significant encounters with God in a way fit to this model, then I am hesitant to set it aside cavalierly. Our metaphysical positions need to be internally consistent, able to respond to significant objections, and experientially adequate. The religious experiences of great leaders of the faith are not unimportant data for Christian philosophers to take into account. There could, of course, be misunderstandings of aspects of one's experience, and there are surely important translations that must occur when articulating metaphysical structures, rather than recording one's first-personal religious experience. Nonetheless, the seeming fit between certain religious experiences and the castle model of the soul is not a minor consideration.

I have also been led to take seriously this account of soul by the arguments Edith Stein gives in her great opus, *Finite and Eternal Being*. Among Stein's projects is giving a more philosophically nuanced version of the castle model, and she points to features of our experiences which suggest a character-rich immaterial soul out of which we may live. For example, one might think of cases where one hears a piece of wonderful news, which may be unrelated to your own personal life. It is good news, appropriately evoking joy, but, nonetheless, some of us may *experience* joy whereas others recognize that they ought to be joyful but do not feel joyful. There can be some feature or trait within us that prevents us from experiencing what we would expect ourselves to experience. Perhaps, one might say, these differing felt responses—despite agreement that the content should evoke joy—point to previous formation, as well as our other competing current experiences. Surely each of these is an important part of the story. I can be exhausted, struggling with my own problems, and cannot feel joy at another's good fortune, despite being convinced that it is truly news about which I ought to and want to feel joy. But, in other cases, such an explanation does not seem adequate. There are occasions when, despite one's whole formation, despite being convinced that some news ought to evoke joy, despite being seemingly rested and well, one may, nevertheless, not experience what one expects to. We do have cases where we both take something to be genuinely worthy of a certain response and yet we do not have that response—and we can find no good reason for that failure.

Similarly, we can be caught off guard by the strength of an experience. Someone can be "struck to her core" in an unexpected way, reached at times or

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by situations that—given her history, given her previous formation, given her habits—is deeply unexpected. Such moments catch us off-guard. They seem to come from an inner depth that is not always fully accounted for by pointing to previous experiences or encounters. We can seem—as Nietzsche might say—foreign and unknown to ourselves.

A castle model of soul has a ready answer for these experiences. Yes, we are shaped by our histories. Yes, our physical condition and resources color how we experience. But there is also a character to the soul itself, shaping how we experience events. That is, there is a character-rich underlying aspect of us out of which our current experiences may rise.

A castle theorist can also give an account of disciplines such as psychology, which are capable of articulating laws of psychological reactions, giving an account of what patterns to expect in what relations and conditions, regardless of one's culture or other formative elements, etc. Castle theorists can account for this predictability, and thus psychology as a genuine discipline, by pointing to the features and traits of human souls *per se*. Similarly, a castle theorist could see the great mystical writers as providing a science of spiritual development, articulating the patterns by which we come to know and love, and come to be united to God.[4] And, of course, a castle theorist can also, insofar as the model is a variation on classic dualism, give the same kinds of arguments that classic dualists do regarding language, understanding, and identity, as well as making use of the model to discuss immortality and life after death.

Objections and Responses

There are, however, concerns that commonly haunt castle-type models of soul. The most significant one for my question today is the challenge that is present for any more dualist account: that is, the castle model, like dualisms generally, appears to encourage a kind of anti-social individualism at odds with any strong vision of our membership within the church. Insofar as soul on this model is a separable substance, maintaining its structure and identity independent of the body, and insofar as we meet God most fully in those innermost rooms of the soul, our bodies can easily be seen as mere husks that we carry along in this life, things to be discarded as soon as we can, while our

[4] Stein claims this explicitly in the introduction to her *Science of the Cross* (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 2002), and we can see a similar argument implicitly at work in her writings on Teresa of Avila, especially the appendix to *Finite and Eternal Being*.

