

Participation in God

Few ideas have excited greater interest among theologians in recent decades than the idea of ‘participation’. In thinking about creation, it is the notion that everything comes from, and depends upon God, inviting the language of sharing, or of an exemplar and its images; in thinking about redemption, it points to the restoration of that image, and is expressed in the language of communion with God and with the redeemed community. In this volume, Andrew Davison considers these themes in unprecedented breadth, investigating the fundamental character of participation as it can be applied to a wide range of theological topics. Exploring what it means to know, to love, to do good, and to live together well, he shows how these ideas animate a particular understanding of human life and how we relate to the world around us. His book offers the most comprehensive survey of participation to date, contributing to detailed discussions of these themes among academic theologians.

Andrew Davison is Starbridge Lecturer in Theology and Natural Sciences at the University of Cambridge, and fellow in theology at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. His previous books include *The Love of Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy for Theologians*, *Why Sacraments?* and *Blessing*.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48328-5 — Participation in God
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A Study in Christian Doctrine and Metaphysics

ANDREW DAVISON
University of Cambridge



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CAMBRIDGE
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
 New Delhi – 110025, India
 79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108483285

DOI: 10.1017/9781108629287

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First published 2019

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow Cornwall

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Davison, Andrew, 1974– author.

TITLE: Participation in God : a study in Christian doctrine and metaphysics / Andrew Davison.

DESCRIPTION: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2019. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2018048006 | ISBN 9781108483285 (hardback)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Spirituality–Christianity. | God (Christianity) | Engagement (Philosophy) | Participation. | Life–Religious aspects–Christianity.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC BV4501.3 .D3855 2019 | DDC 234–DC23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018048006>

ISBN 978-1-108-48328-5 Hardback

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For John Hughes 1978–2014

For, quite clearly, the mighty gifts with which we are endowed are hardly from ourselves; indeed, our very being is nothing but subsistence in the one God.

John Calvin¹

In true metaphysical thinking there is . . . a finessed love for the intimate strangeness of being, a love that finds itself coming to wakefulness just in encounter with, or participation in, this being's mystery.

William Desmond²

¹ *Institutes* (trans. Ford Lewis Battles. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), I.i.1.

² *The Intimate Strangeness of Being* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), xvii–xviii.

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Acknowledgements

Among my teachers, it is to Catherine Pickstock and Janet Martin Soskice that I most of all owe a debt when it comes to the topics discussed in this book. I am also grateful for all that I have learned from students. The Aquinas Reading Group in the Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge has been an ideal forum in which to discuss the texts of the Dominican master, over the course of the past six years. I set it up with John Hughes, to whom this book is dedicated. Among the theologians of my generation, he shone brightly and warmly, and he was a participatory thinker through and through. His death in a car accident five years ago was an incalculable loss to the church and academy, but his influence continues to enrich the lives of friends, colleagues, and students.

Too many of my friends have contributed to my thinking on participation for me to be able to mention them all. I hope that it will not be invidious to single out Daniel de Haan, Elizabeth Powell, Iain McColl, Jacob Sherman, John and Alison Milbank, Matthew Bullimore, Max Kramer, Melanie Marshall, Nathan Lyons, and Nathan MacDonald and Vittorio Montemaggi provided much appreciated advice on philosophy. Barney and Silvianna Aspray, Gilleen Craig, Paul Dominiak, Ashley Hall, Alex Hampton, and Rupert Shortt each discussed points of theology or philosophy. Books by Hans Boersma, Gregory Doolan, David Burrell, David Bentley Hart, Olli-Pekka Vainio, and Rudi te Velde were particularly influential.

Several people read all or part of the manuscript through in full, at various stages of completion. I am grateful to them all, including Hans Boersma, Charlotte Cook, James Crockford, Sarah Delere, Christine

Havens, Thomas Howse, Graham Stevenson, and Frankie Ward. Its shortcomings remain my own.

During 2017–18, I was a member in residence at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton. I am grateful to Will Storrar, the Director, for his generosity in taking me into that programme, and to all my colleagues there, for a year of companionship and fruitful discussion, and especially to Jessie Couenhoven, Gerald McKenny, Douglas Ottati, and Olli-Pekka Vainio, for discussions related to this book. My thanks are also due to Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore and the Seminary of the South West in Austin, for a similarly generous welcome during a sabbatical in 2013, and especially to Daniel McClain and Tony Baker.

Beatrice Rehl has been a delight to work with as a commissioning editor. I extend my thanks also to the production team at Cambridge University Press, and Charlie Collier, Chris Spinks, and Robin Parry for encouragement during an earlier iteration, and for their friendship more widely. Austin Stevenson did a magnificent job with the Subject index.

No book I have written so far has brought me greater pleasure than this one. Set out here, with some delight, are my convictions about how things are. As an account, it starts with divine sharing, which I take to be the foundation of Christian doctrine and metaphysics. It is a vision I share with others: people who are dear to me, friends and colleagues. Indeed, it is a large part of what binds us together. For all of that, I am grateful.

Works of Thomas Aquinas: Texts, Translations, and Abbreviations

Latin texts are taken from the editions of the Leonine Commission (*Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici. Opera Omnia. Iussu Leonis XIII*, Rome: Vatican Polyglot Press, 1882–). Where a Leonine edition is not available, I have used the Parma edition (*Opera Omnia*, Parma: Fiacca-dori, 1852–73). Translations are generally as follows (sometimes with small emendations), unless I indicate that I have produced my own. Where no reference is given to the part of the article cited, it is to the main body or response.

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