



<https://theses.gla.ac.uk/>

Theses Digitisation:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/research/enlighten/theses/digitisation/>

This is a digitised version of the original print thesis.

Copyright and moral rights for this work are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study,
without prior permission or charge

This work cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first
obtaining permission in writing from the author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any
format or medium without the formal permission of the author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author,
title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Enlighten: Theses

<https://theses.gla.ac.uk/>
research-enlighten@glasgow.ac.uk

THE PROBLEM OF POLARIZATION:

AN APPROACH BASED ON THE WRITINGS OF G.C. BERKOUWER.

By

CHARLES MILLAR CAMERON B.A. B.D.

A Thesis submitted for

the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Presented to the University of Glasgow
Researched in the Faculty of Divinity.

October 1983

ProQuest Number: 10907105

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10907105

Published by ProQuest LLC (2018). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank all who have, in any way, assisted me in the production of this thesis. Special thanks are due to the Faculty of Divinity for its financial support; Professor A.D. Galloway for his supervision of my studies; the teaching and library staff of Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan, U.S.A. for the invaluable time (Academic Year, 1978-1979) spent there under the auspices of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches; the congregation of St. Ninian's Parish Church, Dunfermline which called me to be its minister in the knowledge that I was already committed to postgraduate studies which would occupy a certain proportion of my time; Mrs. Marion Halley, a full-time school teacher and active member of St. Ninian's, who graciously undertook the task of typing this thesis (A car accident prevented Marion from completing this task (she did type almost two hundred pages). We, at St. Ninian's, are thankful to God for her recovery.); Marion's husband, Douglas and daughter, Alison for their gracious acceptance of the intrusion of a thesis into their family life; Sharon, my wife since October 1980, for her patient acceptance of my persistent failure either to find a "thesis corner" where I could work tidily or to "put the thesis out of my mind for a while".

While this study represents, to a great extent, my own particular grappling with the problem of polarization, I am particularly indebted to Professor Galloway for his guidance. His awareness of the important difference between a descriptive survey and a genuine thesis, developed from a distinctive point of view, significantly influenced my selection of the problem of polarization for special consideration. If this problem is to be confronted seriously, it demands more than a descriptive approach by which alternative viewpoints are simply set side by side. In a study which has brought me into confrontation with other types of theological understanding, I have appreciated Professor Galloway's knowledge of contemporary theology which has helped to deepen my understanding of those theologies^{of} which I have felt compelled to be respectfully critical.

My indebtedness to Berkouwer's writings is obvious. Since a study of this type tends to accentuate my disagreements with other theologies, I wish to express personal appreciation of the stimulating writings of those whose general theological method I do not share. I hope that this study commends itself as a valuable discussion of a complex problem.

CONTENTS

<u>Introductory Preface</u>	<u>Pages i-vi.</u>
 <u>CHAPTER ONE</u>	
<u>The Problem of Polarization: Berkouwer's Relation to his Background.</u>	<u>Pages 1-20.</u>
Introduction	1-3
(1) <u>The Reformation Era</u>	<u>3-9</u>
(a) Berkouwer's Relation to Calvin	5-6
(b) Berkouwer's Relation to Arminius	6-9
(2) <u>The Post-Reformation Development</u>	<u>9-19</u>
(a) Berkouwer's Relation to the Experiential Theology of Early Dutch Calvinism	10-12
(b) Berkouwer's Relation to Scholasticism in Dutch Calvinism	<u>12-19</u>
(i) Berkouwer's Relation to A. Kuyper and H. Bavinck	13-16
(ii) Berkouwer's Relation to V. Hepp	16-19
Conclusion	19-20.
 <u>CHAPTER TWO</u>	
<u>The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to Berkouwer's Central Concerns.</u>	<u>Pages 21-42.</u>
Introduction	21-22
(1) The Subject-Object Dichotomy	22-29
(2) The Nature of Language	29-34
(3) The Heteronomy-Autonomy Dilemma	34-38
(4) Anthropology	38-42
Conclusion	42.
 <u>CHAPTER THREE</u>	
<u>The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to the Doctrine of Revelation.</u>	<u>Pages 43-59.</u>
Introduction	43
Theological and Philosophical Presuppositions	43-46
General Overview of the Content and Context of this Discussion	46-48
(1) Introduction to the Doctrine of Revelation	48-51
(2) Revelation and Reconciliation	51-57
(3) Conclusions concerning the Doctrine of Revelation	57-59.
 <u>CHAPTER FOUR</u>	
<u>The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to Theological Rationalism.</u>	<u>Pages 60-117.</u>
(1) <u>Deism</u>	<u>60-78</u>
(a) Its Understanding of God	60-62

(b) Its Understanding of Man	62-65
(c) Its Understanding of the Nature of Reality	65-67
(d) Its Understanding of the Nature of Truth	67-70
(e) Its Understanding of the Character of Certainty	<u>70-77</u>
Tillich's Conception of Certainty and the Resurrection of Jesus	74-77
Conclusion	77-78
(2) <u>Biblicism</u>	<u>78-95</u>
Introduction	78-79
(a) Its Understanding of God	79-83
(b) Its Understanding of Man	83-86
(c) Its Understanding of the Nature of Reality	86-89
(d) Its Understanding of the Nature of Truth	89-94
(e) Its Understanding of the Character of Certainty	94-95
Conclusion	95
(3) <u>Christomonism</u>	<u>95-117</u>
Introduction	95
(a) Its Understanding of God	95-100
(b) Its Understanding of Man	100-105
(c) Its Understanding of the Nature of Reality	105-110
(d) Its Understanding of the Nature of Truth	110-114
(e) Its Understanding of the Character of Certainty	114-116
Conclusion	116-117
The Context and Significance of the Preceding Discussion of Theological Rationalism	117.

CHAPTER FIVE

<u>The Problem of Polarization: The Doctrine of Revelation and Modern Thought.</u>	<u>Pages 118-144.</u>
Introduction	118
(1) <u>Philosophy</u>	<u>118-130</u>
(i) God	119-122
(ii) Man	122-125
(iii) Evil	125-129
Conclusion	129-130
(2) <u>Biblical Criticism</u>	<u>130-139</u>
(3) <u>Science</u>	<u>139-142</u>
The Context and Significance of the Preceding Discussion of the Doctrine of Revelation and Modern Thought	142-144.

CHAPTER SIX

The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to the Doctrine of Grace. Pages 145-172.

Introduction	145-149
(1) Understanding the ' <u>pre</u> ' element in predestination	<u>149-157</u>
(2) Understanding the ' <u>destination</u> ' element in predestination	<u>157-163</u>
(3) Understanding the significance of the <u>present</u> in view of predestination	<u>163-172.</u>

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to the Church's Role in Christian Communication. Pages 173-215.

Introduction	173-177
(a) Berkouwer's concern to overcome the competition-motif in relation to tensions <u>within his own denomination</u>	<u>177-183</u>
(b) Berkouwer's emphasis on a proper understanding of the salvation of God in Christ in relation to tensions <u>within Protestantism</u>	<u>183-192</u>
(c) Berkouwer's understanding of the depth-dimension in religious language in relation to tensions <u>between Protestantism and non-Reformed churches</u>	<u>192-197</u>
(d) Berkouwer's anthropology in relation to the tensions <u>between the church and the world</u>	<u>198-215</u>
Common Grace	204-205
Salvation History	205-206
The Personal Character of Faith	206-209
Eschatological Dualism	209-215.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Problem of Polarization: The Communication of the Christian Message to the Whole Man. Pages 216-300.

Introduction	216-218
I. <u>Apologetics</u>	<u>218-251</u>
(1) The Relationship between Apologetics and Dogmatics	219-243
(a) "The Heart of the Church"	220-223
(b) "The Authority of Scripture"	223-227
(c) "Concern for the Faith"	227-243
(2) A Proper Use of Apologetics	243-245
(3) The Extent to which Theology may make use of Apologetics	245-251
II. <u>Social Concern</u>	<u>251-300</u>
Introduction	251

(1) The Significance of Berkouwer's Concern with the Problem of Polarization	<u>251-255</u>
(2) Berkouwer as a Biblical, Reformed and Contemporary Theologian	<u>255-293</u>
Introduction	255
(a) Berkouwer as a Biblical Theologian	255-257
(b) Berkouwer as a Reformed Theologian	257-264
(c) Berkouwer as a Contemporary Theologian	<u>264-293</u>
Introduction	264-271
Appreciation of Marx's Critique of Bourgeois Religion	271
Critical Discussion of Marx's Critique of Bourgeois Religion	<u>271-293</u>
(i) The Critique of 'Other-Worldly' Religion	272-273
(ii) The Critique of Individualistic Religion	273-276
(iii) The Critique of Hypocritical Religion	276-281
(iv) The Call for a World-Changing Philosophy	281-293
(3) The Basic Contours of Berkouwer's Theology of the Christian Life	<u>293-300</u>
Introduction	293-294
(a) The Practical Significance of Berkouwer's Doctrine of God	294-295
(b) The Practical Significance of Berkouwer's Doctrine of Revelation	295-297
(c) The Practical Significance of Berkouwer's Doctrine of Reconciliation	297-300
General Conclusion	300.

FOOTNOTES

	<u>Pages 301-446.</u>
Introduction to the Footnotes	301-302
Footnotes to Introductory Preface(Pages i-vi)	302-303
Footnotes to Chapter One(Pages 1-20)	303-307
Footnotes to Chapter Two(Pages 21-42)	307-315
Footnotes to Chapter Three(Pages 43-59)	315-320
Footnotes to Chapter Four(Pages 60-117)	320-354
Footnotes to Chapter Five(Pages 118-144)	354-374
Footnotes to Chapter Six(Pages 145-172)	374-395
Footnotes to Chapter Seven(Pages 173-215)	396-414
Footnotes to Chapter Eight(Pages 216-300)	415-446.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pages 447-454.

SUMMARY

This study is concerned with the problem of polarization. This problem is approached from a perspective developed from a detailed study of the writings of G.C. Berkouwer. Following an introductory preface which provides an overview of the entire study, Chapter One sets the problem of polarization in the context of Berkouwer's historical background - (1) the Reformation era (Calvin and Arminius); and (2) the post-Reformation development (pietism and scholasticism). Special emphasis is placed on Berkouwer's concern to avoid the twin pitfalls of objectivism and subjectivism. This emphasis is developed further in Chapter Two where the problem of polarization is viewed in relation to four of Berkouwer's central concerns - (1) the subject-object dichotomy; (2) the nature of language; (3) the heteronomy-autonomy dilemma; and (4) anthropology.

Chapters Three to Five approach the problem of polarization from a perspective, developed in Chapter Three, which emphasizes the integral unity of the doctrine of revelation in its creational, incarnational, biblical, proclamatory and pneumatological aspects. Chapter Four contains a critical analysis of three theological tendencies which, in the author's view, tend to increase polarization because of a common tendency towards theological rationalism - (1) deism; (2) biblicism; (3) christomonism. Chapter Five contains a constructive approach to three intellectual disciplines in which the effects of polarization are often felt - (1) philosophy; (2) biblical criticism; and (3) science.

Guided by the statement - The message of God's grace is to be communicated by the church of Jesus Christ to the whole man -, Chapters Six to Eight discuss the problem of polarization in relation to Christian communication. Chapter Six is concerned with the doctrine of grace, seeking to understand the concept of predestination in its 'pre' and 'destination' aspects with particular emphasis on the significance of the present proclamation. Chapter Seven is concerned with the doctrine of the church, focusing special attention on Berkouwer's approach to tensions within a single denomination, within Protestantism, between Protestantism and non-Reformed churches and between the church and the world. Chapter Eight is concerned with the doctrine of the whole man, drawing attention to the significance of apologetics and social concern within the full context of the church's calling to communicate the gospel of grace to the whole man.

Introductory Preface

Following a favourable citation of Karl Barth's repudiation of "(t)he construct, "God is everything, man is nothing," as a description of grace", G. C. Berkouwer writes,

"Dilemmas always are a source of polarization. We quickly go over to simplistic either-or's..in which the fulness of truth is torn apart. And in the atmosphere of false polarities, we often stop listening to each other and lose our ability to understand each other's words. With this, irritation and pique poison the theological discussion. But it is striking and, at the same time, reassuring that the clear intent of the gospel comes through even in the midst of theological polarization, especially when all the parties intend to be faithful to the gospel".¹

This entire study may be regarded as a development of the perspective provided by these words of Berkouwer concerning the problem of theological polarization.

The immediate context of the words - an attempt to understand how God and man are related to each other in the gospel - is precisely the context in which this entire study is set. The particular content of the words - a constructive approach to the problem of theological polarization - sets out the aim of this entire study. The author of the words - G. C. Berkouwer - provides a focal-point for the discussion of the wide ranging problem of theological polarization and its relation to the interpretation of the relationship between God in his revealing and reconciling activity and man towards whom this revealing and reconciling activity is directed.

With the writings of G. C. Berkouwer providing its focal-point, this study is essentially a study in contemporary theology. The wide-ranging character of the problem of theological polarization and its relation to the gospel carries it beyond the immediate confines of contemporary theology.

- This study does not have as its specific aim the close examination of particular biblical passages. It is not, therefore, primarily a study in biblical theology. Since, however, Berkouwer is an avowedly biblical theologian, a constant effort is made to relate the discussion to the interpretation of the biblical writings. From this perspective, this study promises to contribute to an increased understanding of biblical theology.

- This study does not have as its specific aim the detailed

interpretation of particular episodes in the history of doctrinal understanding. It is not, therefore, primarily a study in historical theology. Since, however, Berkouwer pays close attention to the history of doctrine in the development of his own theology, an attempt is made to set this entire study against the background of the history of doctrine (Chapter One). From this perspective, this study promises to provide an illuminating analysis of historical theology.

Contemporary theology has a great deal to learn from a theological perspective which, though it seeks to be contemporary, resolutely refuses to lose significant contact with biblical and historical theology.

With the writings of G. C. Berkouwer providing its focal-point, this study may be regarded as a study in systematic theology. The context in which the problem of theological polarization and its relation to the gospel is discussed is one in which attention is drawn to both the use and abuse of systematic thinking in theological reflection. This study seeks to understand the relationships between different aspects of Christian truth. Care is taken to avoid imposing a 'system' on Christian truth which does not permit the gospel to be understood and proclaimed in the fulness of its biblical perspectives.

- Attention is drawn in Chapter Two to general philosophical issues involved in the discussion of the problem of theological polarization and its relation to the gospel. This study does not, however, purport to be a detailed study of philosophical issues viewed in isolation from the total context of Christian theology. This study is not, therefore, primarily a study in philosophical theology. Since, however, Berkouwer shows an awareness of the philosophical issues involved in theological discussion, it might be expected that this study should provide a perspective which offers a clearer understanding of the issues involved in philosophical theology.

- Following a general discussion of the relationship between philosophical investigation and theological affirmation, Chapter Three takes the discussion into the field of doctrinal theology. In this discussion of the doctrine of revelation, the concern is to emphasize the integral unity of divine revelation, carefully guarding against the danger of a one-sidedness which leads to a distorted view of divine revelation.

- There is, in Chapter Four, a study in what might be described as comparative theology. Three types of theological system are placed under the careful scrutiny of the theological perspective outlined in Chapter Three. These three systems are discussed in a single chapter rather than in three separate chapters so that the comparative element might be emphasized. The terms used in this analysis - deism, biblicism and christomonism - are not intended as precise descriptions of the views of the theologians who figure prominently in the discussion. In this study, these terms bear the character of hypothetical constructs which serve to clearly distinguish particular directions in which a one-sided doctrine of revelation might move. The aim of this discussion is to emphasize the comprehensiveness of divine revelation over against interpretations which have a rather one-sided character.²

The discussion in Chapter Five is concerned with an analysis of what might be described as investigative theology. It is emphasized that the intellectual disciplines of philosophy, biblical criticism and science may be properly used by theology in its investigation of the meaning of divine revelation. This use of these investigative disciplines is carefully dissociated from their illegitimate use as the basis of a value-judgment by which it is claimed that the reality of divine revelation is either proved or disproved.³ Throughout the discussions contained in Chapters Two to Five, the relationship between Christian experience and systematic theological reflection is prominent. It is emphasized that theological system-building may not be dissociated from Christian experience without leading to a distortion in the understanding of the gospel which it seeks to interpret.

With the writings of G. C. Berkouwer providing its focal-point, this study could be regarded as a study in experiential theology. There is, throughout this study, a concern with the relationship between Christian experience and Christian doctrine. There is a concern to speak of both "the Christian faith" and "Christian faith" without the definite article.⁴ The aim is to draw attention to both the uniqueness of the revealing and reconciling activity of God in Jesus Christ and the necessity for faith to be "a life response of the total person, at the depths of his being, to the summons and opportunity of the Gospel".⁵ The precise manner in which this

Page 17
expression "experiential theology" is being used here becomes clearer in Chapters Six to Eight.

- The discussion of the doctrine of grace in Chapter Six is concerned with the development of an evangelistic theology. The central concern is to emphasize the unbreakable relationship between theology and evangelism. A theology which does not lead to evangelism remains remote from both the gospel of God and the need of men. An evangelism which shows little interest in theological reflection tends to become rather superficial and stereotyped, lacking the depth and range of what might be described as teaching evangelism.⁶

- The discussion in Chapter Seven is concerned with church theology. It is emphasized that Christian experience is not a form of religious individualism which is dissociated from the life of fellowship and that Christian doctrine is to be worked out not in individualistic isolation but in the service of the church's witness to the gospel.

- The discussion in Chapter Eight focuses attention on the role of apologetics and social concern within the total context of Christian witness. Since the aim is to emphasize this total context, these aspects of Christian witness are included in a single chapter rather than two separate chapters. The gospel's own intrinsic apologetic significance is emphasized with a view to developing an apologetic theology which carefully avoids "the polarities of a mindless fideism and a faithless rationalism".⁷ The gospel's own intrinsic social significance is emphasized with a view to developing a liberation theology which is entirely bound up with a faith in Jesus Christ as the Liberator, a faith which finds its practical expression not in a 'service of God' which exists in a 'spiritual' vacuum apart from the service of men but in the service of others for Jesus' sake.⁸

The goal of this study is to present a contemporary theology which is both systematic and experiential. The basic theological methodology used may be summarized thus :

"The truth of the Gospel..is known and understood only within the total context of both revelation and the obedience of faith. Theology, whose task is to restate that truth, is determined in its methods and limited in its conclusions by the nature of the Gospel as it is heard and obeyed in faith".⁹

This approach promises to be most valuable in the contemporary situation. It is emphasized that theology must seek to understand the relationships between different aspects of the truth of the gospel without distorting that truth by imposing an alien system upon it.

An alien system is imposed on the gospel whenever revelation is understood in a way that tends to devalue human experience as well as when human experience is permitted to take on a normative character such that it becomes the ultimate criterion by which divine revelation is judged.

The experiential character of theological reflection requires to be related to both the normativity of divine revelation and the totality of man's experience. Divine revelation reaches man in his experience but is not derived from man's experience. A proper emphasis on the experiential character of man's knowledge of God requires to be carefully distinguished from the tendency to make human experience the norm by which divine revelation is to be judged. Theology must pay close attention to the significance of human experience in the light of divine revelation. It must, however, resist the temptation of demanding that the gospel's message fit a particular interpretation of human experience. The accommodation of the gospel's voice to a particular understanding of man's experience can only result in an impoverished understanding of the gospel in which those aspects of the gospel which do not appear to fit are tacitly ignored. This procedure restricts the gospel's relevance to those areas of life where it is adjudged to have particular significance. The knowledge of God which the gospel brings is, however, related not to a part of man's experience but to its totality.

If theology is to speak adequately of the gospel of Jesus Christ, it must be thoroughly committed to hearing

"the powerful witness of the "tremendous" Word that always speaks against us so that we can learn to stop speaking against it".¹⁰

In view of the comprehensiveness of the gospel, theology may not settle for inadequate ways of thinking about the gospel. The gospel does not merely inform man's intellect, giving him information to which intellectual assent must be given and from which a perfect theological system may be built. The gospel does not merely affect man's emotions apart from his understanding. The gospel is not directed towards a specifically 'religious' or 'personal' sphere which is isolated from the totality of life. A proper recognition of the comprehensiveness of the gospel carries with it an awareness of both the privilege and the responsibility of theological reflection. Recognizing the inadequacy of both its understanding of divine

revelation and its response to that revelation, theology must seek to fulfill its privileged responsibility with a humble gratitude to God and a responsible commitment to hearing the gospel in obedient faith.

This study of theological polarization follows Berkouwer in his dual concern with faithfulness to the gospel and listening to and understanding the words of others.¹¹ Berkouwer's approach to theological discussion is a most valuable approach from which much can be learned, whether or not one is in agreement with every detail in Berkouwer's theology. L. B. Smedes draws attention to the value of Berkouwer's approach to theological discussion.

"Perhaps one of the most important immediate contributions that Berkouwer has made to evangelical theology is the example he has given of Christian and responsible polemic confrontation. Berkouwer's polemics are meant to be servants of grace, for the theology he is criticizing, for the preachers of the Church. There is a style of polemics that is revealed in the motives of the man engaging in it. A loveless polemics is possible, a polemics with a design to refute without a desire to serve. An irresponsible polemics is possible, and evangelical theology is no stranger to it, a polemics that is eager only to find the weak spot in the armor of one's opponent, eager, that is, for victory and not for truth. After Berkouwer, evangelical theology ought have no excuse to revert to the uncreative and loveless style of polemics of which it has too often been guilty".¹²

This study has an 'after Berkouwer' character in that it seeks to incorporate into its approach to theological polarization the lessons which have been learned from a detailed study of Berkouwer's writings.

In his evaluation of Berkouwer's theological significance, Smedes writes,

"One could wish for Berkouwer to do many things he does not do. One could wish that he would, now and then, develop a line of thought more concisely, more pointedly than he does. An Anglo-Saxon may be forgiven for wanting at times less circumlocution and more succinctness than he finds in European theologians".¹³

The sheer bulk of Berkouwer's "Studies in Dogmatics" makes the serious reading of his works a most formidable task. The present study seeks to draw together certain key aspects of Berkouwer's thought and relate them to particular problem areas in contemporary theology in a way that emphasizes the significance of his theology.

CHAPTER ONE

The Problem of Polarization: Berkouwer's Relation to his Background.

Berkouwer's historical background is of particular importance for this study. There are contrasting theological emphases in his background. These emphases tend to move in opposite directions -- the directions of objectivism and subjectivism. He is aware of the dangers inherent in both tendencies. He seeks, therefore, to construct a theology which does full justice to both the true objectivity of the Christian faith and the necessity for that faith to be a subjectively experienced faith.

In terms of Berkouwer's background, these contrasting tendencies in theology may be seen in two broad historical subdivisions. These are (1) the Reformation era; (2) the post-Reformation development. Since Berkouwer fully intends to stand in the line of the Reformation, it hardly needs to be said that the influence of John Calvin looms large in his background. Since, however, he belongs -- in particular -- to the Dutch strand of the Reformation, the significance of the controversial Dutch Reformer, James Arminius, must also be taken into account. The post-Reformation development of the Dutch Reformed tradition is no less ambivalent than the initial Dutch experience of the Reformation. It has produced two contrasting theological developments -- the pietism of the experiential theology movement and the scholasticism of the system-builders.

In relation to this inherited tradition, Berkouwer is always careful not to be forced into choosing between alternatives which are not mutually exclusive. He shows immense appreciation for Calvin, while never allowing himself to become completely uncritical of the great Reformer. Indeed, Berkouwer is at pains -- through creative interpretation rather than scathing criticism -- to move beyond the fatalistic caricature of Calvin. Berkouwer's relation to Arminius is equally ambivalent. While he does not claim to stand in the line of Arminius, he is appreciative of his chief concerns and adopts a number of positions which are remarkably similar to those of Arminius.

Berkouwer's theological position clearly stands in the line of the keynote of the experiential theology movement -- that Christian

faith must be an experienced faith and not simply a faith to which one gives mere intellectual assent. By reiterating this strongly experiential emphasis, he does not advocate sheer mysticism. While sharply critical of scholasticism with its closed systems, he is acutely aware of the need for Christian experience to find verbal articulation in a manner that corresponds to the nature of that experience.

This explains Berkouwer's concern with the exposition of Christian doctrine rather than so-called "devotional" literature. This exposition is carried out within the perspective of the open categories of Christian experience as it moves forward in faith, worship, witness and service. The imposition of any alien system upon such Christian experience can only lead to a severely distorted and painfully inadequate understanding of Christian doctrine.

As one who stands squarely in the Dutch Reformed Church tradition, then, Berkouwer - born into "a devoutly Reformed home and a devoutly Reformed church"¹ in 1903 and, from early childhood, nurtured in the Scriptures and the confessional and catechetical instruction of the Dutch Reformed Church - must be understood from within that general context. He must not, however, be understood as one who merely "parrots" any single theological tradition. Rather, he weaves his way through the various strands of that tradition - Calvinism, Arminianism, pietism and scholasticism - and produces a theology which integrates the strengths of each strand without falling prey to its weaknesses. The theology which he has presented, is, therefore, by virtue of its capacity for the avoidance of polarized theological positions, a theology of great importance for contemporary theological debate.

Berkouwer's historical background is not being analysed for its historical interest, considerable though that may be. It is included for its value in strengthening the argument for Berkouwer's importance for theology in its present state of confusion. His perceptive treatment of the controversies of historical theology suggests that he has a valuable contribution to make towards the achievement of a viable solution to the contemporary problem of polarization in theology.

This excursus into historical theology in the Dutch Reformed tradition aims to help present-day theologians to develop a keener

appreciation of the deep, underlying themes inherent in positions from which they have previously been polarized. Theology would, then, be better equipped for sensitively evaluating the merits of contrasting theologies without falling into unnecessary pitfalls which are present at every point on the theological spectrum. Such sensitive evaluation of different views will, when theologically grounded, prove far superior to the kind of vacillation which avoids polarization at the expense of the kind of conviction which is absolutely indispensable if the life and work of the Christian Church is to be invigorated.

(1) The Reformation Era

The influence of the Reformation lies at the very foundation of Berkouwer's thought. He sees himself as a Reformed theologian. He stands in the line of the Reformation, always insisting that theology is continually being reformed in the light of the Scriptures.² He is constantly seeking to interpret the Reformers, especially Calvin, and the Reformed Confessions, especially the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt. His relation to the Reformed tradition is not, however, a simple one. There is sufficient ambiguity about his relation to the Reformed tradition for it to require some clarification.

This element of ambiguity centres on the interpretation of the doctrine of election. Berkouwer rejects the causal categories by which traditional orthodoxy has understood this doctrine. He is constantly seeking to offer creative interpretations of Calvin and the Reformed Confessions, even the problematic Canons of Dordt. With respect to Dordt, he distinguishes between unchangeable affirmation and changeable representation, recognizing the historically conditioned character of the Church's Confessions.

Berkouwer's seemingly ambiguous stance with respect to Dordt provides an interesting introduction to his relation to Calvin and Arminius. It is not, however, a matter of purely historical interest since the most controversial sections of the Canons of Dordt(1,6,8,15) have figured prominently in twentieth-century theological debate in the Netherlands. Berkouwer states clearly his own position in regard to such debate when he cites favourably two recent episodes in Dutch church life.³

(1) In 1961, Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk (Netherlands Reformed Church), the major Protestant denomination, formulated guidelines

for dealing with the doctrine of election. These guidelines dealt critically with the Canons' use of Scripture and with abstract theories of divine sovereignty. The guidelines, which focused on Christ as the mirror of election, led to further discussions of the deepest intentions of the Arminians of the seventeenth century - fear of determinism and of God being the author of sin.

(ii) The synod of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands), Berkouwer's own denomination, stated that certain parts of the Canons (1.6,8,15) did not rest on the cited Scriptural passages but on the philosophical-theological concept of the all-causative God. The synod acknowledged the real intent of the Canons - to affirm the sovereignty of God's grace towards lost mankind - but it then added that the disputed passages do "not speak in a correct way of the Lord God."⁴

In referring to Berkouwer's favourable citation of these recent episodes as indicative of the ambiguity of his relation to the Reformation, there is no suggestion given of any lack of clarity in Berkouwer's own interpretation of election. This ambiguity arises from the fact that the term "Reformed" is not understood in any univocal manner. If the term "Reformed" is taken to mean an uncritical adoption of the Reformed Confessions without creative interpretation, then it cannot be applied to Berkouwer without qualification. If, however, the term "Reformed" is taken to imply the present-day conviction that "the Reformation continues",⁵ then Berkouwer is a fine example of a Reformed theologian - always respectful of his roots in the sixteenth century Reformation yet constantly seeking to reform current thinking in accordance with the Scriptures which provide the theological norm for both sixteenth and twentieth centuries.

The above general remarks concerning the modern discussions of the Canons of Dordt offer general guidelines concerning Berkouwer's criticisms of Calvin and his affinities with Arminius. He criticizes Calvin as one who wishes to stand in Calvin's line as an interpreter rather than an uncritical follower. His affinities with Arminius find expression not as part of a theology that claims to stand in the Arminian line. Rather, they are found in a theology which carefully seeks to overcome the polarization caused by the Calvinist-Arminian controversy.

(a) Berkouwer's Relation to Calvin

It is quite clear from the number of references to Calvin in Berkouwer's writings that Calvin has had a most significant influence on his thinking. Calvin is, for Berkouwer, of such great importance for Reformed theology that no theology, claiming to be Reformed, can proceed adequately without considerable exposition, interpretation and discussion of the writings of Calvin. On the whole, Berkouwer shows considerable agreement with Calvin. Where there is disagreement, this tends to be minimized through sympathetic interpretation which accentuates their agreement. Whenever disagreement is inevitable, it is always respectful disagreement. Berkouwer's criticisms of Calvin are never offered without the greatest respect for the great Reformer.

While Berkouwer offers much sympathetic exposition and interpretation of Calvin, it is clearly not his intention "to defend every one of Calvin's utterances regarding the doctrine of election."⁶ In particular, Berkouwer is critical of the "imbalance in the causa-concept which we observe in Calvin".⁷ Even here, however, Berkouwer's criticism is sympathetic rather than scathing. He refers to an "imbalance" which requires correction rather than presenting an equally unbalanced and categorical rejection of Calvin's valuable insight into the central importance of the doctrine of election.

Calvin displayed significant pastoral sensitivity when, in his idea of Christ as the "mirror of election", he emphasized the close relation between election and pastoral concern, between election and the certainty of salvation. Calvin may not have, "on the basis of this conception, .. in all respects drawn the proper conclusions and formed them into a harmonious "system".⁸ The validity of some of his exegesis (e.g. Romans 9 - 11) may be questionable. Nonetheless, Calvin's basic insight concerning Christ the mirror of election demands that he be given a much more sympathetic interpretation than he has frequently been given.

Such a constructive approach - with its emphasis on sympathetic criticism and creative reinterpretation - may well prove to be more valuable in present-day discussions of divine sovereignty and human freedom than the approach which categorically rejects Calvin's contribution. Such categorical rejections are generally based on a rather gross caricature of Calvin. The loss of Calvin's

voice in present-day theology is a loss that is ill-afforded for it is the loss of a seminal thinker whose significance goes far beyond his own generation.

While Berkouwer's treatment is quite different from those who categorically reject Calvin's doctrine of election, it does not meet with the approval of those who would not feel so free to criticize Calvin. A.L. Baker critically remarks that Berkouwer normally cites Calvin only where Calvin is in agreement with Berkouwer's own view. While there is undoubtedly truth in Baker's charge, it should be appreciated that Berkouwer does not feel bound to absolute agreement with Calvin. Baker sees Berkouwer more as an heir of Blaise Pascal than of John Calvin - "In many ways, he follows Blaise Pascal more closely than Calvin, in his approach of arguing for what is religious."⁹ Supporting this suggestion, Baker cites J.J. Arnold who writes, "In his total epistemology he drinks deeply of Blaise Pascal."¹⁰

While it may not be accurate to set Pascal over against Calvin, it is fairly accurate to observe strong affinities between Pascal and Berkouwer. Pascal, whose God "was not the God of rationalist argument"¹¹, maintained that "It is the heart which experiences God and not reason."¹² Pascal was not interested in debating with sinful men but in witnessing to them. In these essential features of his theological method, Pascal is close to Berkouwer. It is not surprising, then, that Berkouwer has written appreciatively on "The Significance of Pascal (1662-1962)".¹³

Berkouwer's greatest difficulty with Calvin's theology concerns the question of the meaningfulness of man's subjective experience in view of the reality of a sovereign God. This emphasis on subjectivity - which Arnold and Baker have rightly detected in both Pascal and Berkouwer - is precisely the point at which Berkouwer's strongest affinities with Arminius are found.

(b) Berkouwer's Relation to Arminius

Berkouwer's understanding of divine election is best understood not merely in terms of the Reformation in general but in terms of the Dutch Reformation in particular. There, one finds a similar struggle to avoid determinism and thus emphasize the sincerity of the gospel offer. These motifs are found especially in the writings of the Dutch Reformer, James Arminius. The strong similarities

between Berkouwer and Arminius should not be taken to mean that Berkouwer regards himself as standing in the line of Arminius.

While rejecting the equal ultimacy of election and rejection, Berkouwer insists that his own position need not involve the acceptance of an Arminian position.¹⁴ In his exposition of Faith and Justification, he explains how his own position differs from "Arminianism". This opposition to a most dangerous "over-estimation of faith as a spiritual achievement"¹⁵ in Arminianism must, however, be set alongside Berkouwer's favourable attitude towards current criticism of the very document which opposed Arminianism (the Canons of Dordt). He sees in such criticism of the Canons of Dordt the deepest intentions of the Arminians of the seventeenth century.¹⁶ In view of this somewhat ambivalent situation, it would hardly be surprising for a study of Arminius - in terms of his deepest intentions - to show strong affinities between Berkouwer and Arminius.

In his book, Arminius: A Study in the Dutch Reformation,¹⁷ Carl Bangs has made a number of observations about Arminius which suggest a striking similarity to Berkouwer.

- (i) The historical situation in Holland was not a simple one of Calvinism coming in, Arminius nearly ruining it and the Synod of Dordt restoring it.

"The earliest Dutch Reformed leaders don't seem to be Calvinists at all. They rise out of the soil, here and there, nurtured by the old Dutch biblical piety, not seized by dogmatic insights but steadily pressing toward a purified life of faith according to Scripture."¹⁸

This emphasis is similar to Berkouwer's insistence that election is not a special gnosis for the theological elite. Rather, it is a confession of faith, arising from the hearts of those who have come to know the grace of God.¹⁹

- (iii) Arminius' theological method is "practical and through faith".

"For the Theology which belongs to this world, is practical and through faith: Theoretical Theology belongs to the other world, and consists of pure and unclouded vision. For this reason we must clothe the object of our Theology in such a manner as may enable us to worship God, and fully to persuade and win us over to that practice."²⁰

This understanding of theology bears an amazing similarity to Berkouwer's doxological approach which sets the doctrine of election in a context of praise and thanksgiving.²¹

(iii) In Romans 9, Arminius finds the message of justification, the message of the freedom of God's mercy, by which he determines that it will be the believer who will be saved. This is an affirmation of predestination. God has predestined to salvation all who believe in Christ. It has been argued that Arminius stands in the Reformed tradition, since he insists that salvation is by grace alone and that human merit must be excluded as a cause of salvation. Only faith in Christ places the sinner in the company of the elect. Arminius' understanding of Romans 9 is remarkably similar to the view expounded by Berkouwer as Reformed.²²

(iv) Against synergism, Arminius affirms that grace is essential for the beginning, continuation and consummation of faith. He does, however, reject the distinction between a universal call which must be resisted and a special call which must be heeded.

"Whomsoever God calls, he calls them seriously, with a will desirous of their repentance and salvation."²³

"The whole controversy reduces itself to this question, 'Is the grace of God a certain irresistible force?'.. I believe that many persons resist the Holy Spirit and reject the grace that is offered."²⁴

Arminius' point is that grace is not a force. Grace is a Person, the Holy Spirit, and in personal relationships there cannot be sheer overpowering. This is precisely what Berkouwer is concerned to maintain in his protest against the 'potestas absoluta'.²⁵ It is precisely what Berkouwer means by his idea of the divine sovereignty as "the personal superiority of love and grace".²⁶

(v) Regarding the enigmatic character of Arminius, Bangs writes,

"Some Calvinists, finding that his writings do not produce the heresies they expected, have charged him with teaching secret heresy unpublished. Many Arminians, finding him too Calvinistic, have written him off as a transitional thinker, a 'forerunner'."²⁷

Berkouwer stands in the line of this element of the Dutch Reformation. To those who like to classify theologians as 'Calvinists' or 'Arminians', he is an enigma. He does not seem to fit. Perhaps, this is because he recognizes that the gospel itself does not fit neatly into our systems.²⁸

(vi) Arminius was committed to the Reformed Confessions and their creative interpretation. He was concerned to teach nothing other than the teaching of the Dutch Confession of Faith and the Heidelberg Catechism.²⁹ He sought to present his teaching on predestination as true to the historic teaching of the Church, by which he meant the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism.³⁰ Nonetheless, there was a curious duality about his relationship to the Confession and the Catechism. He believed his views to be consonant with them yet he wanted them revised, reduced to the essentials, to remove the ambiguities that allowed for the views of his opponents.³¹

If Arminius is understood according to his deepest intentions and not according to a Pelagian distortion of his meaning, he can be regarded as a Reformed theologian, committed to the Confession and the Catechism, while maintaining an element of ambiguity with respect to them. It has already been noted that this is essentially Berkouwer's position. He seeks to interpret the Reformed standards, being careful to state which interpretation he favours and which he avoids. His favourable citation of recent developments in the confessional life of the Dutch church has been noted, with the observation that his concern in such discussions has been for interpretation rather than categorical rejection of Dordt.

Berkouwer's relation to the Reformation era may be summed up thus:

- He is a child of the Reformation, always seeking to interpret, rather than categorically reject, the Reformers and the Reformed Confessions.
- He bears a marked affinity to the Dutch Reformation, "nurtured by the old Dutch biblical piety.. steadily pressing toward a purified life of faith according to Scripture."³²

(2) The Post-Reformation Development

The concern here is not with Berkouwer's relation to two key figures in the history of the Dutch Reformation, but with his relationship to two continuing tendencies in theology - tendencies which contrast with each other and which have frequently led to polarization. His significance lies in his judicious treatment of these contrasting and potentially divisive strands in theology. He has taken the important

- page 10 -

elements of each strand and, with remarkable alertness to the dangers inherent in both tendencies, has forged a theology carefully designed to overcome the twin errors of objectivism and subjectivism.

(a) Berkouwer's Relation to the Experiential Theology of Early Dutch Calvinism

The 'experiential theology of early Dutch Calvinism' finds its clearest expression in the writings of a number of seventeenth century writers, such as William Ames, T.J. Frelinghuysen and William a Brakel.³³ This school of theology was noted for its distinctive understanding of Christian doctrine. Doctrine was not meant merely for the mind to reflect upon. Doctrine was seen as arising out of the Christian experience in which the whole man had encountered God in Jesus Christ. Doctrine was seen as speaking to the whole man in the totality of his existence.

'Experiential theology' tended to emphasize such teachings as the new birth, conversion, sanctification with a view to the believer's growth in an experiential knowledge of God's saving grace. The mood of this movement was that of zeal - zeal for spiritual growth. Its method was that of existential personalism, insisting that the whole man in the totality of his existence must be affected by religious experience which makes him aware of the centrality of his relation to God. This method involved 'experiential theology' in a reaction against scholasticism which was inclined to revel in logic and speculation. The 'experiential theology' was

"an attempt to strike the same note found in Calvin and the Heidelberg Catechism, and grounded in Scripture, that man is called to live to the glory of God. There was nothing new in the teaching; much of it already appeared in medieval Dutch mysticism.. It is a striking example of profound spirituality.." ³⁴

Both the emphases and the roots of 'experiential theology' are strikingly similar to those of Berkouwer. This explains the inclusion of this movement for consideration rather than any explicit citation by Berkouwer of the writers characteristic of this movement. The emphases of 'experiential theology' are remarkably similar to those of Berkouwer - the emphases on the whole man,³⁵ the centrality of man's relation to God,³⁶

the zeal for spiritual growth,³⁷ the reiteration of personal motifs,³⁸ and the critical attitude towards scholasticism.³⁹

The roots of 'experiential theology' in "...Calvin.. the Heidelberg Catechism..Scripture..medieval Dutch mysticism.." are similar to those of Berkouwer.⁴⁰

Berkouwer's creative interpretation of Calvin and the Reformed confessions must be understood in relation to his close affinities with "the old Dutch biblical piety."⁴¹ In his treatment of Calvin, he is concerned to move away from the more speculative developments of later Calvinism to the warm biblical piety of Calvin himself.⁴² In his treatment of the Reformed Confessions, he is concerned to interpret them according to their intentions, being careful to distinguish between the changeable form and the unchangeable content of the historically-conditioned confessions.⁴³ The Reformed Confessions, which Berkouwer seeks faithfully to interpret, have been formative in his religious thinking from early childhood when he was steeped in the confessional and catechetical instruction of the Dutch Reformed Church. This element in Berkouwer's background is surely closely related to the profound respect with which Berkouwer treats the Reformed Confessions, even when he ventures to be critical of their historically-conditioned, and therefore changeable, form.

Of all the Reformed standards, the Heidelberg Catechism comes closest to Berkouwer's own style of theologizing:

"..the Heidelberger was the great "existential" catechism - if one can accept that word in a sixteenth-century context. It was anthropologically oriented, emphasizing not only the first person but even the more personal first person singular. Essentially, the Catechism was related to the spiritual life of man, not wrestling with theological abstractions.. It propounded no subtle theological niceties but rather was a catechism characterized by such phrases as "How are you reminded and assured.." and "What benefit do you receive.." True Christian spirituality was not defined in terms of right doctrines, for "even the devils believe and tremble," but in terms of right actions."⁴⁴

This type of spirituality, found in the Heidelberg Catechism, formed an important source of inspiration for the 'experiential theology' movement. It is also highly characteristic of the spirituality of Berkouwer who is constantly searching for the "existential direction

of Scripture",⁴⁵ continually seeking to relate Christian truth to man in his primary relation to God.⁴⁶ He repeatedly reminds his readers that the heart of Christian faith is to be in a saving relationship to God.⁴⁷

The 'experiential theology' of early Dutch Calvinism, then, provides an important key for understanding the historical context out of which Berkouwer has come. Its importance for this study arises not from any special interest in seventeenth-century theology or particular theologians from that period. Rather, it is because this particular movement gives clear expression to a continuing tendency in theology which persists to the present-day.

Berkouwer may be regarded as a twentieth-century heir of such 'experiential theology'. The best representatives of this movement - such as William Ames⁴⁸ - were careful in their emphasis on subjectivity not to lapse into subjectivism. This has been a major concern of Berkouwer's. He has placed a strong emphasis on subjective experience without making that experience the norm for theology. He has emphasized that Christian theology gives expression to truth which can only be known by faith yet is not itself produced by faith.⁴⁹ The divine reality can only be known through being in a relation of faith toward that reality.⁵⁰

(b) Berkouwer's Relation to Scholasticism in Dutch Calvinism

Scholasticism - like experiential theology - is not directly identifiable with one particular period in theology. Rather, it is a continuing tendency which finds expression in different historical eras. Scholasticism - like experiential theology - is not so easily defined that it can be observed perfectly in certain writers and not at all in others. The tendency towards scholasticism, like the mood of experiential theology, can be found in various writers in differing degrees and with different points of emphasis.

Scholasticism is a tendency

"to do theology by deducing propositions from objective truths given by revelation. The difference between theological truths and mathematical truths lay in their source: the former were derived from divine revelation and the latter from natural reason. Faith entered, only at the beginning of the enterprise, as an assent to the truthfulness of the statements. Thus, theology (does) not do all of its work guided, limited, and determined constantly by the obedience of faith."⁵¹

This type of theological method is, according to Berkouwer, quite inappropriate. Throughout his writings, one finds "a

consistent apologetic intention..directed at scholasticism."⁵²

Berkouwer has insisted that

"theology, each step of the way, be in dynamic and determinative relationship to faith...that theology be shaped and formed by the nature of the thing it talks about - the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel comes to man as an urgent summons and merciful invitation..not..as a matter-of-fact disclosure of a set of objective, abstract truths.. The truth of the Gospel.. is known and understood only within the total context of both revelation and the obedience of faith."⁵³

Berkouwer's relationship with scholasticism is, then, one in which he is constantly seeking to break the stranglehold of scholasticism on Reformed theology. The extent to which Reformed theology remains under the influence of scholasticism is the extent to which it fails to do justice to the central motifs of the Reformation - the free grace of God, operative through the Word and by the Spirit, calling men to faith in Christ. For theology to be truly Reformed - in terms of these great Gospel motifs - it must proceed by a living faith in the living God.

Berkouwer's confrontation with scholasticism has been immediate. The Free University of Amsterdam, at which he taught, as Professor of Systematic Theology, from 1945 until his retirement in 1973, provides an interesting study of the influence of scholasticism in Dutch Reformed theology. The Professors of Systematic Theology in the Free University of Amsterdam have been - to date - A. Kuyper, H. Bavinck, V. Hepp, Berkouwer, and the present occupant of the chair, J. Veenhof. The contrasting way in which Berkouwer has treated the views of his predecessors - Kuyper, Bavinck and Hepp - provides a useful illustration of his own relationship to scholasticism. It should be noted that Kuyper, Bavinck and Hepp are not equally scholastic in their theological method. Berkouwer's evaluation of the theological significance of each of his predecessors varies rather directly with the extent to which each of them were able to free themselves of scholastic influence.

(i) Berkouwer's Relation to A. Kuyper and H. Bavinck.

Berkouwer frequently cites both Kuyper and Bavinck. Citations of Bavinck are, however, generally more frequent than citations of Kuyper. In most discussions of any given theme, he introduces the opinions of Kuyper and Bavinck. He is generally more critical of Kuyper than he is of Bavinck. He rarely criticizes Bavinck. Not only does he favourably cite Bavinck with great frequency, but he

constantly seeks to interpret Bavinck in a way that will minimize any disagreement. A significant reason for Berkouwer's attempt to interpret Bavinck favourably, if he possibly can, will be noted when Berkouwer's relation to his own predecessor and teacher, V. Hepp, is considered.

Any comparison of Kuyper, Bavinck and Berkouwer must focus its chief attention on the theological trend away from scholasticism. Generally speaking, Kuyper inclines toward scholasticism more than Bavinck. Berkouwer, in turn, seeks to rid his theology of scholasticism, even more consistently than Bavinck.

Contrasting Kuyper and Bavinck, J. Timmer writes,

"Bavinck was a man with a deep concern for evangelism. If Kuyper placed the emphasis on the anti-thesis (i.e. the negative stance vis-a-vis the world), Bavinck was more likely to place it on the thesis. Bavinck's theology is more open-ended. The divine mysteries play a much more significant role in his thought. Although Kuyper did recognize the element of mystery, he had the tendency to have the system prevail over the evidence. His theology inclines toward the scholastic."⁵⁴

This contrast between Kuyper and Bavinck can also be applied to the relation between Bavinck and Berkouwer. Although Bavinck begins his book, The Doctrine of God with the words, "Mystery is the vital element of dogmatics",⁵⁵ his style of writing is quite different from that of Berkouwer. The format of the book is quite different from any of Berkouwer's writings. There is more of an orientation towards scholasticism in Bavinck than there is in Berkouwer. In Berkouwer, there is a more consistent attempt to rid his thought of scholastic influences.

This contrast between Bavinck and Berkouwer has been noted and discussed by S. Meijers in his Objectiviteit en Existentialiteit (Objectivity and Existentiality).⁵⁶ Meijer examines the theologies of Bavinck and Berkouwer (as well as those of H.M. Kuitert and A.A. van Ruler), asking the question to what extent each theologian allows one concept to stand over against the other - "either the objectivity of revelation - Bavinck -, or the existensiality of knowledge emanating from faith - Berkouwer" (and Kuitert and Van Ruler).⁵⁷ Meijers shows that "Bavinck puts great emphasis on the objective nature of scriptural testimony and makes existensiality take root in this objectivity."⁵⁸

In emphasizing both objectivity and existensiality, Bavinck intends to reject both the dualistic starting-point of the ethisch-gereformeerden ("ethical theology", prominent

in 1920, "was not easy to define precisely..But generally..was characterized by the slogan: "not dead doctrine, but the living Lord."..an anti-dogma slogan.." implying a "false antithesis")⁵⁹ on the one hand and scholasticism on the other. When, however, Bavinck attempts to make his own starting-point comprehensible, he lapses into objectivism, calling in the help of scholasticism.

In his analysis of Berkouwer, Meijers stresses that Berkouwer follows Bavinck in putting "full stress on the nature of objectivity".⁶⁰ Berkouwer understands the relation between objectivity and existentiality differently from Bavinck.

"Bavinck approaches existentiality via objectivity, Berkouwer follows the reverse route."⁶¹ Meijers acknowledges a "congeniality of intention between Bavinck and Berkouwer".⁶² Both wish to oppose anti-dogma subjectivism and scholastic objectivism. There is, however, some distance between Bavinck and Berkouwer when one comes to the material content of their respective theologies.

Berkouwer has responded to Meijers' thesis⁶³ with two comments:

First, he emphasizes the accuracy of Meijers' emphasis on his "consistent apologetic intention..directed at scholasticism". He sees himself as following through - with greater consistency - the protest against scholasticism which had been characteristic of Bavinck before him.

Second, he claims a greater affinity with Bavinck than Meijers gives him credit for. Meijers acknowledges their similar intention and sees the difference between them residing more in specific aspects of their respective theologies. While Meijers "calls attention to the distance separating them",⁶⁴ Berkouwer - a theologian for whom 'intention' is absolutely crucial in his theological analysis⁶⁵ - would rather underline his affinity to Bavinck rather than his distance from him.

One may view Berkouwer in terms of his affinity with Bavinck - continuing, in Bavinck's line, to rid theology of scholasticism - or his differences from Bavinck - less scholastic on specific details of theology. Either way, it cannot be denied that the movement from Bavinck to Berkouwer is a movement further away from the influence of scholasticism in theology.

The movement from Bavinck to Berkouwer is a movement from a theologian who has written on the doctrine of God as a topic in

itself to a theologian who - perhaps because of a fear of lapsing into scholasticism - has not written on the doctrine of God as such. Berkouwer believes that God is. He also believes, however, that he can only be known by faith. This faith dimension is taken so seriously that he has written of God only in his relation to man, e.g. General Revelation⁶⁶ - God revealing himself to man; Divine Election⁶⁷ - God graciously saving man; The Providence of God⁶⁸ - God caring for and providing for man.

Berkouwer's relation to the scholastic tendency in theology has a most specific historical and geographical context. The geographical context is the Free University of Amsterdam and the men with whom Berkouwer interacts most frequently are his predecessors, Kuyper and Bavinck. Berkouwer's immediate predecessor - V. Hepp - has not been included in the above analysis because he does not fit into this spectrum of a movement away from scholasticism. Berkouwer's relation to Hepp is quite different from his relation to Kuyper and Bavinck. There are, in addition, specific historical circumstances which explain why Berkouwer virtually ignores Hepp in his theological discussions and accords Bavinck a great deal of space (and respect) throughout his writings. Attention will now be focused on Berkouwer's relation to Hepp.

(iii) Berkouwer's Relation to V. Hepp

Berkouwer's relation to Hepp is quite different from his relation to Kuyper and Bavinck. While Berkouwer has sought to rid his thought of scholasticism more consistently than Kuyper and Bavinck before him, it can still be said that Kuyper and Bavinck have been major influences in his historical background and that he seeks to stand in their line, generally speaking. Hepp, on the other hand, cannot be regarded as a significant influence on Berkouwer in any positive direction.

Historically, Hepp belongs to the Kuyper - Bavinck - Hepp - Berkouwer line. Theologically, however, - if the line is understood as a progression away from scholasticism, he does not. Hepp was a scholastic. Concerning Berkouwer's relation to Hepp, L.B. Smedes writes,

"Most of his theological education at the Free University was received under the tutelage of Valentinius Hepp, a genuine Reformed scholastic, whose theological method left no imprint

on Berkouwer, but who, as it turned out had to accept Berkouwer as his own successor in the chair of dogmatics."⁶⁹

Nonetheless, the fact that Hepp occupied the Chair of Systematic Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam between Bavinck and Berkouwer has influenced Berkouwer's manner of writing. This influence is essentially one of producing a negative reaction. This negative reaction can be seen in two respects.

First, Hepp's scholastic method, under which Berkouwer received much of his theological education, has intensified Berkouwer's reaction against scholasticism. Berkouwer's own subjection to so much scholasticism has increased his determination to rid his own thinking of its influence and to oppose its theological method.

Second, Berkouwer's continual references to Kuyper and, more particularly, Bavinck might be seen as an implicit dissociation of himself from Hepp. By simply ignoring Hepp⁷⁰ (rather than explicitly rejecting him) and going back beyond him to Bavinck, Berkouwer continues a task pioneered by Bavinck - the task of developing a more existential and less scholastic theology. By seeking to show his affinity with Bavinck, Berkouwer implicitly suggests that Hepp was on the wrong track when he opposed the trend away from scholasticism.

While it must be insisted that the major influence of Hepp on Berkouwer was that of producing a negative reaction, it might be asked whether there are not traces of Hepp's scholasticism in Berkouwer's thought. In particular, it needs to be asked whether Hepp's scholasticism ever had a greater hold on the earlier Berkouwer. It may be that there is evidence in Berkouwer's writings that he has only freed himself from Hepp's scholastic influence through a struggle.

An examination of Berkouwer's complete theological career confirms the possibility of a greater influence of Hepp on the early Berkouwer. There are several factors which suggest that the earlier influence of Hepp was more significant and that this influence has waned with the passing of the years.

First, H. Berkhof distinguishes between three phases in Berkouwer's thought - the absolute authority of Scripture; the salvation content of Scripture and the existential direction of Scripture.⁷¹

Second, Berkouwer developed a greater openness to Barth and

Rome in his later writings than he showed in his earlier writings.⁷²

Third, Berkouwer expresses his own dissatisfaction with the pastoral impotence of his own earlier understanding of the doctrine of election.⁷³

To say that Berkouwer has, in his earlier days, been influenced by Hepp's scholasticism is not to suggest that the scholastic outlook ever had a complete hold on him. There are, in Berkouwer's earliest writings,⁷⁴ the seeds of his later dissociation of himself from Hepp's scholasticism.

Berkouwer's opposition to Hepp - through simply ignoring him rather than entering into direct confrontation with him - seems to have taken this particular form as a result of Berkouwer's realization that there was a broader issue at stake than the dissociation of himself from one individual. The Christian faith had to be expounded positively. Berkouwer's appreciation of the positive nature of this task enabled him to grow from his earlier days when he was more involved in confrontation to the positive, open-minded, mature theologian he has become.⁷⁵

Berkouwer's policy of sidestepping Hepp to show his affinity with Bavinck also has a broader issue in view, other than simply associating himself with Bavinck. It is a situation in his own denomination, De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands). In 1926, the synod of Assen officially lent its support to a literalist understanding of Genesis 2-3, following a controversy over a minister who allowed for an alternative interpretation.⁷⁶

In 1967, the Committee for Advice Concerning the Doctrinal Statement of the Synod of Assen, 1926 reported to the General Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, meeting in Amsterdam, calling for the repeal of the Declaration of Assen 1926.⁷⁷ This report was the main factor in the repeal of Assen. Berkouwer was one of the leading figures on this committee.⁷⁸ Early in this report, significant quotations from Bavinck are made. The report shows that, prior to Assen, Bavinck was stressing the human character of Scripture.

In view of this significant reference to Bavinck's adoption of a more open method prior to Assen, it would be reasonable to assume that Berkouwer's frequent references to Bavinck in his Holy Scripture

have implicit reference to Assen. He is seeking to show that there is a better way for biblical interpretation than the way of Assen and Hepp. That way is the way taken by Bavinck prior to Assen and Hepp.

Conclusion

In general terms, the context out of which Berkouwer writes is twofold - pietism and scholasticism. These two tendencies have been noted in Berkouwer's historical background. These tendencies have been noted in both the Reformation era and the post-Reformation development.

In the section entitled "the Reformation Era", Arminius, though not quite a contemporary of Calvin's - was considered alongside the great French Reformer. It was noted that Berkouwer is more appreciative of the warm piety of Calvin than the more speculative theology of later Calvinism. He has, however, suggested that Calvin has not always avoided the influence of scholasticism, thus, inadvertently giving encouragement to later more speculative theology. It was noted that Berkouwer, in his theological method, shows considerable affinity with Arminius. He is, however, adamant that the later development of Arminianism, which was opposed by the Synod of Dordt, presents a truncation of the gospel of sovereign grace. Berkouwer's prime concern, in his understanding of the Calvinist-Arminian controversy, is to transcend the dilemma with a sympathetic reinterpretation (rather than a 'wooden' repetition) of Calvin and Dordt, coupled with a profound appreciation of the deepest intentions of Arminius.

In the section entitled "The Post-Reformation Development", the experiential theology of early Dutch Calvinism - though not so distant in time from Arminius -, and the scholastic tendency in Dutch Calvinism were considered as factors which have continued to shape twentieth-century theology, and, in particular, the context out of which Berkouwer arose. It was noted that the emphases of experiential theology are remarkably similar to Berkouwer's key motifs. It was also noted that Berkouwer is a product of a tradition with a great concern for the formulation of Christian doctrine. Blending together these two elements in his background, Berkouwer has produced most valuable studies in Christian doctrine, written from a perspective in which Christian truth never ceases to be existentially challenging to his readers. In

following this theological method, he has been concerned to avoid the twin pitfalls of objectivism and subjectivism.

Christian theology has not always successfully avoided these pitfalls. At this point, Berkouwer's contribution to twentieth-century theology promises to be most valuable. From this perspective, he offers a most constructive approach to the areas of theology where the harmful effects of polarization have been most felt, notably the doctrines of grace and revelation.

CHAPTER TWO

The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to Berkouwer's Central Concerns.

The problem of polarization in theology has been an extremely difficult problem to solve. Time and again, doctrinal controversies have led to polarization. The importance, for the life and work of the whole church, of overcoming this problem of polarization, requires much emphasis. The writings of G.C. Berkouwer, and, in particular, his treatment of the crucial issue of subject-object relations, point in a direction which may prove helpful to theology as it wrestles with the problem of polarization.