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relations with both our bodies and with other beings can be seen as incidental to the true spiritual goal of unity with God in the innermost rooms of our soul.[5]

It does seem to me, however, that there are several things an advocate of a castle view could say to these objections. One might, for example, argue that, although the rooms have character to be discovered, some of the rooms have—as their character and discoverable features—an essential relation to various of our bodily functions or physical development. A castle view is unlikely to say that *all* of the rooms are essentially tied to physical life, but some could be. (And thus the castle model could be distinguished from strong forms of Cartesian dualism.) Perhaps a proponent of the view could say, with Thomas Aquinas, that matter and bodily life are essential to at least certain aspects of the soul—or certain rooms, if you will—and thus a human soul separated from its body is incomplete, longing for the fullness of a resurrected body.[6] Thus, although one might worry that the castle model—like certain dualist ones—has an inherent tendency toward forms of Gnosticism, it is not clear to me that this need be so. The castle model offers us a good deal of flexibility in how we unpack the relation of body and soul, and at least certain versions might offer rich connections.[7]

Further, although advocates of this model often emphasize a withdrawal from the senses and even this temporal world, that is, a move away from the more exterior rooms into the more interior ones, this move need not be understood in a simple way that involves mere separation. For example, Stein carefully distinguishes our *soul* from the *I,* who dwells in the soul. Following Husserl and the phenomenological tradition, she understands the *I* to be relational and intentional. I do not merely dwell in myself, but am oriented toward objects, things, ideas, persons, etc. The soul as a castle is then a place or perspective from which the *I* relates to other things. An *I* that dwells in more exterior rooms tends to focus on more superficial aspects of that toward which it is directed. As an *I* moves more deeply into its own soul, the *I* recognizes

[5] Or, with a nod to Descartes and the modern philosophical tradition, we might articulate the question as one of the relation of body and soul, the challenges of substance dualism, the question of the existence of other minds, etc. Insofar as the castle model emphasizes the independent structure and identity *of the soul,* then it appears that numerous theological and philosophical questions come up quite quickly.

[6] Although I will not explore this in the following, one could also develop a version of “rooms of the soul” that are interpersonal, perhaps a kind of *Mitsein*-structure, adapting Heidegger.

[7] It appears to me that this is the type of castle model Edith Stein is developing in her later metaphysical writings. She makes clear a rejection of the Aristotelian-Thomistic model as ultimately adequate to describing the soul, although she claims that it accounts for aspects of soul. See especially: *Finite and Eternal Being*, chapter VII.

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more relations among the things; it feels the significance of events and entities more deeply and appropriately; and as it moves into the most interior rooms, the *I* begins to see and feel the world and others from the perspective of Eternity. Given this account, the soul as castle need not be taken primarily as that which draws us away from the world but, rather, as a way to come into a deeper and more adequate communion with all of being.[8]

If these elaborations of the model are plausible, then it seems to me that the castle model of soul does not necessarily separate body and soul in ways problematic for an embrace of resurrected bodies, nor need it have anti-social implications. The sense in which one withdraws into one's soul need not involve drawing away, in any unchristian sense, from others.

Relation to Church

As I think about how we may be *one* with others, given this model, we could certainly be *one* in the sense of our intertwined physical needs and dependence. We should not sell this dimension short. We can also see a 'one-ness,' in the interrelationship among us in our spiritual lives insofar as (a) we need other individuals—both living and dead—as guides in coming to dwell with God in our souls and (b) in the orientation to others that occurs as we move inward.

I'd like to unpack each of these. A castle theorist understands the soul as a thing to be navigated, that which we must explore, come to understand, possess or dwell in more deeply. As one needs a guide to travel well through a mountain pass or navigate a complex building, so too a castle theorist might see other human individuals as important for navigating our own souls. One might argue that, given both our finitude and fallenness, it is extremely difficult to travel well one's own soul without the guidance of experienced others. Certainly, Christ would be foremost among such guides, but God may choose to use other humans as aids.

