

Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers

Volume 13 | Issue 4

Article 5

10-1-1996

Schleiermacher on Evil

Robert Merrihew Adams

Follow this and additional works at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy>

Recommended Citation

Adams, Robert Merrihew (1996) "Schleiermacher on Evil," *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*: Vol. 13 : Iss. 4 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy/vol13/iss4/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers by an authorized editor of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange.

SCHLEIERMACHER ON EVIL

Robert Merrihew Adams

Schleiermacher's theology of absolute dependence implies that absolutely everything, including evil, including even sin, is grounded in the divine causality. In addition to God's general, creative causality, however, he thinks that Christian consciousness reveals a special, teleologically ordered divine causality which is at work in redemption but not in evil. He identifies good and evil, respectively, with what furthers and what obstructs the development of the religious consciousness in human beings. Mere pains and natural ills are not truly evil, in his view, apart from a connection with some obstruction of the God-consciousness. These themes are explored in the present essay.

Friedrich Schleiermacher's treatment of the problem of evil deserves our attention for several reasons. He is a great theologian—in my opinion, the greatest Christian theologian since the Middle Ages, in terms of intellectual achievement. He is highly original and massively consistent. His account of evil grows out of his views about the nature of religion and of Christianity, about God and salvation, and coheres with them. It is strikingly different from the approaches to the problem of evil most discussed in philosophy of religion today. Few if any of us, I suspect, will want to embrace it completely as a solution to the problem; but it presents an instructive and salutary challenge to our usual ways of thinking. My exposition of it will rely mainly on Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*, *The Christian Faith*, the principal document of his mature theology, though I will refer occasionally to some of his other writings.

1. *The Divine Causality*

It is a commonplace that the shape of the theological problem of evil depends on beliefs about God's power. Schleiermacher's doctrine of divine omnipotence is anything but commonplace, however, and gives the problem of evil quite a different shape for him from that which it assumes in discussions that are likely to be more familiar to us. Omnipotence holds a central place in his account of the attributes of God, because it pertains with unique transparency to the divine causality, and Schleiermacher insists that "all the divine attributes to be dealt



with in Christian Dogmatics must somehow go back to the divine causality, since they are only meant to explain the feeling of absolute dependence" (§50.3: p. 198/I,286).¹

It is one of the best-known features of Schleiermacher's theology that all of it is "only meant to explain the feeling of absolute dependence." It is a mistake, I think, to interpret this as implying a thoroughgoing subjectivism, as if the content of his theology must all be reducible to descriptions of our own internal states of mind. The feeling of absolute dependence is a consciousness of oneself (and one's world) as related to a "Whence" on which one is absolutely dependent (§4.4: p. 16f.), and Schleiermacher gives plenty of indication that he regards a full religious acceptance of the feeling as carrying with it commitment to the reality of the relation and of the Whence.² He does indeed intend an austere limitation of what can be said about God, but I think this is best understood as an attempt to solve the traditional problem of divine attribution by an uncommonly strict adherence to "the way of causality" (§50.3: p. 197/I,285). All that is said about God is to be capable of being understood in terms of the divine causality—and that means the divine causality as seen from our end, the receiving end, in terms of our being absolutely dependent.

For this theology of absolute dependence and divine causality, omnipotence has thematic importance, and Schleiermacher's understanding of omnipotence is distinctive. In his own summary it contains two points: first, "that the entire system of nature, comprehending all times and spaces, is grounded in the divine causality," and second, "that the divine causality, as our feeling of dependence affirms it, is completely presented in the totality of finite being, and consequently everything for which there is a causality in God becomes actual and happens" (§54: p. 211/I,307f.). Both points are highly relevant to the problem of evil.

The first denies Schleiermacher the possibility of excluding anything, however evil, from the scope of the divine causality. Any such possibility is excluded, indeed, by our absolute dependence on God, as Schleiermacher understands it. Typical versions of the free will defense depend on the assumption that voluntary choices of creatures, or some of them, have a partial independence from the divine causality, and are not completely determined by it. This assumption is flatly inconsistent with Schleiermacher's conception of our absolute dependence, which is rooted in a "consciousness that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us" (§4.3: p. 16/I,22).³ Consistent as usual, Schleiermacher allows, with some qualifications, that God is "author [*Urheber*] of sin" (§79: p. 325/I,478).

As we shall see in section 3, Schleiermacher has a use for the traditional idea that as evil is something negative rather than positive, it is not in its own right an object of divine (or other) causality; but he is quite clear that this does not remove the evil from the scope of the divine causality (§81.1: p. 331f./I,487-89). It merely qualifies the way in which it does fall within the scope of the divine causality. It does not get God off the hook, if that were needed.

Arguably it is not needed, on Schleiermacher's account. That is due to

the second and more distinctive point in his conception of divine omnipotence, "that the divine causality . . . is completely presented in the totality of finite being" and that "everything for which there is a causality in God becomes actual." This is one of the points in his theology at which he is closest to Spinoza. What he means is that what God actually causes exhausts all possibility, so that there is no difference for God between the actual and the possible (§54.2: p. 213/I,309).

Schleiermacher therefore cannot make use of a best of all possible worlds theodicy. Indeed he explicitly rejects Leibniz's "doctrine of the best world" because it depends on "the idea (which we have already rejected) of many worlds all originally equally possible with the one which actually came into existence" (§59 Postscript: p. 241/I,353). This could of course provide Schleiermacher with another version of the excuse that God couldn't have done any better—namely, that God couldn't have done anything different at all; but Schleiermacher (wisely) does not avail himself of this excuse.

Excuses are beside the point in relation to Schleiermacher's God. The most important thing about the plurality of possible worlds, for Leibniz, was that the only way that one of them could become actual was by the *choice* of the creator. The alternative possibilities assure a role in creation for God's choosing, and for the values by which the choice is guided; and in this Leibniz distinguished his view of God's causality from Spinoza's.⁴ Schleiermacher sides here with Spinoza against Leibniz, not only rejecting the nonactual possibles but also denying quite explicitly that "God . . . decides and produces by choice and deliberation" (§55.2: p. 225/I,329). For Schleiermacher as for Spinoza, a choosing God would be one whose actual causality would be limited, unacceptably, by the possibilities not chosen. And a God who has no choices to make needs no excuses. The actions of such a deity are beyond blame and justification.