Berkouwer's response to his own historical background is most instructive. He has taken particular note of the tendencies towards both objectivism and subjectivism in his own Dutch Reformed tradition and has constructed his own theology in a way that avoids these twin errors. The careful balance with which he has constructed his theology is much needed in the modern theological scene which has frequently been characterized by extremes rather than balance. The balance with which he has presented his theology is most important because it is not motivated primarily by pragmatic considerations. It is grounded theologically in his profound understanding of key theological motifs.

Berkouwer's contribution towards a solution to the problem of polarization in theology may be seen in his approach to particular doctrinal controversies. To understand this contribution, however, it is necessary to note four general concerns which are central to Berkouwer's treatment of specific doctrinal controversies.

The general concerns, chosen for special attention here, are:

- (1) The concern to overcome the subject-object dichotomy;
- (2) The concern to understand the nature of language;
- (3) The concern to overcome the heteronomy-autonomy dilemma;
- (4) The concern with anthropology.

The first of these concerns is Berkouwer's basic concern and the other concerns should be seen in relation to it.

To state these concerns in such general terms does not indicate the profundity of Berkouwer's theological reflection on these matters. It does, however, indicate that Berkouwer's approach to the various doctrinal controversies of the twentieth-century

is not a collection of disconnected and unfounded attempts to avoid extremism. Rather, his treatment of the various controversies represents the fruit of considerable reflection on some of the major issues in philosophical discussion.

A theology which has paid close attention to such important philosophical questions as subject-object relations, the nature of language, the problem of heteronomy and autonomy and the nature of man is a theology that deserved to be heard. The importance of listening to such a theology resides in the fact that it is precisely theology's understanding of these important philosophical questions that will determine theology's capacity for coping with the problem of polarization.

(1) The Subject-Object Dichotomy

The importance of the subject-object question can hardly be over-emphasized. This question has not only concerned philosophers. It has been a major concern of modern theology.¹ Contrasting tendencies in modern theology ^{are closely} related to contrasting ways of understanding the subject-object question.

The importance of this question is underlined by the number of volumes which have been devoted to its discussion. Such works as T.F. Torrance's Theological Science², J. Brown's Subject and Object in Modern Theology³ and C. Stephen Evans' Subjectivity and Religious Belief⁴ have provided useful contributions to theology's understanding of this important question. Berkouwer's approach is not, however, to treat this question in its own right. Rather, he proceeds with his discussion and exposition of Christian doctrine, allowing his view of subject-object relations to appear indirectly in the course of such exposition. His concern is less with the ontological question of objectivity and subjectivity within the being of God as with the epistemological question of objectivity and subjectivity within man's knowledge of God.

Berkouwer's understanding of Divine Election⁵ and his analysis of The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth⁶ are most closely related to his understanding of subject-object relations. It is, however, at the outset of his Holy Scripture that he offers his most general remarks concerning the proper subject-object schema for theology. He criticizes "an incorrect conception of theology

a conception which considers it possible to discuss Holy Scripture apart from a personal relationship of belief in it, as though that alone would constitute true "objectivity".⁷

He holds that those who view Scripture in this way "wrongly..see involvement and correlation as subjectivism."⁸ Such a misdirected fear of subjectivism lapses into a faulty objectivism with its suggestion that Christian truth can be considered without direct reference to the believer's personal involvement with that truth.

According to Berkouwer, there must be a proper understanding of the correlation between faith and its object. This correlation should be understood along the following lines:

"faith is decisively determined by the object of faith, namely, God and his Word", yet this "does not..imply that Scripture.. derives its authority from the believer's faith: this idea is already rendered untenable by the very nature of faith, which rests on and trusts in the Word of God."⁹

This understanding of the correlation between faith and its object is carefully distinguished from "philosophical relativism".¹⁰

Berkouwer's idea of "relativity..refers simply to the relation of a thing to something other than itself."¹¹ He does not intend to call in question the authority of Scripture for theological reflection. Rather, he attempts to understand the true nature of that authority.

To build a doctrine of the authority of Scripture on a faulty notion of "objectivity" is to lapse into subjectivism in several areas.

- (a) Such a theory of biblical authority is "based on a rationally developed infallibility of Scripture that was supposed to preclude all doubts."¹²
- (b) Such a theory of biblical authority "greatly obscures the contexts in which God himself gave us Scripture.",¹³ blocking "the road to a correct understanding of Scripture..by ignoring and neglecting its human aspect."¹⁴
- (c) Such a theory of biblical authority, because it can be "believed without "the obedience of faith", tends "to relativize concrete obedience."¹⁵

Thus, a falsely objectivized doctrine of Scripture turns out to be thoroughly subjectivistic. It is motivated by man-centred considerations. It opens the door to subjectivistic interpretation of Scripture. It tends to lessen the seriousness of Christian obedience.

The doctrine of Scripture provides a useful illustration of Berkouwer's insistence that theology must, while not surrendering the objective foundation of Christian faith, do full justice to man's subjectivity. To fail to do justice to that subjectivity would be to set up a false objectivism, which is, in effect, a lapse into subjectivism. This concern to understand objectivity in a way that takes full account of subjectivity can be seen throughout Berkouwer's writings. The doctrine of Scripture is, however, a particularly apt example of Berkouwer's conception of subject-object relations, since it lies at the heart of the matter concerning the authority of God and man's relation to that authority.

For theology to be "relative to the Word of God"¹⁶ means that theology must be "occupied in continuous and obedient listening to the Word."¹⁷ A proper recognition of the authority of God is not adherence to some formal theory of biblical authority.¹⁸ Rather, it is a matter of walking in the way of Christ, which way is lit up by the lamp and light of God's Word.¹⁹ Without anticipating further discussion of Berkouwer's approach to Scripture, the question must be raised whether Berkouwer himself has not lapsed into subjectivism.

Berkouwer's approach to subjectivity and objectivity has been criticized by H. Berkhof, who has suggested that Berkouwer has imposed his own "system" on Christian truth.²⁰ A.L. Baker has remarked critically that

"Berkouwer feels that Scripture cannot be interpreted to teach anything that is contrary to the existential emphasis. Berkouwer thus approaches Scripture subjectively, with his mind already made up as to what it must teach."²¹

Any evaluation of Berkouwer's contribution towards a helpful solution to the problem of polarization in theology must take seriously such criticisms.

Whenever the question of subjectivism in Berkouwer's thought is raised, it must be acknowledged that he has consistently emphasized both objectivity and subjectivity. He has stressed that faith's subjectivity and certainty is rooted in the truth of the gospel.

"Faith involves a certain subjectivity,..a subjectivity which has meaning only as it is bound to the gospel."²²

"..the church's..certainty is bound to certain norms and..a feeling of subjective certainty does not guarantee irrefutable certainty..it is not the certainty, but the truth in the certainty that makes us free..there is a way of understanding Holy Scripture that does not estrange us from the gospel."²³

He has also stressed that the truth of the gospel is not to be identified with theology's capacity to give adequate expression to that truth.

"the hesitations and doubts that are present at many points (in twentieth-century theology) do not in themselves indicate a deep and final uncertainty..an alienation from the gospel."²⁴

"The confession of the testimony of the Spirit was not intended to give a rational and theoretical solution or explanation to the relationship between Word and Spirit..the mystery of Word and Spirit remains unfathomable..Every attempt to somehow clarify the mystery remains revealingly unsatisfactory..The mystery cuts across every exclusive formulation."²⁵

This dual emphasis on both objectivity and subjectivity aims to avoid the twin pitfalls of both objectivism and subjectivism.

"..the authority of God's Word is not..an arbitrary, external authority..(but) a wooing and conquering authority..Scripture's authority does not demand blind obedience..rather a subjection that spells redemption..a subjection to Christ whereby he is never out of view..in which acceptance occurs with joy and willingness."²⁶

Berkouwer's own words indicate that he cannot be classified according to a system of classification which accepts the categories provided by polarization. He is a biblical theologian who accepts the authority and normativity of Scripture for theology. He is also a modern theologian who accepts the testing of the church's certainty and the hesitations and doubts produced by such testing. These two elements of Berkouwer's thought should not be set over against each other nor should one be emphasized to the virtual exclusion of the other.

As a biblical theologian, Berkouwer is aware of "the dangers of an experience-theology".²⁷ As a modern theologian, he is critical of the suggestion that "all scriptural questions could possibly be solved by excluding them on the basis of a childlike faith".²⁸

In the face of such dangers, he has sought to understand the authority of Scripture in a way which fully acknowledges both the objectivity of biblical authority and the subjectivity of the believer's experience of that authority. He emphasizes that his view is "not...a subjectification of authority, which might only become reality through acknowledgment".²⁹ Rather, it points to "the unique authority (which) can only be acknowledged and experienced on the way".³⁰

While it would be arrogance to completely reject the possibility of the dominance of a 'system' or the presence of subjectivism in Berkouwer's thought, it should be recognized that the presence of such elements should be regarded as incidental rather than intentional. Berkouwer rejects both the idea of "a special method or a hermeneutical technique whereby all scriptural questions could possibly be solved"³¹ and the notion of "a subjectification of authority".³²

While precise evaluations of Berkouwer's consistent endeavour to avoid the twin dangers of objectivism and subjectivism will differ, it must be acknowledged that his contribution towards a solution to the problem of polarization in theology cannot be ignored. Berkouwer is acutely aware of theology's tendency either to exaggerate its own capacity to systematize divine revelation (objectivism) or to forget that it must always remain under the authority of divine revelation (subjectivism).

The dangers of objectivism and subjectivism are distinguishable yet they are closely related since both stem from a failure to recognize the limitations of theology. Theology is limited by Scripture. Theology is not permitted to systematize where Scripture does not. Theology is not permitted to speculate where Scripture does not. A proper avoidance of the dangers of objectivism and subjectivism is to be achieved by the development of a more adequate view of objectivity and subjectivity rather than through a primarily pragmatic analysis of the effects of polarization in theology.

Berkouwer's concern to avoid both objectivism and subjectivism emerges clearly in every volume of his Studies in Dogmatics. Particular attention is drawn, in this chapter, to the approach taken in Holy Scripture,³³ The Return of Christ,³⁴ Divine Election,³⁵

and Man: the Image of God.³⁶ Brief note should be taken, however, of the concern with the objectivity-subjectivity question which runs through the whole of his Studies in Dogmatics.

Speaking of man's problem in relation to God, Berkouwer writes, in the volume entitled Sin,

"(M)en have tried to construct abstract and causal answers to this question of sin's origin and..have violated the very limits of objectivity..Whoever reflects on the origin of sin cannot engage himself in a merely theoretical dispute; rather he is engaged, intimately and personally, in..the problem of sin's guilt."³⁷

Commenting on the "Nature Psalms" in General Revelation,

he writes,

"This understanding, and seeing, and hearing, is possible only.. in the enlightening of the eyes by the salvation of God..But this seeing and hearing is not a projection of the believing subject, but an actual finding, and seeing, and hearing! Here nothing is "read into", but it is only an understanding of the reality of revelation."³⁸

In The Providence of God, he relates providence to both the grace of God as the object of the believer's faith and the believer's faith by which providence is subjectively experienced.

"(I)n the doctrine of Providence we have a specific Christian confession exclusively possible through a true faith in Jesus Christ..this faith is no general, vague notion of Providence. It has a concrete focus: "If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" (Rom.8:31,32)..the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. There is no purer expression than this of the depth of man's faith in God's Providence."³⁹

In The Person of Christ, he relates christology's content and method thus:

"(T)heology is not practised apart from faith, prayer, and adoration...The whole subject matter of Christology is most intimately related to the secret of revelation...the enlightenment of the eyes."⁴⁰

In The Work of Christ, he describes the purpose of christology thus:

"(T)he object is not a purely theoretical knowledge but a profitable, wholesome knowledge of the salvation of God in Jesus Christ."⁴¹

Berkouwer's work on Faith and Justification is undergirded

by this foundation-principle:

"The character of faith resolves all tension between objectivity and subjectivity. For faith has significance only in its orientation to its object - the grace of God."⁴²

His work on Faith and Sanctification is undergirded by the same principle.

"The sanctification..demanded is always an implicate of the sanctification that originates in God's mercy. Hence the sanctification of believers is never an independent area of human activity..(W)e can speak truly of sanctification only when we have understood the exceptionally great significance of the bond between Sola-fide and sanctification..(T)he Sola-fide..a confession of "By grace alone are we saved"..is the only sound foundation for sanctification."⁴³

His work on Faith and Perseverance is grounded in this same foundation.

"The perseverance of the saints is not primarily a theoretical problem but a confession of faith..a song of praise to God's faithfulness and grace."⁴⁴

Berkouwer's principle for understanding justification, sanctification and perseverance may be summed up thus:

"Sola fide (faith alone) and sola gratia (grace alone)..mean the same thing."⁴⁵

Concerning the confession "Credo Ecclesiam" (I believe in the church), Berkouwer, writing in the volume entitled The Church, insists that the church's objectivity is not subjectivized by the affirmation that

"(T)he only framework in which the Church can be and can remain the Church of the Lord (is) the framework of faith, prayer, obedience and subjection."⁴⁶

Discussing reality and symbolism in The Sacraments, he writes,

"Only if we reject false dilemmas..it will be possible to delve deeper, to discern the sovereign manner in which God stoops down to us, taking up simple earthly elements and using them for the affirmation and strengthening of our faith."⁴⁷

From the entirety of Berkouwer's Studies in Dogmatics, it can be demonstrated clearly that a primary concern in Berkouwer's writings has been the development of a satisfactory understanding of the relation between objectivity and subjectivity. While this

question is not discussed as an independent theme in the Studies in Dogmatics, it must not be inferred that it is incidental to Berkouwer's main purpose. Rather, it is intrinsic to his work, as is demonstrated by its recurrence in every volume. The recognition of this primary concern is not intended to detract from the vast range of his writings. A careful study of Berkouwer's works is an education in biblical exegesis, systematic theology, practical theology, historical theology and contemporary theology - "a kind of post-graduate study in theology".⁴⁸ The identification of a key motif in Berkouwer's thought is intended to set his many and varied contributions to biblical and theological study in a more general context, which emphasizes the unity of the single theology rather than the diversity of the many discussions.

Berkouwer may be regarded as an excellent exegete and a pastorally sensitive theologian.⁴⁹ His essential contribution towards a solution to the problem of polarization in theology is not, however, merely the accumulative effect of a whole host of helpful exegetical suggestions and pastorally sensitive insights. Rather, it is based on his whole approach to subject-object relations. A profound analysis of Berkouwer's thought must go beyond the level of a discussion of a variety of pieces of exegesis and pastoral advice. The centrality of his concern with the development of an adequate view of objectivity and subjectivity must be acknowledged. The strength of Berkouwer's theology cannot be properly understood without an adequate appreciation of this central concern. Its strength may be demonstrated, by comparison with other less adequate and consequently more polarizing approaches, with particular reference to the doctrines of revelation and grace.⁵⁰ The pragmatic value of his theology may then be seen not as sheer pragmatism but as the direct implication of a viable understanding of faith and its relation to its object.⁵¹

(2) The Nature of Language

Berkouwer seeks, with his approach to subject-object relations, to avoid the twin pitfalls of both objectivism and subjectivism. His understanding of the nature of language is rooted in his view of objectivity and subjectivity. He dissociates himself from two contrasting theories of language which he regards as equally erroneous - the approach which tends to take language at its face-value

without recognizing any depth-dimension in its use and the approach which tends to understand religious language in such a symbolic fashion that the words seem strangely distant from the concepts underlying them. The first approach is exemplified in the movement known as Scottish Common Sense Realism, while the second is typified by Bultmann's demythologization programme.⁵²

The Scottish Common Sense Realism movement has, through its "clean subject-object distinction"⁵³ and its view of the transparency of language, been a major influence on the development of the combination of fundamentalism and scholastic Calvinism found in the Old Princeton and Westminster theology.⁵⁴

This school of theology has been traced back to the influence of Scottish Common Sense Realism by J.C. Vander Stelt in his Philosophy and Scripture: A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology.⁵⁵ This study, originally a doctoral dissertation for the Free University of Amsterdam and initially directed by Berkouwer, argues strongly for the kind of approach to Scripture adopted by Berkouwer himself. Vander Stelt contends that Berkouwer's emphasis on letting Scripture speak on its own terms represents a significant advance on the Old Princeton and Westminster theology which reflects a latent dependence on philosophy.

While no theology, Berkouwer's included, can be totally detached from philosophical influences, theology must take great care to avoid becoming dependent on a particular philosophy. Philosophy as a tool, used by faith as it seeks understanding, requires to be clearly distinguished from the use of a particular philosophy as a controlling factor in the interpretation of the Christian faith. Rational thought concerning the Christian gospel is quite different from tacit adherence to a form of rationalism which actually distorts theology's understanding of the gospel. Theology is called upon to think according to the gospel's own intrinsic rationale without becoming imprisoned by a form of rationalism which is alien to the gospel.

The particular question concerning the influence of rationalistic philosophy on modern biblicism and the general question of theology's relation to philosophy are discussed further in this thesis in chapters four and five respectively. At this point, it is sufficient to note that no theory concerning religious language can be adequately analysed without reference to its view of subject-

object relations and its relationship to philosophical influences.

Bultmann's call for the demythologization of religious language requires to be viewed from this perspective. Prior to considering Berkouwer's main criticism of Bultmann's position, several representative criticisms might be noted.

T.F. Torrance criticizes Bultmann's view of the Christ-event for its implicit assumption that there was not a "profound conflict between the Gospel and the prevailing world-view!"⁵⁶ Torrance maintains that Bultmann's theology is determined by his "own world-view, with its dualist, obsolete, scientific preconceptions."⁵⁷ H.M. Kuitert, while appreciative of Bultmann's apologetic intention, suggests that Bultmann's existentialist theology, influenced by Heidegger's philosophy of existence, has reduced religious truth to "what is personally real to me", thus exil(ing) itself from a necessary area of theological truth by restricting truth to personal experience.⁵⁸

R.T. Roberts, in his study entitled Rudolf Bultmann's Theology: A Critical Interpretation correctly understands Bultmann's theology in direct connection with his view of subject-object relations.⁵⁹

W. Pannenberg suggests that Bultmann's conception of the "nonobjectivity" of God is hardly distinguishable from "general indefiniteness".⁶⁰ N.H.G. Robinson exposes the weakness of Bultmann's understanding of God with respect to divine redemption and the call for human response:

"(I)f Bultmann is taken seriously..the act of God becomes..a sheer event, lacking all colour, character and content..a sheer irrelevance."⁶¹

"(T)his dominant trend (anti-metaphysical tendency) in Bultmann's thought..inevitably carries with it the implication that over against man there is nothing..but a bare Beyond. Such a focus of faith and decision, however, seems much too meagre to attract anything that can conceivably be described as obedience. Whether we spell the word 'beyond' with a capital or not, we cannot obey a 'beyond'."⁶²

While Bultmann's critics appreciate and share his concern for the communication of the Christian message in a world where its truth can no longer be taken for granted, they have not hesitated to use their critical acumen to demonstrate the inadequacy of his theology. The essential weakness of Bultmann's theology arises from a fear of objectivism which has led him to adopt a theory of religious

language which tends towards pure subjectivism.

It is with this weakness in view that Berkouwer's criticism of Bultmann is considered. Berkouwer shares Bultmann's concern to carefully avoid objectivism. He is concerned to do so not by any "synthesis of objectivism and subjectivism, but the rejection of both."⁶³ He is more acutely aware of the danger of subjectivism than Bultmann. Bultmann endeavours to avoid the danger of objectivistic rationalism with the result that his own theology tends towards subjectivistic irrationalism. Berkouwer, however, insists that "irrationalism is not less dangerous than rationalism for the Christian faith,"⁶⁴ and that the Christian faith is not obliged "to choose between rationalism and irrationalism."⁶⁵

Despite their overt differences, scholastic fundamentalist Calvinism and Bultmann's demythologization programme display a clear resemblance to each other. This resemblance may be demonstrated, with reference to their relation to rationalism and irrationalism.

From one point of view, both are exceptionally rationalistic since both have allowed theology to be dominated by philosophy. Fundamentalism is dominated by the Scottish Common Sense philosophy while Bultmann's thought is dominated by a closed world-view, masquerading as scientific philosophy.⁶⁶

From another point^{of view}, both are extremely irrationalistic. Fundamentalism, despite the ever-increasing appreciation of the human character of Scripture by biblical research, insists on holding to a doctrinal formulation which has been almost completely "guided by the "wholly divine or wholly human" dilemma."⁶⁷ Such a refusal to consider a reinterpretation of its understanding of the authority of Scripture involves fundamentalism in a somewhat irrational leap of faith that runs counter to "the manner in which Scripture came to us as a human witness."⁶⁸ Bultmann's theology, with its close affinity to the existentialist philosophy of Heidegger, displays a strongly irrational character in that Christian faith appears to be pure decision with no objective foundation.⁶⁹

With respect to Berkouwer's relation to the rationalistic and irrationalistic tendencies in theology, B. Demarest writes

"Berkouwer skilfully threads his way between a mindless fideism and a faithless rationalism."⁷⁰

In the present discussion, one might equally well speak of

Berkouwer's threading his way between fideistic rationalism and critical irrationalism. However these seemingly contrasting movements in theology are to be described, Berkouwer's difference from both schools must be seen in close relation to his understanding of religious language.

Berkouwer understands theological language in terms of believing confession rather than speculative system-building.⁷¹ He sees a "depth-aspect"⁷² in the theological use of language. This conception distances Berkouwer from wooden literalism, which shows little appreciation for "the deepest intent"⁷³ underlying theological language. His concept of the "depth-aspect" is, however, quite different from Bultmann's call for the demythologization of religious language.

Berkouwer poses a penetrating question for both Bultmann and fundamentalism. It is the question of whether Bultmann's concept of myth and the fundamentalist notion of error are conceptions imposed on Scripture rather than derived from Scripture. For Berkouwer, the question of how a theology defines its terms and how it obtains its definitions is most important. Since the fundamentalist notion of error is discussed further in chapter four, it is sufficient here to note that his criticism of that notion is essentially the same as his criticism of Bultmann's concept of myth. It is imposed on rather than derived from Scripture.

Berkouwer's basic criticism of Bultmann's concept of myth is that it is different from the New Testament conception of myth.

In the New Testament, Berkouwer maintains that

"myth stands over against the truth (aletheia) of the history of Jesus Christ..the decisive die has..been already cast in the New Testament opposition to myth."⁷⁴

The concept of myth, in the New Testament, is not simply a harmless feature of a primitive world-view, requiring only to be reinterpreted for the sake of modern man. Rather, it is that which "diminishes the truth of salvation".⁷⁵ It is, therefore, warned against because of its destructive influence, leading men away from the truth and the God of truth.⁷⁶

Berkouwer's application of his idea of the depth-aspect is most notable in his Divine Election,⁷⁷ where he uses it to oppose the scholastic Calvinist tendency towards a determinism which undermines the trustworthiness of God. It also proves useful in The Return

of Christ where he opposes Bultmann's de-eschatologizing.

In his eschatological discussion, Berkouwer does not use the phrase "depth-aspect". He distinguishes between reduction (or de-eschatologizing) and concentration, the aim of which is

"not to weaken the eschatological expectation but to get at the meaning of the eschatological promise, which has come to us couched in images and concepts whose understanding requires a patient effort."⁷⁸

Berkouwer uses this distinction between reduction and concentration to emphasize the "perpetual contemporaneity"⁷⁹ without "transferring its relevance to some unknown future date...a remote end-time".⁸⁰

This understanding of eschatological language maintains Bultmann's valid emphasis on the existential challenge of the Christian message⁸¹ without lapsing into Bultmann's a-historical understanding of the Christ-event and its eschatological significance.⁸²

Berkouwer's use of religious language will be seen in greater detail as various aspects of his theology are discussed in this thesis. It is sufficient at this stage to note that his understanding of religious language complements his understanding of subject-object relations. His opposition to both scholastic fundamentalist Calvinism and Bultmannian demythologization - in their approach to religious language - must be seen as a direct result of his concern to emphasize fully the existential character of the Christian message without surrendering the objective foundation of that message.

(3) The Heteronomy-Autonomy Dilemma.

This problem can be viewed from various angles. It can be considered with regard to its philosophical, ethical and theological dimensions. Christian theologians have written on the problem with respect to each of these dimensions. It would be inaccurate to separate these dimensions from each other and to classify certain writings in a uni-dimensional way. Certain Christian theologians have concerned themselves primarily with one dimension, though not to the complete exclusion of the others.

Wolfhart Pannenberg, in his The Idea of God and Human Freedom,⁸³ has concerned himself primarily with Christian faith's relationship to philosophical developments since the Enlightenment. The primary

concern of N.H.G. Robinson's The Groundwork of Christian Ethics,
is, as the title suggests, with the ethical dimension of the Christian
faith, which transcends the dilemma of sheer heteronomy and sheer
autonomy. Berkouwer's own chief concern is theological.

Throughout his writings, and especially in his Divine Election and
Man: the Image of God, he has sought to understand and explicate
the central themes of Reformed theology in a way that shows the
falsity of the dilemma between sheer heteronomy and sheer autonomy.

The basic issue can be described in different ways. The diff-
erent terminology is not completely uni-dimensional in that it can
only appear in one of the afore-mentioned dimensions of the problem.
Broadly speaking, however, the heteronomy-autonomy terminology is
primarily the language of ethics; the determinism-indeterminism
terminology is primarily the language of philosophy; and the
(divine) sovereignty-(human) freedom terminology is primarily the
language of theology.

However the issue is described, and in whichever sphere it is
discussed, this question cannot be discussed in isolation from other
philosophical, ethical and theological problems. Berkouwer's
concern with subject-object relations and the nature of language
has already been noted. These problems do not belong to entirely
different spheres with the heteronomy-autonomy dilemma belonging
to a third sphere. The problem of subject-object relations is not
entirely a matter of epistemology. The nature of language does
not belong solely to the sphere of linguistic philosophy. The
heteronomy-autonomy dilemma may not be placed within the sole
domain of ontology. Such a complete separation of these questions
from each other by a rigid system of classification is largely
artificial, obscuring the basic unity of human experience in its
various complementary dimensions: thought, language, and experience
of the transcendent.

Berkouwer has sought to hold together the various dimensions
in human and Christian experience, as he seeks to articulate that
experience in terms of Christian doctrine. The difficulty in
defining Berkouwer as an uni-dimensional thinker can be seen by
referring to two criticisms levelled against him.

(a) Timmer has classified Berkouwer as a functional rather
than ontological thinker.⁸⁵ Timmer's description of Berkouwer as
a functional thinker is quite understandable in the context of the

Berkouwer-Arntzen discussion, following Arntzen's criticism of Berkouwer in his article, "Will all people be saved?"⁸⁶ It is, however, quite misleading. Berkouwer has expressly denied that subjectivity can be considered without reference to its objective foundation. The epistemological question of man's subjective knowledge of God cannot be considered without reference to God, the ontological reality that is known in such knowledge.⁸⁷ Timmer develops his classification of Berkouwer as a functional thinker in the following way.

"Berkouwer seeks to answer the questions that concern modern man and the modern Christian. This makes of him a poor systematic theologian."⁸⁸

This statement is misleading in two respects.

(i) It tends to imply that Berkouwer sacrifices truth for relevance. Berkouwer places a strong emphasis on relevance.⁸⁹ There is not, however, a sacrifice of truth for relevance.⁹⁰

(ii) It appears to imply a certain concept of 'system' - a rather closed view which Berkouwer rightly rejects.⁹¹ Berkouwer's rejection of a certain concept of 'system' does not, however, mean that he is a poor systematic theologian. Berkouwer's criticisms of other positions, as he formulates his own, reveal a highly systematic mind.⁹² When the nature of Berkouwer's more open 'system' has been recognized, he may actually be charged with being over-systematic in the development of his own 'system'.⁹³

(b) Baker, in his G.C. Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election: Balance or Imbalance?⁹⁴, writing from the perspective of Reformed scholasticism,⁹⁵ criticizes Berkouwer for continually failing to expound the full teaching of Scripture concerning the "before" element of divine election.⁹⁶ According to Baker, "Berkouwer actually surpasses the great Barth in exegetical ability."⁹⁷ Baker, however, ventures to correct Berkouwer's exegesis. He argues that Berkouwer has, by his linguistic interpretation of certain passages - notably Ephesians 1:4 ("chosen before the foundation of the world..") -, undermined the ontological foundation of divine election. This is an unjust accusation. It suggests that Baker has not stepped outside of his own particular linguistic philosophy in order to understand more sympathetically and accurately Berkouwer's understanding of the Bible's predestinarian language.⁹⁸

Berkouwer's approach to the heteronomy-autonomy problem is not, then, uni-dimensional. It is not simply an ontological question, while the question of subject-object relations is epistemological and the question of the nature of language is purely a matter of linguistic philosophy. Ontology, epistemology, and linguistic philosophy are not, in Berkouwer's theology, isolated areas of study. Rather, they interact within the whole context of theological study.

Berkouwer's understanding of the authority of God is perhaps best described as "theonomy".⁹⁹ This "theonomy", in which revelation is normative for faith, can, however, be thought of in different ways. It can be thought of in a way that appears to identify theonomy with sheer heteronomy which results in an oppressive objectivism that threatens to deprive man's subjective experience of meaning.¹⁰⁰ It can be thought of in ways that seek to take full account of man's subjectivity.

This attempt to take account of man's subjective experience within a context of theonomous thought has taken different forms.¹⁰¹ It is, therefore, of great importance to understand how the precise nature of divine authority and its implications for theology are understood by Berkouwer. He writes,

"Authority..cannot be a darksome power that compels us to subject ourselves without reason."¹⁰²

Rather, the authority of God, unlike what is usually meant by "external authority",¹⁰³ brings "perspective, joy and hope."¹⁰⁴

Berkouwer emphasizes the need for a correct understanding of the true nature of authority. He warns against getting "caught up in an emotional reaction against such phrases as "believing on authority", insisting that everything depends on the character of the authority and the character of believing.¹⁰⁵ The authority of God, as understood by Berkouwer, is "...not..an arbitrary, external authority"¹⁰⁶ demanding "blind obedience".¹⁰⁷ Rather, it is "a wooing and conquering authority,¹⁰⁸ the acceptance of which "occurs with joy and willingness"¹⁰⁹ in the context of Christ's redemption.

Such an understanding of the authority of God in the context of Christ's redemption and the wooing and conquering way of the Spirit leads, according to Berkouwer, to a proper understanding of human freedom.¹¹⁰ His understanding of human freedom is quite different from the idea of man as autonomous. He points out that

generally "the controversy between determinism and indeterminism, takes place against a background of religiously neutral anthropological analysis",¹¹¹ maintaining that the assumption of "a purely formal concept of freedom..leaves the real and central problem untouched."¹¹²

Berkouwer insists that a theological understanding of human freedom is concerned with "a much deeper question than..the usual controversy between determinism and indeterminism".¹¹³ Its concern is with "the freedom of the man of God."¹¹⁴ Human freedom is, according to Berkouwer, "freedom in and through Christ."¹¹⁵ Such a "relational" concept of freedom is in direct contrast to "an abstract concept of freedom."¹¹⁶ Since freedom is "not a formal possibility..but rather an actuality, the actuality of being free."¹¹⁷

From this understanding of human freedom, Berkouwer is able to distance himself from "a secularized and autonomous concept of freedom."¹¹⁸ Such a concept of freedom places "divine power and human freedom in a relation of opposition".¹¹⁹ He points out that the "freedom" of autonomous man, which man seeks to defend against God "is not honored with that name in the New Testament."¹²⁰ Such "freedom", through attempted autonomy, can, according to the New Testament, be better described in terms of the "enslaved will".¹²¹ The New Testament "definition" of freedom is rather this: "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (II Cor.3:17).¹²² To turn away from freedom in and through Christ is not an act of freedom. Rather it is an act that "endangers freedom."¹²³ Thus, Berkouwer maintains that "freedom in Christ is the true freedom of man's humanness."¹²⁴

With this understanding of divine authority and human freedom, Berkouwer is able to understand divine sovereignty and human freedom as complementary rather than competitive.¹²⁵ The sovereign God never enforces his authority in any other way than through man's willing and glad submission. Man's true freedom lies precisely in such willing and glad submission to the sovereign God of salvation.

(4) Anthropology

In the discussion of Berkouwer's understanding of subject-object relations, the importance of a proper understanding of the relation between faith and its object was stressed. Correlation is described by Smedes as "the single most influential principle in

Berkouwer's theology."¹²⁶

For Berkouwer, the concept of correlation means that

- (a) "Theology is a work of faith";¹²⁷
- (b) Theological truth is not created by faith;¹²⁸
- (c) "truth is Christian truth only within the framework of faith".¹²⁹

Different theologians, such as Berkouwer, Barth and Tillich¹³⁰ have given "a very diverse content" to the concept of correlation which is, according to H.M. Kuitert, directly related to "a difference in the concepts of man that are employed in it."¹³¹

Berkouwer's understanding of subject-object relations via his own understanding of the concept of correlation has significantly influenced his interpretation of the use of theological language. Religious language must not be used in a way that suggests that the subjective is "a competitive factor that subverts objective revelation".¹³² Rather, it should be used to demonstrate "man's involvement" in that objective revelation.¹³³

The understanding of man's subjective involvement with divine revelation lies at the centre of Berkouwer's understanding of the heteronomy-autonomy question. The significance of man must not be swallowed up by divine sovereignty,¹³⁴ nor must the significance of man be exaggerated such that man is given a creative function with respect to truth.¹³⁵ The heteronomy-autonomy question is to be understood in terms of neither sheer heteronomy nor sheer autonomy. Man's true freedom must be understood in connection with his true nature, which lies in his relatedness to God.¹³⁶ Thus, man's true freedom only finds expression when his relatedness to God finds its fulfillment through faith.¹³⁷

The importance of "theological anthropology"¹³⁸ -

"what man is, through his relation to God; or, better, through God's self-relation to man"¹³⁹ -

must, therefore, be recognized as fundamental to Berkouwer's contribution towards theological understanding. His understanding of man is, then, most important for any evaluation of his contribution towards a solution to the problem of polarization in theology. He emphasizes that the divine and human are not to be thought of as competitors. A correct understanding of man and his relationship to God is of crucial significance for the development of a constructive approach towards the problem of theological

polarization.

It is, therefore, most important to elaborate further on Berkouwer's understanding of "theological anthropology". He cites favourably Gogarten's description of theological anthropology:

"When it discusses man, it does not speak of man alone, man in and by himself; it always speaks equally of God."¹⁴⁰

Commenting on this description, Berkouwer writes:

"This does not mean that man and God are..reciprocally dependent on each other; it means that when the Bible speaks about man it..is speaking about the real actual nature of man, "who can simply not be thought of without God." And that is what the theological approach demands; it asks for the opposite of an abstract view of man as an isolated and self-enclosed unity which can exist and which can be understood by itself..Theology.. does pay special attention to man..in his religious relationship to God..the one central and essential dimension of man.."¹⁴¹

Berkouwer's heavy emphasis on man's relation to God is set over against all attempts to see man's essential nature in some element within himself.

Existentialism is criticized for its emphasis on man's "self-produced salvation"¹⁴² which emerges out of "the hidden center of man..in his freedom, as self-choosing subject."¹⁴³ Existentialist thought of the kind espoused by Sartre¹⁴⁴ and Heidegger¹⁴⁵ cannot be thought of as exhibiting "a close formal and structural relationship with the Biblical witness..",¹⁴⁶ since

"the essential religious aspect of man's being is lost in a horizontal type of analysis..and the way to self-knowledge is impossible to traverse with this kind of horizontal analysis, since the decisive dimension of man's nature, his relation to God, remains outside the analysis."¹⁴⁷

When man is classified

"as a rational animal..a being endowed with reason in distinction from the beasts, "as if he had no special relation to God..", there is a failure to "realize that "the relation to God is essential to man's very being."¹⁴⁸

Even when

"man is defined in a more complex fashion - as a person, for example - there still remains the objection that man is defined apart from his relation to God, and hence the definition still misses man's essence."¹⁴⁹

Berkouwer's opposition to every theory which sees man's essence in something other than his relation to God, -e.g. his freedom, his rationality or his personhood - is clearly expressed thus:

"If man's relation to God is not merely something added to man's nature, then it is clear enough that any view which abstracts man from this relation can never penetrate the mystery of man."¹⁵⁰

With this understanding of man,

"theology can hardly say it treats a special aspect of man, the "religious" aspect, which is added to other aspects."¹⁵¹

It might be argued that this concentration on man's relation to God is no more than the adoption of a particular religious theory of man, rather than dealing with real man, actual man. Berkouwer, however, insists that, from the standpoint of Christian faith, the situation is quite the reverse. He insists that "we are not dealing with an abstract idea of man, but with actual man."¹⁵² Rather, from the standpoint of faith, it is the view of man in relation to God, and not the views of man as rational, free or personal, which deals with the actual man, who stands outlined in the searching light of the revelation of God."¹⁵³

With any of the other theories - man as rational, free or personal -, it would be possible to gain "knowledge" of man without growing in self-knowledge. To illustrate his understanding of "the indissoluble Biblical relation between knowledge of man and knowledge of self."¹⁵⁴ Berkouwer uses the following exceptionally perceptive examples:

- "The Jew did not have a better understanding because he was able to judge the heathen. In the sphere of abstract morality this could possibly be said, but this is not Biblical morality - O man, who judgest others!"¹⁵⁵
- "We can hardly say that the Phariwee had an accurate "knowledge" of man when they pointed to the sins (the real sins) of publicans and sinners. This judgment, which separated knowledge of man from self-knowledge, was as nothing in God's eyes."¹⁵⁶

Such knowledge of man that is indissolubly related to knowledge of self, comes through knowledge of God, as Berkouwer notes in this favourable citation of Calvin:

"man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God and come down from such contemplation to look into himself."¹⁵⁷

Thus, it becomes clear why Berkouwer's particular stance with regard to theological anthropology is of such importance for his whole theological method. If theology is to be a work of faith, arising as a confession from the faith-experience, it cannot be burdened with an anthropology based on a horizontal analysis of man. This would mean that while faith might be desirable for

doing theology, it would not be essential.

Knowledge of man - his rationality, freedom and personhood - could be acquired without regard to knowledge of God. It would, then, be the proper task of theology to build on this anthropology. Rather, it would be an inappropriate alliance between theology and man-centred anthropology.

This would mean the re-opening of the door to scholasticism, for it would, in effect, be saying that theology (or, at least, that part of it concerned with man) can be done without direct regard to faith. Such theology would be a form of natural theology. It does reflect a tendency towards a reversal of the principle, "By faith we understand". The principle, "By faith we understand", does not involve a total disregard for all that is meant by the term 'apologetics'. It does mean, however, that theology's use of the term 'apologetics' should be defined not in terms of an anthropological analysis which operates independently of faith and which faces the perennial temptation of demanding that the gospel conform to its conclusion. If theological anthropology is not to be, in principle, a relativization of the way in which believing man finds his true human freedom, it must let the gospel form the foundation for all its thinking. From this perspective, theological anthropology would involve neither a natural theology nor an independent apologetics. It would be a believing investigation of the gospel's own intrinsic rationality and apologetic significance. This investigation would not permit 'man' to become an independent theme which can be dissociated (even for the purposes of theological study) from the actual man who is confronted in his entire existence by the reality of the living God. ¹⁵⁸

Conclusion

This discussion of the general concerns which are central to Berkouwer's theology has demonstrated the importance of his constant attempt to understand divine-human relations in a manner that does full justice to the true nature of both God and man. Clarity of theological understanding on this matter is of major significance for the discussion of polarization, which is essentially the problem of theology's inability to properly understand the true nature of divine-human relations.

CHAPTER THREE

The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to the Doctrine of Revelation.

No area of Christian doctrine is free from the threat of polarization. The far-reaching effects of polarization may be observed in numerous doctrinal discussions. The aim of this study is not, however, to trace the effects of polarization in different spheres of theological debate. Rather, it aims to see polarization, a single problem with many ramifications, as a problem of theological method, a question of how theological study is approached. When polarization is viewed thus it becomes possible to recognize the essential unity of theological study within the diversity of the many theological discussions.

Since polarization is viewed as a single problem with many ramifications rather than a collection of disconnected problems located in entirely disparate sectors of theology, this study requires to have a focal-point. Such a focal-point, as was suggested in the previous chapter, may be found in the relation of objectivity to subjectivity. This question may be discussed as a philosophical problem. Since, however, the purpose of this study is avowedly theological, the focus of attention is placed on the theological dimension of this question - the relationship between God and man.

It is not suggested that the philosophical problem should be simply dismissed, as though there were no dialogue possible between theology and philosophy. Rather, it is to specify the precise matter upon which theology is called to speak - the relationship between God and man. It is in this context that theology seeks to understand and explicate the relation of objectivity to subjectivity. The question of theology's relation to philosophy is discussed further in chapter five. The related question of theology's relation to apologetics is discussed in chapter eight. It is, however, in order, at this point, to briefly specify the basic position taken in this study with respect to theology's relation to philosophy and theology's dialogue with philosophy.

Theological and Philosophical Presuppositions

First, theology and philosophy should not be understood such that philosophy is concerned with the world of objective reality while theology is restricted to the world of subjective feelings. The 'a priori' exclusion of theology from the world of objective reality is itself a subjective decision since there is no logical

basis for the assumption that the only kind of reality is the empirically verifiable kind. The 'a priori' denial of a divine being is no less a statement of belief, reflecting a subjective attitude, than the believing confession of faith in a transcendent God. The 'a priori' rejection of the possibility of divine revelation is no more empirically verifiable than the believing confession of faith in divine revelation. Theology and philosophy should not, then, be viewed as polar opposites, as though philosophical reflection necessarily deprives theological language of any reference to objective reality. True dialogue is possible only where philosophical reflection is clearly distinguished from adherence to a particular philosophy which makes an 'a priori' negative judgment regarding the content of theological statements.

Second, both theology and philosophy should be aware of their own limitations. Theology is limited by its confession of faith. In its elucidation of the doctrine of revelation, theology is called upon to understand but not to compromise its basic confession. Theology is required to interpret its faith in divine revelation. It is not, however, permitted to deny the reality of that revelation without contradicting its own foundation. Philosophy is limited by its own rules of logic. Philosophy may be of assistance in clarifying the issues involved in religious belief. It is not, however, permitted to make a negative judgment concerning religious belief without stepping beyond its own boundaries into the sphere of value-judgment. As person, the philosopher may decide against religious belief. To make this decision, he must, however, step outside of his role as philosopher since philosophical reflection does not, by itself, entail the rejection of religious belief. Theology and philosophy are not to be regarded as polar opposites, as though philosophy were, of necessity, the avowed opponent of religious belief. True dialogue is possible where both disciplines are seen in relation to the interpretation of religious belief. Theology interprets religious belief from the perspective of faith while philosophy approaches religious belief from the standpoint of enquiry.

Third, both theology and philosophy are to be studied in a self-critical attitude. Both are required to question their own questions. The theologian is required by his confession of faith to question his own questions.

In view of his confession of faith, the theologian can regard even his most searching questions as a quest for understanding rather than a threat to the foundation of his faith. The philosopher is required by the exploratory character of philosophical reflection to question his own questions. Philosophy may not, of itself, determine how one should decide on the matter of religious belief. It is, however, entirely unwarranted to assume that philosophy as a form of question-asking may be used as an evasion of decision-making. Intellectual comprehensiveness demands that the philosopher as philosopher concerns himself with the questions of existence no less than with rules of logic, grammar and ethics. Moral seriousness demands that the philosopher as person faces the fundamental decision concerning religious belief. The enormity of the question of God's existence and its significance for the meaning of human life is such that it cannot simply be dismissed arrogantly by atheistic authoritarianism. Theology and philosophy may not be seen as polar opposites, the one concerned with affirmation and the other with denial, since both are concerned with the question of God. Theology's questions are asked with a view to understanding the faith it confesses. Philosophy's questioning forms part of its rational investigation of reality which necessarily entails concentration on the question of God. This understanding of theological and philosophical questioning opens up a way for true dialogue.

Fourth, theology and philosophy should be open to each other. Theology may not proceed without reference to philosophical reflection since theology is required to elucidate the philosophy inherent in the gospel itself. The use of philosophical reflection in theological study should, however, be distinguished from the restriction of theology's scope by the dominance of a particular philosophy which is alien to the gospel. Openness to philosophy need not involve domination by humanistic philosophy. In one sense, theology must be 'philosophical theology' since it is required to offer a rational analysis of the gospel's own philosophical foundations. In another sense, however, theology must not become 'philosophical theology' since it is not permitted to make unwarranted concessions to rationalistic philosophy without contradicting the essence of its own believing affirmation of divine revelation. Philosophy may not proceed without reference to theology since the comprehensiveness of the philosophical discipline demands that

attention be paid to the theological affirmation of divine revelation. This openness to theology does not entail an uncritical acceptance of theological statements. It does, however, demand that serious consideration be given to them. In one sense, philosophy must be 'theological philosophy' since philosophical reflection necessarily raises the question of divine revelation. In another sense, however, philosophy must not become 'theological philosophy', as though the necessary outcome of philosophical reflection was religious belief. Theology and philosophy may not be presented as polar opposites, since reflection and revelation are not polar opposites. Reflection may not lead directly to an acknowledgement of revelation, but it does raise the question of revelation. Revelation may not have its foundation in reflection, but it does call for reflection concerning its meaning and significance. Such a perspective on divine revelation and human reflection makes true dialogue possible between theology and philosophy.

General Overview of the Content and Context of this Discussion.

The preceding discussion of theology's relation to and dialogue with philosophy indicates that the following discussion of the doctrine of revelation should not be understood as an expression of theological arrogance by which philosophical reflection is simply dismissed. The theological affirmation of the doctrine of revelation does not involve a disregard for philosophical reflection as such. Rather, it specifies the character, criterion and context of the philosophical reflection implicit in theological study. The character of theology's philosophical reflection is determined by a non-negotiable factor in theology's dialogue with philosophy - the affirmation of divine revelation. The criterion of theology's philosophical reflection is the normativity of divine revelation. The context of theology's philosophical reflection is determined by the understanding that theology's use of its critical faculties is oriented towards gaining a deeper insight into the nature of divine revelation. The character, criterion and context of theology's philosophical reflection give to it an entirely different complexion from general philosophical reflection. Theology affirms the normativity of divine revelation and seeks to interpret this affirmation, explicating its meaning and significance.

The precise specification of the nature of theological study does not mean that theology can dispense with the need for serious critical reflection concerning the content of its confession. It does mean, however, that theology may not, as a result of its critical reflection, dispense with the content of its confession without sacrificing its right to speak as theology.

In this chapter, an attempt is made to understand and interpret the doctrine of revelation in a manner that neither compromises nor denies the reality of revelation. Special attention is paid to the problem of polarization which is closely related to the interpretation of objectivity and subjectivity. This problem is brought into clearer focus in chapter four, where the theological tendencies of deism, biblicism and christomonism are analysed from the perspective developed in the present chapter. The reasons for the selection of these theological tendencies for particular analysis, while implicit in the present discussion, are stated clearly in the introduction to chapter four. The concern of the present chapter is to set out a particular understanding of the doctrine of revelation which is then used in the subsequent discussion of theological polarization.

This chapter may be viewed at two different levels which reflect the dual character of this entire study. This study is intended as a positive contribution to both theology's treatment of the problem of polarization and the interpretation of Berkouwer's writings. No attempt is made to discuss every aspect of either polarization or Berkouwer's theology. The interest of this study is in the relationship between the problem of polarization and Berkouwer's contribution towards its solution. The dual character of this study is reflected in ^{the} three subdivisions of this chapter. The opening and closing sections are concerned with the general question of revelation, with Berkouwer's writings being referred to only in the notes. The central section is essentially an appreciative interpretation of Berkouwer's understanding of revelation, with particular reference to its relationship to reconciliation. While this chapter may be viewed at two different levels, it is essentially a unity since the central section provides an important link between the

general introduction and conclusions.

A certain selectivity is inevitable in this study. The concepts of revelation and grace have been chosen as guiding concepts because of both their importance in the work of Berkouwer and their significance for the discussion of polarization. These concepts are closely related since God's revelation is held to be a gracious revelation. Grace undergirds revelation and revelation proclaims grace. The concepts of revelation and grace can, however, be distinguished from each other. Grace is regarded as the content of revelation while revelation is viewed as the means by which grace reaches man. A proper understanding of both concepts is essential to a constructive analysis of the problem of polarization. Chapter six concentrates its attention on the doctrine of grace while the present chapter focuses on the doctrine of revelation.

(1) Introduction to the Doctrine of Revelation

When the doctrine of revelation is discussed, the question of the Bible and its role in theology is brought to the fore. In modern theology, the Bible has become a controversial subject. The role of the Bible has occasioned a major crisis¹ in the church. There has been concern over the strange silence of the Bible in the church.² This strange silence can be seen as a crisis of faith. It is, however, also a crisis of understanding. A variety of different approaches to Scripture have been used by modern theologians.³ This has produced a rather confused theological climate.

This confusion has tended to silence the Bible in the church, creating an atmosphere in which there is a lack of clarity concerning the proper role of the Bible in modern theological thinking. In this rather confused situation, it is insufficient to speak of a crisis of faith. The place of the Bible in theology must be seen as a problem of understanding. The "strange silence" will not be overcome by a bare assertion of biblical authority. The problem requires to be discussed carefully if numerous misunderstandings are to be properly dealt with. A careful discussion of the problem is essential if the ever-present tendency towards polarization is to be overcome.

The question of the place of the Bible in theology cannot be considered apart from broader theological considerations. In

Christian theology, the Bible forms part of a wider process, - revelation -, in which God makes himself known to men. The biblical writings are not to be identified directly with this process of revelation, since the Bible itself does not constitute the sum-total of this process. This process of revelation is not, however, so completely removed from the biblical writings that the Christian Church can proceed without taking the Bible seriously.

An adequate approach to the Scriptures requires a clear understanding of the whole process of revelation, of which the Scriptures form a part but not the whole. This perspective of the whole process of revelation prevents the doctrine of Scripture from being lost in the tangled web of different theologies.

The basic prerequisite for understanding revelation is the acknowledgment that it is God's revelation. The doctrine of revelation is, therefore, integrally related to the doctrine of God. However the precise meaning of the concept of revelation is spelt out, it is of prime importance that the initiative of God comes to the fore.⁴ This initiative of God, implicit in the concept of divine revelation, is active rather than passive. In Christian theology, revelation is not a process initiated by man, in which he, by various means, e.g. meditation, ethical conduct, discovers something which he then calls "God." Such a process of discovery cannot be called "revelation", since revelation is concerned with the activity of the living God. A proper understanding of this process demands an adequate doctrine of the Spirit of God. Any concept of revelation treating the activity of God's Spirit as a mere appendix to an already formulated system is inadequate.

A second prerequisite is that God's revelation comes to man. An adequate understanding of man and his relation to God's revelation is, therefore, essential to the proper - though always imperfect - articulation of the theological concept of revelation. Man's place in the process of revelation cannot be such that "God" becomes no more than a projection of man's religious ideals.⁵ Such a process, whatever it may be called, could hardly be called revelation. Man's place in the process of revelation cannot, however, be conceived in a way that threatens to make him insignificant, the meaning of his whole

existence being swallowed up by a faulty conception of the initiative of the sovereign God.⁶

Man's role in revelation may be described as receptive rather than creative.⁷ Man does not "create" revelation by virtue of his faith. Rather, he receives God's revelation through that faith.⁸ Man's reception of revelation is, however, active rather than passive. Man's reception of revelation is an act, not of some special part of man - e.g. his religious intuition, his reason, his emotions, or his will - but of the whole man in response to God.⁹

The context in which man finds himself placed by the revelation of God is, therefore, thoroughly existential. Man is involved in the totality of his existence. Through the continuing activity of the ever-present and ever-active Spirit of revelation, man is called upon to respond to the God of revelation.

This emphasis on the activity of the Spirit of revelation, constantly placing man in a thoroughly existential context in which he is being challenged to respond in faith to the God of revelation, raises an important question: How does this process of revelation take place?

The contexts of the activity of God's Spirit and the thoroughly existential decision to which that Spirit calls man demand that the concept of revelation is not defined in a way which, because of its emphasis on the past dimensions of revelation, loses this vital present revealing activity of the God of revelation. The emergence of faith is a result of the revealing activity of God. The relation of this continuing revelatory activity of God to man's faith has been described thus:

"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."
(Romans 10:17, A.V.)

"Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ." (Romans 10:17, R.S.V.)

God's revelatory activity did not end at some fixed point in the past. He continues to reveal himself to men as he brings them to faith. This present character of God's revelation is seen in the genesis of faith through response to "the Word of God" in "the preaching of Christ".

While it would be misleading to focus much attention on the word "preaching" in its narrow sense, close attention must be paid

to the terms "Christ" and "Word of God". A proper understanding of these terms and their relation to the whole process of revelation is imperative for any useful contribution to be made towards overcoming polarization with respect to the doctrine of Scripture.

A proper understanding of the terms "Christ" and "Word of God" preserves a genuinely historical approach to the question of revelation. To make the continuing activity of the ever-present Spirit of revelation the sum-total of the concept of revelation is to have a completely a-historical concept of revelation,¹⁰ which operates with an inadequate understanding of both "Christ" and "the Word of God".

Revelation forms a whole process of which the Bible forms only a part and not the whole. Neither is the whole process of revelation exhausted by what takes place in the process of proclamation. God, in his freedom, has willed that the proclamation of the Christian message, with the attendant activity of the Spirit of revelation, be indispensable for the process of revelation to take its full course (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:21; Romans 10:14). Proclamation does not, however, constitute the whole process.

(2) Revelation and Reconciliation

Prior to developing further the concept of revelation, it must be asked whether the concept of revelation should be given a central place in theology. C.E. Braaten raises this question:

"..Serious reservations... must be voiced against the dominant position of the idea of revelation in theology, with its corollary that man's essential predicament is his lack of knowledge... if the ignorance of man stands in the center, then the fact of revelation relieves that plight; but if man's guilt is the problem, then not revelation but reconciliation must become the theological centrum."¹¹

Any worthy theology of revelation will take full account of the substance of Braaten's comment. Man's basic need does not lie in his finitude but in his sinfulness. That need is met not by mere knowledge about God but by reconciliation to God.

In his thinking about revelation, Berkouwer seeks to take full account of human sin and divine reconciliation. This is especially clear in his treatment of the doctrines of Christ and Scripture.

On christology, Berkouwer has written two volumes, The Person of Christ and The Work of Christ. This person - work distinction is, for Berkouwer, largely artificial, being occasioned by the mass of

material requiring to be covered. In both volumes, the unity of Christ's person and work is emphatically affirmed:

"... it is impossible to separate his person from his work. There is such an inseparable connection between his person and work that any separation causes us to go astray with respect to both his person and his work."¹²

"In the Bible we continually encounter the irrefragable unity of Christ's person and work ... The starting point of Christology will have to be the entire witness of Holy Scripture concerning Christ's person and his work."¹³

In his christology, Berkouwer is acutely aware of the twin dangers of a "depersonalization of redemption"¹⁴ (treatment of Christ's work with "a certain independence ... somewhat absolved from the person"¹⁵) and a "speculative Christology"¹⁶ ("a warped "ontological" interest in the being of Christ" isolated from a deep concern for "the message of salvation and the quality of his work").¹⁷

In stating his aim in The Person of Christ, Berkouwer affirms the essential unity of Christ's person and work.

"In concerning ourselves, in this book, with the confession touching the person of Christ we are convinced this work can be faithfully carried out only if we continually remember that the aim is not to gain abstract data about the person of Christ but rather to gain an insight into what the Scriptures tell us about the person of him whose name is Jesus and who, as the Christ, exercised his office in the completion of the work God the Father had assigned to him."¹⁸

In Berkouwer's christology, there is clearly no false dichotomy between revelation and reconciliation.

In his doctrine of Scripture, Berkouwer places the doctrine of reconciliation at the centre. Revelation is not merely an antidote for ignorance. Revelation centres itself on Christ by whom men are reconciled to God. Scripture must be understood with respect to its specific intention,¹⁹ which is "most closely related to salvation."²⁰

A proper understanding of the doctrine of Scripture demands a proper understanding of the function of Scripture as a pointer to Christ through whom believing man receives eternal life.²¹ The revelation that comes to man through the Scriptures is precisely "The powerful operation of the Spirit" which "centers in the salvation that has appeared in Christ."²² Thus, the Spirit of revelation points to God's agent of reconciliation, whose salvation is the antidote not simply for man's ignorance but his

guilt. This work of the Spirit, pointing to a salvation that calls for the response of faith, is central in Berkouwer's understanding of the doctrine of Scripture.

"Believing Scripture does not mean staring at a holy and mysterious book, but hearing the witness concerning Christ. The respect for the concrete words is related precisely to this, and the 'is' of the confession (Scripture is the Word of God) points to the mystery of the Spirit, who wants to bind men to Christ through these words, through this witness."²³

"It is possible to live with Scripture only when the message of Scripture is understood and is not considered 'a metaphysical document', but a living instrument serving God for the proclamation of salvation."²⁴

The relation of God's Spirit to Scripture is essentially connected with the concepts of guilt and reconciliation rather than the "revelation" of knowledge that is primarily cognitive. Assurance concerning the authority of Scripture is directly related to Christian experience. Such assurance is an expression of the faith which trusts Christ and finds him trustworthy.²⁵

The assurance that God's Spirit continues to speak through Scripture concerning Christ is quite different from the kind of rationalism which turns the 'is' of the confession - Scripture is the Word of God - into "a rationally developed infallibility of Scripture that was supposed to preclude all doubts."²⁶ Such an approach to Scripture operates primarily on a cognitive level with its concern for infallible and inerrant information.²⁷ This formalized notion of infallible and inerrant truth threatens to undermine the true meaning of faith.

Faith is not simply an addendum to cognitive knowledge concerning infallible and inerrant truth. It is misleading to place cognitive assent to a certain theory of the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture prior to believing trust in Jesus Christ. Such a separation of form and content - an infallible Scripture is made the prerequisite for reliable knowledge of Jesus Christ²⁸ - leads to the idea that one believes the Bible with a different 'faith' from the faith with which one trusts Christ. Such a notion involves concepts of faith, truth and knowledge that are primarily intellectual in nature.

Faith is thought of as assent to an "external authority".²⁹ There is little understanding of faith's relation to truth in terms of doing the truth (John 3:21), walking in the truth (2 John 4;

John 4), being set free by the truth (John 8:32), and being sanctified through the truth (John 17:19). Truth is conceived of rather statically, thus obscuring the dynamic aspect of truth.³⁰ The concept of knowledge is so generalized that it fails to appreciate the truly religious nature of knowledge of God.