I take it the most significant relation with others, however, comes not at the point of working *to enter* the depths of the soul, although there may be important relations there, but, rather, in how we feel and value others the more deeply we enter our souls. If Stein is right that, in coming to the interior of the soul, we would come to greater communion with reality, including the source of all Being, Being Itself, then it is being united in love for others that is the *result* of dwelling in the inner part of the soul that is most significant. We might think of Augustine's lines in the *Confessions* IV, §9 in this light. He says, "Blessed is the

[8] See Stein's appendix to *Finite and Eternal Being* on Teresa's interior castle.

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man who loves You [that is, God], who loves his friend in You, and his enemy because of You."[9] In loving God, in the *I* coming to dwell in the innermost part of the soul, the *I* would develop a perspective on others and the ability to love another as God does. Thus, it is truly *in God* that we come to be united rightly to others.

If the castle model for soul is right, then it seems to me that our relations with others would be, in the outer realms of soul, primarily ones tied to our physical and psychological lives; as one moves inward, there might be a crucial role played by others in offering guidance in that interior journey; but the key point of togetherness with others occurs via love that results from deeper unity with God and God's perspective on another. This could result in various actions toward others, developing a more deeply empathetic understanding of other's experiences, etc., but I take the communion with others *because of* one's love of and unity with God to be fundamental here. Such a view would certainly value particular concrete churches, and the emphasis put on the need for guides would shape the emphases and articulation of the role of the local church. But the greater emphasis may be on the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church understood as that which Christ loves and through union with Christ, we too may come to love as God loves. Thus, one might say that the full flowering of the church occurs insofar as we become first united to God; insofar as we are rooted in the vine, there can be outgrowth of oneness with others.

There is much, it seems to me, to recommend this vision. But let's consider an alternative first: a capacities model of soul.

Capacities Models of Soul

By capacities models, I mean those models which emphasize the soul as—not primarily an independent substance—but a seat of potencies or capacities that then need to be developed in various ways.[10] The chief example would be Aristotelian hylomorphism, in so far as it challenges Platonic dualism.[11] One of the great strengths of this view is its ability to account for the unity of body and soul, matter and form. At core, a capacities model of soul, as I'm calling it, sees soul as a principle of growth and development, as a set of capacities directing a thing to develop in certain ways. Capacity models see

[9] *Confessions of Saint Augustine*, trans. Rex Warner (New York, NY: Signet, 2009).

[10] Although not fond of metaphysical readings of her work, Martha Nussbaum has popularized the notion of focusing on Aristotle's theory as a "capacities account."

[11] There are various ways to read, for example, Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (e.g., Jonathan Lear's, Nussbaum's, Daryl Tress's, Laval Thomists', etc.). In citing Aristotle here, it would be better to say that I am citing certain readings of Aristotle and emphases in Aristotle.

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externalization in matter[12] as the *way of being* for the soul. Most capacity theorists would find the spatializing metaphors of the castle theorists to be problematic. If you can point to something, that is, if it has some kind of spatial dimension (even imagined spatial dimension), then it must be an already actualized unity of form or soul and matter. This is the reason Aristotle claims that form and matter are *principles,* not things. As principles, they are inseparable aspects of things but are not, themselves, things. We can *understand* the formal and material principles, but we cannot *imagine* them. Thus, capacity models of soul would emphasize the being of soul as primarily a *potency coming to act*, rather than an easily separable substance.[13] Soul is not a "thing," but a principle enabling there to be things that have become this, rather than that, within their matter.

On this model, the emphasis is placed on the way in which our capacities are developed, that is, whether we develop virtues or vices, whether we become—through our matter, material conditions, and in our choices—the sorts of beings our souls have the potential to be. Thus, the emphasis is on the notion of soul as nothing in itself; it is but a *set of capacities* which have their being precisely in their actualization. Matter in this tradition should not be understood as *stuff*, this physical entity before one. Matter should be taken as *whatever* shapes how the soul develops and becomes itself. The books we read, the movies we watch, the conversations we have with our parents, the sermons we hear, and the love we do or do not feel, are all as "material" as the pizza we eat. And insofar as the shape of the soul is directly impacted by the kind of matter it develops through, all matter matters.[14] I think of a child who listens to Bach, Mozart, and Handel, versus one immersed in John Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Wynton Marsalis. Each may fully develop her musical capacities, but there would be a different cast and sound to the music played. And a child never allowed to listen or spend time with any music would end up woefully deficient in her musical abilities.

