

# **St.Teresa of Jesus's Self-understanding through the Humanity of Christ**

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## Abbreviations

### Teresa's works

All quotations are taken from *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, translated by Kieran Kavanaugh O.C.D. and Rodriguez O.C.D., Washington DC: Publication, 1976, 1980, 1985.

The abbreviations to Teresa's works as follows:

F *The Book of her Foundations*

L *The Book of her Life*

IC *The Interior Castle*

ST *Spiritual Testimonies*

W *The Way of Perfection*

Reading references to *The Book of her Foundations*, *The Book of her Life*, *Spiritual Testimonies*, and *The Way of Perfection*, the first number indicates the chapter; the second refers to the paragraph. For example, L 22:10 refers to Chapter twenty-two and paragraph ten.

In reference to *The Interior Castle*, the first number indicates the dwelling place; the second refers to the chapter; and the third number to the paragraph. For example, IC 6:7:3 refers to the sixth dwelling places, chapter seven, and paragraph three.

## Introduction

Teresa lived in the Golden age that was sixteenth-century Spain. Many things happened around the sixteenth century: the discovery of America, the beginning of the modern era, the Protestant Reformation, the Council of Trent, and the Catholic reform movement. These geographical, political, social, and ecclesiastic transitions impacted Spain, where Teresa lived in a time of turmoil. Many sought outward glory and a new world during those times, whereas Teresa explored the interior journey.<sup>1</sup> Teresa discovered this interior journey in a society where appearance, honor, aesthetics, and attention to body image prevailed, and the individual was classified by physical appearance, income or social value, and honor. Teresa delved deeper into the world of the spirit and discovered a surprising vitality and richness as deepened her prayer.<sup>2</sup> Ezequiel García Rojo stresses that "the superficiality of the consumerist paradise, which is presented as a full response to human need, can only be overcome from a more profound experience that requires interiority, contemplative capacity, silence, solitude, and deep personal prayer."<sup>3</sup> Teresa is a model of overcoming the struggle with superficiality. She also overcame a divided heart of more than twenty years through her friendship with Jesus Christ, shown as the progressive interior journey toward the center of the soul. For Teresa, the interior journey is not self-reflection, self-absorption, or self-analysis, but discovering a new identity through the relationship with Christ. Thus, her anthropology and Christology are strongly interconnected, and Teresa's understanding of herself deepens as she grows and matures in the relationship with Christ. Self-knowledge is crucial not only at the beginning of the interior journey but also during

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<sup>1</sup> Kieran Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila: The Book of her Life*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1976), 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ezequiel García Rojo, "La interioridad en Teresa de Jesús." *Revista de espiritualidad* 75 (2016): 195.

<sup>3</sup> Rojo, "La interioridad," 191.

the entire journey. Teresa of Jesus' teaching about self-knowledge and the Humanity of Jesus Christ is central to her spirituality.

This thesis will examine the self-knowledge of Teresa of Jesus and her self-understanding through the Humanity of Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> The theme is to analyze and expound on the relationship between Teresa's anthropology and Christology. Most Teresian scholars emphasize the importance of Christology in her spirituality. Rowan Williams, Daniel Chowning, Fr. Kevin, Brian O. McDermott, Maria Alvira, Edward Howells, and Marie-Eugène Grialou emphasize the importance of the role of the Humanity of Jesus Christ in Teresa's prayer, conversion, and understanding of her identity. Maria Alvira stresses that the center of the soul is Christ, analyzing the structure of the soul extensively with a philosophical and anthropological approach.<sup>5</sup> Edward Howells questions how the transformed soul is in union with God while maintaining its identity with self. He tries to find the answer to the mystery of the Humanity of Jesus Christ in the hypostatic union, and his approach is epistemological.<sup>6</sup> Daniel Chowning uses a historical approach to analyze Teresa's Christological experiences chronologically, focusing on the role of the Humanity of Jesus Christ in overcoming her obstacles.<sup>7</sup> Fr. Kevin asserts that the role of the Humanity of Jesus Christ is crucial in entering the two last mansions of *the Interior Castle*, emphasizing its role in prayer.<sup>8</sup> Rowan Williams briefly mentions the relationship between the Humanity of Jesus Christ and Teresa's self-understanding.<sup>9</sup> He maintains that Teresa's self-knowledge comes from her relationship with Christ. Williams pays attention to the intersection

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<sup>4</sup> Fuller address of this term will happen in chapter two.

<sup>5</sup> Maria Isabel Alvira, *Vision de l'homme selon Thérèse d'Avila* (Paris: F.X. de GUIBERT, 1992), 246.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila: Mystical Knowing and Selfhood* (New York: Crossroad, 2002), 122.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Chowning, "Jesus Christ, Friend and Liberator: The Christology of St. Teresa of Jesus" in *A Better Wine: Essays Celebrating Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D.*, ed. Kevin Culligan (Washington: ICS press, 2007), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Father Kevin, "The Sacred Humanity of Jesus – a Constant Object of Prayer," *Mount Carmel* 20 (Winter 1963): 1.

<sup>9</sup> Rowan Williams, *Teresa of Avila* (London: Continuum, 1991), 52-53.

of Teresa's anthropology and Christology, where the Humanity of Jesus Christ is a bridge between the two elements.<sup>10</sup>

The first chapter will examine how Teresa understands self-knowledge. Teresa borrows and adopts various images and concepts of self-knowledge from various traditions, notably Augustine and Francisco de Osuna, and they influence her teaching of self-knowledge more directly and explicitly. Thus, it is crucial to examine how they understand self-knowledge. Augustine's teaching of self-knowledge can be summarized in subjectivity, interiority, and mutuality. In a narrow sense, Teresa follows Augustine's teaching because she also emphasizes these three aspects in her prayer journey. At the same time, Teresa views self-knowledge more broadly, like Osuna. His understanding of self-knowledge involves the whole spiritual journey, which provides a spiritual map and guidance. In a broad sense, following Osuna's pattern of self-knowledge, Teresa points out the significant role of self-knowledge as a guide and compass in her anthropology. Her teaching of self-knowledge shows the goal of the human person, which is union with God. According to Teresa, human nature is easily occupied with external things and loses the sense of direction without this knowledge.<sup>11</sup> Thus, self-knowledge is an internal compass to point out where we should go in a busy and secular society.<sup>12</sup>

Chapter two will examine Teresa's Christological experience, focusing on her conversion experience and the development of prayer in the *Interior Castle*. The analysis of her Christological experience shows a strong tie between anthropological and Christological dimensions of her spirituality. In her spiritual journey, she discovers that her maturity, integrity, and unity depend on Christ's presence. When Christ becomes more present in her life, she

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<sup>10</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 70-71.

<sup>11</sup> IC 1:2:2

<sup>12</sup> P. Marie-Eugène Grialou, *I Want to See God: A Practical Synthesis of Carmelite Spirituality*, Vol. 1 (Texas: Fides Publ. Assoc., 1953), 33.

becomes integrated; in the opposite case, she becomes disintegrated. This is the same as her prayer life. As Christ's presence becomes stronger, her prayer advances, and the more she gains self-knowledge, verified in the *Interior Castle*. These facts point out that her Christology and anthropology are deeply related, and understanding the Christological dimension is key to understanding her concept of self-knowledge.

The culmination of her Christological doctrine is the Humanity of Christ born in her conversion and prayer experience. This part will show the characteristics of the Humanity of Christ, which are incarnational and existential. This doctrine is born from her long struggle and conflict, which is her existential crisis. As her Christology begins from her existential crisis, her teaching of the Humanity of Christ has an existential feature. She relates to Christ profoundly in her struggle, crisis, conflict, and suffering, in which she discovered the value of the Humanity of Christ and experienced the conversion. At the same time, the Humanity of Christ is incarnational. Teresa relates to Christ in every human situation and emotion, and she encounters God in the human form of Jesus Christ in her life.<sup>13</sup> Also, her experience of Christ is an embodied experience. Teresa describes the physical involvement in her mystical experiences.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the analysis of the Humanity of Christ will provide her clear picture of Christology.

Chapter three will examine how she understands herself through the Humanity of Christ and the relationship between her anthropology and Christology. For this purpose, it will first examine the role of the Humanity of Christ in her Christology and anthropology to find out how Teresa understands herself through the Humanity of Christ. The Humanity of Christ is the starting point of her new anthropology because her life dramatically changed after discovering

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<sup>13</sup> Brian O McDermott, "The Christ-Wound: Christology and Teresa of Avila," in *Word and Spirit: A Monastic Review* 4 (1983), 37.

<sup>14</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 68.

the value of the Humanity of Christ. Through the intimate experience with the person of Jesus Christ, she understands that her identity and life is within Christ, and the goal of the human person is becoming Christ and Christification. Teresa sees the truth about herself in engaging with the Humanity of Jesus Christ. Christ, as a mirror, reveals her truth which is her past, present, and future.

Then it will examine the relationship between self-knowledge and her Christology and anthropology. Teresa's concept of self-knowledge shows the goal of the human person and the method to achieve this goal. As she points out the relational aspect of the human person in the teaching of self-knowledge, she prepares space for Christology in which her anthropology is completed. Her doctrine of the Humanity of Christ is the culmination of the two dimensions, and the Humanity of Christ reveals the interconnection between her anthropology and Christology.

## **Chapter I: Augustine and Francisco de Osuna's Influence on the Self-knowledge of Teresa and Teresa's Understanding of Self-knowledge**

Teresa's concept of self-knowledge is not her own invention. While learning about prayer, she integrated and adopted it from various spiritual traditions and books such as Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Berdinado de Laredo, Bernard de Palma, Francisco de Osuna, John of Avila, Luis de Granada, Luis de Leon, Ignatius of Loyola, John of Avila, and Catherine of Siena.<sup>1</sup> Although Teresa inherited her thoughts on self-knowledge from various traditions, she developed and expanded them so that we can find a unique concept of self-knowledge in her expressions. When she explains the beauty of the soul in the *Interior Castle*, she uses diamond and castle analogies which are the fruit of her own experience.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, tracing her sources to find out where she derived her thoughts on self-knowledge is beneficial to allow us to see her understanding of self-knowledge more clearly.

Since Teresa was a prolific reader and consulted with numerous figures about her experience and prayer, it is hard to trace all the books and figures that influenced her concept of self-knowledge. This chapter will primarily examine the two figures who affected Teresa's understanding of self-knowledge more directly and significantly: Augustine and Francisco de Osuna. Alvira asserts that the Carmelite Order absorbed the mystical tradition from the Franciscan tradition, which can be traced back to Augustine.<sup>3</sup> Teresa's understanding of self-knowledge is deeply related to interiority, which was a great emphasis in her time.<sup>4</sup> Among many books and traditions, Teresa cultivated interiority in the method of recollection through

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<sup>1</sup> Mark O'Keefe, *In Context: Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, and Their World* (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 2020), 127.

<sup>2</sup> Kieran Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila: The Interior Castle*, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1980), 269.

<sup>3</sup> Maria Isabel Alvira, *Vision de l'homme selon Thérèse d'Avila* (Paris: F.X. de GUIBERT, 1992), 24.

<sup>4</sup> O'Keefe, *In Context*, 135.

Francisco de Osuna's book<sup>5</sup>, and she was heavily influenced by Augustine's journey to find God within himself, which also focuses on the interiority described in *Confessions*.<sup>6</sup> Many Teresian scholars also argue that Augustinian and Franciscan traditions strongly influence Teresa's prayer and self-knowledge.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it is necessary to examine Augustine and Osuna's understanding of self-knowledge, and then we will see Teresa's viewpoint of self-knowledge.

## I.1 Augustine

Teresa explicitly mentions Augustine in her major works, particularly the *Life and the Interior Castle*. She notes that there are two reasons why she loves Augustine. First, her boarding school belonged to the Augustinian order, and she received a positive influence from the conversation with Sr. Dona Maria Briceno.<sup>8</sup> Second, Augustine was a great sinner who returned to God through a dramatic conversion.<sup>9</sup> In her autobiography, she describes the influence of Augustine on her conversion by reading *Confessions*. Teresa identified herself in Augustine's long struggle and wandering, which alludes that Augustine's life journey strongly impacted her.<sup>10</sup> Teresa mainly mentions how Augustine found God within himself when she refers to Augustine.<sup>11</sup> In particular, she mentions Augustine's struggle with pleasure, sin, and error to highlight his wandering and arduous search for God in the wrong places.<sup>12</sup> These references to Augustine from Teresa's writing reveal the strong influence of Augustine.

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<sup>5</sup> O'Keefe, *In Context*, 140.

<sup>6</sup> This thesis uses Chadwick's translation: *Confessions*, translated by Henry Chadwick (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>7</sup> Edward Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila: Mystical Knowing and Selfhood* (New York: Crossroad, 2002), 96; O'Keefe, *In Context*, 145.

<sup>8</sup> L 3:1

<sup>9</sup> L 9:7

<sup>10</sup> L 9:8

<sup>11</sup> W 28:2, IC 4:3:3, L 40:6

<sup>12</sup> L 40:6

Augustine strongly influences Teresa in terms of her conversion, teaching of interiority, and self-knowledge. Augustine's search for God within the soul impels Teresa to seek God inside herself, not outside.<sup>13</sup> Augustine's teaching of self-knowledge is based on his endeavor, long struggle, and arduous journey of finding God and truth in his life. The characteristics of his self-knowledge can be summarized as subjectivity, interiority, and mutuality. He expresses that God dwells within the most intimate part of the soul and comes to know himself through knowing God. Reading Augustine's autobiography, Teresa is assured that the soul is the locus to seek God, and God is the center of the soul which corresponds to the *Interior Castle*.

The life of Augustine is a reliable source for impelling Teresa to enter into her interiority, so it is necessary to examine how Augustine found God within himself. Augustine's endeavor to search for God can be distinguished into three periods: the entry into Manicheism, the encounter with Neo-Platonism, and the embrace of Catholicism. His teaching of self-knowledge, which can be emphasized in subjectivity, interiority, and mutuality, will unfold by examining the three periods. In particular, the analysis of his conversion experience will highlight how the three points of self-knowledge, subjectivity, interiority, and mutuality, are unfolded. Augustine describes his conversion in book eight of *Confessions* and writes about the mutual aspect between the knowledge of God and himself in book ten. Thus, we will also examine book ten of *Confessions* to ascertain the mutual aspect of self-knowledge in Augustine.

### **I.1.1 The Entry into Manicheism**

When Augustine was in Carthage, he flourished in his study and joined Manicheism.<sup>14</sup> Manicheism combines Christian and gnostic elements. The Manichees believe salvation comes through the revelation of knowledge. They view the world dualistically: Light-Darkness, God-

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<sup>13</sup> IC 4:3:3

<sup>14</sup> John J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine* (New York: St. Paul Press, 1965), 61.

Evil, and Spirit-Body. The world is the battlefield between good and evil and is mixed with two opposing substances: matter and soul. In this belief system, it is essential to be free from the world, body, and material reality, which belong to the darkness and sin, to obtain liberation.<sup>15</sup> Because of this influence of dualism, Augustine can not accept the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.<sup>16</sup> Since the flesh is the source of defilement in this system, Augustine can not accept the incarnated Jesus in the flesh. After Augustine entered Manicheism, he confessed that it was a time of regret and confusion.<sup>17</sup> Although Augustine could not find truth in Manicheism, he associated with this heresy for nine years, which heavily influenced Augustine regarding the concept of God and morality.<sup>18</sup> Since the influence of Manicheism, Augustine thought that everything could not exist without matter.

For this reason, he considers God an immense physical figure with perfect balance and harmony and limits God to a physical substance.<sup>19</sup> The teaching of Manicheism led Augustine to error in his understanding of God, blocking him from accepting the Incarnation of Jesus. Reflecting on this period, Augustine expressed that it was a time of darkness and error. His nine years in Manicheism can be marked as the time of error that sought God externally, not interiorly.

### **I.1.2 The Encounter with Neo-Platonism**

Encountering Neo-Platonism is a decisive moment to cut off Manicheism and sparks his intellectual conversion. Through reading the books of Neo-Platonic philosophy, Augustine could be free from the error of the anthropomorphic and physical idea of God, and he came to

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<sup>15</sup> J. Ries, "Manicheism" in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 9 ed. Bernard L. Marthaler (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 111-113.

<sup>16</sup> *Confessions*, 5,20

<sup>17</sup> *Confessions*, 3,10

<sup>18</sup> *Confessions*, 5,10; 5,19

<sup>19</sup> *Confessions*, 7,2

recognize God spiritually.<sup>20</sup> Augustine was so bound to this limitation of thinking and dealing with material and corporeal objects that he could not conceive of anything immaterial, even the concept of God.<sup>21</sup> However, as a result of the encounter with Neo-Platonism, Augustine recognized God as the Spiritual and incorruptible Being and started to search for God inwardly, not in external and physical matter. This shift from exteriority to interiority brought about a change in his concept of true knowledge. True knowledge is spiritual and immaterial and should not be based on the senses but absorbed by the mind.<sup>22</sup> In this intellectual conjecture, Augustine did not seek truth and God outside but inside himself. Although Augustine's focus moved from material to immaterial substance, and his mind ascended from the corporeal sphere to the spiritual sphere, he could not still encounter a personal and intimate God. For Augustine, God is not a subject who could converse with him but is still the object of intellectual reflection.

### **I.1.3 The Embrace of Catholicism**

Ambrose's influence on Augustine was so significant that it moved Augustine toward transcendental, spiritual realities and the inner sphere, and thus prepared Augustine to embrace Catholicism. Although Augustine embraced Catholic teaching and truths about God intellectually, he could not break from his past and attachments to the flesh and sensual pleasures. However, his conversion experience changed everything for Augustine. An analysis of his conversion will provide the characteristics of his experience with God, which exemplifies what it means to find God interiorly and the value of this interior experience of God.

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<sup>20</sup> *Confessions*, 7,23

<sup>21</sup> Charles Brittain, "Self-Knowledge in Cicero and Augustine (*De Trinitate* X, 5, 7–10, 16)," *Medioevo* 37 (2012): 122.

<sup>22</sup> Abdul Muaz, "Self-seeking towards self-knowledge in the Confessions' book written by saint Augustine," *Al-Afkar Journal For Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (21 July 2019): 164, [https://doi.org/10.31943/afkar\\_journal.v4i1.66](https://doi.org/10.31943/afkar_journal.v4i1.66).

#### **I.1.4 The Conversion**

The description of his conversion is theatrical, dramatic, and dynamic, and Augustine expressed his struggle and conflict within himself.<sup>23</sup> His will is divided<sup>24</sup>; his mind is disordered<sup>25</sup>; illusory images in the memory disturb and bother him.<sup>26</sup> Augustine portrays his state as a half-sleeper with a heavy feeling in his body.<sup>27</sup> He knows the truth and light are in Christ, yet he feels that he does not have the power to follow the mind. His body and old habit pull him down while his mind wakes him up. Augustine was deeply divided between the two different desires and between the body and the mind. Knowing his limitations and powerlessness, Augustine recounts his conversion experience in book 8,29. In the description of his conversion process, firstly, Augustine identifies his powerlessness to change himself. Even though he knew Catholic teaching and the concept of God intellectually, his intellectual knowledge could not change him but only the experience and grace of God. Through the conversion experience, Augustine acknowledges the existence of transcendental reality wholeheartedly, which penetrates the innermost part of himself. This experience was profoundly interior and powerful, so it shook Augustine's whole existence. Augustine's conversion is a rapturous and electrifying experience; it is also a moment to embrace Jesus Christ (book 8,29). His embrace of Jesus Christ means the wholehearted acceptance of the person Jesus Christ and complete submergence of his will in Jesus Christ. This experience brought about the radical and dramatic change that Augustine could not have manufactured with his own will and reason. The embrace of Jesus Christ is the

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<sup>23</sup> *Confessions*, 8,18-19; 8,26

<sup>24</sup> *Confessions*, 8,22-26

<sup>25</sup> *Confessions*, 1,19

<sup>26</sup> *Confessions*, 10,41

<sup>27</sup> *Confessions*, 8,12

starting point of the grace of God, and grace constantly overflows into Augustine through his relationship with Christ.<sup>28</sup>

Through his conversion experience, Augustine knew more clearly his limitation and powerlessness and conceived of the power and mercy of God. His struggle and conflict were crucial sources of how Augustine understood human nature and himself, and his conversion experience helped him to recognize the grace and knowledge of God from the bottom of his heart: God is the merciful and loving Father who spared humanity from sins and provided his only Son for humanity.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, through the experiences of his inner conflict, Augustine came to know profoundly that human beings could not escape the tension between the body and the soul.

His conversion experience highlights three dimensions of self-knowledge: subjectivity, interiority, and mutuality. Augustine's conversion is a profound interior experience within himself and reveals a mutual dynamic between knowledge of God and himself.

### **I.1.5 The Relationship between the Knowledge of God and the Knowledge of Oneself**

When Augustine refers to God, he uses 'unchangeable, immutable, and stable' throughout the book of *Confessions*, whereas he uses 'mutable, changeable, evil, and unstable' to address himself and human nature in general. Augustine confesses that the human person is rooted in God, which is the fundamental foundation of the human person. His self-knowledge is firmly based on the two truths, who God is and who he is, and it is acquired from a comparison between these truths. After his conversion experience, Augustine asked who he was and who God was.<sup>30</sup> Fundamentally, book ten of *Confessions* is configured by two great subjects: the knowledge of

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<sup>28</sup> *Confessions*, 10,68

<sup>29</sup> *Confessions*, 10,69.

<sup>30</sup> *Confessions*, 9,1.

God and the knowledge of oneself. The two are in mutual correlation and interdependence.<sup>31</sup> By knowing himself, he can know God and vice versa. At the beginning of book ten of *Confessions*, Augustine cries, "May I know you, who know me."<sup>32</sup> His fundamental position of knowing himself is through knowing God: God knows everything about him, and he cannot know himself. "It is you alone, Lord, who judge me, because, although no one knows what is going on in man, except the spirit of man in him, yet man is something that does not even know the spirit of man in him."<sup>33</sup> Augustine continues on the same topic in book 10,7: "But you, Lord, know everything about the human person; for you made humanity." Here, Augustine stands on faith in God rather than systematic reasoning regarding the knowledge of himself. His conversion experience confirmed that Augustine was convinced that God knew him more than he knew of himself, and knowledge of himself is not dependent on the senses but is direct, penetrating, and enlightened by God.

Augustine's teaching of self-knowledge can be summarized in subjectivity, interiority, and mutuality. Self-knowledge is not examining something external and material objects but a person interiorly in which the human person finds God. Through knowing God, the person knows the core of him/herself. The three dimensions of self-knowledge are revealed in how he found God in his long and arduous struggle. In particular, the analysis of his conversion experience highlights how the three dimensions of self-knowledge are revealed.

## **I.2 Francisco de Osuna**

Teresa mentions the *Third Spiritual Alphabet*<sup>34</sup> when she visits her uncle's house in the *Life*. She recounts how helpful this book is in advancing her prayer through the method of

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<sup>31</sup> José Luis Cancelo, "La Influencia de San Agustín En Santa Teresa," *Revista Agustiniana* 53, no. 160 (2012): 83.

<sup>32</sup> *Confessions*, 10,1

<sup>33</sup> *Confessions*, 10,5

<sup>34</sup> This thesis uses the sisters of Standbrook's translation: *The Third Spiritual Alphabet* (New York, Lulu Press, 1931).

recollection.<sup>35</sup> Francisco de Osuna's writing, *The Third Spiritual Alphabet*, affected Teresa's spirituality extensively, and she learned the method of prayer, which is called *recogimiento* advancing in her prayer journey through this book. Osuna and *recogidos* taught deeper interior prayer and reflection on themselves, which is the characteristic of *recogimiento* and involves quiet time at least two times a day. They advocated an interior journey for the union with God who dwells in the innermost center of the soul.<sup>36</sup> According to *recogidos*, recollection was to lead the soul in a state of sin and disorder into the highest union with God, which takes place in the innermost center of the soul. This form of prayer was the best way to reach union with God through three steps: self-knowledge, the imitation of Christ, and the transformation of the soul within God through love.<sup>37</sup> For Osuna, self-knowledge is not self-criticism, but the result of prayer and deeper reflection on oneself as they are—that is, as graced and sinful in the light of God's presence.<sup>38</sup> We can see Teresa's writing of self-knowledge and God's indwelling mirroring Osuna's writing. For example, her description of the just soul as paradise in *the Interior Castle* corresponds to Osuna.<sup>39</sup> Teresa's understanding of humility, which is strongly related to self-knowledge, almost matches Osuna's writing.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, she borrowed and adopted several images from his writing to explain the steps of prayer and describe the union with God: silkworm/butterfly imagery, the water image to describe contemplation, and betrothal and marriage imagery to describe the highest state of union with God.<sup>41</sup> Osuna influenced Teresa's

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<sup>35</sup> Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Book of her Life*, vol 1, 19.

<sup>36</sup> O'Keefe, *In Context*, 135.

<sup>37</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 35.

<sup>38</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 36.

<sup>39</sup> *Alphabet*, 4,3; IC 1:1:1

<sup>40</sup> *Alphabet*, 19,1; IC 1:2:11

<sup>41</sup> O'Keefe, *In Context*, 142.

spirituality extensively, and she did not only adopt major concepts of prayer and learn from him but also developed and expanded them.

Throughout *the Third Spiritual Alphabet*, Osuna understands self-knowledge in a broad sense, and he explores this terminology in relation to numerous subjects. For Osuna, self-knowledge is a relational term, so he explains this concept in relation to various subjects. Thus, we will examine the varied subjects related to self-knowledge: characteristics of the heart, recollection, humility, the image of God, and knowledge of God through not understanding.

