

"The Peace of Creation"
An Ecological Hermeneutic of Power
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In Christian theological ethics, the exercise of power has often been perceived in a negative light, something of a concession with sin. In the history of doctrines, the notion of *imago dei* has been constantly associated with the power of dominion over nature, so much so, that Christianity has been strongly criticized for promoting attitudes that lead to environmental destruction on the one hand, and domination of peoples, on the other. Biblical tradition however sees God's exercise of power, primarily disclosed in Jesus Christ, as geared towards the cosmic restoration of all creation into unity and eternal fellowship with the Creator. Translating how this cosmic promise would look like in actual historic existence however is an elusive theological task. This paper hopes to contribute to this theological endeavor. I propose that an ecological hermeneutic of power will provide us with the language helpful to usher biblical speech into a postmodernist discourse on reconciliation.

An ecological understanding of power provides us a way of reflecting on those moments of alienation, separation, violence, repression, and fear, and the human longing for unity, within the context of the Hebraic understanding of the relationship between humanity and nature, as well as within the prophetic/apocalyptic vision of the renewal and redemption of creation present in both the Old and the New Testaments. At the same time, an ecological hermeneutic of power facilitates our analysis of community life where the exercise of power becomes incomprehensible apart from a dialectical interaction with other persons in the community and the natural world.