There are certainly thinkers who use this model and nonetheless think that soul is responsible for more than the formation of the body, the development of more than material life. Thomas Aquinas, for example, clearly understands the soul as capable of some kinds of non-material-based activities, and he does not take the soul to be matter-bound in all respects. But his

[12] Or, for pure forms (i.e., angels), in being.

[13] Certainly, someone like Thomas Aquinas speaks of the soul as the first act of the body, etc. But he is emphasizing the nature of soul as a principle of act *in relation to* matter, which would be pure potency for formation.

[14] This strikes me as consistent with Aristotle, but it is not a point he explicitly discussed. I titled this type of matter "cultural and environmental matter" in contrast to "biological matter" in my *An Aristotelian Feminism* (Switzerland: Springer, 2016).

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language is quite distinctive. In the *Summa,* Thomas describes soul in general as "the first principle of life, [which] is not a body, but the act of a body."[15] Thomas describes the soul quite clearly as a *principle*, not a thing or part, and as an "act of a body." When he speaks of *human* souls, he does say that the soul "has an operation *per se* apart from the body,"[16] but this operation is articulated in relation to matter: it rises "above corporeal matter"; it is less "merged in matter"; it excels "matter by its power and operation."[17] And, finally, when he talks about human knowing, Thomas claims that even those acts of knowing that "rise above matter" do so via sense experiences.[18] One might think of our ability to do higher mathematics. Even when we can do quite abstract math, that ability is built from years of playing with blocks and counting particular items. The capacities may, ultimately, function in relative independence of our bodies, but they rise out of such a dependence—and thus can truly be said to develop in and through our matter.

Because our soul has such "relative independence," Thomas has confidence that our soul may survive the death of our human bodies. And in a very important respect, the immaterial soul is a substance, but Thomas Aquinas does not use the language common in the castle tradition of the soul abiding in itself, one's possession of the soul, or the notion of an inward turn. Thus, it seems to me that discussion of soul in this tradition focuses on capacities and the actualization of those capacities, whether one is talking of a primarily matter-bound soul or one that can function relatively independently of matter.

I find the capacities model very attractive in part because of how deeply integrated the body is into the whole model. Given the capacities model, it is easy to see how *our bodily, physical* life matters; we can affirm easily the goodness of creation, and we can understand how our relations with each other matter for how each of us comes to understand God and our calling before God. All of our life, our capacities and development are affected by the social, historical, emotional, and physical worlds in which we have been planted. Further, the adaptations of the qualified hylomorphists can provide ways to reflect on both the possibility of surviving the death of this physical body and the Christian affirmation of the resurrection of the body. But the capacities model needs to have something to say about the very points making the castle model so attractive. A castle theorist might object, first, that the capacities model sells short our *inner lives* in the sense of experiences of self-discovery and various

[15] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 3 vols., trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benzinger Brothers, Inc., 1947), I, q. 73, a. 1c.

[16] *Summa theologica* I, q. 73, a. 2c.

[17] *Summa theologica* I, q. 76, a. 1c.

[18] *Summa theologica* I, q. 76, a. 5.

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depths at which we might experience things, and, secondly, that it cannot as easily account for the descriptions of the experience of God given by so many great Christians. It seems to me that there are several ways in which capacity theorists could respond to these challenges.

Certainly, many of the leaders advocating a capacities model, such as Thomas Aquinas, emphasize the language of coming to know ourselves. Insofar as *capacities* are precisely what is *not yet but could be*, we need time and experience in order to understand what we are like and what we are capable of. Doing so might involve studying the perfect life of Christ, the models given in Scripture, and the lives of holy people. But in addition, we would also need to study our own habits, the tendencies and virtues and vices each of us has habituated, so that one can better understand how each of our souls has developed thus far.