"For the purpose of the God-breathed Scripture is not at all to provide a scientific gnosis in order to convey and increase human knowledge and wisdom, but to witness of the salvation of God unto faith. This approach does not mean to separate faith and knowledge. But the knowledge that is the unmistakable aim of Scripture is the knowledge of faith."³¹

Berkouwer's perspective on Scripture is not concerned with infallible information secured by inspiration.³² Rather, he insists that "...the nature of the God-breathed character of Scripture cannot be deduced by means of various analogies to the inspiration."³³ and that "Scripture is the Word of God because the Holy Spirit witnesses in it of Christ."³⁴

Developing this idea of witness in connection with the New Testament witness to Christ, Berkouwer, citing H.N. Ridderbos, writes,

"it is the product of a perception that was not infinite. It is subject to human limitations, its record does not exceed the limits of human memory."³⁵

There is, however, a "deep dimension of the human witness" for "This witness does not well up from the human heart but from the witness of God, in which it finds its foundation and empowering as a human witness."³⁶

This conception of "Scripture" as "human witness empowered by the Spirit"³⁷ transcends the "wholly divine or wholly human" dilemma³⁸ by which fundamentalism has allowed itself to be guided.³⁹ Rather, it is made clear that "the Word of God does not draw us away from the human but involves us with the human".⁴⁰

Berkouwer's appreciation of the human aspect of Scripture,⁴¹ his insight into the relation between the Spirit and Scripture,⁴² and his distinction between the nature of the knowledge of God and other types of knowledge⁴³ each constitute important elements in an adequate doctrine of Scripture. Conserving the basic thrust of the Reformation - "Sola Scriptura",⁴⁴ Berkouwer has been able to avoid the "unfruitful old orientations"⁴⁵ of fundamentalism and offer "a genuinely evangelical middle way."⁴⁶

Berkouwer's doctrine of Scripture is free from the fearful⁴⁷

motivation and equally fearful results of fundamentalist polemics for the authority of the Bible. This freedom from fear is the result of a proper understanding of Christian truth. Thus, Berkouwer's approach to Scripture promises to be a way of transcending "the extremes of both conservatism and liberalism."⁴⁸ Fundamentalism, with its "all or nothing"⁴⁹ character, may, in fact, cause some to adopt the position of "extreme liberalism".⁵⁰ This contrast between Berkouwer and fundamentalism is most instructive for the general discussion of polarization in theology.

In terms of the question of the relation between revelation and reconciliation, Berkouwer does not think of "revelation" as merely an antidote for finite man's ignorance. Rather, in his treatment of Christology and Scripture, the focus of attention is on reconciliation, the divine antidote for sinful man's guilt. He is, then, in basic agreement with Braaten's remark that the concept of reconciliation as an antidote to man's guilt should be more central than the concept of revelation as an antidote for man's ignorance.⁵¹

It should not, however, be assumed that Berkouwer is ready to dispense with the concept of revelation and replace it directly with the concept of reconciliation. Hesitation at this point is necessitated by the simple fact that Berkouwer has written a volume entitled General Revelation. This simple fact raises two questions for discussion:

- What does Berkouwer mean by general revelation?
- Can his concept of general revelation be described in terms of reconciliation?

Berkouwer's understanding of general revelation is essentially fourfold.

a) There is a real revelation of God in creation. Thus when believing man observes this "revelation",

"this seeing and hearing is not a projection of the believing subject, but an actual finding, and seeing, and hearing!" for "Here nothing is "read into" but it is only an understanding of the reality of revelation."⁵²

b) This revelation of God in creation does not compete with God's revelation in Christ. Hence,

"everyone who believes in general revelation must prove that he does absolutely no injustice to the revelation in Christ." for "There may be no competition between God's general revelation and special revelation, and every

conception of general revelation which is the result of doubt as to the absoluteness of the revelation in Christ is to be condemned."⁵³

Any friction between creation and salvation must be recognized as unbiblical fiction."⁵⁴

c) The confession of general revelation (or God's revelation of himself in creation) is not indissolubly bound up with natural theology.

Berkouwer's position on this heated subject is brought out clearly in his discussion of "Karl Barth's Offensive Against Natural Theology"⁵⁵ where he writes

"Barth has centred his attack more and more upon natural theology as the great enemy of faith, and general revelation was always involved in his attack as well."⁵⁶

Discussing Barth's "Christomonistic conception of revelation",⁵⁷ - the basis for his attack on both natural theology and general revelation -, Berkouwer asks the "pivotal question":

"whether we have the right to simply conclude from the exclusive salvation in Christ to the exclusive revelation in Christ." ⁵⁸

Answering this question negatively, Berkouwer affirms that "the spectacles of special revelation ... are needed in order to read the revelation in creation". ⁵⁹ There is "an objective revelation of God in his works which man .. can no longer read because of the darkening of his understanding."⁶⁰ This dual emphasis on an objective revelation and man's inability, because of sin, to understand that revelation constitutes precisely Berkouwer's affirmation of general revelation and his denial of natural theology.

d) General revelation can only be truly understood through grace. The man who has come to experience the grace of God in salvation is alone able to understand the revelation of God in creation. Writing on "The Nature Psalms",⁶¹ Berkouwer states this succinctly.

"nature is not seen isolated from the salvation of the God of Israel ... man in and by the salvation of God is delivered from the tenacity of the egocentric and commences to sing of the glory of God. It is this salvation that opens doors and windows toward God's handiwork ... This understanding, and seeing, and hearing, is possible only in the communion with him, in the enlightenment of the eyes by the salvation of God."⁶²

Thus, Berkouwer affirms that while there is an objective

revelation of God in creation, man can only understand that revelation properly when he has come to experience reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ. It is clear, then, that reconciliation is a central concept in Berkouwer's thought. It should not, however, be assumed that God's act of reconciliation through Jesus Christ constitutes the entirety of revelation. God revealed himself first in creation prior to man's sin and, therefore, prior to the need for reconciliation. Since man has sinned, he is no longer able to rightly understand this revelation. Man's sin, therefore, occasioned the need for "the revelation of reconciliation."⁶³

This redemptive revelation should not, however, be thought of as replacing creational revelation. God has revealed himself redemptively because of the failure and sin of man and not because of the failure of creational revelation. The purpose of creational revelation was not redemptive, for, prior to his sin, man did not require to be redeemed. The relationship might better be described as restorative. Man's original relationship with God, spoiled by man's sin, is restored through the revelation of reconciliation.

(3) Conclusions concerning the Doctrine of Revelation.

The full process of the revelation of reconciliation, understood in its full context includes five elements:

- a) The creational revelation through which God gave himself to man in a relationship not yet marred by sin. That revelation remains revelation after man's sin, though it is not understood properly until man's sinful blindness is removed through God's redemption.
- b) The incarnation in which God himself became man with the purpose of delivering man from sin and death.⁶⁴
- c) The Scriptures which serve as "a living instrument serving God for the proclamation of the message of salvation."⁶⁵ with each Testament pointing to Christ from a different perspective.⁶⁶
- d) Proclamation which calls for the church to be joyful and faithful servants of the Redeemer and his message of redemption. Through his church's very human witness, Christ speaks his divine Word to the world.⁶⁷
- e) The Spirit of God whose activity is indispensable if there

is to be reconciliation. Without the Spirit's presence, Christ's incarnation would remain a matter of past history, the Scriptures would be no more than a record of Jewish religion and the proclamation of the church would be empty religious tradition. Whatever there might be of past and present tradition, there would be no reconciliation, for it is the Spirit who enables the message of Christ in the Scriptures⁶⁸ and the proclamation of the church⁶⁹ to be a message of reconciliation which actually brings men into a new existential relationship with God.

In this chapter, a basic perspective has been offered on the doctrine of revelation. The integral unity of the whole process of revelation has been emphasized. A direct implication of this integral unity is that no part can be ignored without affecting the whole. This far-reaching implication may be developed in five directions.

- (i) The loss of the perspective of creational revelation results in the loss of an adequate perspective on man's sin and guilt, for man's sin "is unmasked in its guilty character precisely because there is and remains revelation."⁷⁰
- (ii) Without Christ, there can be no Christian faith, for without Christ man has no Saviour.⁷¹
- (iii) Without the Scriptures, man would not have the message of Christ available to him.⁷²
- (iv) Without the church's proclamation of the message of reconciliation, that message would remain in the Bible without reaching those for whom it is intended.⁷³
- (v) To lose the perspective of the Spirit is to open the door to the kind of barren rationalism⁷⁴ which kills rather than giving life (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:6).

From the perspective of the integral unity of "the undivided revelation of the Creator-Redeemer",⁷⁵ other less adequate theological approaches may be analysed and general tendencies in modern theological study which threaten to cause polarization may be discussed. Such analysis and discussion is developed in Chapters 4 and 5. The basic perspective from which such analysis and discussion proceeds is that the Logos,⁷⁶ the Christ, and the Bible belong together in the whole process of God's revelation, and that the believing man is able, by the Spirit of God alone, to

truly understand the religious⁷⁷ meaning of this process and the relationships that inhere in it.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to Theological Rationalism.

Theological polarization is closely related to theological rationalism. When the doctrine of revelation is interpreted by means of rationalistic conceptions, it tends to be distorted by an undue emphasis on one aspect at the expense of other constituent elements of divine revelation. The effect of theological rationalism is to produce polarization between contrasting views of revelation.

The deistic, biblicistic, and christomonistic tendencies in theology, while representing different approaches to the doctrine of revelation, share a common tendency towards theological rationalism. Each of these types of theology is analysed with respect to the following features:

- (a) its understanding of God;
- (b) its understanding of man;
- (c) its understanding of the nature of reality;
- (d) its understanding of the nature of truth;
- (e) its understanding of the character of certainty.

Special attention is paid to both the intended effects and the unintended or unrecognized effects of each theological system.

(1) Deism

The chief interest is in residual deism in modern theology rather than deism in its original form. Residual deism is detected in the thought of Paul Tillich, a major opponent of deism. The basic contention is that there is a radical contrast between the intended effects of Tillich's theology and its unintended effects. Tillich opposes the natural theology of deism and the deistic conception of history. His own development of the idea of God as Being and his consequent a-historical interpretation of the Christian message do, however, display a demonstrable affinity to deistic thought. If this charge is recognized as valid, Tillich's theology may not be regarded as a tenable solution to the problem of polarization between faith and reason since it is based on a misrepresentation of divine revelation.

(a) Its Understanding of God

The God of deism is "the Intelligent Author of Nature" and "the Moral Governor of the World",¹ a God who can be discovered by reason. Hence, there is "no need of divine revelation".²

Reacting adversely to the Bible's crudities, deism seeks "to relieve God of all traces of anthropomorphism"³ and thus present an understanding of God with superior content, clarity and style.⁴ The deist view of God comes into "headlong opposition to the traditional idea of God",⁵ lacking the Bible's strong historical consciousness and emphatic affirmation of historical revelation.⁶ The deist "attempt to disanthropomorphize God" produces "the thin God-concept of natural theology...- empty, without content, glory or comfort".⁷

Deism does not proclaim a God who - out of love for man - has revealed himself in a salvation that enables man to share his divine glory. The loss of the divine glory and the divine love constitutes a significant loss. The deist attempt to disanthropomorphize God results in the humanizing of God, who is no longer seen as the living God whose glory is expressed in revelation and reconciliation. The God of deism is an expression of "sterile human intellect" and "barren intellectualism".⁸ The loss of the divine glory, expressed in revelation and reconciliation represents a severe threat to a proper understanding of the divine love.

"Disbelief in a God who so loves mankind that he has actually revealed himself to men must inevitably lead to the denial of the existence of a God of love".⁹

The loss of a proper perspective on the divine glory and the divine love led to the death of deism in its original form with many of its adherents passing over into pantheism or sheer atheism.¹⁰ The challenge of deism, however, continually confronts theology in different forms. The theology of Tillich, despite its overt opposition to deism, represents a subtle deistic influence in modern theology. Tillich emphasizes that God as "being-itself, not a being"¹¹ is "the creative ground"¹² of being by whose "sustaining creativity"¹² everything is brought into being and maintained in being. Thus, Tillich opposes the remoteness of the God of deism. The precise content of his concepts of God as Being and God's sustaining creativity does, however, reflect a residual deism in Tillich's thought.

Despite his opposition to the natural theology of deism, Tillich's own doctrine of God displays a similar independence of incarnational and biblical revelation.¹³ Despite his opposition to the remoteness of the God of deism, Tillich's own concept of sustaining creativity as "the continuity of the structure of reality as the basis of being and acting" amounts to an exclusion of

direct divine activity in history.¹⁴ An examination of Tillich's theological system demonstrates that his dissociation of himself from deistic rationalism ^{is unconvincing} since

"In practice .. the doctrine of God is limited to the terms of his ontology. Biblical statements..about God.. must be trimmed to allow them to fit within Tillich's world view." 15

Tillich's theology has been rightly equated with natural theology by Berkouwer. Commenting on Gottschick's aphorism:

"Without Christ I would be an atheist", he writes,

"A Christocentric view like this has no place for the abstractions of natural theology, for a knowledge of God as "the unconditional" (Tillich) or the "first cause" or "absolute being".¹⁶

Berkouwer rightly insists that a Christian theology must have its origin in Christ. Tillich's theology tends to reduce Christian theology's ultimate norm - Jesus Christ - to a secondary status since

"Jesus Christ and the biblical revelation have been fitted into a structure already complete without them".¹⁷

The 'God' of Tillich's theological system is determined by Tillich's own ontological analysis which produces a theology concerned with timeless truth which is merely illustrated in history.¹⁸ Thus, Tillich's doctrine of God, despite his anti-deistic intentions, bears a distinctly deistic character.

(b) Its Understanding of Man

The anthropological presupposition of deism is predominantly intellectual. The propriety of belief in the God of deism is regarded as demonstrable by means of "reason itself".¹⁹ This claim takes no account of the effect of man's sin on his reason. Christian theology recognizes a revelation of God in creation without assuming that man, through reason alone, can rightly understand this revelation and thus come to faith in the God of revelation.²⁰ When the revelation of God confronts man, it finds not a positive attitude but "a negative one, which must be overcome".²¹ The overcoming of man's negative attitude towards God is accomplished through God's salvation by which man comes to faith not through his own reason but by the grace of God.²²

Christian theology's response to this intellectualistic anthropology requires to be grounded in an adequate understanding of the whole man. Intellectualism may not be replaced by emotionalism since neither offers a proper perspective on the whole man. Man's intellect may seek a dis-anthropomorphized God. Man's

emotions may yearn for a God whose nature of love embodies a sentimentalism which always expresses uncritical approval of man. Both intellectualism and emotionalism humanize God. Intellectualism creates God in the image of its own intellect. Emotionalism creates God "in the image of human love".²³ The God-concepts of intellectualism and emotionalism are unable to bring meaning to the totality of life. The God of intellectualism does not encourage confidence in his love for persons. The God of emotionalism does not inspire confidence in times of crisis.²⁴

From the perspective of the whole man, there is deeper intellectual integrity in the idea of a personal God who has entered into personal relations with men than in the notion of God who remains remote from his creatures.²⁵ A proper perspective on the whole man does not involve a retreat into emotionalism. Rather, it offers a deeper understanding of human emotion in which mature emotional development is clearly distinguished from an obsessive and rather childish yearning for approval. Mature human emotion involves love in taking its recipients seriously. Love which does not take seriously the actions of the loved one is mere sentimentalism. Love involves responsibility towards the loved one. God's love is expressed, in part, by his taking man seriously as a moral being.

Man's reason must not be elevated, as in deism, to the extent that man effectively determines what God is like. Theology's response to intellectualism must not be the creation of a God who merely reflects man's preoccupation with approval. The God of grace and glory must be allowed full expression in and through man, who is loved by God and given dignity, the dignity of moral responsibility.²⁶

Tillich rejects both "rationalistic deism" which transforms revelation into information²⁷ and mystical theology which tends to make experience a source of revelation.²⁸ His ontological emphasis is directed against subjectivism. His existential emphasis is directed against rationalism. His protest against both positions is, however, weakened by his refusal to make Jesus Christ absolutely central to his theological system.

His doctrine of God as Being is developed independently of Jesus Christ and can be regarded as a kind of ontological 'argument' designed to provide "an ontologically guaranteed deity".²⁹ Tillich's interpretation of biblical statements concerning Jesus

Christ is determined by his insistence that

"God is being-itself is a nonsymbolic statement .. nothing else can be said about God as God which is not symbolic".³⁰

The problem with this type of theology is that ultimately the concept of Being tends to receive its precise content from the theologian's own experience.

Tillich has attempted to avoid the trends towards intellectualism and emotionalism by opposing the idea of God as a human projection developed from unconvincing arguments for his existence and insisting on the ontological foundation of man's existential experience of Being. This attempt to avoid these trends must, however, be regarded as quite unsatisfactory. Tillich states that his method of interpretation "is derived from a prior knowledge of the system to be built by the method."³¹ This prior knowledge of the system comes from Tillich's ontological analysis of being which permits him to interpret the Christian message according to his own existential experience. Thus, the danger of emotionalism in Tillich's theology arises from the predominantly intellectualistic structure of his theology. Tillich's ontological analysis of being, which guides his interpretation of the Christian faith, provides neither a convincing reason why 'being-itself' should be called 'God',³² nor any guarantee that the saving Word of God in Christ is allowed to speak for itself" in all its objectivity and truth as a reality which must in no case be adjusted to our experience".³³

Christian theology must respond cautiously to the tendency towards the overestimation of man's reason. An over-simplistic rejection is no substitute for a careful attempt at precise understanding. Rejection without understanding is sheer authoritarianism.³⁴ This can hardly be the way forward for theology.³⁵ In its assessment of deism, there must be a recognition that

"(t)he interpretation of the classical arguments is artificial and inadequate (yet) (t)here is a sense in which.. if they are used cautiously they can both express religious awareness and evoke it".³⁶

Such a cautious interpretation of the 'proofs' for God's existence acknowledges the reality of creational revelation while remaining acutely aware of the danger of drifting back into what Berkouwer describes as "the old rationalism and .. the vague categories of the old natural theology".³⁷ The evaluation of the modern over-estimation of man's reason must be assessed not overhastily but

fairly in the light of the gospel which, Berkouwer insists, is "not according to men (Gal. 1:11), not even religious men, and .. is, after all, a scandal to natural thought."³⁸

(c) Its Understanding of the Nature of Reality.

The deist understanding of the nature of reality corresponds directly to its understanding of God. Its difference from the Christian understanding of reality corresponds to its different understanding of God. L. Berkhof contrasts the deist and Christian views by means of an analogy drawn from modern technology. The deist view of the world is comparable to "a machine" which requires only to be "put in motion", while the Christian view sees the world as "a vessel which He (God) pilots from day to day".³⁹ A closed view of reality, in which even the Creator is restricted in his freedom to be active within his creation, is contrasted with an open view in which the Creator's freedom is affirmed.

The essential question raised by deism may be formulated thus:
Is the creation to be made the "lord" of the Creator or is the Creator to be seen as the Lord over creation?

Berkouwer raises this issue sharply when he discusses 'impossibility'.

"the critics of miracles say that miraculous activity is impossible, Scripture says that it is impossible that death could hold our Lord (Acts 2:24). Thus defined by redemption.. "impossibility" receives a totally ^{new} meaning".⁴⁰

The definition of terms is important. If they are defined in terms of a closed view of reality, then revelation and redemption are excluded. What remains is not even an adequate understanding of creational revelation as the continuous revelation of the living God. Contrasting definitions reflect contrasting world-views, as Berkouwer has observed:

"Unbelief absolutizes the world, making it autonomous and cut off from its origin. In faith man again sees the world as in the hand of God".⁴¹

Tillich criticizes "theological biblicists" for their casual use of "a term like "history" when speaking .. of God as "the Lord of history".⁴² His own dismissal of interpretations which do not fit into his system is, however, rather casual. His concept of God as Being itself is rightly used to oppose the deistic separation of the Creator from the created world. It is, however, questionable whether his interpretation of historical revelation necessarily follows from his understanding of God as the Ground of Being. His understanding of history appears to be based on the naturalistic

philosophy which underlies the deistic exclusion of God from history. Tillich's view of miracles,⁴³ based on "the continuity of the structure of reality",⁴⁴ involves the removal of miracles from the realm of historical reality to that of ontological-existential reality. Tillich's theology contains a basic conflict between ontological impossibility and historical impossibility. While he insists that

"nothing can happen in history which would make the work of the New Being impossible",⁴⁵

his interpretation of 'the Resurrection of the Christ' is based on the impossibility of Jesus' resurrection as a literal, historical fact.⁴⁶ Tillich's theology appears to be based on a theological variation of the principle of an absolutized natural law.

Berkouwer's conception of "impossibility" defined by redemption⁴⁷ is grounded in a deeper harmony between ontology and history and contains a more radical critique of natural law. Berkouwer, like Tillich, rejects "a dangerous concept of supernaturalism"⁴⁸ in which miracles are regarded as an occasional supernatural invasion of an absolutized natural order. He emphasizes that this kind of supernaturalism "devalues the "ordinary" work of God"⁴⁹ and that its alternative is not a devaluation of the historical reality by means of an ontological-existential theory. Berkouwer, like Tillich, does not view miracles "from the standpoint of the antithesis God-natural law".⁵⁰ He does not, however, evade any possible conflict between God and natural law by means of a concept of God's sustaining creativity understood in terms of the continuity of the structure of reality.⁵¹ Rather he insists that

"the Divine act in miracles does not break any natural laws, as though they were absolute".⁵²

Thus, the antithesis God-natural law is overcome not by means of an ontological-existential theory which interprets miracles a-historically but through a recognition of the sovereignty of God in his redemption which is characterized by the unity of its ontological, historical and existential dimensions. From this perspective, the redemptive significance of miracles⁵³ can be understood in terms of their historical character as "reality and revelation"⁵⁴ by which "the sign is rooted in the reality".⁵⁵

Christian theology, in its evaluation of modern variations of the deistic understanding of history, must carefully avoid any polarization between history and faith. Tillich's theology, with its

concern to overcome the polarization between theology and philosophy⁵⁶ has increased the polarization between history and faith.⁵⁷ His concern "to synthesize rational and existential thinking"⁵⁸ requires to be related more closely to the biblical understanding of historical revelation. Tillich's notion that biblical statements should be understood as symbolic of the way in which the rational (Being-itself) pervades the existential (man's experience) contains the implicit assumption that a literal acceptance of biblical statements concerning direct divine activity in history is a retreat into irrationalism. The acceptance of this assumption leads to a thorough misrepresentation of divine revelation which must be allowed to speak for itself without being required to conform to the dictates of theological rationalism concerning the nature of reality.

(d) Its Understanding of the Nature of Truth

Christian truth contains two inseparable aspects - the objective and the subjective. The objective aspect refers to the truth of the gospel, which has its origin not in man's experience but in God's redemption. The subjective aspect refers to man's reception of the gospel. The evaluation of any theological system must pay close attention to its conception of truth and its capacity to do justice to both the objective and the subjective aspects of truth.

Deistic rationalism, with its exclusion of divine redemption and its overestimation of man's reason, misrepresents both aspects of truth. By means of his symbolic theology, Tillich appears to be able to overcome deistic reductionism and rationalism. His symbolic theology enables him to develop a christology and a pneumatology, both of which are absent from deism. Tillich's symbolic theology is developed by means of the method of self-transcending naturalism. This method enables Tillich to intuitively discern the Unconditional in the symbols of the conditioned without having to depart from a basically naturalistic world-view. Thus, Tillich's theological method may be regarded as a theological variation of the naturalistic-world-view.

By emphasizing that

"revelation is "spoken" to man, not by man to himself",⁵⁹ Tillich insists that his method represents a rejection of the "naturalistic" method.⁶⁰ Tillich insists that his doctrine of revelation is rooted ontologically in God and that its source is

not to be traced to man's existential experience. The naturalistic character of Tillich's thought is, however, observable in the way he relates faith's existential experience to its ontological foundation. His theology of revelation is based on a rather direct movement from ontological truth to existential truth which involves no significant departure from a naturalistic understanding of historical revelation.

Tillich's theology requires to be analysed with respect to its capacity to do justice to each of the ontological, historical and existential dimensions of Christian truth. This question revolves round his concept of historical revelation.

"Historical revelation is not revelation in history but through history.. Since man is essentially historical, every revelation occurs in history. But history itself is revelatory only if a special event or a series of events is experienced ecstasically as miracle".⁶¹

For Tillich, the historical character of revelation is derived from the historicity of man and his believing response to history.

With this understanding of historical revelation, he seeks to understand "the Resurrection of the Christ as event and symbol".⁶² Tillich's interpretation of the revelatory event is governed by his view of symbolism.

"Every religious symbol negates itself in its literal meaning, but it affirms itself in its self-transcending meaning".⁶³

Thus, Jesus' resurrection is regarded not as a literal, historical fact but as a symbol which expresses the faith that

"God is being-itself, in the sense of the power of being or the power to conquer non-being".⁶⁴

The symbol "The Resurrection of the Christ" is regarded as event since, as an expression of faith in God as the power to conquer non-being, it participates in the reality of God as being-itself.

Tillich's understanding of this 'event' is acquired through his method of self-transcending naturalism which takes the form of a "Hegelian-style dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis".⁶⁵

Thesis: "his disappearance from present experience and his consequent transition into the past except for the limits of memory."⁶⁶

Antithesis: "the power of his being had impressed itself indelibly upon the disciples as the power of the New Being."⁶⁷

Synthesis: "In this tension something unique happened. In an ecstatic experience the concrete picture of Jesus of Nazareth became indissolubly united with the reality of the New Being."⁶⁸

Thus Tillich, by way of intuition, affirms the ontological priority of being over non-being while fully accepting the naturalistic premise concerning the finality of death.

The words "something unique happened",⁶⁹ used in Tillich's restitution theory, provide the interpretative context for understanding his general statement that, in the resurrection, "something happened within existence".⁷⁰ Tillich regards the resurrection as historical revelation because it happens within the experience of man who is "essentially historical".⁷¹ It is historical revelation because it is "experienced ecstatically"⁷² by man. Existential truth is, for Tillich, directly related to ontological truth without being dependent on historical truth. Identifying the revelatory event with the disciples' ecstatic experience, Tillich dismisses the question of the resurrection of Jesus as a once-for-all, unrepeatabe event which is distinguishable from the revelation of the risen Jesus to the disciples. Tillich maintains that "the symbol "Resurrection" which was readily available in the thought forms of that day" is used to interpret "the event" of experiencing "his living presence, here and now".⁷³ The reality of the New Being and 'the event' in which man experiences the New Being is, according to Tillich, "not dependent on the special symbols in which it is expressed. It has the power to be free from every form in which it appears".⁷⁴

While Tillich acknowledges that

"The New Testament lays significance on the objective side of the Resurrection",⁷⁵

it is questionable whether his conception of objectivity corresponds to that of the New Testament. Berkouwer insists that

"It is impossible to separate the fact from the significance of the resurrection, as though the main thing were the idea rather than the historical reality of the resurrection".⁷⁶

He further contrasts the words of 2 Timothy 2:8, "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead" with "timeless idealism which does not need remembrance".⁷⁷ An adequate understanding of the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the objective foundation of Christian truth must carefully avoid any rationalistic conception which "shifts the centre of revelation from history to a non-historical realm" by a "complete separation of fact .. and interpretative faith",⁷⁸ thus relativizing the absolute significance of Jesus Christ by reducing the fact of his resurrection to "an

idea with transforming power".⁷⁹

When the objective truth of the gospel is misrepresented, subjective truth or man's experience of the gospel becomes entirely distorted. While faith, as an act of the whole man, is more than intellectual assent to the fact of Jesus' resurrection, it may not be understood as less than such intellectual assent. The historical fact of Jesus' resurrection is to be remembered in personal faith, which involves the mind in believing that he rose from the dead, the emotions in receiving the assurance brought by the truth of the resurrection and the will through which the life is brought into conformity with faith in the risen Christ. Thus, faith may not, for the sake of intellectual acceptance in the modern world, be directed to Being-itself, in a way that distracts attention from the risen Jesus Christ as the object of faith. Faith's implications, such as a 'feeling of absolute dependence'⁸⁰ or 'commitment',⁸¹ must not be made the entire content of faith. Rather, these elements should be regarded as the subjective dimensions of faith which has its objective foundation in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When ontological speculation and existential experience are cut off from this historical foundation, they are no longer grounded in the objectivity-subjectivity pattern of the gospel itself and thus become dangerous forms of objectivism and subjectivism.

(e) Its Understanding of the Character of Certainty

The deistic understanding of certainty is related to its alleged rational demonstrability of God's existence. Deism displays a high degree of certainty concerning both its own view of God and its rejection of the biblical doctrines of providence and redemption. This view of certainty, characterized by anthropocentric arrogance, led to deism becoming "increasingly hostile to the Christian faith".⁸² The deistic notion that "God always behaves accordingly to strictly human rationality"⁸³ distorts both the content and the character of faith. Faith's content is restricted to belief in the God of the proofs. Its character becomes primarily that of intellectual assent to the validity of the proofs. A more adequate understanding of faith's content and character is required if Christian certainty is to be properly

grounded, in the richness of the Christian gospel rather than the shallowness of natural theology. The biblical accents on both the redemptive work of God in history and the response of the whole man - mind, emotions and will - to that redemption are integral to a Christian understanding of certainty.⁸⁴

Tillich opposes the deistic view of certainty, insisting that the certainty of faith cannot be based on unconvincing theological arguments. He intends to lift the doctrine of God above the uncertainty inherent in such arguments. He distinguishes his own ontological analysis from such arguments, insisting that he "does not mean that a doctrine of God can be derived from an ontological system".⁸⁵ He seeks to move beyond the theological abstractions of deism, emphasizing that his theology is concerned with the "existential knowledge of revelation".⁸⁶ He seeks to avoid the natural theology of deism, maintaining that "(t)he character of the divine life is made manifest in revelation".⁸⁷ His concept of God as the Ground of Being is used to oppose the anthropocentrism implicit in the "absent landlord view of God".⁸⁸ Through his concept of sustaining creativity and his use of Christian symbols, he aims to overcome the a-historical defects of the deistic notion of a God who is remote from both creation and history.

Tillich's own view of certainty does, however, retain a clear affinity to deism in certain important respects.

(i) He aims to provide a certainty which is beyond question.

When God is defined as Being-itself, the concept of Being may be accepted even when the word "God" is not used. Thus, the possibility of uncertainty is virtually excluded by means of a rather tautologous concept of ontological truth.⁸⁹ When man can be certain of Being without reference to either the word "God" or the Christian symbols, the existential element in certainty⁹⁰ becomes rather tautologous since the concept of participation in Being involves the identification of the knowledge of God with having being.

(ii) His view of certainty is directly related to his view of God's relation to creation.

Tillich views creation as a movement from essential being to existential being. Through his creation man "falls into the state

of existential estrangement" in which "(m)an is estranged from the ground of his being".⁹¹ The concept of estrangement should not be confused with the concept of sin. Tillich relates estrangement to finitude - "man is finite, excluded from the infinity to which he belongs".⁹² He insists that "(c)reation is good in its essential character" and that sin is not "a rational necessity".⁹³ Sin is not "a necessary consequence of man's essential nature".⁹⁴ Sin is man's rebellion against his finitude by which he "affirms the state of estrangement in acts of freedom which imply responsibility and guilt".⁹⁵

Tillich's concept of estrangement governs his understanding of the human predicament.⁹⁶ This leads him to present God as "the answer to the question implied in man's finitude".⁹⁷ His view of certainty is oriented towards an awareness of Being rather than an assurance of forgiveness.⁹⁸ The form of certainty offered to the sceptic by Tillich's concept of God as Being requires to be distinguished from Christian assurance concerning the forgiveness of sins.

Sin is regarded by Tillich as an affirmation of estrangement,⁹⁹ which is, according to Tillich, a characteristic of created being.¹⁰⁰ This view of sin's relation to the divine creation of man as existential being makes it difficult to understand either "The Biblical A Priori" (God is not the Author of Sin)¹⁰¹ or the gravity of sin. Sin, according to Tillich, is "an expression of man's estrangement"¹⁰² rather than the cause of his estrangement. The confession of the forgiveness of sins is, according to Tillich, "a religious-symbol expression"¹⁰³ by which an awareness of Being is expressed by finite man.¹⁰⁴

Man's most serious problem is described by Berkouwer as "the problem of sin's guilt".¹⁰⁵ The primary obstacle to Christian assurance is not man's finitude but his sin. The way to Christian assurance is the way of confession and forgiveness of sin. Insisting that

"the riddle of sin is not resolved but is only known and confessed. The mystery of our sin is the mystery of that dark evil which can only be forgiven and eternally blotted out,"¹⁰⁶

Berkouwer emphasizes that sin cannot be regarded as an expression of man's created being and that forgiveness of sin may not be

identified with an awareness of Being. Thus, Berkouwer emphasizes as "the central message of the Gospel: the real forgiveness of our sins",¹⁰⁷ "which (†) he believer receives. in the way of penitent faith..which, in its very nature, can know nothing but God's mercy"¹⁰⁸ as the foundation of Christian assurance.

(iii) His view of certainty is directly related to his view of God's relation to history.

Tillich's theology is determined by his philosophical presupposition concerning the transition from essence to existence.¹⁰⁹ This gives his theology a distinctly a-historical character. According to Tillich,

"The notion of a moment in time in which man and nature were changed from good to evil is absurd." 110

He rejects¹¹¹ the idea that "the fall of man changed the structures of nature" because it conflicts with his view of the transition from essence to existence. Similarly, Tillich rejects the

literalistic interpretation of the Incarnation by which, in his view "a true and powerful symbol becomes an absurd story".¹¹²

This allegation of absurdity arises directly from his separation of essence from existence in a way that does not permit him to hold "that essence ever became existence".¹¹³ Furthermore, Tillich

rejects the 'physical' theory of Jesus' resurrection as "a rationalization of the event"¹¹⁴ which raises "the absurd question..

as to what happened to the molecules which comprise the corpse of Jesus of Nazareth".¹¹⁵ The alleged absurdity of this question is a direct consequence of Tillich's philosophical presuppositions which demand that Jesus is not placed beyond the split between essence and existence.

It is questionable whether Tillich's understanding of the Christian message can be regarded as a direct result of biblical exegesis. Tillich draws a radical contrast between "the historical Jesus" and "the biblical picture of Christ".¹¹⁶ This contrast has been questioned by Berkouwer who emphasizes that

"the gospels..were consciously written to summon people to faith in Jesus Christ. Out of the conviction that the historical Christ is the Son of God". 117

In view of the biblical emphasis on eyewitnesses,¹¹⁸ it would appear quite illegitimate to contrast "the biblical picture of Christ" with

"the historical Jesus" in the way that Tillich has done.¹¹⁹

Tillich's understanding of the Christian message is grounded in his understanding of essence and existence which demands that biblical statements are interpreted symbolically rather than literally. Tillich's theology reflects his philosophical pre-suppositions concerning what God can do and what God cannot do. Thus, his opposition to the deistic notion of a God who remains remote from his creation is seriously relativized by his refusal to acknowledge the Incarnation as "a divine fact with all the weight of historical reality".¹²⁰

Tillich relates certainty to an ultimately a-historical ontology. He tends to make certainty concerning Being the prerequisite for interpreting Christian symbols in the light of this certainty. The New Testament emphasizes that faith in Jesus Christ is the prerequisite of the assurance of faith. For Tillich,

"the man Jesus as a transient medium for an eternal principle called the Christ which only points beyond itself to.. the ground of being".¹²¹

The New Testament proclaims that "This Jesus hath God raised up",¹²² emphasizing that Christian assurance is directly related to the resurrection of Jesus as a historical event, "(t)he event character of (which) is unaffected by faith or unbelief".¹²³

Tillich's Conception of Certainty and the Resurrection of Jesus.

All man's knowledge of factual reality is of a probable nature. The absolute logical certainty which pertains to tautologous statements which say the same thing twice is not possible with respect to historical events which are contingent and could have been otherwise.¹²⁴ It follows, therefore, that historical investigation can never lead to a necessary conclusion of faith since historical research always involves estimating a probability factor. The distinction between certainty and probability has been correctly emphasized by Tillich:

"faith.. cannot make the historically probable or improbable certain. The certitude of faith does not imply certainty about questions of historical research".¹²⁵

These observations concerning the contingency of all historical events and the limitations of historical research do not lead to the necessary conclusion that the resurrection of Jesus either did not or could not take place as a historical event which "stands .. in absolute priority to faith".¹²⁶ There is no direct logical

connection between the acknowledgement that irrefutable certainty concerning Jesus' resurrection is unattainable and the statement that the resurrection of Jesus "is impossible to prove simply because it did not happen in history".¹²⁷

The recognition of the limitations of historical research is a direct implication of the recognition that "No event is absolutely certifiable".¹²⁸ The assertion of the impossibility of Jesus' resurrection taking place in history involves a denial of the freedom of God to act in ways which, though beyond human comprehension, lie within the scope of his redemptive power. The movement from a recognition of the limitation of man's knowledge to a restriction of God's redemptive activity is accomplished, in Tillich's thought, by means of his notion of "the continuity of the structure of reality"¹²⁹ which would be destroyed if miracles were "interpreted in terms of a supranatural interference in natural processes".¹³⁰

Tillich emphasizes both man's need for certainty and the limitations of historical research. Interpreting Jesus' resurrection by means of the notion of the continuity of the structure of reality, he adapts the biblical witness to meet the requirements of his own idea of certainty. A recognition of the limitations of historical research, combined with a readiness to allow the biblical witness to speak concerning the truth of the gospel and the kind of certainty it provides, might have led Tillich to emphasize the unchangeable character of faith's God-given foundation while acknowledging the changeability of man's experience of certainty. When the emphasis is placed on faith's confession of the action of God rather than faith's confidence in historical research, it will be recognized that the most important aspect for faith is "not the certainty but the truth in the certainty".¹³¹

Tillich's concern with the provision of a subjective certainty which may be dissociated from believing in the historically contingent event of the resurrection of Jesus should be understood in relation to his intention to provide an 'answering theology' addressed to questioning man. In this respect his theology serves a similar function to that of the deistic arguments for God's existence which were originally used to provide subjective certainty for rationalistic man who had lost faith in the God of revelation and redemption. The success of Tillich's theology as an 'answering theology' is not, however, the sole criterion by which his theology should be judged.

Tillich himself stresses that his theology is "based on the kerygma".¹³² He seeks, in his adaptation of the Christian message to the modern mind, to retain "its essential and unique character".¹³³ The question remains, however, whether Tillich has not replaced the truth which God has provided with a certainty which man demands.

The New Testament witness concerning the truth of the gospel is not that the gospel, like the concept of Being, is ontologically true but that the event of Jesus' resurrection had to happen for the gospel to be true.¹³⁴ The New Testament witness concerning the relation of Jesus' resurrection to faith is that "(t)he resurrection.. is.. not an experience which creates a "happening" ¹³⁵ but an event which "(f)ait h embraces but does not create".¹³⁶ By his emphasis on the objectivity of Being, Tillich insists that faith does not create its object and that man's subjective certainty is grounded in the objective reality of Being.¹³⁷ In his a-historical interpretation of the Christ-event, the truth of the gospel is adapted to man's need for certainty rather than that need for certainty being oriented to the truth.

If Tillich had presented Jesus' resurrection as the unchangeable truth which forms the foundation for man's changeable subjective certainty, he might have avoided giving the impression that Christian faith has, in his theology, been accommodated to modern uncertainty in order to give modern man an unassailable certainty. Tillich's search for this kind of certainty is rooted in the fear that a faith based on historically contingent events might prove destructive of certainty. Having defined the character of certainty without reference to the historical character of divine redemption, Tillich proceeds to reinterpret divine redemption according to the requirements of his conception of certainty. Tillich's view of the certainty of faith is rightly rejected by Berkouwer who contends that

"Christians need not fear facts when they really believe in the living Creator of heaven and earth",¹³⁸

insisting that

"The message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ can bring certainty in human hearts as a light in human darkness".¹³⁹

The priority of the truth of the gospel over man's subjective experience of certainty represents an order of priorities which may not be reversed. Tillich recognizes the priority of truth over certainty when he emphasizes that existential experience is

grounded in ontological truth. His interpretation of historical truth tends, however, to place Jesus' resurrection in the shadows of uncertainty rather than leading men out of those shadows through the proclamation of the resurrection. Tillich's theology appears to offer modern man religious certainty. As Christian certainty, this certainty turns out to be illusory since it is based on both a dissociation of Christian certainty from its foundation and a misunderstanding of Christian certainty which is not an absolute certainty inferred from the concept of Being on purely logical grounds. Christian certainty is known only by faith which is centred on the fact and meaning of Jesus' resurrection. The evidence for the content of this faith is person-relative rather than compelling to all irrespective of presuppositions regarding history and meaning. When this faith is received, it produces not a perfectly calm and tensionless certainty but a certainty which grows as a personal assurance of God's love and faithfulness in Jesus Christ. This growth in personal assurance comes as the fact and meaning of God's salvation increasingly sheds its light on the believer's life.

Conclusion

The earlier deistic theology came into disrepute because of its refusal to take seriously the biblical and christological aspects of Christian faith. The theology of Tillich has, with strong opposition to certain aspects of deism, reinstated those biblical and christological aspects into his interpretation of the Christian message within a framework which bears a distinct affinity to deism. Both the deists and Tillich have been concerned, in their different ways, with the problem of polarization between reason and faith. Their approach has, however, increased the polarization between faith and history. The call for Christian theology to present a reasonable faith in the modern world must not lead to the reduction of Christian faith to faith in either the 'God' of deism or Tillich's concept of Being. In its communication of the Christian message, theology must retain the Christian character of its proclamation by insisting on the absolute indispensability of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men. The absolute centrality of christology in Christian theology is rooted not in man's reason but in the biblical witness to Christ. The integral relation of Christian faith's biblical and christological aspects is emphasized by

Berkouwer who writes,

"If holy Scripture becomes a problem in the Church of Christ, then Christ inevitably becomes a problem too."¹⁴⁰

Christian faith may not attempt to overcome the polarization between reason and faith by means of a devaluation of the biblical testimony to the unbreakable connection between faith and Jesus Christ as its object. Any proposed 'solution', offered by Christian theology, to the problem of the relation between reason and faith must be based on a concept of faith which is directly identifiable with Christian faith rather than a concept of 'faith' which is already complete without Jesus Christ.

(2) Biblicism

Biblicism and deism may be radically contrasted as the affirmation and the denial of revelation. Both can, however, be viewed as forms of theological rationalism with the one being the reverse side of the other. While deism defines how God must not act, biblicism tends to define how God must act. Using the manifest function-latent function paradigm, it may be argued that biblicism, despite its intention to do justice to the various components in a comprehensive doctrine of revelation, has restricted the range and the depth of the doctrine of revelation.¹⁴¹

The first type - fundamentalism - is characterized by definite docetic tendencies.¹⁴² The emphasis on "Scripture's divine aspect" tends to lead to an "ignoring and neglecting its human aspect."¹⁴³ While the idea of mechanical inspiration or the dictation theory is disavowed,¹⁴⁴ it is doubtful whether fundamentalism succeeds in its attempt "to do full justice to what the Bible has to say about its human side".¹⁴⁵ Fundamentalism's complex harmonization procedure is necessarily involved by its own particular construction of the doctrine of biblical inspiration.¹⁴⁶ Any analysis of the fundamentalist construction of biblical authority must remember that

"mere recognition of a human element does not necessarily guarantee that full justice is done to many aspects of this human element."¹⁴⁷

The second kind of biblicism attempts to move directly from the Bible to the twentieth-century without reference to the intervening centuries.¹⁴⁸ Disavowing himself of this approach,

Berkouwer writes:

"we do not intend to be biblicistic, to neglect or belittle the light which the Church has accumulated in her history.. no

one any longer approaches Scripture as if it were a blank sheet of paper. The confessions and hymns of the Church, and especially her preaching, are indeed relevant. The ties of faith will not create an obstacle if only we maintain obedience to the normative Word of God." 149

Modern theology must relate itself constructively to the tradition of faith in which it stands.¹⁵⁰ While this tradition is not to be devalued, its purpose must be clearly understood:

"the confession is not intended to replace the riches and fullness of the Scriptures. It is precisely the purpose of the confession to point out that fullness and those riches."¹⁵¹

Historical theology must be used responsibly with thorough analysis and fair judgment.¹⁵² Loose and selective citation in support of a hotly disputed¹⁵³ interpretation of historical theology cannot be allowed. A thorough and fair estimation of historical theology is required if an a-historical belittling of the tradition of faith is to be avoided.

These two types of biblicism, though closely related and frequently overlapping, are distinguishable. Those who tend to minimize the human element in Scripture (by implication if not by explicit intention) often tend to pay little attention to historical theology apart from its use in support of their own position. While these elements are often found together they do not always or necessarily belong together. This discussion concentrates chiefly on the first type of biblicism.

(a) Its Understanding of God

Berkouwer shares the biblicist concern to be biblical in his doctrine of Scripture.¹⁵⁵ He does, however, contend that biblicism, through imposing its own theory of inspiration upon the Bible, has formulated an unbiblical concept of 'error' which does not sufficiently recognize the human aspect of Scripture. Berkouwer insists that when

"the concept of error in the sense of incorrectness is.. used on the same level as the concept of erring in the sense of sin and deception .. we are quite far removed from the serious manner with which erring is dealt in Scripture .. (as) a swerving from the truth and upsetting the faith (II Tim.2:18)".¹⁵⁶

Acknowledging the "serious motivation" of those who tend to identify inerrancy with correctness,¹⁵⁷ Berkouwer maintains that

"In the end it (this notion of inerrancy) will damage reverence for Scripture more than it will further it".¹⁵⁸

His criticism of biblicism is part of a constructive attempt to understand Scripture more clearly.

Berkouwer seeks to be biblical without being biblicistic. He denies the biblicist assertion that its doctrine is "the time-honoured Biblical view of inspiration",¹⁵⁹ arguing that "Fundamentalists allowed themselves..to be guided by the "wholly divine or wholly human" dilemma, and thus they allowed the camp they opposed to force a problem on them".¹⁶⁰

Theological polarization concerning the doctrine of Scripture is, in Berkouwer's view, largely due to the biblicist tendency to view divine-human relations in terms of "competition and reciprocal limitation",¹⁶¹ thus tending to overemphasize the divine at the expense of the human. A biblical doctrine of Scripture must seek to do full justice to the divine-human character of Scripture.

Berkouwer contends that the biblicist view of Scripture tends to operate from "a theoretical concept of inspiration or infallibility" and what that concept would 'demand' it (the infallibility of Scripture) to be".¹⁶² Biblicism makes certain assumptions about what the Bible must be if it is to be God's Word. It is argued that one's doctrine of Scripture is derived from either experience or Scripture, either natural man or supernatural God:¹⁶³

"Without Him (God) there could have been no Bible. Without man there could have been."¹⁶⁴

"What lies before the Church at the present time is the old issue of supernatural versus man-made religion".¹⁶⁵

Biblicism criticizes

"Modern theories (which) wish more and more to give a larger place to the activity of man and a lesser place to the activity of God".¹⁶⁶

The biblicist criticism of modern theories is based on its doctrine of God:

"What kind of a God is He who cannot reveal to the world a message that is free from error?"¹⁶⁷

"To maintain that there are errors in it (the Bible) is the same as declaring that there are flaws or errors in God Himself."¹⁶⁸

Biblicism insists that "the Scriptures in matters of historical and geographical detail are infallible".¹⁶⁹ A limitation of biblical authority to the realm of faith and practice is rejected as an untenable dualism between faith and other types of knowledge.¹⁷⁰ Berkouwer rejects this position, insisting that theology must carefully avoid the "various dangerous conclusions" reached "with a 'supratemporal' conception of Scripture that honored its vertical dimension but not its horizontal dimension".¹⁷¹

Berkouwer insists that full account must be taken of Scripture's

time-relatedness and its purpose. Recognizing that "the impression of a dualism.. cannot be avoided",¹⁷² he emphasizes that "Scripture.. is time-related and has universal authority".¹⁷³ He insists that "The reference to background, goal and intent does not .. imply a method of subtraction. It desires to understand the Word of God in its "absolute significance".¹⁷⁴

Though aware of "all the dangers of using the form-content scheme in a destructive manner", Berkouwer insists that "no one can avoid this time-boundedness".¹⁷⁵ Berkouwer's concern is not simply to be modern. Modernity of outlook is, by itself, irrelevant. The question of how divine revelation relates to the modern world is secondary to his primary concern with the proper understanding of divine revelation. His entire theology is based on the principle:

"we may not be silent where God speaks .. we may not speculate beyond the boundaries which God in His wisdom has set us".¹⁷⁶

He speaks of "the problem of the boundary of our speaking in the light of the entire Biblical message",¹⁷⁷ thus acknowledging the difficulty of determining the precise boundaries of God's speech and his silence. He points out that

"Scripture itself in a very explicit way speaks about its intention".¹⁷⁸

He emphasizes that his approach is not an "arbitrary approach to Holy Scripture"¹⁷⁹ based on a modern outlook which places a restriction on biblical authority. Rather, it is an approach, based on Scripture itself, which seeks to understand the proper nature of Scripture's absolute authority.

Commenting on 2 Timothy 3:16, Berkouwer writes:

"Paul does not give a more accurate description of the word theopneustos (God-breathed), but he does underscore the great significance of the graphé (scripture). The functional character of Scripture is most closely related to salvation".¹⁸⁰

He emphasizes that the God-breathed character and functional character of Scripture may not be set against each other.

Scripture is "holy and thus "functional".¹⁸¹ He stresses that the meaning of the word theopneustos is passive (God-breathed) rather than active (God-breathing or breathing out God),¹⁸² thus emphasizing "a deep relationship between origin and authority".¹⁸³

Thus, he emphasizes that

"Scripture .. does not derive its authority from the fact that we use it, not even when we use Scripture in faith".¹⁸⁴

While rejecting "all subjectivism regarding Scripture",¹⁸⁵ he

insists that Scripture's functional character is "not the opposite of the God-breathed character of Scripture .. (but) is a part of it"¹⁸⁶ and that

"Scripture can be known only together with its purpose-implying both its use and application".¹⁸⁷

Berkouwer's perspective has its source in neither a preference for functionalism nor a tendency towards the subjectification of authority. It is grounded in his determination not to go beyond the boundaries of God's speech. This perspective enables him to describe as "completely fruitless" and offering "no true perspective on the God-breathed Scripture"¹⁸⁸ the debate concerning

"whether Scripture was also truly God's Word "before and apart from its use" or whether it became God's Word only "by its use"."¹⁸⁹

From this perspective, any reduction of the scope or intent of Scripture to the level of culture-boundedness may be regarded as a contravention of the Scripture principle by which Scripture is regarded as both God-breathed and functional.¹⁹⁰ Similarly, an inference in the direction of the biblicist concept of inerrancy represents a transgression of the boundaries of God's speech since it tends to move beyond the biblical emphasis on the integral relation between the God-breathed character and the functional character of Scripture.

Biblical warrant has been proposed for the biblicist concept of inerrancy.¹⁹¹ It is, however, far from self-evident that the passages proposed can bear the full weight of the biblicist exegesis. Viewed in terms of the stated purpose of Scripture, these passages need not be interpreted according to biblicist presuppositions. The biblicist argument is based on inferential thinking by which the biblicist concept of inerrancy is inferred from the absolute perfection of God. The idea that the Bible must be inerrant in the biblicist sense contains certain questionable implications. It is not immediately apparent that the refusal to accept the biblicist concept of inerrancy must be based on the idea that God is incapable of providing man with an inerrant Bible.¹⁹² It is not self-evident that the refusal to accept the biblicist notion of inerrancy should be identified with the declaration that "There are flaws or errors in God Himself".¹⁹³ The idea that the presence of purely formal error in Scripture is incompatible with the moral perfection of God is questionable because it tends to define "perfection" apart from the purpose of Scripture.

Berkouwer's criticism of biblicist inferential thinking is not based on a limitation of God's power to reveal himself in whatever way he chooses. Such an approach would reflect an independent standard by which divine revelation is judged and would seriously relativize his critique of deism since his theological method would share the deistic tendency to demand that divine revelation must conform to the demands of human rationality. His criticism of biblicist inferential thinking is not based on a rather empty conception of the freedom of God which he uses to avoid drawing necessary conclusions concerning the authority of Scripture. Rather, it is based on the recognition of God's purpose in Scripture. Holding that the Bible is all that God wants it to be in accordance with his precise purpose, Berkouwer insists that it is unnecessary to posit a perfection which extends beyond the confines of the specific purpose of Scripture. From this perspective, Berkouwer is able to challenge both biblicistic and deistic tendencies to be more biblical in their thinking about God rather than thinking in terms of how God must or must not act.

(b) Its Understanding of Man

The competition-motif affects the biblicist doctrine of man no less than its doctrine of God. Biblicism tends to give the impression that God is a kind of Divine Scholastic, obsessed with the avoidance of purely formal error. Its understanding of man is no less intellectualistic. Biblicism's 'all-or-nothing' argument is based on the assumption of the need for a rationalized certainty by which all doubts can be precluded.¹⁹⁴ The implicit anthropology is that of the rational being requiring precisely accurate knowledge of the divine. The manifest function of the biblicist doctrine of Scripture is to emphasize that

"the Scripture possesses an indefectible authority..

All that it teaches is of unimpeachable, absolute authority, and cannot be contravened, contradicted or gainsaid".¹⁹⁵

The latent function of its preoccupation with a theory of theoretical, mathematical, historical and geographical accuracy may, however, be to direct attention away from man the sinner in need of salvation to man the finite creature in search of the Infinite within the realm of the finite.

The highly intellectualistic character of the biblicist anthropology is evident in its concept of inerrancy. According to biblicism, Scripture has to be inerrant if it is to be God's Word.

It cannot be otherwise. A perfect product of divine inspiration is alone capable of providing man with an utterly reliable foundation for religious certainty. ^{This} need not, however, lead directly to the biblicist concept of inerrancy. If Scripture is understood in terms of its purpose, the reliability of God may be demonstrated in his provision of the Scriptures which are sufficient for their God-given purpose. The sufficiency of Scripture may be understood as "sufficiency for the Christian life".¹⁹⁶ Thus, the discussion of reliability takes on an entirely different meaning from the biblicist discussion which tends to reflect a rather intellectualistic anthropology with a split view of faith as intellectual assent to Scripture's form and trust related to its content.

Advocates of biblicism contend that their doctrine of Scripture aims to hold Scripture's form and content together, arguing that it is the critics of biblicism who draw an untenable "distinction between essential content and time-related form".¹⁹⁷ Such a distinction is rejected by biblicists as entirely arbitrary. It can, however, be argued that this distinction need not entail an inevitable arbitrariness since it is a direct consequence of a determination to see Scripture in the light of its purpose. This determination can hardly be regarded as arbitrary since its goal is to hold together Scripture's authority and its purpose.

Interpreting Scripture's reliability in terms of its purpose, Berkouwer writes,

"Scripture itself shows us clearly that a yardstick of reliability may not be applied which is not in agreement with its purpose" ¹⁹⁸

He emphasizes that the alternative to the biblicist view of Scripture's reliability is not the notion of Scripture's unreliability.¹⁹⁹ Rather, it is the confession of the reliability of the God-given Scriptures, in accordance with their God-given purpose. This confession of faith is rooted in the prior confession concerning the reliability of God. The believer can only confess his faith in the reliability of Scripture because of his prior conviction concerning the reliability of God.²⁰⁰

This confession of faith in the reliability of both God and Scripture need not entail the biblicist concept of inerrancy. The positive meaning of this confession is described thus by Berkouwer:

"The church expresses with this confession that it honors the Holy Spirit, who in his witness to the truth does not lead us

into error but into pathways of truth (II Jn. 4). The Spirit, with this special concern, has not failed and will not fail in this mystery of God-breathed Scripture".²⁰¹

Emphasizing the anthropological aspect of the confession of faith concerning the reliability of Scripture, Berkouwer writes,

"To this reliability of the biblical witness corresponds an unlimited trust that in our interaction with Scripture by faith, we shall not be put to shame but confirmed."²⁰²

Berkouwer's understanding of the reliability of Scripture emphasizes that faith is an act of the whole man as he places his unlimited trust in the God of Scripture who meets him in the words of Scripture.

A characteristically biblicist criticism of this approach to biblical authority is that the denial of the biblicist concept of inerrancy leads to an undermining of the reliability of Scripture and the consequent erosion of the Christian faith. This biblicist approach emphasizes that faith as an act of the whole man involves intellectual assent to the biblicist concept of infallibility. The denial of this concept leads to the acceptance of a concept of 'faith' which is empty of content. Thus, the biblicist argument is that the denial of the biblicist concept of inerrancy constitutes an escape from reason by which refuge is taken in the irrational.²⁰³ The strength of this biblicist argument depends entirely on the validity of its interpretation of Scripture. The biblicist must demonstrate that his view represents a theological rationality which is grounded in Scripture rather than a theological rationalism which is imposed on Scripture.²⁰⁴

Biblicism inclines towards an intellectualistic anthropology. This does not, however, mean that intellectual assent to the biblicist doctrine of inerrancy is regarded as either a prerequisite or a necessary accompaniment of Christian faith. It is not held that "the internal testimony of the Spirit . . . a witness-bearing to the soul that the Bible is the Word of God" implies that a "well-formulated doctrine of Scripture is thus given to the believer".²⁰⁵ Rather, it is held that

"A well-formulated doctrine of Scripture can come only upon the basis of a careful study of Scripture itself".²⁰⁶

The biblicist emphasis on the importance of its concept of inerrancy does not imply that the biblicist holds that a man cannot be a Christian unless his careful study of Scripture results in biblicist conclusions.²⁰⁷

The distinction between the internal testimony of the Spirit and the subsequent study of Scripture demonstrates that the biblicist concept of inerrancy is properly regarded as an expression of faith's self-understanding rather than as a prerequisite to faith. To make the acceptance of the biblicist concept of inerrancy a prerequisite to faith might lead to an escape from faith in which the call to faith is obscured by its preoccupation with the precise formulation of the doctrine of Scripture. There appears to be a tension between the assurance of faith produced by the internal testimony of the Spirit and the intellectual assent given to the concept of historical, geographical and scientific inerrancy on the basis of the careful study of Scripture. The careful study of Scripture demonstrates the difficulty of reaching the conclusion that the Bible is inerrant without the prior assumption that the Bible must be inerrant. The movement from the conviction that the Bible is the Word of God to the acceptance of the biblicist concept of inerrancy seems to be largely a matter of inference based on what the Bible must be if man is to have religious certainty. Without this prior assumption, attention can be focused more on what the Bible is.²⁰⁸

(c) Its Understanding of the Nature of Reality

The Christian faith points to the comprehensiveness of revealed reality in its creational and redemptive aspects. Biblicism seeks to do justice to God's revelation in creation, Christ and the Bible. Its concentration on the formalized doctrine of an inerrant Scripture tends, however, to direct attention away from creation and Christ. The impression is frequently given that revelation begins and ends with the writing of the Bible.

