

Divine Wisdom: Her Significance for Today

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The person of Wisdom is the focus of this study. There are certain obvious flaws in the selection of Wisdom, such as the magnification of one aspect of the Divinity to be all-encompassing.¹ However, there are also serious problems with images such as Father and Son, which by definition exclude the majority of the human race.² At this point in time, Wisdom is my personal choice for imaging the Divinity because I know of no other image in my Christian tradition that speaks as powerfully to the three issues to be addressed in this paper. Thus I will present Wisdom as a universal saving figure, as the Divine as feminine, and as the Presence of the Divine in Creation as its ground.

Wisdom as Universal Savior

For the first time in recorded history, all of humankind share a common origin story—the scientific story of how our Universe blazed forth into being from an infinitesimal pin point.³ This blazing forth from a common source speaks to us of our unity and our connectedness; all that we know, including ourselves, is basically recycled stardust. This story of the Universe gives us pause in regard to the claims made by Christianity. This issue is well stated by Sallie McFague:

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us.” (John 1:14a). The scandal of uniqueness is absolutized by Christianity into one of its central doctrines, which claims that God is embodied in one place and one place only: in the man Jesus of Nazareth. He and he alone is “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). The source, power, and goal of the universe is known through and only through a first-century Mediterranean carpenter. The creator and redeemer of the fifteenth-billion-year history of the universe with its hundred billion galaxies (and their billions of stars and planets) is available only in a thirty-year span of one human being’s life on planet earth. The claim, when put in the context of contemporary science, seems skewed, to say the least. When the world consisted of the Roman Empire (with “barbarians” at its frontiers), the limitation of divine presence to Jesus of Nazareth had some plausibility while still being ethnocentric; but