We might be tempted to infer that evil is no problem for Schleiermacher, but that would be a mistake. Eliminating divine choice as a focus of the problem does not solve or eliminate the problem of evil, for at least two reasons. The first is that Schleiermacher still faces the question whether his views about the divine causality in relation to evil are consistent with the attributes, causally understood, that he ascribes to God; we will return to this question in section 4. The other and more fundamental reason is the same as the reason why there is a problem of evil even for atheism. One still has to deal with evils. One has to sustain or renounce hope, believe or not that life is worth living. In short there remains the human problem, whether we can be reconciled with the basic conditions of our existence while retaining an incentive to try to overcome evils. The reconciliation in question is central to most religious traditions, and plays an important part in Schleiermacher's account of religion. Evil and the overcoming of it are particularly central to his conception of Christianity, which is distinguished from other religions, in his view, by a consciousness of sin and of redemption from it through Jesus (§11: pp. 52ff./I,74ff.).⁵ It is in these terms, most of all, that Schleiermacher faces a problem of evil.

2. Good

Schleiermacher's treatment of the problem of evil cannot be understood apart from his conception of the good. I refer to the conception of the good that prevails in his theology, and will not comment here on his philosophical ethics.⁶ Two points are important here, of which he is emphatically explicit only about the second. The first is that Schleiermacher understands good and evil only in relation to humans; the second is that in relation to us, development of the higher, religious life is the good.

On the first point, because he is not explicit about it, it is possible that I have misunderstood Schleiermacher. It is the point, in his whole theology, on which I think I most deeply disagree with him. It seems to me a profound mistake for a theology to renounce the idea of transcendent value. But the main lines of Schleiermacher's theology do strongly suggest that good and evil have essential reference to humans and are to be understood as enhancement and obstruction of human life. Among his philosophical heroes Schleiermacher seems to agree here with Spinoza against Plato.

Most telling, I think, is that the central religious experience is characterized by Schleiermacher as consciousness of causal dependence, and hence of divine power; never as consciousness of value. In his thought the religious consciousness is supremely valued, but is not a consciousness of value. God is conceived as supreme causality, not as supreme value. This is not to deny that God is worshiped and adored in Schleiermacher's religion. But Schleiermacher's concepts of value find their home, not in worship, but in thinking about what is desirable in human development.

Of the eight attributes of God affirmed as doctrines by Schleiermacher, holiness is the one in which we might best expect to find an intrinsic value of the deity, independent of its relation to human development. But that is not Schleiermacher's conception. He adheres rigorously here to his policy of characterizing God in terms of our dependence on the divine causality, rather than in terms of anything intrinsic to the divine being. "By the holiness of God," he declares, "we understand that divine causality by virtue of which, in all human corporate life, conscience is posited together with the need for redemption" (§83: p. 341/1,503).

The value of the world is similarly understood as value in relation to human development. From the beginning of his career, the world or universe was an object of love and religious interest for Schleiermacher. In the end, however, when he enunciates a theological doctrine of "the original perfection of the world," this is not done in terms of an intrinsic excellence of the universe as a whole or of any nonhuman part of it. On the contrary,

"By perfection of the world nothing is to be understood here except what we must name so in the interests of the religious self-consciousness, namely, that the totality of finite existence, as it influences us... works together in such a way as to make pos-

sible the continuity of the religious self-consciousness" (§57.1: p. 233/I,340).⁷

Implicit in this definition of the perfection of the world is the second main point in Schleiermacher's conception of the good—namely, that the good for human beings is the development of the religious consciousness and, more broadly, the religious life. This is expressed also in his doctrine of "the original perfection of the human being," which he identifies with "the direction [*Richtung*]⁸ toward the God-consciousness" (§60: p. 244/I,357). For some theological purposes at least, he is prepared to understand "under the good only what is determined by the God-consciousness," and this is "what Christian piety regards as alone good in the strictest sense" (§70.2-3: p. 283f./I,414,416).

That religion should value itself supremely is part of Schleiermacher's conception of Christianity, which he sees as characterized by a reflexive interest of religion in religion. According to his *Speeches On Religion*,

The fact that Christianity in its most characteristic basic intuition most frequently and best prefers to intuit the universe in religion and in its history, the fact that it treats religion itself as material for religion and thus is, as it were, raised to a higher power of religion, makes up its most distinctive character and determines its whole form.⁹

The opposition of sin to the development and dominance of the religious consciousness and the removal of that opposition in and through Christ constitute the central object of the specifically Christian consciousness, in Schleiermacher's view. That the proper development of religion is supremely valued is an integral part of this version of Christianity.

It is important to an understanding of Schleiermacher to recognize that what is supremely valued here is not just having religious feelings. That would be too trivial an aspiration in his view. He holds that the religious consciousness, the feeling of absolute dependence, is "an essential element of human nature" (§6.1: p. 26/I,36), and is more or less universally present in human beings. What is not trivial, what is far from universal, and indeed is universally obstructed by sin (except in Jesus), is having religious consciousness that is clear, and that dominates moments of consciousness, and having one's life organized around moments so dominated. That is the goal of Christian aspiration. This is reflected in Schleiermacher's account of the exemplarity¹⁰ [*Urbildlichkeit*] of Christ, which he identifies with "the power of the God-consciousness to give the impulse to all life's moments and to determine them" (§93.2: p. 378/II,33).¹¹ "By a religious [or devout: *fromm*] personality," likewise, "is to be understood one in which every predominantly passive moment is resolved only by relation to the God-consciousness given in the influence of the redeemer, and every active moment proceeds from an impulse of this same God-consciousness" (§106.1: p. 476/II,176f.).

3. Sin

The antithesis of Schleiermacher's conception of a religious personality is his conception of sin. Sin, he says, is "everything that has obstructed (*gehemmt*) the free development of the God-consciousness." He also characterizes it as "an obstruction (*Hemmung*) of the determinative power of the spirit, caused by the independence of the sensuous function" (§66: pp. 271,273/I,396,398f.).¹² This is an essentially religious, and not in the first instance a moral, conception of sin (cf. §70.3: p. 284f./I,416f.).

Sin in this view, as in much ancient and modern thought, is rooted in a conflict between lower and higher faculties or aspects of the self. It is constituted by a failure of the lower or sensuous consciousness to be properly subservient to the higher or religious consciousness. Schleiermacher states that "the flesh's acting for itself [*Fürsichthätigkeit*] makes [a moment] sin...; for all activities of the flesh are good when obedient to the spirit, and all are evil [*böse*] when severed from it" (§74.1: p. 307/I,451).