### **I.2.1 The Understanding of Self-knowledge in *The Spiritual Alphabet***

As the landscape is best viewed in the panorama, Osuna shows the soul's whole journey from the beginning stage to union with God. In his book, Osuna expounds on numerous subjects, such as the purpose of the human person which is intimate friendship with God, who God is, the role of creatures and corporeal things, the characteristics of the human heart, the way of recollection, barriers on the way of recollection, counsels to overcome obstacles, the imitation of Christ as a model, the importance of humility, and the recollection through love. By doing this, Osuna unfolds his anthropology and his understanding of self-knowledge. When he explains self-knowledge, he rarely uses the term 'self-knowledge'(occurring only three times), but he reveals self-knowledge in a broad sense. Why does Osuna broadly use this term, not directly? First, considering his readers, he rarely uses academic terminology and defines any concept.<sup>42</sup> Instead, he uses analogy and descriptive language. Second, self-knowledge is relational terminology. In exploring various subjects related to self-knowledge, such as characteristics of the heart, recollection, humility, the image of God, and knowledge of God through not understanding, the friar expounds on the meaning of self-knowledge. Thus, self-knowledge for

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<sup>42</sup> *Alphabet*, Introduction, 7. Osuna did not write this book academically but for ordinary people who did not access scholastic knowledge.

Osuna comprises the knowledge of God and oneself, the goal of the human person, obstacles and difficulties in the spiritual journey, and the method to achieve the purpose. For this reason, self-knowledge for Osuna is a broad and comprehensive concept.

### **I.2.2 Characteristics of the Heart**

Illustrating the characteristic of the human heart, the Franciscan friar asserts that the heart is the place that God should fill. For him, the organ of the human heart represents the interiority of the human person, which plays a significant role in union with God. The heart has three doors: intellect, will, and sensitive nature, and through the three doors, they can access their hearts, and they can be united with God utilizing these three powers.<sup>43</sup> Through this distinction among the three doors, we can distinguish three parts of the human person: spiritual, intellectual, and physical. For Osuna, the heart refers to the interiority of the human person, and the soul refers to the human person. Also, he uses the soul and the heart to refer to the interiority of the human person as well. Furthermore, given the warning to guard the heart continually, Osuna keeps raising the issue of the deficiencies and limitations of the heart: the heart is like an open jar or vase; it is easily filled with dust and distraction.<sup>44</sup>

Osuna emphasizes the harmony between the body and soul and the exterior and interior senses by explaining recollection and the characteristics of the heart.<sup>45</sup> In his anthropology, there is a hierarchy between the soul and body and the interior and exterior senses. Nevertheless, he argues that the two elements of the human person should work together to achieve contemplation. For this reason, he advises using our senses, corporal and material elements of the world, and the interior senses: counsels about smell, sight, and sleeping, and pieces of advice

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<sup>43</sup> *Alphabet*, 4,4

<sup>44</sup> *Alphabet*, 1,2; 1,3

<sup>45</sup> *Alphabet*, 1,5

on memory, reason, and desire. The emphasis on the harmonious relationship between the exterior and interior senses reveals his relational dimension of anthropology.

By illustrating the characteristics of the heart, Osuna reveals his anthropology: seemingly negative and hierarchical but harmonious and relational.

### **I.2.3 Humility and Self-knowledge**

These organic and relational dimensions of his anthropology and understanding of self-knowledge are highlighted in his explanation of the virtue of humility, and he describes humility in relation to the virtues of love and detachment. Humility enlarges the capacity to love in the human person, and it increases by practicing detachment and aims to empty the self.<sup>46</sup> Although he does not define humility precisely, his position on humility is very similar to Teresa's: knowing who God is, who the human person is, and that everything depends on God.<sup>47</sup> Explaining humility, Osuna unfolds the meaning of self-knowledge. His description of humility is almost interchangeable with self-knowledge. Osuna's understanding of humility is fundamentally knowing the human person's truth. Thus, humility for Osuna is not exterior behavior but an interior disposition standing in the presence of God.<sup>48</sup> Osuna compares the sight of God to the sight of the world. The humble person does not stand in the judgment of people but in the sight of God, and he also rejects the honors of the world.<sup>49</sup> Emphasizing the sight of God, Osuna asserts that a human person knows who he/she is when he/she knows who God is.

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<sup>46</sup> *Alphabet*, 19,1

<sup>47</sup> IC 1:2:9

<sup>48</sup> *Alphabet*, 19,1

<sup>49</sup> *Alphabet*, 19,1

## **I.2.4 Image of God**

Throughout his writing, the main image of God is the merciful and forgiving Father.<sup>50</sup> As the father longs for his son in the parable of the prodigal son, God desires us more than we long for God.<sup>51</sup> By asserting obligations and the necessity of why we should give thanks to God, Osuna points out that grace is gratuitous, and God is the merciful and generous Father who gives everything for us.<sup>52</sup> This father imagery also repeats when Osuna explains temptation in the twentieth treatise. God visits us through temptations, and God is like an all-wise Father who sends temptations and conflicts to train and strengthen his children.<sup>53</sup> The imagery of the father culminates when Osuna describes the Father's love and sacrifice in giving his only Son for us.<sup>54</sup> The Father did not only create us but also gave himself for our love, the Father almost made us superior to himself to win our love, and God's love is infinite and unconditional.<sup>55</sup> Showing the image of God as the merciful Father, Osuna reveals who God is, which is the essential part for self-knowledge.

## **I.2.5 Recollection is the Way to Union with God**

Osuna argues for the necessity of recollection and why it is the best way to union with God. The human person can collect all its powers, including its interior and exterior senses, and enter within itself with its God until finally achieving union with divinity. They should first learn to gather its exterior senses from sensual pleasures, representing the flesh, and material goods, representing the world. Next, the human person should learn to collect its interior senses, utilizing the memory to focus on God, the intellect to think of God through creatures, and the

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<sup>50</sup> *Alphabet*, 1,1; 10,6; 2,1; 16,10

<sup>51</sup> *Alphabet*, 1,1; 10,6

<sup>52</sup> *Alphabet*, 2,1

<sup>53</sup> *Alphabet*, 20,1

<sup>54</sup> *Alphabet*, 1,1

<sup>55</sup> *Alphabet*, 16,10

will to make resolutions.<sup>56</sup> The way of recollection brings about sweetness and joy to the soul; those who practice it are like a tree planted nearby flowing water, and everyone is called to practice recollection.<sup>57</sup> By recollection, the human person enters into herself, eventually leading to the innermost part of the soul where God dwells. For this reason, recollection is the best way to union with God, which is the ultimate goal of self-knowledge.

### **I.2.6 Knowledge of God through not Understanding**

Distinguishing three stages of the spiritual life into the purgative, illuminative, and unitive, Osuna states the types of the human person corresponding to each stage of the spiritual life: the beginner, the proficient, and the perfect. For beginners, knowing God through corporeal, material, and visible means is necessary through employing reason.<sup>58</sup> However, the recollected and the advanced should avoid all material, visible objects, and even the function of reason to acquire the knowledge of God.<sup>59</sup> The friar distinguishes pure intelligence from reason. Pure intelligence does not rely on exterior senses or visible objects, and the human person can know God through pure intelligence. For the human person to be united with God and to know God more clearly, it should be empty from all images and corporeal things. This union takes place in the innermost part of the soul through love produced by the will, not by reason, and thus the power of understanding and reason ceases.<sup>60</sup> The knowledge acquired through this union is ineffable, mysterious, and secret. Through this knowledge and union, the human person recognizes the spousal relationship between God and them, leaving certitude of God's presence in them.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, the human person can recognize its beauty, dignity, and grandeur because

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<sup>56</sup> *Alphabet*, 15,2

<sup>57</sup> *Alphabet*, 12,7

<sup>58</sup> *Alphabet*, 21,3

<sup>59</sup> *Alphabet*, 21,4

<sup>60</sup> *Alphabet*, 21,5

<sup>61</sup> *Alphabet*, 21,6

of its union with God, the source and fountain of life, which vivifies, beautifies, and transforms the human person like the butterfly from the silkworm.<sup>62</sup> They know the truth about itself and the knowledge of God directly and intimately through union with God.<sup>63</sup> Here, Osuna speaks about the infused knowledge through the union with God. Unlike the beginner, the advanced acquire self-knowledge through direct contact with God.

For Osuna, self-knowledge is all knowledge required for union with God. By explaining it with various subjects, Osuna understands self-knowledge more broadly. Thus, it covers and involves the whole spiritual life.

### **I.3 Teresa's Understanding of Self-knowledge**

Traditionally, Teresa uses the term *propio conocimiento* to explain her prayer journey, the discovery of her identity, and her awareness before the presence of God.<sup>64</sup> Self-knowledge is acquired in the life of prayer, and it accompanies the entire prayer process and grows as the prayer goes deeper.<sup>65</sup> *Propio conocimiento* or *autoconocimiento* is seen as self-discovering knowledge, philosophical reflection, and psychological introspection in the modern sense.<sup>66</sup> Teresa used this term twenty times in her writing. Some modern Spanish scholars use *autoconocimiento* instead of *propio conocimiento*. In Spanish, *propio* has two meanings: 'own' and 'appropriate.' Thus, *propio conocimiento* can mean appropriate knowledge or knowledge of oneself, which can be translated into self-knowledge. In comparison, *autoconocimiento* has a strong connotation of self, mental mastery of knowledge, and self-reasoning corresponding to the usage of self-knowledge in the modern sense. However, her self-knowledge is fundamentally a

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<sup>62</sup> *Alphabet*, 16,6

<sup>63</sup> *Alphabet*, 16,6; 16,7

<sup>64</sup> IC 1:1:8; 1:2:8; 1:2:11; 4:1:9

<sup>65</sup> Eduardo Sanz de Miguel, "Los métodos del conocimiento en Santa Teresa de Jesús," *Teresianum* 61, no. 2 (2010): 198.

<sup>66</sup> Rojo, "La interioridad," 191.

relational term that emphasizes the mutual aspect between God and the human person. Thus, her understanding of self-knowledge fundamentally comprises knowledge of God and oneself.<sup>67</sup>

Teresa asserts that self-knowledge is essential throughout the whole journey of prayer. By explaining the prayer with self-knowledge, she reveals relational, dynamic, and mutual aspects of self-knowledge. In particular, the mutual aspect of self-knowledge points out that her anthropology comes from in relation to God in the prayer experience. Moreover, Teresa demonstrates these aspects of self-knowledge by connecting to humility and using *the Interior Castle's* con-centric structure and spatial language. Thus, this part will begin with the importance of self-knowledge and then highlight the relational and mutual aspects of self-knowledge. Based on this mutuality, it will examine how Teresa understands the human person, and then it will continue to explore relational and dynamic aspects of self-knowledge by examining her usage of spatial language and the *Interior Castle's* structure.

### **I.3.1 The Importance of Self-Knowledge**

Teresa emphasizes the necessity of self-knowledge in *the Interior Castle* and encourages readers to strive to know who they truly are here and now instead of limiting themselves to consider only roughly their bodies.<sup>68</sup> She strongly asserts that our identity does not lie in the outer part of ourselves but within the human person, and Teresa's foundation of self is anchored in the Divine presence dwelling within her.<sup>69</sup>

Teresa's self-knowledge is strongly accented in its spiritual and mystical aspects, which manifest human dignity and value immensely: "the soul is made in His own image makes it

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<sup>67</sup> Oswaldo Escobar, "Conocimiento propio según Santa Teresa de Jesús", *Teresa, de la rueca a la pluma* (2015), available at <https://delaruecaalapluma.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/conocimiento-propio-segun-santa-teresa-de-jesus-2.pdf>, (accessed 09/09/2022)

<sup>68</sup> Alexandra Pleshoyano, "From Self-Knowledge to Contempl/Action: Teresa of Avila Today," *Counseling et Spiritualité / Counselling and Spirituality* 33, no. 2 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.2143/CS.33.2.3064581>. 32.

<sup>69</sup> Pleshoyano, "Self-Knowledge," 31.

almost impossible for us to understand the sublime dignity and beauty of the soul. The shining sun that is in the center of the soul; it is always present in the soul, and nothing [even deadly sins] can take away its loveliness."<sup>70</sup> Her viewpoint of human beings is remarkably positive and hopeful compared to Luther and Augustine. Although Augustine mentions the immanent presence of God, he is pessimistic and critical of human nature by emphasizing original sin and generalizing his personal sin.<sup>71</sup> Luther also has a strongly negative view of human beings: "this rich and divine bridegroom Christ marries this poor, wicked harlot, redeems her from all her evil, and adorns her with all his goodness. Her sins cannot now destroy her, since they are laid upon Christ and swallowed up by him."<sup>72</sup> This text reveals that grace is understood as something extrinsic, and there is no intrinsic presence of God and inner grace in the human soul. Luther implies that the transformation of the human person into God is impossible.<sup>73</sup> However, the description of the soul in the *Interior Castle* recognizes human dignity and a tremendous possibility for transformation of the soul: "For just as all the streams that flow from a crystal-clear fount are also clear, the works of soul in grace, because they proceed from this fount of life, in which the soul is planted like a tree, are most pleasing in the eyes of both God and man."<sup>74</sup> In the *Interior Castle*, Christ dwells at the center of the soul, the source of life, providing inspiration, joy, beauty, dignity, and creative energy to the soul like a fountain welling up of life-living water without exhaustion and drying up.

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<sup>70</sup> IC 1:1:1; 1:2:3

<sup>71</sup> J. Patout Burns, *Theological Anthropology*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 13.

<sup>72</sup> Martin Luther, *Christian Liberty* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), 19.

<sup>73</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 134.

<sup>74</sup> IC 1:2:2

### **I.3.2 Characteristics of Self-Knowledge**

*Propio conocimiento* for Teresa is fundamentally relational, and she used it mainly in the context of prayer. According to Teresa, our dignity is based on two statements: we are God's image, and the soul is the locus of God's indwelling. These are fundamental principles in her doctrine; the first step of such discovery is in the prayer of recollection. The prayer led her to beautiful discoveries about the beauty and dignity of the soul and the qualities with which God beautifies souls.<sup>75</sup> We can state with forcefulness that prayer was always a source of personal discoveries for Teresa.<sup>76</sup> The prayer is an interior journey, and self-awareness and self-knowledge make up the first integrating dynamic of interiority.<sup>77</sup> Self-knowledge is not simply examining oneself but discovering the imminent presence of God within one's interiority. Teresa describes her interior journey in prayer as the dynamic interaction between the soul and God.

### **I.3.3 Mutual Aspect of Self-knowledge**

Marie-Eugène argues that Teresa's self-knowledge is fundamentally relational, spiritual, psychological, and epistemological—not self-absorption or mere self-analysis.<sup>78</sup> According to Marie-Eugène, it is impossible to advance toward God without knowing "the structure of the soul, its possibilities, its deficiencies, [and] the laws that regulate its activities."<sup>79</sup> The purpose of self-knowledge for Teresa is to attain God more surely.<sup>80</sup> At the same time, this knowledge is acquired by knowing God's immanent presence within the soul; "we shall never completely know ourselves if we don't strive to know God."<sup>81</sup> Her logic is reciprocal: "God must be at the

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<sup>75</sup> L 40:5; IC 1:1:1

<sup>76</sup> Escobar, "Conocimiento."

<sup>77</sup> Rojo, "La interioridad," 192.

<sup>78</sup> P. Marie-Eugène Grialou, *I Want to See God: A Practical Synthesis of Carmelite Spirituality*, Vol. 1 (Texas: Fides Publ. Assoc., 1953), 42.

<sup>79</sup> Grialou, *I Want to See God*, 34.

<sup>80</sup> Grialou, *I Want to See God*, 35.

<sup>81</sup> IC 1:2:9

same time the end and the beginning of the knowledge of self."<sup>82</sup> Teresa's way of speaking resonates with Augustine's "let me know myself, and I know You."<sup>83</sup> Knowledge of God also helps to deepen the knowledge of oneself. As the bee does not stop flying to bring about the nectar of the flowers until it manufactures honey, the human person gathers self-knowledge contemplating between God's greatness and the soul's lowliness.<sup>84</sup>

Teresa often compares God and the human person to expound on self-knowledge. Through this comparison, the human person comes to know a dual reality: its nothingness and its grandeur. Something black becomes apparent next to something white, and vice versa: as the human person's awareness of its sinfulness and the miserable state becomes noticeable, so do the grandeur and beauty of God in them become clear.<sup>85</sup> Teresa seeks to keep this tension between the human person's awareness of its sinfulness and the beauty of God in them; she keeps both aspects of the human person in self-knowledge. Therefore, what Teresa means by self-knowledge is not confined to intellectual and conceptual information, but instead, it is more relational and epistemological.

#### **I.3.4 Self-knowledge and Teresa's Anthropology**

Teresa's self-knowledge mainly comprises knowledge of God and oneself, and knowledge of oneself is obtained through the comparison with God in prayer. As her concept of self-knowledge is fundamentally relational, her understanding of the human person comes primarily from in relation to God within her prayer experience. This section will examine how she understands the human person considering the relational aspect of self-knowledge.

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<sup>82</sup> Grialou, *I Want to See God*, 35.

<sup>83</sup> *Confessions*, 10,1

<sup>84</sup> Miguel, "Los métodos," 202.

<sup>85</sup> IC 1:2:10

Teresa refers to the human person using the term '*alma*' (soul) that is comprised of interior and exterior parts. The interior is the spiritual component, and the exterior is the physical component, which has five senses.<sup>86</sup>

Her understanding of the human person is complex because she has a seemingly dualistic view of the body. However, in reality, her view of the human person is comprehensive and harmonious. First, her writing shows tension between the body and the soul: "It seems that the little bird, the spirit, escapes from the misery of the flesh and the prison of this body."<sup>87</sup> Teresa views the body negatively because it hinders union with God. Second, she views the body as the instrument of the soul. The body is the co-principle of the human person, along with the soul, and the two mutually influences each other.<sup>88</sup> Teresa speaks about the necessity of care for the body.<sup>89</sup> When the body is looked after well, the soul can serve God better. Third, Teresa believes that the body participates in the spiritual favors of the soul. Through union with God, the transformed person does not feel the dualistic tension between the body and the soul in the seventh dwelling. When the soul is completely united with God, the body participates in the life of God.<sup>90</sup> The glory of the soul reflects through the beauty of the body. Showing the beauty of the body through the union with God, Teresa elevates the value of the body.<sup>91</sup>

Teresa has various views of the soul. First, she views the soul as the depth of the human person, veiled in mystery and shrouded in silence; God dwells in the innermost part of the soul, and union occurs at the soul's center.<sup>92</sup> Although *alma* refers to the whole human person in

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<sup>86</sup> Tomás Alvarez, "*Alma*," en *Diccionario de Santa Teresa: doctrina e historia*, 2a edición., Diccionarios 'MC.' (Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2006), 32.

<sup>87</sup> ST 59:12

<sup>88</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 237.

<sup>89</sup> F 29:2

<sup>90</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 245.

<sup>91</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 245.

<sup>92</sup> W 13:7; L 20:3

Teresian anthropology, Teresa also uses this term to indicate the interior part of the soul in contrast to the body.<sup>93</sup> Second, she understands the soul as a higher entity and the life-principle animating the body.<sup>94</sup> Through union with God, the soul strengthens and empowers the body, and the source of life comes from the center of the soul.<sup>95</sup> Third, the soul plays a critical role in the epistemology of Teresa. The distinction between the exterior and interior parts of the soul corresponds to its exterior and interior operations. The soul's faculties are involved with natural knowing in its exterior operation and the mystical knowing in its the interior operation.<sup>96</sup> Thus, the soul comes to know divine favors and knowledge through this interior operation.

The soul has three faculties: will, intellect, and memory. Teresa conceives that the human person is transformed as the three faculties are united with God.<sup>97</sup> Although Teresa mentions the natural function of the three faculties, she primarily relates the faculties to union with God through the development of prayer. Memory is the power to remember God and can remind human nature and the dignity of the human person.<sup>98</sup> Intellect is distinguished into reason and understanding. Reason involves natural knowing through an exterior operation, and understanding involves supernatural knowing through an interior operation.<sup>99</sup> Understanding has a capacity for contemplation. Through the prayer of contemplation, the higher part of the intellect understands mystical knowledge.<sup>100</sup> Will is the power to desire and love God.<sup>101</sup> Teresa emphasizes the power of the will because the will is the most powerful and stable among the

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<sup>93</sup> IC 1:1:2

<sup>94</sup> Alvarez, "*Alma*," 34.

<sup>95</sup> IC 7:4:11; IC 1:2:2

<sup>96</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 75.

<sup>97</sup> Secundino Castro, *Cristología Teresiana*, Vol. 5 (Madrid: Espiritualidad, 1978), 104.

<sup>98</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 290.

<sup>99</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 310.

<sup>100</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 311.

<sup>101</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 354.

three faculties.<sup>102</sup> Union with God begins as the will of the soul is united with God. Finally, the soul is united with God completely when the two wills become one, called the union of love.<sup>103</sup>

### **I.3.5 Humility and Self-knowledge**

As Teresa's anthropology is mutual and relational, her concept of self-knowledge is also relational. Teresa also demonstrates relational and dynamic aspects of self-knowledge, connecting self-knowledge and humility. Humility is the outcome of self-knowledge before the presence of God and interior disposition rather than external behavior.<sup>104</sup> For Teresa, humility is the concept of knowing the truth that everything depends on God.<sup>105</sup> It is like a bee making honey ceaselessly in the beehive: "Without it, everything goes wrong. But let's remember that the bee doesn't fail to leave the beehive and fly about gathering nectar from the flowers. So it is with the soul in the room of self-knowledge."<sup>106</sup> Teresa uses the bee analogy to explain the importance of self-knowledge. In her analogy, self-knowledge and humility are almost interchangeable, and her description of self-knowledge is dynamic, vivid, and active like a bee. The image of the bee for the relationship between self-knowledge and humility reveals how interconnected and dynamic they are.

### **I.3.6 Self-knowledge and the Usage of Spatial Language**

When Teresa mentions the necessity of self-knowledge, she illustrates the multifaceted dimensions of the human person by using spatial language: "Well, let us consider that this castle has many dwelling places: some up above, others down below, others to the sides. You should

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<sup>102</sup> L 18:12

<sup>103</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 381.

<sup>104</sup> Elena Carrera, *Teresa of Avila's Autobiography: Authority, Power, and the Self in Mid-Sixteenth Century Spain* (London: Legenda, 2005), 49.

<sup>105</sup> Kieran Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila: The Way of Perfection*, vol 2 (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1980), 31.

<sup>106</sup> IC 1:2:8

not think not in terms of just a few rooms but in terms of a million."<sup>107</sup> As the human person advances, the capacity and the knowledge of them increase and expand. From the first dwelling places to the third dwelling place, Teresa deals with the danger of sins and temptations. In contrast, the human person increases its understanding of the spiritual gifts, the heavenly secrets, and the profound truth at the center of the soul from the fourth dwelling places to the seventh dwelling places. Thus, Teresa shows the ascending movement and the progress of the human person from the fourth dwelling places to the seventh dwelling places.<sup>108</sup> By showing the spatial dynamic of the human person and ascending movement, Teresa strongly argues that self-knowledge is not static, but it has dynamic and fluid characters.

Teresa also used spatial language in her autobiography to show the dynamic aspect of self-knowledge:

As I have already stated – and I do not wish this to be forgotten, in this life we are living the soul does not grow like the body, even though we say it grows, and it truly does. But once a child has become an adult and has developed a strong body, and is already a man, he does not shrink and become small again. But the Beloved does wish this to happen to the soul. The only way I know this is that have seen it myself. This must be the case so as to humble us for our own greater good and to remind us not to become careless in this state of exile. The higher we ascend, the more closely we must pay attention, and the less we must rely on our own self.<sup>109</sup>

Teresa identified that the soul's growth differs from the body's and could expand or diminish. Our inner being matures and grows through the practice of humility, love, and detachment.<sup>110</sup> As the soul grows in virtues, the knowledge of God and oneself also increases. On the other hand, the soul's capacity could decrease when it becomes self-

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<sup>107</sup> IC 1:1:3; 1:2:12

<sup>108</sup> Joseph F Chorprenning, *The Divine Romance: Teresa of Avila's Narrative Theology* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992), 106.

<sup>109</sup> L 15:12

<sup>110</sup> Charlo Camilleri, "The Soul's Growth Is Not like the Body's Growth": Teresa of Jesus' Fourfold Path for Mystical Transformation. *Melita Theologica* 69 (2019): 204.

centered and attaches to sensual pleasures and worldly enjoyment. In this case, self-knowledge is regressing as the soul deteriorates. Thus, Teresa shows the dynamic aspect of self-knowledge by illustrating the soul's movement.

### **I.3.7 The Structure of *the Interior Castle* and Self-knowledge**

The *Interior Castle* has a fundamentally con-centric structure: God is at the center of the soul, and the human person gradually progresses toward the center from the outside of the soul. As the human person goes deeper toward the center, her self-knowledge becomes more acute and intensifying. This movement corresponds to modes of sins and temptations, one of the human person's dual realities. In the first three dwelling places, Teresa deals with sins and temptations externally while they become more interior at higher dwelling places. Teresa notes the occasion of sins in the second dwelling places: "[the source of sins] are pastimes, business affairs, pleasure, and worldly buying and selling."<sup>111</sup> However, sins and temptations are interior in the fifth dwelling places that they "darken the intellect, cool the will's ardor, and makes self-love grow until in one way or another [they] withdraw the soul from the will of God and bring it to his own."<sup>112</sup> As the prayer deepens, the mode of temptation and sins also becomes more interior and intense. They understand their creatureliness and nothingness more acutely, which is the one aspect of self-knowledge, through the intensity of temptations and struggle. These exterior and interior modes of sins and temptations also reveal how dynamic and fluid self-knowledge is.