Further, formation and development begin the moment one comes into being. Long before we are richly conscious, long before we have a concept of the self as a free *I*, one's soul has already developed and become in many, many different ways in the particularities of one's matter.[19] And even when conscious, much of the development of one's capacities continues outside a sphere accessible to conscious awareness. For example, an individual might be convinced that she has truly and deeply forgiven a friend's betrayal and that the relationship has been repaired, but an experience of unexpected resentment over some slight or in an inappropriately deep anger may indicate that the person has not, in fact, worked through all of the harm and hurt.[20] We can truly discover things about ourselves and our formation,[21] and thus a capacities model can provide a way to think about notions such as coming to know oneself, abiding in oneself, or possessing one's own soul.

A capacity theorist might grant that the castle metaphor is experientially significant. It is tremendously helpful to think of soul as a building that has been formed through our experiences, through unfolding or actualizing in the very concrete and particular events of our lives. It is a building that can be looked back upon and discovered. And thus, the model of soul as like a spatial castle can provide help for the very difficult practice of coming to know who we have become, how our souls have been actualized.[22] One might further

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[19] Stein makes this point in FEB VII, §3, 4.

[20] Most of these are coming from Stein. See FEB VII, §3, 4.

[21] We might too look at recent studies on the effect of experiences on, for example, the structure of our DNA, and the various ways in which we can physically pass those formations on. These suggestions, although not yet evidence, provide a productive way of seeing Stein and the Aristotelian-Thomist in dialogue.

[22] A capacity theorist might also develop the "discovery" aspects by emphasizing the role of *secondary matter*. See, especially, Stein's discussion of such secondary matter in her way

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claim that, insofar as the first-person subjective perspective is more foundational than any third-person metaphysical perspective, the castle account of the soul should be seen as more foundational, getting more centrally at the meaning of soul. All metaphysical work needs to begin from the soul *as experienced* and *lived*, rather than the soul as an object comparable to rocks and typewriters. To begin with the soul as metaphysical object is to treat our primary experience of soul as non-personal, to fail to take seriously the right lessons of the turn to the subject. Thus, one might argue that the castle model has a certain pride of place, even if metaphysically failing to give the full account of soul.

I would like to note, however, that the capacity theorist would see the spatial metaphors as *experientially useful* but metaphysically misleading.[23] We do, in our reflection, need to rise above the flux of experience and notice our habits, tendencies, patterns. Doing so, may then lead one to envisage "the soul as a thing-like substance with enduring properties."[24] Insofar as the self-awareness of consciousness, that is, the self-awareness concomitant with all conscious experience, need not rise to the level of self-reflection, maturity and personal growth require that we get to the point where we reflect on our actions, tendencies, and habits—that is, see ourselves as subjects to be understood, evaluated, and about which we ought to take a stand. In this respect, the castle metaphors of soul are tremendously valuable. Becoming mature as a person requires us, to some degree, to treat ourselves as something one comes to understand. One grows into the ability to understand and describe oneself as having certain tendencies, traits, proclivities, etc.

Thus, a capacity theorist might grant that one can and should employ a spatial model—the notion of seeing one's soul as an object—for certain purposes. One does gather one's attention, ask "what do I value most?," "do I really value what I think or want to value?," etc. That gathering of attention, taking the time to reflect and notice one's habits of thought, emotion, judgment

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of appropriating evolutionary theory in *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person*, as well as my discussion of this point in *Thine Own Self* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2010), chapter two. See also *Finite and Eternal Being*, Chapter VII, §4 for discussions of matter that give it a broad meaning.

[23] Stein is both in the phenomenological tradition and an advocate of an explicitly metaphysical castle theory of soul. I should note that this particular move is not characteristic of phenomenologists generally. Certainly, phenomenologically-influenced thinkers such as Lonergan and Rahner have taken more Thomistic turns, and there is no evidence that Husserl would have been friendly to castle models, had he had any interest in metaphysical accounts.