Schleiermacher allows that sin is "grounded in human freedom" (§81: p. 330/I,486). This applies directly to "actual sin" and indirectly to "original sin," which he characterizes as "in each the work of all and in all the work of each" (§71.2: p. 288/I,421). His concept of freedom, however, is emphatically compatibilist. Not only is each free human act absolutely dependent on the divine causality; it must also have a place, with all other events, in a completely deterministic system of nature. Free action, and hence actual sin, must be voluntary, but only in a fairly broad sense. Thus "actual sin in the precise sense is present even where something sinful shows itself only internally, and has part of a moment of consciousness as a thought or a desire" (§73.2: p. 305f./I,449). Likewise "the swift movement of a sensuous excitation towards its goal without ranging itself with the higher self-consciousness is undeniably the act of the individual" (§69.1: p. 279/I,408f.). The primary marks of freedom in Schleiermacher's discussion of sin are action in this broad sense and its spontaneity, that is, that "every excitation first receives its determinate quality from the inmost midpoint of [one's own] life," and not from merely external influence, "so that the sin, therefore, as proceeding from this midpoint, is in every case the sinner's own act and no one else's" (§81.2: p. 334/I,492).

It should not surprise us, therefore, that Schleiermacher insists that "sin's being grounded in our freedom is all the more compatible with its being rooted, in another respect, in the divine causality since, in relation to the feeling of absolute dependence, we recognize no difference between the greater and the less vitality of temporal causality" (§81.2: p. 333f./I,491). The point is quite central, indeed, to his conception of absolute dependence. We have a relative freedom as well as a relative dependence in relation to other finite things, on which we act as well as being acted on by them. But the absoluteness of our dependence of God signifies that not only our passivity and relative dependence but also and especially our activity and (relative) freedom are totally grounded in the divine causality. The feeling of absolute dependence involves "the

consciousness that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us" (§4.3: p. 16/I,22).

That is why Schleiermacher calls God "author of sin" (§79: p. 325/I,478). However, his view of the relation of divine causality to sin is more complex than that expression might suggest. He tries, in uncharacteristically tortured prose, to reach some accommodation with traditional claims that God is *not* the author of sin. He does it, after a fashion, but only subject to the qualification that "God has ordained that the continually imperfect triumph of the spirit¹³ should become sin to us" (§81: p. 330/I,486). This accommodation rests on a subtle intertwining of two main strands: the nothingness of evil and the purposive subordination of evil to good.

The nothingness of evil has been a prominent theme of theodicy in Christian Platonism. Schleiermacher indicates crisply and clearly how traditional theological positions may require it. "For once it is said that everything actual must be brought forth through the productive will of God, and again, that God cannot be author of evil [*des Bösen*], there is only one way to unite the two: if it can be said that in relation to God the evil is not [*gar nicht ist*]."¹⁴ Schleiermacher clearly recognizes that this is a problematic solution of the problem.¹⁵ At most it can tell us that evil as such, and more broadly the negative as such, is not the object of the divine causality—nor presumably of any other causality. In relation to divine omnipotence, "we are shut up to the choice between saying that for sin there is no eternal causality at all, and finding that causality in God" (§81.1: p. 332/I,488). Whatever is real or factual in evil must still be grounded in the divine causality. On this view what is real is good, and evil is limitation of good. Specifically, sin is limitation of the God-consciousness imparted by God. But then, insofar as it is a fact, "the limitation as well as the impartation can be grounded in the same divine will" (§81.1: p. 332/I,489). For that reason, as Schleiermacher recognizes, there is obviously a sense in which God can rightly be called author of sin. The idea of the nothingness of sin, as such, does not seem to me to do much work in Schleiermacher's account of evil.

An idea with which it is connected, however, that sin is not related to the divine causality *in the same way* as the good is, really is important for his thought. Specifically, "God cannot be thought of as author of sin in the same way as he is author of redemption." This is because the Christian consciousness of redemption includes consciousness of "a special divine impartation," which is a causality distinct from "that general divine cooperation without which even sin could not be done. ... For the general cooperation is the same in both, but in the case of sin there is lacking the special divine impartation that gives to every approach to blessedness the character of grace" (§80: p. 326f./I,480f.).

This point relates to a fundamental feature of Schleiermacher's theology that is too often overlooked. Everyone who knows anything about his mature theology knows that he identified *religious* experience with a consciousness or feeling of absolute dependence. What is less often noted, but was no less important to Schleiermacher, is that he identified *Christian* experience with consciousness of a more specific relation to the

divine causality. The particular experience that forms his conception of Christian consciousness is, broadly speaking, an evangelical experience of salvation. It includes the general consciousness of absolute independence, but also includes a consciousness of sin and redemption. The redemption seems to be conceived by Schleiermacher as participation in a blessedness that is perfect in itself, though our participation in it is imperfect. Our consciousness of its perfection is nonetheless adequate, in his view, to ground a conviction that it could only have originated in a perfect religious life (Christ's life), and that no natural historical circumstances could account for its origination. It must therefore have originated in a special divine causality, "a special divine impartation." Its origin is supernatural, though its living out and its propagation through the experience, preaching, and social interaction of the Christian church are natural. It is the supernatural become natural [Naturwerden des Übernatürlichen] (§§ 88.4, 120.1: pp. 365,552/II,16,295; cf. §§13.1, 117.2: pp. 62-64,537/I,88-91; II,272).

Here as everywhere, Schleiermacher is austere minimalist in his acceptance of the supernatural. But there seems to me to be at least one very important difference between his conceptions of the general divine causality revealed in the feeling of absolute dependence and of the special divine causality revealed in the Christian consciousness of redemption. Nothing in Schleiermacher's account of the general absolute dependence of all things on God gives reason to posit a *teleology* or *purpose* in the divine causality, nor any indication that some finite things are better indicators than others of the purpose (if any) or future direction of the divine causality. Even "the original perfection of the world," treated by Schleiermacher in connection with the doctrines of creation and preservation, is not presented, so far as I can see, as involving any teleology in the divine causality; it is simply a matter of the evaluation of the results of divine causality in relation to what is seen as the good for human life. The special divine causality involved in redemption, however, is conceived (at least implicitly) as teleological. In this connection Schleiermacher speaks freely and often of God's "will" or "good pleasure" and of God's "ordaining," and this is not a mere superficial manner of speaking.