Moreover, this con-centric structure of the castle reveals a significant truth about the human person. The love of God is the center of the soul regardless of the human person's state, and God's love is never absent in the human person.<sup>113</sup> Teresa emphasized this reality and the

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<sup>111</sup> IC 2:1:2

<sup>112</sup> IC 5:4:8

<sup>113</sup> IC 1:2:3

beauty of the human person rooted in the love of God before dealing with the state of them in mortal sins in the *Interior Castle*. She could have first described the state of the human person in mortal sins as she confessed her sins and misbehaviors in the first ten chapters of the autobiography. However, Teresa first stressed that the love of God was the center of the soul, the beauty and dignity of the human person, and then she explained how ugly the soul in mortal sins was in the *Interior Castle*, which corresponds to the structure of the human person. Why did she not follow the outline of her autobiography in the *Interior Castle*? Teresa provided the reason behind this structure:

If we are always fixed on our earthly misery, the stream will never flow free from the mud of fears, faintheartedness, and cowardice. These souls think that all such fears stem from humility. The fears come from our not understanding ourselves completely. And self-knowledge will not make one base and cowardly. Terrible are the wiles and deceits used by the devil so that souls may not know themselves or understand their own paths.<sup>114</sup>

Teresa understood the harm of false humility and the danger of self-knowledge without the firm basement of God's love. Without reflecting on the love of God, it is easy to be entangled with inner afflictions and self-absorption.<sup>115</sup> Thus, she promoted true humility and self-knowledge in the context of the love of God.

## **Conclusion**

As we examined, Teresa stands with Augustinian and Franciscan traditions. Augustine's teaching of self-knowledge is based on his endeavor, long struggle, and arduous journey of finding God and truth in his life. The characteristics of his self-knowledge can be summarized as subjectivity, interiority, and mutuality.<sup>116</sup> There is no doubt that Augustine's teaching and life

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<sup>114</sup> IC 1:2:10-11

<sup>115</sup> Rojo, "La interioridad," 195.

<sup>116</sup> Louis de Bazelaire, "Connaissance de soi", en *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol.2 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1953), 1518.

journey influenced Teresa, and Teresa mainly mentions how Augustine found God within himself when she referred to Augustine.<sup>117</sup>

As the conversion experience and struggle with the attachments of Augustine are the sources that reveal his knowledge of God and his limitation, Teresa's conversion experience and her struggle with prayer manifest the power of God and her limitation and powerlessness:" I think it would have been impossible in so short a time to get rid of so many bad habits and deeds."<sup>118</sup> Teresa points out the mutual relationship between the knowledge of God and the knowledge of oneself in her conversion experience, as Augustine did in the book of *Confessions*.

In a narrow sense, Teresa follows Augustine's teaching because she also emphasizes these three points of self-knowledge in her prayer journey.

There is no doubt that Osuna's book is one of the primary sources influencing Teresa's writing. His writing style, images, analogies, terminology, and various themes such as self-knowledge, recollection, imitation of Christ, the importance of love, detachment, and humility resemble Teresa's writing. Although Osuna does not often use the terminology 'self-knowledge,' he reveals what self-knowledge is by showing the whole picture of the spiritual journey to attain union with God. Showing the entire spectrum of the spiritual life, Teresa also follows Osuna's writing style, and she reveals what self-knowledge is in a broad sense: who God is, the capability, possibility, structure, and limitation of the human person, the necessary means for union, and the obstacles and temptations of this journey. Teresa does not only use self-knowledge in a broad sense but also often uses the term 'self-knowledge' in her writing, defining it mainly as who God is and who the human person is. As she mentions self-knowledge directly, she explains self-knowledge and various themes relating to self-knowledge, namely the structure

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<sup>117</sup> W 28:2, IC 4:3:3, L 40:6

<sup>118</sup> L 23:1

of the human person, the importance of self-knowledge, the relationship between self-knowledge and humility, and the result of self-knowledge more clearly, vividly, and dynamically.

Influenced by the two traditions, self-knowledge of Teresa is fundamentally relational, and she used it mainly in the context of prayer. Her self-knowledge is not mere self-absorption, self-analysis, and self-reasoning. Teresa shows the dynamic and relational aspect of self-knowledge by using spatial language, the concentric structure of the human person, the bee analogy, and the castle imagery. The critical point in her self-knowledge is the relationship between the knowledge of God and oneself. Without the knowledge of God, the human person cannot attain the knowledge of oneself. For this reason, prayer and humility are vital factors in understanding self-knowledge of Teresa. For Teresa, self-knowledge can be centered on three types of knowledge: the divine attributes, the human person's capacity, and the human person's weaknesses and limitations.<sup>119</sup>

Her anthropology is born in the mutual understanding between God and the human person. Teresa understands the human person in relation to God, and her anthropology also reveals a relational aspect corresponding to the mutual aspect of self-knowledge.

The outline of *the Interior Castle* reveals a whole spectrum of the spiritual journey. By doing this, Teresa points out that self-knowledge is involved in the whole spiritual journey as Osuna did. In a broad sense, Teresa's self-knowledge is related to various themes such as who God is, the capability, possibility, structure, and limitation of the human person, the necessary means for the union, and the obstacles and temptations of this journey.

As examined above, Teresa's self-knowledge is based on the indwelling of God, dignity, and the beauty of the human person, which reveals optimistic anthropology. In her anthropology,

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<sup>119</sup> Escobar, "Conocimiento."

grace is understood as something intrinsic, not extrinsic. The grace of God is already infused within the human person, which makes the possibility for union with God.

Furthermore, the con-centric structure of *the Interior Castle* indicates Teresa's anthropology is deeply related to her Christology. As the human person advances towards the center, they discover its real identity as the bride of Christ. As if the ugly silkworm transforms into a beautiful butterfly, they come to know her real identity only after passing the prayer of the union in the fifth dwelling places.<sup>120</sup> Through the intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, the human person progresses in their interiority, finally leading to union with God.

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<sup>120</sup> Camilleri, "The Soul's Growth," 196.

## Chapter II: Teresa's Experience of Christ and the Humanity of Christ

Virgilio Elizondo notes that Christology is deeply related to anthropology: "[In his intimate experience of the Father], Jesus reveals a new anthropology: dignity, confidence, security, docility, and self-respect based on freely chosen dependence on the absolute God."<sup>1</sup>

Teresa can also affirm that all Christology is true anthropology, or rather, that the depths of the human person can only be grasped in the light of the mystery of Christ.<sup>2</sup> We can affirm that her doctrine is a living commentary on those words of Vatican II: "In reality, the mystery of man is only clarified in the mystery of the Incarnated Word."<sup>3</sup>

Teresa found intimacy with God through the Humanity of Jesus Christ, in which she found a new identity, mutual understanding, friendship, dignity, security, and authority. Teresa's intimate experience with Jesus Christ opens up a new horizon in her anthropology and deepens her self-understanding. Teresa's existence, considerably marked by an experience of existential openness to the infinite or the absolute, only found its emotional and vital stability when she found that God in Jesus Christ. A God that seemed a little impersonal, abstract, and distant in her childhood years, gradually concretized in Jesus Christ. Her existence begins to feel anchored and secure as it is clothed in Jesus Christ. Her personality matured significantly as she opened herself to the experience of Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> In particular, since her discovery of the Humanity of Jesus Christ in her conversion, she embarked on a new journey: "This is another, new book from here on."<sup>5</sup> Through her friendship with Jesus Christ, Teresa finds her identity and begins a new

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<sup>1</sup> Virgilio P. Elizondo, *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000), 74.

<sup>2</sup> Secundino Castro, *Cristología Teresiana*, Vol. 5 (Madrid: Espiritualidad, 1978), 11.

<sup>3</sup> Vatican Council II, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (18 November 1965) § 1:22, in *Vatican II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. A. Flannery (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1980).

<sup>4</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 11.

<sup>5</sup> L 23:1

journey in her spiritual life. Teresa describes friendship with Jesus Christ as a progressive encounter with Him. As she deepens her relationship with Christ, Christ's presence intensifies in her life and prayer. When Christ appears centered in her heart, Teresa finds herself and immediately recovers her unity. On the other hand, when He is not her center, her whole person disintegrates.<sup>6</sup> Thus, we can say that her Christology is deeply interwoven with anthropology, which can be verified in the development of her prayer. Fundamentally Teresian prayer is carried out from the perspective of existence, of transformation of the human person, and of an encounter with God, who reveals Himself in Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup>

Teresa's development in prayer and progressive self-knowledge correspond to the development of her Christological experience. As we examined self-knowledge as relational and dynamic in Chapter One, the relational dimension of her Christology is also revealed in the analysis of her experience of Christ and the development of her prayer. For this reason, it is essential to examine Teresa's experience of Christ and the development of her prayer to find the relationship between her Christology and anthropology. Moreover, Teresa's doctrine of the Humanity of Christ is born in her conversion experience and the development of prayer. Her Christological experience is distinguished into two phases: ascetic and mystical.<sup>8</sup> Her conversion experience is the culmination of the Christological experience in the ascetic phase and is a hinge for the beginning of the mystical phase. Understanding her conversion experience provides a foundation to comprehend the mystical phase, which is systematically synthesized in the *Interior Castle* as she explains the development of prayer. Moreover, the analysis of her Christological

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<sup>6</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 36.

<sup>7</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 11.

<sup>8</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 16.

experience, focusing on her conversion and the development of her prayer, will lead to how Teresa understands the Humanity of Christ.

Chapter Two has three sections. Section one will examine Teresa's Christological experience, providing a proper tool to investigate the relationship between her anthropology and Christology. Section two will examine the development of prayer in the *Interior Castle*. The prayer analysis systematically explains the relationship between self-knowledge and her Christology. Section three will examine the Humanity of Christ, which is the central teaching of her Christology born in Teresa's conversion experience, and she stresses the value of the Humanity of Christ in explaining the development of prayer. This section will investigate her writings on the Humanity of Christ and then examine the characteristics and the meaning of the Humanity of Christ.

## **I. Teresa's Experience of Christ leading up to her Conversion**

Teresa recounts her experience of Christ in the *Life* at length and in detail. To understand her Christological experience, it is vital to examine her struggle and conversion experience. The former provides the background and context of her existential condition which leads to her conversion. Just as it is essential to examine Augustine's sinful life to understand his Christological experience and conversion, Teresa's existential condition helps us understand her conversion, which reveals the Christological and anthropological dimensions of her spirituality. Thus, we will first examine Teresa's inner conflict which uncovers the Christological and anthropological dimensions of her conversion.

### **I.1 Inner Conflict in Childhood, Adolescence, and Religious Life**

The life of Teresa can be distinguished into two stages. The first period is from her childhood until her conversion, and the second is after her conversion. She recounts the first

period that was filled with struggle and conflict. She describes her inner struggle extensively in the *Life*, especially in chapters seven and eight, which highlight her internal conflicts. Her struggle and conflict are a large part of her life which manifests as the source of her humanity and the discovery of the Humanity of Christ.<sup>9</sup> Before her conversion, her life was a continuing struggle between God and worldly attachment. When she was a child, she longed for martyrdom to obtain eternal happiness.<sup>10</sup> However, her desire for God became cold as she engaged in frivolous conversation and relationship with her cousins.<sup>11</sup> Her father was so worried about teenage Teresa that he sent her to a school run by Augustinian nuns. She became interested in practicing virtue and a religious vocation through her conversation with Sr. Dona Maria Briceno.<sup>12</sup> After she entered the Incarnation, she continued seeking God fervently.<sup>13</sup> In particular, she advanced her prayer by reading the *Third Spiritual Alphabet* in her uncle's house.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, her desire swayed to worldly friendship and pastimes again for more than eighteen years in the monastery of the Incarnation.<sup>15</sup>

### **I.1.1 Friendship is the Source of Teresa's Struggle**

What is the nature of this battle between God and the world? What are her enjoyments of the world and pastimes? These are deeply related to her extroverted personality.<sup>16</sup> Her fundamental desire is for love and recognition. As extroverted people do, she gains energy

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<sup>9</sup> Brian O McDermott, "The Christ-Wound: Christology and Teresa of Avila," in *Word and Spirit: A Monastic Review* 4(1983), 34.

<sup>10</sup> L 1:4

<sup>11</sup> L 2:2-6

<sup>12</sup> L 3:1

<sup>13</sup> L 4:1

<sup>14</sup> L 4:7

<sup>15</sup> L 7:1-8:12

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Chowning, "Jesus Christ, Friend and Liberator: The Christology of St. Teresa of Jesus" in *A Better Wine: Essays Celebrating Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D.*, ed. Kevin Culligan (Washington: ICS press, 2007), 6.

through relationships with people and friendships.<sup>17</sup> Friendship is her source of joy and, simultaneously, the cause of the trouble and torment in her life.

Even though it was her natural gift to love and be loved, there was an enormous drawback in using this talent. She enjoyed and needed the friendships badly<sup>18</sup> and longed for recognition too much.<sup>19</sup> She was easily bound in human relationships and friendships. Her problem was not her talent but being attached to the relationship.<sup>20</sup> There are some examples to describe these problems: "For in this matter of pleasing others I went to extremes, even when it was burden to me; so much what in others would be considered virtuous, in me was a great fault, for I very often acted without discretion."<sup>21</sup>

Teresa accepted that she wanted recognition, and she heavily relied on friendships. Her decision to enter the Incarnation highlights the characteristic of her dependency<sup>22</sup>: "I had a good friend in another convent, and that was the reason why if I were to become a nun I would have not done it unless it were in the convent where she was."<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, she admits that this dependency became harm to her prayer as well:

I had a serious fault that did me much harm; it was that when I began to know that certain persons liked me, and I found them attractive, I became so attached that my memory was bound so strongly by the thought of them. There was no intention to offend God, but I was happy to see these persons and think about them and about the good things I saw in them. This was something so harmful that it was leading my soul seriously astray.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Constance FitzGerald, "A Discipleship of Equals: Voices from Tradition- Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross," in *A Discipleship of Equals: Towards a Christian Feminist Spirituality*, ed. Francis A. Eigo (Pennsylvania: The Villanova University Press: 1988), 67.

<sup>18</sup> FitzGerald, "A Discipleship," 69.

<sup>19</sup> McDermott, "The Christ-Wound," 39.

<sup>20</sup> McDermott, "The Christ-Wound," 45.

<sup>21</sup> L 3:4

<sup>22</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ, Friend," 8.

<sup>23</sup> L 3:2

<sup>24</sup> L 37:4

Friendship defines Teresa, and it reveals the strong relational aspect of her humanity. Her problem is not her gift for relationships but a dependency and her being attached to friendships. This tendency clashed with her desire for God.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, friendship became a source of conflict and division.<sup>26</sup>

### **I.1.2 Moral Aspect of Teresa's Struggle**

Other sources of her conflict and struggle were the pastimes, sensual pleasures, and vanities that she refers to. These point out the moral aspect of her difficulties.<sup>27</sup> Even though they are not grave activities, they disturbed and inflicted her seriously. From her childhood until her conversion in 1554, she was deeply divided between her desire for pastimes, pleasure, and vanity and her longing for God. According to Teresa's self-report, her life was an account of swaying desires between God and the worldly attachments.<sup>28</sup> Her attachments in her childhood and adolescence were reading chivalry novels, concern for her looks and clothes, and frivolous conversations with her cousins. Initially, Teresa's desire for virtue, eternity, and God was growing. However, her desire for God and virtue became cold as her vanities took over her heart.<sup>29</sup> When she looked back on this period from the mystical heights and from very personal and intimate dialogue with Christ, she considered this time evil, nearly making her lose forever that divine intimacy that she enjoyed so fully. In recounting this unpleasant period of her life, Teresa does not make direct reference to the person of Christ. Instead, she tells us about God, who sees everything, and before whose presence she dared to offend Him.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> McDermott, "The Christ-Wound," 45.

<sup>26</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ, Friend," 9.

<sup>27</sup> Maria Isabel Alvira, *Vision de l'homme selon Thérèse d'Avila* (Paris: F.X. de GUIBERT, 1992), 225.

<sup>28</sup> FitzGerald, "A Discipleship," 67.

<sup>29</sup> L 2:5

<sup>30</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 23.

Moreover, the primary source of Teresa's difficulties was the pastime of pleasant conversation.<sup>31</sup> It continued even in her religious life. Due to her charm and intelligence, the parlor in the Incarnation was filled with visitors to meet Teresa. She was fascinated with the stories and conversations of visitors.<sup>32</sup>

There was fierce competition between God and the worldly attachments, and Teresa was caught in this state.<sup>33</sup> For many years she was back and forth between the parlor and her cell.<sup>34</sup> Although a vision of Christ warned her, she kept coming back to the same conversations and also other conversations. Teresa was convinced that she was not completely faithful to the love of God, and she was dissatisfied. Although this friendship was lawful, she was fully convinced that she was unfaithful to her vocation which demanded the totality of her person.<sup>35</sup> Teresa describes this period as "struggling not living."<sup>36</sup> She could enjoy neither God nor the world. She was torn, restless, divided, and her life was tormented.<sup>37</sup>

### **I.1.3 Two Dimensions of Teresa's Struggle**

Teresa has two problems in her struggle. First, she tries to harmonize contradictions within herself. Second, she cannot make a connection between her longing and divine love. Her idea of God is distant and abstract in the first years of her life, and the distant God seems dominant in that period. In Teresa's childhood, she could not connect with God personally because she perceived God as distant and abstract. The distant God had less impact on Teresa's affectivity and psyche, and she could not connect her longing with God's love. The personal

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<sup>31</sup> L 2:6

<sup>32</sup> Marcelle Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kathleen Pond (New York: St. Bede's Press, 1998), 66.

<sup>33</sup> FitzGerald, "A Discipleship," 67.

<sup>34</sup> Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 65.

<sup>35</sup> Castro, *Cristologia*, 36.

<sup>36</sup> L 8:12

<sup>37</sup> L 8:12

relationship with Jesus Christ and her perception of God as a friend and loving Father has not yet emerged in a totalizing way.<sup>38</sup>

## **I.2 Teresa's Conversion Experience**

In scripture, a change of name signifies in various ways that biblical figures are given a new mission, identity, and life. Teresa lived in the Incarnation monastery for almost thirty years under the name Teresa de Ahumada, her legal name which identified her biologically and socially, "drawing her dignity and worth from her human origins."<sup>39</sup> However, she changed her name to Teresa of Jesus after founding St. Joseph's monastery.<sup>40</sup> This reveals the great impact of her conversion which caused dramatic changes in her life, prayer, and self-understanding. What made Teresa jump into active and public life from her hidden life? How did she advance in her prayer life after almost twenty years of struggle in prayer? How did Teresa relate to Jesus Christ more personally and intimately? How did she convincingly understand the ontological truth that Christ is present at the center of the soul? The answer to these questions will be revealed when we analyze her conversion experience, which is the culmination of the combined Christological and anthropological aspects of her life. Her conversion experience is the turning point in her life, and this experience plays a significant role in the major shift in her life. Thus, it is necessary to examine Teresa's conversion experience, which hugely impacts her anthropology in the context of her Christological experience.

### **I.2.1 Existential Condition of Teresa before her Conversion**

Teresa recounts her conversion experience in chapter nine of her autobiography:

Well, my soul; now was tired; and, in spite of its desire, my wretched habits would not allow it rest. It happened to me that one day entering the oratory I saw

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<sup>38</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 20.

<sup>39</sup> Schneiders, Sandra Marie. "The Jesus Mysticism of Teresa of Avila: Its Importance for Theology and Contemporary Spirituality." *Berkeley Journal of Religion and Theology* 2, no. 2 (2016): 49.

<sup>40</sup> Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 148.

a statue they had borrowed for a certain feast to be celebrated in the house. It represented the much wounded Christ and was very devotional so that beholding it I was utterly distressed in seeing Him that way, for it well represented what He suffered for us. I felt so keenly aware of how poorly I thanked Him for those wounds that, it seems to me, my heart broke. For since I knew the Lord was certainly present there within me.<sup>41</sup>

Teresa was tired, exhausted, and weary because of her long struggle and conflict. In this spiritual crisis, she encounters Christ profoundly and keenly through the image of the wounded Christ. Her tired, wounded, broken soul identifies with the wounded Christ. It was not only the image of the wounded Christ that impelled her conversion but also

Augustine's book of *Confessions*:

As I began to read the *Confessions*, it seemed to me I saw myself in them. I began to commend myself very much to this glorious saint. When I came to the passage where he speaks about his conversion and read how he heard the voice in the garden, it only seemed to me, according to what I felt in my heart, that it was I the Lord called. I remained for a long time totally dissolved in tears and feeling within myself utter distress and weariness.

When Augustine heard the inner voice, he was divided and severely distressed. Likewise, Teresa saw her divided and broken soul in Augustine as she identified herself with the wounded Christ because of her brokenness and woundedness.

### **I.2.2 Anthropological Aspect of Teresa's Conversion**

Ironically, her long period of struggle, darkness, and torment became an instrument to find Jesus. She came to understand the Humanity of Jesus Christ through the experience of her own humanity. She used to pray with Jesus alone in the garden of Gethsemane. In this prayer, she came to fathom Jesus' struggle and weakness through her struggle and conflict: "The scene of His prayer in the garden, especially, was comfort to me. I strove to be His companion there. It seemed to me that being alone and afflicted, as

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<sup>41</sup> L 9:1

a person in need, He had to accept me."<sup>42</sup> Fundamentally, her own humanity which was revealed in her struggle, was a bridge between her heart and the divine love shown in the Humanity of Jesus Christ.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, before the image of the wounded Christ, Teresa strongly feels God wants her directly. Through the encounter with the wounded Christ, Teresa is fully aware of what God is doing in her soul, and she can draw courage and authority from this experience.<sup>44</sup>

### **I.2.3 The Shift of Teresa's Concept of God through her Conversion Experience**

It is noteworthy that Teresa's concept of God changed dramatically. God is not an ideology, an ethic, or a series of precepts that must be followed, but is rather a human person: Jesus Christ. She begins to understand herself and all of reality by relating with Jesus Christ. The love of God is revealed in Jesus Christ concretely, in which she can find her conviction of love of God and her love for God: "But by considering the love He bore me, I regained my courage, for I never lost confidence in His mercy. I clearly understood that I loved Him."<sup>45</sup> She understood that religion is a matter of love and friendship with Jesus Christ.<sup>46</sup> From this perspective, she defines prayer as intimate friendship in chapter eight of her autobiography: "For mental prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us."<sup>47</sup>

Her certitude of the experience of God appears in the fifth mansion after the prayer of union.<sup>48</sup> This surety applies to her love of God in her prayer and her conversion experience.

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<sup>42</sup> L 9:4

<sup>43</sup> Schneiders, "The Jesus Mysticism," 57.

<sup>44</sup> Rowan Williams, *Teresa of Avila* (London: Continuum, 1991), 53.

<sup>45</sup> L 9:7; 9:9

<sup>46</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 40.

<sup>47</sup> L 8:5

<sup>48</sup> IC 5:1:9

Teresa can never doubt the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ and her love for God. From this perspective and conviction, she understands who she is and who God is with certainty and clarity. Her conversion is deeply related to her Christology and anthropology, which is also verified in the structure of the *Life*. After the account of her conversion in chapter nine, Teresa digressed for several chapters to discuss prayer.<sup>49</sup> Teresa dedicates Chapter twenty-two to the Humanity of Jesus Christ after a lengthy digression on the topic of prayer. In the following chapter, she narrates how she feels after her conversion experience: "This is another, new book from here on—I mean another, new life."<sup>50</sup> Chronologically, Chapter twenty-three follows Chapter nine, and Chapter twenty-two serves as a hinge between the two chapters by linking her conversion experience to the Humanity of Christ. This structure also points out that the Humanity of Christ is the origin and source of her conversion.

#### **I.2.4 The Fruits of Teresa's Conversion**

Moreover, Teresa mentions freedom and liberation after her conversion experience in Chapter twenty-four.<sup>51</sup> We can affirm Teresa's Christological experience is interconnected with the anthropological dimension of her conversion experience. After a Jesuit priest advised Teresa to devote herself to the Humanity of Christ,<sup>52</sup> Teresa experienced a vision of the Risen Christ and numerous other mystical experiences which brought about a tremendous transformation with liberation and loving knowledge:

These words have been fulfilled, for I have never again been able to tie myself to any friendship or to find consolation in or bear particular love for any other persons than those I understand love him and strive to serve him; nor is it my power to do so, nor does it matter whether they are friends and relatives. May God be blessed forever because in an instant He gave me the freedom that I with

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<sup>49</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ, Friend," 21.

<sup>50</sup> L 23:1

<sup>51</sup> L 24:8

<sup>52</sup> L 23:17

all the efforts of many years could not attain by myself, often trying to force myself that my health had to pay dearly.<sup>53</sup>

Loving knowledge and liberation are the fruit of her conversion, and they increase as her Christological experience intensifies. After she is liberated, Teresa can relate to others without attachment and can love more freely and maturely.<sup>54</sup>

### **I.2.5 Teresa's Conversion is the Door to a different Phase of her Life**

Teresa's conversion experience opens the door to her discovery of the Humanity of Jesus Christ, which uncovers new anthropological, mystical, and ecclesiastical dimensions of her spirituality. The key to her transition from a contemplative life to an active life as an author and founder and from the ascetical phase of her spiritual life to the mystical phase is found in the development of her Christological experience, which is profoundly related to the anthropological dimension of her spirituality. This new phase is revealed and analyzed in the *Interior Castle* more systematically than in any of her other works. As we examine the development of the mystical dimension in her prayer, the relationship between her Christology and anthropology will be revealed. Thus, we will examine how the anthropological and Christological dimensions of her spirituality unfold in the development of her prayer in the *Interior Castle*.

## **II. The Development of Prayer through the *Interior Castle***

The seven mansions in which Teresa systematizes the process of spiritual life represent seven vital and psychological dimensions of the human person that Christian holiness and virtue express. Teresa considers these stages distinct steps through which the spiritual life in us is perceived. Teresian prayer gradually deepens the human being in the mystery of Christ, and each stage is one more step toward immersion and interiorization.<sup>55</sup> When Teresa explains the process

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<sup>53</sup> L 24:6; 24:8

<sup>54</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ, Friend," 23.