The continuity between creational and redemptive revelation, while recognized, is not sufficiently emphasized. The danger of thinking of creational revelation as 'natural' and the Bible as 'supernatural' is always present in biblicism. This gives the impression of a silent God who suddenly began to speak only to retreat again into silence after he had spoken.

The reality of divine revelation is instructively discussed by A.W. Tozer who emphasizes

"Not God spoke, but God is speaking."²⁰⁹

Tozer observes that

"His speaking Voice, antedates the Bible by uncounted centuries ..

(since) that Voice .. has not been silent since the dawn of creation." 210

Tozer offers a perceptive analysis of the tendency to separate biblical revelation from creational revelation. He emphasizes the integral relation between faith in creational revelation and faith in biblical revelation:

"The Bible will never be a living Book to us until we are convinced that God is articulate in His universe." 211

He maintains that the separation of creational and biblical revelation is destructive of faith in the reality of divine revelation.

"To jump from a dead, impersonal world to a dogmatic Bible is too much for most people. They may admit that they should accept the Bible as the Word of God, and they may try to think of it as such, but they find it impossible to believe that the words there on the page are actually for them." 212

This effect is, according to Tozer, the result of "a divided psychology" which "tries to think of God as mute everywhere else and vocal only in a book." 213 He insists that

"much of our religious unbelief is due to a wrong conception of and a wrong feeling for the Scriptures of Truth. A silent God suddenly began to speak in a book and when the book was finished lapsed back into silence forever. Now we read the book as the record of what God said when He was for a brief time in a speaking mood. With notions like that in our heads how can we believe?" 214

By grounding the unity of creational and biblical revelation in the belief that God is "by His nature continuously articulate", 215

Tozer intends to emphasize that the Bible is

"not only a book which was once spoken, but a book which is now speaking." 216

He emphasizes that

"a word of God once spoken continues to be spoken." 217

Tozer's analysis of the doctrine of revelation is neither necessarily nor entirely incompatible with the biblicist concept of inerrancy. It does, however, suggest that the accent on biblical revelation should be understood such that the present significance of redemptive revelation is not distorted because of a failure to properly emphasize the reality of creational revelation. Tozer's concern with the continuous speaking of God and the thoroughly existential challenge of the biblical revelation reflects an important aspect of biblical authority which has been consistently emphasized by Berkouwer. 218

Discussing the authority of Holy Scripture in the modern world,

Berkouwer writes,

"The confession of the authority of the Word of God can never be isolated from the saving content of the Word of God."²¹⁹

In confessing that the Bible is the Word of God, the believer confesses that God is speaking to him through the Bible concerning salvation.

Berkouwer insists that

"Christianity is a book-religion, but not a book-religion in the formal sense of the word."²²⁰

The confession, "The Bible is the Word of God", emphasizes the importance of the Bible for Christianity. The rejection of the formal conception of Christianity as a book-religion is intended to emphasize the present activity of the Spirit in pointing men to Christ through the words of the Bible. Berkouwer emphasizes that

"Scripture is the Word of God because the Holy Spirit witnesses in it of Christ,"²²¹

insisting that this understanding of the relation between the Spirit and Scripture opens up

"a perspective that is not locked in the past."²²²

Berkouwer insists that the authority of Scripture is never established "by means of a rationalistic apologetic"²²³ but rather through "the testimony of the Holy Spirit."²²⁴ Thus, he presents the doctrine of biblical authority as

"not a conservative testimony in fear of facts, but .. a conviction of faith."²²⁵

Emphasizing that

"the authority of God's Word .. is (known) in the way of the Spirit, which leads man to obedience and draws him in his full existence to the gospel",²²⁶

he seeks to avoid the divided psychology of "a Bible-only mentality (which) virtually equates spiritual reality with the text of Scripture itself."²²⁷

A careful distinction requires to be drawn between the idea that the spiritual significance of creational revelation is properly understood through the redemptive revelation recorded in Scripture and the tendency to think of Scripture as the entirety of divine revelation.²²⁸ The first of these positions affirms the unity of revealed reality while the second tends to reflect "the scholastic theory of the supernatural and the natural as constituting two realms of reality."²²⁹ Biblical authority requires to be affirmed within the context of the affirmation of the unity of revealed reality if there is to be a proper understanding of the

nature of Scripture and its authority.

"Scripture is not the totality of all God has said and done in this world. Scripture is that part of revelation and history specially chosen for the life of the people of God through centuries."²³⁰

Thus, Scripture is the means by which man comes to understand the true character of revealed reality without itself being the entirety of that revealed reality. This approach to the role of Scripture in divine revelation avoids the charge of a purely formal book-religion without lapsing into either secularism by which the reality of revelation is ^{denied} or spiritualism by which the authority of Scripture is rejected.²³¹

(d) Its Understanding of the Nature of Truth

The biblicist notion of truth, conceived in terms of inerrancy, tends to result in a failure to properly understand both the historical progression within Scripture and the present activity of the Spirit in keeping men in the truth. Analysing the pre-suppositions of biblicism, Berkouwer writes,

"The supposition that limited human knowledge and time-boundedness of any kind would cause someone to err and that Holy Scripture would no longer be the lamp for our feet unless every time-bound conception could be corrected, is a denial of the significance of historical development."²³²

He maintains that

"the formalization of inerrancy .. creates numerous insoluble problems in the historical development (within Scripture)"²³³

Discussing the intention of the biblicist conception of inerrancy, Berkouwer recognizes that

"inerrancy" was emphasized with the intention of warning against a mistrust of the testimony of God and of keeping the church from really erring."²³⁴

He does, however, contend that the extension of the concept of inerrancy beyond the stated purpose of Scripture "virtually destroys this intention."²³⁵ The tendency to equate "limited historical perception within a certain cultural and scientific situation" with "erring in the sense of lying" makes it difficult to rightly understand Scripture. The historical character and the spiritual purpose of Scripture, both of which belong to the proper understanding of biblical authority, tend to be obscured by biblicism.

Berkouwer points out that since

"the revelation of God has been given in the form of a history .." .. not everything recorded in Scripture should be of normative authority for our faith and life" (since) "much of what God offered and affirmed no longer immediately concerns us".²³⁶

The historical character of the Bible raises the important questions of both the suitability and the meaningfulness of the term "inerrancy".

Berkouwer emphasizes that

"the purpose of the God-breathed Scripture is not at all to provide a scientific gnosis in order to convey and increase human knowledge and wisdom, but to witness of the salvation of God unto faith."²³⁷

He insists that

"This approach does not mean to separate faith and knowledge. But the knowledge that is the unmistakable aim of Scripture is the knowledge of faith, which does not increase human wisdom, but is life eternal."²³⁸

This understanding of the purpose of Scripture implies that

"the horizon of knowledge of the biblical authors did not need to be broadened with scientific insight so that it could compete with the knowledge of their contemporaries in a strange and surprising way".²³⁹

This view of Scripture's purpose raises further the question of the suitability and meaningfulness of the term "inerrancy".

An adequate Christian understanding of truth emphasizes the historical character and the spiritual purpose of Scripture, both of which require to be fully acknowledged.

The biblicist conception of the truth of the Bible involves adherence to a conception of absolute inerrancy, i.e. the Bible has no errors of any sort. This position is held by H. Lindsell, whose views are examined here.

"The Bible is not a textbook on chemistry, astronomy, philosophy, or medicine. But when it speaks on matters having to do with these or any other subjects, the Bible does not lie to us. It does not contain error of any kind." ²⁴⁰

The first of these sentences would meet with general agreement.

The second sentence would not. The connection between the two sentences is extremely tenuous. It could be argued that, since the Bible is not intended to teach us about such subjects, we should not expect it to speak inerrantly on them.

To speak of the inspiration of the Bible in generalized terms - The Bible is the inspired Word of God. God does not lie. Therefore the Bible is inerrant in everything it says - is to pay scant attention to the purpose of the God-breathed Scriptures. Lindsell concentrates almost exclusively on the opening phrase of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is inspired by God" (New American Standard Bible) - at the expense of the stated purpose of Scripture

which follows. He does state that "The Bible is not a textbook on chemistry...." but hardly takes this into account in his understanding of truth which is completely generalized. The truth of history, geography and science are set on the same level as the truth that teaches, reprovcs, corrects, trains in righteousness and adequately equips for every good work.

Lindsell opposes those who teach that "the Bible contains some truth and some error."²⁴¹ This view is seen as one of the "only three possible answers to (the) question",²⁴² Is the Bible trustworthy? The other answers, suggested by Lindsell, are "The Bible is not at all trustworthy" and "The Bible can be trusted as truthful in all its parts."²⁴³ From Lindsell's perspective, these are rightly described as the only three possible answers to the question.

The idea that the Bible is not at all trustworthy is clearly sub-Christian. Lindsell holds that "The Bible can be trusted as truthful in all its parts". His third alternative is problematic. Those criticized by Lindsell as those who make "the case for errancy" (in contrast to "champions of inerrancy")²⁴⁴ would not describe their position as Lindsell describes it. His description - "The Bible contains some truth and some error" - would be rejected on several grounds.

First, Lindsell's criticism is superficial since it fails to appreciate the chief intention of those who seek to understand the Bible according to the biblical understanding of truth.

"The converse of the statement "The Bible teaches truth" is that the Bible does not teach error .. this simple statement " The Bible does not teach error" has caused considerable controversy because it ignores how the Bible teaches truth .. The Bible teaches truth .. in the ways and manners of expressing truth in ancient times."²⁴⁵

Second, Lindsell's criticism fails to take account of the fact those who supposedly "make the case for errancy" are simply seeking to understand Scripture according to the biblical understanding of error. Defined Biblically, error has a depth of moral, religious, practical and existential meaning which is absent from the idea of 'error' as incorrectness.²⁴⁶

Third, the "champions of inerrancy", in their offensive against those who "make the case for errancy", may themselves weaken the confession of Biblical authority and decrease true reverence for Scripture. A "levelling view" which "places the "words" of Scripture alongside each other without any differentiation" tends to produce

an inadequate understanding of the historical character and spiritual purpose of Scripture. This results in a failure to honour the authority of Scripture since "authority is only honored in a correct interpretation."²⁴⁷

Fourth, Lindsell's description of those who "make the case for errancy", holding that "the Bible contains some truth and some error", may say more about Lindsell himself than those he ostensibly describes.²⁴⁸ It is questionable whether those who "make the case for errancy" see themselves as "champions of errancy".²⁴⁹ Their goal is a more adequate understanding of the Bible. Their concern is with the actual exposition of Scripture rather than with Lindsell's question, "Is the Bible infallible?" or "Does the Bible contain error?"²⁵⁰ "Error", as understood by Lindsell, does not figure in their thinking. This concept has not been particularly helpful to them in their task of achieving a better understanding of Scripture.

Fifth, Lindsell's self-image is misleading with respect to the criticisms he imagines the "champions of errancy" will make of him. He writes:

"Those who advocate inerrancy take the Bible in its plain and obvious sense. The charge that they are "wooden-headed literalists" shows the bias of those who make the charge. All that is meant by saying one takes the Bible literally is that one believes what it purports to say."²⁵¹

It is hardly self-evident that the criticism of biblicism would be that its advocates are "wooden-headed literalists" who "take the Bible literally" and "believe what it purports to say". The main criticism may be quite the opposite. Biblicism, by imposing its own categories of 'truth' and 'error' upon Scripture, does not allow the Bible to speak on its own terms. The competition-motif's notions of God and man lead to a concern with what Scripture must be rather than what it is, as Berkouwer writes,

"fundamentalism greatly obscures the contexts in which God himself gave us Scripture. Back of fundamentalism lies something of an unconscious wish not to have God's Word enter into the creaturely realm... and the wish that Scripture should not subject itself "as writing to the fate of all writings."²⁵²

This concern with what Scripture must be has led to Scripture being understood in ways that are anything but literal²⁵³ in order to avoid the charge that Scripture contains error. Commenting on this phenomenon, Barr writes:

".. a fundamentalist is a person who 'takes the Bible literally'. This .. is far from being a correct or exact description. The point of conflict between fundamentalists and others is not over literality but over inerrancy. Even if fundamentalists sometimes say that they take the Bible literally, the facts of fundamentalist interpretation show that this is not so. What fundamentalists insist is not that the Bible must be taken literally but that it must be so interpreted as to avoid any admission .. of error. In order to avoid imputing error to the Bible, fundamentalists twist and turn back and forward between literal and non-literal interpretation."254

Comparing biblicism and biblical criticism, Barr writes:

"It is only in part .. that literal interpretation is a fundamentalist characteristic: it is in fact much more an element in critical scholarship."255

Finally, Lindsell's argument that ".. the acceptance of inerrancy is the watershed of modern theological controversy" and that those who do not accept this position "must ultimately yield the right to the use of the name "evangelical".."256 is based completely on concepts of truth and error imposed on Scripture by the biblicist theory of Biblical inspiration. This position stands under severe criticism from the gospel that embodies a truth that is far more profound than biblicism's formalized concept of inerrancy.

Concerning the biblicist view of inerrancy, Barr writes:

"There often seems to be an absurd lack of proportion between the things that are religiously important to fundamentalists and the arguments about scripture by which they seek to guarantee them."257

Observing a tension between conservatism and evangelicalism, he further argues that

"the only way of maintaining a consistently evangelical position is if one carefully avoids the non-evangelical modes of thinking which are essential to the conservative evangelical position."258

Contending that "The real problem of fundamentalism lies ... in its intellectual structure," Barr then contrasts the biblicist intellectual system with the piety of most biblicists:

"it has been fortunate for fundamentalism that most of its adherents have not had to learn too much of this.. intellectual approach. For, the more they learned of it, and the deeper they went into the peculiar corners of it, the more they would be likely to feel it strange to their own religious needs and convictions and alien to the approach of the simple reader of Bible even within fundamentalism."259

Attention has been drawn to the dual context of Berkouwer's writings - pietism and scholasticism.²⁶⁰ His thought bears a marked affinity to "the old Dutch biblical piety ... steadily pressing toward a purified life of faith according to Scripture."261 His

writings have "a consistent apologetic intention ... directed at scholasticism."²⁶² Berkouwer's work is done in a pietistic rather than a scholastic perspective. This does not lead him into subjectivism. Rather, it enables him to deal with the living character of God's Word rather than theories about what God's Word ought to be.²⁶³ If fundamentalism emphasized the pietistic element in living faith rather than the scholastic element found in its theologizing, it would understand the real watershed to be obedience rather than inerrancy.²⁶⁴

(e) Its Understanding of the Character of Certainty.

The living character of Christian faith is not adequately understood by biblicism which has a restrictive doctrine of the Spirit coupled with an inadequate doctrine of revelation. Biblicism is based on "a rationally developed infallibility... supposed to preclude all doubts".²⁶⁵ Its doctrine of inspiration keeps God's Spirit locked in a perspective that belongs essentially to the past.²⁶⁶

The lack of a proper appreciation of the role of the Spirit in producing Christian assurance is observed by Barr in his criticisms of rationalistic biblicism's distance from the living faith of the average evangelical believer. He holds that the fundamentalist

"apologetic is not genuinely derived from the evangelical faith... Evangelical faith is betrayed by the fundamentalist apparatus of argument. For faith it substitutes dependence on rational use of evidence; and in place of the religious functioning of the Bible it takes, as primary guarantee of the authority of scripture, the absence of error, especially in its historical details. In pursuit of these principles it works out a whole apparatus of argument and interpretation, much of which is probably unknown to and unwelcome to the average evangelical believer. Contrary to fundamentalist argumentation, evangelicalism is a quite flexible form of religion, and it can easily bear the adjustments necessary to enable it to see much of the Bible in a way different from the ways traditional in the past. Criticism of fundamentalist doctrine and biblical interpretation is therefore not at all directed against the evangelical religious basis."²⁶⁷

Barr's contention is that living faith is related to the working of God's Spirit rather than to rationally developed systems designed to produce certainty.

The radical contrast between the two different forms of certainty and the two different ways of acquiring that certainty is clearly brought out by Pinnock in his perceptive criticisms of biblicism.

Page 25

"We are simply not in a position by sheer logic to judge how God ought to have given his Word.. When the awareness of God speaking powerfully through Scripture begins to subside, it is necessary to cling to rationalistic arguments in order to defend the Bible, and scholastic orthodoxy is born.. Minute inerrancy may be a central issue for the telephone book but not for psalms, proverbs, apocalyptic and parables. Inerrancy just does not focus attention correctly where the Bible is concerned.. What will keep us sound in the faith will not be our strenuous rationalistic efforts to make the case for the Bible air-tight. It is the Spirit of God in mighty power.. The moving of the Spirit accomplishes more on behalf of biblical authority than all the arguments of conservative evangelicals ever could."²⁶⁸

Conclusion The following major inadequacies have been noted in biblicism.

- the conceptions of God and man are inadequate, being based on the competition-motif.²⁶⁹
- the doctrine of revelation is so closely related to the doctrine of Scripture that the importance of continuing creational revelation as the presupposition²⁷⁰ of revelation in Christ and through Scripture tends to be obscured.
- the biblicist conceptions of truth and error are so closely related to the need for rational certainty that the significance of the work of God's Spirit tends to be obscured.²⁷¹

(3) Christomonism

Biblicism rightly emphasizes the important place of the Bible in any Christian understanding of revelation. Christomonism rightly emphasizes the centrality of Christ in a proper understanding of revelation. Neither position is, however, able to do full justice to other important elements in an adequate Christian doctrine of revelation. The christomonistic emphasis tends to obscure the rich diversity of God's self-revelation.

(a) Its Understanding of God

"Christomonism" is generally associated with the thoroughly christocentric theology of Karl Barth.²⁷² Barth's opposition to deism and biblicism is emphatic. He refuses to adopt a formal conception of God which excludes Christ, or which, at best, regards him as an appendix to a basically deistic view of God.²⁷³ He refuses to identify revelation directly with the Bible, insisting that the Bible is a witness to revelation.²⁷⁴ Barth's careful avoidance of the arid intellectualism of deism and the bibliolatry of fundamentalism is welcomed.

An important question in the assessment of Barth's theology revolves round his view of the relationship between natural theology and general revelation. Discussing "Karl Barth's Offensive Against Natural Theology",²⁷⁵ Berkouwer notes that "Barth's conception of revelation...is frequently called "christomonism" ",²⁷⁶ while acknowledging that Barth's "only motive has been to hold fast at all costs to the christological thread throughout" asking "whether a Christian theologian may do anything but think of 'Christ only' ".²⁷⁷ Berkouwer concludes, however, that "it does appear that this 'Christ only' of Barth is given so special a form that it can rightly be called a 'Christomonism'".²⁷⁸

Barth proposes three reasons for the persistence of natural theology.²⁷⁹ Finding these reasons inadequate, he proceeds to specify man's pride as the real reason for its persistence. Barth holds that God can only be known through Christ and that natural theology is "nothing else but the justification of the natural man".²⁸⁰ While agreeing with Barth's opposition to natural theology as a way of self-justification of the natural man, Berkouwer criticizes the manner in which Barth has opposed natural theology.

Berkouwer, drawing a clear distinction between natural theology and general revelation,²⁸¹ observes that,

"Barth has centered his attack more and more upon natural theology as the great enemy of the faith, and general revelation was always involved in this attack as well." ²⁸²

This distinction between natural theology and general revelation and the critique of Barth's opposition to natural theology is based on the further distinction between revelation and the knowledge of revelation.²⁸³

Knowledge of revelation is, according to Berkouwer, arrived at not through natural theology but through experience of the salvation of God "that opens doors and windows toward God's handiwork."²⁸⁴ With this emphasis on the salvation of God as the way of understanding general revelation, Berkouwer opposes natural theology no less emphatically than Barth. Berkouwer contends that man is unable to escape the revelation of God in creation,²⁸⁵ which is a real revelation and is not read into the created world by the believer.²⁸⁶ The objective reality of God's revelation in creation renders man guilty²⁸⁷ yet it does not provide a way of salvation.

The removal of guilt comes through Christ's salvation. In Berkouwer's view, general revelation does not give man "a disposition to believe."²⁸⁷ Thus, Berkouwer's "No!" to natural theology is no less pronounced than Barth's, since both hold that,

"man in all his endeavors stands under the condemnation of the radical No of the true and living God, the No of His holy judgment in the presence of which man cannot live, but only die".²⁸⁹

In his exclusion of natural theology, Berkouwer emphasises "the radicality of sin",²⁹⁰ stressing that "being a sinner is not a peripheral and relative thing"²⁹¹ and that

"There is no way for man to escape this condition of being lost..The lost can only be sought and found."²⁹²

He insists that man has no power to begin by himself any change in spiritual things.²⁹³ The radicality of man's sin is broken down "only when the Holy Spirit convinces the individual of sin and righteousness and judgment."²⁹⁴ Man's sin and guilt are overcome only through the saving grace of God in Christ.

Since both Berkouwer and Barth affirm God's No to man in his sin, it is clear that their disagreement regarding general revelation is not essentially anthropological. Holding that man cannot save himself and that Christ alone is man's Saviour, both reject natural theology. Both are undoubtedly christocentric in their theology. The difference arises from Barth's particular development of christocentric theology in relation to the doctrine of God and his revelation.

Barth holds that "revelation itself" is to be identified with "Jesus Christ Himself."²⁹⁵ The Scriptures are regarded as "the witness to revelation."²⁹⁶ Barth's doctrine of the Word of God excludes general revelation:

"If God's revelation is the way from veiling of the eternal Word to His unveiling..how can it possibly be anything else than God's becoming man, His becoming flesh?...To be revelation it had to be an incarnation."²⁹⁷

This is a development of his christological foundation for Christian dogmatics:

"The incarnation of the eternal Word, Jesus Christ is God's revelation."²⁹⁸

"A church dogmatics must..be christologically determined. If dogmatics cannot regard itself..as fundamentally Christology, it has assuredly succumbed to some alien sway."²⁹⁹

"the statement, 'Jesus Christ is very God and very Man,' is the assumption upon which all further reflection must proceed."³⁰⁰

Barth's development of this christological assumption leads to the exclusion of God's self-revelation in creation.

The difference between Berkouwer and Barth may be seen as a matter of definition, i.e. how "revelation" is defined. It is, however, misleading to say that "...the theologians who speak of a variety of revelations do not take the concept in the strict sense that Barth does."³⁰¹ The plural - revelations - is misleading since Berkouwer does not think of general revelation as independent of God's revelation in Christ. General revelation is seen as an integral part of the one, single and undivided revelation which finds its culmination in redemption through Christ. The suggestion that Berkouwer's use of the concept of revelation is looser than that of the more precise Barth is also misleading. Berkouwer's defence of general revelation does not rest on loose theological terminology. On the contrary, his position has certain advantages over Barth's. His distinctions between (i) natural theology and general revelation³⁰² and (ii) revelation and the knowledge of revelation³⁰³ offer a valuable contribution to areas where the relation between Barth's christocentric view of revelation and his view that God "has made himself known.. in the works of creation as God"³⁰⁴ demonstrates a distinct tension.

In his discussion of Barth's view of the relation between revelation and creation, Berkouwer accepts Barth's emphasis that,

"The biblical message concerning creation does not present us with cosmological or ontological truths of which everyone who is not wholly blind can take note (through the natural light of reason)".³⁰⁵

Berkouwer accepts Barth's view that,

"It is not possible first to come to a knowledge of creation in itself, and then advance to a knowledge of redemption in Christ."³⁰⁶

Thus, Berkouwer accepts Barth's rejection of natural theology.

He does, however, emphasize that the rejection of natural theology and the insistence that "knowledge of creation is possible only in terms of the revelation in Christ"³⁰⁷ need not entail the rejection of the expression "creational revelation". It does mean, however, that creational revelation should be understood ^{terms of} in the _^ unity of divine revelation which finds its central focus in Christ.

Despite their considerable agreement, Berkouwer still raises a significant point regarding what is to be called "revelation". While this may, to some extent, be a matter of semantics, there is a question worth raising. Berkouwer opposes the idea that "revelation" has reference only to the incarnation as a "dogmatic reflection."³⁰⁸ He insists that "Scripture does not state such a thing at all.",³⁰⁹ emphasizing that,

"It must be noted how entirely different this dogmatic reflection speaks of God's revelation than does Scripture."³¹⁰

While certain biblical passages (John I:3f; Col.I:16; Heb. I:2f) suggest that the revelation of God in nature may be regarded as a revelation of the Son, it is questionable whether Barth's conception of revelation provides the most apt description of the unity of God's gracious work of creation and redemption.

Barth's conception of revelation may be related to the idea of revelation summed up in the words, 'Only God can reveal God'. The expression 'Only God can reveal God' may be interpreted to mean that only the incarnation can be called revelation. This is, however, based on a restrictive notion of the revealing activity of God. The created world may not be identified with God. Nonetheless, God can be regarded as actively revealing himself to man through creation.

When Barth writes, "To be revelation it had to be incarnation",³¹¹ he seeks to emphasize the completeness of incarnational revelation.

"Incarnation was needed in order that God might become manifest to us" 312

This emphasis on the completeness of incarnational revelation need not, however, require the restriction of the term 'revelation' to the incarnation. When creational revelation is affirmed, it is acknowledged that such revelation lacks the completeness of incarnational revelation. Creational revelation is only properly understood in the light of the incarnation. This need not mean that the idea of creational revelation demands the positing of a second 'revelation' over against the incarnation and that the term 'revelation' must, therefore, be restricted to the incarnation.

Barth's concern may be to emphasize the unity of divine revelation. It is questionable whether he has given adequate expression to this unity. The concept of creational revelation, properly understood in the light of the unity of divine revelation, proclaims the sovereignty of God in his revelation, while emphasizing the

historical character of divine revelation with greater clarity than Barth's conception of revelation which reflects a "revised supralapsarianism" which "blocks the way to ascribing decisive significance to history."³¹³

Barth's conception is not, however, fully understood without reference to his rejection of natural theology. It should, however, be observed that the affirmation of creational revelation contains no suggestion that there is, in fallen man "an affinity and aptitude for God's revelation"³¹⁴ or that there is, in created reality, "a special capacity for revealing God."³¹⁵ Barth's offensive against natural theology is motivated by a desire to reject the idea that man contributes to God's salvation. It does not, however, follow that the confession of God's creational revelation gives man any encouragement to take pride in the contribution he supposes himself to have made to God's salvation. A proper understanding of creational revelation in relation to divine redemption leads to a clear emphasis on the sovereignty of God in his redemption.

Berkouwer has stated that, in any discussion of Barth's theology,

"The pivotal question is, whether we have the right to simply conclude from the exclusive salvation in Christ to the exclusive revelation in Christ".³¹⁶

Barth protests against the idea of God as "power in itself"³¹⁷. He emphasizes God's freedom by which he has revealed his power in his free, gracious condescension in Christ.³¹⁸ He insists that creation is grace.³²⁰ This rejection of the God of natural theology is to be welcomed. The question remains, however, whether the God of natural theology has not, despite Barth's commitment to the authority of Scripture, been replaced by the God of Barth's own peculiar form of christomonism.³²¹

(b) Its Understanding of Man

When Barth's conception of revelation is understood in relation to his rejection of natural theology, it may be seen as primarily an affirmation of divine grace. The interpretation of grace is a particularly sensitive area where the doctrines of God and man are integrally related to each other. In their understanding of divine grace, both Berkouwer and Barth affirm the doctrine of divine election.³²²

Both affirm the centrality of Christ in this doctrine.³²³
The particular form of Barth's christocentric doctrine of election

has raised the question of universalism.³²⁴ The suggestion that Barth's doctrine of election has an inherently universalist tendency is, despite Barth's disavowal of universalism,³²⁵ compelling. If such a charge can be maintained, this is of considerable importance for the doctrine of revelation.

If Barth's doctrine of election is inherently universalist, then it is questionable whether he can really take man seriously. This would raise the further question whether the revelation of Christ's gracious election must simply go over man's head, not involving him ultimately since the absolute necessity of faith is essentially undermined. This question is of importance here because of its bearing on the revelation of Christ's gospel, as it affects actual and concrete man. Barth's doctrine of election threatens to treat man more as an abstraction than as he really is. Man, according to Berkouwer, must be seen as one for whom the decision regarding Christ is of absolute significance.³²⁶

The question of universalism in Barth's thought has been raised directly by J.D. Bettis in his article, "Is Karl Barth a universalist?"³²⁷ This article requires to be carefully discussed not only for its significance as an interpretation of Barth's thought but also because it presents a serious misinterpretation of Berkouwer's criticism of Barth.

Bettis writes,

"Modern Protestant theology has defined three basic answers to the question of the particularity of election: double predestination, Arminianism, and universalism."³²⁸

By attempting to fit Berkouwer into "this structure of alternatives",³²⁹ he completely misrepresents Berkouwer's criticism of Barth.

Berkouwer does not operate, as Bettis wrongly suggests,³³⁰ from the idea of double predestination.³³¹

Bettis contends that, according to Berkouwer, Barth "must be a universalist."³³² This is, however, to miss the point of Berkouwer's argument. Berkouwer never states that Barth is a universalist on the basis of the notion that Barth must be a universalist. Rather, acknowledging Barth's rejection of universalism, Berkouwer questions the effectiveness of Barth's rejection of universalism.³³³

Bettis contends that,

"For Barth, one can reject both Arminianism and double predestination without having to accept universalism."³³⁴

This statement might have been written of Berkouwer, who rejects this structure of alternatives more convincingly than does Barth. In fact, it may be said that the precise nature of Berkouwer's criticism of Barth can only be properly understood when Berkouwer's rejection of this structure of alternatives is recognized.³³⁵

Bettis maintains that

"Barth consistently rejects universalism as a doctrine!"³³⁶

The problem with this estimation of Barth's rejection of universalism is that it does not take adequate account of Barth's own words:

"Even though theological consistency might seem to lead our thoughts and utterances in this direction (universal reconciliation), we must not arrogate to ourselves that which can be given and received only as a free gift."³³⁷

Barth's rejection of universalism is not motivated by the interests of theological consistency which, he acknowledges, might seem to lead towards universal reconciliation.

Bettis notes that Barth

"leaves open the possibility that within God's freedom all men may be saved."³³⁸

Barth holds that, because of the freedom of divine love, even the believing man can never escape the threat of eternal rejection.³³⁹

Thus, Barth's rejection of universalism is rooted in the idea that the future of all men is uncertain. This notion involves a conception of God's freedom which might be characterized as a freedom to be ungracious. Barth's entire theology appears to proclaim the grace of God. This conception of divine freedom appears to suggest, however, that the affirmation of grace requires to be qualified by the possibility that God might not be gracious. This, however, is to suggest that, while the chief direction of Barth's theology is towards assurance grounded in the revelation of divine grace, such assurance must be qualified by a recognition of the divine freedom to withhold this grace.

Admittedly, Barth's intention is to stress that grace is a free gift which no man has any right to expect from God. This principle is, in itself, unassailable. When, however, the universal threat of eternal rejection is set over against the divine reconciliation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the issue is not one of man's rights but of the faithfulness of the divine promise of grace to be received through faith in Christ. The divine reconciliation in Christ strips man of all the rights he supposes himself to have. At the same time, however, this

reconciliation provides the believing man with a gracious assurance which is vouched for by God himself in his divine promise of grace. This assurance has nothing at all to do with man's rights and everything to do with the free grace of God which has been pledged to believing man through Christ.

When Barth writes,

"We should be denying .. that evil attempt (the persistent attempt to change the truth into untruth) and our own participation in it, if in relation to ourselves or others or all men, we were to permit ourselves to postulate a withdrawal of that threat .. No such postulate can be made even though we appeal to the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ we must not arrogate to ourselves that which can be given and received only as a free gift",³⁴⁰

he appears to set 'God in himself' over against 'God for us'. The suggestion that God might yet withdraw his saving grace from those who believe not only rules out the possibility of the assurance of salvation but casts aspersions of doubt on the reliability of the divine promise of grace which is received through faith in Christ. Christian assurance is not a form of presumption which takes God's grace for granted. Rather, it is an assurance which is rooted in the reliability of God in his gracious self-revelation in Christ. If this revelation of grace is to be qualified by a concept of divine freedom which can be isolated from God's self-revelation in history, it can only be done at the expense of introducing both an element of arbitrariness into the doctrine of God and a basic uncertainty into the believer's knowledge of God.

It may be that the particular form of Barth's rejection of universalism arises directly from the universalist structure of his theology. Barth conceives of God's dealings with men in universal terms. God's dealings are with 'man' rather than with the believer and the unbeliever.³⁴¹ Similarly, Barth's rejection of universalism is presented in universal categories. There is no suggestion of any dichotomy between the believer and the unbeliever. The introduction of such a dichotomy into Barth's rejection of universalism would run counter to the whole tenor of his theology. Barth, therefore, insists that universal reconciliation may not be postulated since the threat of eternal rejection hangs over all men because all men are sinners.

Recognizing that Barth's notion of divine freedom entails a devaluation of the trustworthiness of the salvation of God in

Christ, Bettis writes,

"Rather than ask whether Barth attributes too much to the work of Christ, the real question is whether Barth attributes enough to Christ's work. If it is not to remove the threat of permanent rejection for those who believe, what is the purpose of the crucifixion and resurrection?"³⁴²

Barth's concept of divine freedom prevents him from giving an adequate answer to this question. For this reason, Barth's rejection of universalism remains quite unconvincing.

Bettis insists that

"Barth's rejection of universalism is consistent with his .. strong and clear intention of refusing to identify the love of God with a cosmic plan of redemption and with refusing to identify the gospel with information about that plan."³⁴³

This statement might have been made of Berkouwer who writes,

"it is extremely dangerous to think and talk about "the love of God" and what "follows" from it outside of the gospel"³⁴⁴

He insists that

"the tender mercy of God .. is not the point of departure for logical conclusions on our part."³⁴⁵

He resists the

"persistent and almost irresistible inclination to go outside the proclamation of the gospel to find a deeper gnosis, whether in the form of certain knowledge or only as surmise",³⁴⁶

insisting that there is

"only one "necessity" .. "Necessity .. is laid upon me. Woe to me, if I do not preach the gospel! (1 Cor 9:16)"³⁴⁷

He stresses that the gospel's answer to the question of the number of the saved is found in Jesus' words:

"Strive to enter by the narrow door"³⁴⁸

From this perspective, Berkouwer rejects 'a priori' universalism without losing a proper perspective on the divine freedom. From Berkouwer's perspective, the possibility of universal reconciliation would be related not to the freedom of God to be ungracious but to the freedom of God to be gracious. Such a conception of divine freedom would be more consistent with the gospel as a revelation of grace than Barth's introduction of the idea of the freedom of God as a qualification placed on a theology bearing an inherently universalist structure. Barth's notion of divine freedom raises problems regarding his theology of revelation. The suggestion that believing man stands under the threat of eternal rejection tends to relativize the reality of God's gracious revelation.

The faithfulness of the God of revelation is called in question.

Thus, it becomes difficult to distinguish between divine freedom and arbitrariness.³⁴⁹ In Barth's conception of divine freedom, there appears to be no essential connection between the historical revelation in which God promises salvation to those who believe and the eschatological possibility that this salvation might yet be withheld from those who believe.

If the freedom of God is to avoid becoming a formless freedom which conflicts with the affirmation of the gracious character of revelation, it requires to be understood that

"the universality of the New Testament .. is nowhere made into an objective state of affairs."³⁵⁰

When objectivity and subjectivity are not set in tension with each other, a priori universalism may be rejected without recourse to either an arbitrary avoidance of theological consistency or an arbitrary conception of divine freedom which permits God, in his eschatological judgment, to be unfaithful to the promise of grace given in his historical revelation. The significance of man's faith is fully recognized since the reality of the divine faithfulness in God's promise of grace is upheld. The significance of unbelief is emphasized in the face of the warning of the gospel. Thus, the significance of man can be affirmed over against the universalist devaluation of the seriousness of unbelief and the threatening of faith's significance by an a-historical conception of divine freedom. Thus, without any sacrifice of theological consistency, it can be unambiguously affirmed that

"Kerygmatic universality does not preclude but include the call to belief and repentance".³⁵¹

(c) Its Understanding of the Nature of Reality.

For Barth, Christ is the key to understanding the whole of reality. If Christ, God's revelation, is taken away, man is thrown into an abyss of meaninglessness. Man cannot, by himself, bring meaning to his experience of reality. Christ alone can reveal to man the meaning of the whole of reality. This insight lies at the heart of Barth's radical distinction between religion and revelation.³⁵² Religion is anthropocentric. Revelation is christocentric. Religion is man's attempt to impose meaning on a meaningless existence. Revelation is God's way of showing to man the meaning of his existence.

Berkouwer agrees with Barth's affirmation that Christ is the

key to the understanding of the whole of reality. It is only in Christ that the meaning of reality can be properly understood.³⁵³ Without Christ, man gropes in the darkness. Even man's religion, without Christ, is a groping in the darkness, a groping after the light of the world.³⁵⁴ There is, however, an important difference between Berkouwer and Barth. This difference revolves round the distinction between noetic and ontic thinking.³⁵⁵

In his discussion of the relation of anthropology to christology, Berkouwer makes an important contribution to the understanding of the difficult distinction between ontic and noetic thinking. Berkouwer contrasts the ontic thinking of Barth with the noetic thinking of Calvin and Bavinck.³⁵⁶ Each of these theologians bases anthropology on christology.³⁵⁷ There is, however, an important difference between Barth's use of christology and that of Calvin and Bavinck.

Barth's method is derived "from the idea that we cannot understand "man" apart from his relation to God."³⁵⁸ In Berkouwer's view, this position is "unassailable".³⁵⁹ Barth's view is described thus by Berkouwer:

"Man's being, man's nature, is to stand in grace, God's grace; this is the truth we discern in the election of the man Jesus Immanuel (God with us) .. his essence is to be an object of God's grace. This essence is indeed covered and hidden by sin, but how can something which has its basis in God's grace be wholly destroyed? There is and remains a "continuum, an essence unchanged and unchangeable by sin."³⁶⁰

The ontic element in Barth's view is found in this emphasis on "an essence unchanged and unchangeable by sin."³⁶¹

At this point, Barth's approach differs from that of Calvin and Bavinck. They approach the image of God in man via the renewal of that image through Christ.³⁶² This renewal takes place in the context of "man's fall and guilt"³⁶³ as man enters into "communion with Christ"³⁶⁴ through faith.³⁶⁵ This renewal

"has nothing to do with a "natural" state of affairs in the relation between God and man, but rather shows forth the wonder of the new birth .. through which the life of the creature can once more exhibit God's image."³⁶⁶

Barth's idea that this renewal has taken place in "mankind" by virtue of the Incarnation has led R. Prenter to describe Barth's position as "creation docetism."³⁶⁷ While acknowledging Barth's intention to emphasize the unbreakable unity of creation and reconciliation,³⁶⁸ Berkouwer recognizes the validity of Prenter's

criticism of Barth.³⁶⁹ Berkouwer is concerned that the decisiveness of history is not endangered.³⁷⁰

Emphasizing "not the ontic qualities of man, but what he does with these qualities",³⁷¹ Berkouwer critically remarks that

"Barth is concerned not only with a noetic problem .. but also with an ontic problem."³⁷²

He notes that Barth speaks of faith as an "objective, real, ontological inevitability for all, for every man"³⁷³ and of unbelief as "an objective, real ontological impossibility."³⁷⁴ He observes that Barth's notions of the ontological inevitability of faith and the ontological impossibility of unbelief are grounded christologically in his view of God's election.³⁷⁵ While objecting strongly to the concept of objectivity implicit in such conceptions, Berkouwer does not intend to lead theology towards a subjectivized understanding of divine grace. Rather, he seeks to understand objectivity and subjectivity not as polar opposites but as inter-related elements which are harmonized in a proper understanding of the relationship between grace and faith.

In his criticism of the ontic thinking undergirding Barth's theology, Berkouwer commends Barth for his concentration on Jesus Christ which gives his theology a "triumphant and joyful character (which) did not arise from a superficially optimistic attitude to life."³⁷⁶ Berkouwer, whose own theology is thoroughly christocentric,³⁷⁷ suggests that Barth's use of christology has become highly speculative.³⁷⁸ In insisting that the significance of history must not be devalued,³⁷⁹ Berkouwer is not suggesting that human sin should be taken more seriously than divine grace.³⁸⁰ Rather, he seeks to elucidate the precise nature of the relationship between divine grace and human sin.

This concern with this question is central to Berkouwer's view of divine grace. He writes,

"there can never be a question of too strongly accenting the grace of God. Rather the question is, how shall we lay the proper emphases and how can we most purely praise this grace. It is never the full accent but the wrong accent that obscures the gospel of God's grace."³⁸¹

This concern guides his interpretation of Barth in which he rejects both

"an accentuation of the grace of God in such a manner that this grace hardly seems to be other than a deterministic causal system" ³⁸²

and an interpretation which pleads

"for human freedom and for the significance of human decisions only to end in synergism."383

Insisting that the gospel comes to man in contexts of "calling and invitation, of proclamation and admonition,"384 Berkouwer maintains that

"It is not possible to speak meaningfully about God's grace in Jesus Christ outside of these contexts."385

He emphasizes that

"This context is unable to function, however, when the gospel is overshadowed by an objective message about election which bears no vital relationship to the proclamation",386

insisting that

"When we have a proper regard for Jesus Christ as He is revealed to us in Scripture, no conclusions are possible or warranted which are drawn outside of faith."387

The problem which is raised by Berkouwer's rejection of Barth's ontic approach is whether he has not retreated into a kind of dualism which contains no real perspective concerning the sovereignty of God over the whole of reality. Aware of this difficulty, Berkouwer insists that

"The New Testament .. does not speak less but rather differently about the vanquishing of the demons than Barth does."388

He emphasizes that

"The problem of how rightly to evaluate the power of the demonic host can never be solved abstractly and theoretically. It can be resolved only in Christ, in faith, love, and prayer."389

According to Berkouwer,

"the triumph of grace .. transcends any possibility of human usurpation".390

He emphasizes that

"In this triumph of the kingdom all human self-elevation, all phariseeism, can only be radically condemned."391

The sovereignty of God over the whole of reality may be viewed as the demonstration that salvation is salvation in God's way - by grace through faith. When salvation in God's way - by grace through faith - is properly understood, the believer understands that the sovereignty of God's grace

"is the victory about which we cannot speak abstractly, but only in terms of the conquest of our own rebellious heart." 392

This view does not represent a retreat from the sovereignty of God over the whole of reality to the sovereignty of God within the heart of the believer. Rather, it represents the sovereignty of God over

man. God's way of salvation - by grace through faith - is vindicated over against man's attempt at achieving salvation through his own works.

This view of God's gracious sovereignty over the whole of reality does not require to posit either the inevitability or the probability of universal reconciliation.³⁹³ Rather, it maintains that reconciliation is God's work, accomplished in God's way. Thus, the emphasis is placed on the biblical proclamation of salvation by grace through faith rather than the more speculative idea of universal reconciliation. When the integral relation between grace and faith is upheld against every tendency to see grace and faith as competitors, theology will

"not permit itself to use a "principle" (that of the sola gratia) as a point of departure for all manner of deductions."³⁹⁴

Rather, it will be

"guided by the message of the Scriptures .. that called urgently to faith and warned against unbelief."³⁹⁵

This understanding of the sovereignty of divine grace is not dependent on the idea of

"two parallel lines, divine mercy and divine justice, two divine properties, juxtaposed and sometimes even opposed to one another, each in its own right."³⁹⁶

Such a notion is rejected as

"an unbiblical concept of God (since) The Bible gives no warrant for isolating God's love and God's justice in this fashion."³⁹⁷

The graciousness of divine revelation and reconciliation is emphasized more adequately than in christomonism which threatens to turn a proper emphasis on Christ, the Revealer of God and the Reconciler of men, into a "principle" from which deductions are drawn. This tendency arises from the ontic approach to reconciliation which threatens to turn a properly christocentric theology into a christomonistic philosophy which fails to do justice to several aspects of revealed reality. The revelation of God in creation tends to be obscured, making it difficult to understand man's responsibility and guilt.³⁹⁸ There is a tendency to interpret Scripture so as to support one's own theory.³⁹⁹ The work of the Holy Spirit tends to be devalued when the urgency of faith and the warning against unbelief are not properly emphasized.⁴⁰⁰

(d) Its Understanding of the Nature of Truth

For any truly Christian theology, the idea that Christ himself is the Truth is fundamental.⁴⁰¹ This conviction must lie at the centre of any Christian theology which seeks to make pronouncements about the nature of truth. With the exception of deism, each of the positions analysed in this discussion places a central emphasis on Christ as the Truth. The problem with biblicism and christomonism is not that they fail to acknowledge that Christ is the Truth. Rather, the problem concerns how they emphasize the centrality of Christ as the Truth.

Biblicism tends to obscure this emphasis on Christ as the Truth by its heavy emphasis on the formalized concept of inerrancy. Biblicism requires to be reminded that

"The most potent symbol for the Word of God is not the book itself but the cross of Christ shining through the pages of the open Bible. For it is Jesus Christ whom the Bible attests; it is his salvation that the Bible proclaims and conveys."⁴⁰²

Christomonism views Scripture in close relation to Christ.

Barth rightly points out that

"A witness is not identical with that to which it witness, but it sets it before us."⁴⁰³

Barth places a wholesome emphasis on the actual study of the Bible:

"We must study it (the Bible), for it is here or nowhere that we shall find its divinity."⁴⁰⁴

Barth rightly emphasizes that the Word of God in Scripture cannot be separated from the actual words of Scripture itself:

"God Himself says what the text says, The work of God is done through this text .. If God speaks to man, He really speaks the language of this concrete word of man .. there is .. the hearing of the Word of God only in the concrete form of the biblical word."⁴⁰⁵

Barth correctly recognizes that

"the inspiration of the Bible cannot be reduced to our faith in it." ⁴⁰⁶

Barth rightly maintains that

"Scripture is recognized as the Word of God by the fact that it is the Word of God."⁴⁰⁷

Barth places a proper emphasis on "the doctrine of the witness of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁰⁸

There are, however, problems in the christomonistic interpretation of Scripture. The christomonistic view of revelation appears to introduce an unbiblical tension between the incarnation

and other aspects of divine revelation. Commenting on Hebrews 1:1, the opening verse of

"the epistle which leaves no stone unturned to show that the absolute and exclusive salvation is in Christ," 409

Berkouwer points out that

"This exclusiveness of salvation apparently does not at all conflict with the fact that God's speaking in and by His Son is mentioned together with God's earlier speaking "in divers manners".⁴¹⁰

From the point of view of Barth's view of revelation,

"The Old Testament is the witness to the genuine expectation of revelation".⁴¹¹

Berkouwer suggests that, from the point of view of Scripture itself, the Old Testament might be described as

"God's revelation of that which was not yet actually present."⁴¹²

The general validity of Barth's distinction between witness and revelation⁴¹³ should be acknowledged. His particular use of this distinction may, however, be derived from a christomonistic tendency in his thought rather than from Scripture itself.

When Scripture is interpreted according to the christomonistic conception of revelation, Christ tends to be understood as an almost self-evident truth. Christomonism does not conceive of Christ as a self-evident truth in the same way that deism emphasizes the self-evident truth of a Divine Being. This is most clearly demonstrated in Barth's doctrine of the Spirit in relation to man's appropriation of the truth. Barth's doctrine of the Spirit does not, however, diminish the inherent tendency in christomonism towards diminishing the human contexts in which truth is received or rejected. A close examination of Barth's doctrine of the Spirit shows that it reflects the ontic structure which obscures the "decisive choice"⁴¹⁴ between faith and unbelief which is set before men by Christ the Truth. Despite his stress on the work of the Spirit, Barth has not adequately emphasized that the truth, in Christ, is never purely informative, informing man of a new state of affairs in which he is reconciled to God, irrespective of whether he has faith.⁴¹⁵

Barth emphasizes the work of the Spirit in man's coming to the knowledge of divine revelation.

"God's revelation occurs in our enlightenment by the Holy Spirit of God to a knowledge of His Word."⁴¹⁶

"The work of the Holy Spirit is that our blind eyes are opened and that thankfully and in thankful self-surrender we recognize and acknowledge that it is so."⁴¹⁷

"By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit it becomes possible for man .. to be met by God's revelation."⁴¹⁸

This work of the Spirit, is, however, restricted to the noetic aspect of man's recognition of divine revelation.⁴¹⁹ Ontically, however, the truth concerning man's relation to God stands regardless of man's acknowledgment of it.⁴²⁰

"The truth itself does not undergo any addition. It is the truth, even if man is not in the truth. It is true that God is with us in Christ and that we are His children, even if we ourselves do not perceive it. It is true from all eternity, for Jesus Christ who assumed our nature is the eternal Son of God. And it is always true in time, even before we perceive it to be true. ~~It is still true even if we never perceive it to be true, except that in this case it is true to our eternal destruction.~~"⁴²¹

Barth's intention is to maintain that

"Subjective revelation is not the addition of a second revelation to objective revelation."⁴²²

Barth is entirely correct in opposing subjectivism. His opposition to subjectivism is, however, complicated by his notion of an eternal truth concerning man in virtue of the Incarnation. Barth correctly insists,

"He is not a Spirit side by side with the Word. He is the Spirit of the Word itself who brings to our ears the Word and nothing but the Word."⁴²³

This emphasis is, however, complicated by his tendency

"to transpose .. (justification and sanctification)..⁴²⁴ from the encounter of the individual with Christ in history to the realm of a super history where it is objectified, universalized and all but emptied of subjective response."⁴²⁵

Barth's use of universal categories does not mean that he uncritically accepts "a priori" universalism. Concerning unbelieving man's relation to the truth, he writes,

"if we never perceive it to be true .. it is true to our eternal destruction."⁴²⁶

G.W. Bromiley has summarized Barth's view thus,

"The lie cannot overthrow the truth, but God may finally condemn the liar to live in it."⁴²⁷

Bromiley observes, in Barth's view, "the trend toward an ultimate universalism" while acknowledging that "universalism in the sense of the salvation of all individuals is not a necessary implicate of Barth's christological universalism."⁴²⁸ Bromiley suggests, however, that Barth's reservation with respect to ultimate

universalism is "not really adequate."⁴²⁹

C. Brown suggests that Barth's reservation should have taken place not at the point of drawing possible consequences from his theology but rather at the outset of his christological approach to theology. He maintains that

"the trouble is that all Barth's theology is made to centre around an idea of Christ. But it is not exactly the biblical idea of Christ."⁴³⁰

Contrasting Barth's idea of Christ with the biblical idea of Christ, Brown writes,

"Whilst God deals with men through Christ, Christ is not equally all things to all men. To some He is Saviour, to others He is Judge. According to .. the New Testament .., God deals with men in two ways .. as they are in themselves apart from Christ. And .. as they are in Christ. The two spheres are not identical.. All men are by nature in the first. Some are by grace in the second."⁴³¹

Thus, Brown concludes that

"it is a Christ-idea that often gives Barth his characteristic emphases"⁴³²

and that this has meant that

"Some important aspects of New Testament teaching had to be stretched to make them fit, while others had to be lopped off."⁴³³

The dominance of a Christ-idea in Barth's theology is notable in his treatment of the relation between the truth and man's recognition of the truth. His intention of avoiding subjectivism is clear when he writes:

"It is not that there are, as it were, two different points: at the one the Son of God assumes humanity; and then, at quite a different point, the question of our destiny is necessarily raised and answered. In the one reality of revelation He is, in His assumed humanity, the Son of God from eternity, and we, for His sake, are by grace the children of God from eternity."⁴³⁴

It is, however, questionable whether Barth has not, in his protest against subjectivism, emptied of significance the human contexts in which the truth is received or rejected.

Barth speaks of the work of the Holy Spirit in connection with man's recognition and acknowledgment of the truth. Thus, he denies the idea that truth - in the noetic aspect of man's knowledge of it - is self-evident.⁴³⁵ It is, however, questionable whether man's relation to the truth is adequately understood by Barth. His concern for theological unity - "the one reality of revelation" rather than "two different points"⁴³⁶ - appears admirable. It would appear, however, that this concern has devalued the eternal

significance of the human decision regarding Christ. Barth correctly emphasizes that man's destiny is inseparably connected with Christ. He does, however, fail to adequately emphasize that "the question of our destiny is necessarily raised and answered" ⁴³⁷ in personal confrontation with Christ. ⁴³⁸

The problem with the christomonistic conception of salvation is that its view that the truth concerning mankind is established from eternity tends to detract from the gospel's emphasis on the truth which calls for man's decision. However much emphasis is placed on the Holy Spirit, ⁴³⁹ the christomonistic conception of salvation must be adjudged to have placed the noetic aspect of man's response to the truth under the domination of the ontic aspect of an established truth concerning mankind. When the ontic and noetic elements are understood thus, it becomes most difficult to emphasize the seriousness of the noetic element.

This critique of christomonism does not intend to set human decision, for decision's sake alone, against the christomonistic view. The alternative to an emphasis on decision for decision's sake is not a system which tends to minimize the human decision. The question is not one of human decision versus divine decision. Rather, it concerns the understanding of the truth. The idea of a single truth concerning mankind seems far removed from the biblical emphasis on the decisiveness for his eternal destiny of man's relation to the truth. ⁴⁴⁰

(e) Its Understanding of the Character of Certainty

Certainty is concerned with knowing and is, therefore, closely related to truth. One can only know when the truth has been made known to one. For Barth, God's "Yes" is the all-important decision. ⁴⁴¹ God's gracious affirmation of sinful man is precisely the content of the doctrine of election. This understanding of election leads him to adopt the highly speculative concept of the ontological impossibility of unbelief. ⁴⁴² Thus, he teaches that the unbeliever is one who does not yet know that he has been redeemed by Christ. The believer knows he has been redeemed and the unbeliever does not. ⁴⁴³ Reconciliation has been accomplished objectively and man's lack of subjective knowledge of this reconciliation does not detract from its objectivity. ⁴⁴⁴ This antithesis between believers and unbelievers as those who know and those who do not yet know fails to do justice to the biblical emphasis on the absolute necessity of

faith if men are to pass from death to life.⁴⁴⁵

Barth's view of certainty - despite his emphasis on the work of the Spirit - tends to confuse knowledge and faith. A lack of knowledge is different from a lack of faith. The unbeliever's problem is not that he does ^{not} know that his eternal destiny has already been established according to the "Yes" of God's grace. Rather, it is that he has not believed in Christ in whom there is eternal salvation to be received by faith.

This distinction between knowledge and faith does not mean that knowledge and faith are unrelated. Certainty must be related to the facts made known in the gospel, the making-known of the salvation of God.⁴⁴⁶ This making-known is not, however, the proclamation of a decision which has already been taken by God for every man. Rather, it is the making-known of God's salvation which is to be received by faith. This making-known is "full of exhortation to faith."⁴⁴⁷ The idea that some know while others do not know about an a priori and identical decision taken with respect to both tends to reduce the proclamation of the gospel to "a giving of "information" about a given state of affairs."⁴⁴⁸

Barth acknowledges that the certainty into which the gospel invites men to come is the assurance of faith and that the knowledge which the believer possesses is the experiential knowledge of the God of salvation. The problem arises when these emphases are placed within the ontic structure of his theology. The noetic aspect - man's knowledge of God - is grounded in the ontic aspect - God's determination of man's nature as "an essence unchanged and unchangeable by sin"⁴⁴⁹ - in such a way that the biblical call for conversion appears to be reduced to a call to man to recognize what he already is.

This critique of the ontic structure of Barth's view of certainty should not, because of its emphasis on human responsibility, be construed as suggesting that faith itself provides the basis for Christian assurance. The believer's assurance finds its true foundation in Christ alone. Barth correctly observes this when he writes,

"On principle, we literally cannot assign any other definition of content to the new existence of men convinced by God Himself than that they know, and that they cannot and do not want to know, anything else except that they are in Christ, by Christ."⁴⁵⁰

The point at issue is not here. It is agreed that the believer's experience of assurance, produced by God Himself, is precisely the knowledge that he is in Christ. The point at issue arises when Barth objectifies and universalizes the term "in Christ" in his explanation of the above passage.

"In Christ" means that in Him we are reconciled to God, in Him we are elect from eternity, in Him we are called, in Him we are justified and sanctified, in Him our sin is carried to the grave, in His resurrection our death is overcome, with Him our life is hid in God."⁴⁵¹

Barth's emphasis on "in Him" is entirely correct. His position becomes more complicated when he continues,

"in Him everything that has to be done for us, to us, and by us, has already been done."⁴⁵²

The complication increases as Barth progresses from "for us" to "to us" and then to "by us". His Christ-centredness is admirable yet one wonders whether Barth's particular interpretation of the centrality of Christ has not led to a devaluation of historical experience and human responsibility. The complexity of Barth's view is increased when he identifies 'us' in terms of the whole of mankind.⁴⁵³

In his understanding of the "subjective aspect" of Christian assurance, Barth rightly places the emphasis on "men convinced by God".⁴⁵⁴ This noetic aspect of being convinced by God is rightly described as the subjective aspect since Christian assurance is objectively grounded in Christ rather than man's experience, understood apart from Christ. The ontic structure of Barth's theology is such that it might be inferred that certainty can be deduced from what "has already been done" for us, to us and by us.⁴⁵⁵ without any real reference to what must be done for us - forgiveness, to us - regeneration, and by us - faith. A proper understanding of objective-subjective relations demands that personal salvation is viewed neither as the result of God's action in Christ nor the product of faith itself. Salvation has its foundation in Christ alone without diminishing the absolute necessity of faith for the reception of salvation. The character of certainty must, therefore, be understood in direct connection with this salvation.

Conclusion

Christomonism's characteristic strength - its insistence on the centrality of Christ for all theological thinking - is also its greatest weakness. While its strong emphasis on Christ is

commendable, its precise interpretation of this emphasis requires to be questioned. Christian theology must always keep Christ at the centre for there is no Christian gospel without him. Christian theology must also take care that the Christ of the gospel is not replaced by an idea of Christ which the theological system has itself produced.