Some of the depth of it is to be found in the second main strand in Schleiermacher's explanation of how God is not author of sin in the same way as God is author of redemption—that is, in the purposive subordination of evil to good. "God is also the author of sin," Schleiermacher allows, "of sin, however, only as related to redemption" (§80.2: p. 328/I,483). "Human evil exists, everywhere, only on the basis of the good, and sin only on the basis of grace" (§80.2: p. 327/I,482). More comprehensively, he says, his own view is that

sin was ordained only for the sake of redemption, and accordingly redemption appears as the gain bound up with sin; in comparison with which there can be no question of damage due to sin, for the merely gradual and imperfect unfolding of the power of the God-consciousness belongs to the conditions of the

stage of existence on which the human race stands (§81.4: p. 338/I,498).

The implication is (1) that sin is part of a process whose goal is redemption, (2) that this process begins with very limited God-consciousness and passes through stages of significant but still imperfect improvement, and (3) that in beings of human finitude the God-consciousness could have only such a progressive development. Schleiermacher's articulation of this third point, taken in isolation, could be misleading, for he also maintains that the development of the God-consciousness, though progressive, could have been without sin.¹⁶ That is, there need not have been the resistance to it that constitutes sin, but "the God-consciousness could have developed steadily from the first human being to the purity and holiness that it has in the Redeemer" (§68.3: p. 278f./I,408). Still it is Schleiermacher's view that sin has a role to play in the actual process of redemption, and is ordained for the sake of that process.

These views are obviously related to his well known denial of the historical character of humanity's fall into sin (§72). Human history, religiously considered, is not really on his view one of fall and rising again. It is rather one of gradual rising from undeveloped to developed God-consciousness, a rising disturbed and obstructed by the resistance that he identifies with sin.¹⁷

4. Teleology, Election, and the Loving God

In what follows I will not be concerned with Schleiermacher's treatment of *Genesis*, but with the role of divine purpose in his account of redemption. His claim that the divine causality in relation to sin is subservient to the divine purpose of redemption commits him to ascribing a purpose to God. This is problematic in relation to his conception of God. As we have seen, he denies that God makes choices among alternatives. How can God have purposes if God makes no choices? Part of Schleiermacher's concern, in what he denies about God, is to minimize anthropomorphism. Conceiving of the divine causality as unconditioned by time, he wants to deny that God engages in any process of deliberation (§55.2: p. 225/I,329). But that denial does not clearly exclude choice. Leibniz would agree that there is no process of deliberation in God, but Leibniz is emphatic that God chooses, in the sense that the divine causality selects among possible alternatives on the basis of their comparative value. Schleiermacher rejects divine choice in precisely this Leibnizian sense, denying that there are any possible alternatives to the world that God actually creates (§59: p. 241/I,353). This is an implication of Schleiermacher's account of God's omnipotence.

It follows, I think, that Schleiermacher cannot consistently maintain that there is anything that could and would have happened differently, or that God could and would have done differently, if God's purposes had been different. Without really possible alternatives, however, there seems to be nothing for purposes to explain. And it seems at best very questionable what reality there can be to a purpose where there is noth-

ing for it to explain.

Perhaps Schleiermacher would reply that God could and would indeed have acted otherwise if God's purposes had been different, but that God's purposes could not have been different. I see no textual evidence that Schleiermacher held this position, however, and it is consistent with divine choice in the sense I have called Leibnizian.¹⁸ A problem seems to remain here for Schleiermacher.¹⁹

Even supposing the idea of divine purpose without divine choice to be coherent, one might wonder what place it has in Schleiermacher's theology. Is this ascription of purposes to God just idle speculation about divine psychology? Speculation about the inner life of God is supposed to have no place in Schleiermacher's theology. To this challenge I think he can make an adequate response. His conception of divine purpose will not be psychological, and the ascription of purposes to God plays an important part in his religious interpretation of human experience—or rather of certain aspects of human experience.

As I have pointed out, our general consciousness of divine causality in the feeling of absolute dependence is not presented by Schleiermacher as having teleological content. Accordingly he abstains (wisely, in my opinion²⁰) from trying to read divine purposes off the phenomena of physical and biological nature (§166.1: p. 728/II,560f.). It is only in the Christian consciousness of redemption that Schleiermacher finds grounds for ascribing purposes to God. Here he finds a teleological content that does in fact shape his treatment of some doctrines.

One of these is the doctrine of election. Schleiermacher famously defended Calvin against Lutheran opponents on the subject of predestination. Everything that happens is not merely foreseen by God, but predetermined by the divine causation. That is implied by the absolute dependence of all things on God. This applies to participation in redemption as well as to everything else. Schleiermacher thinks it follows from "the laws of the divine government of the world" that "all those living at any one time can never be uniformly taken up into the kingdom of God founded by Christ" (§117: p. 536/II,270). Due to its character as process, redemption is always incomplete in human history as we know it. Some have come to faith in Christ; some have not. Who has and who hasn't is ultimately determined by the divine causality as it is related to the world as a whole (§120). This is plainly implied by Schleiermacher's conception of absolute dependence, combined with the most elementary empirical realism about Christian history.

Thus far his doctrine of predestination does not essentially depend on any teleological assumption. Teleology enters the picture decisively with Schleiermacher's response to the issue that links the doctrine of election to the problem of evil,

the 'horrible' of the Calvinist decree, that the overlooked or rejected are then damned forever and deprived of all blessedness, notwithstanding their nature and the universal force of redemption give them the same claims as the others, which of course are nothing ... but claims on divine grace.²¹

Schleiermacher argues that this problem is no more acute for Calvin than for his Lutheran critics.

