Biblical and theological elements in a digitally shaped life

Albrecht Knoch, Germany
three steps

• about God
• about human being
• about christian life
At each step the theological affirmations shall either help to underline

• opportunities
  or
• critical distance
  from christian point of view
Ps. 139 God's Complete Knowledge and Care

1 LORD, you have examined me and you know me.
2 You know everything I do;
from far away you understand all my thoughts.
3 You see me, whether I am working or resting;
you know all my actions.
4 Even before I speak,
you already know what I will say.
5 You are all round me on every side;
you protect me with your power.
6 Your knowledge of me is too deep;
it is beyond my understanding.
7 Where could I go to escape from you?
Where could I get away from your presence?
8 If I went up to heaven, you would be there;
if I lay down in the world of the dead, you would be there.
9 If I flew away beyond the east or lived in the farthest place in the west,
10 you would be there to lead me, you would be there to help me.
11 I could ask the darkness to hide me
or the light round me to turn into night,
12 but even darkness is not dark for you,
and the night is as bright as the day.
Darkness and light are the same to you.

17 O God, how difficult I find your thoughts;
how many of them there are!
18 If I counted them, they would be more than the grains of sand.
When I awake, I am still with you.

אֶפְּרֵם מֵחַוְל יִרְבּוּן הַקִּיצָת וְעוֹדִִ֥י עִמ ָּֽךְ׃

23 Examine me, O God, and know my mind;
test me, and discover my thoughts.
24 Find out if there is any evil in me
and guide me in the everlasting way.
about God

• God is creator of everything – out of nothing  
  *Genesis 1*

• God knows everything - wellspring of all wisdom  
  *Col 2 3[Christ] is the key that opens all the hidden treasures  
  of God's wisdom and knowledge.*

• God is with us in all steps / stages of our live  
  *Ps 139*

• God created time  
  night / day – working days / sabbat or holidays  
  (all creation needs this alternance: action / rest)  
  *Remember the the idea of the „decadi“ in french revolution:  
  Have a Resting day after nine days of work failed be introduced!)*

• **God as the Other**  
  *(altérité)*  
  in Dialogue and **relation** with human being  
  and the whole creation
about God

• God is communication in himself: The Mystery of Trinity giving and receiving Father - Son - Holy Spirit

• God wants Human being to join in / become part of to Gods own communication

  This can be understood as a model for all communication
about human being

• created by God and
• part of the dialogue with God
• this relation is the (only) foundation of identity
• face to face - personal contact are essential to full human life while digital life is dissociating time and place
• called to be co-creating with God God gave wisdom to human being to create, also digital worlds!
How technique helps to spread the gospel:

With hammer and nail since ever a big outcome is possible.
500 years – Martin Luther and Reformation inimaginable without us craftsmen
On the other hand: Critical distance towards technical development by faith

Arma Christi cross, 1980ies nearby Leutkirch
© A. Knoch
about christian life

• Individually called to new life in freedom and
• Called to new life in solidarity

• Justification by grace is the foundation of
• Sanctification (answering to God's love through love) or:

perfection is the fruit of God's grace not of self-optimization as suggested in the digital world, where „Lifelong learning“ is required. Lifelong growing and the experience of forgiveness has some similarity to this concept, but is not the same as it has a spiritual and a human dimension, but is has not to be „traded“ with.
about christian life

How we get in contact with God

• Media / supports always were used
  narratives – manuscripts / letters – printed – radio – TV – digitalized...
  illumination – conversion
  but: ApActs (Philippus) –
  personal witnessing makes the „difference“

• communication can help create communion

  actual debate: can we or not receive communion at a TV service?

Digital supports:
They risk to distract,
they keep on working, while we are searching for rest
  How to concentrate?)

Examples:
- „Godspot“ (Protestant Church of Berlin )
- Partenia (see next slide)
Das freie WLAN der Evangelischen Kirche
Partenia is a space of liberty to dialogue with all peoples of this world.

www.partenia.org
about christian life

How we get in contact with the others

Ecclesiology

• Church as the body of Christ and its members
  see 1 Cor 12
  Reformation: Priesthood of the baptized
  cloud intelligence
  *In agile teams, creativity can circulate, each one has something to say
  no subordination, diversity is needed*

• Church(es) as network
  Pauls letters create and support communion,
  there was no central authority, but interconectivity as in the wor(l)dwideweb
  • The different charismas of the church traditions can be interrelated

• *Practical church life*
What means resurrection of the flesh?

Speaking about - resurrection of the flesh – not without our whole person not as a newly formatted hard disc, but including and transcending our experience and put together by God to a new life (as in a mosaic/collage)

See artistic work of Anne Merkelbach (next slide)
Wie wollen wir arbeiten?

Kreative schuf ten selbstbestimmt. Aber das müssen sie sich leisten können

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Teilzeit, das klingt so toll. Aber ist es das auch?

20–22

Erfolg durch Arbeit: Eisschnei d läufer Gunda Niemann-Stirnemann im Gespräch

26–27
• Pour ou contre?
• Comment uti
Me pas se laisser faire / mais
• Technik- und Erfolgsfreundlichkeit der
Gesellschaft / auch des Protestantismus und
die Rechtfertigungslehre stehen im
Widerspruch,
Das protestantische Paradox (Thiede,
Pfarrerblatt)