The Context and Significance of The Preceding Discussion of Theological Rationalism

Theological rationalism is a constant threat to a proper understanding and proclamation of the gospel. Deism, biblicism and christomonism are forms of theological rationalism, each of which threatens to increase polarization. The theology of revelation outlined in chapter three is essential if the inadequacies in these positions are to be avoided and the problem of polarization overcome. The discussion in chapter five seeks to demonstrate the greater adequacy of the doctrine of revelation presented in chapter three by indicating its strength with respect to the understanding of certain general issues which have proved problematic for the types of theological rationalism discussed in the present chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Problem of Polarization: The Doctrine of Revelation and Modern Thought.

Any doctrine of revelation claiming the attention of modern man must pay close attention to the concerns of modern man. If intellectual integrity is to be maintained, there must be a genuine openness to the questions being asked in the modern world.

Consideration is given here to how a Christian doctrine of revelation might relate to three general fields of study -

(1) Philosophy; (2) Biblical Criticism; and (3) Science.

The selection of these three fields for special attention is closely related to the preceding discussion of deism, biblicism and christomonism. A characteristic feature of the natural theology of deism has been an overestimation of the role of philosophy in theology. Biblicism has been characterized by an inadequate understanding of the role of biblical criticism in theology. Christomonism has been characterized by a failure to provide an adequate theological philosophy of science. While this discussion is not primarily concerned with deism, biblicism and Christomonism, its connection with the preceding discussion should be kept in clear view.

(1) Philosophy

"Philosophy of religion"¹ finds its place within the general discipline of philosophy. Its method is quite different from that of Berkouwer.² The contrast between philosophical method and theological method is not new. It has been present throughout the history of the Christian Church.³

An interesting contribution to this question has been offered by Paul Tillich,⁴ who writes,

"Philosophy and theology ask the question of being. But they ask it from different perspectives. Philosophy deals with the structure of being in itself; theology deals with the meaning of being for us."⁵

He maintains that,

".. the philosopher tries to maintain a detached objectivity, toward being and its structures.."

while

"The theologian .. is .. involved in it (his object).. with .. the love which accepts saving .. personal truth. The basic attitude of the theologian is commitment to the content he expounds."⁶

Tillich seeks to emphasize the unity of truth, emphasizing that reason and faith should not be separated from each other.⁷ His distinction between philosophical method and theological method does, however, reflect an empiricist-romanticist dichotomy which is present in his thought.⁸ Berkouwer's approach does fuller justice to the unity of truth. He emphasizes that the theologian is concerned not only with truth for us but also truth in itself⁹ and that the philosopher cannot confine his attention to truth in itself without seeking truth for us.¹⁰

Tillich's own theology raises the question whether he has not allowed his theology to be dominated by a philosophy alien to the Christian faith. He has acknowledged the soteriological or "for us" element in Christian theology which calls for an involved commitment to saving, personal truth. There is, however, the suggestion that Tillich's interpretation of this soteriological element has been conditioned by a prior commitment to the philosopher's detached objectivity.¹¹ Thus, Tillich's theology tends to produce polarization. Some¹² are greatly enthusiastic about his "answering theology"¹³ while others¹⁴ emphatically reject his theological position.

Tillich's treatment of the relation of theology and philosophy is closely related to his understanding of subject-object relations. Objectivism and objectivity have not, however, been properly distinguished by Tillich.¹⁵ Failure at this point leads to important elements of the Christian gospel being discarded as 'objectivism' rather than being valued as the objective basis for the challenge to Christian commitment. Berkouwer presents a more adequate view of subject-object relations.¹⁶ He offers a more integrated view of theology and philosophy which promises to help overcome polarization.¹⁷ For Berkouwer, the question of truth in itself cannot be asked without also involving the questioner in the question of truth for me.¹⁸ Conversely, to ask the question of truth for me is to find that truth for me has its foundation in truth in itself.¹⁹

Berkouwer's distinctive approach may be illustrated with reference to three standard philosophical questions - (i) God; (ii) man; (iii) evil.

(i) God

Philosophical theology is chiefly concerned with the abstract question of the existence of God. Berkouwer, however, insists that

the question of God should be asked religiously.²⁰ The question of God, asked religiously, sounds like this:

"Who is a God like thee, pardoning iniquity, and passing over transgression...." (Micah 7:8)²¹

To ask the question of God religiously is to see this question as "the one theme that really lies at the bottom of everything else."²² It is to seriously call in question the detached objectivity of philosophical theology²³ by opening oneself to the "different atmosphere" of "Micah's question", the atmosphere of "a latent doxology, a "rapturous hymn" (A. Weiser), that leaves all doubt behind as it revels in admiration of Israel's God."²⁴

While Berkouwer is critical of philosophical theology, contending that, "Many of the questions of our time arise not in doxology but in doubt",²⁵ he does not opt out of ^{the} apologetic task of presenting a reasonable faith to a sceptical and unbelieving world.²⁶ His main criticism appears to be directed against the kind of philosophical approach which seems to be pre-occupied with the God of natural theology. To discuss the traditional arguments for the existence of God is, for Berkouwer, a far cry from asking the question of the living God.²⁷ The God of the old natural theology can be discussed abstractly while the living God can never be removed to such a comfortable distance.²⁸

This contrast between the living God and the God of the proofs is to a certain extent, a matter of emphasis rather than an absolute contrast. Handled sensitively within the context of the Anselmic dictum, "I believe that I may understand", philosophical arguments can perform a positive function in Christian theology. Their function would not, then, be that of "proofs". Rather, they might function as an aid to Christian theological reflection concerning the meaning of faith in God. This positive function within Christian theology rests on the recognition that arguments for God's existence are not viewed as incontrovertible proofs and that the God of Christian theology is the God of revelation whose nature may not be simply read off from such arguments.²⁹ Removed from this context of faith in the God of revelation, the God of the proofs remains a pale reflection of the God³⁰ of the Christian faith. The God of the proofs remains at the periphery of human experience. When the God of the proofs is identified with the God of the Christian faith, agnostic and atheistic philosophers are provided with the ideal excuse for their scepticism and unbelief.

Man can justly be indifferent to a 'God' who has been indifferent to him. Such a 'God' hardly merits man's attention.³¹ If philosophical theology is to be taken seriously by the Christian faith, then it must take seriously the God of the Christian faith - the God who has taken mankind seriously.

Berkouwer insists that the question, "Does God exist?"³² implies the further question, "Who is God?"³³ This latter question is to be understood as

"a most existential and relevant question...not a theoretical question about God's existence as a 'thing'."³⁴

The question of God is, then, a deep question which is raised by the question of meaning and purpose in man's entire experience of life.³⁵ The thoroughly existential character of this question involves man in asking further questions about this God:

"What do we mean by his presence in the world?"

"Where does he reveal himself here and now?"³⁶

Thus when the enquirer asks the question, "Does God exist?" in an attitude of openness, he soon finds himself faced with the question of revelation as a present phenomenon impinging on his life.

An openness to God and his revelation allows the possibility of asking the question of God doxologically. Doxology is the only appropriate alternative to doubt. Doxology does not depend on the foundation of a faith that is built on a natural theology.³⁷ It recognizes the revelation of God in creation.³⁸ Doxology does not assert itself, claiming blind faith³⁹ and blind obedience.⁴⁰ Rather it offers humble and grateful obedience to the God whose revelation brings meaning and purpose to man's life.⁴¹ Doxology does not hanker after the perfect system,⁴² but acknowledges that the revelation of God is richer than any man-made system of thought.⁴³ Doxology does not mean sheer mysticism with its scant attention to the words of Scripture.⁴⁴

Berkouwer's approach to the question of God and his revelation accentuates several important points:

(a) The way of authoritarianism is excluded because of the limitation of man's knowledge⁴⁵ since God, in his revelation, remains hidden.⁴⁶

(b) The way of rationalism is excluded because man's thoughts cannot be compared with those of God whose revelation remains the

mystery of revelation.⁴⁷

(c) The way of mysticism is excluded because God's revelation, though not comprehensive, is clear.⁴⁸

The way indicated by Berkouwer is a way which combines positive commitment and openness.⁴⁹ This way promises to be helpful in overcoming the problem of polarization. It overcomes

(a) the rationalistic impasse between "mindless fideism and faithless rationalism";⁵⁰

(b) the authoritarian impasse between those who accept and those who reject;⁵¹

(c) the scholastic impasse between those who subscribe to the system and those who do not;⁵²

(d) the mystical impasse between those who have the experience and those who do not.⁵³

(ii) Man

For much of modern theology, the question, "What is Man?" must precede the question "Who is God?"⁵⁴ The approach which begins with man can be set against the approach which begins with God,⁵⁵ thus producing the polarization caused by the heteronomy-autonomy dilemma.⁵⁶

Berkouwer's doctrine of man has been commended as

"a middle course between conflicting theologies .. achieved by a strenuous independence of mind."⁵⁷

The basic contours of Berkouwer's doctrine of man are as follows:

(a) Man cannot be understood properly apart from God.

"all sorts of theoretical knowledge ... does not answer the question, "What is man?"⁵⁸

"man's nature .. is not self-enclosed, and .. can never be understood outside of its relation to God.. The relation of man's nature to God is not something which is added to an already complete, self-enclosed, isolated nature; it is essential and constitutive for man's nature, and man cannot be understood apart from this relation."⁵⁹

(b) The divine revelation in creation and reconciliation does not stand over against man as a purely heteronomous factor. Rather, God's sovereignty, rightly understood, forms the true foundation for human freedom.

" The divine act makes room, leaves open the possibility for man's act. That possibility is not absorbed or destroyed by divine superiority, but created, called forth by it."⁶⁰

The divine superiority is

"the personal superiority of love and grace which in man's experience is making room for him to act by not destroying his freedom."⁶¹

(c) Man's relation to God is inescapable so that, even in his guilt, the life of man is affected by divine grace. A proper understanding of the relation between total corruption and common grace helps to overcome the heteronomy/autonomy dilemma.

There is

"not .. some last reserve in man, some untouched and untouchable "part" of man which has escaped the power of sin and corruption .. man through sin became wholly corrupt in his disobedience and enmity .. but he still remained man."⁶²

"The continuance of life" has "its ground not in the relative nature of man's sin but rather in the divine 'nevertheless', in the grace .. of God".⁶³

"Thus, (there is) total corruption, but a limited curse; but the limit of the wrath of God is never derived from a limited corruption ... it is the light which shines in man's total corruption as the light of mercy."⁶⁴

Thus, Berkouwer's theology indicates that while the question of man must always be related to the question of God, it is by no means swallowed up by the question of God. This emphasis on "theological anthropology"⁶⁵ promises to overcome the heteronomy-autonomy dilemma in philosophy -- the "from above -- from below" dilemma in theology.⁶⁶ Berkouwer's understanding of divine-human relations is set over against erroneous uses of the concept of relation, which threaten to produce polarization.

"... the concept of relation has often been interpreted in ways which are erroneous. It can be interpreted to mean that man exists only in relation to God, and God only in relation to man.. But such misuses of the concept may not deter us from giving due weight .. to the Biblical concept of relation to God .. Nor should this be seen as choosing relation over reality .. for such a dilemma .. is not at all in line with the Biblical outlook, which does not sacrifice reality to relation, but shows us reality existing as reality, full created reality, only in this relation to God." ⁶⁷

Berkouwer claims, in his theological anthropology, to deal with "not ... an abstract idea of man, but .. actual man."⁶⁸ He challenges all forms of idealistic anthropology to engage in self-criticism:

"any search for a hidden center in man's nature which turns from the actual man to look for the "real" man must face the question whether this shift is justified."⁶⁹

This challenge is directed to both humanism⁷⁰ and existentialism.⁷¹ The basic challenge to both views centres round the question of evil. Berkouwer insists that "we cannot escape considering evil".⁷² Commenting on the words of Jeremiah 17:9 - "The heart is deceitful above all things ...", Berkouwer notes both the uniqueness ("above all things") and the universality of man's evil.⁷³ He then poses the question

"whether such an "abysmal" view of man is ... not an extreme exaggeration .. but rather a genuine description of the real man..."⁷⁴

He then analyzes contemporary humanism's treatment of man, noting its complexity:

"On the one hand, it is frequently critical of exaggerated optimism about man, and on the other hand, it remains unwilling to give up the humanistic transition from the "actual" man to the "real" man."⁷⁵

He observes that

"contemporary humanism ... does not want to be identified with the earlier, naively optimistic faith in man "yet" in the last analysis humanism's outlook as regards the "real" man still remains."⁷⁶

In his discussion of existentialism, Berkouwer contends that, despite "the existentialist stress on evil in man",⁷⁷ there remains a trace of idealism in "the existentialist emphasis on human freedom."⁷⁸ Thus,

"the problem of the search for the hidden center, the search for the "real" man, again becomes acute."⁷⁹

Berkouwer's criticism of existentialism is that it

"does not continue its concentration on man's misery, but points to his (self-produced) salvation."⁸⁰

In existentialism's "critical evaluation of man",⁸¹ Berkouwer sees

"no thought of a radical unmasking (of man), since at the critical moment the search for the hidden center of man re-appears, which results in finding man, in his freedom, as self-choosing subject."⁸²

Such an anthropology, Berkouwer calls "a new form of humanism."⁸³

Thus, Berkouwer concludes that

"The antithesis to a Biblical view of man lies in idealistic anthropology - even if it incorporates within itself a certain amount of realism and unmasking of man's evil."⁸⁴

Berkouwer's fundamental criticism of both humanism and existentialism concerns their anthropocentrism:

"the essential religious aspect of man's being is lost in a horizontal type of analysis the way to self-knowledge is impossible to traverse with this kind of horizontal analysis, since the decisive dimension of man's nature, his relation to God, remains outside the analysis."⁸⁵

The challenge of this religious view of man to atheistic philosophy is a demanding one. It suggests that there are weighty reasons for questioning the adequacy of the atheistic anthropology. It suggests that the atheistic philosophy has difficulty in remaining within the framework of a horizontal analysis without implying questions which go beyond the scope of such an analysis.⁸⁶ It questions the reasonableness of the atheistic exclusion of the religious dimension from its analysis of human life.⁸⁷ It questions the adequacy of the atheistic analysis of such questions as the origin and destiny of human life.⁸⁸ It questions the adequacy of the atheistic treatment of questions relating to the meaning of human life.⁸⁹

(iii) Evil

Philosophical theology rightly recognizes the problem of evil as a "crucial" issue.⁹⁰

"The issue is whether to assert ... that there is an infinitely good God ... an all-powerful Creator ... and that there are evils in this universe is to contradict yourself."⁹¹

The crucial character of the problem of evil can, however, be seen in a different direction than the question of self-contradiction. The problem of evil can be seen as absolutely crucial because it is man's problem. Man faces the problem of evil existentially and practically, since man is evil.

Philosophical theories are concerned primarily to explain evil, to account for it. Theism must seek to offer such an explanation if it is to continue to speak of an infinitely good and all-powerful Creator-God while taking account of the fact of evil.⁹² Atheism cannot, however, by-pass the problem of evil, as though evil was a problem for theism only. Atheism may criticize the theistic contention that,

"The origin of moral evil lies forever concealed within the mystery of the human race."⁹³

Atheism may not assume that the fact of mankind, whether his moral propensity be good or evil, accompanied with a rejection of belief in God is any less mysterious than the Christian's belief in

both the goodness of God and the sinfulness of man.

Atheism may wish to contend that

"the universe itself is ultimate, and, hence, that whatever science may .. hold to be the most fundamental laws of nature must .. be taken as the last words in any series of answers to questions as to why things are as they are. The principles of the world lie themselves 'inside' the world."⁹⁴

Atheism may not, however, assume that science can be used as a norm by which the validity of Christian belief can be assessed. Any direct connection between science and atheism must be questioned on several grounds.

(a) "Science has as its very basis an unempirical tenet."⁹⁵

The belief that the

"only kind of reality is the observable and testable kind ... is not itself observable and testable."⁹⁶

Thus, there is

"no logical basis for asserting that the scientific kind of truth is the only valid truth."⁹⁷

(b) "(A)t.. its end .. science confronts something transcendent to itself and to its fondest hopes." ⁹⁸

"(S)cience never even reaches its limit in the empirical, natural dimension of reality."⁹⁹

(c) Science, as an intellectual discipline, must be distinguished from scientism, as a religious creed. When this distinction is made, it becomes clear that the real issue is not between science and faith but rather between meaning and meaninglessness.¹⁰⁰

(d) Both religion and science require a belief in meaning. This is perhaps self-evident with respect to religion. It is, however, no less true of science which requires the presuppositions of both a meaningful universe and a goal to be pursued.¹⁰¹

The problem of evil has not, however, been dealt with adequately when a decision has been made between the relative intellectual merits of theism and atheism. The problem of evil is a thoroughly existential problem which confronts man at the very centre of his being.¹⁰² It is at this comprehensive level that Berkouwer makes his valuable contribution to the discussion of the problem of evil, emphasizing that the problem of evil confronts man by the very fact of who he is - man, the sinner. This existential character of the problem of evil is altogether more

serious and more comprehensive than the problem of evil conceived as a primarily intellectual issue involved in the theism-atheism debate. Whether or not one is directly involved in the intellectual debate between theism and atheism, one must still face the problem of evil by virtue of one's being a man. Regardless of whether one's leanings are towards theism or atheism, one must still face the problem of evil, for it is a problem from which man cannot escape.¹⁰³

The problem of evil can be discussed at the level of explanation, accounting for evil. It can, however, be approached from the standpoint of confessing one's own involvement in evil rather than giving a general account of its origin, overcoming evil rather than explaining it. This is the approach taken by Berkouwer.

"Whoever reflects on the origin of sin cannot engage himself in a merely theoretical dispute; rather, he is engaged, intimately and personally, in what can only be called the problem of sin's guilt."¹⁰⁴

Developing the contrast between a "particular guilt" and an "abstract theory", Berkouwer writes,

"Any "causal" explanation .. can only be seen, in the practice of living, as .. an "indisputable" excuse."¹⁰⁵

Whenever one looks at the question of God and evil in terms of "The Biblical A Priori"¹⁰⁶ that God is not the Author of man's sin, one must affirm both the goodness of God and the sinfulness of man. If this dual emphasis is to be regarded as a theodicy,¹⁰⁷ the term 'theodicy' must be understood in a particular way. When one speaks thus of theodicy, one must be careful not to make an overestimation of man's reason, his capacity to fully "justify the ways of God to men."¹⁰⁸ Where reason is given a central place, there is always the danger of seeking to justify man's actions to God.¹⁰⁹

Berkouwer is cautious of adopting the idea of theodicy into his theology. He speaks of "The Problem of Theodicy".¹¹⁰ He sees the problem of theodicy as twofold. Theodicy is generally associated with both the method and the 'God' of natural theology.

"The basic problem of theodicy is defined by the manner in which one approaches reality. One cannot mount from reality to the righteousness of God, because reality can only be known through ... revelation. The Light that illuminates the world is found only in faith ... any attempt to approach God from the basis of empirical reality ... - be it unintended - make(s)

His righteousness a deduction of human reason. This makes all natural theodicy, in spite of its apologetic intent, worthless and unacceptable. Instead of preparing the way for fruitful conversation, ... theodicy only suggests that we try again to reach God by way of natural understanding."¹¹¹

The problem with theodicy's close association with the method of natural theology is increased by theodicy's close association with the "God" of natural theology,

"the fact, that one in theodicy usually concludes with an empty, abstract God concept is already a judgment against this method."¹¹²

The alternative to theodicy is not, however, an abstract notion of sovereignty.¹¹³ Rather, it is the God of revelation - the good God who has revealed His goodness in the justification of sinful men.¹¹⁴ God's revelation of redemption is, for the believer, the foundation of a truly biblical "theodicy".

"it is nowhere more obvious that the notion of God as auctor et causa peccati, (author and cause of sin) is an utter blasphemy than in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ."¹¹⁵

He who understands Christ's statement, "He who has seen me has seen the Father."¹¹⁶ will have no difficulty understanding that God is good. Thus, paradoxically, the justification of God by man is found in the justification of man by God.¹¹⁷

The gospel, then, is the Christian's "theodicy". The gospel provides the proper context for affirming that God is good in his dealings with sinful man.

- The gospel addresses not simply man's mind but "man himself - the whole of man ... in a very profound way."¹¹⁸ such that man's interest in the origin of sin can only be called "existential."¹¹⁹

- The gospel demands that "confession (of guilt) is really the existential application of the Deus non causa peccati (God is not the Author of sin)."¹²⁰

- The gospel demands that such confession is not a mild recognition of imperfection, tinged with self-excuse,¹²¹ since the gospel affirms that Christ died not for the "righteous" or the "good" but for "sinners".¹²²

Thus, when the gospel is seen as the "Divine Theodicy" - God's defence of Himself through his revelation - in contrast to any human theodicy - man's defence of God through his reason -, the problem of evil is seen in its thoroughly existential character.

The question the believer is compelled to ask is not, "How can God permit evil in the world?" but rather "How can God have such love for a sinner like me?"¹²³ Within this context, the believer recognizes that,

"The love of God is both more significant and more inexplicable than the horror of evil. It is also more powerful, for evil is expelled by love .. the conquering love of God which was victorious in the sacrificial life and death of Jesus Christ."¹²⁴

Conclusion

While Berkouwer's approach to such questions as "God", "man" and "evil" differs from that of philosophical theology, it may not be said that Berkouwer is unphilosophical in his approach. Berkouwer is concerned to think clearly about these issues. He is, however, concerned to deal with "actual knowledge of God"¹²⁵ and the perspective such knowledge offers concerning "actual man"¹²⁶ as he faces the "existential"¹²⁷ problem of evil. This perspective refuses to build an independent system and then apply it to the question of God, man and evil.¹²⁸ In adopting such an approach, Berkouwer is allowing his philosophical thinking to be dominated by the reality of God. He recognizes that, in any Christian philosophy, God's revelation of himself must precede man's knowledge of God.¹²⁹ The recognition of the priority of revelation is understood neither in a fundamentalist nor an existentialist context. Rather, it is in a context which affirms "the epistemological relevance of the Holy Spirit,"¹³¹ in both the revelation of God and man's reception of that revelation.¹³²

When the philosophical framework of Berkouwer's theology is understood, it becomes clear how he is able to cope with the criticism that he has not answered the philosophers' questions. Such a criticism of Berkouwer may also be an implicit criticism of the philosophers' way of asking questions rather than Berkouwer's theological method. The consistency with which Berkouwer follows through the conviction that God is the living God is most impressive. He allows the living Object of faith to inform his faith at every point.¹³³ Throughout his theology, he proclaims the living God who cannot be reduced to an abstraction, even for the purposes of theological discussion. His theology proclaims that man has to do with the living God, and, therefore, man cannot be discussed without taking this God into account.¹³⁴

The essential difference between the two approaches is not, then, that one is philosophical and the other is not. Rather, it is a difference of ways of asking questions.¹³⁵ The Christian asks his questions about God, himself and evil in a spirit of faith because he knows that he is not simply ignorant man seeking intellectual knowledge but sinful man seeking divine forgiveness.

Berkouwer's theology does not seem to be particularly suited to overcoming the polarization between the believer and the unbeliever. It appears to accentuate this polarization. This impression is, however, only apparent. Berkouwer's theology promises to overcome polarization within the believing Church of Jesus Christ, so that she might be set free from asking the wrong questions in the wrong way,¹³⁶ and thus be set free for the real task of proclaiming Christ to an unbelieving world. Through such proclamation, the polarization between faith and unbelief is overcome not by argument but through conversion.¹³⁷

(2) Biblical Criticism

The problem of Berkouwer's relation to biblical criticism is highlighted by two contrasting analyses of Berkouwer's theology.

- In 1964, Paul D. Collard raised "The Problem of Authority for Dogmatics in G.C. Berkouwer."¹³⁸ Collard sees, in Berkouwer's theology a rather negative view of biblical criticism. Collard's thesis was written prior to the publication of Berkouwer's major work on Holy Scripture.¹³⁹ Consequently, Collard relies heavily on Berkouwer's 1953 lectures, Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith.¹⁴⁰ He does, however, express the wish that the forthcoming volume on Holy Scripture might contain a more positive appreciation of biblical criticism than Collard finds in Berkouwer's earlier writings. It is argued here that Berkouwer's Holy Scripture¹⁴¹ provides an adequate approach to biblical criticism and that the basis for this approach is found in his earlier work.

- In 1965, H. Berkhof distinguished between three phases in the theological development of Berkouwer - the absolute authority of Scripture, the salvation content of Scripture and the existential direction of Scripture.¹⁴² Berkhof's article, also written prior to the publication of Berkouwer's major work on Scripture, offers a most perceptive analysis of the mature Berkouwer's approach to Scripture.¹⁴³

Of the two analyses, Berkhof's is the more perceptive. He

notes that, in 1932, Berkouwer's doctoral thesis contains both a defence of the absolute authority of Scripture and an appreciation of the salvation content of Scripture.¹⁴⁴ He notes that, in the later phases, Berkouwer emphasizes that the authority of Scripture is not to be denied but interpreted in accordance with the existential intent of Scripture which is concerned with

"the preaching of salvation in Christ, who desires to redeem and renew the sinner".¹⁴⁵

The notion of the existential direction of Scripture should not be set over against the authority of Scripture. Rather, it should be viewed as an interpretative principle which Berkouwer uses to determine what is and what is not in accordance with Scripture.

The idea of the existential direction of Scripture is difficult to define precisely. It is, however, crucial to a proper understanding of Berkouwer's approach to Scripture. The basic idea behind the phrase "the existential direction of Scripture" becomes clear when appropriate instances of Berkouwer's biblical exegesis are observed.

Berkhof points out that, for Berkouwer,

"The perseverance of the saved .. is a confession that cannot stand outside the correlation with faith .. (and that) a causality-theory .. (which) works with ideas that are valid outside of faith.. makes a caricature of it".¹⁴⁶

Discussing Berkouwer's exegesis of Romans 5:12-21, Berkhof suggests that Berkouwer holds that the idea

"that we all fell in Adam either by virtue of juridicial accounting cannot be biblical because it has not an existential but an objective direction".¹⁴⁷

Berkhof¹⁴⁸ regards Berkouwer's understanding of divine election as directly related to his view of the existential character of Scripture. Berkhof views Berkouwer's understanding of eschatology as a clear illustration of the radical nature of his method of correlation.¹⁴⁸ Berkhof's entire analysis of Berkouwer's theological method is characterized by critical appreciation. Criticizing Berkouwer's theological method, Berkhof points out that all our methods together do not constitute 'the' method.¹⁴⁹ Appreciating Berkouwer's theological method, Berkhof maintains that Berkouwer has done more than anyone to draw orthodox Protestantism away from the abyss of scholastic thinking.¹⁵⁰

Berkhof has discerned a significant development in Berkouwer's thought and has sought to describe Berkouwer's characteristic

emphases at different stages in this theological development. In advancing this three-phase form of classification, Berkhof does not wish to deny that there is an essential unity in Berkouwer's thought. The three phases should, then, be regarded as the characteristic emphases at different stages in a single theological development.¹⁵¹

In 1932, Berkouwer summarized the content of his doctor's thesis thus:

"All the problems of the modern German theology can be traced to the surrendering of the absolute authority of Holy Scripture!"¹⁵²

This summary may represent the characteristic emphasis of Berkouwer's thought in 1932. It should not, however, obscure the fact that there is, in Berkouwer's doctoral thesis, both an appreciation of the salvation content of Scripture¹⁵³ and the use of the principle of correlation¹⁵⁴ which forms the basis for Berkouwer's emphasis on the existential direction of Scripture.

Following the three-phase form of classification, Berkouwer's 1938 work Het Probleeme der Schriftkritiek¹⁵⁵ (The Problem of Scripture Criticism) might be interpreted as a thoroughly negative evaluation of biblical criticism, which is seen to be based on human autonomy rather than divine authority. This would, however, be to oversimplify Berkouwer's view of biblical criticism. In Het Probleeme der Schriftkritiek, Berkouwer contends that

"The Reformed Scripture-theonomy cannot be 'proved'. But this theonomy does point the way out of the impasse of subjectivism".¹⁵⁶

The significance of this statement should not be lost. The emphasis on this theonomy suggests that Berkouwer is distinguishing here between a proper theonomy and an incorrect conception of theonomy as sheer heteronomy. The difference between these two types of theonomy is directly connected to the salvation content of Scripture. A view of Scripture which relates itself directly to the salvation content of Scripture points the way out of the impasse of the subjectivism inherent in both sheer heteronomy or sheer autonomy. In Berkouwer's statement that this theonomy cannot be 'proved', there is a clear suggestion of his subsequent theological development in which he came to emphasize increasingly the faith-confession character of theological statements.

This emerging emphasis on the salvation content of Scripture, the inner witness of the Holy Spirit and the inadequacy of

theological rationalism is more clearly in evidence in Berkouwer's 1953 work, Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith.¹⁵⁷ At the outset of Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, Berkouwer states that,

"The confession of the authority of the Word of God can never be isolated from the saving content of the Word of God ... we can never prove the authority of the holy Scriptures by means of a rationalistic apologetic .. only the testimony of the Holy Spirit can convince us of the real authority of the Scriptures .. the Scriptures really are a light to our feet."¹⁵⁸

Thus, Berkouwer, emphasizing both the unity of form and content and the testimony of the Spirit, stresses that the confession of Biblical authority is "not a conservative testimony in fear of facts, but a conviction of faith."¹⁵⁹ Regarding the human character of Scripture, Berkouwer maintains that the Bible is

"a human document, written by holy men .. not a 'vox celestis', a heavenly voice .. that human beings do not take part in .. It is the Word written by men .. The Word of God .. entering the world .. going the historic way .. We hear the human voice and in that human voice we hear the voice of the Lord."¹⁶⁰

In 1953, Berkouwer's view of the authority of Scripture is closely linked to the clarity of Scripture (i.e. the gospel comes through).¹⁶⁰ Berkouwer's real concern is to prevent people saying,

"the revelation, the Word is far away; we cannot discover the Lord".¹⁶¹

From this perspective, it becomes possible to understand the deepest intent of the early Berkouwer's strong protest against biblical criticism. From this perspective, it becomes possible to understand how the later Berkouwer has come to make the existential direction of Scripture his characteristic emphasis. He is concerned that the gospel is not obscured by an approach to Scripture which does not focus attention sufficiently on the existential relevance of divine revelation.

When Berkouwer's emphasis on the existential direction of Scripture is set in the context of the entire range of his theological writings, it becomes clear that it is directly developed from concepts found in all his writings and that it does not imply any denial of earlier emphases. Each of Berkouwer's 'three phases' are included in the mature Berkouwer's approach to Scripture. Berkouwer holds that in the words of Scripture, God addresses man, with divine authority and existential relevance, concerning divine salvation.

When Berkouwer's approach to Scripture is set in the context of the theological polarization regarding biblical criticism, its importance becomes clear. Berkouwer's approach to Scripture enables him to transcend the polarization between conservative and critical rationalism. His emphasis on the gospel coming through to man with existential relevance enables him to overcome the polarization between an excessive confidence in a particular theory of biblical inerrancy and an excessive confidence in the 'assured results' of biblical criticism. Berkouwer is able to challenge both forms of rationalism because he refuses to assume the stance of the unquestioned subject (the theologian) investigating its object of study (Scripture). This rationalistic stance can be found in conservative rationalism as well as critical rationalism. An ostensibly biblical system of theology can be developed and defended in a highly rationalistic manner which fails to adequately appreciate the nature of faith which radically affects man in his entire existence.

Contrasting Berkouwer's theological method with conservative rationalism, Smedes writes,

"orthodox Reformed theology has tended often to do theology by deducing propositions from objective truths given by revelation. The difference between theological truths and .. mathematical truths lay in their source: the former were derived from divine revelation and the latter from natural reason. Faith entered, only at the beginning of the enterprise, as an assent to the truthfulness of the statements. Thus, theology did not do all of its work guided, limited, and determined constantly by the obedience of faith. Berkouwer has insisted that theology, each step of the way, be in dynamic and determinative relationship to faith."162

Emphasizing that Berkouwer's criticism of conservative rationalism is advanced not on the basis of critical rationalism but of the nature of the gospel which affects man's entire existence, Smedes writes,

"Berkouwer insists that theology be shaped and formed by the nature of the thing it talks about - the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel comes to man as an urgent summons and merciful invitation to enter into a grateful relationship with God the Father through Christ. It does not come as a matter-of-fact disclosure of a set of objective, abstract truths about the state of affairs beyond man."163

The existential direction of Scripture is to be understood in direct relation to this purpose of the gospel - to lead man into a relationship with God which affects his entire existence.

While this type of 'existentialism' is concerned with the entirety of human existence, it is not concerned exclusively with human existence.¹⁶⁴ Smedes observes this important aspect of Berkouwer's thought:

"Berkouwer rejects the naive modernistic notion that faith creates theological truth. But he does recognize that truth is Christian truth only within the framework of faith. The objective reality of God and Christ, the objective reality of grace and salvation, is the Christian truth, not in isolation, not abstracted from, but in relationship to faith. Theological truth, therefore, is not a set of general propositions about "things as they are", like mathematical formulas, valid for everyone and open to discussion by everyone. Theological truths are true only as believed and obeyed truths. This is the case with theology because it is the case with the Gospel.. for this reason, theology always ought to be done, and in every part, in co-relationship with faith."¹⁶⁵

When the existential direction of Scripture is thus understood, it becomes possible to understand the present significance of the sovereignty of divine revelation over man's entire existence in a way that has not been sufficiently emphasized by conservative rationalism. Man may not remove the existential challenge of divine revelation to a convenient distance by means of either a critical rationalism which constantly subjects Scripture to the strictures of man's reason or a conservative rationalism which, in the interests of theological development, effectively removes Scripture from the context of a faith that is filled with existential relevance. Critical rationalism results in a rather arbitrary reduction of the content of the biblical message. Conservative rationalism results in a rather arbitrary distortion of the context in which the biblical message is received. Both tendencies find their source in a tendency to overestimate man's reason. Where man's reason is allowed to think about divine revelation in a way that is not controlled by both the content and context of that revelation, the character of that revelation becomes obscured. When theological statements are seen in relation to both the reality of divine revelation and the relation of faith in which that revelation is received and confessed as reality,¹⁶⁶ theology becomes able to develop a more adequate approach to Scripture than has been propounded by advocates of either conservative or critical rationalism.

Berkouwer propounds a view of biblical criticism which promises to overcome theological polarization. Keeping the gospel

at the centre of his thinking, he maintains that it is possible to acknowledge that there are

"hesitations and doubts .. present at many points (which) do not in themselves indicate a deep and final uncertainty."¹⁶⁷

This hearing of the gospel in the reading of Scripture does not involve the presupposition of a "vox celestis", a heavenly voice .. that human beings do not take part in."¹⁶⁸ Such a view would exclude biblical criticism. One hears the gospel in Scripture as one acknowledges what Scripture is, not as what one speculates about what Scripture should be.¹⁶⁹ The recognition that in Scripture, one has ".. the Word written by men ... The Word of God .. going the historic way"¹⁷⁰ leads to the view that the character of Scripture demands biblical criticism.¹⁷¹ When it is recognized, however, that, "We hear the human voice and in that human voice we hear the voice of the Lord",¹⁷² there remains an imperative to approach the Bible with a "childlike faith."¹⁷³

Berkouwer contends that such a childlike faith is not put forward as "a cheap solution."¹⁷⁴ Rather, it is the only appropriate response to the gospel,¹⁷⁵ and is a direct consequence of the belief that we hear the voice of the Lord in the human voice.¹⁷⁶ The close connection between Scripture and its message demands that man's relation to Scripture should be understood in terms of obedience.¹⁷⁷ The reading of Scripture with a view to obedience to its message is not to be thought of as "a form of naiveté whereby serious questions and reflections are out of the picture."¹⁷⁸ Childlike faith does not mean "the attitude of one who walks with closed eyes."¹⁷⁹ Childlike faith seeks for the gospel in Scripture, while fully acknowledging that

"..there is much left in Scripture that arouses doubt .. there are and will be questions and struggles for a correct understanding of Scripture, objections and knotty problems that ought not to be disguised or hidden from view."¹⁸⁰ Thus, the obedience of faith does not involve the exclusion of real questions about Scripture.¹⁸¹

Berkouwer's positive attitude to both biblical criticism and towards the Bible as the Word of God in the words of men runs through the whole of his Holy Scripture. The basic principle upon which he builds this view revolves round the use of the term "listening":

- Page 131 -

"listening to God's voice does not need to be threatened by scientific research into Holy Scripture. Man's listening is only threatened when he stumbles over the 'skandalon'".¹⁸²

Thus, Berkouwer contends that the real question is whether one exercises faith in the Christ to whom the gospel, by the Spirit and through Scripture, points. Berkouwer argues that such a position is not based on a dualistic separation of history and faith. Rather, it is the position most in harmony with the specific purpose of Scripture - to point men to Christ.¹⁸³

This important question of faith and criticism is not dealt with incidentally by Berkouwer. He devotes a whole chapter to the subject.¹⁸⁴ Berkouwer distinguishes between two different types of criticism.

First, there is the kind of criticism that exalts itself above God, turning against the message of the gospel. This kind of criticism is to be resisted,¹⁸⁵ since it presents an obstacle to the knowledge of God.

Second, there is the kind of criticism that recognizes "the way God speaks to us in His Word - in the form of a witness through human words."¹⁸⁶ Such a recognition legitimizes Biblical research as a duty.¹⁸⁷

The former type of criticism is to be overcome by obedience. Berkouwer emphasizes that,

"When God speaks, we are not dealing merely with a margin of reliability alongside another margin of unreliability."¹⁸⁸

God's Word calls for a total response:

"It is not possible to exalt oneself above God's speaking ... God's Word can only have one subjective correlative, namely, faith."¹⁸⁹

This faith is not blind faith.¹⁹⁰

"..the authority of God's Word is not being enforced like an arbitrary external authority.."¹⁹¹

It is, through the Spirit's "wooing and conquering authority"¹⁹² that man is drawn in his entire existence to believe the gospel. With this view of biblical authority, Berkouwer is able to maintain that

"Faith in terms of a sacrifice of the intellect is a perversion of the Christian faith and of obedience."¹⁹³

In his rejection of blind obedience, he insists that,

".. a sacrifice of the intellect is a dangerous view of faith; for faith would then be called to a decision without inner conviction regarding the object and content of the faith to which man is called." ¹⁹⁴

Berkouwer insists that there is not "an abandoning of human thought in the encounter with the revelation of God."¹⁹⁵ He is clearly not advocating the repression of real questions. He is arguing that man's rationalized 'proofs' of the Bible's authority or 'evidences' to support its authority are no 'answers' to real questions. They do not establish the objectivity of the Christian faith, for they are based on a mistaken conception of the objectivity and authority of the gospel. As the gospel is proclaimed and believed, it will show its own authority - an authority which is not dependent on hermeneutical principles but on the power of God. Involvement in the complex business of hermeneutics is unavoidable,¹⁹⁶ yet hermeneutics must serve and not lord it over the gospel.¹⁹⁷

Berkouwer's contribution to the question of biblical criticism could be summarized thus:

(i) Biblical criticism is neither excluded nor is it given an undue importance. Thus, the polarized positions of conservative and critical rationalism are avoided.

(ii) The words of the Bible are taken seriously.¹⁹⁸ Thus, the polarized positions of docetism¹⁹⁹ and spiritualism²⁰⁰ are avoided.

(iii) The rejection of dubious notions such as absolute precision,²⁰¹ a false objectivity which excludes subjective interpretation,²⁰² the necessary reliability of incidental matters not related to the specific purpose of Scripture²⁰³ and the necessity of a formalized concept of inerrancy for the purposes of developing a water-tight system of doctrine²⁰⁴ opens the way for the development of a concept of reliability which overcomes a superficial and unnecessary polarization between reliability and unreliability.²⁰⁵

When biblical criticism is viewed as a servant of Jesus Christ, it may be affirmed that

"new questions will no longer appear to be like the wild power of the storm abruptly rebuked by Christ (Mk 4:39) but will be questions that force us to continue to listen."²⁰⁶

Opposition to biblical criticism does not ensure faith and obedience. Biblical criticism need not lead to doubt and despair. The polarized attitudes of faith and unbelief are not to be identified with the stance taken with respect to biblical criticism. The issues of faith and unbelief are related to man's total response to the divine calling to believe the gospel and live in

its light.

(3) Science

Christian theology, if it is to be taken seriously in the modern world, must carefully consider its relation to science. The relation between faith and science has frequently been characterized by polarization. For example, the positions already discussed - biblicism, (residual) deism, and Christomonism - are unable to do full justice to the complex relation between faith and science.

Biblicism²⁰⁷ tends to treat the Bible as though it were an authority on scientific matters. Biblicism claims to oppose any dualism between faith and science.²⁰⁸ It does, however, tend to use science as a bulwark for its own positions while criticizing, on dogmatic grounds, other interpretations of scientific research.²⁰⁹ This view demonstrates "a mentality whose trust in Scripture is built on its "supernaturalness", its suspension above all time and humanness."²¹⁰ With its "rationally developed infallibility of Scripture",²¹¹ biblicism tends "to abandon every new question about interpretation because of the danger involved"²¹² for its view of Scripture. From this stance, biblicism has developed a self-supporting view of science, by which it enjoys the support of science without being threatened by it. While this view may be highly consistent, given the biblicist position, it does not offer any real promise of overcoming the faith-science polarization.

(Residual) deism²¹³ adopts an inadequate view of the faith-science relation. Where theology retains residues of deism, its understanding of Christian faith revolves around a rationalistic view of science.²¹⁴ There is an alleged opposition of any dualism between faith and science.²¹⁵ Christian faith is, however, interpreted in a way that presents little significant challenge to the modern scientist's world view. The course followed is rather "condescending to Scripture and its message."²¹⁶ While this position claims to have considerable value as an "answering theology",²¹⁷ it is questionable whether its answer to man's question is significantly determined by "kerygmatic theology".²¹⁸ It has tended, rather, to be determined by the modern ethos which has placed severe restrictions on the kerygma.

Christomonism has been criticized for its inability to provide

a strong impulse toward scientific progress.²¹⁹ The basic failing of christomonism has been its concentration on a truncated view of theology's scope.²²⁰ If theology is to be able to take science more seriously, there requires to be a clearer recognition of the universal character of theology.²²¹ The precise interpretation of the universal character of theology has been disputed. Pannenberg wishes to discard the term "general revelation"²²² while advocating a form of "natural theology".²²³ Berkouwer, however, wishes to retain the concept of "general revelation" while resisting the idea of "natural theology".²²⁴ The present argument is that general revelation rightly understood forms an integral part of a complete doctrine of revelation while natural theology rightly comes under the criticism of Barth that it threatens the true character of grace.²²⁵ Barth's failure to provide an adequate understanding of general revelation makes it difficult for science to be taken with sufficient seriousness.²²⁶

Any position which tends to bolster the faith-science polarization, however unintentionally, "must be avoided".²²⁷ If both sides of the faith-science dilemma are to be taken seriously, there needs to be a recognition of three important theological principles:

- the specific character of Scripture as witness to Christ;²²⁸
- the free sovereignty of God over his creation and in his revelation;²²⁹
- the revelation of God in created reality.²³⁰

Where these theological principles are in full view, it becomes possible to do full justice to the complex relation between faith and science.

Berkouwer's doctrine of revelation seeks to emphasize those important principles and thus overcome the shortcomings of biblicism, (residual) deism and christomonism. When these principles are taken together, there is less of a tendency to create an implicit dualism between science and faith, as though faith must oppose, accommodate or ignore science. The attitudes of opposition, accommodation and indifference to science each display an implicit dualism between faith and science.²³¹ Berkouwer's concept of science does not contain these dualistic nuances of opposition, accommodation or indifference. Rather, it is a much broader concept, as J. Rogers notes in a translator's note to Holy Scripture,

"Berkouwer's concept of a science is equivalent to our notion of an academic discipline. Thus, studies in the humanities and social sciences as well as the natural sciences are included. Theology is also a science, since it proceeds by orderly, academic research and reflection."²³²

Berkouwer's definition of theology ^{lies} within the sphere of this concept of science:

"Theology is scientific reflection on the normativity of revelation for faith."²³³

Berkouwer's view of theology contains certain important implications for this discussion of the polarization of faith and science.

- Revelation is not identified exclusively with a certain interpretation of biblical authority.
- Revelation, not the modern ethos, is normative for faith.
- Revelation is not restricted to a narrow christomonistic scope.

Thus, general revelation maintains the motive for scientific research. Redemptive revelation does not compete with scientific research though it does not allow for autonomous reason to exclude faith.

From Berkouwer's broad understanding of science and his understanding of theology as a particular science, there are several important points which can be made concerning the faith-science relation.

(i) The unity of knowledge is maintained. Science may be viewed as an investigation of God's creational revelation. This investigation leads the scientist to the limits of his particular method.²³⁴ Thus, the question of the ultimate meaning of the discoveries of science is raised. Recognizing both the unity of knowledge and the limits of science, Berkouwer writes of

"one pretension not found in the circles of science itself, except for odd cases of vain scientific idealism which are convinced that the light of Scripture has been permanently extinguished by science."²³⁵

When this emphasis on the unity of knowledge and the limits of science within the total framework of man's existence is appreciated, the scientist will be humble before his findings, acknowledging that they do not, of necessity, demand any particular metaphysical or non-metaphysical interpretation. Such humility is a basic presupposition if "the secret of the gospel"²³⁶ is to be understood.²³⁷

(ii) The proper relationship between faith and science does not depend on artificial devices of harmonization. This point is set in contrast to the procedures of biblicism and (residual) deism. Biblicism requires to be warned against "exegetical bungling" that infers too hastily that there is a conflict between science and Scripture without sufficient serious study.²³⁸ (Residual) deism requires to be challenged as to whether its theology has not accommodated itself so much to scientism (science elevated to the level of a religious creed) that it is barely recognizable as Christian theology.²³⁹ There is also a challenge to christomonism. It is the challenge to come out of a theological 'ghetto'²⁴⁰ and appreciate the truly religious significance of science in its investigation of God's creational revelation.

(iii) The basic unity between faith and science is grounded in the nature of divine revelation. Theological science does not compete with the natural and social sciences, as though the former represented God while the latter represented man.²⁴¹ Rather, both have a divine-human character. This emphasis is central to Berkouwer's doctrine of Scripture. He speaks of divine revelation coming to mankind "through the prism of humanity travelling the Spirit's paths."²⁴² This understanding is set against the idea that "the immediate voice of God is miraculously direct."²⁴³ In presenting this view, Berkouwer contends that the authority of Scripture is not relativized by its total involvement with the human.²⁴⁴ Rather, Scripture demonstrates its authority in and through the human.²⁴⁵ An extension of this principle of the divine-human character of revelation may be extended to the fields of natural and social science since God is revealed in the whole of created reality. From this perspective, the faith-science relation need not be seen as a God-man polarization. Rather, both may be seen as involving both the divine and the human. When this perspective is considered seriously, the humble scientist will recognize that his research can have a truly religious character as its "transcendent element . . . does cry aloud for God" since "the immanent rationality in nature does not provide us with any explanation of itself."²⁴⁶

The Context and Significance of the Preceding Discussion of the Doctrine of Revelation and Modern Thought.

An adequate doctrine of revelation is essential if theology is to confront the challenge of philosophy, biblical criticism and the natural and social sciences. If the doctrine of revelation is presented in a one-sided way, this will lead to polarization. This has been noted with respect to three inadequate theologies.

(i) Biblicism tends to minimize other aspects of the doctrine of revelation by its insistence on a particular interpretation of biblical authority.

(ii) (Residual) deism tends to lose sight of the freedom of God in his revelation because of its preoccupation with being an "answering theology" without a sufficient foundation in "kerygmatic theology".

(iii) Christomonism fails to do justice to creational revelation because of its proper but imbalanced emphasis on Christ, making him not only the centre of revelation but the sole content of revelation.

An adequate doctrine of revelation involves a proper emphasis on its creational, incarnational, biblical and proclamatory aspects, accompanied by the indispensable conviction that the Spirit of God is working all-pervasively throughout the whole process of divine revelation. Such a view of divine revelation has important consequences for the avoidance of polarization in theology's relations with philosophy, biblical criticism and the natural and social sciences.

(a) Philosophical questions concerning God, man and evil are seen in their full existential significance rather than as merely intellectual questions.

(b) Biblical criticism is understood in the context of the significance of Scripture for man's entire existence rather than in the limited context of literary criticism.

(c) The natural and social sciences are understood as research which raises the ultimate question concerning the meaning of man's existence in the universe.

When philosophy, biblical criticism and the natural and social sciences are seen in terms of the ultimate search for life's meaning, they need not become areas of polarization. When these disciplines are understood as faith's tools, there is a way of avoiding the polarization between simply ignoring these disciplines

and making theology subservient to these disciplines.

The importance of a proper approach to philosophy, biblical criticism and the natural and social sciences is directly related to the understanding of the message of revelation in the modern world. A proper understanding of the doctrine of revelation is essential to the communication of that message in the modern world. In the remaining chapters, attention is directed to the process of communication which is understood thus:

The message of God's grace is to be communicated by the church of Jesus Christ to the whole man.

This statement may be regarded as a summary of the discussion contained in the remaining chapters, which aim at providing an elaboration of its meaning. Chapter 6 aims at providing a doctrine of grace which avoids the dangers of polarization which have plagued this doctrine historically. Chapter 7 aims at presenting an understanding of the church which takes seriously the problem of polarization as it has faced the church historically. Chapter 8 emphasizes the importance of the whole man in view of the polarization which has developed between different methods of communicating the Christian message.

CHAPTER SIX

The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to the Doctrine of Grace.

A proper understanding of the doctrine of revelation must be properly grounded in an adequate doctrine of grace. It must also provide a strong impulse towards the communication of the divine revelation of grace. This chapter is concerned with understanding the doctrine of grace and its communication.

This important subject is dealt with by Berkouwer in his work, Divine Election.¹ His concern is to speak "in the light of the full context of the gospel message".² This emphasis immediately places divine election into a direct relationship to the other great gospel themes inherent in divine revelation.³ Berkouwer is concerned to deal seriously with "the questions that have come up in the course of a long history and with the dangers that have threatened the doctrine of election".⁴ His analysis of "The Doctrine of Election in Historical Perspective"⁵ leads directly into questions concerning the relation of election to arbitrariness, mystery, and Christ.⁶

In his treatment of "Election and Arbitrariness",⁷ Berkouwer analyzes various Biblical passages - notably Romans chapters 9 to 11 -⁸ concluding that,

"It is not difficult to discover throughout Scripture the lines of the pattern of God's acts and to point out many passages in which the concept of arbitrariness is implicitly or explicitly contradicted."⁹

He stresses that,

"It is of great importance that in the revelation concerning election the light of non-arbitrariness shines forth."¹⁰

When it is understood that divine election has nothing to do with arbitrariness since "God is the complete opposite of all untrustworthiness and inconstancy",¹¹ it becomes possible to understand divine grace in a way which overcomes the heteronomy-autonomy dilemma.¹²

On the question of "Election and the Hiddenness of God",¹³ Berkouwer insists that God's hiddenness must never be contrasted with his revelation, as though the reality of his revelation was made dubious by his hiddenness.¹⁴ He rejects the idea of election as a hidden decree in the sense of the distinction

between a hidden and a revealed will of God.¹⁵ The reliability of Christ's revelation must not be threatened by the idea of a hidden election behind the clear¹⁶ light of revelation. The notion of a hidden election is objectionable since it separates election from God's grace in Christ.¹⁷ With this emphasis on Christ as the revelation of God, the mirror of election, Berkouwer is able to reject the "concept..of the God who teasingly lets just enough be known of Himself to throw men into despair of ever knowing the real, hidden God."¹⁸ He rightly insists that,

"God..is hidden from corrupt eyes, from the proud and disdainful, but revealed to those who in confession of sin and receptive faith are open to His grace."¹⁹

Thus, he is able to write,

"Salvation is preached in Christ: it is not necessary for one to travel a long way to overcome its hiddenness: he should simply accept this gift in faith."²⁰

Berkouwer's treatment of the relation of election to arbitrariness and the hiddenness of God leads him to the centre of the biblical message of election - election in Christ.²¹ Emphasizing the trustworthiness of the revelation of God in Christ,²² he seeks to show that

"the joyful gospel of God does not lose..its true gladness.. because of election."²³

He contends that

"it is better 'not to speak of another decree lying behind and beyond the gracious election in Christ' because that would too much detach election from Jesus Christ."²⁴

He further insists that,

"To isolate election from the love of God in Christ is dangerous..because it is impossible afterwards to connect the two."²⁵

This matter of understanding election in its integral relation to God's love is a matter of great urgency for the communication of the message of God's grace since

"The gospel can be preached with real urgency and challenge only when the mirror of election is a clearly reflecting mirror."²⁶

The importance of a proper understanding of election and its practical implications for the preaching of the gospel²⁷ is clearly seen in Berkouwer's attempt to overcome the polarization which exists between Reformed scholasticism and universalism.²⁸

He stresses that both positions undermine the true relation between the doctrine of election and the preaching of the gospel since both are based on a faulty objectivity-subjectivity scheme, which conceives of divine sovereignty and human freedom in terms of the competition-motif, as though divine sovereignty excluded human freedom.²⁹

In his analysis of these apparently contrasting³⁰ positions, Berkouwer insists that "we are not forced to make a choice here".³¹ He rejects this dilemma by "repudiating the schema of objectivity-subjectivity on which it rests."³² He agrees with Barth's criticism of any interpretation of election which is guilty of making God arbitrary by its idea of election as a hidden decree.³³ He does, however, question whether Barth has not left himself open to similar charges to those made against Reformed scholasticism in relation to the preaching of the gospel and the human response to that gospel.

While Barth has rejected an "a priori" universalism,³⁴ Berkouwer astutely remarks that

"There is no alternative to concluding that Barth's refusal to accept the apokastasis cannot be harmonized with the fundamental structure of his doctrine of election."³⁵

The structure of Barth's doctrine of election reflects "a strong universalistic strain" which "runs through the whole of Barth's dogmatics."³⁶ This universalistic strain leaves Barth open to the charge of relativizing or jeopardizing the decisive gravity of the proclamation of the gospel no less than Reformed scholasticism,³⁷ since the human decision of faith or unbelief ultimately has no eschatological significance.³⁸ Berkouwer's attempt to overcome the polarization between Reformed scholasticism and universalism is clearly related to his accentuation of the primacy of the pulpit³⁹ which has led to a consistent emphasis on "the importance of preaching as a criterion in appraising theological concepts."⁴⁰ His concern with overcoming this polarization is not, however, a matter of sheer pragmatism. His concern is rather to show that an "urgent kerygma" is truly grounded in "election finding concrete expression in Christ."⁴¹

When Jesus' statement, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"⁴² is given central significance for the understanding of election, the preaching of the gospel can proceed with both joy and urgency. By relating the doctrine of election to the Jesus of

the Gospels,⁴³ the preaching of the gospel can be freed from the despair inherent in Reformed scholasticism⁴⁴ and the presumption implicit in universalism.⁴⁵ Embedded in the incarnate Person of Jesus Christ is a universal love,⁴⁶ which comes to men as "the warning of the gospel.. the compelling voice of a guide, of the gospel itself."⁴⁷ From this understanding of election in Christ, Berkouwer denies the necessities of both equal ultimacy and universalism. He affirms that there is

"only one "necessity" - the necessity that confronted Paul as he faced the future: "Necessity (anangke) is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Cor.9:16)."48

Thus, Berkouwer answers the question of how many (few or all) will be saved by citing the words of Jesus.

"Over and over the question addressed to Jesus arises in the history of the church: "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" Jesus' answer seems so noncommittal, so evasive: "Strive to enter by the narrow door" (Luke 13:23f.). But this evasiveness is only apparent. This is the answer to this question. As long as we see only in a mirror, in riddles, many questions will remain unanswered. But this question has been answered, once for all time."49

Berkouwer's treatment of election raises the question of his view of the idea of predestination. The success of Berkouwer's attempt to overcome polarization in the understanding of the doctrine of grace will depend to a large extent on his ability to offer an adequate interpretation of the predestination language of Scripture. Predestination is a difficult concept to understand and has to be interpreted carefully.⁵⁰ Berkouwer faces the question directly concerning the relation between his understanding of election in Christ and the idea of predestination.

"Is this perhaps a "kerygmatic" trend in Paul's thinking, running parallel to a "predestinational" trend or is there a harmony in which the one is not limited by or ruled out by the other..? It is clear that this harmony is essential for all of the gospel. It is the foundation for the entire gospel message."⁵¹

The word "predestination" has two elements inherent in it. It has the 'pre' element, referring to the past, and the 'destination' element, referring to the future. The concept of predestination, understood in the context of the full gospel message, is not, however, bound in the past because of its 'pre' element. Rather, it points to the unity of past, present and future in the salvation of God, pointing to the love of God as the eternal source of salvation, the call to faith as the present

challenge of salvation, and eternal life as the future hope of salvation.⁵²

The present argument is that both Reformed scholasticism and universalism threaten to destroy the unity of past, present and future in the salvation of God. Each has created a hiatus between the past and the future, by teaching that the ultimate future is predetermined by the ultimate past. These positions may be contrasted since Reformed scholasticism teaches "election and reprobation, the predetermination of both the good and the wicked to their final ends."⁵³ while universalism teaches that "in the end all beings will be saved".⁵⁴ They bear a strong similarity in that both threaten to undermine the ultimate significance of the present in which man is called to respond to the gospel.

In the remainder of this chapter a view of predestination is presented in which the unity of past, present and future is preserved, thus avoiding the polarization between Reformed scholasticism and universalism. This discussion falls into three sections:

- (1) Understanding the 'pre' element in predestination;
- (2) Understanding the 'destination' element in predestination;
- (3) Understanding the significance of the present in view of predestination. The third of these sections gives special attention to the relation between predestination and the preaching of the gospel and the decision of faith for which that preaching calls.

(1) Understanding the 'pre' element in predestination.