Or is the distinction between divine foreordination [*Vorherversehung*] and permissive divine foreknowledge [*Vorherwissen*] so great indeed that, in view of eternal damnation, the universal father-love of God is incompatible only with the one, but appears in its full light when the other is assumed? And shouldn't one much rather say that if the merciful Father so much as foresaw the eternal damnation of some, he should not indeed have made them?²²

If there is something in this part of Calvin's theology that needs correction, Schleiermacher argues, it is not the thesis of divine predetermination, but the doctrine, which the Lutherans share with Calvin, that those who die without faith in Christ are eternally damned. The objection, he says,

pertains much more to the fact of damnation than to the way in which its causality is apportioned between God and the human being; both parties [Calvin and the Lutherans] find themselves at the parting of the ways: either with the eternity and endlessness of the punishments of hell to assume also the unintelligibility of the divine ordinances; or, by turning to the idea of an ultimate universal reconciliation and restoration of all that is lost, to rise at the same time above all apparent conflict between the divine justice and the divine love.²³

Schleiermacher therefore favors the universalist view that the process of redemption will attain its end, after death, in the salvation of all human beings (§§118-20).

I admire Schleiermacher's argument, and find most of it compelling, but my question here is *why* he could not rest content with the view that some are saved and some are not. That might leave us with a rather harsh view of the divine causality, but then some of the historical realities that Schleiermacher unblinkingly accepts as products of the divine causality are harsh enough. *Why* must he go beyond them to belief in universal salvation after death? *Why* indeed must he postulate a life after death at all? After all, as Schleiermacher insists, these supposed future facts are not themselves data of Christian experience (§§157, 159). And if (as I claimed in section 2 above) God is conceived, and experienced, according to Schleiermacher, as supreme causality and *not* as supreme value, he cannot simply argue that eternal damnation, or annihilation, is too *bad* for God to perpetrate.

I believe the grounds for Schleiermacher's universalism, and more generally for his eschatology, must be sought in the teleological content of the Christian consciousness of redemption. Schleiermacher does not say that as plainly as I wish he did, perhaps because he is reluctant to recognize the extent of his dependence on teleology. But I do not see

any really satisfying alternative available to him, and much of his argument seems to me best interpreted in terms of the sort of teleology I have in mind. An implication of experienced teleology emerges in a cautious statement about the empirical grounds of eschatological belief when Schleiermacher states that "we are conscious of our spiritual life as communicated perfection and blessedness of Christ, ... and this is at the same time faith in the reality of the perfected church, though only as an effective motive force within us" (§159.2: p. 705/II,524). I think faith in life after death must for Schleiermacher be grounded in such teleology. His explicit argument for life after death appeals to "faith in the immutability of the union of the divine essence with human nature in the person of Christ" (§158: p. 698/II,514). For that faith in its turn, however, reaching as it does beyond all present experience, Schleiermacher can hardly admit any other ground than a teleology discerned in the divine causality of redemption.

These teleological themes can be traced in three arguments that Schleiermacher gives for universalism. One is presented in terms of "Christian sympathy," which will give rise to "an irresolvable discord if, on the assumption of survival after death, we are to think of a part of the human race as entirely excluded from this fellowship [of redemption]" (§118: p. 539/II,275). The "sympathy with unblessedness" will tend to extinguish blessedness (§118.2: p. 543/II,281), "and the resulting inevitable and ever-renewed sadness permits no unalloyed communication of the blessedness of Christ" (§120: p. 558/II,304). Indeed he states that eternal blessedness cannot coexist with eternal damnation (§163, Appendix: p. 721/II,549). So what? we may ask. This would doubtless be an unfortunate result, but what grounds does Schleiermacher's theology afford for thinking it cannot or will not happen? His grounds must presumably be found in the Christian experience of redemption, and I think specifically in a consciousness of a divine causality at work in redemption in such a way that it tends to communicate blessedness more and more perfectly. This must be consciousness of a teleology in this special divine causality that allows us to project its effects into the future, ruling out the possibility that it will allow the blessedness of Christians to be extinguished by sympathy with unblessedness. That there is a tendency toward successful propagation of the Christian redemption, on which predictions can be based, Schleiermacher certainly believed, declaring that "it is an essential of our faith that every nation will sooner or later become Christian" (§120: p. 559/II,305). And I do not see how he could consistently have maintained this, except on the basis of a supposed experience of redemption incorporating this teleology. Teleology is here conceived in largely epistemological terms, as an experienced and projectible tendency. Nothing is assumed about its metaphysical basis; in particular, nothing is assumed about a divine psychology.

This argument also depends, of course, on the premise that Christian consciousness will tend to produce sympathy with whatever unblessedness there may be. And this Schleiermacher clearly believed. "If the perfecting of our nature is not to move backwards," he says, "sympathy must embrace the whole human race" (§163, Appendix: p. 721/II,550).

Here again he evidently relies on a teleology in the process of perfecting human nature, for which his evidence must be sought in an experienced tendency of the divine causality responsible for redemption.

A second argument for universalism is christological. The high-priesthood of Christ grounds a universality of redemption that implies that predetermination to blessedness is universal. "Neither of the two can be limited without also curtailing the other" (§120: p. 560/II,306).

If all in this fashion are included in the divine predetermination to blessedness, then the high-priestly dignity of Christ shows for the first time its whole efficacy, to which indeed it belongs that God sees all human beings only in Christ (§120: p. 560/II,306).

This argument clearly presupposes that the efficacy of the high-priesthood of Christ is powerful and also tends in a certain direction, so that a result can be predicted from it. For Schleiermacher this presupposition would have to be grounded in the Christian consciousness of redemption through Christ and in the divine causality experienced there.

The third argument is the most fundamental. The crucial problem for Calvin's doctrine of election, and more broadly for the doctrine of eternal damnation, is presented by Schleiermacher (as noted above) as an issue about the consistency of these doctrines with "the universal father-love of God."²⁴ God's love is such a central Christian teaching, and this issue arises so naturally in relation to it, that Schleiermacher's identification of it as a problem might easily pass without comment. But we have to ask what God's love means for Schleiermacher, and what grounds *he* has for thinking it incompatible with the eternal damnation of some human beings.

Schleiermacher identifies "the divine love" with "the attribute in virtue of which the divine nature imparts itself," and insists it is recognized exclusively "in the work of redemption" (§166: p. 727f./II,560f.). Here we must remember that for Schleiermacher the divine attributes are not features of the inner life of God but aspects of the divine causality as it is experienced in religious consciousness. The love of God, accordingly, is not understood as part of the divine psychology, but as the special divine causality revealed in the "special divine impartation" experienced in redemption (cf. §80.1: p. 326f./I,480f.). And, precisely in the context of his account of the divine attributes related to redemption, Schleiermacher is explicit that our consciousness of this causality has a teleological character.