<sup>55</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 74.

of spiritual development in prayer, the relationship between the Christological and anthropological dimensions of her spiritual life is gradually revealed. Moreover, as the spiritual movement becomes ascent, Christ's presence intensifies, infusing the intimate and secret knowledge of God and the fruits of virtues such as love, humility, and detachment in the human person.<sup>56</sup>

## II.1 The First Dwelling Places

In giving an explanation of the development of prayer, Teresa outlines three subjects in each of the dwelling places: a description of each stage, the way the human person relates to God, and her advice and counsel.

Some representative images of the first dwelling are 'the deaf,' 'the blind,' and 'the paralyzed.'<sup>57</sup> The human person in this stage is so occupied with worldly and material matters that they cannot hear God's voice and see the light within themselves. They do not have self-knowledge, and they hardly pray. Thus, Teresa emphasizes the importance of self-knowledge in the first dwelling, and the absence of the reference to Christ in the vision of the castle points out the lack of self-knowledge in this stage.<sup>58</sup> Her vision of the castle in the first dwelling places in the *Interior Castle* corresponds to her vision of a mirror in the *Life*:

It seemed to me to be like a brightly polished mirror, without any part on the back or sides or top or bottom that wasn't totally clear. In its center Christ, our Lord, was shown to me, in the way I usually see Him. It seemed to me I saw Him clearly in every part of my soul, as though in a mirror. I was given understanding of what it is for a soul to be in a mortal sin.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Joseph F Chorpensing, *The Divine Romance: Teresa of Avila's Narrative Theology* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992), 96.

<sup>57</sup> IC 1:1:6; 1:2:14; 2:1:2

<sup>58</sup> IC 1:2:8; 1:2:10; 1:2:12

<sup>59</sup> L 40:5

The difference is that she does not refer to Christ in the first dwelling places, unlike in the *Life*. Why does she not mention Christ in the first dwelling places? Instead, she uses the general term 'God' to refer to the Divinity. There are two reasons. The first is a purely pedagogical reason. The first dwelling places refer to the human person in the beginning who have not yet discovered the mystery of Christ. She wants to accommodate them beginning in the first dwelling places and show readers how the human person gradually discovers the presence of Christ in their journey.<sup>60</sup> Second, she wants to illustrate that they do not have self-knowledge. Fundamentally, self-knowledge comes from a relationship with Jesus Christ. However, the human person in the first dwelling places does not engage with Christ. By referring to God as a general term of Divinity, she wants to demonstrate that they do not yet have self-knowledge.

Furthermore, Teresa vaguely mentions the religious reality in this dwelling. To describe the action of grace, she uses images of water and light. Although she mentions the ontological truth of the beauty and dignity of the human person, there are hardly any psychological-spiritual effects on them.<sup>61</sup> As Teresa rarely mentions the presence of Christ in this stage, she gives the impression that her Christological thought is expressed in a veiled way, and they do not yet have self-knowledge.<sup>62</sup> For this reason, she stresses self-knowledge in the first dwelling places. Self-knowledge is realized when they seek Christ. Jesus Christ is a mirror that the person should reflect on in order to know oneself truly.<sup>63</sup>

The vision of the castle is a fundamentally Christological vision which is verified in the *Life*. Thus, we should understand this vision under the umbrella of Christological thought. After describing the beauty of the human person in grace, she begins to narrate the process of

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<sup>60</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 78.

<sup>61</sup> IC 1:1:6; 1:2:3

<sup>62</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 81.

<sup>63</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 103.

deification of the human person.<sup>64</sup> This process of deification needs to be understood as a process of Christification because the vision is originally Christological vision.<sup>65</sup>

Teresa clearly underscores that self-knowledge comes from the relationship with Christ in the first dwelling places. The rare reference to Christ and the absence of reference to Christ in the vision of the castle strongly support that the Christological dimension of Teresa's thought is deeply interconnected with her anthropology.

## **II.2 The Second Dwelling Places**

The representative image of the second dwelling places is the prodigal son.<sup>66</sup> The human person in this stage sometimes prays but does not avoid occasions of sin.<sup>67</sup> Compared to the previous stage, struggle and conflict increase in this period. They are unstable, and there are dangerous risks for them to return to the previous stage, or even outside the castle.<sup>68</sup> Intensifying conflict and struggle are signs of increasing self-knowledge because they know what they are meant for and how deeply embedded their sins and bad habits are.<sup>69</sup>

Nevertheless, they still lack self-knowledge. How the human person fails to recognize Christ reveals that they do not have a deep engagement with Christ. In the second dwelling places, Jesus Christ appears as the religious center of reference of the human person. Although this period is characterized as a conversation with Christ, this conversation is not systematic and consistent but sporadic. The human person in this stage begins to recognize the voice of Christ: "So these persons are able to hear the Lord when He calls. Since they are getting closer to where

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<sup>64</sup> IC 1:1:3

<sup>65</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 79.

<sup>66</sup> IC 2:1:4

<sup>67</sup> IC 2:1:2

<sup>68</sup> IC 2:1:2

<sup>69</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 117.

His majesty dwells, He is a very good neighbor."<sup>70</sup> What Teresa means by hearing the Lord is not a supernatural revelation or locution but words spoken by other good people or through sermons, or good books.<sup>71</sup> They can recognize the voice of Christ who works in the Church and ordinary life events. Although they recognize Christ and hear his voice, they recognize Christ as someone outside the human person. Like the prodigal son who returns to his father because of hunger, not because of the relationship with the father, they in this stage recognize Christ through external factors, not through the personal relationship with Christ in prayer. These shreds of evidence reveal that they still lack self-knowledge and do not have a solid relationship with Christ.

Nevertheless, compared to the first dwelling places, Teresa reveals that self-knowledge is increasing in this stage through frequent reference to Christ, particularly in John's Gospel and the redemptive work of Christ. Following Christ is the main topic in this stage.<sup>72</sup> The more the human person reflects on the passion of Christ, the more they are awakened and inflamed in the love of God. This specific love reveals who God is explicitly and leads to recognition of the human person's arduous journey for union with God. Fallen human nature can quickly return to the previous stage and fall into sins and temptations.<sup>73</sup> Thus, Teresa emphasizes determination to follow Christ, which involves the purification of the ascetic life. The purification of the human person begins precisely in the second dwelling places.<sup>74</sup>

In the second dwelling places, she reveals the ambiguous nature of self-knowledge: at one point, she argues that the human person in this period lacks self-knowledge, but at the same

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<sup>70</sup> IC 2:1:3

<sup>71</sup> IC 2:1:3

<sup>72</sup> IC 2:1:7

<sup>73</sup> IC 2:1:2

<sup>74</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 87.

time, she wants to show that they have increased in self-knowledge compared to the previous stage.

### **II.3 The Third Dwelling Places**

The representative image of the third dwelling places is the rich young man, which provides the framework for Teresa to describe the state of the human person in this stage.<sup>75</sup>

Those who reach this stage are mature Christians who are characterized as stable and balanced in their faith and life.<sup>76</sup> They pray regularly, practice charity and discipline and avoid venial sins.<sup>77</sup>

Although they are secure, stable, and ordered in their spiritual life, they are prisoners of themselves and are still far from holiness.<sup>78</sup> Their sense of control, reason, and self-protection is too strong, and they feel a sense of an impasse at this stage which blocks them from advancing and produces complacency.<sup>79</sup> Teresa advises them to continue their journey, though they do not understand what lies beyond this stage: "Enter, enter...into the interior rooms; pass on from your little works. By the mere fact that you are Christians you must do all these things and much more."<sup>80</sup> However, there is a danger of returning to their former spiritual practices, and she sees this reaction as a lack of humility.

In one sense, the human person in this stage is stable and secure. In the other sense, they are complacent and do not have self-knowledge. One of the prevalent words in the third dwelling is 'humility,' which occurs fifteen times in the third dwelling places. In the Teresian language, humility is strongly connected to self-knowledge. The human person in the third dwelling

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<sup>75</sup> Wayne Simsic, *The Inward Path to God: A Prayer Journey with Teresa of Avila* (Maryland: The Word Among Us Press, 2014), 118.

<sup>76</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 113.

<sup>77</sup> IC 3:1:5

<sup>78</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 119.

<sup>79</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 115.

<sup>80</sup> IC 3:1:6

becomes so secure in their state that they do not dare advance. Teresa points out that this is a lack of humility. They do not know what is beyond this stage, and they trust themselves too much. Their prayer is based on consolation, and their source of security is themselves. Also, all their attention seems to be on themselves. Teresa points out that they lack humility and self-knowledge at this stage.

It is striking to notice the rare reference to Christ in this dwelling, while Teresa frequently mentions the words 'humility' and 'test.'<sup>81</sup> These facts point out that the human person in this stage does not have proper self-knowledge and humility, so there is a strong sense of the danger of an impasse at this stage: "With humility present, this stage is a most excellent one. If humility is lacking, we will remain here our whole life."<sup>82</sup> Teresa alludes that they do not have self-knowledge and humility at this stage, like the rich young man.

Although the rich young man is morally and externally good, he does not have a personal relationship with Christ. The lack of a relationship with Christ leads to the rejection of the invitation of Christ, which is the next step of growth.<sup>83</sup> Here, Teresa uses the image of the rich young man to explain the relationship between humility, love, and detachment. Self-knowledge fundamentally comes from a relationship with Christ, and the lack of this relationship leads to a lack of humility, commitment to love, and detachment, which is her main focus in these third dwellings.<sup>84</sup> Thus, Teresa demonstrates that self-knowledge does not grow without a personal relationship with Christ. The image of the rich young man, the lack of humility, the rare reference to Christ in the third dwellings, and her urgent advice in this stage support this demonstration.

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<sup>81</sup> IC 3:2:3; 3:2:3; 3:2:6

<sup>82</sup> IC 3:2:9

<sup>83</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 117.

<sup>84</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 120.

In the third dwelling places, Teresa juxtaposes a sense of security and a sense of caution. Although she praises the state of the human person in this stage, the second chapter of the third dwelling places is filled with warnings, advice, and counsel. A strong sense of urgency and warning urges readers to move to the next phase.

#### **II.4 The Fourth Dwelling Places**

Teresa is more systematic in the fourth dwelling places than in previous dwellings and explains the development of prayer from acquired recollection to a passive form of recollection and the prayer of quiet.<sup>85</sup> The development of prayer in the fourth dwelling is noteworthy because we can see that her Christology, anthropology, and prayer are interpreted by explaining the development of prayer. As prayer deepens, Teresa discovers her identity profoundly in Christ. At the same time, as she has a more intimate relationship with Christ, her prayer goes more profound, which impregnates the virtues of humility, love, and detachment.

Distinguishing between 'consolation' and 'spiritual delight,' Teresa explains the difference between acquired recollection and passive recollection, which is the beginning stage of contemplation.<sup>86</sup> Through this distinction, Teresa differentiates two types of self-knowledge corresponding to active and passive recollection. The first kind of self-knowledge comes from our effort and initiative, with the help of meditation, vocal prayers, and intellectual work in the first three dwelling places.<sup>87</sup> However, self-knowledge in the second phase is infused and

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<sup>85</sup> Castro, *Cristologia*, 101. When Teresa mentions a passive form of recollection and the prayer of quiet, it sounds like the passive recollection is followed by the prayer of quiet. It is easy to have the impression that the two are different prayers. In contrast, passive recollection emphasizes the aspect of recollected faculties. The prayer of quiet stresses the psychological effects of recollection, such as peace, quiet, and sweetness in the very interior part of the soul. Thus, we should not regard the two as different prayers. Rather Teresa uses the two different terms of prayer to explain a different aspect of contemplation.

<sup>86</sup> IC 4:1:4

<sup>87</sup> A. M. Zacharie Igirukwayo, "Dimora-Dimorare: Antropologia Dell'unione Nel Castello Interiore Di Santa Teresa," *Teresianum* (2022): 280, <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.TER.4.2018011>.

supernatural knowledge. Through a direct relationship with God, the human person is given greater insight into the beauty and glory of God, and God infuses them with deeper self-knowledge.<sup>88</sup> The first kind of knowledge is preparatory and previews mystical knowledge. Although imperfect and preparatory, this knowledge has the same mutual dynamic between them and God. However, they in the first phase cannot anticipate the direct mutual dynamism of union.<sup>89</sup>

In the fourth dwelling, Teresa first explains consolation. Consolation begins with us and ends in God in prayer. Although consolation moves us toward the presence of God, we take the initiative for consolation.<sup>90</sup> However, spiritual delight, which begins in God and ends in us, brings about liberation from pressure and expands the heart.<sup>91</sup> God takes the initiative, and the effect of spiritual delight remains within the human person. They become more passive in the form of passive recollection. Why does Teresa distinguish between consolation and spiritual delight? She seems to demonstrate that passivity is the sign of more profound engagement with Christ, which results in passive recollection. In describing a movement into a passive form of recollection, Teresa uses the image of the good shepherd to refer to Christ who is at the center of the castle.<sup>92</sup> Although His whistle is gentle, the human person never fails to listen to it, and the whistle has such power over the listeners, "that they abandon the exterior things... and enter the castle."<sup>93</sup> The shepherd's voice brings about a deep receptivity in them, which makes them pay

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<sup>88</sup> Robyn Wrigley-Carr, "The butterfly and the King: Self-Knowledge in Teresa of Avila's Interior Castle," *Studies in Spirituality* 19 (2009): 120, <https://doi.org/10.2143/SIS.19.0.2043676>.

<sup>89</sup> Edward Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila: Mystical Knowing and Selfhood* (New York: Crossroad, 2002), 99.

<sup>90</sup> IC 4:1:4

<sup>91</sup> IC 4:1:4-5

<sup>92</sup> IC 4:3:2

<sup>93</sup> IC 4:3:2

attention to God's voice more actively.<sup>94</sup> However, being passive does not mean being inactive, inert, or lethargic, instead, becoming more receptive and responsive to God's voice. By relinquishing their control, activity, and initiative, they allow God to transform them gradually.<sup>95</sup> As prayer becomes simpler and more responsive, the sense of trust and the willingness to be led by God increases, and the human person's focus shifts from themselves to Christ. Thus, passivity in prayer is a sign of growing trust and intimacy between Christ and them.

When Teresa explains the passive form of recollection, she uses imagery of the good shepherd from John's Gospel.<sup>96</sup> The shepherd imagery explains the intimate relationship between Jesus and the flock, who know each other. In John's Gospel, knowing is not limited to the intellectual dimension but also includes an existential dimension. The shepherd knows the sheep, and the sheep belong to the shepherd. In John's Gospel, "knowing and belonging are interrelated."<sup>97</sup> Knowing this imagery contains intimacy between Jesus and his people, Teresa illustrates that Jesus Christ and the human person in the fourth dwelling have a deep and intimate relationship, which leads them to become docile and passive to listen to Jesus Christ. Thus, the imagery of the good shepherd and the increase of passivity in prayer support the growth of intimacy reflected in the development of prayer.

Being aware of how the intimacy that deepens between Christ and the human person in this stage, Teresa points out that self-knowledge also grows in the fourth dwelling. Teresa distinguishes between '*pensamiento*' (or '*imaginacion*') and '*entendimiento*'; the mind, '*pensamiento*' has a more active nuance, whereas understanding, '*entendimiento*' has a more

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<sup>94</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 124.

<sup>95</sup> Mark Foley, *The Ascent of Joy* (Washington D.C: ICS Publications, 2016), 24.

<sup>96</sup> IC 4:3:2

<sup>97</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration* (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 280.

passive connotation.<sup>98</sup> As we examined in the second dwelling, an increase in struggle and conflict is a sign of growing self-knowledge. Distinguishing the two terms, Teresa explains two movements happening at different levels in the human person: one is at the center of souls, and the other is on the outskirts of souls. As the human person grows in their relationship with Jesus Christ, their brokenness, sinfulness, and fallen nature come into their consciousness. At the same time, they also feel the presence of God from their interiority. Although they experience confusion because of the different movements within them, Teresa claims that they grow in self-knowledge through a deeper engagement with Christ in this stage by distinguishing between the terms '*pensamiento*' and '*entendimiento*.'

As the human person notices that the intellect is occupied with God at the center of souls, Christ's presence becomes more apparent in this period: "for the soul experiences deep feelings on seeing itself close to God."<sup>99</sup> Unlike the previous dwellings, Christ's presence is strong, and his presence affects the body as well: the heart expands, the human person feels delighted and liberated, and this joy overflows to the body.<sup>100</sup>

Furthermore, the experience of Christ is not from outside of the human person but from inside. In other words, Christ's presence is felt from close to the center of souls. Thus, showing the experience of the presence of Christ at the center of souls in this phase, Teresa illustrates that the origin of human transformation is fundamentally Christ's presence at the center of souls.<sup>101</sup>

It is also striking to pay attention to the prevalence of the language of love as the Christological and anthropological dimensions deepen. Compared to the previous dwellings, the word 'love' occurs more frequently in the fourth dwelling. Teresa claims that the human person is

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<sup>98</sup> IC 4:1:9

<sup>99</sup> IC 4:3:12

<sup>100</sup> IC 4:1:4-5

<sup>101</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 101.

given spiritual delight not because of their merits and intellectual work but through their love and determination to follow the crucified Christ.<sup>102</sup> She mentions spiritual delight to explain the transition from active to passive prayer. Spiritual delight is the evidence that the human person in the fourth dwelling places begins the prayer of contemplation. In this phase, contemplation begins because the love for Christ is profound, and their disposition is to follow Christ.<sup>103</sup> Teresa emphasizes that contemplation presupposes a profound loving relationship with Christ. The human person in this stage understands more clearly that prayer "is not to think much but to love much."<sup>104</sup> As the prayer progresses from active forms of prayer to passive recollection and the prayer of quiet, there is also an increase in virtues in the human person, particularly love. Thus, using Christological references and emphasizing love in the dwellings, Teresa demonstrates that Christological, anthropological, and prayer dimensions are mutual and inseparable.

Compared to the third dwelling, she is systematic and shows the evolution of prayer, reflecting the growth of the Christological and anthropological dimensions. As the prayer evolves, love and secret knowledge of Christ and oneself are known to them, and Christ's presence is strongly felt in this stage. At the same time, Christ's strong presence is key to understand their advance of prayer and impregnation of loving and secret knowledge.

## **II.5 The Fifth Dwelling Places**

Teresa describes the stage of the fifth dwelling places as the prayer of union, which is a pure gift; no human technique and skill can acquire this gift. God communicates with the human person directly, and the meeting between God and them takes place in the prayer of union.<sup>105</sup> Through the meeting, the human person sees God for the first time, enabling them to die and

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<sup>102</sup> IC 4:2:9

<sup>103</sup> IC 4:2:9

<sup>104</sup> IC 4:1:7

<sup>105</sup> IC 5:1:4; 5:4:4

surrender to God's will.<sup>106</sup> This meeting impacts all the faculties so that they feel dead because all faculties are asleep, and they detach from the world completely: the will is united with God, the intellect does not understand, and the memory remains occupied.<sup>107</sup> However, in the prayer of quiet, only the will is united with God, and the other two faculties remain free. The prayer of union occurs before the betrothal stage, and it acts as its beginning.<sup>108</sup>

Nevertheless, this union is brief and does not last more than half an hour.<sup>109</sup> For Teresa, union is a flexible term, indicating different states from the fifth dwelling to the highest stage.<sup>110</sup> When she mentions union in the fifth dwelling, she refers to a delightful union, which only lasts temporarily and is characterized as a brief meeting. This union is not a complete union but a preview and glimpse of true union. The true union, called spiritual marriage, takes place in the last stage in which the faculties are fully united with the presence of God.<sup>111</sup>

Union in the fifth dwelling is marked with joy, peace, and delight coming, not from the body or sentiment, but from the interior part of the soul. Teresa mentions that this joy is above earthly and bodily joy, though it is brief.<sup>112</sup> Although this union is temporary, it leaves a sure sign that this experience comes from God:

For during the time of this union it neither sees, nor hears, nor understands, because the union is always short and seems to the soul even much shorter than it probably is. God so places Himself in the interior of that soul that when it returns to itself it can in no way doubt that it was in God and God was in it. This certitude is what matters now, for I shall speak of the effects of this prayer afterward.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> IC 5:4:4

<sup>107</sup> IC 5:1:4

<sup>108</sup> Sinsic, *The Inward*, 142.

<sup>109</sup> IC 5:2:7

<sup>110</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 88.

<sup>111</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 91.

<sup>112</sup> IC 5:1:6

<sup>113</sup> IC 5:1:9

Teresa notes that certainty is a sign of this union, and then she introduces a different type of knowing: "How did the soul see this truth or understand if it didn't see or understand anything? I don't say that it then saw the truth but that afterward it sees the truth clearly, not because of a vision but because of a certitude remaining in the soul that only God can place there."<sup>114</sup> Teresa speaks about mystical knowing here, which is different from natural knowing. The human person receives certitude and communication of God by some other means in this stage without seeing physically and understanding in a natural sense.<sup>115</sup> Teresa asserts that communication with God occurs without using the bodily senses, indicating that there should be different senses which provide hearing, seeing, and understanding in "a distinct set of operations."<sup>116</sup> Introducing this different type of knowing in the fifth dwelling, Teresa distinguishes between interior and exterior parts of the soul corresponding to interior and exterior operations. In Teresa's epistemology and anthropology, there is a strong sense of distinction between the exterior and interior parts of souls and between exterior and interior operations. For Teresa, there is an exclusive distinction between interior and exterior operations which causes a strong sense of division between the body and the soul. In her experience, a bodily, external activity often causes trouble and division within the soul, and the experience of the delightful union in the fifth dwelling almost separates her soul from the body.<sup>117</sup> Thus, her anthropology can give the impression of a strong sense of division and dichotomy between the body and the soul. Her description of complex interior and exterior operations reveals how difficult it is to resolve this issue. From the fourth to the sixth dwelling, this dichotomy does not lessen but intensifies until the human person reaches the final

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<sup>114</sup> IC 5:1:10

<sup>115</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 74.

<sup>116</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 74.

<sup>117</sup> IC 5:1:4

dwelling through the complete union with Christ.<sup>118</sup> Christ is key to overcoming the division between body and soul and the tension between interior and exterior operations.

In the prayer of union, the human person feels renewed and born again, and their faculties are transformed. They recognize that these effects come from the presence of God within them.<sup>119</sup> Teresa uses the silkworm/butterfly image, which contains elements of rebirth, resurrection, and new life, to explain the transformation in this stage:<sup>120</sup> "The silkworm, which is fat and ugly, then dies, and a little white butterfly, which is very pretty, come forth from the cocoon."<sup>121</sup> Chorpenning asserts a strong parallel between the silkworm's death and new life and Jesus' death and resurrection.<sup>122</sup> The cocoon, which is the dark condition for the silkworm, symbolizes the dark sepulcher of Jesus. As Jesus experienced death three days in the sepulcher and then was raised from the dead, the silkworm also experiences its death in the cocoon, representing the human person's death to the world, attachment, and self-will. During this process, they conform their will to God's will, and new life emerges as the white butterfly appears from the cocoon. Though fragile and restless, the butterfly, the transformed soul, emerges in all its grandeur and beauty.<sup>123</sup> Coming out of this prayer, the human person finds marvelous beauty and a new identity, no longer recognizing themselves and experiencing the new creation in Christ.<sup>124</sup>

When Teresa mentions this transformation, she understands clearly that the purpose of the transformation is Christification. Compared to the previous dwellings, Teresa speaks clearly

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<sup>118</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 73.

<sup>119</sup> IC 5:1:9

<sup>120</sup> Chorpenning, *The Divine Romance*, 110.

<sup>121</sup> IC 5:2:2

<sup>122</sup> Chorpenning, *The Divine Romance*, 110.

<sup>123</sup> IC 5:2:6-7

<sup>124</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 140.

that becoming Christ is the ultimate goal of her spirituality, and she finds her identity in Christ.<sup>125</sup>

Using the butterfly image, Teresa wants to show that the transformation of souls is similar to how a silkworm turns into a butterfly.<sup>126</sup> Thus, Teresa points out that her spirituality is Christocentric through the silkworm/butterfly imagery.

To describe the intensity of the intimacy between Christ and the human person, Teresa uses spousal imagery combined with the silkworm/butterfly imagery in the fifth dwelling:

Now I recall, in saying that we have no part to play, what you have heard the bride say in the *Song of Songs: He brought me into the wine cellar...His majesty must place us there and enter Himself into the center of our soul. And that He may show His marvels more clearly He doesn't want our will to have any part to play, for it has been entirely surrendered to Him. Neither does He want the door of the faculties and of the senses to be opened, for they are all asleep. But He wants to enter the center of the soul without going through any door, as He entered the place where His disciples were.*<sup>127</sup>

In this imagery, Teresa connects the bridegroom from the *Song of Songs* to the resurrected Christ in John's Gospel, revealing that Christ is the spouse of the human person. In this imagery, it is noticeable that the passivity intensifies, resulting in a strong sense of surrender to Christ and immense intimacy. In the wine cellar imagery, they recognize that the effects of the transformation do not come from their abilities but from contact with Christ. Thus, Teresa keeps emphasizing in the fifth dwelling that the union of prayer is purely the gift of God and is God's work. A strong sense of passivity in surrendering to God runs through the whole fifth dwelling.<sup>128</sup> This intensifying passivity reveals that the self-knowledge of the human person is infused and receptive knowledge through contact with Christ.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> IC 5:2:4

<sup>126</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 105.

<sup>127</sup> IC 5:1:12

<sup>128</sup> IC 5:1:12; 5:1:4; 5:4:4

<sup>129</sup> IC 5:2:13

Teresa wants to convey the human person's growing desire for God and the immense intimacy between Christ and them through spousal imagery. The spousal language is prevalent in the fifth dwelling, and she addresses Christ as the bridegroom for the first time in this dwelling.<sup>130</sup> This shift is noteworthy because it manifests immense intimacy and the human person's intense longing for God, and it signals a new phase of the relationship. Thus, the spousal language and imagery demonstrate the immense intimacy and loving relationship between Christ and them.