It has already been maintained that neither Reformed scholasticism nor universalism is able to bridge the hiatus between the past and the future, since both contain the seeds of determinism within their⁵⁵ doctrine of grace. Berkouwer has aimed at overcoming this hiatus and freeing his doctrine of grace from residual traces of determinism. It has, however, been argued that Berkouwer has not offered an adequate exposition of the 'pre' element in predestination. In his Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election, Balance or Imbalance?,⁵⁶

A.L. Baker remarks that

"Berkouwer desires to maintain a dynamic concept of election, but instead lays most of his emphasis on the human response to the gospel. He continually warns against "an objectivized election that goes its own way without consideration for faith and unbelief."⁵⁷

Maintaining that Berkouwer has failed to expound the "before" element in election, Baker insists that

"Berkouwer cannot communicate what the Bible means by "election" if he neglects to explain such a determinative concept."⁵⁸

Certain related criticisms are made by Carl Bogue in his A Hole in the Dike: Critical Issues of Berkouwer's Theology.⁵⁹ Bogue quotes the following passage from Berkouwer's Divine Election

"Scripture showed us that in the doctrine of God's election the issue is not a decretum absolutum, abstracted from Jesus Christ, neither a necessitas rerum which cannot be changed under any circumstances, nor a dark and irrational power of the potentia absoluta. Rather, Scripture points in its doxologies and songs in praise of the free election of God."⁶⁰

Bogue makes the following comment on this passage:

"One gets the impression that Berkouwer tends to be a Calvinist in election and an Arminian in rejection. But if God's election is not something "which cannot be changed" (i.e. election can be changed?), even his doctrine of election as Calvinistic is suspect."⁶¹

Bogue paraphrases Berkouwer's position thus:

"Faith sees things differently, not in causality but in doxologies that point to a way that is true but not transparent to rational considerations."⁶²

He then proceeds to make the following criticism of Berkouwer's position:

"We have yet to apprehend adequately what that means, but apparently one must risk the loss of objective certainty and take the existential leap of faith into the realm of theological (noumenal?) understanding."⁶³

In his concluding paragraph, Bogue contends that

"Berkouwer is influenced by the "philosophy of the utter relativism of history" with the "modern view" of a "would-be autonomous man."⁶⁴

and concludes that Berkouwer has placed revelation and theology "beyond the realm of phenomena, with "in faith" becoming equivalent to "supra-history".⁶⁵

Both Baker and Bogue show distinct displeasure with Berkouwer's treatment of "reprobation" and with his interpretation of the Canons of Dordt.⁶⁶ Each of their criticisms revolves around the question of the 'pre' element in predestination. A careful discussion of these criticisms is required before Berkouwer's treatment of the 'pre' element can be properly understood.

(i) Baker contends that "Berkouwer.. lays most of his emphasis on the human response to the gospel."⁶⁷ While Berkouwer places a proper emphasis on the human response to the gospel, it may not be said that he lays most of his emphasis there. Berkouwer repeatedly places the emphasis on divine election:

"..in Scripture the election of God..does not come out of works but out of grace." 68

"God's electing plan prepares the way of salvation in which man learns that salvation is obtained only as a divine gift and never as an acquisition because of good works."69

"..salvation..has its eternal foundation in the love of God."70

"..election..is not of works but of Him who called."71

"God's election is sovereign and gracious, and hence not based on any human quality."72

In view of Berkouwer's repeated affirmation of the divine character of election, it must be denied that most of his emphasis is laid on the human response. Rather, it should be pointed that his penetrating analysis of the competition-motif enables him to place due emphasis on the human response without threatening the divine character of God's gracious election.⁷³

(ii) Baker contends that Berkouwer has continually failed to expound the "before" element in election. The present analysis demonstrates that Berkouwer has expounded this element. He has, however, offered a different kind of exposition from that which Baker is asking for. An alternative exposition must, therefore, be distinguished from the absence of any exposition.

(iii) Bogue cites Berkouwer's criticisms of the speculative conceptions of a decretum absolutum, a necessitas rerum and the potentia absoluta. Bogue has, however, concluded the quotation in the middle of a sentence which continues,

"..to the deep, unfathomable source of salvation in Jesus Christ. He chose us in him before the foundation of the world...having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ" (Eph.1:4-5).74

Bogue's citation of Berkouwer is rather selective, tending to create the desired impression that Berkouwer is denying rather than seeking to understand election.

(iv) Bogue, commenting on his citation of Berkouwer, suggests that Berkouwer implies that election can be changed. This is, however, an unjust inference. Berkouwer does say that election is not to be understood as a decretum absolutum, a necessitas rerum, a potentia absoluta. He does not suggest that election can be changed. He views election as the gracious election of God in Christ.⁷⁵ The revelation of that grace is something which has taken place in history through the free grace of God,⁷⁶ and is something which cannot be changed.⁷⁷ It must, therefore, be noted that Bogue's criticism of Berkouwer revolves around a different

understanding of the same words, e.g. Calvinist, Arminian, election.⁷⁸

(v) Bogue's paraphrase of Berkouwer is accurate in its observation that Berkouwer rejects causality.⁷⁹ There are, however, two misleading impressions left by Bogue's comment. First, it is implied that a causal system is beyond criticism. Second, it is implied that Berkouwer retreats into irrationalism. Both assumptions are without foundation.⁸⁰

(vi) Bogue's comment that Berkouwer's view leads to the loss of objective certainty must reckon with two additional factors. First, Berkouwer's view of election is aimed at opening the way to certainty⁸¹ and thus transcending the position of Reformed scholasticism which makes certainty impossible.⁸² Second, it appears that Bogue's use of the word "objective" fails to draw an adequate distinction between objectivity and objectivism.⁸³ It is only from this false objectivism that Bogue can suggest that Berkouwer moves into the realm of noumenal⁸⁴ thinking. When the true objectivity of the divine grace revealed in Christ is properly distinguished from the false objectivism of Reformed scholasticism, it can be appreciated that Berkouwer's view of election is not a kind of spiritual intuition without foundation. Rather, it is a well-grounded faith which has its foundation in the absolutely trustworthy revelation of God in Christ.⁸⁵

(vii) Bogue's remark that "Berkouwer is influenced by the "philosophy of the utter relativism of history" with the "modern view" of a "would-be autonomous man."⁸⁶ must be rejected as a gross misrepresentation of Berkouwer. Berkouwer's doctrine of election is aimed at counteracting the philosophy of Reformed scholasticism which interprets election in a way that utterly relativizes all that happens in history.⁸⁷ Berkouwer emphatically opposes the idea of human autonomy.⁸⁸ Berkouwer is determined to do justice to both the historical revelation of God in Christ and man's historical decision with respect to Christ, both of which are threatened with meaninglessness by Reformed scholasticism.⁸⁹ It would, therefore, seem more accurate to suggest that Reformed scholasticism, rather than Berkouwer, retreats into a supra-history of election.⁹⁰

This discussion of these criticisms of Berkouwer's doctrine of election has helped to clarify Berkouwer's position. Berkouwer's reaction to such criticisms may well be to suggest that he would

be unable to recognize himself in the picture painted of him by Bogue in particular⁹¹ and to question whether the view underlying these criticisms can be recognized as an authentic expression of the Reformed faith.⁹²

In his discussion of the 'pre' element in predestination, Berkouwer insists that

"he who speaks of God's counsel in terms of human categories will have to be aware of the inadequacy of his words."⁹³

In this respect, Berkouwer closely follows Bavinck who, in his discussion of predestination, insists that

"one cannot speak of before and after with respect to God."⁹⁴

Recognizing the inadequacy of human language, Berkouwer seeks to understand predestinarian language in connection with what he calls the "depth-aspect"⁹⁵ of salvation. He emphasizes that

"the depth-aspect of salvation..is not a matter of hiddenness which goes beyond the knowledge of faith..not something far distant, not a vague, threatening reality, but the foundation of salvation..⁹⁶

With this idea of the depth aspect of salvation, Berkouwer seeks to understand the idea of "before the foundation of the world".⁹⁷ He emphasizes that

"These words do not occur in Scripture as a threat, but in the decisive depth-aspect of salvation. They are not placed in a context in which they make us dizzy in the face of an unapproachable "eternity",..but they are intended to show us the source of our eternal salvation.. "Before" indicates that this divine act of salvation, preached to us by the gospel, is free from what we know in the world to be arbitrary and precarious..in this depth-aspect of God's salvation it becomes..evident that this salvation did not originate in our flesh and blood, and that it is by no means of human merit or creation. But precisely this fact does not obscure the way; on the contrary, it illumines it. "Before the foundation of the world" means to direct our attention to what can be called the opposite of chance and contingency."⁹⁸

Berkouwer's basic understanding of the depth-aspect is defined thus:

"When we speak of the depth-aspect, we mean that eternity does not stand in contrast to what in time becomes historical reality, but rather that the salvation accomplished by Christ's death of reconciliation cannot be merely historical, but that it has its eternal foundation in the love of God."⁹⁹

Contributing to a collection of essays written in honour of Berkouwer,¹⁰⁰ T.F. Torrance has, in his article, "The Epistemological Relevance of the Spirit",¹⁰¹ made some helpful comments which suggest a basic framework within which Berkouwer's

concept of the depth-aspect of salvation might be understood. A certain similarity of intention should be noted between Torrance and Berkouwer on election. Torrance, like Berkouwer, insists on the centrality of grace in any adequate theology.¹⁰² Torrance, like Berkouwer, aims to overcome "the temptation..to convert this living..election into..a deterministic predestination alien to the New Testament."¹⁰³

Torrance seeks to ground election in christology in a manner somewhat different from Berkouwer. His understanding of election is grounded in an analogy to the person of Christ.

"just because in Jesus Christ is no docetic person but also man and real man, personal and historical, then election must be understood as an act also in the field of time and history. It does not mean the repudiation of human freedom but its creation, and the repudiation of bondage."¹⁰⁴

"the approach of God in Christ..the invasion of eternity into time, means that God takes seriously the relations of time such as human reactions, choices and decisions, and predestination means that precisely these are brought face to face with the Eternal, man's will is not overcome."¹⁰⁵

While Torrance takes a rather different route to his doctrine of election to that of Berkouwer,¹⁰⁶ it should be noted that certain common emphases come to the fore in both.

(a) Both deplore the idea of a hidden will of God behind His revealed will in Christ.¹⁰⁷

(b) Both emphasize the graciousness of God's election in which he "exercises His freedom to break the bondage of a sinful world, and to bring Himself into personal relations with man."¹⁰⁸

(c) Both reject the concept of 'free will' since "The man who knows himself to be chosen by God cannot say that he himself chose God"¹⁰⁹ for it is only through grace that man is brought out of bondage into his true freedom which is bondage to grace.¹¹⁰

(d) Both reject 'a priori' universalism which, in Torrance's words, "commits the dogmatic fallacy of systematizing the illogical."¹¹¹

While there are differences between Berkouwer and Torrance, notably Torrance's use of the analogy of Christ in connection with election, Torrance's comments regarding the depth-dimension in theological language may be used to explicate Berkouwer's idea of the depth-aspect of salvation. Torrance writes,

"God reveals Himself to man..in the medium of the creaturely existence..and uses the sign-world of inter-human communication in order to communicate Himself to man."112

"..true statements about God have a dimension of depth which they acquire through pointing to the infinite and eternal Truth of God who far transcends all our thoughts and statements about Him..our statements are more true the more open they are to the ultimate Truth..The Spirit is thus the act of God upon us which keeps our concepts or cognitive forms^{open}, so that our thought and speech are stretched out beyond themselves toward the inexhaustible nature of the divine being..open concepts are not irrational because they are open, for to be open vis-a-vis the eternal God is the true mode of their rationality, prescribed for them by the nature of the divine Object of knowledge..Thus the very "inadequacy" of these concepts to their objects is essential to their truth, for they would not be true unless they pointed far beyond any "adequacy" they have to the infinite and eternal God."113

Torrance's comments are not directly related to the doctrine of election. It is, however, possible to see their application to the understanding of election. In any attempt to understand the nature of divine grace, five important observations require to be made.

First, man only knows of grace through revelation.

Second, divine revelation comes to man in the form of human language.

Third, the inadequacy of human language as a vehicle of divine revelation demands that due care be taken in the interpretation of Scripture.

Fourth, the inadequacy of human language as a vehicle of divine revelation demands an avoidance of undue dogmatism regarding the precise meaning of Scripture.

Fifth, the idea of an open concept contains a depth dimension which lies beyond the limitations of human language and the spiritual realities to which it refers.

Berkouwer's concept of the depth-aspect of salvation may be viewed as a serious attempt to understand the complex problem of the relation of human language to divine revelation.¹¹⁴ It is not a denial of what Scripture says, but rather an interpretation of what Scripture says, an attempt to understand what a particular passage teaches in relation to the "entire Biblical message".¹¹⁵

The recognition of a depth-aspect of salvation does not involve a denial of biblical authority. Rather, it involves reserving the right to ask the question, "Is this what the Bible is really saying?"

and to develop a penetrating analysis of all interpretations on the basis of a clear distinction between Scripture itself and theological interpretations of Scripture.¹¹⁶ This distinction emerges directly from the nature of human language, the precise meaning of which is not immediately self-evident in its reference to God.

Berkouwer's use of the concept of the depth-aspect of salvation to illuminate the 'pre' element in predestination may be related to wider discussions of religious language such as F. Ferré's discussion of "The Logic of Obedience"¹¹⁷ and "The Logic of Encounter"¹¹⁸ and W. Smart's discussion entitled "On Understanding the Inexpressible".¹¹⁹ Berkouwer insists that a proper understanding of theological language is only attainable within the context of the obedience of faith. Such obedience does not reflect a retreat into sheer heteronomy. Predestinarian language is understood as a form of expression which the believing man, who has willingly submitted himself to the authority of grace, uses to confess his Christian faith. Berkouwer insists that a proper understanding of theological language is only attainable within the context of an encounter with the divine object of faith. This encounter does not reflect a retreat into subjectivism. Faith's subjectivity has meaning only in relation to the divine object of faith. Predestinarian language is understood in direct connection with the kerygma through which man encounters God in Christ. Set in this context, predestination may not be regarded as a form of determinism which threatens to strip human experience of decisive significance. Emphasizing that he who has seen Christ has seen the Father, Berkouwer maintains that the Christian, in his encounter with Christ, comes to know the revelation of God which is not threatened by a hidden God whose secret will cannot be known.¹²⁰ Berkouwer insists that a proper understanding of theological language involves the recognition of the inexpressible character of the divine object of faith which the believer encounters in the obedience of faith. The gift of God's grace in Christ is an "inexpressible gift."¹²¹ When the believer seeks to express his gratitude to God for this inexpressible gift, he finds it quite impossible to give adequate expression to this gratitude which he feels so deeply. He is almost certain to use language which, at best, will contain certain ambiguities and, at worst, misleading

impressions if his language is not recognized as a groping after a form of expression that is worthy of a virtually inexpressible Reality.

This section on the 'pre' element in predestination suggests that Berkouwer's doctrine of grace promises to overcome the polarization between Reformed scholasticism and universalism. This assessment of Berkouwer's doctrine of grace is strengthened by an analysis of his treatment of both the 'destination' element in predestination and the significance of the present in view of predestination.

(2) Understanding the 'destination' element in predestination.

Eschatology is an area of theological thought which has rarely been directly associated with the doctrine of election which has generally been understood in relation to its 'pre' element.¹²² Election and eschatology have been understood in direct relation to one another by W. Pannenberg, whose whole theology bears a distinctly eschatological flavour. Pannenberg's peculiarly eschatological theology has been described thus:

"The intellectual task that Pannenberg has set for himself is a monumental one, namely, to construct a fundamental system of thought in which the primary ontological principle is futurity."¹²³

The fundamental importance of futurity in Pannenberg's thought is expressed thus by Pannenberg himself:

"We see the present as an effect of the future, in contrast to the conventional assumption that past and present are the cause of the future. The future lets go of itself to bring into being our present."¹²⁴

From this thoroughly eschatological perspective, Pannenberg understands election thus:

"The Christian people, chosen from all nations, has been elected to exist in this world as the eschatological community of the God of Israel and witnesses even now to this imminent rule over all creation and all mankind."¹²⁵

In Pannenberg's understanding of election and eschatology, there is an undeniable universalist tendency. The election of the Church is presented as a witness to the coming universal Kingdom of God. Pannenberg's radical distinction between the Kingdom and the church lies at the heart of his view of the significance of individual faith. He holds that

"the notion of individual faith is indeed fundamental in the concept of the Church."¹²⁶

while speaking also of the "universal communion of renewed human-

kind in the Kingdom of God".¹²⁷ This distinction is important since it enables Pannenberg to emphasize "the universal thrust in the notion of the Kingdom of God".¹²⁸

This universal thrust is heavily underlined by Pannenberg: "the Kingdom of God is certainly universal. The power of the one God cannot be conceived as limited to certain areas. It extends to the whole world and every individual."¹²⁹

"the Kingdom of God will comprise all mankind."¹³⁰

Pannenberg insists that his view of the Kingdom of God is not "merely a formalistic idea about God's ruling over everybody and everything."¹³¹ It is not, however, clear whether Pannenberg can adequately defend himself against such a charge. Pannenberg can be charged with allowing a preconceived idea of the Kingdom of God to dominate his theology. The question must be faced concerning whether he has not shown undue confidence in his system of thought even where it could be called in question on the basis of biblical exegesis.¹³²

Particularly questionable is Pannenberg's attempt to explain the meaning of judgment. On this subject, Pannenberg writes,

"the wholeness of our existence can only be represented as an event beyond death...the entrance of the eternal depth into our experience means both resurrection and judgment at the same time. It means resurrection because in that event man's destiny is fulfilled in his own person. It means judgment because the eternal totality of his own life must be destroyed in the contradiction between the ego and man's eternal destiny."¹³³

"eternity means judgment because in the eternal concurrence our life must perish because of its contradictions and especially because of the basic contradiction between the self and its eternal destiny."¹³⁴

Pannenberg states that the Kingdom of God is not an idea but an event which has reality beyond death. It is not, however, clear that he has overcome the charge that the idea of a universal Kingdom has dominated his thought so that his treatment of judgment lacks the seriousness of the biblical warnings against judgment. The notion of an eternal concurrence between resurrection and judgment fits in well with the notion of a universal Kingdom of God. It does not, however, do justice to the decisiveness of faith and unbelief and the serious warning against judgment as these are presented in Scripture.¹³⁵ A resurrection-judgment which takes place simultaneously in man both fulfilling man's eternal destiny and destroying the contradictions of his earthly life may fit in well with the notion of a universal Kingdom of

God. It does not, however, contain the seriousness of the biblical call to faith in the face of imminent judgment.¹³⁶

The key term in Pannenberg's understanding of the relationship of history and eschatology¹³⁷ is that of 'universal history', a term derived from Hegel.¹³⁸ Pannenberg is not uncritical of Hegel. He contends that Hegel failed to see the element of openness in the future.¹³⁹ He is critical of a pantheistic tendency in Hegel¹⁴⁰ and demonstrates this in his quite unHegelian affirmation of the historicity of the resurrection of Jesus as an act of the personal God.¹⁴¹ He is, however, consistent in his basic appreciation of Hegel's understanding of universal history.¹⁴²

While Pannenberg has been critical of Hegel, there remains a great respect for him. This respect is expressed in Pannenberg's analysis of "The Significance of Christianity in the Philosophy of Hegel"¹⁴³, when he writes:

"How can we explain why the Christian religion and theology treated Hegel with so much mistrust and reserve? Even Karl Barth asks in astonishment (though not without ironically disassociating himself from the nineteenth century as a whole, since he believed his theology had gone beyond the outlook of that century): "Why did Hegel not become for the Protestant world something similar to what Thomas Aquinas was for Roman Catholicism?"¹⁴⁴

In view of Pannenberg's critical treatment of Hegel, he cannot be simply classed as a 'Hegelian'. Pannenberg's position must be described as "a re-establishment of the Hegelian marriage of theology, philosophy and universal history --.. with a difference."¹⁴⁵ since Pannenberg uses "post-Hegelian concepts".¹⁴⁶

The idea of 'universal history' may represent a valid development from the Christian's confession of faith in God as the Lord of history if it is taken to mean that there is ultimate meaning in history seen from the divine perspective. Pannenberg's use of the concept of 'universal history' to move from the election of the church to a universal Kingdom is not, however, at all self-evident. To build a theology which revolves around a universal Kingdom goes beyond the mere affirmation of 'universal history' in the sense of ultimate meaning in history to a pronouncement about what that 'universal history' must mean. Such a theological construction must be distinguished from a believing confession of the reality of the Kingdom of God, since it represents the result of a particular idea of the Kingdom of God dominating a whole theology.

When the idea of a universal Kingdom is presented at the heart of any theology the question is raised concerning:

"Jesus" claim that the verdict to be passed on men in the final judgment is already determined by the attitude they adopt to himself in the present age. "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10:32; cf. Lk. 12:8).¹⁴⁷

That "the presence of the Kingdom of God in the presence of Jesus faces the individual with a clear-cut decision"¹⁴⁸ must not be obscured by language which points in the direction of an universal reconciliation. It must be observed that Pannenberg, in his attempt to avoid the charge of "merely a formalistic idea about God's ruling over everybody and everything",¹⁴⁹ has "consistently refused to espouse universalism unequivocally".¹⁵⁰ Pannenberg's hesitation with respect to 'a priori' universalism is especially notable in his exposition of Christ's descent into hell¹⁵¹ in both Jesus - God and Man¹⁵² and The Apostles' Creed¹⁵³ where he writes:

"the increasingly mythological conception of Jesus' preaching in the realm of the dead or in hell.." is "...the expression of the universal significance of Jesus' vicarious death..The concept of Jesus' descent into hell..asserts that men outside the visible church are not automatically excluded from salvation. Who participates in salvation and who does not remains to be sure, open."¹⁵⁴

"what took place in Jesus also applies to the people who either never came into contact with Jesus and the message about him, or who have never really caught sight of the truth of his person and his story.." although it is "...no guarantee of their salvation. Salvation is only guaranteed to the man who has definite communion with Jesus..But all other men, too, even those who died before Jesus' ministry, can achieve the salvation which appeared in him - even if in ways which are beyond our comprehension."¹⁵⁵

This position presented by Pannenberg in Jesus - God and Man and The Apostles' Creed retains the kind of humility which recognizes the sovereignty of God in his salvation. The possibility of universal reconciliation is allowed for, as it would appear to be in certain biblical passages.¹⁵⁶ This possibility is not, however, presumed upon, in the face of other biblical passages which speak sternly of divine judgment.¹⁵⁷ In view of these conflicting emphases in Scripture, it is unwise to take a bold stand on the question of universalism, either affirming its actuality or rejecting its possibility.

The problem with Pannenberg's thought becomes more acute when

he attempts to expound the doctrine of election in terms of the Christian church's election to be a witness to God's "imminent rule over all creation and all mankind"¹⁵⁸ as a "universal communion of renewed humankind in the Kingdom of God".¹⁵⁹ While Pannenberg seeks to emphasize the importance of "spiritual rebirth.." and "..individual faith",¹⁶⁰ it appears that these emphases are in tension with the radical church-Kingdom distinction which lies at the heart of his understanding of election.

If the doctrine of grace is to be understood in its relation to eschatology, the relation between church and Kingdom must be understood clearly. Pannenberg's understanding of the church-Kingdom relation has its weakness precisely where its strength lies. He correctly emphasizes the clear distinction between the church and the Kingdom. The problem is the manner in which he emphasizes this distinction. That the Kingdom should be conceived of in predominantly universalist categories is not implicit within the church-Kingdom distinction itself.

The Church and the Kingdom can be understood as quite separate realities without implying a universalist understanding of eschatology. This has been demonstrated by G.E. Ladd who "has achieved a mastery over the whole field of biblical eschatology".¹⁶¹ Ladd distinguished the church and the Kingdom thus:

"The Kingdom is primarily the..kingly rule of God..The church is the community of the Kingdom but never the Kingdom itself."¹⁶²

He expounds this distinction under five headings - The Church is not the Kingdom; The Kingdom creates the Church; The Church witnesses to the Kingdom; The Church is the Instrument of the Kingdom; The Church is the Custodian of the Kingdom.¹⁶³ Ladd's careful distinction is developed in such a way that universalism is not implied.

"His(God's) concern for the lost does not dissipate the divine holiness into a benign kindness. God is seeking love, but he is also holy love..Therefore those who reject the offer of his Kingdom must stand under his judgment."¹⁶⁴

"The religious dimension of the eschatological salvation is set in sharp contrast to what it means to be lost."¹⁶⁵

While Ladd stresses that "the Kingdom will one day prevail so that no rival sovereignty exists",¹⁶⁶ he does not do so to the denial of the "eschatological separation".¹⁶⁷ Recognising the seriousness of the eschatological judgment,¹⁶⁸ Ladd is able to emphasize

It is precisely at this point concerning the radical nature of evil and the radical judgment of evil that Pannenberg's theology is inadequate, as Tupper says,

"If Pannenberg's theology is to reflect more accurately the perspective of Biblical realism, history must be interpreted candidly from the human perspective of brokenness as well as hopefully from the eschatological perspective of wholeness."¹⁷⁰

If Pannenberg's theology is to consistently overcome the charge of an undue universalist tendency, he must avoid "the inclination to understate (or ignore) the radicality of the destruction and brokenness within history as the expressions of the sinfulness of man."¹⁷¹ While Pannenberg's distinction between church and Kingdom has a certain validity, it need not be taken in a universalist direction. It could be understood in connection with the church militant-church triumphant distinction, such that the Kingdom of God realizes to the full "the convocation of the saints".¹⁷²

Despite his attempt to avoid the charge of universalism, Pannenberg's doctrine of election is set in an inherently universalist framework. His eschatological understanding of election does no more justice to the absolute necessity of man's decision for Christ than does a 'pre' oriented doctrine of grace, whether particularist or universalist. Pannenberg's understanding of universal history threatens to devalue human freedom no less than the philosophy of Hegel which Pannenberg has criticized for its inadequate treatment of human freedom.¹⁷³ The question of human freedom has been raised by R.W. Jensen who suggests that, in Pannenberg's eschatology,

"what we are bidden to await is the transformation of the God who is the power of the future into the God who was the power of the future."¹⁷⁴

Jensen questions whether Pannenberg has adequately demonstrated that "the anticipated end will not preclude the continuing openness".¹⁷⁵ While this question is asked in a more general context, it can be applied to the question of predestination, as Tupper has done,

"Does the priority of eschatology preclude the determinism of predestination?"¹⁷⁷

It would appear that a clear perspective on the reality of man's present decision regarding Christ can only be maintained where neither the 'pre' element nor the 'destination' element of

predestination are interpreted in such a way that the present loses its real significance as the time for decision.¹⁷⁸

With a view to preserving the urgency of the gospel proclamation, Berkouwer offers his understanding of eschatology in his The Return of Christ.¹⁷⁹ While he does not 'a priori' exclude the possibility of a universal reconciliation, he gives no encouragement to presume upon such a superabundant bestowal of grace on all.¹⁸⁰ The structure of his doctrine of grace revolves around the urgency of ensuring that one has received grace rather than speculating about how many will receive grace.¹⁸¹ Eschatology should never be presented such that it appears more like an announcement concerning "a remote end-time"¹⁸² rather than "a summons to constant watchfulness"¹⁸³. The problem with particularist and universalist theological systems is that they are too preoccupied with final states.¹⁸⁴ The gospel urges men to ensure that they are in Christ. The gospel's approach to men is not to offer them precise knowledge of final states. Rather, it is to present men with both the promise of salvation and the warning against spurning salvation. Both the promise and the warning are designed to lead men to faith.¹⁸⁵ Thus, the future stands before man as a call to decision. Berkouwer has emphasized this call to decision most aptly in the concluding paragraph of his discussion entitled "Apocatastasis?":

"The history of the doctrine of apocatastasis reveals a persistent and almost irresistible inclination to go outside of the proclamation of the gospel to find a deeper gnosis, whether in the form of certain knowledge or only as surmise. Over and over the question addressed to Jesus arises in the history of the church: "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" Jesus' answer seems so noncommittal, so evasive: "Strive to enter by the narrow door" (Luke 13:23f.) But this evasiveness is only apparent. This is the answer to this question. As long as we see only in a mirror, in riddles, many questions will remain unanswered. But this question has been answered, once for all time."¹⁸⁶

(3) Understanding the significance of the present in view of predestination

A proper understanding of the significance of the present cannot be dissociated from a proper understanding of the past and the future. To place all the emphasis on the present at the expense of the past and the future is to have an inadequate view of the present itself. This tendency is found in R. Bultmann and P. Tillich both of whom demythologize or deliteralize the Christ-

event as recorded in the New Testament and the eschaton as it is anticipated by the New Testament. 187

A proper perspective on the present finds its foundation in the reality of the Incarnation - "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us". (John 1:14). Religious language which requires to be continually modernized by a process of demythologization or de-literalization is no substitute for the New Testament kerygma which is grounded in facts - the fact of Christ's resurrection which authenticates His incarnation (Romans 1:4). The centrality of the facts of Christ's resurrection and incarnation for the Christian kerygma is made clear in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 15:3-11, 14, 17, 20; 1 John 4:2-3). Any interpretation of the Christian message which calls for a demythologization or de-literalization of the language of the New Testament must face the question of whether such an interpretation is not essentially founded on a denial of the basic facts of the gospel. While the gospel must be interpreted for each generation, there must be care not to present an interpretation which is essentially a denial of the facts for then there would be no gospel to interpret.

It is not suggested that the Bible does not require to be interpreted. By virtue of its finitude, human language is inadequate in its reference to God. To acknowledge the limitation of human language does not, however, lead inevitably to the demythologization of the New Testament. That would also require a negative dogmatic assumption concerning the capacity of God to enter the human scene in a manner that is beyond human understanding. It may be more consistent, as well as more biblical, to acknowledge the limitation of human understanding in its reference to God and his activity in history. A recognition of those limitations would lead not to a bold demythologization of the gospel but to a humble faith in God and his amazing work of salvation. Christian theology must, therefore, be cautious of the idea of The Myth of God Incarnate¹⁸⁹ which appears to be more concerned with the question, "What can modern man believe?" rather than the question, "What is the Christian gospel?" To allow the former question to swallow up the latter is to destroy the essential connection between the present proclamation and its historical foundation.

A proper perspective on the present requires a proper perspective on the future if the present proclamation and call

for decision is not to lose a great deal of the urgency with which it is presented in the New Testament. The view which demythologizes the Bible's eschatological language has been expressed succinctly by Nicholas Lash when he writes,

"I am suggesting..that the concept of "risen life" be taken to refer, not to another order of existence subsequent to that which we historically experience, but to that single historical process, within its beginning and its end defining and delimiting its particularity, as experienced from the standpoint of the God who, in the stillness of unchanging love, creates, sustains and enlivens that process. To say that life, in Christ, is eternal, is not to say that it has no beginning and no end but that even in its finitude and particularity it is, as finite and particular, eternally an expression of God, a participation in his eternity."¹⁹⁰

While this position has a certain appeal to modern man who thinks in this-worldly categories, it is questionable whether it holds the balance between present and future as delicately as the New Testament, which it purports to be interpreting. In comparison with the New Testament's treatment of the present and future elements of eternal life, this view would appear to be somewhat one-sided. While the New Testament idea of eternal life is not completely futuristic, neither is it wholly present. Rather, the present and the future are viewed as two "inseparably associated"¹⁹¹ dimensions of the one spiritual reality.

With this emphasis on the irrefragable unity of past, present and future, Berkouwer expounds his doctrine of grace. It is a doctrine of grace which does not allow the past to relativize the present and the future.¹⁹² It is a doctrine of grace which is not dominated by any particularist or universalist preconception regarding the future.¹⁹³ Rather, the present is filled with significance in view of the past and the future. The significance of the present is not, however, set against the past and the future such that the past and the future may be legitimately demythologized or de-literalized.

Berkouwer's doctrine of grace is rooted in the incarnation in a way that the absolute significance of Christ's words, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9) is not threatened by either an a-historical determinism or an a-historical demythologization, neither of which offers an adequate perspective on the incarnation. Against demythologization, Berkouwer insists on the actuality of the incarnation as an event in history rather than a mythical event taking place in some sphere beyond the

historical. Against determinism, Berkouwer insists on the trustworthiness of the revelation of God in the incarnation, behind which there is no hidden, arbitrary God.

Berkouwer's understanding of grace takes him to "a truly eternal pre¹⁹⁴ in the heart of the eternal God. In understanding this "dimension of depth"¹⁹⁵ to God's work of salvation in Christ, he warns against "a speculative logic" which "can invade a scriptural proclamation of salvation and torture it beyond recognition."¹⁹⁶ He seeks to understand "the priority of God's grace",¹⁹⁷ that salvation "arises out of the eternal depths of the heart of God."¹⁹⁸, in a way that points unequivocally to the historical event of Christ's death for sinners.¹⁹⁹ Thus, he insists that

"we do not mean to confine God's love within time's horizon",²⁰⁰ He emphasizes that

"the eternity of divine mercy comes to us in the historical revelation".²⁰¹

Berkouwer's understanding of the relation between the eternal love of God and its historical revelation represents an important reminder that

"Theology is not an excursion into the stratosphere that lies beyond scriptural speech in time; it may not travel beyond the borders of faith's perspective. Beyond the word of Scripture we dare not go, in speech or in theological reflection; for it is in this word that God's love in Jesus Christ is revealed. There is nothing beyond that."²⁰²

In view of the unity of the incarnation and its eternal foundation, theology must be cautious of any theology, whether particularist or universalist in tendency, which is inclined to set eternity over against time. Neither particularism nor universalism can do justice to the earnest call of the gospel for present decision. Particularism tends, because of a restrictive 'pre', to devalue the present relevance of the "whosoever" element (John 3:16; Romans 10:13) in the promise of the gospel. Universalism tends, because of a presumptive 'pre' to devalue the present relevance of the exhortatory element (Matthew 18:3; John 3:3) in the warning of the gospel. With an adequate understanding of the relation between time and eternity, the gospel will not be interpreted according to preconceptions which distort its present significance as both promise and warning extended to all.

Berkouwer's view that

"Salvation is not of, but is surely in history"²⁰³

guards against the devaluation of both the historicity of the Christ-event and the decisive character of man's present decision concerning Christ. Both demythologization and determinism are carefully avoided by Berkouwer. Berkouwer's concern for the present communication of the gospel does not lead him in the direction of demythologization. Concerning Bultmann's demythologization programme, he comments

"The fact that he proceeds from a pastoral and missionary motive - namely, to preserve modern man from rejecting the New Testament because of its mythical structure - does not diminish by one iota the theological presumption of this undertaking."204

Berkouwer is aware of the tensions in modern theology which have led to the widespread acceptance of a demythologized form of Christianity. He is aware of the complexity of biblical historiography,²⁰⁵ the kerygmatic purpose of the New Testament,²⁰⁶ and the changing situations to which the gospel must address itself.²⁰⁷ He is, however, quite insistent about the historical character of the Christian revelation. To sacrifice this would lead not to relevance but irrelevance.

Berkouwer insists that the gospel's foundation in past history may not be sacrificed for the sake of present relevance. He emphasizes that the gospel's present relevance is rooted in its past history.

"The historical record may have been strongly influenced by its kerygmatic purpose, but the final purpose of the gospel .. is to demonstrate the truthfulness of what has been said of the Christ.. the gospels have been written out of faith..the conviction that the historical Christ is the Son of God."208

"There is reason to believe that certain post-Easter situations of the Church co-determined the renditions (of Jesus' words and works).. This..is..due..to faith in the living Christ and the saving event manifest in him, with all its power and grace in every situation and age..What happened is decisive for all evangelists.. their tendency is clearly anti-docetic.. But..not in opposition to a freedom in composing and expressing the mystery of Christ." 209

"It might be asked whether, in all the discussions about.. demythologizing..the decisive die has not been already cast in the New Testament opposition to myth. Is not "a divine fact with all the weight of historical reality" placed over against myth in (2Peter 1:16)..It cannot be denied that the witnesses had in mind a real event in time. The emphasis on eyewitnesses makes sense only in this way."210

Thus, Berkouwer refuses to sacrifice the historical foundation of the gospel in search of a spurious relevance. He does seek relevance,²¹¹ but never at the expense of the truth of the gospel.

In keeping with 1 John 4:2, - "every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God" -, Berkouwer affirms the doctrine of the Incarnation, favourably citing the words of Vos:

"One cannot avoid teaching Christ's pre-existence: if Jesus Christ be God, then he existed before he became man."²¹²

In his affirmation of this doctrine, Berkouwer also affirms "the fact of the virgin birth...as part of an indivisible totality".²¹³

In keeping with 1Cor.15:14, - "if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" -, Berkouwer affirms the historical factuality of Christ's resurrection:

"It is impossible to separate the fact from the significance of the resurrection, as though the main thing were the idea rather than the historical reality of the resurrection."²¹⁴

It is clear that, for Berkouwer, contemporary relevance is not gained by accommodating the Christian message to modern scepticism. Rather, contemporary relevance emerges from the truth of the gospel itself.

Berkouwer's concern for a proper understanding of the present in relation to the past may be seen in his understanding of both predestination and the incarnation in relation to the present proclamation of salvation. Salvation cannot be proclaimed without a solid foundation in the person and work of Christ.²¹⁵ The gladness of salvation cannot be proclaimed where theological speculation restricts the scope of the gospel.²¹⁶ The urgency of salvation cannot be proclaimed where theological speculation presumes on an 'a priori' universalism, to which Berkouwer says, "The church is not to speculate but to preach."²¹⁷

If the church is to be set free from speculative theology to preach the gospel joyfully and urgently, there must be a clear perspective on the future. The present proclamation of the gospel will be joyful where there is a future hope.²¹⁸ The present proclamation of the gospel will be urgent where that future hope is presented as a call for response.²¹⁹ An adequate perspective on the future demands a hope which may not be interpreted in a manner which represents a radical departure from the New Testament hope.²²⁰ When the Christian hope is radically demythologized, it tends to be dismissed as irrelevant. When the Christian hope is objectivized, it tends to be taken for granted, thus endangering its relevance. The difficulties involved in understanding the Bible's

eschatological language cannot lead to a thorough demythologizing of the eschaton without altering its message.²²¹ The difficulties involved in understanding divine judgment cannot lead to its dismissal without seriously damaging the urgency of the gospel's proclamation.²²²

Parallel to "demythologizing" are "dehistoricizing" and "de-eschatologizing".²²³ "Dehistoricizing" and "de-eschatologizing" amount to "de-kerygmaticizing". To strip the Christian message of its historical foundation and its eschatological challenge is to empty it of its content as a joyful and urgent kerygma. The apostolic preaching of the gospel emphasized the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus who, as the exalted Lord, will bring history to its consummation with his return. This historical and eschatological kerygma was concluded with a call to repentance and faith as the way of receiving the blessings of the kerygma.²²⁴ In the apostolic preaching there was, then, both a joyful proclamation and an urgent summons to decision. The urgent call to faith was grounded in the saving events of the gospel, which were presented as events which took place in time.

The existential experience of the believer arises from but does not make redundant the unique saving acts of God in history.²²⁵ To call for a decision that is not grounded in the historical facts of the gospel represents an unbiblical separation of fact and meaning.²²⁶ However demythologization may be proposed, its advocates must face the question whether

"the core of the kerygma of the New Testament is affected when this temporal saving event is brushed aside".²²⁷

In the kerygma of the New Testament,

"This saving event is described in a form that cannot be separated from its content, namely, "that of historical reality".²²⁸

Rather than removing the Christian message from the sphere of history, it must be affirmed that

"There is room for a humble and courageous defense of Christianity. The combination of humility and courage is the combination that Christianity in our day sorely needs."²²⁹

On the basis of the affirmation of the saving acts of God in history, the Christian message proceeds to its joyful and urgent proclamation of the eschaton.

Biblical eschatology requires to be distinguished from the kind of futurism which, because of its great interest in speculation concerning the future, has not sufficiently emphasized the biblical call for present response.²³⁰ The present challenge of eschatology is well brought out by Berkouwer when he writes, concerning "The Signs of the Times"

"The apocalyptic perspective is always of present significance.. the eschatological message..never loses its contemporaneity.. the signs are not pertinent to only a remote end-time..for believers they are summons to constant watchfulness."²³¹

In emphasizing the contemporaneity of eschatology, Berkouwer is adamant in his rejection of the use of the signs to calculate when Christ will come:

"..calculation is not necessary, desirable, nor even possible. Calculation of approximate temporal conclusions from certain selected phenomena cannot be the intention of the signs. The shift of emphasis from the signs themselves to calculation stems from the belief that the eschatological proclamation is intended to give a more or less exact narrative account of some events that are to be expected in the future."²³²

Rather than "reportorial eschatology"²³³ which seeks for "an objective, chronological report"²³⁴ of future events, Berkouwer adopts the position of "continuous reinterpretation, in which nothing of the eschatological promise is sacrificed."²³⁵ This view of eschatology which seeks to find the "deep dimensions"²³⁶ of "the call to preparedness, watchfulness and steadfastness",²³⁷ is presented not as de-eschatologizing but as "a meaningful perspective that rids eschatology of any futurism."²³⁸ Berkouwer distinguishes his position from de-eschatologizing by his use of the distinction between reduction and concentration.²³⁹

"Comprehension and penetration - not reduction - are the goals of exegeting the biblical thought-world..one might use the word reduction in a good sense to refer to the effort to get at the root and meaning of the words in which the eschatological message and expectation are couched, but it would probably be more precise and helpful to call this "concentration" rather than reduction, since it does not involve sorting out but comprehending. Concentration in this sense does not amount to "de-eschatologizing" as some literalists have charged. Its aim is not to weaken the eschatological expectation but to get at the meaning of the eschatological promise, which has come to us couched in images and concepts whose understanding requires a patient effort."²⁴⁰

This process of concentration involves the exegete in a careful study of the urgent character of biblical eschatology.

For the present communication of the gospel to maintain this

biblical urgency, there must be a careful avoidance of making presumptuous deductions which do not accurately reflect "the total New Testament proclamation of the future" which finds its unity in "the call to preparedness, watchfulness, and steadfastness".²⁴¹

With the totality of the New Testament proclamation in view, Berkouwer discusses universalism, making several important points:

"wherever the New Testament speaks of the love of God, it also mentions the judgment."²⁴²

"The entire New Testament makes an important point of human reaction to salvation."²⁴³

"the context of the New Testament words about judgment never suggests that the ultimate extinction of resistance is self-evident."²⁴⁴

Following his discussion of universalism and its relation to the New Testament witness, he makes a valuable contribution to the proclamation of the urgent summons to faith. Guarding against "human legalism or moralism, which can often assume such radical and serious airs"²⁴⁵ and warning against the damage done by "moralistic preaching of "hell"" which "can easily assume a magical, terrifying dimension that speaks only of the incalculable, all-consuming wrath of God, and says nothing of His love",²⁴⁶

Berkouwer asks the question,

"Has the church's preaching always warned, in a responsible way, against provoking the love of God?"²⁴⁷

When the doctrine of judgment is dissociated from all its false associations, it may be used as "something to disturb man on the basis of the wealth of the gospel",²⁴⁸ as "the compelling voice of a guide, of the gospel itself".²⁴⁹ Through the urgent proclamation of the joyful news of God's love, men will find their way back to God, wherever it is recognized that

"the tender mercy of God..is not the point of departure for logical conclusions on our part, but is proclaimed to us "to guide our feet into the way of peace""²⁵⁰

This discussion of the doctrine of grace and its communication has sought to emphasize that the Christian message can be proclaimed with present relevance where past, present and future are seen to form an unity which is not destroyed by any one element becoming predominant over the others. To find assurance in the doctrine of grace and to attain relevance in the proclamation of that grace, one must pay close attention to the gospel and not allow oneself

to speculate beyond the bounds of the gospel, for

"it is extremely dangerous to think and talk about "the love of God" (or the sovereignty of God, or the otherness of God) and what "follows" from it (universalism, fatalism, demythologizing) outside of the gospel".251

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Problem of Polarization: Its Relation to the Church's Role in Christian Communication.

The preceding chapter consists of a doctrinal discussion with significant practical implications, emphasizing that one's understanding of the doctrine of grace affects one's understanding of the preaching of the gospel. It is impossible to separate the doctrinal and the practical from each other. One's understanding of doctrine inevitably affects one's understanding of the dual character of the gospel proclamation as a joyful declaration of grace and an urgent summons to faith.

Reformed scholasticism tends to threaten both the joy and the urgency of the gospel proclamation with its decretal theology. 'A priori' universalism tends to present a joyful message which lacks an urgent summons to faith. Berkouwer's doctrine of grace aims to overcome the defects of those positions by questioning the objectivity-subjectivity schema on which both are based. Thus, he aims to allow the gospel proclamation to speak with its own inherent joy and urgency without the restrictions placed on it by theological speculation.

The integral relation between doctrine and preaching has been emphasized by Pitt-Watson:

"The question must always be asked 'What doctrine does this sermon seek to present and illuminate?' If no clear answer can be given to that question the subject matter of the sermon must be suspect. All preaching should be doctrinal preaching. Of course this does not mean that it should be 'academic' or 'theological' in the narrow technical sense of that word. The bigger the truth we try to speak the smaller the words we should use, and the shorter the sentences." 1

This irrefragable relation between doctrine and preaching is exemplified by Berkouwer in two important respects.

- His theology presses him towards the pulpit as one who is first and foremost a pastor who has regularly involved himself in the preaching ministry of the church.²

- His preaching ministry has been characterized by simplicity, as Rogers has noted in his description of Berkouwer's visit to a church in the U.S.A.:

"The worshippers were disappointed by his sermon. They could understand it! They expected the great professor to be profound (i.e. abstract, dull). Instead, he preached a simple gospel sermon of pastoral comfort and affirmation. For

Berkouwer, theology is always and only the servant of the church. Theology is good only if it can be preached!" 3

The pastoral, church-oriented character of Berkouwer's theology finds expression in his teaching of theology, as Rogers observes in his description of his initial impressions of Berkouwer's theological lectures:

"..he was excited and dynamic! I began to hear certain words repeated again and again. One of them was boeiend, which means "fascinating". Everything about theology fascinated Berkouwer. His enthusiasm was catching. After listening to him, you wanted to grab the nearest theological book and devour it. Talking to him was even more stimulating." 4

The value of Berkouwer's contribution to the life of the church lies in his understanding of the nature of theology. Theology is more concerned with a confession of faith than with a system of thought.⁵ Theology is more concerned with listening to the living Word of God than with philosophizing about the opinions of man.⁶ Theology concerns itself with a proper understanding of the salvation of God in Christ.⁷ From this perspective, theology addresses itself to the issues involved in ecclesiology.⁸

Berkouwer's approach to theology allows him to make a far-reaching contribution to the church in its work of Christian communication in situations where polarization threatens to impoverish the church's witness. His contribution extends far beyond the sphere of the pulpit. The communication of the gospel is far wider than pulpit ministry. The church's presence in the world extends Christian witness to many who never hear a 'sermon'.

In the face of powerful polarizing influences, Berkouwer's theological method opens up constructive perspectives for the contemporary church's witness in the world. Polarization threatens to harm the church's witness at various levels. This chapter examines the problem of polarization at four levels of relationship:-

- (1) within a single denomination;
- (2) between the different Protestant denominations;
- (3) between Protestant and non-Protestant denominations;
- (4) between the church and the unchurched.

Berkouwer's approach to the problem of polarization is considered from the perspective of four prominent themes in his theology:

- (i) his concern to overcome the competition-motif and its distorting effects in theology; 9
- (ii) his concern with the salvation of God in Christ, which provides the framework within which ecclesiological issues are understood; 10
- (iii) his concern with understanding the depth-dimension of the religious language in which faith makes its confession; 11
- (iv) his anthropological concern with the whole man to whom the living Word of God is addressed, demanding a response. 12

The different levels of polarization are inter-related, as are the key themes in Berkouwer's theology. While acknowledging these complex interrelationships, each level of polarization is discussed in relation to a single aspect of Berkouwer's thought.

This discussion takes the following form:

- (a) Berkouwer's concern to overcome the competition-motif in relation to tensions within his own denomination.
- (b) Berkouwer's emphasis on a proper understanding of the salvation of God in Christ in relation to tensions within Protestantism.
- (c) Berkouwer's understanding of the depth-dimension in religious language in relation to tensions between Protestantism and non-Reformed churches.
- (d) Berkouwer's anthropology in relation to the tensions between the church and the world.

Sections (a) - (c) concentrate on Berkouwer's own contribution to particular theological discussion while section (d) discusses this more general theme in the more general context of the discussion of deism, biblicism and christomonism.

As a general introduction to this discussion of the different levels of polarization, Berkouwer's general discussion of "Unity and Division"¹³ is particularly instructive. He begins by facing the fact of the church's disunity and asking the question:

"..are we confronted here with a painful, insoluble paradox that - even if it does not entirely annul the credo ecclesiam - at least radically relativizes it?"¹⁴

Concerning the possibility of explaining the church's disunity, he writes:

"Every "realistic" explanation threatens to blur the riddle of the disunity. Sin never lends itself to an explanation. Speaking about it here in the midst of the division itself is possible only in the form of a deep confession of guilt, so deep that one might expect unimaginable things to result from it! To speak about sin other than in this context is illegitimate; it is an escape from the clarity of God's intention and from

the reality of the sole Shepherd. It is good to remind oneself of one of Christ's statements with an ominous ring to it: "Every kingdom divided against itself (meristheisa kath heautes) is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand" (Matt. 12:25)...a warning against the "possible" catastrophe of destruction, since it bears a "general" character: kingdom, city, and house. There is no reason to banish this warning from our minds when we reflect on this dividedness in the Church - the churches!"¹⁵

Following these penetrating words of warning, he then proceeds to the discussion, "Unity only in the eschaton?"¹⁶ where he writes:

"All such "eschatological" considerations can give rise to a form of defeatism...that is not willing to seek for unity with all its power and to pray that the status quo of division might be penetrated... in the New Testament, the eschaton never gives reassurance with respect to what belongs to human guilt...the eschatological outlook never weakens concrete calling and evangelical admonition. The eschaton does not leave room for any form of defeatism."¹⁷

In the discussion "Visible and invisible Church?"¹⁸ he understands the Reformation's visible-invisible distinction thus:

"The intention here was not to flee from visibility to invisibility, to a docetic, unearthly ecclesiology; rather, it was to remind us of the Church's essence as the congregation of the faithful in the fellowship with Christ through the Spirit. The intention was definitely not to suggest that there are two churches."¹⁹

In the section entitled "Division in Scripture"²⁰ he discusses the division of the church at Corinth, making a most perceptive remark:

"In the light of the undivided Lord, all motivations for quarreling and schism are undermined. This situation is truly "impossible", not as if it were unreal, but because of the meaning, the origin, and the reality of the Church. If shadows are cast here, then they are cast on Christ too. Is Christ divided?"²¹

In the section entitled "Unity" "so that the world may believe"²², he discusses the meaning of Christ's high priestly prayer in John 17, adopting this conclusion:

"Clearly, this is not of minor importance, something that is not necessary for the "essence" of the Church...To flee here to the continuing sinfulness of the Church as an "explanation" of her disunity or into the reassurance that a hidden unity can survive in the division does not take Christ's prayer seriously...Because of her function and purpose in relating salvation to the world, one cannot boast here of a solidarity that is sufficient in God's eyes, but one must think of the eyes of the world...Therefore, the severance of unity is a catastrophe for the world. John 17 says as much, but we are so

- page 111 -

accustomed to disunity that we are in danger of becoming immune to its warning."²³

Commenting further on the meaning of John 17, he writes:

"To forget the "so that" of John 17 is to lose the outlook.. on the world, which God has loved in sending His Son. That world is related to this love not through a "miracle", but through the witness of the Word and through the undisrupted oneness of the Church. If the being and proclamation of the Church are to be characterized by fruitfulness in and on behalf of the world, unity is the only possibility."²⁴

While emphasizing the pragmatic value of unity, Berkouwer stresses that "the call to unity is not a pragmatic endeavor"²⁵ since the church's unity has its deep foundation in "Trinitarian unity"²⁶ (John 17:21). Considering the church's disunity in the light of the "Trinitarian mystery",²⁷ Berkouwer insists that

"..no "explanation" may moderate the tension, especially if we understand to some degree how greatly the mysterium iniquitatis, the mystery of sin, contradicts the genuine" mystery,"²⁸

A review of the history of the church produces "dismay and terror"²⁹ - dismay because of the church's disunity and terror because of God's displeasure. In face of the future which calls the church to the task of mission, there must be a deep acknowledgment of "The Church's guilt for disbelief".³⁰ The contemporary church must penitently acknowledge

"that the endless division of the Church gives the world cause for joy and derision, a reason for its unbelief in the One sent by the Father."³¹

The call to unity is

"not a tactical maneuver (in the interests of mission), but is part of God's plan of salvation, a way of revealing His ultimate, reconciling intentions in a world characterized by disunity."³²

The many complexities involved in the church's past and present disunity need not result in the above introduction being disregarded as unrealistic idealism. However complex the problem of disunity may be, the church must carefully avoid "alienation from the norm of the Church",³³ for it is that norm which continually sets before the church her true reality as the one body of Christ.

(a) Berkouwer's concern to overcome the competition-motif in relation to tensions within his own denomination.

To understand the nature of Berkouwer's contribution to the life of his own denomination, the nature of that denomination must be understood. The Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (the free Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) was formed in 1892 follow-

ing a number of secessions from the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk.³⁴
Thus, Berkouwer was reared in a denomination which "began in rather conservative isolation".³⁵

Berkouwer's reconciling influence within his own denomination is considered here. The background of the secession and the present relationship between the two denominations is discussed, with special reference to Berkouwer's contribution, in section (b). Berkouwer's contribution to his own denomination's attitude to wider ecumenical enterprise is considered in section (c), with a more general perspective being indicated in section (d).

Since its formation in 1892, the 'Gereformeerde Kerken' has not remained in a state of peaceful unanimity. There have been heated conflicts which have made it difficult to maintain a theological equilibrium. At the heart of this theological and ecclesiastical situation, Berkouwer has written a helpful book entitled Verontrusting en verantwoordelijkheid.³⁶ The title of this book, which is unavailable in English, may be translated 'Concern and Responsibility'. The book is essentially an appeal for better understanding and some measure of tolerance. It is addressed primarily to those who have 'concern', an uneasiness because of their disagreement with recent trends in the denomination. They are exhorted to have 'responsibility', the attitude of the fearless Christian who is aware that he lives in the twentieth century to which he must respond. Berkouwer warns against a theological analysis that is too simplistic, that works by the insinuating use of theological labels such as 'liberal', and which can lead to over-hasty pronouncements of heresy.

Berkouwer's general analysis is further developed in relation to three concrete issues - Scripture, the confession and science. His contribution to his denomination's understanding of these areas is well illustrated by his involvement on the Committee for Advice Concerning the Doctrinal Statement of the Synod of Assen, 1926 which was concerned with the interpretation of the inter-relationships between those three areas. "The Report of the Committee for Advice Concerning the Doctrinal Statement of the Synod of Assen and its implications for the understanding of Scripture and science" was submitted to the General Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands Meeting in Amsterdam, 1967. It is considered here not because of its special relevance beyond

the immediate situation, but because it is illustrative of wider issues affecting the understanding of Scripture and science.

The background of this report is the Synod of Assen, 1926.³⁷ Following an official objection to his preaching, Dr. Geelkerken, a minister of the Gereformeerde Kerken, was asked to sign a statement affirming that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the snake and its speaking, and the tree of life were, according to the obvious intent of the biblical narrative, to be understood in a real or literal sense and were, therefore, to be understood as sensuously perceptible realities. It was stated that the opinion of Dr. Geelkerken, suggesting that one could render disputable these matters and facts as sensuously perceptible realities, should be repudiated since it was in conflict with the authority of the Bible as it is confessed in articles 4 and 5 of the Belgic Confession.

Dr. Geelkerken, who preached a historical fall while having difficulty with the interpretation of its details, made five statements in reply.

- He failed to see the legality of the Synod's demand that he sign the statement.
- The Synod accorded an equal measure of authority to its interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3 as it did to Scripture itself.
- He himself had no definite exegesis regarding these four points (i.e. the two trees, the snake, and its speaking) and that, from the viewpoint of faith, he had no objection whatsoever to the traditional exegesis as current in Reformed circles.
- He reserved himself the freedom of scientific interpretation into this entire matter.
- For as long as this matter was pending, he would be willing, in his preaching and catechetical instruction, to conform with the Synodical declaration regarding 'the obvious intent of the Genesis 2 and 3 narrative'.

Dr. Geelkerken was suspended. After continuing to preach, he was removed. This led to secession and the formation of the Gereformeerde Kerk in Hersteldverband as a Reconstituted Reformed Church. This church later united with the Hervormde Kerk. Reviewing the situation historically, it seems clear that Assen could have been avoided and that Dr. Geelkerken was the victim of a kind of theological 'witchhunt'.

Tension regarding the Assen declaration built up in the post-war period. This led, in 1961-62, to the General Synod receiving a request to clarify to what extent the Declaration of the Synod

of Assen in 1926 was still binding. A committee was appointed which advised the Synod of Groningen in 1963-64 to abrogate the binding character of the Assen Statement. A difference of opinion ensued. The Synod declared that "the doctrinal statement of the Synod of Assen in 1926 no longer functions ecclesiastically" and judged that "it was not desirable to set forth rules concerning this matter which would lead to a new attempt to make this declaration function in a binding way." (Article 382). The Synod appointed another committee to consider the question of the status of the Assen Statement and its relation to the interpretation of Genesis and the related confessional statements. 38

A committee of nine members was set up. This committee failed to reach unanimity, there being one dissenting member. The other eight members who signed the report were G.C. Berkouwer, W.H. Gispen, K.G. Idema, J.L. Koole, A.D.R. Polman, N.H. Ridderbos, D. van Swigchem and S. van Wouwe. This committee reported that the Assen Statement should be repealed. Of the eight signatories, one (not Berkouwer) remained committed to the traditional interpretation but recognized that this should not be the only legitimate position to be tolerated in the denomination.

The report maintained that the intent of Genesis 2-3 was to present in a culture form mankind's turning away from God. The Assen Declaration was said to have made the basic mistake of placing its official stamp on a particular form of exegesis. The 1967 Synod accepted the majority report that Genesis 2-3 be understood as a special kind of historiography. The Assen Declaration was repealed in the understanding that the confessional standing of the Heidelberg Catechism and the Belgic Confession was not affected by the repeal of the Assen Declaration, since they are confessions of faith rather than theological interpretations.

The 1967 Synod made a threefold statement concerning Assen.

- Together with the Synod of Assen, it fully shares the concern that the authority of Holy Scripture must be respected by the church.
- It does not consider itself competent to form the type of judgment with respect to the specific nature of the biblical narrative in Genesis 2-3 that would enable it to continue to follow the exclusive way in which the Synod of Assen 1926 expressed itself with respect to the obvious meaning of certain details of this narrative.
- The things which the Confessions of the Church (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 3 and 4; Belgic Confession, articles 14 and 15) have to say regarding the origin of sin and the consequences of man's fall into sin, clearly expresses the

basic meaning which Scripture, in both the Old and New Testament, ascribes to this history, and that, therefore, it ought to be authoritatively maintained by the Church as being of essential importance to the proclamation of the gospel.