When we trace to the divine causality our consciousness of fellowship with God, restored through the efficacy of redemption, we posit the planting and extension of the Christian church as object of the divine government of the world (§164: p. 723/II,553).

This teleology, aiming at the "extension of the Christian church," is understood by Schleiermacher as directed to the redemption of *all* human beings. He argues that "even the [supposedly] damned cannot

be excluded from being objects of the divine love, because everything that belongs to the ordered world of life must be an object of all divine attributes."²⁵ The idea that the divine attributes may be adequately manifested if some humans are objects of divine mercy while others are objects only of divine justice must be rejected.

We cannot...concede in general that there is a divided revelation of divine attributes, for then they would be limited, and God would be an unlimited being with limited attributes. But justice and mercy must not exclude each other (§118.2: p. 543f./II,281f.).

Thus the supposedly damned must receive redemption after all; for they must be objects of the divine love, and the divine love is simply the divine causality as source of redemption.

In the argument I have just quoted, Schleiermacher seems to appeal to the divine infinity for proof of the universality of divine love. That seems to me a questionable strategy. Any inference from the divine infinity as such to a prediction of empirical consequences is precarious. It would be more in keeping with the general tenor of Schleiermacher's theology, in my opinion, to appeal to a teleology discerned in the Christian consciousness of redemption. That that consciousness has a teleological character is plausible enough, in view of the importance of *hope* in Christian piety. Perhaps Schleiermacher could argue also that a tendency toward the redemption of all human beings can be discerned in the evangelistic impulse in Christian piety. Or it may be that if he were pressed hard for the grounds of his hopes, he would simply appeal to a direct apprehension of the divine purpose in Christian consciousness of the efficacy of redemption, as I believe he is already committed to a quite un-Humean and un-Kantian direct apprehension of the divine efficient causality in the feeling of absolute dependence.

5. The Problem of *Übel*

The only part of the problem of evil that I have addressed thus far is the problem of sin, which is incomparably the most important part for Schleiermacher. The remaining part is the problem of what he calls *Übel*. The customary English translation of *Übel* is 'evil' or 'evils', but that is misleading. 'Evil' in English has the connotation of something really sinister. In German that is *das Böse*, which for Schleiermacher is virtually identical with sin. *Übel* is less sinister. It may be either natural or social, but social *Übel* is merely the *result* of sin, and does not include *das Böse* or evil in a morally charged sense (§75.2: p. 316/I,464f.). I shall therefore render *Übel* as 'ills'. This translation may carry a slight suggestion of taking the matter lightly, but that is appropriate to Schleiermacher's views, as we shall see.

Schleiermacher defines ills [*Übel*] as "persistent efficient causes of obstructions to life [*Lebenshemmungen*]" (§75: p. 315/I,462). This must refer in the first instance to obstructions to the lower or sensuous life,

since “everything that has obstructed [*gehemmt*] the free development of the God-consciousness” is reckoned as sin (§66.1: p. 271/I,396), and hence as *Böse* and not merely *Übel*, an evil (in the morally charged sense) and not merely an ill. Mere ills as such do not pose for Schleiermacher any problem of consistency with God’s love, for he defines that love as the divine causality considered specifically as source of redemption, so that only what obstructs redemption or the God-consciousness conflicts with the divine love. He explicitly denies that the divine love can be recognized “in all those arrangements of nature and orderings of human affairs which protect life or further it” (§166.1: p. 728/II,560).

In relation to mere ills, accordingly, Schleiermacher counsels “religious submission” (§78.2: p. 323/I,475). This is a theme deeply rooted in his conception of religion. “You see, I look at everything with religion,” he declares in a letter of 1799,²⁶ with apparent reference to his reaction to a selfish analogue of love that he connected with a materialistic philosophical view. “I should not like to miss²⁷ it in the world,” he says, commenting that something beautiful can be molded from it, and adds, “There is also a proper feeling of reciprocal love for these people, which I should also not want to dispense with.” To look at everything with religion is to see everything in its place in the universe, or in its absolute dependence on God—these relationships being primary contents of religious consciousness for the early Speeches *On Religion* and for the mature systematic theology, respectively. The consciousness of absolute dependence, in Schleiermacher’s view, cannot be separated from a consciousness of all things as part of a deterministic system of nature [*Naturzusammenhang*] (§46: p. 170/I,243). All things, even bad things, are thus material for religious consciousness, and can be accepted as such. This applies to ills, and not merely to ills, but also to things that are morally and religiously bad, as is implied in the letter quoted above. “To a pious mind,” as Schleiermacher declared in the Speeches, “religion makes everything holy and valuable, even unholiness and commonness itself.”²⁸

It is only sin, only obstruction of the religious consciousness, that keeps us from reconciliation with the conditions of our existence, in Schleiermacher’s view; and in a sense it is only sin that is intrinsically bad. All ills, he holds, are due to sin. Social ills are directly and obviously caused by sin, but even natural ills are indirectly due to sin. “As the human being without sin would not feel as an ill what merely obstructs his sensuous functions, therefore the fact that he does feel it as an ill is grounded in sin” (§76.2: p. 319/I,469). The implication that a properly developed religious consciousness would not perceive obstructions of the sensuous life as ills—that is, would not perceive mere ills as ills²⁹—is seriously intended by Schleiermacher. For a sinless consciousness, nothing is truly bad except, in a way, sin itself. This is Schleiermacher’s principal solution to the problem of ills, the problem of *Übel*.

Our first reaction may be that this solution calls for a stronger stomach than most of us have. More seriously, we may wonder whether it calls for a stronger stomach than we *ought* to have. Morally, in particu-

lar, we may wonder whether Schleiermacher's views can motivate an acceptably determined effort to alleviate the ills that afflict human life. Our concern will only be heightened when we read, in the standard English translation of *The Christian Faith*, that "the Christian consciousness could never give rise to a moment of activity specially directed toward the cessation of suffering as such" (§78.2: p. 324). Has this claim not been reduced to absurdity by the dedicated efforts of generations of medical missionaries, not to speak of all the other sorts of works of mercy inspired by Christianity?

Schleiermacher's astonishing statement is at least somewhat less astonishing when it is correctly translated. He actually said, "the Christian religious consciousness cannot give rise to a special activity, filling up a moment, [that would be] directed towards the cessation of suffering as such" (§78.2: I,476). His claim is not that Christian consciousness cannot inspire activity specially directed to relief of suffering, but that such an aim cannot completely *fill* a moment of Christian consciousness, which must always retain some direct orientation toward the specifically religious as such. Even so we may still suspect that he is underrating the importance of preventing and relieving suffering.