Although Teresa stresses the beauty of the human person and the special relationship through the two images, she also warns about sins and temptations from the devil. In the earlier dwellings, temptations and sins are more external, coming from physical and external activities, whereas temptations and sins are more internal in the fifth dwelling.<sup>131</sup> As temptations and sins become more interior and subtle, Christ also gives knowledge to them: "His majesty would regret the loss of this soul so much that He gives it in many ways a thousand interior warnings, so that the harm will not be hidden from it."<sup>132</sup> Knowing the devil's tactic and Christ's help altogether, they increase their sense of trust in God in this stage. Thus, the awareness of the interior and subtle temptations and sins reveals their increasing self-knowledge through a close relationship with Christ.

Teresa explains the prayer of union using two strong Christological images: the silkworm/butterfly and the inner wine cellar. The two images overlap with each other, and she expounds on anthropological discoveries and Christological accents by mixing the two images.

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<sup>130</sup> IC 5:3:12

<sup>131</sup> IC 5:4:8

<sup>132</sup> IC 5:4:9

In the fifth dwelling places, the prayer of union is the beginning stage of betrothal and is called the meeting. Through the meeting, the human person sees God for the first time, leaving certitude of the presence of God and sure knowledge of God. The sixth dwelling, full of Christological visions, locutions, and raptures, reveals that the God seen by them in the fifth is Christ.

## **II.6 The Sixth Dwelling Places**

When the prayer of union, called the meeting, begins in the preceding stage, Teresa calls this stage betrothal. In the fifth, Teresa reveals the spouse as Christ through the inner wine cellar imagery. As the betrothal takes place in the sixth, spousal language becomes more prevalent than in the preceding stage. In this stage, the human person feels Christ's presence more frequently and intensely than in previous dwellings.<sup>133</sup> Locutions, visions, and raptures are shreds of evidence of the intimate and intense presence of Christ. This stage reveals intense tension and love corresponding to excruciating pain and suffering before the spiritual marriage occurs.<sup>134</sup>

As Teresa dedicates chapter twenty-two of the *Life* to the subject of the Humanity of Christ, she also expresses her strong opinion about the Humanity of Christ in the spiritual life in chapter seven of the sixth dwelling. The Humanity of Christ for Teresa is the culmination of the expression of her Christocentric spirituality. The whole sixth dwelling focuses on Christ's presence, and the intense presence of Christ is the reason for supernatural phenomena.<sup>135</sup> By emphasizing the Humanity of Christ and making the connection between the Humanity of Christ and the mystical experiences, Teresa wants to point out that Christ is present in the human

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<sup>133</sup> IC 6:2:1; 6:3:1; 6:3:4

<sup>134</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 130.

<sup>135</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 109.

person as God and as human. Thus, the Humanity of Christ refers to the whole person of Jesus, not only his human nature.<sup>136</sup>

Moreover, Teresa asserts that the Humanity of Christ is essential in every stage of prayer, particularly in the last two dwellings, because those who abandon the Humanity of Christ will not enter the sixth and seventh dwellings, "for if they lose the guide, who is the good Jesus, they will not hit upon the right road."<sup>137</sup> Here, she emphasizes the instrumental value of the Humanity of Christ for union with God, and she states that those who abandon or undervalue the Humanity of Christ will not advance in prayer.<sup>138</sup> In the sixth dwelling, an intense interiority corresponding to a prevalence of supernatural phenomena becomes stronger. The more intense it becomes, the more Teresa emphasizes that the human person should rely on the Humanity of Christ because the Humanity of Christ is the origin of mystical experience and has instrumental value.<sup>139</sup>

We easily think that intense interiorization and spiritual maturity does not involve the physical dimension of the human person in spiritual life. However, Teresa opposes angelic spiritualism by her teaching on the Humanity of Christ: "To take care not to flee from corporal things to the extent of thinking that even the most sacred Humanity causes harm. His most blessed Mother knew He was God and man, and even though she loved Him more than they did, she did so with such perfection that His presence was a help rather than a hindrance."<sup>140</sup> Teresa argues that the Humanity of Christ is necessary for spiritual growth by stating that Mary knew Jesus as human and divine. By means of His Incarnation, the Humanity of Jesus was united to the Father in history, and this physical presence of his Humanity helped Our Lady to grow

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<sup>136</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 109.

<sup>137</sup> IC 6:7:6

<sup>138</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 110.

<sup>139</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 109.

<sup>140</sup> IC 6:7:14

spiritually.<sup>141</sup> Through the Humanity of Christ and the example of Mary, she argues that the interior journey involves flesh and blood; it is not separate from the corporal dimension of the human person. Through our humanity, we do not only relate to Jesus' Humanity in every situation; His Humanity teaches us how we should relate to God with our body. Thus, we come to understand our physical dimension as an instrument to relate to God through the Humanity of Christ.

When Teresa explains the necessity of the Humanity of Christ, she emphasizes Jesus's companionship, his suffering in relation to human misery: "Life is long, and there are in it many trials, and we need to look at Christ our model, how He suffered. Jesus is too good a companion for us to turn away from Him." Teresa recognizes the nearness of God through the suffering of Christ in human suffering. As Jesus shares the human nature with us, He comes to solidarity with human suffering. In the previous dwellings, she identifies the presence of God metaphysically and interiorly. However, Teresa sees the presence of God existentially through the Humanity of Christ, who is empathetic of human misery and suffering and accompanies the human person as a friend. For Teresa, the concept of friend is the same as in John's Gospel: "No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13 *JB*). As the spousal imagery indicates the intimacy between God and the human person, the terms 'friend' and 'good company' through the concept of the Humanity of Christ reveal God's great love for humanity. Thus, the concept of the Humanity of Christ manifests the existential presence of God in human history and suffering.

Although the Humanity of Christ emphasizes God's existential and incarnational aspects, we should not forget that the Humanity of Christ is also the origin of supernatural grace as

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<sup>141</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 134.

Castro argues. The three categories of supernatural phenomena are locutions, ecstasy, and visions, which are fundamentally Christological. They do not convey information primarily; they convey the loving action of God, producing certitude, joy, and peace within the human person.<sup>142</sup> Through visions, locutions, and ecstasy, they increase in gaining loving knowledge of God and have the certitude of the presence of God compared to the preceding stage.

Moreover, the more the human person receives divine favors, the more they increase another aspect of self-knowledge.<sup>143</sup> Knowing their limited response to God's love compared to divine favors, they become more aware of the metaphysical truth of their nothingness in relation to God.<sup>144</sup> It is noteworthy for the human person to recognize the transcendence of God and the nothingness of them through locutions, ecstasy, and visions, which are Christological experiences. We can consider two differences compared to the previous dwellings. First, from the fourth to the fifth dwellings, Christological experiences highlight the dignity and beauty of the human person, which is one aspect of self-knowledge. However, the Christological experiences in the sixth reveal not only the beauty of the human person but also the nothingness of them. Second, the human person recognizes their creatureliness in this stage through Christological experiences, not through temptation and sinfulness, compared to the fourth and fifth. In the sixth, as they increase in self-knowledge and God's loving knowledge more acutely, they experience excruciating tension, pain, and suffering in them.

As the ecstasies and visions increase, the human person feels the presence of Christ in the innermost part of themselves. From this interior part, the sanctification and purification of Christ takes place and extend to the various levels of the human person:<sup>145</sup> "The soul is renewed like the

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<sup>142</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 131.

<sup>143</sup> IC 6:9:15; 6:3:17; 6:5:10

<sup>144</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 147.

<sup>145</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 114.

phoenix, and one can devoutly believe that its faults are pardoned. Now that it is so pure, the Lord join it with Himself, without anyone understanding what is happening except these two."<sup>146</sup> Castro asserts that these Christological experiences remove the evidence of sin and aim to form the image of Christ in the innermost part of the soul.<sup>147</sup> The accumulation of Christological experiences gradually erases the trace of sin and produces the image of Christ more clearly in the human person. As the image of Christ emerges from the innermost part of souls, the root of original sin and personal sins become weaker.<sup>148</sup>

The repetition and frequent occurrence of visions, locutions, and raptures in the sixth point out what the human person is. As Teresa converses and builds an intimate relationship with Christ, visions, locutions, and raptures occur more frequently and intensely. They reveal the intimacy between Christ and Teresa and her strong desire to see Christ and converse with Him. Thus, we can surmise that these supernatural occurrences reveal that the human person is open to Christ and needs Christ as a conversational subject.<sup>149</sup> The human person needs to communicate with Christ ontologically and psychologically. The human person longs for union with God because he/she is created in the image of God. Based on this truth, the human person seeks Christ as a communication companion to achieve this union. At the same time, existentially and psychologically, the human person needs Christ in challenging life circumstances: "Life is long, and there are in it many trials and we need to look at Christ our model, how He suffered. Jesus is too good a companion for us to turn away from Him."<sup>150</sup> Humans need a constant companion to overcome challenges and obstacles in life, and Christ provides good company for humanity.

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<sup>146</sup> IC 6:4:3

<sup>147</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 117.

<sup>148</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 117.

<sup>149</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 119.

<sup>150</sup> IC 6:7:3

The Christological element penetrates the sixth dwelling, and the doctrine of the Humanity of Christ is the key to unpacking supernatural phenomena. The Humanity of Christ reveals how Teresa's anthropological and Christological dimensions are intertwined. Through the Humanity of Christ, the human understands its physical dimension as an instrument to relate to God and the existential presence of God. Moreover, her Christological experiences point out what human nature is and how sanctification and purification take place.

Compared to the preceding stage, the sixth dwelling reveals that love, longing for suffering and death, surrender to God, and humility become more intense, which reflects a more profound intimacy between God and the human person. In the fifth, the union is described as a short meeting and does not have a strong sense of commitment. In the sixth, as the betrothal takes place, a serious commitment is made to surrender for love.<sup>151</sup> They in this stage have a strong desire and love for God. However, they have not yet been completely purified, and they know their limited response to God's love and their weak human nature is not capable of receiving the intensity of love of God. Thus, this dichotomy between their desires and bodily limitations and the difference between God's immense love and their awareness of their limited responses create immense suffering and tension. Showing these intensities and tensions, Teresa introduces the final dwelling where the complete union occurs.

## **II.7 The Seventh Dwelling Place**

The last stage of prayer is called spiritual marriage because complete union takes place, and there is no separation between God and the human person.<sup>152</sup> Although they are united with God completely, Teresa points out that there is a metaphysical difference between God and them

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<sup>151</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 154.

<sup>152</sup> IC 7:2:2

by emphasizing humility. Teresa mentions that humility is the foundation of the spiritual life.<sup>153</sup> In Teresian terms, humility is deeply related to self-knowledge, and they are almost interchangeable in her writing. Even in this highest stage, the human person recognizes more acutely their sinfulness and the metaphysical difference between God and them.<sup>154</sup> Since they have a strong sense of humility and self-knowledge, they become conscientious not to offend God and desire only to serve God.<sup>155</sup> Thus, a strong sense of humility in the final stage indicates that they in this stage are grounded in the virtue and self-knowledge.

The seventh dwelling differs in many ways from the previous dwellings, particularly the fifth and the sixth. First, raptures and ecstasies do not occur in the seventh.<sup>156</sup> Second, the human person clearly understands their union with God and their interiority.<sup>157</sup> Third, this stage resolves the dichotomy between the exterior and interior parts of the soul.<sup>158</sup> Why do spiritual favors cease in this dwelling? What makes them understand mystical experiences and their internal movements clearly? How can they integrate exterior activity and interior unity? As we mentioned in the analysis of the fifth dwellings, we can find that the answer in Christ.

The final stage describes the human person being united with Christ completely. Compared to the fifth and sixth dwellings, in the spiritual marriage, they are never separated from God, and they become Christ-like and *alter Christus*. Thus, Teresa exclaims, "its [the soul's] life is Christ."<sup>159</sup> Although Christ's presence intensifies from the fifth to the sixth, they have not yet surrendered to God entirely in these stages.<sup>160</sup> Nevertheless, from the fifth and the

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<sup>153</sup> IC 7:4:8

<sup>154</sup> IC 7:3:14

<sup>155</sup> IC 7:3:14

<sup>156</sup> IC 7:3:12

<sup>157</sup> IC 7:1:6

<sup>158</sup> IC 7:3:2

<sup>159</sup> IC 7:2:6

<sup>160</sup> IC 5:4:4

sixth, the gradual encounter with Christ helps the human person surrender to God and advance to a complete union with God.<sup>161</sup> During the transformation process, their encounters with Christ intensify and increase. His company purifies and sanctifies their faculties; eventually, they are united with Christ in love and will.<sup>162</sup> As the will is united with Christ entirely, the other two faculties become united with Christ simultaneously. Throughout this process, Christ leads them to transformation<sup>163</sup> at the center, and they become like Christ in the last stage.<sup>164</sup>

Since Christ is entirely involved with the human person's transformation process, He has an instrumental value. At the same time, Christ has terminal value because they become like Christ through the end of this process. Since the human person is wholly united with Christ in this stage and Christ is involved with the transformation process entirely, Christ is the key to answering the three questions: the absence of rapture and ecstasies, their clear understanding of union with God and their interiority, and the integration between the exterior and interior parts. First, the complete union with Christ strengthens and transforms the faculties and senses.<sup>165</sup> As strengthened human nature is capable of receiving the intensity of God's love, raptures and ecstasy do not occur. Ecstasy and raptures are not regarded as an essential part of union, but only as a side-effect and byproduct of intense love poured on the human person.<sup>166</sup> These phenomena happen when human nature cannot receive the immense love of God. Since their human nature in this stage is strengthened through the complete union with Christ, raptures and ecstasy do not occur. Second, since the human person's images are engraved in Christ, they can see themselves

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<sup>161</sup> IC 5:4:4

<sup>162</sup> IC 7:4:10; Alvira, *Vision*, 378.

<sup>163</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 380. Transformation should not be understood in the sense of pantheism. Without losing human nature, agency, and will, the center of the soul is transformed.

<sup>164</sup> IC 7:4:10

<sup>165</sup> IC 7:4:10-11; 7:3:12

<sup>166</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 91.

in the mirror of union with Christ at the center.<sup>167</sup> The complete union with Christ enables them to have the same understanding and relationship with the Father as the Son has with the Father.<sup>168</sup> The vision of the Trinity in chapter one of the seventh dwelling demonstrates that they acquire the same understanding as Christ through complete union with Him.<sup>169</sup> Since the intellect is suspended in the fifth and sixth dwellings, they do not understand union with God. However, they in the final stage see and understand the whole spiritual journey from the perspective of complete union with God.<sup>170</sup> Third, through complete union with Christ, "the Lord has now fortified, enlarged, and made soul capable,"<sup>171</sup> and "the messages [are sent] from the interior center to the place at the top of the castle and to the dwelling places outside the center."<sup>172</sup> Thus, the faculties, senses, and all the corporeal parts united with the human person serve God and the world.<sup>173</sup>

As spiritual marriage is fulfilled through the complete union with Christ, the human person produces good work and service.<sup>174</sup> Here, Martha and Mary, representing the exterior and interior parts of souls, and activity and contemplation, join together.<sup>175</sup> Howells explains that the unity between the exterior and interior parts of souls is not a simple unity, but they share "the

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<sup>167</sup> IC 7:2:8

<sup>168</sup> IC 7:3:2; Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 90.

<sup>169</sup> IC 7:1:6; John of the Cross, *The Collected Works of John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh & Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1991), 497, 547, 554. John of the Cross uses very strong language when he describes spiritual marriage in the *Spiritual canticle*. He said that the transformed soul becomes God through participation and son of God through adoption. Christ is the natural Son of God, and the soul becomes son of God by participation. In this stage, the soul mirrors Christ perfectly. Soul's intellect becomes the intellect of God. John emphasizes the equality between God and the soul, at the same time, human nature still remains as human.

<sup>170</sup> IC 7:2:6

<sup>171</sup> IC 7:3:12

<sup>172</sup> IC 7:4:10

<sup>173</sup> IC 7:4:10

<sup>174</sup> IC 7:4:6

<sup>175</sup> IC 7:4:12

activity of love" from the same root.<sup>176</sup> Thus, "this interior root is the source of its active life as well as of its union."<sup>177</sup> In the previous dwellings, the delightful union seems to separate the soul from the exterior activity and the world, giving it a "painful desire to leave the world," and Teresa describes works and virtues as the offspring of the union.<sup>178</sup> However, she views activities and works as "the immediate product of loving expressions" between God and the human person.<sup>179</sup> They in this stage participate in active works and service for God and the world without experiencing division of them and attachment to the world.<sup>180</sup>

These three differences between the preceding dwellings and the final stage reveal Teresa's anthropological dilemmas: a dichotomy between the body and soul, a division between God and the world, and the problem of mystical knowledge. As souls are united with Christ entirely, they have a clear understanding of union with God, and Teresa's dualistic tendency between the body and soul and between God and the world is resolved. The seventh dwelling illustrates that her Christology is key to answering her anthropological issues, and her Christology is deeply related to her anthropology.

### **III. The Humanity of Jesus Christ**

The *Devotio Moderna* is a devotional and religious movement that began from laypeople.<sup>181</sup> It is possibly one of the most influential currents in the sixteenth century.<sup>182</sup> It focused on the interior life, self-knowledge, the Humanity of Christ, and the practice of virtue, avoiding vice, and retirement from the world. The Christocentric accent is the main feature of

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<sup>176</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 89.

<sup>177</sup> Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 107.

<sup>178</sup> IC 5:3:11; Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 89.

<sup>179</sup> IC 7:3:2; Howells, *Mystical Knowing*, 89.

<sup>180</sup> IC 7:4:6

<sup>181</sup> William Griffin, Introduction in *The Imitation of Christ*, XVII.

<sup>182</sup> Javier Sesé, *Historia de La Espiritualidad*, Manuales de Teología 32 (Pamplona: EUNSA, 2005), 161.

*Devotio Moderna*, and the goal of the movement is to make people imitate Christ. For this reason, the life of Christ is the primary source of inspiration, and the historical Jesus and the Humanity of Christ are emphasized.<sup>183</sup>

In the sixteenth century in Spain, there was a great emphasis on meditation on the passion of Christ, and Franciscan *regogidos* stressed Jesus' Incarnation and redemptive mysteries. Reading many devotional books, particularly *Vita Christi* by Ludolph of Saxony, *Imitatio Christi* by Thomas à Kempis, and the *Third Spiritual Alphabet* by Francisco de Osuna, Teresa was influenced by Christological devotion, and her concept of the Humanity of Christ was born in this milieu.<sup>184</sup> The Humanity of Jesus Christ is the heart of Teresa's Christology, arising from her personal experience of liberation by the Lord and the intimate experience with the person of Jesus in her prayer.<sup>185</sup> Teresa's spirituality is fundamentally Christocentric: "All my life I was devoted to Christ."<sup>186</sup> Her writings on the Humanity of Christ are mainly in the *Life* and the *Interior Castle*. Thus, it is necessary to examine Teresa's writings on the Humanity of Christ, and then we will highlight features of Teresa's Christology to find out how she understands the meaning of the Humanity of Jesus Christ.

### **III.1 The Humanity of Christ in the Writings of Teresa**

The concept of the Humanity of Christ is born of Teresa's conversion, and she stresses the importance of the Humanity of Christ in chapter twenty-two of her autobiography and chapter seven of the sixth dwelling places in the *Interior Castle*, explaining the development of prayer. Since she dedicates these two chapters to the Humanity of Christ, and this subject is dealt

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<sup>183</sup> Rodrigues, "Humanidad de Cristo," 31.

<sup>184</sup> Melquiades Andrés Martín, "En Torno a La Theologia Crucis" in *La Espiritualidad Española (1450-1559)*, *Diálogo Ecuménico* 6, no. 23–24 (1971): 363.

<sup>185</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ," 28.

<sup>186</sup> L 22:4

with extensively in the previous sections, it is helpful to summarize her writings on this topic to clarify the meaning of the Humanity of Christ.

Fundamentally, the Humanity of Christ (*la Humanidad de Cristo*) refers to the whole person of Jesus. However, Teresa uses it to emphasize slightly different focuses in various contexts. Here, we will explain four emphases in her concept of the Humanity of Christ.

First, when she mentions her conversion experience, she refers to Christ as 'the wounded Christ'<sup>187</sup> to emphasize Jesus' human nature. As she relates her weakness and struggles to the Humanity of Christ in her conversion, she emphasizes Jesus' human nature in the concept of the Humanity of Christ: "Well, my soul; now was tired...It represented the much wounded Christ and was very devotional so that beholding it I was utterly distressed in seeing Him that way...I could only think about Christ as He was as man."<sup>188</sup> Since Teresa starts to relate to Christ profoundly in her struggle and discovers the Humanity of Christ in her conversion, we can find the existential characteristic of her Christology in the expression 'the man Jesus' or the 'wounded Christ'.<sup>189</sup>

Second, when she experiences God's love and intimacy concretely and personally, she uses the Humanity of Christ with coupling the conviction of the love of God. For example, after the conversion, Teresa refers to the man Jesus in chapter nine and paragraph six, and then she continues how much she is convinced by the love of God in the same chapter and paragraph seven: "I could only think about Christ as He was as man...By considering the love He bore me, I regained my courage, for I never lost confidence in His mercy; in myself, I lost it many times."<sup>190</sup> We can also find the coupling between the conviction of the love of God and the vision of the Humanity of Christ in the sixth mansion: "His majesty communicates Himself to us and

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<sup>187</sup> The wounded Christ refers to the statue of the suffering Christ in Teresa's conversion.

<sup>188</sup> L 9:1; 9:6

<sup>189</sup> See also L 22:10; 22:11; IC 6:7:13; 6:7:14

<sup>190</sup> L 9:6-7

shows us the love He bears us. He does this through some very wonderful apparitions and visions."<sup>191</sup> Thus, the vision of Christ goes with Jesus' loving eyes, which contain Jesus' love for Teresa.<sup>192</sup>

Third, Teresa uses the expression of the Humanity of Christ in the apologetic sense. Reacting to some spiritual traditions that undermine the importance of the Humanity of Christ, she emphasizes the Humanity of Christ with an apologetic sense: "We must do through the most sacred humanity of Christ... I have definitely seen that we must enter by this gate."<sup>193</sup> By asserting the value of the Humanity of Christ, Teresa defends the orthodox teaching of Christology that Christ is the only way to the Father and the mediator of God.<sup>194</sup> Teresa also highlights the incarnational characteristic of her Christology by defending the Humanity of Christ in the process of union with God. Jesus came to human history as a concrete person and has entered fully into human life, and through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, we can access God.<sup>195</sup>

Last, when Teresa describes a vision of the Humanity of Christ in the resurrected form, she refers to the Humanity of Christ as God: "The living Christ... He is both man and God, not as He was in the tomb but as He was when He came out of the tomb after his resurrection.... You want the soul to know how tremendous this majesty is and the power that this most sacred humanity joined with the Divinity has."<sup>196</sup> Knowing the unity of Jesus' Divinity and Humanity, Teresa refers to the Humanity of Christ as 'God and man glorified.'<sup>197</sup> Also, we can find the

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<sup>191</sup> IC 6:8:1

<sup>192</sup> See also IC 6:8:2; 6:8:3; 6:8:4

<sup>193</sup> L 22:6

<sup>194</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 125.

<sup>195</sup> See also IC 6:7:6; 6:7:14

<sup>196</sup> L 28:8-9

<sup>197</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ," 30.

connection between the Humanity of Christ and the reference to the Divinity in her vision of the Humanity of Christ in the *Life* 38:17: "I saw the most sacred humanity with more extraordinary glory that I had ever seen...it seemed to me I was in the presence of the Divinity." These references signify Teresa's recognition of the Humanity of Christ as Divine. Thus, we should understand her concept of the Humanity of Christ within these various contexts.<sup>198</sup> This expression occurs thirty-three times in her works, and her frequent references reveal its significance in her spirituality.

### **III.1.1 The Humanity of Christ in the *Life* 22**

Although the Humanity of Jesus Christ is prevalent in all of Teresa's writings, she explicitly explains the Humanity of Jesus Christ with great vigor in chapter twenty-two of her autobiography. Teresa argues why the Humanity of Christ is essential point by point here. First, the Humanity of Christ is vital in advancing prayer. In her time, Teresa encountered some spiritual traditions that asserted all that corporeal notions, including the Humanity of Jesus Christ, should be abandoned at the higher levels of prayer, remaining in pure emptiness and immersed in the Divinity. They argued that images, representations, all corporeal things, and even devotion to the Humanity of Jesus Christ were obstacles to perfect contemplation.<sup>199</sup> However, Teresa refused to treat the Humanity of Jesus like any other material object.<sup>200</sup> Although Teresa knew that the Humanity of Jesus was not limited to images, representations, and reflection on the historical Jesus, she was convinced that through her own experience, they

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<sup>198</sup> L 15:11. It is also beneficial to pay attention to how Teresa gives advice on the place of the human Christ for the beginner in prayer. Contemplation on Christ's suffering helps beginners to detach from worldly attachment.

<sup>199</sup> Kieran Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila: The Book of her Life*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1976), 28.

<sup>200</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 70.

mediated the experience of God, increased spiritual growth, and that Christian life could not depart from the historical Jesus.<sup>201</sup>

Let us consider the glorious St. Paul: it doesn't seem that any other name fell from his lips than that of Jesus, as coming from one who kept the Lord close to his heart. Once I had come to understand this truth, I carefully considered the lives of the saints, the great contemplatives, and found that they hadn't taken any other path: St. Francis demonstrates this through the stigma; St. Anthony of Padua, with the Infant; St. Bernard found his delight in the Humanity; St Catherine of Siena and many others."<sup>202</sup>

Teresa strongly asserts that there is no progress in contemplation without the Humanity of Christ, and the Humanity of Christ is the only way to union with God.<sup>203</sup>

Second, the doctrine of the Humanity of Christ teaches us the danger of running away from our humanity.<sup>204</sup> Teresa mentions, "we are not angels but we have a body. To desire to be angels while we are on earth—and as much on earth as I was—is foolishness."<sup>205</sup> The human person constitutes the body and soul, and he/she needs human and psychological support. The Humanity of Christ provides psychological support and company for the human person.<sup>206</sup> Ignoring the Humanity of Christ can lead us to false and angelic spiritualism, which undermines the integrity and unity of the human person as the body and soul.