[24] As Edith Stein puts it in FEB, 375/ESGA, 319-320.

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and choice does require sifting out what one did once or twice when in a particular setting or situation, versus what one has done most consistently and habitually. It requires one to look at patterns and exceptions, understanding each, and it does have something of the sifting of the more superficial from the more significant aspects. These distinctions call to mind Teresa's notion of outer and inner rooms.

But a capacity theorist would insist that these are metaphors and images useful for reflection on one's experience, not *metaphysically* adequate models of the soul itself. Further, capacity theorists will object that the notion of meeting God in the most interior rooms is metaphysically inadequate. For the capacity theorist, meeting God in one locale or another is the wrong image altogether. We are always already living and becoming "in and through" God. Our very actualization is for the sake of what God has written in us in potencies and directed toward the actualization and goal God calls us to. Our being is rent through with God's work and God's presence with us. There may be greater and lesser awareness of our being in God, and the greater awareness may be imagined in some sense as "in the interior of the soul," but the genuine *meeting of God* is in being itself. It is little surprise that Augustine speaks of our hearts being restless until they rest in God, whereas Aquinas provides arguments for God's existence drawing from mundane as well as profound experiences.

The focus on the need to become, on development, provides a different vision of church. For a capacity theorist, we need each other for *all* of our development, all of our becoming. Insofar as our soul *is* through becoming in matter (or is fundamentally reliant on that becoming in matter), those who are around us, the things that they say and the examples given, are essential to each and every one of us and who we become. God may certainly choose to work in other ways, but a capacity theorist would understand God's primary work in our lives to be precisely work through the matter around us. And church is the place in which God calls us to God's self. The church provides not simply a set of guides or even those one comes to love after having come to God most deeply in one's soul, but that gift to us which enables us to be the sorts of people who can love at all—whether we speak of love of neighbor or love of God.

Unity with others, thus, is always already occurring. Every interaction and relation are part of how each of us becomes in any respect—whether it be our conceptual, emotional, or physical lives. Soul has character in itself qua "set of capacities," but any *becoming* of the soul—contra the castle model—comes via actualization in relation to other beings.

Thus, it seems to me that a capacity model can account for many of the attractions of the castle model, the spiritual, experiential usefulness of the spatial metaphors, even while objecting to their metaphysical standing. The capacity

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theorists would deny and quite strongly, however, that God is met in any "inner room" that has its character in full isolation from the particular, concrete features of our lives.

Conclusion

Thus, what does this set of reflections indicate for our understanding of church or possible ways we can be united into a "we?" For the castle theorists, the soul is an independent, immaterial structure with distinct character, and our primary job in relation to our own soul is to discover and move into its depths so that we may meet God and then come to love others as God does. We (at least in our soul) are a "we" in the sense that we may be mutual helps in the inward journey and then we may be united into a "we" of love in Christ. For a capacity theorist, the soul is a principle that *is* in its actualization via matter, including our relations with others. Our primary job in relation to our soul is to become ourselves well. But doing so—becoming ourselves—is tied, in part, to the quality of the matter in which we become. Thus, insofar as all that each soul interacts with is "matter" in that sense, we are all responsible for the fullness of each other's becoming. We are united into a "we" in the very quality of each of our becomings.

Given these two contrasting accounts, how ought each of these shape our understanding of church? On one hand, some of the hard questions are still before us. Insofar as the *church* may not be identical with "everything we might love in Christ" (for the castle theorist) or "everything through which we become" (for the capacity theorist), it is crucial to still specify how—given these differing pictures—we get the "we" of the church, in contrast to other types of "we's." This is a crucial question, and much is yet to be done. I wanted to end, however, with a reminder. In the hours prior to his death, Jesus prayed in the Garden, as John tells us in his Gospel: "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us. … that they may become completely one." It seems to me that questions of the church, and how we may *be* or *become* church, are also questions tied to our understanding of God and the inner life of the Trinity as well as questions calling us to reflect on Jesus's deep concern for us in his final hours before the Cross.

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