Schleiermacher himself was certainly no quietist. One of his chief claims to fame in his own time and place was his preaching of distinctly activist patriotic sermons in Berlin during the Prussian uprising against the French occupation in 1813. And he classified Christianity as a "teleological" or active rather than an "aesthetic" or passive religion, declaring that "in Christianity all pain and all joy are religious only in so far as they are related to activity in the Kingdom of God" (§9.2: p. 43/I,60). He specifically repudiates the idea that religious submission should "take on a positive character as willingness that ills should continue or unwillingness that they should cease" (§78.2: p. 323/I,475). Christianity will therefore be opposed to ills in general, though of course it will be even more opposed to the sin to which the badness of the ills is due (§78.2: p. 324/I,475f.).

Christian opposition to ills will be motivated less by the badness of the ills as such than by the positive demands of a religious consciousness. The specific motive Schleiermacher suggests may not sound ecologically correct to us.

At the same time [he says] because every restriction of self-activity [and hence every ill] indicates a dominion [*Herrschaft*] over nature that is not yet present, the task arises of making that dominion effective (§78.2: p. 324/I,476).

Schleiermacher sees this task as set for teleological religion, I think, in order to provide scope for activity in the Kingdom of God.

For the continuance of ills cannot be willed as an obstruction of life, inasmuch as every such obstruction always restricts also, on one side or another, the activity that proceeds from the God-consciousness (§78.2: p. 323/I,475).

Schleiermacher's theology is notably Christocentric, and many of its themes play out interestingly in his christology. His treatment of the sufferings of Christ, in particular, typifies and illuminates his view of sufferings in general. Historical perspective may be helpful here. It is a commonplace that during the later Middle Ages there was a change in the presentation of the sufferings of Christ. In older images he is serene, untroubled on the cross and in the events of his passion, whereas in later ones he is often visibly anguished. My impression is that in late medieval and early modern devotional literature there is likewise a growing stress on the cost to Christ of his passion. These developments, I suspect, are rooted in changes in deep-seated attitudes toward suffering, and perhaps in thinking about the atonement.

The serenity of the older presentation corresponds to a classical ideal of imperturbability of mind in relation to sensations and passions. It sees the significance of the sufferings of Christ (and of the martyrs) largely as an occasion for triumphing over them (and, through them, over evil in general) by rising above them in Stoical indifference and self-control, or in something even better. Any salvific significance they may have, on this view, depends on there being a rather narrow limit to the degree of awfulness they can impose on a strong-spirited sufferer.

The later presentations, on the other hand, express a piety for which the significance of the sufferings of Christ, and of Christian suffering more generally, is enhanced precisely by magnifying the awfulness of the sufferings for the sufferer. On this view they have meaning as a gift from the sufferer to God and to us; and the more awful they are, the greater the gift. In some contexts there is also the theme that much human suffering is awful in any event and the awfulness of Christ's sufferings crowns his identification with us.

In this contrast Schleiermacher clearly represents the older view. His conception of the nature of redemption through Christ does not allow Christ's sufferings to be too awful. "The Redeemer assumes the believers into the fellowship of his unclouded blessedness, and this is his reconciling activity" (§101: p. 431/II,112). The significance of the Redeemer's sufferings, therefore, is primarily in the victory over them; "the blessedness [of Christ] appeared in its perfection only in that it was not overcome even by the fullness of suffering" (§101.4: p. 436/II,119). Schleiermacher knows there is a view that "locates the reconciling power of [Christ's] suffering precisely in [the idea] that he voluntarily gave up even his blessedness," becoming "actually unblessed" for a period of time. But that is a misunderstanding, "completely overlooking the necessity of an unshakable blessedness in Christ" (§101.4: p. 436/II,119). Christ's blessedness must remain unclouded [*unbetrübt*] in the midst of sufferings, so that it can be communicated with its full value to us.

Thus the redeemed person, in so far as he is taken up into fellowship of life with Christ, is never filled [that is, never dominated or controlled] by the consciousness of any ill, because it cannot touch obstructively the life that he shares with Christ (§101.2: p. 432/II,113).

He will certainly experience “natural and social obstructions of life,” as Christ did; “but there is no unblestness [*Unseligkeit*] in the pains and sufferings, because they do not as such penetrate into the inmost life” (§101.2: p. 432/II,113f.).

Accordingly Schleiermacher quite explicitly relegates suffering to the rank of a secondary rather than a primitive element in the work of Christ (§101.4). And the suffering that stands in closest connection with Christ’s work is his sympathy for spiritual unblestness in others. It would be particularly inappropriate to ascribe “a special reconciling value to [Christ’s] bodily sufferings”; one of the reasons Schleiermacher gives for this judgment is that

even according to our own feeling, an ordinary ethical development and robust piety have as their reward the almost complete suppression of bodily sufferings in the presence of a joyful spiritual self-consciousness, whether personal or corporate; at least they can never repress that consciousness, nor diminish a moment’s content of blessedness (§101.4: p. 437/II,120).

I find this statement as incredible as anything Schleiermacher wrote about evil, though perhaps no more incredible than many other broadly Stoical responses in the history of Western thought. Surely, I want to say, our bodies have more of a grip on our souls than that. Some sufferings are so awful that they do have a terrible human importance, whether we want them to have it or not, and whether we think they ought to have it or not. This is a point that I think deeply problematic for Schleiermacher’s christology as well as his treatment of evil. Still I think it would be a mistake to dismiss Schleiermacher’s view too lightly, without pondering the challenge that he offers us.

The challenge to “look at everything with religion” expresses a strikingly coherent religious outlook. It is one in which the chief values are derived from, and organized around, the religious consciousness. Such organization is indeed Schleiermacher’s ideal of religious life, or a major strand in it. Other, more “sensuous” values, including those of bodily pleasure and pain, are set firmly in their place. We may think the place assigned them is too low and too small, but we may also ask whether any coherent religious view can assign them as large and as high a place as they assume in our late-twentieth century “consumerist” culture.