Third, the Humanity of Christ enables us to discover our identity and worth. In relation to the Humanity of Christ, Teresa knows her identity as a friend of Christ and her human worth. She sees Jesus as a good friend and a man with weakness and trials.<sup>207</sup> In her conversion experience, she also realizes that Jesus needs her as much as she needs Jesus. Teresa sees Jesus

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<sup>201</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 102.

<sup>202</sup> L 22:7

<sup>203</sup> L 22:9

<sup>204</sup> Rodrigues, "Humanidad de Cristo," 65.

<sup>205</sup> L 22:10

<sup>206</sup> L 22:10

<sup>207</sup> L 22:10

needs her and longs for her more than she longs for Jesus and needs Jesus. This awareness of mutual dependency contributes to her belief in human worth.<sup>208</sup>

### **III.1.2 The Humanity of Christ in the *Interior Castle***

The description of the Humanity of Christ in chapter seven of the sixth dwelling is similar to chapter twenty-two of the *Life*. First, Teresa emphasizes the importance of the Humanity of Christ in the context of prayer. Without the Humanity of Christ, people never enter into the last two dwellings.<sup>209</sup> Second, she stresses the physical dimension of spirituality by teaching the Humanity of Christ. Teresa asserts that negligence of the Humanity of Christ undermines the Eucharist, which is the extension of the Incarnation.<sup>210</sup> Moreover, contemplation and mystical favors are not continuous, so it is necessary to meditate on the Humanity of Christ to spark our desire for God.<sup>211</sup> Third, Teresa emphasizes the unity between Jesus' Divinity and Humanity through the Humanity of Christ. As she refers to Jesus as Divine and the human, she maintains the unity between Jesus' Divinity and Humanity, and her teaching of the Humanity of Christ shows Teresa's apologetic tendency.<sup>212</sup>

### **III.2 The Characteristics of the Humanity of Christ**

Teresa's teaching on the Humanity of Christ is fundamentally existential and incarnational. We will examine these two features, which reveal her Christology clearly and lead to what it means for the Humanity of Christ for Teresa.

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<sup>208</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 133.

<sup>209</sup> IC 6:7:6

<sup>210</sup> IC 6:7:14

<sup>211</sup> IC 6:7:13

<sup>212</sup> IC 6:7:9

### **III.2.1 The Humanity of Christ is Existential**

Teresa's concept of the Humanity of Christ stresses the existential and experiential aspects of her Christology. McDermott highlights the existential characteristic of Teresa's Christology, which is more basic and concrete. This existential Christology emerges from the struggles and conflicts of daily life, delight, availability, development, and growth, which is deeply related to the Christian life in a mundane world.<sup>213</sup> Teresa's Christology is an existential Christology because her starting point in Christology is her struggle, conflict, suffering, and crisis, which comprise a large part of her life.<sup>214</sup> Thus, "Teresa's Christology is born from her experience of human limitation."<sup>215</sup> Her relationship with God amid her struggles and conflicts leads Teresa to the discovery of the Humanity of Jesus Christ, in which she experienced a profound conversion. For this reason, Teresa's teaching of Christology and her descriptions of Christ are practical, vivid, and concrete. Although she is informed by various readings, sermons, and discussions with her confidants, her Christology has vital existential and experiential dimensions because it comes from the actual direct experience of Christ to her spirit in her struggle and conflict.<sup>216</sup>

### **III.2.2 The Humanity of Christ is Incarnational**

Teresa's Christology is also Incarnational. Jesus came to human history as a concrete person through whom we can access God; God has entered fully into human life and has become one of us (Jn 1:14 *NAB*). McDermott emphasizes that human life is fundamentally Incarnational: "Incarnation is the offer of God's love in every human form in the midst of a desolate, blessed, and groaning creation. God's ministry to us, to his people, in human form, as human, to the guilt-

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<sup>213</sup> McDermott, "The Christ-Wound," 33.

<sup>214</sup> McDermott, "The Christ-Wound," 34.

<sup>215</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ," 6.

<sup>216</sup> Schneiders, "The Jesus Mysticism," 54.

ridden, the self-righteous, and the children of this world."<sup>217</sup> Teresa's life is wholly embedded with Christ. Whether experiencing joy or suffering, she always identifies her experience with Christ:

If you are joyful, look at him risen. Just imagining how he rose from the tomb will bring you joy. Indeed, like one coming forth from a battle where he has gained a great kingdom! And all of that, plus himself, he desires for you. If you are experiencing trials or are sad, behold him on the way to the garden: what great affliction he bore in his soul; for having become suffering itself, he tells us about it and complains of it. Or behold him with burdened with the cross, for they didn't even let him take a breath. He will look at you with those eyes so beautiful and compassionate, filled with tears; he will forget his sorrows so as to console you in yours, merely because you yourselves go to him to be consoled, and you turn your head to look at him.<sup>218</sup>

Teresa relates to Christ in every human situation and emotion, and she encounters God in the human form of Jesus Christ in her life.<sup>219</sup> Also, her experience of Christ is an embodied experience. Teresa describes the physical involvement in her mystical experiences:<sup>220</sup> her body participates more fully in the spiritual joys as the soul experiences union with God, and she describes the supernatural experience of Christ in sensory language such as hearing, tasting, seeing, touching, and smelling.<sup>221</sup> Teresa rejects disembodied spirituality: "To be always withdrawn from corporeal things and enkindled in love is the trait of angelic spirits, not of those who live in mortal bodies. We are not angels, but we have a body. To desire to be angels is foolishness."<sup>222</sup> Furthermore, in Teresa's time, most Christology focused on Jesus' Divinity at the higher levels of prayer. However, she begins her Christology from below, focusing on the Jesus of Nazareth and concrete encounter with Jesus Christ in her daily life.<sup>223</sup> Teresa loved images of

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<sup>217</sup> McDermott, "The Christ-Wound," 37.

<sup>218</sup> W 26:4-5

<sup>219</sup> McDermott, "The Christ-Wound," 37.

<sup>220</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 68.

<sup>221</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 245.

<sup>222</sup> IC 6:7:6; L 22:10

<sup>223</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ," 26.

Jesus and the Gospels, particularly the story of the Samaritan woman, and her usual prayer was to reflect on Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.<sup>224</sup>

Thus, Teresa's Christology is existential and incarnational, which are characteristics of the Humanity of Christ. The existential aspect of her Christology focuses on her context and starting point in relating to Jesus Christ. The incarnational aspect of her Christology is apologetic and stresses the bodily dimension of her anthropology and the value of the historical Jesus.

### **III.2.3 The Meaning of The Humanity of Christ**

Teresa emphasizes the importance of the Humanity of Jesus Christ in her prayer and her Christian way of living. Throughout the examination of the features of her Christology, it is known that the Humanity of Jesus Christ is deeply related to the historical Jesus and Teresa's concrete experience of Jesus. What is meant by the Humanity of Jesus for Teresa? Chowning defines the Humanity of Jesus Christ:

What does Teresa actually mean by the sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ? She means not simply his corporeal reality, but the Jesus of the Gospels, the Eternal Logos of the Father, who took flesh in time, lived, died, rose from the dead, and continues to live with the Father and with us in a new way dynamic way. The Risen Lord Jesus, "God and man glorified," best expresses her understanding of the Humanity of Jesus. For Teresa, Jesus is not a mythological figure who lived in the first century Palestine but is now sunk into the incomprehensibility of God with no further relation to history. Jesus continues to have an abiding and significant presence with us. He is united with the Father but also lives among us in a new, permanent, and dynamic way.<sup>225</sup>

Although the Humanity of Jesus Christ for Teresa focuses on the historical and Incarnational aspects of Jesus Christ, Chowning points out that the historical Jesus cannot be separated from the Risen Christ in the concept of the Humanity of Jesus Christ. Thus, Teresa's experience of

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<sup>224</sup> L 9:4

<sup>225</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ," 29-30.

Christ is not confined to the earthly human form of Jesus but encompasses also the Risen Christ in human form.<sup>226</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Chapter two consists of three parts: an analysis of Teresa's conversion experience, the development of prayer, and her understanding of the Humanity of Christ. The three parts are intimately related, and the analysis of the three themes provides how Teresa's anthropology and Christology are related. The analysis of her Christological experiences is the methodology to find out the relationship between her anthropology and Christology and the meaning of the Humanity of Christ. Her concept of the Humanity of Christ is born in her conversion experience and the development of prayer. Although she was influenced by Christological devotion in her time, she discovered the value of the Humanity of Christ in her conversion experience. Since her discovery of the Humanity of Christ, she advanced in prayer, and her life dramatically changed. Teresa integrated contemplative and active aspects into her life, and the mystical phase in her prayer began.

The analysis of her conversion experience reveals how she changed her perception of God through the Humanity of Christ. This change led her to relate to God more personally and intimately, and she had a firm conviction in the love of God and a deep understanding of herself. From her loving relationship with the Humanity of Christ, Teresa understood herself as the friend of God, which is her strong conviction in the love of God and her new identity. Moreover, the discovery of the Humanity of Christ in her conversion produced fruits of liberation, freedom, and maturity in her life. Thus, the analysis of her conversion experience shows how her anthropology and Christology are interconnected.

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<sup>226</sup> Chowning, "Jesus Christ," 42.

The conversion experience plays the role of the hinge to open the threshold for the mystical phase. Her development of prayer is synthesized in the *Interior Castle*, and this development reveals the relationship between her Christological and anthropological dimensions. Christ's gradual presence corresponds to her increasing self-knowledge in each stage. Furthermore, the Humanity of Christ in the sixth and seventh dwellings shows how it plays a role in resolving her anthropological dilemmas and why the Humanity of Christ in her anthropology is vital and essential. The Humanity of Christ is discovered in her conversion experience, and Teresa has a solid conviction about the value of the Humanity of Christ in the development of prayer. Thus, her conversion experience, development of prayer, and the Humanity of Christ are strongly interconnected, and the Humanity of Christ is the foundation of her Christology and anthropology.

Her teaching of the Humanity of Christ reveals Christocentric spirituality and has an apologetic sense, which provides a dogmatic basement for her Christological thoughts and experiences. In particular, her main writings on the Humanity of Christ in the *Life* and the *Interior Castle* reveal her apologetic and dogmatic sense. Although Teresa emphasizes Jesus' Incarnation in her teaching, she does not separate Jesus' Humanity from His Divinity. Instead, she preserves the unity between Jesus' Humanity and Divinity by connecting the Humanity of Jesus to the Risen Christ.

By emphasizing the incarnational dimension of the Humanity of Christ, she emphasizes the bodily dimension of her spirituality. Her spirituality is embodied, and her teaching of the Humanity of Christ helps us utilize our physicality to relate to God.

Teresa's teaching of the Humanity of Christ is also existential and experiential. Her vision of the Humanity of Christ accommodates her situation and accompanies, guides, and consoles

her. Her concept of the Humanity of Christ focuses on Jesus' companionship in her every situation.<sup>227</sup> For this reason, Teresa has a firm conviction that Jesus is a good friend, and the Humanity of Christ is deeply interwoven with her life.

Overall, chapter two demonstrates that the Humanity of Christ is the jewel of her Christology and the hinge between her anthropology and Christology. Chapter three will explore how Teresa understands herself through her relationship with the Humanity of Christ.

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<sup>227</sup> L 29:4; Castro, *Cristología*, 9.

### **Chapter III: Teresa's Thought regarding Human Self-understanding and the Relationship between Anthropology and Christology**

Teresa's concept of the Humanity of Christ expresses her Christocentric spirituality and is central to her Christology and anthropology. Teresa cherishes the Humanity of Christ not only for dogmatic and apologetic reasons but also for existential and anthropological reasons. In her conversion experience, the wounded Christ resonates with her fragile and vulnerable humanity, and she identifies herself with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. In her identification with the wounded Christ, she has a firm conviction of the presence of God within herself that she had never felt before: "It represented the much wounded Christ and was very devotional so that beholding it I was utterly distressed in seeing Him that way...For since I knew the Lord was certainly present there within me."<sup>1</sup> Teresa feels the presence of God existentially and experientially through the Humanity of Christ, and her firm experience of the presence of God leads to her conviction of the love of God in her conversion. As verified in her life journey, the vision of the Humanity of Christ accommodates Teresa's situation, follows, and accompanies her.<sup>2</sup> From her conversion experience to the second period of her life journey, Teresa experiences God experientially and existentially through the Humanity of Christ. Through this experience, she draws her authority, confidence, security, and trust. There is no wonder why Teresa begins a new life, and her new anthropology starts after her conversion experience. From this experience, Teresa deeply understands herself as the friend of God, which is her firm conviction in the love of God and her new identity. Moreover, the discovery of the Humanity of Christ in her conversion produces fruits of liberation, freedom, and maturity in her life.

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<sup>1</sup> L 9:1

<sup>2</sup> Secundino Castro, *Cristología Teresiana*, Vol. 5 (Madrid: Espiritualidad, 1978), 9.

Chapter Two examined her Christological experiences to discover the relationship between her Christology and anthropology and her teaching on the Humanity of Christ. As examined in the analysis of the *Interior Castle*, the human person develops gradually according to the degree of intimacy with Christ. At the same time, the relationship with Christ is the keyword to the progress of prayer. Thus, we can find a cohesive relationship between Christ's gradual presence, human development, and prayer.

Through the investigation of Teresa's Christological experience and analysis of the *Interior Castle*, the relationship between her Christology and anthropology was revealed, and her teaching of the Humanity of Christ became clear. Also, this investigation demonstrated how the Humanity of Christ became the nexus of her Christology and anthropology. Based on that analysis, Chapter three will finally examine how Teresa understands herself through the Humanity of Christ. The discovery of the Humanity of Christ is so significant in her life that it affects her consciousness, self-understanding, prayer, and the direction of her life. In particular, through the Humanity of Christ, Teresa finds the best possibility to understand herself and recognizes more profound interiority and truth of herself, eventually leading her to transformation.

Furthermore, this chapter will examine her anthropology and Christology nexus. By doing this, it will discover the value of investigating the two areas and provide a coherent and cohesive perspective and logic in approaching Teresa's spirituality.

Chapter three will examine three parts: the role of the Humanity of Christ in her Christology and anthropology, Teresa's self-understanding through the relationship with the Humanity of Christ, and the relationship between self-knowledge and her Christology and anthropology.

## **I. The Role of the Humanity of Christ in Teresa's Christology and Anthropology**

This section will investigate the role of the Humanity of Christ in Teresa's Christology and anthropology. This inquiry will lead to how Teresa understands herself better through the Humanity of Christ.

This section has four subdivisions. First, Teresa's teaching of the Humanity of Christ plays an apologetic role in Teresa's Christology. Teresa emphasizes that Christ is the only way to union with God. Second, the Humanity of Christ helps Teresa value Christological devotion. Representations of Jesus Christ in art and the Gospels have instrumental value in bringing to mind and sparking the love of God. Third, the Humanity of Christ provides the key to understanding her Christological experiences. These can be confusing because they involve supernatural phenomena. These mystical experiences can be understood rightly only through the Christological framework. In this way, the teaching of the Humanity of Christ provides the key to understanding Christological experiences. Fourth, the teaching of the Humanity of Christ provides a proper understanding of her anthropology. By stressing the incarnational dimension of the Humanity of Christ, Teresa avoids any dualistic tendency in her anthropology.

### **I.1 Her Teaching of the Humanity of Christ plays an Apologetic Role in Teresa's Christology**

Teresa's teaching of the Humanity of Christ plays an apologetic role in Teresa's Christology. In her time, Erasmism, Lutheranism, Alumbrados, and some in the *recogimiento* movement devalued anything external: the rites, ceremonies, the visible, the material, and the corporal, including the Humanity of Christ.<sup>3</sup> In particular, some spiritual traditions asserted that the Humanity of Christ should be dispensed in the higher stage of prayer. Teresa warned firmly

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<sup>3</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 4.

against this false teaching in the *Life* and in the *Interior Castle*: "Now it could be that I'm mistaken and that we are all saying the same thing. But I myself see that the devil tried to deceive me in this matter."<sup>4</sup> She confessed that dispensing the Humanity of Christ was a mistake and the devil's trick. As she stressed the Humanity of Christ in the last two dwellings, she emphasizes that Christ is the only way in the process of union with God. Whether the human person is in a high stage of prayer or not, there is no other way to be in union with God except through Christ.<sup>5</sup> We can never identify directly with the Father or the Holy Spirit but only with the Son because Christ has a human nature.<sup>6</sup> By stressing the Humanity of Christ in her teaching of union with God, Teresa provides a comprehensive understanding of Christology, which could have been weakened and undermined by other spiritual traditions.

Moreover, the stress on the human dimension of Christ in her teaching does not oppose the divine facet of Jesus. Whenever she experiences the Humanity of Christ in the resurrected form in her vision, she always refers to the Humanity of Christ as God. Teresa is not concerned about the distinction between the Humanity and the Divinity of Jesus. Instead, she wants to make clear through the teaching of the Humanity of Christ that cutting off any two dimensions of Christ is cutting off the reality of Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup>

## **I.2 The Humanity of Christ helps Teresa value Christological Devotion**

Teresa cannot tolerate that the Humanity of Christ is treated the same as any object, such as the material, corporeal, and visible.<sup>8</sup> Jesus' image, representation, and the Gospels remind her of the example of Jesus' virtue and life.<sup>9</sup> For these reasons, she values and cherishes images of

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<sup>4</sup> IC 6:7:5

<sup>5</sup> IC 6:7:6

<sup>6</sup> Maria Isabel Alvira, *Vision de l'homme selon Thérèse d'Avila* (Paris: F.X. de GUIBERT, 1992), 125.

<sup>7</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 306.

<sup>8</sup> Rowan Williams, *Teresa of Avila* (London: Continuum, 1991), 70.

<sup>9</sup> L 3:6

Jesus, icons, and other holy objects. Although the Humanity of Christ is not limited to images, representations, and reflections on Jesus, Teresa knows that they mediate the experience of God and connect her to Christ.<sup>10</sup> Through her experience, she knows that contemplation and supernatural favors are not continuous, and there are many obstacles and difficulties in the spiritual journey.<sup>11</sup> When mystical favors cease, Jesus' image, representation, and the Gospels help spark and remind her of God's love. Also, there is another reason why Teresa loves the devotional objects. Teresa confesses her poor imagination ability in the *Life*.<sup>12</sup> Although she tries to imagine Jesus' beauty and face, she fails to picture Jesus in her mind. Jesus' image, representation, the Gospels, and other holy objects help Teresa recollect herself and spark the love of Jesus within her heart when she struggles with her prayer.<sup>13</sup> As she defends the Humanity of Christ, Teresa values her Christological devotion, which has an instrumental value in mediating the experience of God in her spirituality.

Moreover, Teresa gives a warning about the negligence of the Humanity of Christ regarding the Eucharist.<sup>14</sup> Undermining the value of the Humanity of Christ could lead to the danger of losing devotion to the Eucharist: "I tell you, daughters, that I consider this[dispensing the Humanity of Christ] a dangerous path and think the devil could make one lose devotion for the most Blessed Sacrament."<sup>15</sup> Her highest mystical experience happened after taking the Eucharist, and there is a strong correlation between the Eucharist and her mystical experience. For example, after communion, she saw Jesus entering her soul as if she saw with bodily eyes.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Kieran Kavanaugh, , 28.

<sup>11</sup> IC 6:7:13

<sup>12</sup> L 3:6

<sup>13</sup> L 3:5

<sup>14</sup> IC 6:7:14

<sup>15</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 268.

<sup>16</sup> W 34:6

This example certifies her faith that Jesus' Humanity is genuinely present in the Eucharist. The coupling of the Humanity of Christ and the Eucharist, and the correlation between the Eucharist and her mystical experience, support that Teresa strengthens her devotion to the most Blessed Sacrament by emphasizing the value of the Humanity of Christ.

Teresa's emphasis on her Christological devotion also makes us think about the bodily and experiential dimensions of her spirituality. When a human person is in contact with divine reality through their senses, their faith can be fostered and cultivated. Her link to the Humanity of Christ and Christological devotion reveals that her spirituality does not exclude the experiential and physical dimensions of the human person.

### **I.3 The Humanity of Christ provides the Key to Understanding her Mystical Experiences**

In the sixth dwelling Teresa describes various mystical phenomena, such as rapture, ecstasy, visions, and locutions.<sup>17</sup> Reading the sixth dwelling could give the impression that her spirituality alienates her from ordinary life, and her mystical experiences disconnect us from her spirituality. However, Castro asserts that these supernatural favors are fundamentally Christological experiences and the Humanity of Christ provides the key for understanding mystical experiences.<sup>18</sup> Teresa asserts that "[intellectual and imaginative] visions almost always come together" when she explains the vision of the Humanity of Christ.<sup>19</sup> Thus, her visions of Christ can be understood in relation to the Humanity of Christ. Whenever Teresa experiences the vision of Christ in the sixth dwelling, the experiences leave peace, joy, and the conviction of the love of God: "His majesty communicates Himself to us and shows us the love He bears us. He

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<sup>17</sup> IC 6:3:12; 6:4:13; 6:5:10

<sup>18</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 109.

<sup>19</sup> L 28:9

does this through some very wonderful apparitions and visions."<sup>20</sup> William also asserts that her visions generally do not convey a special message and information but the loving act of God.<sup>21</sup> In particular, when she explains the imaginative vision of the Humanity of Christ, she emphasizes the effects of the experiences as certitude of the love of God, peace, and delight.<sup>22</sup> Although Teresa explains mystical experiences in detail, her mystical experiences fundamentally convey the concrete experience of the love of God in the Christological context. When we see her mystical experiences in a Christological frame, we can understand her mystical experiences correctly.

#### **I.4 The Humanity of Christ provides a Proper Understanding of her Anthropology**

Teresa's teaching of the Humanity of Christ provides a proper understanding of her anthropology. In her anthropology, we can detect a dualistic tendency in her writing, particularly when she describes the relationship between body and soul. However, her strong emphasis on the Humanity of Christ dismantles any dualistic tendency in her writing. The New Testament scholar, Richard Hays, also argues that the mystery of the Incarnation breaks down any dualism.<sup>23</sup> As Teresa stresses the Humanity of Christ, she highlights the incarnational dimension in her Christology. The incarnational emphasis on her teaching of the Humanity of Christ stresses the bodily elements of Jesus. The mystery of the Incarnation stresses the earthly Jesus, and the culmination of the mystery of the Incarnation is Jesus' passion, which reveals God's immense love through His body.

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<sup>20</sup> IC 6:8:1

<sup>21</sup> Rowan Williams, *Teresa of Avila* (London: Continuum, 1991), 131.

<sup>22</sup> IC 6:9:3; 6:6:9; 6:9:10

<sup>23</sup> Richard B Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation; a Contemporary to New Testament Ethics* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1996), 156.

As mentioned in the sixth dwelling, Teresa argues the necessity of Jesus' physical presence through the example of Mary. Teresa supports the necessity of Jesus' physical presence by providing the example of our Lady that Jesus' Humanity helped her grow spiritually.<sup>24</sup>

Also, her experience of Christ is an embodied experience. For example, Teresa mentions the expansion of the heart in the fourth dwelling when the presence of Christ becomes strong, and her body experiences enormous joy.<sup>25</sup> Teresa rejects disembodied spirituality in her teaching of the Humanity of Christ: "To be always withdrawn from corporeal things and enkindled in love is the trait of angelic spirits, not of those who live in mortal bodies. We are not angels, but we have a body. To desire to be angels is foolishness."<sup>26</sup>

As mentioned above, when we read her writing, her hierarchical language between body and soul makes it easy to be misled into dualism. However, we should be aware that Teresa inherited the anthropological language pattern of her time in her referencing of body and soul. Thus, her writing of the Humanity of Christ provides a helpful corrective to her anthropology. Without her writing on the Humanity of Christ, we cannot see the entire picture of her anthropology. Teresa shows the complete picture of her anthropology by revealing the physical and incarnational dimensions of the Humanity of Christ.

The stress on the physical and incarnational dimensions of the Humanity of Christ reveals Teresa's balanced spirituality. She does not like extreme spirituality focusing only on the spiritual dimension or being overly concerned about the body. We can find her balanced spirituality is reflected in her advice on prayer:

Very often this incapacity comes from some bodily disorder... We are so miserable that our poor little imprisoned soul shares in the miseries of the body; the changes in the weather and the rotating of the bodily humors often have the

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<sup>24</sup> IC 6:7:14

<sup>25</sup> IC 4:1:4-5

<sup>26</sup> IC 6:7:6; L 22:10

result that without their fault souls can not do what they desire but suffer in every way...Let it[soul] then serve the body—and engage in some spiritual pastimes such as holy conversations, provided they are truly so, or going to the country...It is very helpful not to drag the soul along, as they say, but to lead it gently for the sake of its great advantage.<sup>27</sup>

Understanding the dynamic relationship between the body and soul, Teresa provides practical and insightful advice on prayer. Also, we can find similar advice from above when Teresa emphasizes the Humanity of Christ in the *Life*: "we should skillfully and carefully accustom ourselves to avoid striving with our strength to keep this most sacred humanity always present... is what I don't think is good. The soul is left floating in the air, as they say; it seems it has no support no matter how much it may think it is full of God. It is important thing that while we are living and are human we have human support."<sup>28</sup> These pieces of advice keep our feet on the ground and emphasize that the body is a constitutive and valued dimension of the self, along with the soul, and the mutual relationship between the two.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, her balanced anthropology is reflected well in the principle of recreation. Knowing the human condition and weakness, Teresa understands the value of recreation in releasing tension and refreshing the human mind.<sup>30</sup> Escobar states that Teresa innovated recreation in religious life and emphasized the importance of it to promote the unity of the community and lighten the tension of community life.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, her teaching of the Humanity of Christ and her advice on prayer reveals her balanced spirituality and anthropology, which is also verified in her recreation instruction.