A study of the report which led to the repeal of the Assen Declaration is most helpful not only for the view of Scripture and science it presents but also for the way in which it uses the writings of Hermann Bavinck to show that this position was taught by Bavinck before Assen. Bavinck states that inspiration does not of itself make a writing the Word of God, emphasizing that Scripture is the Word of God because the Holy Spirit witnesses in it of Christ.³⁹ Bavinck also stated that

"God's revelation is not something abstract-supernatural, but it has come into the human..It does not hang suspended high above us, but has come down into our situation.."⁴⁰

These statements are cited in both the committee's report and Berkouwer's Holy Scripture.⁴¹ The committee emphasizes further its continuity with pre-Assen theologians by pointing out that various Reformed theologians from previous generations have shown that it is simply impossible in scriptural inquiry, which is always a study of history, to eliminate the 'critical' element in its original sense of 'differentiating, inquiring, comparing, weighing'. This statement clearly alludes to the teaching of Bavinck and Kuyper before him that historical criticism can be distinguished from the kind of criticism which is rooted in heart-resistance of God. This statement clearly reflects the position taken by Berkouwer in his Holy Scripture.⁴²

This method of going back to pre-Assen Reformed theological scholarship proved more successful than the method of the committee which reported to the 1963-64 Synod. That committee's report contained "an extensive appendix in which an overview was given of the development of the natural sciences in the last decades".⁴³ The shortcoming of that report was that it did not speak fully enough concerning the methodology of Scriptural inquiry, thus leaving the impression that the natural sciences were being given more importance than the Scriptures. To a denomination in which "the full authority of Scripture is constantly affirmed",⁴⁴ it was more important and more compelling to present an argument based on a particular understanding of "the nature of Scriptural authority".⁴⁵

The presentation of the committee is scholarly - taking

account of the advances in natural science. It is pastoral - sensitively considering "many in our churches who, with all their heart, wish to subject themselves to the authority of Scripture and who accept the historicity of the fall but who believe that the sensually perceptible reality of the four well-known particulars are a matter of exegesis in which the church members should be free to decide".⁴⁶ It is evangelical - seeking to emphasize the christo-centric nature of Scripture. This scholarly, pastoral and evangelical stance of the committee is personified in Berkouwer and explains his great influence on the denomination, as Rogers has observed:

"..he has developed a scholarly, pastoral, evangelical stance. And he has brought a whole denomination with him."⁴⁷

From whatever angle Berkouwer is viewed - as scholar, pastor or evangelical⁴⁸ - his influence on the Gereformeerde Kerken cannot be separated from his concern with overcoming the competition-motif.

As scholar, he recognises that

"Evidence which science can present on this question comes with "considerably more power today than in 1926" and it affects our traditional exegesis of the first chapter of Genesis as to whether this is the only acceptable exegesis."⁴⁹

To ignore scientific research would be to embrace an erroneous view of divine-human relations which disrupts the unity of man's knowledge of God's self-revelation through nature as well as Scripture. Faith and science may not be torn apart as though they were competitors in a divine-human competition.⁵⁰

As pastor, he recognizes that the membership of the Church must be taken into consideration:

"What should be done now in the interest of honesty, tolerance, and the well-being of the church over against Assen?"⁵¹

This pastoral concern is not sheer pragmatism. Rather, it is rooted ⁱⁿ a thoroughgoing rejection of the competition motif. The God-man relation is such that man's life finds its true meaning in neither heteronomy nor autonomy. The pastoral implications of this insight are enormous.⁵²

As evangelical, he recognizes the Christ-centred character of the biblical witness. With this Christ-centred perspective, he is able to avoid the dilemmas of fundamentalism, caused by its implicit adoption of the competition-motif.⁵³

"..men do injustice to the actual human character of Scripture; so justice is not done, the fact that God's revelation did not come in a docetic, not in a mere seemingness, but in a human form. In this view men ascribe attributes to the human character of Scripture which really only apply to God."54

With this Christ-centred perspective in which he recognizes "the mystery of the Spirit, who wants to bind men to Christ through these words.."55, he is able to overcome the problems caused by critics of the concept of biblical authority, who make

"an illegitimate division between the Word of God and the word of man..(with the result that justice is not done to the fact that everything human in Scripture is taken by God in his service in order to give his complete, faithful revelation."56

With this Christ-centred perspective on Scripture, the Bible will become neither "a reservoir of prooftexts"57 to be used in theological debate nor a diverse collection of human ideas to be viewed from the perspective of the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule (History of Religious School).58 Rather, the Bible can be seen as

"a vital and refreshing stream of revealed truth which gives theology its meaning and energy."59

Through his scholarly, pastoral and evangelical stance, emerging from his consistent rejection of the competition-motif, Berkouwer has been able to make a helpful contribution to resolving the conservative-progressive 'competition' within his own denomination. He has challenged both conservatives and progressives to think more seriously about the strengths of those with whom they have chosen to 'compete'. Conservatives are challenged by his insistence on taking the Reformed Confessions with the utmost seriousness. His work has shown that neither party has a whole answer. The way forward for theology is through a continuous dialogue between the past in which the contemporary church has its roots and the future to which the contemporary church must address itself. Thus, Berkouwer has led the Gereformeerde Kerken from its past - "rather conservative isolation" -60 towards its future which demands a "more open stance".61 By doing so, he has made a significant contribution towards a more relevant communication of the Christian gospel in the contemporary situation.

(b) Berkouwer's emphasis on a proper understanding of the salvation of God in Christ in relation to tensions within Protestantism.

To appreciate the importance of Berkouwer's theological method in relation to tensions within Protestantism, it is necessary to

understand the history of his own denomination - Gereformeerde Kerken-in relation to the larger denomination - Hervormde Kerk. This analysis of the relation between the two denominations pays special attention to Berkouwer's contribution, noting that this contribution has extended beyond the Netherlands to his denomination's relation to the World Council of Churches. This ecumenical concern of Berkouwer is considered further in subsection (c) where his contribution to discussions with non-Reformed churches is examined.

From the 1830s, the Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk became increasingly "decadent"⁶² because of "rationalism and modernism".⁶³ Through "the influence of the "Reveil" or "Awakening" movement which had come to the Netherlands from Switzerland",⁶⁴ the first of several secessions occurred in 1834.⁶⁵ This secession led to the large-scale emigration of the "Dutch puritans"⁶⁶ to the U.S.A. because of "the intolerance of the Dutch liberals".⁶⁷ Some members of the Reveil "did not leave the Hervormde Kerk. They loved the church and refused to leave what seemed to be a sinking ship."⁶⁸ despite being "scorned by colleagues and despised by the learned men of the day."⁶⁹ Men such as Groen van Prinsterer and I. da Costa "became rallying points for the faithful who remained in the church. Through their work, it became evident that, in spite of the conditions in the church, the old faith still lived in the hearts of many of the common people."⁷⁰

In 1886, a second major secession took place.⁷¹ This led, in 1892, to the formation of "the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (i.e., the free Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) as over against the national Hervormde Kerk (Reformed Church)".⁷² This period, like the 1830s, emphasized the tension between the tendency towards secession and the tendency towards remaining within the established tradition.⁷³

This tension is illustrated by the relation between Dr. A. Kuyper and Dr. P. Hoedemaker. These two men "stood head and shoulders above the rest in the struggle to maintain the old truths of the Bible"⁷⁴ yet they responded to that challenge quite differently.

"Kuyper, sorrowing for the Hervormde Kerk, seceded from it and established another denomination, the Gereformeerde Kerk, as the true church which no longer could view the old denomination as anything other than a false church. Dr. Hoedemaker refused to leave the Hervormde Kerk..his beloved denomination. Many of

the faithful had left with Dr. Kuyper, and the task of Hoedemaker was made many many more times more difficult at a moment when it had seemed that God was about to restore the old faith to the Hervormde Kerk. He wrote article after article defending his thesis and slogan, "The whole church and the whole nation". It was his faith that God was concerned about not just one group of seceders or sorrowing Christians, but that he would be satisfied with nothing less than that he be served by the whole church and the whole nation."⁷⁵

Thus, "among the faithful in Holland in the last century, two traditions arose, one separatistic and the other intent upon maintaining the organizational and spiritual unity of the Hervormde Kerk."⁷⁶

The position taken by both traditions is directly related to their contrasting views concerning the doctrine of the church. Hoedemaker's understanding of the church is expressed succinctly in the phrase, "The whole church and the whole nation". He contended that

"One had no right to secede or depart from the Hervormde Kerk, any more than Elijah had the right to depart from Israel because the 450 priests served Baal. If repentance was to come, it was to come to the whole church and the whole nation."⁷⁷

Kuyper's contrasting view of the Church is well illustrated by his paradoxical relation to the Reveil movement. On the one hand, he held that this movement "undoubtedly brought a great blessing",⁷⁸ recognizing the "precious significance"⁷⁹ of its reaction against the decline of the Hervormde Kerk. On the other hand, he criticized the Reveil movement for "its individualism and subjectivity".⁸⁰ and offers this piece of advice.

"It should have supposed the Church as a community as an objective power, and in this objective domain it should have vindicated the significance of the individual spiritual life and of the subjective confessing."⁸¹

Thus, Kuyper contended that the failure of the Reveil movement was that "It lacked conscious, sharply defined principles"⁸² from which it might have consistently proceeded towards the reformation of the church. Kuyper insists on "the imperative necessity.. of satisfying the need of the power of objectivity in presence of the extravagant statements of subjectivity."⁸³ He argued that the Reveil movement's concern for "the conversion of individual sinners"⁸⁴ should have been supplemented by a clearly observable reformation of the church.

Kuyper and the other seceders aimed to supplement the Reveil movement by their Secession from the Hervormde Kerk and formation

of the Gereformeerde Kerken. His emphasis on reformation and revival supplementing each other is, in principle, correct, as

F. Schaeffer has observed:

"At times men think of the two words 'reformation' and 'revival' as standing in contrast one to the other. But this is a mistake. Both words are related to the word 'restore'. Reformation refers to a restoration to pure doctrine; revival refers to a restoration in the Christian's life. Reformation speaks of a return to the teachings of Scripture; revival speaks of a life brought into its proper relationship to the Holy Spirit."⁸⁵

This dual emphasis in the Reformed tradition is observed also by M.E. Osterhaven in his book, The Spirit of the Reformed Tradition,⁸⁶ where he draws attention to both elements in the chapters entitled "Reformed According to the Word of God"⁸⁷ and "The Life of the Christian".⁸⁸ While the necessity of both reformation and revival may be accepted in principle, its application presents difficulties because it is open to different interpretations. The contemporary writers cited illustrate this well. Schaeffer stands in the biblicist tradition,⁸⁹ while Osterhaven stands in line with Berkouwer's position.⁹⁰ If this dual emphasis on reformation and revival is difficult to interpret with respect to biblical authority, it is also difficult to apply to the life of the church, as can be seen from an analysis of the views of Kuyper and Hoedemaker.

Kuyper was concerned for the reformation of the church and seceded from the Hervormde Kerk. Hoedemaker was no less concerned for the reformation of the Church yet he remained in the Hervormde Kerk. Both were concerned for the life of the Church, but expressed that concern differently. Their contrasting responses to the same situation can be subjected to a theological and historical analysis. Such an analysis has been conducted by Heideman.⁹¹ At the theological level, Heideman criticizes the seceders and commends Hoedemaker.

"Their faith had been too small. They no longer concerned themselves with the whole people, for they believed God would save only a remnant. Hoedemaker had not faith in the Hervormde Kerk as such either, but his faith in the covenant-keeping God was great and he could not believe that the God of Israel would forsake his church in the Netherlands."⁹²

At the historical level, Heideman contends that Hoedemaker's policy has been vindicated by subsequent events.

"Hoedemaker was not fully understood in his own day. He was regarded as a dreamer, an idealist who did not see the practical realities of life. Yet history is showing him to be right. In the last two decades, especially, a new life has begun to spring forth from the old stump, and in that new life many of the great concepts of Hoedemaker have come to bear much fruit."⁹³

This historical judgment is shared by Hesselink who writes,

"Hoedemaker was little understood or appreciated during his lifetime, but his principles came to fruition in the reorganization of the Hervormde Kerk after World War II."⁹⁴

This reorganization of the Hervormde Kerk after World War II was most significant both for the Hervormde Kerk's own self-image and for its relations with the Gereformeerde Kerken, as Hesselink notes,

"Before and during the war Hendrik Kraemer, Th.L. Haitjema, and others had led a movement for the renewal of the church and this came to fruition in 1951 when a new church order was adopted by the H.K. According to this, the church was re-constituted as "A Fellowship of Faith Confessing Christ," which meant that the H.K. was now completely freed from the control of the state."⁹⁵

Thus, history has shown that the church need not have been subjected to the rather drastic measure of secession. Hoedemaker's "major concern" for "a church order based on the Scriptures" without secession which "(h)e felt..represented a betrayal of the scriptural concept of the church."⁹⁶ was, therefore, vindicated. The Hervormde Kerk had gained its complete freedom from the control of the state without any sacrifice of the emphasis on "the whole church and the whole nation". Thus, reformation from within the Hervormde Kerk as a long-term policy had borne its fruit.

This historical analysis of the relations between the Hervormde Kerk and the Gereformeerde Kerken provides the context for understanding Berkouwer's particular contribution to the life of the Protestant Churches in the Netherlands. Berkouwer was born into a Gereformeerde Kerken family in 1903, eleven years after the formation of the Gereformeerde Kerken. His early background is described thus by L.B. Smedes:

"..he was reared in the kind of Calvinistic atmosphere that combined a deep commitment to the Reformed religion with a profound respect for humane learning. His father..seems to have affected him with the sober piety married to cultural concerns that is the genius of Dutch Calvinism."⁹⁷

With this dual background, Berkouwer has been able to develop into

"a man so congenially committed to Reformed confessionalism and at the same time so involved in the ecumenical concerns of theology".⁹⁸

In his book, A Half Century of Theology -

"an eyewitness account of the drama of Christian theology in the last fifty years, written by an active participant in it, one whom many would rank as the leading Reformed theologian of our time"⁹⁹ -

Berkouwer shows, in his foreword,¹⁰⁰ how his "deep commitment to the Reformed religion" relates to his "profound respect for humane learning".¹⁰¹

"I regret every sign that theologians have lost their curiosity.. without the tensions of curiosity there is little hope for any essential corrections in one's own insights.. the hesitations and doubts that are indeed present at many points do not in themselves indicate a deep and final uncertainty..an alienation from the gospel..If..theological reflection cannot survive as a repetition of the past..then continued testing and probing are an unavoidable mandate..surely reformation thinking is by definition willing to accept the challenge."¹⁰²

It is because of this basic harmony between these two elements in Berkouwer's thought that

"There is not^a hint of a theological crisis in his life..While there must have been tensions..we find no trace of a radical theological conversion, an agonized break with a theological past".¹⁰³

In view of this harmony, Berkouwer's theological career should be seen in terms of one continuous development rather than in terms of a radical change from one theological position to another.¹⁰⁴ In a critical yet appreciative essay entitled "De Methode van Berkouwers Theologie" (The Method of Berkouwer's Theology), H. Berkhof, the well-known Hervormde Kerk theologian has identified three phases in Berkouwer's thought - the absolute authority of Scripture; the salvation content of Scripture; the existential direction of Scripture.¹⁰⁵ Berkhof is critical of the idea that any one method can be the method though he is appreciative of Berkouwer's valuable contribution in leading Reformed theology away from the dangers of scholasticism.¹⁰⁶ This appreciative criticism is constructive though it must be acknowledged that Berkouwer is aware of the inadequacies of a single method. It has been noted by L.B. Smedes that

"Berkouwer does not set out his methodological guide lines in any formal prolegomena to his theology".¹⁰⁷

Smedes does, however, identify Berkouwer's guiding principle as the principle of co-relation. He acknowledges that Berkouwer gives this term "no systematic explanation".¹⁰⁸ Smedes seeks to

elucidate this principle thus:

"Theology is a work of faith, and all of its statements must be such as the believer can recognize as objects of faith.. Theology..lives in faith and for this reason works in creative response to the Word..a genuinely biblical theology is not simply a theology buttressed with proper proof texts, but one done in responsive and believing listening to the Word."109

Smedes expands on this concept further by emphasizing that, for Berkouwer, it involves

"getting inside the perspective and genius of the biblical writers.. with a constant understanding that the key to everything, theological as well as practical, is the revelation of God's grace in the Cross of Christ."110

While Smedes' comments concerning Berkouwer's methodology are helpful, it should be noted that Berkouwer is careful not to overestimate the value of a particular method.

"Sola gratia and sola fide, thus remain the be all and end all of the relation between faith and justification. But we do not set up a technique..There is no a priori surety against confusion which menace and confine our understanding of salvation. Our formulation surely provides none."111

The value of Berkouwer's theological contribution to the church situation in the Netherlands lies not in the production of the perfect theological method but in assisting the church towards a more adequate understanding of the salvation of God in Christ.

A major contribution towards a clearer understanding of the salvation of God in Christ is represented by Berkouwer's monumental "Studies in Dogmatics"^{which} has proved immensely helpful in the understanding of both the Bible and the Reformed confessions. This dual character of Berkouwer's exposition of Christian doctrine gives it its distinctiveness. His view of the relation between the Bible and the confessions is valuable.

"..for Berkouwer theology is done in constant correlation with the Word of God. But Berkouwer is also a committed confessional theologian..to be a confessional theologian involves an understanding that the creeds of the Church are but the Church's human articulation of the message of the Bible, defined as to character and form by the situation in which they were first uttered..Berkouwer is aware that it is tempting for confessional churches to absolutize their creeds. On the other hand, any reader of the history of many confessional churches knows that under the pretext of a distinction between the spirit and the letter of the creeds theologians have been known to violate the very heart of the creeds of their church..Berkouwer calls for the Church and its theologians to "seek for the deepest intent of the confessions." Biblical fidelity to the confessions can be achieved only when the Church keeps asking what the

creeds, in their human and fallible form and content, intended to teach. This means that the Church must keep alert to the priority of the Gospel over the creeds. The Church's demand for loyalty to the creeds must basically be a demand for loyalty to the kerygma. Creeds function only for the purpose of guiding the Church in its preaching of the Word..they can fulfill this function only as they are read, studied, and proclaimed in a living relationship with the Gospel. When the creeds are faithfully maintained, they will be maintained as human documents, subject to the touchstone of the Word. And they will be used in their human character by each generation anew in order to get at what the Church in other generations understood to be the message of the Word of God..theology is not to be bound by or limited to even the most classic creedal terminology. We must never, he insists, assume that no new light can be shed by the Word beyond the creeds. The Word can break through every situation with new light for new generations."¹¹²

Berkouwer's "Studies in Dogmatics" has been the major vehicle by which he has influenced relations between the Gereformeerde Kerken and the Hervormde Kerk. These widely-read volumes have demonstrated an approach to both the Bible and the Reformed Confessions which has carefully avoided polarization. This has helped to lead the Gereformeerde Kerken out of its excessive conservatism as well as leading the Hervormde Kerk away from a careless liberalism.

Berkouwer's influence on the relation between the two major Protestant denominations in the Netherlands has not been merely through his writings. He has been involved in constant dialogue with theologians of the Hervormde Kerk.¹¹³ Dialogue between theologians has improved the relations between the denominations, such that "The Hervormde and Gereformeerde (sic) churches now cooperate in many areas and continue to draw closer to each other."¹¹⁴ Such a situation has been greatly facilitated by the broad character of Berkouwer's exposition of Christian doctrine, for he has helped to broaden the outlook in the Gereformeerde Kerken and has forced the Hervormde Kerk to take the Gereformeerde Kerken more seriously, not as competitors but as friends and fellow-workers in the service of Christ.

This improved situation has tended to vindicate Berkouwer's life-long commitment to the Gereformeerde Kerken. By working from within his own denomination, rather than stepping out of it, Berkouwer has improved relations rather than exasperating them. Berkouwer's positive contribution to this situation by working within the Gereformeerde Kerken has been aptly summarized by Rogers:

"All his life he has patiently worked at central theological problems. He has taken issues one at a time and brought massive scholarly resources to bear on them. He has listened to, and held private discussions with, theologians of other traditions, learning from them and contributing to their thought..And he has brought a whole denomination with him."¹¹⁵

In this statement, Rogers notes three important elements in Berkouwer's theological career - his concentration on central theological problems, his contribution to the thought of theologians outside of the Gereformeerde Kerken, and his positive theological leadership within the Gereformeerde Kerken. Berkouwer has taken the Church situation far beyond the impasse that existed at the time of his birth in 1903. This progress in the church situation in the Netherlands has, in large measure, been made possible because of the consistency with which "Berkouwer has taught that the choice between conservatism and liberalism is a false dilemma."¹¹⁶

Berkouwer's significant influence on the Gereformeerde Kerken extends far beyond his influence on its relations with the Hervormde Kerk. Berkouwer's role in the broadening perspective of the Gereformeerde Kerken can be seen in its relation to the World Council of Churches. In 1961, while the Gereformeerde Kerken was not a member of the World Council of Churches, Berkouwer was sent as an observer to the New Delhi assembly of that body.¹¹⁷ The Gereformeerde Kerken has since joined the World Council of Churches.¹¹⁸

Berkouwer's positive evaluation of the work of the World Council Churches and his significant influence on the decision of his own denomination to take up membership is clearly observable in his affirmation of the main themes of the New Delhi assembly. At New Delhi, L. Newbigin, General Secretary of the International Missionary Council spoke on the theme, "The Missionary Dimension of the Ecumenical Movement", calling attention

"to the danger of a false use of the word 'ecumenical' which omits the missionary dimension..mission and unity are 'two sides of the same reality, or rather two ways of describing the same action of the Living Lord who wills that all men should be drawn to himself".¹¹⁹

Berkouwer makes a similar point when he writes,

"the Church's mission cannot be added to the reality of the Church as if it belonged to the "well-being" of the Church."¹²⁰

This emphasis on the integral relation between the reality of the church and the church's mission recognizes that the communication of the Christian gospel is directly affected by one's understanding of the nature of the Church. Berkouwer has recognized clearly that

the church's unity and its mission belong together and he has made a significant contribution towards the greater realization of the church's unity and its mission.

(c) Berkouwer's understanding of the depth-dimension in religious language in relation to tensions between Protestantism and non-Reformed churches.

The challenge of theological discussion of the doctrine of the church extends far beyond the bounds of Protestantism, as E. Schlink points out,

"the Reformation Churches..do not take ecumenical discussions seriously unless they are prepared to enter upon discussions with the Orthodox and with the Roman Church".121

The ecumenical challenge involves the relation not only of Protestantism to Roman Catholicism but the relation of both to the Eastern Orthodox Churches.¹²²

Berkouwer's major ecumenical contribution has been concerned with the relation between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. His method is however of relevance to the East-West conflict:

- Berkouwer's doxological method -

"The work of theology must be climaxed, not with the satisfaction of having solved an intellectual problem, but with a doxology to the God of grace".123

- bears a certain similarity to the approach to

"(d)ogma in the Eastern Church (which) is quite apparently determined to a large degree by the structure of doxology".124

- Berkouwer's confessional method -

"Only those matters that the believer can and ought to confess as his personal faith.. are the proper conclusion of theology".125

- bears a certain similarity to the Eastern approach to

"dogma (which) is determined by the credal confession of the service of worship".126

These points of similarity suggest that Berkouwer's approach to theology might prove fruitful in the East-West dialogue. Since, however, Berkouwer has concentrated his attention more directly on Protestant-Roman Catholic relations, this section concentrates on that particular tension within Christendom.

Berkouwer "was invited by Pope John XXIII to be an official observer at the Second Vatican Council".¹²⁷ With his involvement in both the World Council of Churches and the Second Vatican Council, Berkouwer would agree with the Roman Catholic scholar, Hans Kung who has written,

"The work of the World Council of Churches on the one hand and

the Second Vatican Council on the other is bearing fruit."¹²⁸
While Berkouwer has written earlier books on Roman Catholicism,¹²⁹
his main work is his The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholic-
ism,¹³⁰ to which attention is directed here.

In his Translator's Preface to The Second Vatican Council and
the New Catholicism, L.B. Smedes writes,

"..no Protestant theologian is better qualified to write this
book than its author, G.C. Berkouwer..one of the outstanding
participants in the ongoing Catholic-Protestant dialogue..an
ecumenical theologian in the most profound and..the most
universal sense of the word".¹³¹

Smedes holds that this volume demonstrates

"how genuinely a Protestant theologian whose only real concern
is the accurate translation of the gospel of Jesus Christ can
enter into a true and sympathetic dialogue with the Roman
Catholic Church".¹³²

In his opening chapter, Berkouwer stresses the need for
responsible encounter:

"Responsible encounter is not a sign of weakness; it is rather
a recognition of the seriousness of the division of the Church."¹³³

He emphasizes the importance of dialogue:

"The trouble with fear of dialogue is that its alternative is
monologue. And monologists are usually people who are afraid
to let the gospel lead them into a genuine encounter with
others".¹³⁴

Berkouwer sees a sign of hope in Pope John XXIII's words:

"We must distinguish between the inheritance of the faith itself,
or the truths which are contained in our holy doctrine, and the
way in which these truths are formulated.."¹³⁵

He relates John's distinction to an earlier statement made by
Cardinal Bea:

"many of our theological formulations, which do indeed express
timeless and definite truths, must nevertheless be understood
and appraised with reference to the ideological background of
the times in which they developed".¹³⁶

These distinctions drawn by Cardinal Bea and Pope John XXIII
are of crucial relevance for ecclesiastical relations within
Christendom. Cardinal Bea's distinction comes in a book entitled
The Unity of Christians.¹³⁷ The Pope's distinction came on "the
first day of the council"¹³⁸ for which he had "optimistic
expectations"¹³⁹ concerning "the dayspring of the deeply desired
day of the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer in John 17."¹⁴⁰ Berkouwer
also relates the effectiveness of the council to the prayer of
Jesus in John 17:

"as the council becomes history, the way in which the Church of Christ must walk in faith and life..., is going to become clearer..the question will be whether the Church has understood and now understands the prayer that Christ offered for the unity of the Church in the Father and the Son, "so that the world will believe, that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21)."141

In Berkouwer's concern for unity, "there is no compromising or attempt to blur the issues that remain".¹⁴² In this, he shares a common conviction with the Roman Catholic ecumenical scholar H. Kung who writes,

"Truth must not be sacrificed, but rediscovered. The Churches cannot be united satisfactorily on the basis of indifferentist faith and half-hearted allegiances..We must reject "unity at any price". A Church which abandons truth abandons itself."143

Berkouwer's basic position is similar to that of J. Pelikan who recognizes "The Tragic Necessity of the Reformation"¹⁴⁴ while insisting that "..we must..bear together the burden of our separation"¹⁴⁵ and addressing his book "to Protestants and to Roman Catholics who have heard the summons of the Spirit to responsible membership in the church of Jesus Christ."¹⁴⁶

Reflecting on the possibilities of the council for Christian unity, Berkouwer emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the whole church to allow its life to be determined by the gospel.

"(A)fter the Vatican Council is over the non-Catholic churches must still answer their own questions as to the way in which the Church would walk as well as answering the Roman Catholic claim that the New Testament knows of no plurality of churches."147

"If the Reformation arose as an honest effort to reclaim certain aspects of faith that had been lost to experience, the Catholic Church by making the Reformation protest superfluous can open the way to a new rapprochement. The gospel in its fullness can lead the way to integration, and this would involve the acceptance of the Reformation's contribution to the unity of the Church and to the fullness of Catholic truth."148

Berkouwer's essential contribution to the ecumenical challenge facing the Church is stated most clearly in the chapter entitled "Unchangeability and Changeability of Dogma" which begins,

"The very title of this chapter brings us to the kernel of the problem".¹⁴⁹ He identifies the real question as "whether the dogma of the Church is also subject to the influence of historical variation".¹⁵⁰ He draws attention to H. Bouillard's distinction between the unchangeable "affirmations" and the changeable "representations" of truth."¹⁵¹ Berkouwer summarizes Bouillard's point thus:

"theology always expresses the truth by making use of the concepts, terms and images typical of the intellectual climate of a given era..the truth is never expressed in an absolute, wholly adequate, and irreplaceable form. A given formulation is never the only form the content of that truth may take."¹⁵²

A proper appreciation of this distinction is essential if the Christian message is to be communicated effectively in the modern age.¹⁵³ The communication of the Christian message is the calling of the whole church. Christian unity is, therefore, of fundamental importance for the greater effectiveness of such communication.

Berkouwer finds this emphasis in contemporary Roman Catholic writers such as H. Kung and K. Rahner.¹⁵⁴ He draws particular attention to Rahner's reference to the tendency of "all formulae to transcend themselves..., not because they are untrue, but just because they are true."¹⁵⁵ This comment of Rahner's bears a strong similarity to Berkouwer's own idea of the depth-dimension of theological language, in which he recognizes the limitation of human language in giving expression to divine realities.¹⁵⁶

Berkouwer has addressed himself specifically to the question of the relation between the form and the content of theological statements in his article, "Vragen rondom de belijdenis".¹⁵⁷ To understand what he and other writers are saying concerning this complex subject, there requires to be clarity regarding what is being said and what is not being said. In making this distinction between form and content, representation and affirmation, neither Berkouwer nor the new Roman Catholic theology wish to be identified with modernism.¹⁵⁸ While the danger of relativism is appreciated, there is an intense preoccupation with overcoming relativism.¹⁵⁹

The emphasis on both the unchangeability and the changeability of dogma is intended to affirm that throughout the Church's history, "the Spirit remains its guide through all the inescapable changes"¹⁶⁰ and that historical theology should be understood in terms of "what the Church, led by the Spirit, willed in essence to confess".¹⁶¹ The intention, then, is not that of "evacuating faith of permanent truth" but rather to provide "an authentic enrichment of our understanding of unchangeable truth."¹⁶² Berkouwer describes this perspective as "an open door to an ecumenical perspective",¹⁶³ contending that

"There is..no reason why the new theology should not be accepted as authentic Catholicism, and..no reason to suspect

the new theology of a soft, watered-down ecumenical spirit that does not enter the dialogue as representative of genuine Catholicism." 164

Berkouwer's contribution to ecumenical discussion is important since his work promises to help both Protestants and Roman Catholics in their understanding of the theological issues involved. If Roman Catholics enter into a deeper understanding of their own faith and Protestants enter into a more meaningful dialogue with Roman Catholicism through the study of Berkouwer's work then his work will have been of considerable ecumenical significance.¹⁶⁵ The significance of Berkouwer's ecumenical contribution lies in his refusal to permit polarized positions to dominate his thinking. This is clearly seen in his "Epilogue"¹⁶⁶ where he makes several important points.

- While recognizing the need for realism, he emphasizes that "realism about ecumenicity is something different from a fatalistic view of the future".¹⁶⁷

He stresses that

"(r)realism will keep us from misjudging the present situation, but it must not keep us from a believing consideration of the unity of all believers in Christ, of the reality of the One Shepherd and the one flock."¹⁶⁸

- While recognizing the need for dialogue, he emphasizes that this dialogue takes place in a context where "both sides face the same problems in meeting the new responsibilities of a new day."¹⁶⁹ The dialogue concerning doctrinal understanding cannot be separated from the common dialogue with modern man.

"..we cannot take flight into a religious inner life, isolating ourselves from the tensions of today in radical irresponsibility toward the generation tomorrow..Christian faith is now confronted by the horizontal dimension of life and cannot flee from a responsible encounter with it."¹⁷⁰

- While recognizing the need for unity, he insists on "the radical difference between a common-denominator ecumenicity and a serious enquiry into the true nature of unity in Christ and how it came about that this unity was broken".¹⁷¹

The question of unity must be understood in direct connection with the gospel:

"If the adventure of ecumenicity is going to have real relevance to our world, the question of the gospel and the unity of Christ must be both honestly and stubbornly faced as the important issue..the inescapable duty of us all to subject ourselves constantly to the touchstone of the gospel that is meant to lead us all on one pilgrimage in one faith toward the future that will reveal the one truth to us all".¹⁷²

- While recognizing the need for the gospel as the criterion in ecumenical discussion, he warns against this principle being interpreted in an inflexible way in either a conservative or a progressive direction.¹⁷³

"For the Church to be guardian of the truth could be twisted so badly that the Church would lose perspective for the future, lose power to test the gospel in new situations of life, and lose the willingness to attempt new answers to new questions. The other side runs the danger of being so open and fearless in the face of the problems of the time that it does not sufficiently honor the critical, testing power of the gospel. It faces the temptation to engage the issues of the day so openly that it neglects to bring the power and hence the blessings of the unchangeable gospel to bear on the situation."¹⁷⁴

- While recognizing the many problems, Berkouwer, with Pope John XXIII,¹⁷⁵ points to the one unchanging feature - Jesus Christ.

"Standing under the Cross, the Church need fear no problem, not even problems it will see as through a glass darkly until the end of the age. Standing under the Cross, the Church also places itself within the grace and under the judgment of Him who through His Cross has become the one Shepherd of the sheep. The Shepherd will not let the Church escape the question of its divisions, will give the churches no rest as long as they are guilty of dispersing His one flock and of making a travesty of His one sheepfold. But standing under the Cross, even the guilty churches are granted the assurance of His presence on their pilgrimage. It is an assurance that is valid only as the churches do indeed stand under the Cross,.."¹⁷⁶

The maturity of Berkouwer's work marks him out as an important ecumenical theologian. His realism prevents him from being ignored as a dreamer. His awareness of the secular world demands that he is not dismissed as a pietist. His understanding of Christian unity prevents him from being dismissed as a compromiser. His avoidance of polarized interpretations ensures that he is not rejected as an extremist. His christocentric emphasis ensures that he is not rejected as a pessimist. His careful, well-balanced work makes him an important contributor to both the ecumenical debate and the more effective fulfillment of the whole church's mission to the world.

(d) Berkouwer's anthropology in relation to the tensions between the church and the world.

Set in the context of theology, anthropology takes on a distinctively theological character. In theological anthropology the doctrine of man is governed by the doctrine of God. The doctrine of man then influences the subsequent theological understanding which provides the basis for the communication of the Christian message in the world. The effect of theological anthropology on Christian communication may be demonstrated through an analysis of deism, biblicism and christomonism.¹⁷⁷

The God of deism is a God who is discoverable by means of human reason alone without recourse to divine revelation. The influence of deism on theology has led to an increased emphasis on human autonomy and a decreased emphasis on divine revelation. These emphases came to be associated with theological liberalism.¹⁷⁸

Two quite different responses to theological liberalism are represented by the theologies of Barth and Tillich. In his protest against theological liberalism, Barth seeks to re-emphasize the lost emphases on man the sinner and God the Judge.¹⁷⁹ In his attempt to overcome the defects of theological liberalism, Tillich advocates a symbolic reinterpretation of the Christian message.¹⁸⁰

The theologies of Barth and Tillich are governed by two contrasting forms of ontic thinking which threatens to relativize the urgency of the call to sinful man to respond to God.¹⁸¹ Barth tends to approach man via a consideration of the divine transcendence.¹⁸² Tillich tends to move in the direction of the divine immanence via a consideration of man.¹⁸³

Barth's ontological conclusions - the ontological inevitability of faith and the ontological impossibility of unbelief - tend to weaken his protest against theological liberalism. Despite Barth's rejection of 'a priori' universalism, it should be observed that these ontological conclusions do suggest that Barth has propounded "a natural theology of his own"¹⁸⁴ by presenting "a form of universalism highly palatable to modern man".¹⁸⁵ Tillich's ontological analysis of being, through which man's being is presented as grounded in God as the Ground of Being, tends to lead in the direction of an uncritical affirmation of modern man.¹⁸⁶ Despite his rejection of rationalism,

Tillich's theology is highly appealing to rationalistic man.¹⁸⁷

The weakness of the opposition of Barth and Tillich to theological liberalism lies not in the mere fact that both of their theologies has, each in its distinctive way, a considerable appeal to modern man. Rather, it lies in their failure to do justice to important aspects of the New Testament proclamation of the gospel. Tillich has failed to do full justice to the historical revelation of the gospel.¹⁸⁸ Barth has failed to do full justice to the human response to the gospel.¹⁸⁹ Both have allowed the structure of their respective theological systems to determine which aspects of the New Testament teaching are to be emphasized and which are to be virtually ignored.¹⁹⁰ Thus, neither is fully able to overcome the tendency of deism and theological liberalism to allow reason to become predominant over revelation. The simple fact that both theologies proceed on the basis of divine revelation does not diminish the fact that, in the course of interpreting this revelation, the interests of the theological system have not lent themselves to a proper understanding of the entire biblical proclamation of the gospel.¹⁹¹

The mere recognition of the necessity of revelation does not, by itself, guarantee that the Christian gospel is properly understood. This may be demonstrated with respect to biblicism and christomonism, both of which are undoubtedly theologies of revelation. While the affirmation of divine revelation is central to both, it remains questionable whether either perspective has been able to provide an adequate understanding of the relationship between the church and the world.

Biblicism refuses to succumb to deism's notion of a God who is discoverable by man's unaided reason. The absolute necessity of divine revelation is resolutely affirmed. Biblicism cannot be faulted on its emphasis on human sin and divine redemption. These themes cannot be overemphasized. If man is a sinner, then his need for divine redemption is an absolute need. If God alone is man's Redeemer, then divine redemption must be given the absolute significance it demands. While biblicism may not be faulted on its emphasis on the necessity of divine revelation its manner of interpreting divine revelation is questionable.

The Bible tends to be used as a book of proof-texts, a timeless authoritative book. 192

From this understanding of Scripture, a radical eschatological dualism is inferred.¹⁹³ This approach to Scripture is to be commended for its determination to take Scripture seriously. Berkouwer has suggested that the 'proof-text' approach to Scripture moves beyond the existential context in which Scripture, as God's Word, addresses the whole man, calling for his present response to Jesus Christ.¹⁹⁴ He insists that we know, through the gospel, that God comes to men in the preaching of his Word with the promise and the warning of the gospel, both of which are designed to bring men to faith. This knowledge which we have, through the gospel, is an existential knowledge that we are called by God to a decision concerning Jesus Christ which affects our entire existence. This knowledge may not, in Berkouwer's view, be directly identified with theoretical knowledge concerning 'final states'.¹⁹⁵

Berkouwer expresses reservation concerning the way in which "people speak about hell so calmly and assuredly as about an eschatological "circumstance" about which Scripture enlightens us".¹⁹⁶ While he may not speak of hell in such 'objective' terms as biblicism, Berkouwer is not a universalist. He holds that the possibility of a universal reconciliation is a matter about which we dare not and cannot speak since it lies outside the scope of the gospel proclamation. Emphasizing that the gospel comes to man as a word of both promise and warning, Berkouwer gives no encouragement to the presumptuous notion of a universal reconciliation. His emphasis on the existential character of the gospel's promise-warning call to faith does not, however, give an uncritical encouragement to the kind of radical eschatological dualism which tends to give the impression that God must act in a certain way. Concerned to understand adequately "the gospel of grace for godless men",¹⁹⁷ Berkouwer refuses to infer from the severity of the gospel's warning that God could not, in the freedom of his grace, extend his saving grace to all.¹⁹⁸ There are two distinguishable forms of the biblicist radical eschatological dualism, each of which tends to distort the communication of the Christian message. The 'theocentric' form places such a heavy emphasis on God's prior decision concerning the elect and the reprobate that the preaching of the gospel is

- Page 201 -

severely distorted.¹⁹⁹ The 'anthropocentric' form tends to place such a heavy emphasis on man's decision that the content of the biblical gospel is minimized at the expense of acquiring 'decisions'.²⁰⁰ Both forms of biblicism seek to take seriously the realities of human sin and divine judgment. It should, however, be insisted that

"we must not fall into the trap of treating sin more seriously than God's grace".²⁰¹

The suggestion that God's grace and man's sin stand in a relation of reciprocal limitation must be carefully avoided. The freedom of God's grace from such limitation by man's sin should be recognized.²⁰² The careful avoidance of treating sin more seriously than God's grace does not entail an acceptance of 'a priori' universalism. Rather, it rejects 'a priori' universalism without positing either a view of the relation between grace and sin which places a dangerous restriction on the freedom of God's grace or a view of the divine freedom which threatens to relativize the reality of the grace of God to sinful men.²⁰³

Christomonism seeks to take seriously human sin and divine judgment by emphasizing "the infinite distance between God and man".²⁰⁴ On every human attempt to achieve salvation "the absolute No of God" has been pronounced.²⁰⁵ In its opposition to the radical eschatological dualism of biblicism, christomonism seeks to take God's grace more seriously than man's sin. It is stressed that the "absolute No of God is not the last and only Word of God."²⁰⁶ The proclamation of the absolute No of God serves the purpose of God's grace :

"it opens the only possible way to salvation by shutting off all others".²⁰⁷

The deepest intention of the preaching of the No is "for the sake of making the divine Yes heard".²⁰⁸

The interpretation of the divine Yes is the point at which an important difference between a christocentric theology and christomonism emerges. A christocentric theology need not be christomonistic. A christocentric theology becomes christomonistic only where a certain interpretation is given to the centrality of Christ. This contrast can be seen in a comparison of the theologies of Berkouwer and Barth. Berkouwer's theology is christocentric without being christomonistic while Barth's

theology tends towards christomonism.²⁰⁹

By emphasizing the centrality of Christ, Berkouwer seeks to emphasize the absolute necessity of divine grace -

"there can never be a question of too strongly accenting the grace of God".²¹⁰

He insists, however, that this absolute emphasis should be properly emphasized -

"the question is, how shall we lay the proper emphases and how can we most purely praise this grace".²¹¹

Thus, Berkouwer guards against the wrong emphasis -

"It is never the full accent but the wrong accent that obscures the gospel of God's grace".²¹²

From this standpoint, Berkouwer is critical of Barth's interpretation of the triumph of grace in terms of God's universal election. He acknowledges Barth's refusal to accept an 'a priori' universalism but contends that, given Barth's theological position, this results in a relativizing of the triumph of grace.

"Barth has sharply discerned the danger of an ultimately kerugma-less universalism but attempts to free himself from this danger within the limits of God's universal election as His irrevocable Yes in Christ. This explains why the tensions in Barth's doctrine of election lead him to conclusions which, in terms of his own presuppositions, cannot be seen as other than a "shadow" that is cast over the triumph of grace".²¹³

Barth's refusal to accept the 'apocatastasis' is, in Berkouwer's view, simply a refusal to accept the direct implication of his general theological position.

Both Berkouwer and Barth emphasize the relation of the triumph of grace to faith and proclamation.²¹⁴ Berkouwer is, however, able to avoid the universalist stance without having to undermine the general structure of his own theology. Berkouwer insists that

"no conclusions are possible or warranted which are drawn outside of faith..(and that) (i)t is not possible to speak meaningfully about God's grace in Jesus Christ outside of these contexts (of calling and invitation, of proclamation)".²¹⁵

From this perspective, Berkouwer observes the unavoidable tension between Barth's doctrine of election and his emphasis on faith and proclamation :

"Reflection on this triumph..is legitimate only when it is done in the context of this mercy of Christ and of the preaching of the gospel. This context is unable to function, however, when the gospel is overshadowed by an

objective message about election which bears no vital relationship to the proclamation".²¹⁶

Critical of Barth's introduction of the concept of the 'open situation',²¹⁷ of preaching into an inherently universalist theology, Berkouwer maintains that

"such a message concerning election cannot bear vital relation to the proclamation even when it is later brought into relation with it".²¹⁸

From Berkouwer's perspective, the communication of the Christian message is set free from the restricting influence of a Christ-idea, "sometimes very different from the Christ of the New Testament",²¹⁹ which points in the direction of an objectivized election which has difficulty in maintaining "the seriousness of a human decision"²²⁰ with the result that preaching tends to be reduced to "the announcement of an eternal salvation which is in Christ..and no longer confronts us with a decision".²²¹

Barth insists that his theology is not based on an abstract Christ-idea,²²² that his view of election is different from the doctrine of universal reconciliation and that it does not preclude preaching which confronts its hearers with a crucial decision of eternal significance.²²³ There is, however, in Barth's thought, an

"unresolved tension between the triumph of decisive election and the rejection of the apokatastasis doctrine..It meets us at the point where Barth's No is heard concerning the apokatastasis and his Yes concerning the absoluteness of the eternal decision as the joyful news par excellence".²²⁴

Barth's emphasis on the freedom of God fails to resolve this tension. Emphasizing the freedom of God may serve the purpose of rebuking human pride which takes God's grace for granted. It may not be used in a way that threatens the eternal love of God which Barth's whole theological system seeks to proclaim.²²⁵

Berkouwer correctly observes that Barth's use of the idea of the freedom of God "does not provide much clarification" since it tends towards "a curtailment on what God has done and on what God has revealed".²²⁶ In his analysis of Barth's attempt to resolve the tension between his understanding of election and his denial of universal reconciliation, Berkouwer writes,

"There is but one answer to universalism, namely the kerugma".²²⁷

Like Barth, he wishes to affirm the freedom of God, the seriousness of preaching and the absolute No of God pronounced upon the human tendency to take salvation for granted. The difference is, however, that, for Berkouwer, these themes are integral to his theology while, for Barth, they tend to be in tension with the main thrust of his theology.

The aim of this discussion is to explore the background of Berkouwer's view of the relation between the church and the world. Berkouwer's understanding of the kerugma, "the one answer"²²⁸ to deism, biblicism and christomonism, may be considered with respect to four important themes in the interpretation of the gospel - common grace, salvation history, the personal character of faith and eschatological dualism. These themes are closely related to Berkouwer's view of the church - world relationship. The relationship between the church and the world is a question of theological anthropology. It is an anthropological question since it concerns relations between men. It is a theological question since it concerns the relation of these men to God.

Common Grace

The doctrine of common grace is important for the discussion of the relationship between the church and the world. Where common grace is ignored, a radical dualism develops between the church and the world.²²⁹ Where the idea of common grace is dispensed with for the sake of accentuating the saving character of grace, there tends to be a failure to do justice to the biblical call to faith.²³⁰ The concept of common grace is a difficult idea which requires to be interpreted sensitively if theology is to avoid moving in the direction of either dualism or universalism. Neither dualism nor universalism does justice to the complex relationship between the church and the world. Dualism fails to appreciate the value of the world as created humanity. Universalism fails to appreciate the distinctiveness of the church as redeemed humanity. While the doctrine of common grace can be misused,²³¹ its main thrust is commendable in that it seeks to preserve two important emphases :

- the church has a distinctive identity in the world;
- the life of the church never ceases to have relevance for the life of the world.

Berkouwer makes some important observations concerning common grace :

"grace is at work even in fallen man..common grace is constantly at work "to bend partially back in the right direction those human powers and endowments, which were ~~man~~ left to himself would be wholly perverted""²³²

"common grace..an imperfect solution..does center our attention on the gracious act of God in protecting man's corrupt and apostate nature from total demonization".²³³

With all its difficulties, the doctrine of common grace has a distinctive emphasis which is most relevant to this discussion of the relation between the church and the world. It directs attention to the grace of God and the constancy of its working in the human scene. Where the emphasis is placed on the constant working of that grace, the relation between the church and the world may be seen in terms of openness²³⁴ since the free grace of God is constantly at work in a way that cannot be restricted by the closed categories of saving and common grace.

Salvation History

The importance of the notion of common grace for this discussion may not be isolated from other important themes which influence Berkouwer's view of the church - world relationship. The idea of salvation history is of great importance in three respects :

- The decisiveness of the Christ-event requires to be emphasized in the face of positions which threaten the absolute necessity of the historicity of God's saving act in Christ. Neither Reformed scholasticism nor 'a priori' universalism are able to do justice to that historicity since both tend to emphasize an a-historical decision taken by God concerning human destiny.²³⁵

- In the proclamation of the gospel, the emphasis must be placed on salvation history and not on a deterministic interpretation of divine sovereignty or a speculative interpretation of divine love.²³⁶ The Christian proclamation concerns Christ the Saviour and not any supposedly self-evident conclusions drawn from either divine sovereignty or divine love.²³⁷

- The decisiveness of salvation history and its centrality in Christian proclamation requires to be seen in its close relation to the decisiveness of man's decision concerning Christ.²³⁸ Failure in

this area leads to a serious distortion of the preaching of the gospel.²³⁹

The importance of salvation history for the understanding and proclamation of the gospel requires judicious emphasis if polarized positions concerning the scope of salvation are to be avoided. When the central emphasis is placed on salvation history, questions concerning the number of the saved and who does or does not belong to the church are set in their proper context.

The Personal Character of Faith

Berkouwer's approach to the church - world relationship is closely related to his emphasis on the personal character of faith. Whenever theology seeks to understand the phenomenon of faith, it concerns itself with a question which is both anthropological and theological. It is theological since the object of faith is God. It is anthropological since it concerns the nature of man. Its concern with the nature of man is most important for this discussion of the church - world relationship. If the Christian faith wishes to emphasize that man, by his relation to God through creation in his image, is, in the totality of his existence, presented with an urgent summons to faith, it must avoid positions which threaten to relativize the inseparable connection between the nature of man and the urgency of the call to faith. Reformed scholasticism and 'a priori' universalism do not fully honour this connection. Reformed scholasticism gives rise to the question of whether man can believe, if all things are predetermined. 'A priori' universalism gives rise to the question of whether man must believe, if there is to be a universal reconciliation. The questions of how man can believe and why man must believe are left unanswered.

This leads man to see the question of God in primarily cognitive terms rather than in its thoroughly existential challenge. When a man, because of a particularist election, doubts whether he can believe, he will be tempted to think that "nothing could help him "if he were not elect" and his own break from the church could not hurt him "if he were elect".²⁴⁰ When a man, because of a universalist election, doubts whether he must believe, he will be tempted to relegate the question of God to the level of an intellectual puzzle, a question which does not strike at the heart of his existence since his eternal destiny remains unaffected by his attitude to God.²⁴¹ The

strength of Berkouwer's position lies in his understanding of the inseparable connection between the personal character of faith and the doctrine of man as the image of God.²⁴²

When the personal character of faith is understood in connection with the doctrine of man as the image of God, great care must be taken since man is both created in the image of God and fallen from God the Creator. Hasty conclusions drawn from either man's createdness or his fallenness tend to obscure the relation between the personal character of faith and man's nature as created yet fallen. The urgency of the call to faith is relativized by both the inference of universal salvation from a certain interpretation of the universality of God's gracious election²⁴³ and the inference of scholasticism's election - reprobation schema from man's fallen nature.²⁴⁴

Berkouwer avoids drawing such hasty conclusions. Rather than making dangerous ontological inferences from man's createdness, he stresses that

"The Word of God never presents man in this isolated ontic aspect; man, together with all his human capacities, always stands in the light of God's judgment".²⁴⁵

An inference concerning universal salvation drawn from man's createdness fails to take seriously enough man's propensity for evil and God's impending judgment upon evil. A notion of sin's ontological impossibility inferred from man's createdness must not be permitted to obscure the seriousness of human sin and divine judgment.

Berkouwer poses the question :

"How must we understand the image of God in fallen man..?"²⁴⁶
and proceeds to observe that

"the object of the New Testament treatment is not an image which is obviously and as a matter of course present in all men, but is rather the renewing of the image through the grace of God".²⁴⁷

This emphasis leads Berkouwer to describe Schilder's distinction between creation and image as being "indeed on the track of some very important Biblical concepts".²⁴⁸ Berkouwer describes this view thus :

"Man's creation is..the precondition for the image, but it is not the image itself..We should not

describe the image of God in terms of nature.. but in terms of calling. The image of God does not refer to a static, ontic state, but to man's service, man's fulfilling his calling..The creation of man, his whole created existence, is the background and presupposition for the image. But the actual image is found in the use of these created qualities in an active and dynamic service of God".²⁴⁹

Berkouwer uses this understanding of the image of God in man to oppose the speculative theology of an 'a priori' universalism which fails to place a proper emphasis on the decisive significance of faith and the radical character of sin.

In seeking to emphasize both the decisive character of faith and the radical character of sin, Berkouwer aims to fully honour "the radicality of sin"²⁵⁰ and "the unspeakably wonderful nature of salvation"²⁵¹ without adopting an election - reprobation schema. He emphasizes that

"There is no way for man to escape the condition of being lost..The lost can only be sought and found".²⁵²

His concern is to emphasize the 'sola gratia' character of salvation which reaches man only through the Holy Spirit's working.²⁵³ This emphasis need not be understood as a deterministic interpretation of election and reprobation. Berkouwer stresses this in his treatment of "Human Freedom"²⁵⁴ where he contends that

"a purely formal concept of freedom..leaves the real and central problem of freedom untouched".²⁵⁵

There is, in Berkouwer's view,

"a much deeper question than determinism and indeterminism ..the freedom of the man of God".²⁵⁶

The determinism - indeterminism controversy is "really non-religious ..and..wholly outside of the Biblical witness".²⁵⁷ From this perspective, he interprets Reformation theology thus :

"the Reformation's intention was not at all to posit compulsion as over against freedom. There was no suggestion that its critique of the freedom of the will meant to hold, in deterministic fashion, that only God acted, and that man was powerless, deprived of will, and driven".²⁵⁸

From this perspective, he interprets the Bible thus :

"the Scriptural witness on freedom is limited to man's relation to God. Man's enslaved will..does not mean

impotence in the face of divine omnipotence, but rather sin, guilt, alienation, rebellion..Freedom in the New Testament is not a formal possibility.. or a formal power which enables the believer to choose either of two ways. On the contrary; it is no possibility but rather an actuality, the actuality of being free..It does not compete with or limit the acts of God".259

Thus, Berkouwer is able to avoid the divine - human competition motif which has been so influential in the thinking of Reformed scholasticism. 260

Berkouwer's understanding of the personal character of faith is set against both 'a priori' universalism for which faith appears to be unnecessary and eternal reprobation for which faith appears to be impossible. This emphasis on the personal character of faith is important for Berkouwer's conception of the church. The church has a real identity over against the world yet this identity is not to be understood such that the church's mission to the world is constantly under the shadow of eternal reprobation. The life of the church has profound implications for the life of the world since the church's mission is universal without any suggestion of its being rendered unnecessary by an 'a priori' universalism which tends towards spiritual presumption with respect to eternal salvation.

Eschatological Dualism

Whenever the church - world relationship is discussed, the question of eschatological dualism generally arises. Eschatological dualism teaches that those who believe in Christ will be saved while those who do not believe in him will be lost. This view has met with much opposition from modern universalist theology. This conflict between universalism and eschatological dualism has occasioned much discussion. Berkouwer's discussion of this conflict is not based on a superficial mediating position which tends towards a shallow conception of faith and a view of sin which lacks seriousness. This may be demonstrated by an analysis of a book which seeks to maintain a mediating position - N. Punt's Unconditional Good News : Toward An Understanding Of Biblical Universalism. 261

Reviewing Punt's book, Osterhaven notes Punt's view that "we should assume that everyone is elect except those who are declared in Scripture to be lost".262

This assumption is based on the "universalistic texts"263 of

Scripture which speak of salvation in universal terms. It is observed by Punt that

"those who continue in unbelief and sin..will be lost but all others will be saved".²⁶⁴

Punt expresses his position thus :

"On the basis of this assumption we must tell all people what God has done for them in his Son! The awesome truth about God's wrath is to be reserved for those who remain indifferent to or reject this good news which the church has been commissioned to proclaim to all people".²⁶⁵

Osterhaven notes three advantages which Punt sees in this view.

"First, as we evangelize we take courage, for we assume that "all persons are elect in Christ"(p.132, passim). Secondly, we can assure people that their sins are forgiven, for all are elect. Thirdly, believing in biblical universalism gives us (a) caring, loving, accepting attitude towards those we wish to reach; they are elect too and will be saved unless they wilfully turn their backs to God".²⁶⁶

Several remarks require to be made concerning how Berkouwer might respond to this attempt to overcome the polarization between universalism and eschatological dualism.

- He would not accept the idea that all are elect in Christ.

Such a notion objectifies election in an illegitimate manner. He would emphasize that the man of faith can, by grace, see himself as elect. To separate election from the believer's confession of faith, arising from his experience of grace, is quite unwarranted. Any theoretical interpretation of election - universalist, particularist, or mediating - comes under the same criticism that it speculates beyond the believing confession of one's own election.²⁶⁷

- He would be most careful in his interpretation of terms such as 'the saved' and 'the lost'. Such phrases as "those who continue in unbelief and sin.."those who remain indifferent to or reject this good news"..they wilfully turn their backs to God"²⁶⁸ could easily be understood in a way that leads to a kind of moralism by which the 'saved' tend to regard themselves as not so sinful that they deserve to be lost. This would be a total misunderstanding of the doctrine of grace.²⁶⁹

- Concerning the question concerning the number of the saved, Berkouwer refuses to commit himself to any of the answers - few, many or all. He answers this question with Jesus' exhortation to the questioner to seek to be sure of his own salvation. This position

is adopted in the conviction that there are some things we do know and others we do not know. The answer to the question, "How many will be saved?", is "Strive to enter by the narrow door" (Luke 13:24).²⁷⁰ This answer is based not on the things we do not know but on the things we do know. We do know the fact of human sin which can pervert even the most well-intended theology of grace into a means of self-justification, the fact of human responsibility which may not be diminished by any system of thought, however much it may emphasize divine grace, and the fact of the divine promise - "everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13) which must be central to the Christian proclamation concerning eternal salvation.

Thus, Berkouwer's view of church - world relations is not dependent on a particular theory concerning the number of the saved. Any such theory contains a speculative element which is not inherent in the affirmation of the reality of the eschaton. The church is to proclaim to the world the reality of the eschaton, emphasizing both the wrath of God against sin and the grace of God towards sinners. The aim of such proclamation is that men might find the God of grace. This is not, however, to be achieved by relegating the proclamation of divine wrath to virtual insignificance. The proclamation of divine wrath requires to be understood such that divine grace is neither threatened by a misguided view of divine wrath nor cheapened by an equally misguided disregard of divine wrath.

A proper understanding of Christian proclamation is closely related to the avoidance of spiritual presumption. Speculation concerning the number of the saved, regardless of the direction it follows, can lead to presumption.

- 'A priori' universalism may lead to spiritual presumption because it is inclined to take human responsibility with insufficient seriousness.²⁷¹

- Eschatological dualism may lead to spiritual presumption should the 'saved' forget that they themselves have received mercy and thus the antithesis between good and evil becomes a proud and legalistic antithesis that isolates the 'saved' from the world rather than an antithesis which intensifies the call to witness to God's mercy.²⁷²

- A mediating position can lead to spiritual presumption where a superficial analysis might lead the 'saved' to regard themselves as superior to those adjudged to be lost and thus forget the biblical warning - "you have no excuse, O man, whoever you are, when you judge another"(Romans 2:1).²⁷³

The possibility of spiritual presumption need not, by itself, lead to the rejection of a particular position. It is important, therefore, to understand that Berkouwer does not reject these eschatological interpretations simply because of the danger of spiritual presumption. Rather, he is concerned to stress that the whole way of answering the question, "How many will be saved?", suggested by each of these approaches, fails to accurately reflect Christ's response to this question.