It is clear also that for Schleiermacher, and for many of those of his own time and place who flocked to hear his sermons, his firmly religious ordering of values played a part in finding meaning in the midst of suffering and worldly misfortune. One sign of this is the frequency, the ease, and the naturalness with which he spoke about death—something that seems much harder for us to do, and is at any rate more rarely done among us. Death (Jesus’ death and ours) is the subject of many of his sermons that have been preserved. What he says there and in his letters, and what is reported of the scene at his own deathbed,³⁰ show that his insistence on ordering everything around the consciousness of God and

of redemption did indeed offer rich resources for maintaining a moral and spiritual compass in hard circumstances. We may wonder whether he really faced, even in thought, the absolutely hardest; but we also ought not to underestimate, for our part, the transformation of values that may be required if we are to find, and keep a grip on, a Christian meaning in life and in death.³¹

Yale University

NOTES

1. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, English Translation of the Second German Edition [of 1830-31], ed. by H. R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928). Parenthetical page references to this translation follow § references to sections (which the Germans call "paragraphs") and subsections of it and its German original, and are followed by volume and page references to the German 1830-31 edition, as found in the margins of the critical edition, *Der christliche Glaube*, ed. in 2 vols. by Martin Redeker (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1960). I correct the English translation, often without comment, where I think it can be significantly improved.

2. See, e.g., §50.2: p. 196/1,284, where Schleiermacher allows the adherent of Christian dogmatics the right "to attach himself to any form of speculation provided only it allows an object to which the feeling of absolute dependence can relate itself."

3. Here I follow the published English translation, because it gives a vivid as well as substantially accurate expression of Schleiermacher's meaning, although it is rather free by my standards.

4. Robert Merrihew Adams, *Leibniz: Determinist, Theist, Idealist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 20f.

5. See also Schleiermacher's *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, trans. from the first German edition by Richard Crouter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 213/Friedrich Schleiermacher's *Reden Ueber die Religion*, critical edition by G. Ch. Bernhard Pünjer (Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschke und Sohn, 1879), p. 278.

6. For the latter see Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Ethik (1812/13) mit späteren Fassungen der Einleitung, Güterlehre und Pflichtenlehre*, ed. [from notes of lectures] by Otto Braun and Hans-Joachim Birkner (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1988).

7. In the first German edition of *The Christian Faith* this point is not made so clearly, though the basic ideas are already present. See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Der christliche Glaube 1821/22*, Studienausgabe, ed. Hermann Peiter, Band 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984), §70: pp. 226ff.

8. The rendering of this term as 'predisposition' in the published English translation works badly in many contexts, in my opinion.

9. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, first ed., trans. Crouter, p. 214/*Reden*, ed. Pünjer, p. 279.

10. This neologism seems to me a more accurate rendering than the published English translation's 'ideality'.

11. Cf. the account of "the whole religious life" in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, trans. [from the third German edition] by John Oman (New York: Harper Torchbooks.

1958), p. 58f./*Reden*, ed. Pünjer, pp. 72-74.

12. The connection of ideas is seriously obscured by the diversity of renderings used for *hemmen* and *Hemmung* in the published English translation of *The Christian Faith*. I shall render them consistently by 'obstruct' and 'obstruction.'

13. *Die jedesmal noch nicht gewordene Herrschaft des Geistes*—literally, "the always not-yet-accomplished lordship of the spirit."

14. Schleiermacher, *Über die Lehre von der Erwählung; besonders in Beziehung auf Herrn Dr. Bretschneiders Aphorismen*, in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (hereafter, KGA), vol. I,x (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), p. 208.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 208f.

16. I will not pause to consider what sense Schleiermacher's determinism can assign to this 'could have been'.

17. In these themes it is Schleiermacher, I think, rather than Irenaeus, who is the main historic prototype of John Hick's "Irenaeus" type of theodicy. The debt to Schleiermacher is of course acknowledged by Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, revised edition (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), ch. 10.

18. As I have argued in R. Adams, *Leibniz: Determinist, Theist, Idealist*, p. 20f.

19. In our own time a similar difficulty, I think, confronts James Gustafson, who ascribes to God "purposes" but not "intelligence" or "radical agency." See Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*, vol. I: *Theology and Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 270f.

20. However, a theology that takes the goodness of God as a primary premise might have a stronger basis than Schleiermacher has for theological interpretation of nature.

21. Schleiermacher, *Lehre von der Erwählung*, KGA, I,x, p. 216.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 217.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

24. Schleiermacher, *Lehre von der Erwählung*, KGA, I,x, p. 217.

25. Schleiermacher, *Lehre von der Erwählung*, KGA, I,x, p. 218.

26. To Henriette Herz, 25 February 1799, in KGA, vol. V,iii, *Briefwechsel 1799-1800*, ed. A. Arndt and W. Virmond (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992), p. 19. The letter is found in English in *The Life of Schleiermacher, as unfolded in his Autobiography and Letters*, ed. and trans. by Frederica Rowan (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1860), vol. 1, pp. 190-92. I have drawn also on the partial translation of Richard B. Brandt, *The Philosophy of Schleiermacher: The Development of His Theory of Scientific and Religious Knowledge* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941), p. 97, and was first led to the text by his quotation of it. As the letter makes clear, it was written during the composition of Schleiermacher's *Speeches On Religion*.

27. Reading *missen*, with *Aus Schleiermacher's Leben: In Briefen*, vol. 1 (ed. by Hildegard von Schwerin, Schleiermacher's daughter, and Ehrenfried von Willich, his stepson: see KGA V,iii, p. lxxvii), 2nd edition (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1860), p. 199. KGA V,iii, p. 19, reads *wissen*, which makes no sense to me in this context. I have not seen the manuscript, but 'm' and 'w' are very similar in Schleiermacher's script, as can be seen in the photocopies of a few autographs included in KGA V,iii.

28. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, trans. Crouter, p. 109/*Reden*, ed. Pünjer, p. 68.

29. I am indebted to Shannon Craigo-Snell for pointing out to me this aspect of the implication.

30. See the moving account by his widow in *The Life of Schleiermacher, as*

unfolded in his Autobiography and Letters, ed. and trans. by Rowan, vol. 2, pp. 335-39. It is strikingly reminiscent of a sermon about how to die that he had preached thirty-five years earlier: *Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher*, trans. by Mary F. Wilson (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, n.d.), pp. 52-66.

31. A version of this paper was presented to a session of the Society of Christian Philosophers at the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association, December 27, 1995. I am indebted to my commentator on that occasion, Philip L. Quinn, for very helpful comments.