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<sup>27</sup> L 11:15-16

<sup>28</sup> L 22:9

<sup>29</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 237.

<sup>30</sup> F 13:5

<sup>31</sup> Oswaldo Escobar, "Humanismo teresiano", *Teresa, de la rueca a la pluma* (2015), available at <https://delaruecaalapluma.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/conocimiento-propio-segun-santa-teresa-de-jesus-2.pdf>, (acceded 09/09/2022)

This section has examined the roles of the Humanity of Christ, and now it will examine how Teresa understands herself through the Humanity of Christ.

## **II. Teresa's Self-understanding through the Humanity of Jesus Christ**

Teresa fundamentally understands herself through her relationship with the Humanity of Christ. The Humanity of Christ plays various roles in revealing Teresa to herself. First, it is a mirror to reveal the truth about Teresa's past, present, and future. Through her relationship with the Humanity of Christ, she can see her past sins, identify her present state, and anticipate her future.<sup>32</sup> Second, Teresa finds her identity in relation to the Humanity of Christ. Third, the Humanity of Christ plays a role in understanding the depths of her soul and human development. Fourth, Teresa understands her human nature through her relationship with the Humanity of Christ. Fifth, Teresa understands the instrumental value of suffering through the relationship with Christ.

### **II.1 The Humanity of Christ is the Mirror to see Teresa's Truth**

Teresa's relationship with the Humanity of Jesus Christ acted as a mirror for her to see her truth. Maria Alvira suggests three kinds of mirrors in which human beings can see themselves: God, the world, and the self through interiority.<sup>33</sup> Alvira explains that God can see Himself without any mediation because God is omnipotent and omniscient.<sup>34</sup> However, human beings cannot see themselves directly. They need mirrors to see themselves. The first mirror is God: human beings can see themselves through their relationship with God. Second, the external world: they can understand themselves through relating to other creatures. Third, they can see themselves by reflecting interiorly.<sup>35</sup> Through engaging with Christ, Teresa reflected on her life,

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<sup>32</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 125.

<sup>33</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 103.

<sup>34</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 103.

<sup>35</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 103.

identified her desire and state, and saw her hope for the future. People today tend to be obsessed with themselves by seeing their image as in the reflection of a mirror. They hardly see the truth in themselves but only see their image in the mirror. Teresa, however, sees the truth about herself by engaging with the Humanity of Jesus Christ, which works as a mirror in which she sees her past, present, and future.

Teresa sees her past sins, failures, and defects through a deep engagement with the man Jesus. When she saw the wounded Christ, she saw her past sins, wrongdoings, and wretchedness and this brought about compunction and conversion.<sup>36</sup> Christ's wounds and pain reminded her of her sins and wretchedness more seriously because she believed they were the cause of Christ's pain and suffering.<sup>37</sup> Her self-description of 'sinner' and 'wretched' should be understood in the context of her Christological experience rather than a self-loathing expression. For Teresa, Christ's wounds and pain act as a mirror to make her reflect on sins, defects, and wrongdoing.

Teresa sees her present through the relationship with the Humanity of Christ. She identifies her emotional states with the man Jesus:

Well, my soul; now was tired; and, in spite of its desire, my wretched habits would not allow it rest. It happened to me that one day entering the oratory I saw a statue they had borrowed for a certain feast to be celebrated in the house. It represented the much wounded Christ and was very devotional so that beholding it I was utterly distressed in seeing Him that way, for it well represented what He suffered for us. I felt so keenly aware of how poorly I thanked Him for those wounds that, it seems to me, my heart broke. For since I knew the Lord was certainly present there within me.<sup>38</sup>

In her conversion experience, Teresa saw her present state and emotion by contemplating the wounded Jesus. As she gazed upon Jesus' wounds and suffering, she saw her own brokenness, exhaustion, and weariness because of her long interior struggle. Her tired, wounded, broken soul

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<sup>36</sup> L 9:1; 9:4

<sup>37</sup> L 9:4

<sup>38</sup> L 9:1

identified with the wounded Christ.<sup>39</sup> In this way, she saw her present state by seeing the wounded Christ.

Moreover, Teresa finds meaning, hope, and transformation by relating her situation to Christ.<sup>40</sup> Teresa's life is wholly embedded with Christ. Whether experiencing joy or suffering, she always identifies her experience with Christ:

If you are joyful, look at him risen. Just imagining how he rose from the tomb will bring you joy. Indeed, like one coming forth from a battle where he has gained a great kingdom! And all of that, plus himself, he desires for you. If you are experiencing trials or are sad, behold him on the way to the garden: what great affliction he bore in his soul; for having become suffering itself, he tells us about it and complains of it. Or behold him burdened with the cross, for they didn't even let him take a breath. He will look at you with those eyes so beautiful and compassionate, filled with tears; he will forget his sorrows so as to console you in yours, merely because you yourselves go to him to be consoled, and you turn your head to look at him.<sup>41</sup>

Teresa relates to Christ in every human situation and emotion, and she encounters God in the human form of Jesus Christ in her life.<sup>42</sup> By doing this, Teresa felt free, strengthened and enkindled with the love of God, and could reorder her emotional life.<sup>43</sup>

Teresa sees her future through her relationship with the Humanity of Christ. Teresa saw her vision, hope, and mystical knowledge through her friendship with the Humanity of Christ.<sup>44</sup> In the third dwelling, the human person does not have a deep and personal relationship with Christ like the rich young man; thus, they lack self-knowledge and cannot anticipate union with

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<sup>39</sup> L 9:1

<sup>40</sup> Joanna Farrugia, "St Teresa of Jesus, Mental Prayer and the Humanity of Jesus," *The Way* 57, no. 3 (July 2018): 38.

<sup>41</sup> W 26:4-5

<sup>42</sup> Brian O McDermott, "The Christ-Wound: Christology and Teresa of Avila," in *Word and Spirit: A Monastic Review* 4 (1983), 37.

<sup>43</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 90; Farrugia, "St Teresa of Jesus," 38.

<sup>44</sup> Kieran Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila: The Book of her Life*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1976), 275.

God.<sup>45</sup> This is the case with Teresa. In the ascetic phase, she could not anticipate union with God because, in this stage, she did not have a deep and personal relationship with Christ, resulting in a lack of self-knowledge. For this reason, Teresa, in the ascetic phase, could not anticipate her union with God in her future.<sup>46</sup> However, through the relationship with Christ, she moved from the acetic phase to the mystical phase and acquired the infused knowledge. Through obtaining the infused knowledge, Teresa anticipated union with God in her future.

Teresa also asserts that spiritual marriage is impossible without the Humanity of Christ.<sup>47</sup> Through the relationship with the Humanity of Christ, Teresa experienced the highest form of the union on earth. This experience enables her to anticipate a glorious union with God in heaven and access heavenly secrets.

Her encounter with the humanity of Christ was a turning point for Teresa. After this encounter, she took a road that she had never expected to take, as a writer, reformer, and founder. Teresa mentions that souls in the final dwelling of the *Interior Castle* can integrate Mary and Martha, representing contemplation and activity, and the exterior and interior parts of the soul.<sup>48</sup> This combination of Mary and Martha is possible through union with Christ in the last stage of the spiritual journey.<sup>49</sup> This union compels them to work for God and the world and anticipates a new vision for them in the future. Teresa experienced this, and we can verify this in her life. After discovering the value of the Humanity of Christ in her conversion in 1554, she advanced in prayer and experienced various mystical experiences. On the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul,

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<sup>45</sup> Wayne Simsic, *The Inward Path to God: A Prayer Journey with Teresa of Avila* (Maryland: The Word Among Us Press, 2014), 115.

<sup>46</sup> Edward Howells, *John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila: Mystical Knowing and Selfhood* (New York: Crossroad, 2002), 99.

<sup>47</sup> IC 6:7:6

<sup>48</sup> IC 7:4:12

<sup>49</sup> IC 7:4:12

in 1561, Teresa had a vision of the Humanity of Christ in the risen form.<sup>50</sup> Her experience of the Humanity of Christ empowered and renewed her, and she had a strong desire to praise the Lord.<sup>51</sup> Subsequently, Teresa started to write the first draft of the *Life* and founded the monastery of St. Joseph in 1562.<sup>52</sup> These events are not coincidental but deeply related to the experience of the Humanity of Christ.

Moreover, she also points out the human person's vision, hope, and future by showing the possibility of the highest form of the union on earth. Teresa's experience of contemplation through the Humanity of Christ expands the horizon of human beings and manifests the hope of human beings.<sup>53</sup> Although she struggled with her vanity, pastimes, and frivolous friendships, she ultimately achieved a complete union with God through Christ. At the same time, it reveals that the human person is destined for contemplation and union with God, as Teresa was.<sup>54</sup>

## **II.2. The Humanity of Christ is the Mirror of Teresa's Identity**

Teresa uses the metaphor of 'looking' when talking about prayer. She finds intimacy in looking at Jesus' eyes: "He will look at you with those eyes so beautiful and compassionate, filled with tears."<sup>55</sup> In her writing, looking means intimacy and closeness. Writing about Julian of Norwich, Elizabeth Koenig argues that the mother's face and eyes are the mirrors of personal identity.<sup>56</sup> When an infant looks at his/her mother, the baby sees himself/herself through the eyes of the mother. It is the same in the case of Teresa, who discovered her identity by seeing Jesus'

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<sup>50</sup> L 28:1-3

<sup>51</sup> L 28:8

<sup>52</sup> Marcelle Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, trans. Kathleen Pond (New York: St. Bede's Press, 1998), 441.

<sup>53</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 14.

<sup>54</sup> Alvira, *Vision*, 14.

<sup>55</sup> W 26:5

<sup>56</sup> Constance FitzGerald, "A Discipleship of Equals: Voices from Tradition- Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross," in *A Discipleship of Equals: Towards a Christian Feminist Spirituality*, ed. Francis A. Eigo (Pennsylvania: The Villanova University Press: 1988), 76.

loving eyes. She saw herself in the loving eyes of Jesus. In the sixth dwellings, visions multiply and intensify. These visions are mainly of the Humanity of Christ in His resurrected state.<sup>57</sup> They do not necessarily convey information and a special message but the loving act of God.

Whenever Teresa experienced visions, she gained a firm certitude of the love of God. Seeing Jesus' loving eyes convinced Teresa that she was loved by Jesus.<sup>58</sup> This conviction is more than a simple statement that God loves us; it is certainty of God's love. Teresa finds her conviction of the love of God through the Humanity of Christ, and it is highlighted in the sixth dwelling. She can never doubt or deny the love of God after seeing the loving eyes of Jesus. Her identity is firmly grounded in the love of God, and this love is the highest possibility of finding her identity among many other mirrors. Moreover, this conviction of love can be found in her conversion experience through the wounded Christ. God's love was revealed to her in human form, and Teresa was convinced of the love of God and her love for God in her conversion experience: "But by considering the love He bore me, I regained my courage, for I never lost confidence in His mercy. I clearly understood that I loved Him."<sup>59</sup> The vision of the Humanity of Christ in the sixth dwelling and her conversion through the wounded Christ demonstrates how she found her identity through the Humanity of Christ.

Furthermore, Williams asserts that the image of the cocoon and butterfly in the fifth dwelling places is the culmination of a discovery of new identity through relationship with Christ.<sup>60</sup> Teresa describes how the soul finds a new identity within Christ. Christ is hidden within the soul. As the soul spins around itself like a cocoon, it dies and empties itself. The soul dies in its selfishness, egotism, and the ingrained habits that makes it self-centered. However, as it

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<sup>57</sup> IC 6:8:2; 6:9:3; 6:9:5

<sup>58</sup> IC 6:8:3

<sup>59</sup> L 9:7; 9:9

<sup>60</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 140.

empties itself, Christ emerges clearly in the soul.<sup>61</sup> The soul lets go of its control and defensive attitude, and becomes open to the possibility of being taken by Christ solely. As Christ comes to possess the soul, it sees its true identity in Christ and surrenders to God. This possession by Christ liberates the soul from self-imprisonment and self-absorption and enables it to discover its identity in Christ.<sup>62</sup> Through this process, the soul is taken only by love and sees new beauty and dignity in itself. The transformation process is like the silkworm coming out of the cocoon transformed into a butterfly, which is the description of the beginning stage of the union with God. The clarity and certitude of the new identity of the soul in Christ is revealed and manifested in this stage.<sup>63</sup> Thus the butterfly imagery points out that Teresa's identity was rooted in her loving relationship with Christ.

### **II.3 The Humanity of Christ helps Teresa understand her Interiority and Human Development**

The Humanity of Christ plays a role in helping Teresa understand her deepest self.<sup>64</sup> Her prayer and Christological experience can be divided into two phases: ascetical and mystical. In the second phase, she describes a deeper reality and God's communication at the center of her soul.<sup>65</sup> Her description of the inner life is immensely rich, and profound. As the prayer deepens, she discovers more about what is happening in the center of her soul and simultaneously in the exterior part as well. She experiences distraction and a wandering mind in the outskirts of her soul but the interior part of the soul remains united with God.<sup>66</sup> Since Teresa can see that the

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<sup>61</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 128.

<sup>62</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 126.

<sup>63</sup> Williams, *Teresa of Avila*, 131.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas Dubay, *Fire within: St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and the Gospel, on Prayer* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 53.

<sup>65</sup> IC 7:4:10

<sup>66</sup> IC 4:1:9

center of the soul is transformed into God, she can overcome the wandering mind and see her deep identity at the center of the soul. In describing this interior movement, her imagery becomes more intense and profound. This profound discovery of her interiority prevents her from identifying herself with any external thing. Fundamentally, her discovery of the inner life is rooted in the encounter with Christ because her prayer has advanced since the discovery of the Humanity of Christ. There is a cohesive relationship between the discovery of the Humanity of Christ and the development of prayer. The Humanity of Christ enables her to have a deep understanding of God and a profound relationship with God, which leads her to discover her deep and rich interiority. Thus, the Humanity of Christ helps Teresa understand her interiority.

Moreover, as her relationship with Christ deepens, her self-understanding does too. In describing her relationship with Christ, Teresa uses various images, such as a shepherd,<sup>67</sup> a silkworm/butterfly,<sup>68</sup> a wine cellar,<sup>69</sup> and spousal imagery.<sup>70</sup> In the mystical phase in the *Interior Castle*, her imagery intensifies and increases, leading to her gradual self-understanding. Through the shepherd imagery in the fourth dwelling, Teresa recognizes that she belongs to Christ.<sup>71</sup> Next, she has a new insight into her identity in Christ in the fifth dwelling through the silkworm/butterfly imagery.<sup>72</sup> In the same stage, Teresa understands the intimacy between Christ and her through the inner wine cellar imagery.<sup>73</sup> Finally, Teresa understands she is called to be the bride of Christ in spiritual betrothal and marriage.<sup>74</sup> The culmination of her self-understanding is manifested in spousal imagery, which signifies the most intimate and profound

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<sup>67</sup> IC 4:1:9

<sup>68</sup> IC 5:2:2

<sup>69</sup> IC 5:1:12

<sup>70</sup> IC 7:2:2

<sup>71</sup> IC 4:3:2

<sup>72</sup> IC 5:2:2

<sup>73</sup> IC 5:1:12

<sup>74</sup> IC 7:2:2

relationship between Christ and Teresa. She understands herself as called to this intimacy and spousal relationship with Christ through this relationship. Although she adopts bride and bridegroom imagery to express intimacy, her understanding of intimacy goes beyond any human kind of intimacy. Learning of this intimacy through Christ, Teresa redefines the human spousal relationship based on her spousal relationship. Her spousal relationship with Christ is a model for any human spousal relationship to imitate and follow.<sup>75</sup> Thus, her spousal imagery reveals the most intimate and exclusive relationship, and Teresa deepens her self-understanding through the spousal relationship with Christ.

As the relationship with Christ deepens, the human person develops virtues such as love, humility, and detachment. In analyzing the first three dwellings, Teresa rarely mentions the virtues of love, humility, and detachment and speaks about the lack of humility in the third dwelling. However, as the relationship with Christ deepens from the fourth to the last dwelling, Teresa mentions the impregnation of virtues in the mystical phase. In the fourth dwelling, the language of love is prevalent, and the human person in this stage has a profound love for Christ and desires to follow Christ ardently.<sup>76</sup> In the fifth dwelling, they experience union with Christ for the first time, enabling her to die in the world and surrender her will to God.<sup>77</sup> The sixth dwelling is marked by Christ's intense and frequent presence.<sup>78</sup> Locutions, visions, and raptures are shreds of evidence of the intimate and intense presence of Christ. In this stage, the virtue of humility stands out. The human person recognizes their creatureliness and nothingness more acutely, which causes excruciating pain, tension, and suffering in them.<sup>79</sup> In the final dwelling,

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<sup>75</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 195.

<sup>76</sup> IC 4:2:9

<sup>77</sup> IC 5:4:4

<sup>78</sup> IC 6:2:1; 6:3:1; 6:3:4

<sup>79</sup> IC 6:9:15; 6:3:17; 6:5:10

the human person is united with Christ entirely and has a sole desire: to serve God and work for the world.<sup>80</sup> In this stage, they integrate prayer and activity and unite the exterior and interior parts of the soul.<sup>81</sup>

In the mystical phase, we can see the gradual growth of virtues in the human person according to the degree of intimacy with Christ. These are the experiences of Teresa's development of her soul and virtue. As she gradually builds her relationship with Christ, Teresa develops virtue and understands her soul's development.

#### **II.4 The Humanity of Christ as a Mirror to reveal her Human Nature**

The incarnational dimension of the Humanity of Christ shows that Jesus is in solidarity with human suffering and fragility. When Teresa saw the wounded Jesus in her conversion experience, she saw Jesus as a man with weakness and trials.<sup>82</sup> Seeing Jesus' suffering and weakness mirrors Teresa's human condition. Since her teenage years, she had suffered from physical illness, and her struggle with illness was a large part of her life.<sup>83</sup> Her usual prayer was with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, and she could identify her suffering with the wounded Jesus.<sup>84</sup> Through the man Jesus, Teresa could strongly connect Jesus' suffering and fragility with her own, leading her to a profound understanding of her human condition that the human person cannot avoid weakness, struggle, and suffering. Seeing Jesus' struggle and weakness resonates with her fragile human nature and humanity. Thus, Teresa better understands her humanity and human nature through her struggle and the Humanity of Christ.

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<sup>80</sup> IC 7:3:14

<sup>81</sup> IC 7:4:12

<sup>82</sup> L 22:10

<sup>83</sup> Dubay, *Fire within*, 26.

<sup>84</sup> L 9:4

The encounter with the Humanity of Christ is a profound moment to address her desire for intimacy. Before she met the wounded Christ, she moved from pastime to pastime and oscillated between friendship with people and God. When Teresa saw the wounded Jesus, she recognized the weakness and fragility of Jesus, and saw that Jesus needed her.<sup>85</sup> Seeing Jesus' need for her reflected her own need for intimacy and company. Her struggle from her childhood to her conversion is fundamentally about longing for intimacy and company. Before encountering the Humanity of Christ, she moved back and forth between God and the world without addressing her fundamental desire. However, seeing the needy Jesus in the statue of the wounded Christ and her prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, Teresa deeply recognized her fundamental desire for intimacy and human nature's need for constant company: "The scene of His prayer in the garden, especially, was comfort to me. I strove to be His companion there. It seemed to me that being alone and afflicted, as a person in need, He had to accept me."<sup>86</sup> For this reason, when she mentions the Humanity of Christ, Teresa emphasizes Jesus' companionship.<sup>87</sup> Christ provides constant company and intimacy for Teresa. Through her long struggle and the conversion experience, she is convinced that no one provides this company and intimacy except Christ. Thus, Teresa profoundly addresses her human nature and her fundamental desire for intimacy through the Humanity of Christ.

Ironically, her long period of struggle, darkness, and torment became an instrument to find Jesus. She came to understand the Humanity of Jesus Christ through the experience of her own humanity. The experience of her weakness and long struggle resonates with the wounded Jesus, and her weakness and brokenness are the places where God enters and transforms her.

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<sup>85</sup> L 9:4; 22:10

<sup>86</sup> L 9:4

<sup>87</sup> L 22:10

Fundamentally, her own humanity which was revealed in her struggle was a bridge between her heart and the divine love shown in the Humanity of Jesus Christ.<sup>88</sup> Her experience of God is not outside of herself but through her humanity. Teresa strongly connects to the Humanity of Christ through her humanity and finds and meets God in this experience. For this reason, Teresa understands her humanity as an instrument to connect to God in encountering the Humanity of Christ.

## **II.5 Teresa understands the Instrumental Value of Suffering through the Relationship with Christ**

The mystery of the Incarnation creates solidarity with human suffering, and his bodily suffering shows that love is not an abstract idea but is concrete. As Christ reveals His love through his body concretely and is united with God through his flesh and suffering, Teresa understands that she can be united with Christ concretely by embracing physical suffering and carrying the cross.<sup>89</sup>

Moreover, seeing Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection for humanity, Teresa understands the transforming power of suffering and weakness for life and growth. Vilma Seelaus asserts that "her[Teresa] experience of Christ is an interpretive model both for self-understanding and for finding meaning in her suffering."<sup>90</sup> In the sixth dwelling, she enumerates external and internal suffering and pain that the human person in this stage experiences, such as unfriendly gossip, accusations of self-deceit, physical illness, and the confessor's misjudgment.<sup>91</sup> These suffering and pain describe what Teresa undergoes externally and internally. When she

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<sup>88</sup> Sandra Marie Schneiders, "The Jesus Mysticism of Teresa of Avila: Its Importance for Theology and Contemporary Spirituality." *Berkeley Journal of Religion and Theology* 2, no. 2 (2016): 57.

<sup>89</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 311.

<sup>90</sup> Vilma Seelaus, "Teresa, Suffering, and the Face of God," in *Carmel and Contemplation: Transforming human consciousness*, O.C.D, ed. Kevin Culligan (Washington: ICS press, 2000), 137.

<sup>91</sup> IC 6:1:1; 6:1:3; 6:1:8

wrote the *Interior Castle* in 1577,<sup>92</sup> she suffered from poor health, a confessor's misjudgment, and endless business matters regarding founding new monasteries.<sup>93</sup> Amid varied suffering and struggles, Teresa connects her own suffering and weakness with Christ. By doing this, she processes dealing with pain and suffering and internalizes them through her relationship with Christ.<sup>94</sup> For example, the contemplation of Christ's suffering helps Teresa strengthen her will to overcome her suffering: "the mere sight of the Lord fallen to the ground in the garden with that frightful sweat is enough to last the intellect...Soon the will responds even though it may not so with tender feelings, with the desire to serve somehow for such a great favor and to suffer something for One who suffered so much."<sup>95</sup> For Teresa, Christ always walks with her in any situation and never fails to listen to her prayer.<sup>96</sup> Connecting her suffering to Jesus' suffering, Teresa is not crushed by suffering but transformed by it and united with Christ through suffering.<sup>97</sup> Thus, Christ teaches the transforming value of bodily suffering and how we can be united with God concretely through our physical suffering and bodily pain.

### **III. The Relationship between Self-knowledge and her Anthropology and Christology**

Chapter Two analyzed Teresa's Christological and prayer experiences to ascertain the relationship between her anthropology and Christology. The investigation of her anthropology and Christology nexus shows how Teresa's self-knowledge truly becomes the fruit of her experience with the living Christ. It also illustrates that her self-knowledge fosters her conversion and deepening into unitive life with Christ. Thus, this analysis demonstrates that one cannot speak about Teresa's anthropology without linking this to her Christology.

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<sup>92</sup> Auclair, *Saint Teresa of Avila*, 443.

<sup>93</sup> Seelaus, "Teresa, Suffering," 143.

<sup>94</sup> Seelaus, "Teresa, Suffering," 143.

<sup>95</sup> IC 6:7:11

<sup>96</sup> IC 6:8:3

<sup>97</sup> Seelaus, "Teresa, Suffering," 138.

This last section will highlight the relationship between her self-knowledge, anthropology, and Christology. This section has six parts. First, Teresa's self-knowledge becomes the fruit of her Christological experience. Second, Teresa's self-knowledge fosters her Christology. Third, self-knowledge plays a role as a guiding principle in her anthropology. Fourth, self-knowledge acts as a guiding principle in her Christology. Fifth, self-knowledge plays a role as a safeguard in her anthropology. Sixth, Teresa's Christological experience transforms her consciousness.

### **III.1 Teresa's Self-knowledge becomes the Fruit of her Christological Experience**

Teresa's concept of self-knowledge is fundamentally relational and acquired through the relationship between God and the human person. The way she uses self-knowledge in her writing reveals its relational character. Using spatial language, connecting self-knowledge with humility, and showing the concentric structure of the *Interior Castle*, Teresa demonstrates self-knowledge's relational and mutual dimensions. By stressing these characteristics of self-knowledge, Teresa prepares the groundwork for her anthropology and Christology. Self-knowledge is not simply self-reasoning or self-absorption but relational knowledge through the relationship between God and souls. This relational knowledge remains theoretical until the process of obtaining self-knowledge is shown through the Christological experience. The contents and characteristics of self-knowledge are concretely verified and confirmed in her Christological experiences. For example, the double dimensions of self-knowledge, which are the grandeur and nothingness of the human person, are revealed concretely as Christ's presence becomes stronger in the *Interior Castle*. The deeper their relationship with Christ, the more they become aware of their sinfulness and dignity. According to the level of Christological experience, they have the fullness of self-knowledge.

