

Grace and Free Will Redux

Totus Christus

“

[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and in him. And he is before all, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he may hold the primacy: Because in him, it hath well pleased the Father, that all fullness should dwell; And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross, both as to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in heaven.

(Colossians 1:15–20) ”

Ælfric on the *totus Christus*

“

Now the servants of christ [...] attain to the kingdom of heaven, as he himself said; and all those who through a pure life and good merits serve Christ undoubtedly attain to his kingdom. He is the head of all believing people, and we are his limbs.

Ælfric explains that since Christians are members of Christ's body, they are with him even though he has gone before them into heaven. Where Bede is content to describe those who are assured of entering heaven as the elect, however [...], Ælfric makes it clear that these 'cristes ðenas' are apostles, martyrs, saints and all others who arrive there as a direct result of their purity and 'godum gearnungum' (meritorious labours).

(Kleist, *Striving With Grace*, 200) ”

Ælfric on the *totus Christus*

“ Crist. cristenra manna heafod. ordfruma ælcere gife. dælð his gyfe his limum. be gehwilces mannes mæðe. be ðan þe hé healdan mæg þurh his fultum. buton ðam ne déð nán man naht to góde; Næfð nan man geleafan buton of cristes gife. ne nan man ne ðuhrwunað on geleafan buton þurh cristes gife.

(*ÆCHom II*, 35 ll. 81–8) ”

Bibliography I

Kleist, Aaron. *Striving With Grace: Views of Free Will in Anglo-Saxon England*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.



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