Another example is found in the analysis of the previous section, 'the Humanity of Christ helps Teresa understand her interiority and human development.' The human person deepens the understanding of themselves correspondingly to the level of the presence of Christ, which is verified in the intensifying Christological imagery from the fourth to the last dwelling.

These examples demonstrate how the human person acquires self-knowledge through their relationship with Christ; thus, we can say her self-knowledge is the fruit of her experience with the living Christ.

This relationship between Teresa's self-knowledge and Christology is verified in her life journey. One of the main contents of her self-knowledge is the structure of the human person. As shown through the concentric structure of the *Interior Castle*, her writing informs that God is the center of the soul, and it gradually progresses toward the center from the outside of the soul.

Teresa's experience of Christ reveals how this concentric structure is actualized. Teresa recovers her unity and integrity when Christ appears centered in her heart. On the other hand, when He is not her center, Teresa loses her focus and is easily distracted, as examined in Chapter Two.<sup>98</sup>

One of the great examples is that Teresa related to others without being attached and bound after she saw a vision of the Risen Christ: "After I beheld the extraordinary beauty of the Lord, I didn't see anyone who in comparison with him seemed to attract or occupy my thoughts. By turning my gaze just a little inward to behold the image I have in my soul, I obtained such freedom."<sup>99</sup>

These examples demonstrate that her self-knowledge and anthropology are actualized and verified in her Christology.

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<sup>98</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 36.

<sup>99</sup> L 37:4

### III.2 Teresa's Self-knowledge fosters her Conversion and Unitive Life with Christ

As examined above, Teresa's self-knowledge comes from her experience with the living Christ. At the same time, her awareness of sinfulness and wretchedness also contributes to her compunction and conversion.<sup>100</sup> Through her long struggle and conflict, Teresa knows her lowliness and nothingness, and this recognition fosters her conversion. As Augustine's awareness of his long sinful life is one of the significant components to compel his conversion, Teresa's awareness of her sinfulness is also a critical component that impels her conversion.

Moreover, Teresa's self-knowledge fosters a deepening of unitive life with Christ. After the conversion experience, Teresa confirms her recognition of nothingness and lowliness in the experience of freedom: "I think it would have been impossible in so short a time to get rid of so many bad habits and deeds. May the Lord be praised who freed me from myself."<sup>101</sup> This experience impels Teresa to devote herself to prayer life and avoid occasions of sin: "Now, then when I began to avoid occasions and devote myself to prayer...His Majesty began to give me the prayer of quiet very habitually – and often, of union – which lasted a long while."<sup>102</sup> We can see there is a strong correlation between her self-knowledge and advancing the unitive life with Christ in prayer. When Teresa explains the prayer of quiet in the fourth dwelling, she uses the shepherd analogy, which is a strong Christological imagery. As explained in the fourth dwelling, this analogy highlights passivity in prayer. Passivity is a sign of growing trust and intimacy between Christ and the human person because they relinquish their control, activity, and initiative, they allow God to transform them gradually.<sup>103</sup> In the fifth dwelling, the prayer of union characterizes an immense loving relationship between Christ and the human person

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<sup>100</sup> L 9:1; 9:4

<sup>101</sup> L 23:1

<sup>102</sup> L 23:2

<sup>103</sup> Simsic, *The Inward*, 124.

through spousal metaphor. This immense love leads them to surrender to God.<sup>104</sup> This examination shows that the advance of prayer corresponds to the growing presence of Christ.

It is the experience of the prayer of quiet and union that Teresa has. After the conversion, she was convinced more that she could not do anything without Christ, and her awareness of nothingness and lowliness deepened the unitive life with Christ in prayer. Thus, the link between her awareness of nothingness and the advance of prayer demonstrates that Teresa's self-knowledge fosters the unitive life with Christ in prayer.

### **III.3 Self-knowledge acts as a Guiding Principle in her Anthropology**

Teresa stresses that self-knowledge is involved with the whole spiritual journey, and she understands it in a broad sense.<sup>105</sup> By doing this, Teresa provides a spiritual map in her teaching on self-knowledge. Self-knowledge involves the knowledge of God, the soul's capability and limitations, temptations in spiritual life, and is a necessary means for union, which means that it covers the whole spiritual journey, from the beginning to the end. By revealing this spiritual map, self-knowledge acts as a guide in her anthropology. Seeing this spiritual map, the human person can identify their state and progress to the next step. At the same time, they can be aware of the dangers and temptations of the spiritual journey. The spiritual journey is not simple but complex, and it is easy to get lost. Self-knowledge provides an inner compass of where to go for them. Thus, self-knowledge plays a role as a guide by providing a whole spiritual map.

Through comparison to God, the human person gains knowledge of themselves: their lowliness and dignity. Teresa stresses that true self-knowledge does not make people cowardly and fearful but humble and strong.<sup>106</sup> She does not want them to focus on their sinfulness all the

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<sup>104</sup> IC 5:4:4

<sup>105</sup> L 13:15

<sup>106</sup> IC 1:2:10-11

time, and neither on their dignity and beauty either. Teresa does not like extremes but promotes balance between the reflection of the human person's sinfulness and worthiness. The spiritual journey is not static but fluctuating, and it is appropriate for them to reflect on sinfulness more when they feel proud and arrogant. In the opposite case, reflecting on their dignity and worthiness is more proper to make them solid and stable. Self-knowledge puts the human person on the right track in various situations. In this way, self-knowledge plays a role as a guiding principle in her anthropology.

#### **III.4 Self-knowledge acts as a Guiding Principle in her Christological Experiences**

Self-knowledge also acts as a guiding principle in her Christological experiences. As Christ's presence becomes stronger, supernatural favors intensify and increase. The culmination of these Christological experiences is found in the sixth dwellings in the *Interior Castle*. Amid supernatural phenomena, it is easy to be deceived and confused about whether these extraordinary experiences come from God or Satan. In this case, Teresa focuses on the fruit of the experiences to evaluate these experiences, whether the human person has peace, joy, and humility.<sup>107</sup> In particular, she stresses the importance of humility.<sup>108</sup> Humility is the outcome of self-awareness in the presence of God.<sup>109</sup> Humility relating to self-knowledge consistently appears throughout each dwelling. If humility and self-knowledge are lacking, the human person's Christological experiences are not authentic. In this way, self-knowledge and humility can provide criteria for validating authentic Christological experiences. Thus, self-knowledge acts as a guiding principle in her Christological experiences.

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<sup>107</sup> IC 6:3:6; 6:3:7; 6:5:10

<sup>108</sup> IC 6:9:11

<sup>109</sup> Elena Carrera, *Teresa of Avila's Autobiography: Authority, Power, and the Self in Mid-Sixteenth Century Spain* (London: Legenda, 2005), 49.

Moreover, self-knowledge is an indication of progress in her Christological experience. Teresa differentiates two types of self-knowledge corresponding to ascetical and mystical dimensions of prayer. This distinction reveals that self-knowledge is not static but living and dynamic knowledge. Self-knowledge grows or regresses according to the level of Christ's presence in the human person. When they do not grow in understanding of themselves, it indicates a poor relationship with Christ, even if they experience supernatural favors. In this way, self-knowledge acts as an indication of the progress in her Christological experiences.

### **III.5 Self-knowledge provides a tool for Understanding her Anthropology correctly**

Teresa's self-knowledge provides a vehicle for understanding her anthropology correctly. Her concept of self-knowledge is summarized in the knowledge of God and of oneself. From the beginning of the *Interior Castle* to the last dwelling, Teresa stresses who God is and who we are. There is a strong sense of the metaphysical difference between God and the human person in her teaching on self-knowledge. Nevertheless, when we read her description of union with God in the mystical phase, we can have the impression that there is no distinction between God and them: "When rain falls from the sky into a river or fountain; all is water, for the rain that fell from heaven cannot be divided or separated from the water of the river."<sup>110</sup> As the human person is entirely united with God, they feel psychologically that they are dissolved into God, and there is no distinction between themselves and God. However, her teaching of self-knowledge points out that human nature is never annihilated but remains human, and union with God does not remove the metaphysical distinction between God and them. Her teaching of self-knowledge safeguards her teaching of union with God. Thus, her description of union with God does not fall into pantheism, and her Christological experience does not lead to the annihilation of human nature.

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<sup>110</sup> IC 7:2:4

Her salient references to humility in the mystical phase in the *Interior Castle* support her clear understanding of union with God.

### **III.6 Teresa's Christological Experience transforms her Consciousness**

Teresa's Christological experience helped Teresa shift her focus from herself to God. This shift is noteworthy because it marks a distinction between different phases in her Christological experiences. As mentioned above, Teresa's Christological experience can be divided into two phases. Although she swayed between God and the world before her conversion, her life fundamentally revolved around herself in this period, and she described herself as the main character who determined her spiritual life. God was portrayed as a secondary character who depended on her swaying desire. That she made no direct reference to the person of Christ when she recounted her twenty years of struggle in the monastery reveals that Christ was not the center of her life in that period.<sup>111</sup> However, after the experience of the encounter with the wounded Christ, she could relate to God personally and interiorly. Her personal experience of God through the wounded Christ shifted her focus from herself to Christ. Christ was beginning to enter her psyche and mind and became the center of her life.<sup>112</sup> Since her conversion experience, Teresa paid more attention to the emotion and feelings of Christ, and her will was totally centered on Christ.<sup>113</sup> Her multiplying Christological experiences and increasing direct reference to Christ reflect the shift from herself to God. As a result of this shift, Teresa developed a strong sense of surrender to God and experienced freedom and liberation.<sup>114</sup> This shift is significant in identifying a new phase in her Christological experiences and prayer. Through her personal

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<sup>111</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 23.

<sup>112</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 28.

<sup>113</sup> Castro, *Cristología*, 34.

<sup>114</sup> Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Book of her Life*, vol 1, 42.

experience of Christ, Teresa moved her focus from herself to Christ, and this shift opened a new phase in her Christological experiences and prayer.

This dynamic also can be found in the description of the development of prayer in the *Interior Castle*. The *Interior Castle* can be divided into two phases according to prayer: active and passive levels of prayer. The active form of prayer covers the first three dwelling places, passive recollection prayer begins in the fourth, develops into the prayer of union in the fifth, and completes transforming union in the sixth and seventh, the final dwelling places. The fourth dwelling is a transitional stage between meditative prayer and contemplation and between the ascetical and mystical phases. Passivity grows in this transitional period when prayer moves from meditation to contemplation. As examined before, passivity is a signpost in identifying this new dimension of prayer. As the prayer becomes more passive, the human person in this stage becomes more receptive and responsive to God's voice, and their will is united with God in prayer. They relinquish their initiative, and their focus moves from themselves to Christ.

This passivity intensifies in the last three dwellings, as examined in the analysis of the *Interior Castle*. The delightful union makes the human person die to themselves and surrender to God in the fifth dwelling. They, in this stage, do not care about themselves but solely focus on God's business.<sup>115</sup> As passivity in prayer intensifies, they completely conform their will and emotion to Christ. Although the delightful union is short, it produces an enormous effect on them. They recognize clearly that the goal of their life is becoming Christ, and they find their identity in Christ. This intense surrender extends outside of prayer into the human person's activity and work. In the final dwelling, the human person's only desire is to do God's work. As they are completely united with Christ, they want to work only for God's glory and be slaves of

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<sup>115</sup> IC 5:3:3

Him.<sup>116</sup> In the fifth and sixth dwellings, they strongly desire death because they long to see and enjoy God more perfectly. However, in the final dwelling, they want to live to serve God.<sup>117</sup> The second phase in her prayer is marked with passivity, which signifies the shift from herself to God. Thus, we can also find the shift from herself to God in the development of prayer.

The movement of the focus from herself to God was made possible through the gradual encounter with Christ, which opened a new phase in her Christological experiences and prayer. As a new phase in her Christological experiences and prayer embarks, Teresa's consciousness undergoes a transformation. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, her gradual experience with Christ intensifies her surrender to God. From the fourth to the last dwelling, Teresa's sense of surrender to God gradually increases according to the degree of intimacy with Christ. Vilma Seelaus argues that surrender is a sign of Teresa's transformation of consciousness.<sup>118</sup> Surrender is an act and gift and happens through a dynamic of a loving relationship with Christ. Each gradual surrender to God in Teresa's spiritual journey brings about one step deeper recognition of herself and her life. As her consciousness transforms gradually, Teresa sees her life and the purpose of life through the prism of her relationship with Christ.<sup>119</sup> As Teresa goes deeper into each dwelling in the mystical phase, she expands her horizon of consciousness. Teresa relinquishes her initiative and control in the fourth dwelling and shifts her focus to Christ. In the fifth dwelling, as she surrenders to Christ's will and desire, she is thoroughly convinced that the goal of her life is becoming Christ. In the last dwelling, as Teresa surrenders to God entirely, her only concern is to do God's work regardless of her preference for death or life.<sup>120</sup> In the fifth and

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<sup>116</sup> IC 7:4:8

<sup>117</sup> IC 7:3:14

<sup>118</sup> Seelaus, "Teresa, Suffering," 150.

<sup>119</sup> Seelaus, "Teresa, Suffering," 151.

<sup>120</sup> IC 7:4:8

sixth dwellings, Teresa strongly desires death because she longs to see and enjoy God more perfectly. However, in the final dwelling, she wants to serve God regardless of her preference.<sup>121</sup> From the fifth to the last dwelling, we can see Teresa's consciousness expanding from her contemplative concern to the active dimension.

In the final dwelling, Teresa also gives another example of how the unitive life with Christ affects her consciousness and extends to the service for the people. Using St. Paul's words, Teresa emphasizes that she becomes one spirit with Christ in this stage.<sup>122</sup> Next, she describes the effect of this union using water and light images: "For from those divine breast where it seems God is always sustaining the soul there flow streams of milk bringing comfort to all the people of the castle... The soul is enjoying and that from that full-flowing river...there is a Sun in the interior of the soul from which a brilliant light proceeds and is sent to the faculties."<sup>123</sup> The complete union with Christ is like flowing water and shining light constantly infused to the human person. This luminous experience enlightens her faculties, and she can help and guide others by relying on this divine light and company.

Thus, Teresa's personal experience with Christ affects her consciousness, which is eventually transformed through her gradual experience with Christ.

## **Conclusion**

Chapter three consists of three parts: the role of the Humanity of Christ in Teresa's Christology and anthropology, her self-understanding through the Humanity of Christ, and the relationship between her self-knowledge and Christology and anthropology. Since Teresa is not officially trained as a theologian, she lacks a systematic foundation. However, her teaching of the

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<sup>121</sup> IC 7:3:14

<sup>122</sup> IC 7:2:5

<sup>123</sup> IC 7:2:6

Humanity of Christ provides a theological basis for her Christology. By emphasizing the incarnational aspect of the Humanity of Christ, she preserves the unity between Jesus' Humanity and Divinity. Teresa does not dwell on the distinction between Jesus' Humanity and Divinity but cannot tolerate undermining the Humanity of Christ in any state of spiritual life.

Her teaching of the Humanity of Christ emphasizes the Incarnation mystery. By stressing the incarnational dimension of the Humanity of Christ, Teresa protects her anthropology from dualism. Her writings sometimes show a strong division between the body and the soul and between the world and God. If we only read these parts of her writings, we might surmise that her anthropology falls into dualism. However, the emphasis on Jesus' physical dimension in her concept of the Humanity of Christ dismantles any dualistic tendency in her writings and anthropology.

As we examined above, the Humanity of Christ is deeply interconnected with her anthropology. Teresa finds the Humanity of Christ the best possibility to discover her identity and truth. The Humanity of Christ is not only dogmatic and apologetic teaching of her Christology but the best expression of the love of God in her spirituality. As she relates herself to the Humanity of Christ, Teresa finds the firm conviction of her identity rooted in the love of God. With this firm conviction of her identity, she can understand her past and present and anticipate her future.

Moreover, Teresa understands her humanity as an instrument to relate to God through the Humanity of Christ. The experience of her weakness and brokenness resonates with the wounded Jesus, and her humanity eventually mediates the experience of the love of God. Ironically, Teresa is deeply connected to the Humanity of Christ through her negative experiences of her humanity and finds God's love with a firm conviction. Her weakness and brokenness are the

places where God enters and transforms. For this reason, Teresa understands the instrumental value of her humanity through the Humanity of Christ.

Teresa's concept of the Humanity of Christ reveals the correlation between her Christology and anthropology. She fundamentally understands herself through the Humanity of Christ, and her concept of self-knowledge has a strong relational dimension in her anthropology. Teresa's self-knowledge plays a guiding principle in her anthropology and Christology. Her concept of self-knowledge is broad and encompasses various subjects involving the whole spiritual journey. By showing the whole picture of the spiritual journey, self-knowledge guides and leads the human person in their journey. In this way, her self-knowledge plays a guiding principle in her anthropology.

Teresa's concept of self-knowledge also plays a guiding role in her Christology. Her most Christological experiences are mystical and supernatural, which is complex and confusing. Whenever she explains and describes complicated Christological experiences, Teresa always brings about virtues such as love, detachment, and humility to verify these experiences. In particular, Teresa emphasizes humility, which is strongly connected to self-knowledge. Even in the most sublime Christological experience, she emphasizes humility and self-knowledge. In this way, self-knowledge plays a guideline in her Christology.

Furthermore, as examined above, the investigation of Teresa's anthropology and Christology coupling contribute to understanding Teresa's spirituality better. Most Teresian scholars agree that her writing style is colloquial and spontaneous.<sup>124</sup> Although Teresa is a prolific writer, her writing gives the impression that it is unorganized and mixed up with various subjects because of the combination of her colloquial and spontaneous style, alongside the lack

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<sup>124</sup> Gillian T. W. Ahlgren, *Teresa of Avila and the Politics of Sanctity* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1996), 69.

of systematic theological training.<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, the investigation of the nexus between her anthropology and Christology provides one of the primary keys to understanding her spirituality. The analysis of the *Interior Castle* demonstrates that Teresa's anthropology and Christology coupling shows cohesive logic in understanding her spirituality. Many people find her writing difficult because of her writing style and the prevalence of mystical phenomena. For this reason, this is a marvelous discovery in approaching Teresa's spirituality because her anthropology/Christology nexus can provide coherent and unitive logic and perspective to approach her spirituality.

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<sup>125</sup> Kavanaugh, "Introduction" in *The Book of her Life*, vol 1, 39.

## Conclusion

This thesis investigated how Teresa understands herself through her relationship with the Humanity of Christ. To this purpose, it analyzed the Christological experience in her conversion and the development of her prayer. This investigation also uncovered the relationship between her Christology and anthropology and the centrality of the Humanity of Christ in her teaching. At this point, it is helpful to understand why this investigation is essential to her spirituality and ours. Most Teresian scholars consider her anthropology and Christology central to her spirituality. They find a strong connection between her Christology and anthropology particularly in her treatment of the Humanity of Christ. Nevertheless, they do not elaborate enough on the two themes to delve into her anthropology. Mostly they examine her anthropology and Christology separately. Their investigation of her Christology is dogmatic and apologetic, resulting in less implication for her anthropology. Her anthropology is informed by her Christology and her Christology by her anthropology; the two form a cohesive unit. Without losing the traditional approach of her Christology, making a solid connection between the two dimensions will contribute to the modern world. Her anthropology based on Christology provides profound meaning for the human person. Her anthropology is not only a matter of achieving personal holiness but also integrity, unity, maturity, balance, and sanity, which are relevant to all of us. As Augustine identified his restless heart as the characteristic of the human person, Teresa regarded her longing and yearning as the fundamental desire of the human person. Through her long and arduous struggle, she discovered that her longing and yearning could only be fulfilled in Christ. When Christ became the center of her soul, she was integrated, united, and balanced. Relationship with the Humanity of Christ is the keyword for her anthropology. Her struggle and difficulty are relevant to all of us. Teresa found her identity in the Humanity of

Christ, and her concept of the Humanity of Christ is intimately related to her anthropological issue. Her concept of the Humanity of Christ is not simply discovering identity in it but a practical, existential, and fundamental anthropological issue for all of us. As friendship defines Teresa, we too are fundamentally relational. If the human person does not seek their identity, meaning, maturity, integrity, and unity in their relationship with Christ, the core of the human person remains dormant and they never encounter themselves profoundly. In this way, understanding the relationship between Teresa's Christology and her anthropology is beneficial.

Moreover, this investigation is crucial to understand Teresa's spirituality, which also cannot be understood outside the context of her Christology and anthropology. Teresa's writing is fundamentally relational, combining her anthropology and Christology is necessary to understand her spirituality better. This correlation is revealed in the *Interior Castle*. According to their quality of relationship with Christ, the human person in each dwelling increase in their self-knowledge and virtue. At the same time, as Christ's presence becomes stronger, they advance in prayer. The *Interior Castle*, particularly the sixth dwelling, is considered one of the most challenging passages in Teresa's works because it deals with highly mystical phenomena. Her Christology and anthropology provide the key and perspective to understanding this book. Interestingly, the more the human person's movement becomes interior and higher, the more she emphasizes the concrete and incarnational dimension of her Christology through the Humanity of Christ. These examples demonstrate that her Christology and anthropology can provide significant viewpoints to understand her spirituality better.

Central to this theme is not only the investigation of the two elements in general but also Teresa's own self-understanding through the Humanity of Christ. Although the Humanity of Christ was emphasized in her time, her way of discovering and developing the Humanity of

Christ with her anthropology is unique and distinctive. Teresa encountered the Humanity of Christ for the first time, not through a mystical prayer experience but in the context of her personal and natural interior struggles. It was in her existential crisis, deeply experiencing her weakness and brokenness, that she encountered the Humanity of Christ. Through the Humanity of Christ, Teresa connected with God deeply and understood herself more than ever.

Fundamentally her conflictual context and humanity mediate her discovery of the Humanity of Christ. Teresa's experience is relatable and makes us think about the value of weakness in spirituality. Weakness and humility are regarded as avoidable and undervalued in the modern context. However, her example of discovering the Humanity of Christ illustrates that weakness is more powerful than strength in spirituality. Her spirituality is firmly grounded in human weakness, in which her spirituality emerges and finds God through the Humanity of Christ. Her experience of human weakness resonates with St. Paul: "When I am weak then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:10 *JB*). Through this experience of human weakness, Teresa understands herself and unites with others strongly. Her teaching of the Humanity of Christ is compelling, inspirational, and relatable in the modern context. Also, her experience of the Humanity of Christ makes us think that the experience of Christ is available to us in the midst of our struggle and conflict, as Teresa did. The experience of our weaknesses can open the possibility of accessing Christ more profoundly.

Teresa understands her identity through the Humanity of Christ. Maria Alvira suggests three mirrors for the human person to see themselves. Among the three mirrors, Teresa's best mirror to see herself in and find her identity is God's love for her. Teresa experienced God's immense love through the Humanity of Christ, and the Humanity of Christ revealed her true identity. She often uses the word 'looking' to describe the love of God in the context of prayer

and explanation of vision. In the sixth dwelling, visions multiply and these are mainly the Humanity of Christ in his resurrected state. Whenever she experiences the vision of the Humanity of Christ, she has a strong conviction of the love of God. This surety and certainty in the love of God go along with security in one's own identity. She never doubts and denies the love of God. With this firm conviction, Teresa finds her identity through the Humanity of Christ. The love of God expressed through the Humanity of Christ is the only truly effective means Teresa found for discovering her true identity. For Teresa, every other possibility and relationship compared to the Humanity of Christ is imperfect and defective. Although she finds the Humanity of Christ in her weakness and conflict, the fruit of this experience is a firm conviction in the love of God. This love is unconditional and unshakeable regardless of her sinfulness and unfaithfulness. This is her foundation for spirituality. From this foundation, she discovers her identity and views her sinfulness and wretchedness through it. Her expressions, 'sinner' and 'wretchedness,' should be understood in the context of the conviction of the love of God, not an expression of self-effacement.<sup>1</sup> The structure of the first dwelling in the *Interior Castle* also corresponds to the order of the double dimensions of self-knowledge. At the beginning of the first dwelling, Teresa emphasizes the beauty of souls and the love of God, and then she describes souls in mortal sin.

Teresa understood the harm of false humility and the danger of self-knowledge without the firm foundation of God's love. Without reflecting on the love of God, it is easy to be entangled with inner afflictions and self-absorption.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Teresa argues that we should understand ourselves in the context of the love of God.

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<sup>1</sup> Gillian T. W. Ahlgren, *Teresa of Avila and the Politics of Sanctity* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1996), 68-69; Carole Slade, *St. Teresa of Avila: Author of a Heroic Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 66. Ahlgren and Slade argue that Teresa's language is diplomatic in order to disarm inquisitors.

<sup>2</sup> Ezequiel García Rojo, "La interioridad en Teresa de Jesús." *Revista de espiritualidad* 75 (2016): 195.

Teresa's experience with the Humanity of Christ leads her to transformation. The more she contacts the Humanity of Christ through vision or locution, the more her love increases and intensifies. This contact with the Humanity of Christ, which contains the immense love of God, purifies and sanctifies her, eventually leading her to a complete transformation.

As extensions of the Humanity of Christ, visible objects, such as images and icons of Jesus Christ and the cross, cannot be ignored and denied because they are a reminder of God's immense love. For these reasons, dispensing of them is unimaginable for Teresa.

Teresa's name is Teresa of Jesus. Although her legal name illustrates her social and biological identity, the name 'Teresa of Jesus' reveals her true identity. Through her relationship with Christ, she knows her beauty and dignity. At the same time, Teresa knows her sinfulness and lowliness. Fundamentally, the Humanity of Christ reveals her identity and the reality of who she is. No other possibility and relationship can reveal her truth and identity compared to the Humanity of Christ, and they only reveal her identity partially. Thus, without the Humanity of Christ, she cannot be Teresa. Knowing this truth and reality, Teresa emphasizes the Humanity of Christ, and the Humanity of Christ is indispensable in her spirituality.

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