Berkouwer emphasizes that the Bible's eschatological statements are not to be played off against each other in a discussion between universalism, eschatological dualism and a mediating position. Such a process of interpretation would prove quite inconclusive.²⁷⁴ Thus, in discussing contemporary theology's approach to the future, Berkouwer emphasizes that

"Scripture deals with the future only in the context of preaching, appeal and demand for response".²⁷⁵

rather than providing "an "objective" knowledge concerning apocatastasis or the "twofold destination"". ²⁷⁶ Questions regarding the eschaton are to be asked not with a view to theological system-building but with a view to the personal response of faith for which the gospel calls. Berkouwer illustrates this with reference

to eschatological questions asked of Jesus. To the question, "Lord will those who are saved be few?", Jesus gave the challenging answer, "Strive to enter by the narrow gate"(Luke 13:23-24). To the question, "Who then can be saved?", following his encounter with the rich young man, Jesus gave the encouraging answer, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible".²⁷⁷

Jesus' answers to eschatological questions are not easily systematized. It is more appropriate to hear his words in their challenge and encouragement. His words call for commitment to a life of discipleship and trust in the God with whom all things are possible. When Jesus' words are received thus, man enters in, by anticipatory faith, to the life of the eschaton. While biblical

statements concerning the eschaton may sometimes appear contradictory, the believer need not be perturbed. His faith is not directed towards a cognitive knowledge of precise information regarding the eschaton. Rather, he trusts in the God through whom he has entered into a spiritual and personal anticipatory experience of the eschaton.

Berkouwer's approach to such themes as common grace, salvation history, the personal character of faith and eschatological dualism illumines his understanding of the church - world relationship considerably. These themes are closely related to his understanding of the church's mission in the world.

In speaking of the church's boundaries, Berkouwer emphasizes that "the sovereignty of grace" implies "that every calculation or fixing of the boundaries according to our insight ha(s) to be excluded".²⁷⁸ This statement reflects Berkouwer's emphasis on common grace. Grace is not restricted to the sphere of the church. While theology may distinguish between common grace and saving grace, it must emphasize that both belong to the realm of grace. It must also recognize that any attempt to draw precise lines of demarcation "according to our insight"²⁷⁹ contains an element of spiritual presumption. Berkouwer stresses that

"the freedom of God's grace..may not be approached from an antithesis between explicit and implicit"²⁸⁰

which draws a radical contrast between explicit faith and the possibility of an implicit relation to God and his salvation^{which} may be present where there is no indication of an explicit faith.²⁸¹

Where such an antithesis is emphasized, it may reflect a tendency to attach a "meritorious character to faith, making it the "condition" for salvation",²⁸² thus detracting from the absolute priority of grace.

In his discussion of the phrase, "Outside the Church there is no salvation",²⁸³ Berkouwer maintains that

"the intent of the phrase is to accentuate the true role of the church along the way to salvation..(and that) (i)t does not relieve the church of the responsibility to ask herself whether it is her own life which keeps so many outside the church".²⁸⁴

Thus, he places the emphasis not on the institutional church but on salvation history. Salvation is in Christ. The church's role is to point to Christ. The fact that the church is a thoroughly

imperfect witness to Christ means that a person's response to Christ may not be directly identified with his response to the church. The church - world antithesis must never be given a false importance which fails to accurately reflect the fact that the essence of the church's proclamation is not herself but the appearance of the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

In his discussion of the church's mission, Berkouwer emphasizes not the formal character of the church but the devotional character of her relationship to her Lord.

"One's testimony must be clearly separated from seeking for one's own honor and also clearly separated from our cause, from our group, or from a transformation according to our model. Otherwise, the essence of being the Church is violated..When that happens the Church and the confession have been secularized, in a particular form of distinctive "identity", and the gospel misunderstood..only true listening to the voice of the Shepherd can legitimize distinctiveness. One's own identity must be nothing other than the manifestation of love..nothing other than simple devotion to Christ".²⁸⁵

The church cannot simply say, "We are the people of God", implying that those outside of the church are inferior. This would be to contradict the nature of divine grace.²⁸⁶ This would involve a failure to understand the biblical teaching that privilege involves responsibility.²⁸⁷ The idea that the church's relation to her Lord is final, fixed and static requires to be challenged.²⁸⁸ The church is not simply to think of herself as special. Rather, she must demonstrate the reality of her profession by a living and active faith.

Berkouwer's discussion of the church's boundaries is closely related to his view of the proclamation of the eschaton. He cites Bavinck's reference to "the wide heart and the broad outlook", insisting that "he is not assuming apokatastasis, but is locating "the deepest cause of salvation" in God's mercy".²⁸⁹ With reference to both apokatastasis and eschatological dualism, Berkouwer writes,

"theoretical knowledge is denied us at the boundaries.
The Church's charge is to proclaim God's salvation..The Church may not draw conclusions outside of the proclamation, but must testify to all nations of this salvation that oversteps all boundaries".²⁹⁰

The church's task is not to isolate herself from the world but to proclaim Christ in the world. The church may not speculate about the 'necessity' of either apokatastasis or eschatological dualism.

The church must, however, submit herself to the necessity of proclaiming Christ.²⁹¹

The proclamation of Christ in the world, which is considered further in the next chapter, can only be effective when the church's relation to the world is characterized by grace.

"If one thing is clear here, it is that the Church may not function as a fearful border guard, but rather as one who brings good tidings (Rom. 10:15; Isa. 52:7).. For Christ died for us "while we were yet sinners, while we were enemies" (Rom. 5:8,10). All hardness, imprudence and rashness can only be signs that she has forgotten the gracious overstepping of the boundaries at her birth".²⁹²

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Problem of Polarization : The Communication of the Christian Message to the Whole Man.

The Christian message is directed towards the whole man. The communication of the Christian message must, therefore, be conducted at various levels. While the primary emphasis should be placed on the unity of man's nature, distinguishable aspects of man's experience should be recognized. A helpful analysis of man's nature may be based on Luke's account of the growth of the boy Jesus.¹ Luke describes four levels of growth - educational, physical, spiritual and social. These four levels of growth may be applied to the understanding of human nature. Berkouwer has not used this analogy. He would, however, understand such distinctions in the context of the unity of human nature, the centre of which lies in its relation to God.²

The distinguishable descriptions of man as mind, body, spirit or social being each describe the whole man. They are not mutually exclusive descriptions since man is indivisible. Each description refers to a different level at which the whole man may be viewed. The insights drawn from different types of anthropological analysis are complementary to each other in the common task of understanding the mystery of man.³

The application of this basic perspective to Christian communication has certain implications. Since man is not exclusively mind or body or spirit or social being, Christian witness cannot be exclusively apologetics or medical work or preaching or social concern. Since the descriptions of man as mind, body, spirit or social being each relate to the whole man, Christian witness, whatever form it takes, cannot ignore any of the constituent elements of human nature. No single activity may claim to be the whole of Christian witness. In a given situation, one element may be predominant. The others are not, however, completely excluded since a change in the situation may produce a change in emphasis. Each activity has its particular function within the total context of Christian witness.⁴

The unity of human nature, the complementarity of different forms of anthropological analysis and the functionality of different types of Christian witness are important emphases for the discussion of Berkouwer's understanding of the communication of the

Christian message to the whole man. The application of these emphases to the analysis of Christian communication has certain implications for this discussion which focuses attention on Berkouwer's view of the relation of apologetics and social concern to proclamation.

First, apologetics is a form of proclamation while all proclamation has an apologetic element.⁵

Second, social concern is proclamation in deed which receives an enormous impetus from proclamation in word.⁶

Third, God's creation of man as a multi-dimensional being provides the basis for multi-dimensional Christian witness while man's relation to God provides the goal for such witness - leading the whole man to God.⁷

Fourth, one form of Christian witness cannot be set against another since "a scale of priorities is contrary to the gospel".⁸

Fifth, the importance of each form is relative to its appropriateness in a given situation.⁹

Sixth, the concern is with the multi-dimensional obedience called for by God's gracious purpose for the whole man rather than any abstract notion of the perfect balance.¹⁰

Berkouwer's theology may be described as a theology for proclamation. His doctrine of Scripture is inseparably connected to the Spirit's use of Scripture in proclamation.¹¹ His defence of general revelation is closely related to the proclamation of God's word of grace and judgment.¹² His work on God's providence begins with an emphasis on the timeliness of the proclamation of the doctrine.¹³ His interpretation of election aims to preserve proclamation from the harmful effects of a deterministic approach.¹⁴ His doctrine of sin leads the sinner towards the only appropriate response to proclamation - confession of sin.¹⁵ His view of Christ's person and work is set in the context of proclamation.¹⁶ His analysis of justification, sanctification and perseverance is set in the context of faith which comes through the preaching of Christ.¹⁷ His view of man : the image of God is closely related to the renewal of the divine image through a believing and obedient response to the Christian proclamation.¹⁸ Central to his ecclesiology is his emphasis on the church's mission.¹⁹ His view of the sacraments opens up valuable perspectives for the proclamation of their significance.²⁰ His eschatology accentuates the eschatological significance of Christian proclamation.²¹

Berkouwer's concern with proclamation should not be interpreted narrowly.²² His emphasis on the whole man calls for a proclamation that speaks to man in every aspect of his being - instructing his mind, lifting his emotions above the human scene, calling his will to decision. Such proclamation provides the basis for multi-dimensional Christian witness. With its breadth of concern for the whole man, it provides a perspective through which the significance of apologetics and social concern can be properly understood.

This discussion of Berkouwer's appreciative analysis of apologetics and social concern focuses attention on his later work, A Half Century of Theology.²³ Having "personally experienced this half-century of theology..as a continuing event",²⁴ Berkouwer discusses today's questions in its light :

"even at the beginning questions were being raised and answered that are still nagging us today..That we are wrestling today with questions put on the agenda a half-century ago commends modesty in our address to today's challenge. But it may also encourage us to accept that challenge with a curiosity aroused by that which is truly new, the gospel of Jesus Christ who makes all things new, the gospel which theology is dedicated to understand and translate for our generation".²⁵

Modesty and curiosity are important elements in theology's development. Both a willingness to learn from the past and a readiness to face the future are required.

Berkouwer's discussion of apologetics and social concern relates itself to past discussions while seeking a way forward for theology. The present discussion aims to elucidate Berkouwer's contribution towards the avoidance of polarized positions in the contemporary discussion of these issues. In the discussion of apologetics, special attention is focused on the development of Berkouwer's thought during the course of fifty years as an active participant in theological debate. The discussion of social concern draws special attention to the practical dimensions of Berkouwer's biblical and Reformed theology as it relates to the Christianity - Marxism dialogue.

I. Apologetics

For Berkouwer, "The Era of Apologetics"²⁶ began at the outset of his theological career as a student at the Free University of Amsterdam in 1922,²⁷ a year marked by the inaugural paper given by

- 217 -

Hepp, Bavinck's successor at the Free University, on the subject of Reformed Apologetics. Hepp "figured that the time had come to concentrate more attention on apologetics".²⁸ Hepp's movement towards apologetics is set in the context of the Kuyper - Bavinck - Hepp line of Professors of Systematic Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam. Commenting on this progression, Berkouwer writes,

"Kuyper..expressed..negative feelings about apologetics ..Kuyper did not see apologetics as a means of winning back a lost spiritual militancy..Bavinck had a vision of an intellectually aggressive Christianity..Hepp thought that apologetics lent courage to theology..This apologetics wanted to build a platform for discussion and encounter with critics of faith".²⁹

An important question, in view of this progression, is whether Berkouwer, Hepp's successor, has continued this movement towards apologetics.

This question is complex and does not have a simple answer.

It involves further questions -

What is the relationship between apologetics and dogmatics?

What is a proper use of apologetics?

How far may theology make use of apologetics?

These questions form the basis for the present discussion. When the question of the apologetic significance of Berkouwer's theology is set in the context of the overall development of his dogmatical thinking, it becomes clear that, for Berkouwer, apologetics may not be dissociated from a believing understanding of the gospel. Throughout his career, Berkouwer has aimed to understand the gospel more deeply. The apologetic value of his work is integrally related to his insightful interpretation of the gospel and not to a relatively independent apologetics which threatens to fashion God in the image of man rather than leading men to the God of Christian faith.

(1) The Relationship between Apologetics and Dogmatics.

Discussing "The Voice of Karl Barth",³⁰ Berkouwer offers a perceptive analysis of Barth's apparent disregard for apologetics. He notes that Barth's attitude to apologetics is rooted in his concept of revelation :

"Barth..insisted on the radical newness of revelation; revelation can never be the conclusion of human thought".³¹

He observes that Barth's opposition was directed towards the separation of apologetics from dogmatics :

"For Barth there could be no separate task for a theological

apologetics alongside the task of dogmatics".³²

He cites Barth's own statement that dogmatics contains an inherent apologetic value :

"Barth thought it self-evident that dogmatics would "be an apologetic, polemic discourse from beginning to end" (CD I, 1, p.31)".³³

The apologetic value of Barth's work finds expression in his Church Dogmatics which is "full of confrontation with people like Heidegger, Sartre, Nietzsche, and hosts of others".³⁴ Such willingness to engage in debate - on the basis of the gospel - with secular philosophy can hardly fail to have apologetic value, whether or not it takes the form of a self-conscious apologetic.

Berkouwer's analysis of Barth is useful since it provides a basic perspective through which Berkouwer's own view of apologetics may be set in the context of his overall work as a dogmatician. Central to Berkouwer's thought is his doctrine of revelation.³⁵ Berkouwer's chief work has been that of dogmatics. The apologetic value of his work arises directly from the nature of his dogmatics. In his dogmatics, he carefully avoids polarizing positions. The apologetic value of his dogmatics is closely related to his view of theological polarization as the result of the acceptance of false dilemmas.

The apologetic thrust of Berkouwer's dogmatics finds expression in three important chapters in his A Half Century of Theology - "The Heart of the Church"(Chapter 4), "The Authority of Scripture"(Chapter 5) and "Concern for the Faith"(Chapter 8). These chapters form the basis for the present discussion of the apologetic value of Berkouwer's dogmatics.

(a) "The Heart of the Church"

Berkouwer is concerned here to emphasize the importance of the doctrine of election.

"if we take seriously the conviction that election lies at the cor ecclesiae, at the heart of the church, we find ourselves at the center of the church's faith when we focus on the question of election".³⁶

The apologetic value of Berkouwer's doctrine of election is directly related to a number of inter-related factors.

(i) He discerns the harmful effects of a deterministic doctrine of election.

"this doctrine has been all but comforting..an offense, with no real liberating and tension-relieving power..a decision

that was extremely difficult to rhyme with a gospel of love comforting to the heart".³⁷

(ii) He acknowledges that the deterministic interpretation of election has, for many, proved to be an obstacle to faith.

"the confession of divine election did come to the fore in a very direct pastoral way; people in the congregations have been plagued by questions concerning election and human responsibility, questions about the certainty of one's own salvation".³⁸

(iii) He affirms the primacy of revelation over human thought. His approach to the problem of determinism involves a reinterpretation rather than a denial of election. To ignore this problem with an implicit denial of election is to present a superficial apologetic, the value of which is relativized by its failure to take this problem seriously. Such an apologetic demonstrates "a willingness to sacrifice successive points in the line of defense as they come under attack from critics".³⁹ This defensive apologetics does not compare well with authentic apologetics which "can occur only from within the context of the gospel".⁴⁰

(iv) He refuses to be content with "the construction of defensive syntheses".⁴¹

"We knew we had to go further - in concern for the heart of the church - than the construction of defensive syntheses".⁴²

A thoroughgoing reinterpretation of election was essential if it was to be made clear that

"divine election was not an arbitrary decree that opened the door to a fatalism and determinism in which the events of our time and history were robbed of all genuine meaning".⁴³

(v) He has thought seriously about difficult theological concepts and biblical passages.

Concerning the interpretation of divine sovereignty, he writes,

"one has to be on guard against isolating and abstracting words, including the word "sovereignty". If we are not, we may use words that violate the heart of the church".⁴⁴

Such counsel is not given "with a desire to replace determinism with an indeterminism"⁴⁵ for that would be to follow defensive apologetics in an implicit denial of election. His concern is to develop an

interpretation of election which points to the trustworthiness of God :

"the knowledge of divine sovereignty is possible only within knowledge of the God in whom there is no arbitrariness".⁴⁶

Concerning the interpretation of divine freedom, he warns,

"waving the banner of absolute divine autonomy does not dam up anguishing questions, and is certainly not likely to lead to praise".⁴⁷

His concern is not to question the divine freedom but rather to clarify its meaning in a way that "phrases like "incontestible freedom" and.."absolute possibility""⁴⁸ fail to do. He insists that the New Testament "avoids a dialectic between divine freedom and human freedom".⁴⁹ Divine freedom should be understood in connection with divine goodness.⁵⁰ Divine freedom reminds man that he must not presume on divine goodness. Thus, divine freedom serves as "a summons to conversion".⁵¹

Relating his understanding of divine sovereignty and divine freedom to the interpretation of Romans 9-11, he writes,

"Words like "sovereignty" ought not to be approached abstractly via a formal concept; this can only create the impression that we are capturing our own understanding or words in transparent definitions and then applying them directly to God without deeper consideration, as though he naturally fits the definition garnered from human experience. Not surprisingly, this abstract notion of sovereignty has a profound effect when theologians apply it to..Romans 9".⁵²

"If divine freedom explains everything..how is it possible that Paul, in..Romans 9-11..does not end with a reasoned conclusion that the destiny of everything and everyone is sealed from eternity. Why does he, rather, end with a breathtaking doxology"?⁵³

When Romans 9-11 is understood as referring to "God's revelation of mercy..and not to a "naked sovereignty"⁵⁴, the illegitimacy of man's protest against God and the "mystical delight"⁵⁵ of Paul's doxology are seen quite differently from their deterministic interpretation.⁵⁶ Man's protest is recognized as entirely inappropriate because

"the doctrine of election is an "inexpressible comfort" for both the believer and the nonbeliever since it proclaims that there is hope for the "most miserable of men"⁵⁷.

Paul's doxology is recognized as entirely appropriate because it is faith's response to the divine mercy in which

"there is nothing of "the inexplicable arbitrariness of power that moves one to put his fingers to his lips".⁵⁸

Throughout his discussion of these difficult issues, there is theological integrity since his reinterpretation of election

"has nothing to do with a devaluation of divine sovereignty. It is not motivated by respect for the autonomy of the free man".⁵⁹

(vi) Through honest questioning, he has reached a positive position in which he affirms divine election while avoiding the dangers of determinism.

Describing the process by which he reached this position, he writes,

"in the Bible's radical and open character, I found a way of speaking that is not defined by some darksome eternal background, but by the way of history..".⁶⁰

61

"I did not have to posit indeterminism over against determinism".

As his thought moved from abstract concepts towards the person and work of Christ in whom the grace of God is clearly revealed, he found that he was not denying the free sovereignty of God but rather recognizing its character as the free sovereignty of grace.⁶²

He describes the direction of his thought thus :

"the reconsideration of election has tended..not in the direction of a double decree that merely waits to be executed, but in the direction of grace as the nature, the character of election".⁶³

Thus, he has achieved a position with enormous apologetic value for the person who finds the doctrine of election an obstacle to faith. His position may be summarized thus :

"anyone who expects salvation from grace rather than works is set immediately within the sphere of election; but he need not encounter alongside or over election in grace a decision that was made in a hidden decree".⁶⁴

(vii) His position could provide an aid towards faith for the person drawn to nihilism because of disillusionment with the deterministic notion of divine sovereignty. As an alternative to the Reformed scholastic interpretation of election, it is superior to the universalist alternative since it breaks free from the hold of determinism in a way that universalism does not. As an apologetic, universalism is limited not only by its speculative character and its selective use of Scripture but by its lack of an urgent call to decision. To have significant value as an apologetic, a given position must have greater coherence than the position to which objection is taken. It must also provide a foundation for demonstrating to the enquirer the necessity of the decision for which the Christian faith calls. This decision involves the whole man in commitment to Christ. It can never be reduced to the replacement of a pessimistic determinism (Reformed scholasticism) with an optimistic determinism ("a priori" universalism).

(b) "The Authority of Scripture".

The apologetic value of Berkouwer's doctrine of Scripture is

closely connected to a number of inter-related factors.

(i) He has discerned the harmful effects of two polarized approaches to Scripture. Biblicism, in its concern for the authority of Scripture, has developed a fearfully defensive emphasis with its formalized concept of inerrancy.⁶⁶ Theological liberalism, aiming to be thoroughly scientific in its vociferous protest against what it regarded as theological obscurantism, has failed to provide any valuable insight into the authority of Scripture.⁶⁷ In his concern to overcome this polarization, he poses an important question :

"How can we speak clearly and honestly about the authority of Scripture when it is turned into an object of scientific study?".⁶⁸

(ii) His approach to the relation of science to Scripture transcends this harmful polarization. Refusing to place faith and science in wholly different spheres so that the one masters the other, he has developed a theology which is neither reductionism nor docetism. Reductionism is inadequate because of its failure to take seriously the divine character of Scripture.⁶⁹ Docetism is inadequate because of its failure to take seriously the human character of Scripture.⁷⁰ The failure of both views is related to their shared acceptance of the competition motif. There is, however, a perspective which, in moving beyond these two unacceptable alternatives, opens the door to a personal faith which is by no means a blind faith.⁷¹ This perspective allows one to be "grasped by the message",⁷² which reaches man through the concrete words of Scripture,⁷³ without minimizing⁷⁴ the scientific scholars' "legitimate concern for the human aspects of the Scriptures".⁷⁵

(iii) This approach allows the enquirer to come to Scripture in search of divine truth without offending his intellectual integrity. Berkouwer's work is characterized by both spiritual maturity and intellectual integrity. With this striking combination of qualities, he brings simplicity to the discussion of theological problems where polarization has seemed inevitable. Christian faith need not wait until a "rationally developed infallibility"⁷⁶ has been accepted nor need it be abandoned should the formal concept of inerrancy be found unconvincing and irrelevant.⁷⁷

(iv) He distinguishes between the proper use and the misuse of biblical criticism.

He stresses that "objective research and attentive listening do not exclude each other".⁷⁸ Attentive listening to the message of Scripture involves objective research since God's word is "heard through the witness of the human word".⁷⁹ Thus, the enquirer is encouraged to bring his questions to the understanding of the Bible without removing the Bible's address to the whole man via a detached objectivity which, in both its critical and its conservative form, tends to detract attention from the Bible's spiritual content and purpose.

(v) His application of this view of biblical criticism to the understanding of the gospels focuses attention on the Jesus Christ of the Bible. He insists that

"The Gospels..were not cool reports of facts, but reports in which the purpose of writing played and sounded through the story in all sorts of ways".⁸⁰

Recognition of this fact leads not to a devaluation of the historicity of the gospels but a deeper understanding of the gospels.

"Awareness that the gospel records were portraits of Jesus Christ rather than ordinary historical reporting and interpretation, witness rather than journalism, proclamation rather than photographic chronicling did not mean that the Gospels had to be "dehistoricized". Nor was there a contrast between what was preached and what actually took place. But..closer attention had to be paid to the purpose of the Gospel writers in and through which they interpreted the facts they reported".⁸¹

Berkouwer insists that

"a sharp cleavage between historical reporting and interpretation is just not possible..The danger implicit in the quest for method is just this, that in asking how we are to go about understanding the Scriptures, we forget to listen to what the Scriptures say".⁸²

By emphasizing the content of Scripture, he is not ignoring its form. There can be "detailed study of the form in which the content was given"⁸³ without "letting the form prevail above the content".⁸⁴

The recognition that "each Gospel writer put together the gospel stories in his own manner"⁸⁵ need not imply that the gospels were "the creation of the early church".⁸⁶ Thus, the revelatory character of the gospels is maintained over against a tendency to reduce the gospels to the status of a projection from the church's faith.⁸⁷

This emphasis on the Jesus Christ of the Bible overcomes the false polarization between the theological abstractions known as 'the Jesus of history' and 'the Christ of faith'.

(vi) His view of history and proclamation helps to correct the mistaken assumption that historical research relating to the Bible reduces Christian faith to the level of mystical experience. The notion that revelation must be dissociated from historical events has been influential in modern theology.⁸⁸ This idea leads to a false separation of history and experience, by which history is not taken seriously. This 'a priori' idea requires to be subjected to a scrutiny no less careful than its advocates use in their critique of the historical character of revelation. Its radical antithesis between Geschiede(revelation-history) and Historie (history) ought to be called in question by affirming the unity of fact and meaning.⁸⁹ To the enquirer who is dissatisfied with history-less experience, Berkouwer emphasizes that there is a historical foundation for the Christian faith.⁹⁰ To the enquirer who concerns himself primarily with the matter of historicity, he emphasizes that

"..Christian truth can be intellectually recognized.'
But it is 'neither understood nor fulfilled apart
from an act of grace'".⁹¹

(vii) The development of his doctrine of biblical authority from an essentially negative biblicism to an open stance characterized by "freedom from fear"⁹² is of special interest to the enquirer who finds unacceptable the rationalism of both biblicism and theological reductionism.⁹³ Berkouwer speaks of this development when comparing the later Holy Scripture to the earlier Het Probleem der Schriftkritiek(The Problem of Biblical Criticism).⁹⁴ In 1938, biblical criticism was, for Berkouwer, basically a problem to be confronted. In Holy Scripture, biblical criticism is seen as a responsibility to be fulfilled. This development is closely related to the development in his view of the relation between the Spirit and the Word. In 1938, this aspect was quite undeveloped.⁹⁵ In Holy Scripture, it is a central motif.

His comparison of the two books may be summarized thus.

First, he has consistently maintained his emphasis on the words of Scripture :

"As I reread my book of 1938, I sense that the difference between then and now is not that I was at that time impressed with "It stands written" and that later, in my volume on the Scriptures, I was less committed to it".⁹⁶

Second, his understanding of the relation between the Spirit and

the Word provides the key to his sustained emphasis on the words of Scripture.

"..the motto "It stands written" cannot and ought not be a principle to be used as if it were a simple and self-evident technique that we have at our disposal..in understanding the Scripture - or in appealing to its authority - we are not dealing with a formal principle but with a deep spiritual witness to Jesus Christ to whom the Spirit testifies".⁹⁷

Third, this understanding of biblical authority leads to his dissociation from a formal theory of inspiration which has failed to understand the true nature of Scripture in its misguided opposition to scientific progress.

"We can appeal to Scripture in a way that overlooks the very character of Scripture, and so turn our appeal into an easy technique..theology has sometimes condemned science, not in the name of Scripture, but in the name of a wrong interpretation of it..Anyone who does not take account of the fact that the reality of Scripture may be something other than what is deduced from a certain theory of inspiration is almost certainly going to cry "It stands written" and still come out with something that misses the truth and power of Scripture."⁹⁸

Berkouwer's avoidance of polarized positions with respect to Scripture has significant apologetic value for the enquirer who finds that biblicism does not take his questions seriously and theological reductionism does not take its own answers seriously. In Berkouwer's writings, he finds a theology which takes his questions seriously without reducing its content such that it is barely recognizable as Christian faith.

(c) "Concern for the Faith"

The central theme is the modern reinterpretation of dogma, especially christology. ~~The apologetic value of Berkouwer's~~ discussion lies in the way he approaches apparently contrasting emphases. His treatment of relations between one aspect and another, related yet frequently contrasted aspect is most helpful to the enquirer who seeks to move beyond a caricature of Christianity as speculative metaphysics without moving towards theological reductionism.

(i) Form and Content

This is a "fundamental distinction"⁹⁹ in christology. Its use has, however, brought a certain unrest "tied to a fear that the complete trustworthiness of Scripture is somehow being subverted".¹⁰⁰

Berkouwer describes the situation thus :

"The question, for many, is whether we are dealing not with a new manner of expression but with a new faith, a faith with ties somewhere other than that which was "once-for-all delivered" to the church for all times".¹⁰¹

Related to this concern regarding "whether reinterpretations of the faith preserve continuity with the faith of the fathers"¹⁰² is the concern regarding "the difference between correction and interpretation".¹⁰³

Berkouwer distinguishes between form and content,¹⁰⁴ emphasizing that the truth affirmed may not be identified directly with the formulation in which the truth is affirmed.¹⁰⁵ This distinction, echoing the recognition by Augustine and Calvin of the poverty of human language with respect to divine matters,¹⁰⁶ leads to a perceptive analysis of the progress of dogmatic understanding.

"The specific formula cannot be plucked loose from the whole confession of the church at a given period. What Rahner says about the "self-transcendence of every formula" is relevant here; for the formula points to a specific feature of dogma that happened to be in the crucible at a given moment..it is wrong to suggest that Chalcedon is the final stopping place for christological understanding, as though it perfected every thought and said everything that could be said. If we assume that Chalcedon is the end of christological discussion we are likely to isolate the confession and lose sight of its place within the fulness of New Testament revelation.. In short, it can be taken by itself and twisted into an independent formula that has lost touch with the living Savior..we should see further progress in christology, not as transgression of the limits set by Chalcedon, but as growth into the full possibilities of preaching Christ".¹⁰⁷

The progress of dogmatic understanding is closely related to the communication of the Christian message.

Concerning the changeable form, Berkouwer writes,

"the church's speech in historical formulations has no real meaning unless it is taken up into a living confession that later believers can carry with them into a still deeper understanding of it".¹⁰⁸

Concerning the unchangeable truth, he writes,

"The perspective of Thomas' confession - "My Lord and my God" - must prevail through all our thinking and all our reinterpretations..all reinterpretation should be tested by whether it can participate in this confession".¹⁰⁹

Thus, modern christological discussion need not be seen merely as an excursus of the intellect into metaphysics but as a matter that

confronts the whole man with a living Saviour and a full salvation.

The apologetic value of Berkouwer's christology lies in his persistent refusal to separate aspects which rightly belong together in the total context of Christ's person and work.

(ii) Divinity and Humanity

Discussion of the relation between Christ's divinity and his humanity impinges directly on apologetics. The church must affirm that Christ's divinity does not remove him from humanity and that his humanity does not reduce him to humanity. A docetic minimizing of Christ's humanity is to be resisted while distinguishing this rejection of docetism from a reduction of Christ to humanity. An apologetic which has as its end result a diluted christology is to be rejected as a figment of the rationalist imagination which has foisted a radical contrast between 'the Jesus of history' and 'the Christ of faith' upon the interpretation of the New Testament. Neither an ethic based on the teaching of 'the Jesus of history' nor a theology based on a 'Christ of faith' who is little more than a symbolic figure with no real roots in history can be directly identified with the New Testament proclamation of Jesus Christ. It must be acknowledged that, in the New Testament proclamation, there is no other 'biblical Christ' than "Jesus of Nazareth"(Acts 2:22) concerning whom it is affirmed that "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses..God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ"(Acts 2:32,36).¹¹⁰

(iii) Ontological and Functional

Concerning this contrast, Berkouwer writes,

"The contrast has a modern sound; it may be a symptom of a general distaste for abstractions and a modern penchant for what is functional, operational and existential".¹¹¹

Berkouwer has been described as a "functional" theologian.¹¹² He would not, however, accept the ontological -functional dichotomy on which this description is based. He rejects this dichotomy not simply because of its modern character but because of its failure to provide an adequate understanding of faith's relation to the object of faith. Berkouwer refuses to set relation(faith) and reality(the object of faith) over against each other. Thus, he provides a perspective which is neither a demand for mere intellectual assent to what is believed apart from a personal relationship which involves the whole man with the object of faith nor a phenomenology

which views the act of believing apart from the question of the truth of what is believed. Berkouwer's perspective is useful for the evaluation of the twin tendencies of apologetic theology to either isolate intellectual assent from the total response of faith or to reduce the content of the Christian gospel by accomodating its proclamation to the thinking of modern man. In view of these tendencies, Berkouwer's theology represents a more adequate understanding of the fulness of the Christian gospel and the wholeness of the response of faith to the gospel.¹¹³

(iv) "From above" and "From below"

Berkouwer asks "whether the distinction between christologies "from above" and "from below" is a real option".¹¹⁴ He observes the danger in this contrast regardless of which option is chosen :

"..the christology "from above" contains the danger that the connection between soteriology and christology is submerged into the problem of how two natures can be united in a single person".¹¹⁵

"We must keep continuity even as we criticize abstractions in the older christology".¹¹⁶

Refusing to endanger either the connection between soteriology and christology or the continuity with the older christology, he insists that

"to marvel at the "from above" in and with the appearance of Jesus whom we meet "from below" gives an opportunity of reinterpreting the creed without breaking with it".¹¹⁷

This approach to christology is rooted in the New Testament :

"The church's path, like that of the disciples, is the pathway of ongoing discovery".¹¹⁸

The New Testament relates the early church's "discovery-experience.. its discovery of Jesus "from below"". ¹¹⁹ Berkouwer stresses that the apostles' "discoveries were not made by speculating about an abstract notion of preexistence and a coming "from above"". ¹²⁰ This view is illustrated with reference to "John's prologue, ..frequently.. cited as a case of christology "from above"". ¹²¹

"The gist of the prologue is that here the Logos is interpreted from the vantage point of all that had already happened in Jesus Christ before the eyes and ears of the writer. The gospel is a witness of what people had seen, heard and touched. There is no a priori christology here at all. The view of the eternal Word is a view "from below", from the vantage point of human vision, human search, and human

discovery in the history of Jesus".¹²²

Following this approach, Berkouwer is able to say,

"There is only an apparent conflict between christology
"from above" and "from below".¹²³

By observing the character of christological development in the New Testament as the interpretation of an historical event, Berkouwer emphasizes that Christian theology does not require the support of a somewhat artificial "from above - from below" contrast if it is to be apologetically relevant. By grounding his christology in the testimony of the words of Scripture, Berkouwer is able to maintain that the meaning of the Christ-event is grounded in the event itself without any dependence on an exaggerated "from above - from below" contrast. He is careful to avoid misconstruing the words of Scripture by forcing them to fit into a framework which is determined by rationalistic preconceptions rather than the biblical witness to Christ.

The value of Berkouwer's approach to christology may be emphasized through an analysis of the apologetic theology of Pannenberg which approaches christology "from below", setting itself self-consciously against a "from above" approach.¹²⁴ Using historical reason, Pannenberg concludes that it is more reasonable to defend the historicity of Jesus' resurrection than to deny it.¹²⁵ He holds that the resurrection of Jesus has retroactive power, i.e. in the resurrection God sets his seal on the pre-Easter activity of Jesus, declaring him to be the Son of God.¹²⁶ The notion of the retroactive power of the resurrection is carefully distinguished from all assumptions concerning any direct Messianic self-consciousness or direct Messianic claims on the part of the pre-Easter Jesus.¹²⁷

Pannenberg's view of the relationship between Jesus' self-consciousness and the retroactive power of the resurrection is undergirded by his concern to avoid any hint of determinism.¹²⁸ This concern may appear to be apologetically relevant since it reflects the mood of modernity in its search for freedom.¹²⁹ This claim to apologetic relevance does, however, become questionable when his interpretation of Scripture is closely examined.

Pannenberg's conception of the retroactive power of the resurrection might have been extended in the direction of validating Jesus' view of the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures.¹³⁰ Jesus' view of the Old Testament Scriptures may then have been related to the idea that Jesus himself has given a christological foundation

for the church's confession of the authority of the New Testament.¹³¹ Attempting to overcome the biblicism - liberalism dichotomy by means of a theology of universal history, Pannenberg refuses to develop his notion of the retroactive power of the resurrection in this direction. His refusal to move in this direction is determined not by the intrinsic rationality of this notion but by his particular reaction against authoritarianism. If he had adequately distinguished between an authentic authority and an unwarranted authoritarianism, he might have developed his notion of the retroactive power of the resurrection in the direction of a more significant insight into the role of the words of Scripture in divine revelation.¹³²

Pannenberg's interpretation of the gospel narratives is dominated by his own conception of a "from below" approach to christology. As part of an apologetic theology, Pannenberg's analysis of Jesus' self-consciousness is of ambiguous worth. The question arises whether it is more reasonable to believe that the resurrection declared Jesus to be what he had not claimed to be than to believe that the resurrection declared him to be what he had claimed to be.¹³³

Pannenberg's analysis of Jesus' self-consciousness commits him to a demythologized interpretation of the birth narratives. His interpretation of Jesus' birth is in distinct tension with his interpretation of the resurrection where he strongly maintains the unity of fact and meaning.¹³⁴ He rejects the factual character of the birth narratives on the basis of an erroneous meaning he purports to find there. Pannenberg rightly affirms that the idea that Jesus became the Son of God at the moment of his conception in Mary's womb is inconsistent with the idea of Jesus' pre-existence.¹³⁵ He wrongly contends that the birth narratives suggest that Jesus became the Son of God at the moment of his conception in Mary's womb.¹³⁶ Pannenberg's interpretation of the meaning of the birth narratives represents a complete reversal of the affirmation that the eternal Son of God became man precisely in the manner of the virgin birth.

Pannenberg's rejection of the historicity of the virgin birth is based on an artificial dilemma between pre-existence and the virgin birth. ~~This~~ artificial dilemma becomes apparent at the

point where Pannenberg confesses his faith in the incarnation of the eternal Son of God.

He agrees with the intention of the Apostles' Creed when it uses the words, "conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary". He rightly observes that the Apostles' Creed intends to confess its faith in the incarnation of the eternal Son of God and not in the idea that Jesus became the Son of God at the moment of his conception in Mary's womb. He rejects the Apostles' Creed's expression of that intention since he rejects both the fact of the virgin birth and the meaning which he sees in the biblical accounts of Jesus' birth.¹³⁷

If Pannenberg were to find the idea of pre-existence in the birth narratives, he would, on the basis of his emphasis on the unity of fact and meaning, be obliged to accept the fact of the virgin birth along with its meaning. Since, however, he rejects the factuality of the virgin birth on other grounds -

"there are strong historical objections to the tradition about Jesus' virgin birth..Paul and John expressed themselves more or less clearly in the opposite direction"¹³⁸

- Pannenberg claims to find a meaning in the birth narratives which contradicts the ~~Christian~~ confession concerning the incarnation of the eternal Son of God. Apart from an element of 'special pleading' in Pannenberg's statement of his other reasons for rejecting the historicity of the virgin birth, it must be noted that his introduction of the suggestion that the birth narratives teach that Jesus became the Son of God at the moment of his conception in Mary's womb seems a rather contrived attempt to avoid a somewhat arbitrary separation of fact and meaning.

In order to maintain his emphasis on the unity of fact and meaning, Pannenberg relates Jesus' pre-existence to the fact of the resurrection. He affirms Jesus' pre-existence as part of the meaning of the fact of the resurrection on the basis of the retroactive power of the resurrection.¹³⁹ This connection between Jesus' resurrection and his pre-existence is legitimately developed from biblical texts such as Acts 2:36 and Romans 1:4.¹⁴⁰ On the face of things, this procedure enables Pannenberg to maintain his emphasis on the unity of fact and meaning. The resurrection is affirmed in its fact and meaning while the virgin

birth is rejected as legend along with the erroneous meaning it embodies.

By relating Jesus' pre-existence to the retroactive power of the resurrection, Pannenberg may appear to have preserved his emphasis on the unity of fact and meaning. There is, however, an element of special pleading in his comparative treatment of the resurrection and the birth narratives. In his view, the virgin birth story "bears all the marks of a legend..constructed out of an aetiological interest".¹⁴⁰ Pannenberg's assertion that the legendary character of the virgin birth story "can be asserted.. with complete certainty because the transmitted text itself shows so clearly the motive for the legendary rise of the tradition"¹⁴² is far from self-evident. A. Richardson, in his analysis of the complex debate concerning the historicity of the virgin birth reaches this conclusion :

"the Gospel accounts show no desire to 'explain' anything at all; they simply relate an historical happening and leave the matter without any form of explanation..it is very difficult to suggest any motives which prompted the invention of the story of the Virgin Birth, if it is not an historical fact".¹⁴³

Pannenberg contends that "it is never possible..to show the motive " for the development of the resurrection narratives."¹⁴⁴ He asserts that a "demonstration of the origin of the Christian Easter faith has never been attempted, even by its severest critics".¹⁴⁴ Pannenberg may not agree with existentialist reinterpretations of the biblical accounts of the resurrection of Jesus. He is hardly entitled to claim that such reinterpretations have not even been attempted.¹⁴⁵ The inconsistency of Pannenberg's emphasis on the unity of fact and meaning is striking. He rejects the historicity of the virgin birth on the basis of a theory which is not at all inherent in the biblical narrative. He affirms the historicity of the resurrection in the face of existentialist reinterpretations which can be applied to the resurrection narratives no less than the birth narratives.¹⁴⁶

Pannenberg's rejection of both the historicity of the virgin birth and the idea that Jesus had any direct Messianic self-consciousness is rooted in his interpretation of the notion of historical contingency. The apologetic value of Pannenberg's concept of historical contingency becomes questionable when it

is set in the total context of his theology. Pannenberg's treatment of Christian theology from the vantage-point of the historicity of Jesus' resurrection appears to be the basis for a valuable apologetic which promises to set Christian faith free from a history-less idealism.¹⁴⁷ When, however, Pannenberg relates the resurrection to his own understanding of historical contingency, problems of interpretation emerge concerning the interpretation of the entire biblical account of the history of Jesus Christ.

Pannenberg speaks of the contingency of historical events thus :

"the contingency of events according to which, in a particular instant, something is decided that was only a possibility before".¹⁴⁸

He holds that, prior to the resurrection, Jesus was bound by the demands of historical contingency :

"Until his resurrection, Jesus' unity with God was hidden not only to other men but above all..for Jesus himself, also. It was hidden because the ultimate decision about it had not been given".¹⁴⁹

Quite apart from historical considerations concerning the gospel narratives, this interpretation of historical contingency demands a radical rewriting of the gospels. Pannenberg's interpretation of the gospels is determined by the principle of historical contingency :

"What is true in God's eternity is decided with retroactive validity only from the perspective of what occurs temporally with the import of the ultimate..Apart from Jesus' resurrection, it would not be true that from the very beginning of his earthly way God was one with this man. That is true from all eternity because of Jesus' resurrection".¹⁵⁰

The earthly life of Jesus can, however, be approached from a quite different standpoint. It may be maintained that Jesus freely chose to obey the Father and that his choice could not be other than the choice of obedience because of his divinity. This approach does not disregard the principle of historical contingency. Rather, it sets historical contingency within the context of the uniqueness of the incarnation. Rather than creating a tension between what is not true historically and what is true eternally, this approach grounds the historically true in the eternally true. Jesus freely chose to obey the Father because he is the eternal Son of the Father.

This approach permits Jesus to freely use the policy of self-concealment in the progression of his Messianic mission. It does not, however, permit man to place an absolute necessity of historical contingency on Jesus to which he must simply conform in a certain way.¹⁵¹ This approach which sees historical contingency in relation to Christ's divinity is rejected by Pannenberg as insufficiently historical, treating the concept of historical contingency with insufficient seriousness.¹⁵² The charges can, however, be made that Pannenberg's theology is insufficiently historical and that he does not take the concept of historical contingency with sufficient seriousness. Apart from his affirmation of the historicity of the resurrection of Jesus, Pannenberg's interpretation of the gospels creates a distinct tension between 'the Jesus of history' and 'the Christ of faith'.¹⁵³ In his interpretation of the meaning of the resurrection, Pannenberg frequently objects to views which do not allow for the contingency of the future "unfortunately without, however, detailing just exactly how his own strong eschatological orientation leaves room for contingency".¹⁵⁴

In view of Pannenberg's interpretation of the resurrection, it may be observed that he does not, in practice, place God under the restriction of an unqualified concept of historical contingency. God has, in Pannenberg's view, revealed the end of history in the event of Jesus' resurrection. Since, in Pannenberg's view, the resurrection retroactively validates the entire work of God's self-revelation in the incarnation, it may be asked whether it would not be more reasonable to hold that, from the outset of the incarnation, God's self-revelation is not bound by historical contingency operating as an abstract principle apart from the character of God. This approach does not disregard Pannenberg's concern for freedom. Rather, it is emphasized that, in the incarnation, the determinative principle is the freedom of God. When the uniqueness of the incarnation is seen in this way, there is no need to posit a "from above" approach which does not take history seriously. There is, however, no encouragement given to an artificial "from above - from below" contrast which demands that the kerygmatic purpose of the gospels is separated from their intention to speak "about Jesus as he was when he walked and dwelt among us".¹⁵⁵

Set in the context of his interpretation of the entire biblical account of the history of Jesus Christ, the apologetic significance of Pannenberg's theology becomes thoroughly ambiguous. An investigation of the resurrection narratives on the basis of Pannenberg's view of historical reason might lead in two quite different directions from Pannenberg's theology. One might reach the conclusion that the resurrection is to be accepted as historical fact. If there is no 'a priori' reason why the story of the virgin birth and the notion of Jesus' direct Messianic self-consciousness and direct Messianic claims should be regarded as legendary, one might, on the basis of the historicity of the resurrection, come to accept the historical character of the other aspects of the gospel narratives. Using historical reason which is concerned with probability rather than certainty, one might reject the historicity of the resurrection, partly on the basis of a sceptical stance towards other aspects of the gospel narratives. The value of Pannenberg's apologetic is, therefore, person-relative. It is relative to opinions concerning the reasonableness of either a theoretical 'a priori' which demands that the gospel narratives are regarded as legendary where they conflict with this 'a priori' or a historical judgment concerning the historicity of an event which is recorded in documents which present legendary material with no indication of its legendary character. These questions are controversial matters concerning which there is little consensus. Pannenberg's response to these questions is inadequate in three respects. It implies that there is a much greater consensus than there is. It is much further from resolving these controversies than Pannenberg's confident writing sometimes suggests. Pannenberg's theology is based on personal opinion much more than his emphasis on reason would appear to suggest.

An examination of Pannenberg's entire theology suggests that there is a tendency to surrender what appears to be more peripheral with a view to accentuating what is regarded as being of crucial importance. Pannenberg's analysis of the gospel narratives is a combination of both historical and philosophical reasoning. His philosophical notion of historical contingency both demands and justifies his historical conclusions. This combination of historical and philosophical reasoning is applied to the

interpretation of the gospel narratives in a way that tends to both misrepresent the extent to which historians disagree on the question of historicity and rather conveniently dismiss traditional theological interpretations which are regarded as unacceptable. This dual weakness in Pannenberg's whole procedure suggests a reductionist tendency to sacrifice the 'peripheral' for the sake of the central. This procedure may be acceptable to some as an apologetic. For others, however, it raises more questions than it provides answers.

In the discussion of the "from above - from below" contrast, it is important to avoid the tendency to isolate either abstract metaphysics or existential experience from the biblical testimony to divine redemption. Pannenberg's emphasis on universal history has not succeeded in avoiding the tendency to let his philosophical presuppositions determine his theology rather than the biblical witness to Jesus Christ. Berkouwer has sought to avoid the dangers of retreating into either abstract metaphysics or existential experience. He has done this quite differently from Pannenberg. His approach and its relation to apologetics is discussed in relation to Pannenberg's view in the subsequent discussion of "The Extent to which Theology may make use of Apologetics".

(v) "Thingness" and "Personalist"

Observing that the "thingness of a two-natures ontology" has, by some theologians, been set against a "functional, personalist christology", Berkouwer questions the helpfulness of "the juxtaposing of these two categories - "thingness" and "personalist"". ¹⁵⁶

"It..gives a simplistic picture of..Chalcedon. It assumes that Chalcedon pretended to provide a complete and exhaustive summary of the biblical teaching concerning Jesus Christ..it forgets, quite unhistorically, that Chalcedon did not intend its formula be abstracted from the total profile of Jesus Christ that was known and confessed at that time". ¹⁵⁷

D. G. Bloesch has described Berkouwer's theological outlook as "biblical personalism" as distinct from mystical spirituality. ¹⁵⁸ Berkouwer's approach may be described as personalism since his whole theology proclaims a personal God who enters into personal relations with men. This personalism is, however, clearly defined as biblical personalism. Berkouwer does not lay down a personalistic theory to which the witness of Scripture must then conform. He is concerned, in his exposition of the biblical teaching concerning Jesus Christ, to do justice to the total profile of Jesus Christ.

Berkouwer carefully avoids drawing deductions from the 'person' of Christ apart from the total perspective of the Christian message. Criticizing the idea that "the fact that Christ, as God, was also a true man..is..the Christological offense par excellence", he writes,

"The offense is never an attitude of resistance springing from the impossibility of conceiving the unity of God and man, but one of opposition to the message of the grace of God revealed to us in the humiliated One. In him we are confronted, not just with the knotty problem of how it is possible that this man should claim to be the Son of God, but with the decision to believe or not to believe the revealed Word of God".¹⁵⁹

Berkouwer carefully avoids drawing deductions from the 'work' of Christ which tend to reduce christological language to symbols of existential experience. Criticizing the frequent existentialist citation of Melanchthon's words - "To acknowledge Christ is to acknowledge his benefits, not, as is sometimes taught, to behold his nature or the modes of his Incarnation" -, he remarks,

"Melanchthon, far from being indifferent to the confession of Christ as being truly God and truly man, warns and protests against the unfruitful speculations of scholastic theologians..(this is) a far cry from the later idea that knowledge of Christ consisted rather in value-judgments than in ontological judgments..The difference between ontological and value-judgments as a motif in the elaboration of Christology was as completely foreign to the Christology of the Reformation as it is to the biblical message".¹⁶⁰

Berkouwer's christology, like his doctrines of election and Scripture, finds its apologetic significance in his rejection of the competition-motif by which the divine and the human are set against each other. This element in his thought enables him to identify and avoid caricatures of the Christian faith, thus providing the enquirer with a clearer understanding of both what Christianity is and what it is not.

(vi) Christology and Theodicy

A central concern for apologetics is the problem of evil. To face this problem in the full context of the Christian message, the church must "avoid empty notions of transcendence and facile notions of supernaturalism".¹⁶¹ There must be a recognition of "the emptiness of many older concepts that are no longer in touch with reality"¹⁶² if apologetics is to move beyond a defence of "misconstrued "theism" and empty "supernaturalism"¹⁶³ Closer attention must be paid to the

inseparable relation between christology and theodicy.

Berkouwer's discussion of christology and theodicy refers to insights drawn from theologians of different eras - Paul, Luther, Calvin, Barth, Bonhoeffer, Moltmann.¹⁶⁴ The lessons he draws from this analysis are profound :

"..what is involved is not a theoretical answer to the enigma of evil..but an answer of faith".¹⁶⁵

"God's being is expressed in earthly suffering, not an "uninvolved heavenly holiness". The atheistic protest is rendered mute by the theology of the cross".¹⁶⁶

"the abstract questions of theodicy fall away in the shadow of the event of the cross".¹⁶⁷

"..the reality of the cross, a reality that offends human logic..counters all natural expectations of divine power".¹⁶⁸

"In the environs of Jesus Christ, we are conscious of both transcendence and closeness. It is a transcendence, however, that is not an empty transcendence. And it is a closeness that reveals that God's answer transcends even our highest concepts".¹⁶⁹

This christological orientation to theodicy is rooted in the understanding of the relation between divine omnipotence and divine love, as Berkouwer observes in his citation of the words of his fellow Dutchman, A. A. van Ruler :

"The divine rule is fashioned in the style of suffering. Even the omnipotence of God takes the route of love's work of transformation".¹⁷⁰

Berkouwer's discussion of christology and theodicy is not, however, merely a discussion of other writers' views. His own distinctive position is presented in The Providence of God where he discusses "The Problem of Theodicy".¹⁷¹ There are four important features in his approach.

First, he affirms the primacy of revelation.

"The basic problem is defined by the manner in which one approaches reality. One cannot mount from reality to the righteousness of God, because reality can only be known through the explaining word of revelation. The Light that illumines the world is found only in faith".¹⁷²

When God is approached "from the basis of empirical reality", his righteousness becomes "a deduction of human reason".¹⁷³ Natural theodicy, "in spite of its apologetic intent", is adjudged to be "worthless and unacceptable" since it "only suggests that we try again to reach God by way of natural understanding" and usually concludes with an empty, abstract God concept".¹⁷⁴

Second, he emphasizes the character of the God of revelation. He stresses that the Christian message has nothing to do with "an abstract concept of sovereignty".¹⁷⁵ It is concerned rather with "the God of revelation..the true, and living God..the holy and merciful Father..the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ".¹⁷⁶ Thus, the Christian response to the problem of evil must be set in the fuller context of this God rather than the more restricting context of the God of theism.¹⁷⁷

Third, he insists that an experiential knowledge of the redemptive revelation of God provides the proper perspective for the Christian response to the problem of evil.

"Having received forgiveness, man cannot possibly speak of God and the world in abstract categories. Theodicy has usually run aground in the shallowness of the human endeavor to find an explanation where only justification and forgiveness can provide a perspective".¹⁷⁸

The man who has experienced divine forgiveness can leave the problem of evil with the God who has solved his personal problem of evil through divine forgiveness.

Fourth, he insists that the Christian message calls for man's total response to the divine redemption. This emphasis on the urgency of the call for response to the Christian message distinguishes Berkouwer's approach not only from natural theodicy but also from any approach which could be interpreted, however unintentionally, in terms of the acceptance of a theoretical explanation based on revelation. The distinctiveness of his approach is seen in his critique of Barth's christological theodicy. He agrees with Barth's emphasis on the inseparable relation between christology and theodicy. He disagrees with the way in which Barth relates christology to theodicy. He sees "Barth's christological theodicy" as "closely related to his universalistic doctrine of election" with the result that "(u)nbelief is nothing but the nonsense of rejecting this irrefutable fact : the universal love of God".¹⁷⁹ He criticizes this view on the grounds that it could lead to a proclamation lacking in urgency :

"The Scriptures..do not know of such an objectivized notion of the world in Christ. The gospel of redemption is proclaimed in the world as an appeal to faith. It is never a mere informing about a new state of affairs..It must not be objectivized into a proclamation that all is now right with the world".¹⁸⁰

A christological approach to theodicy must seek not only to provide the enquirer with an answer to his question but also with an urgent summons to faith.

Berkouwer's christological approach to theodicy is set in the context of his doctrine of divine providence.

Discussing God's providence in history, he writes,

"It is possible to speak concretely about God's Providence only on the basis of the blood of the cross".¹⁸¹

He is speaking not simply of a theoretical theodicy but of Christian experience.

"He who sees things this way will never succumb to the temptation to identify prosperity with blessing and adversity with curse. In faith, one can ~~accept~~ prosperity as the gift of God and adversity as God's hand graciously leading him to faith".¹⁸²

The apologetic significance of a life of faith is not to be obscured by a rather one-sided preoccupation with the development of theoretical arguments.

Discussing the relation of miracles to divine providence, he maintains that "man's decision as to miracles is, in principle, his decision as to Christ".¹⁸³ In relating the question of miracles to christological challenge rather than philosophical presupposition, he speaks of the apologetic significance of miracles. This significance is paradoxical. Taken on their own, miracles have a limited usefulness in apologetics. Within the total context of the Christian message, miracles bear the character of witness which calls for decision.

"Miracles and signs do not decide anything for the Church, though they may propose a decision".¹⁸⁴

In recognizing the dual character of the apologetic value of miracles, he is stressing the centrality of salvation rather than the isolated question of miracles :

"..it is not miracles, but the salvation of the Lord that is necessary for the well-being of the Church".¹⁸⁵

The purpose of apologetics is not simply to respond to specific questions but rather, in its response, to present the Christian message in its total context.

(vii) Seeking and Finding

In the closing paragraph of A Half Century of Theology, Berkouwer describes the theological task in terms of its difficulties

and its possibilities. This description of the theological task suggests that dogmatics contains within itself an implicit apologetic thrust.

"..the quest that has been given to the church of all times ..is the quest for a deeper and richer understanding of the unsearchable riches of the gospel. On this route, which has many travellers, each with his own cares, defeats, and discoveries, we also stand before another possibility: the correlation between seeking and finding. The light comes in the form of a promise: "Seek and ye shall find." This promise can be the stimulus to new courage and to new service".¹⁸⁶

This correlation between seeking and finding provides an impetus to the church of Christ in the work of communicating the Christian gospel as the answer to the many questions raised in the modern world.

(2) A Proper Use of Apologetics

Berkouwer's perspective on the use of apologetics is closely related to his view of the nature of dogmatics. In the Foreword to A Half Century of Theology, he maintains that

"the hesitations and doubts that are indeed present at many points do not in themselves indicate a deep and final uncertainty, least of all an alienation from the gospel".¹⁸⁷

This perspective is based on a recognition of the limitation of dogmatics. Citing Bavinck, he acknowledges that dogmatics is

"not the Word of God, but only a "vague image and a weak correspondence, a fallible human undertaking in which one tried to think through and translate what God had said beforehand and in various ways....".¹⁸⁸

Following his recognition of the limitation of dogmatics, he asks,

"What meaning might this modest limit to dogmatics have for the positive, confident, and courageous language of apologetics".¹⁸⁹

He answers this question by distinguishing between a wrong use of apologetics and its proper use. In the misuse of apologetics, he criticizes "an unattractive militancy which is hard to harmonize with the Christian style".¹⁹⁰ He maintains that this approach

"has not always been free from a spirit of conflict that irritates its hearers, with the result that instead of opening doors it turns away potential participants in dialogue or provokes them to counterattack".¹⁹¹

This approach is then contrasted with a proper use of apologetics :

"..if apologetics becomes a fight over a system.. it becomes something very different from the "giving an answer" for faith that the New Testament asks for. The struggle may not be waged for the sake of a fight, but only for the sake of the truth. There must, therefore,

never be lust for victory in confrontation. Confrontations can easily be waged in a manner that alienates faith from science without the believing disputants even understanding the problems of science; quick counterarguments are then not even taken seriously by the other side. Apologetics may then celebrate some sort of victory, while in reality it has only exposed its poverty".¹⁹²

Speaking of the proper use of apologetics, Berkouwer refers to Bavinck's statement concerning the "'difficulties and wounds" that one experiences along the way of dialogue". He then remarks, "When the theologian says this seriously and self-critically, all cheap apologetics is ruled out..apologetics is marked by a profound analysis of the critical question that is placed before Christian faith by the world of thought in which we are all sojourners together. Lacking this, apologetics will fall into mere repetition and fail to give a real answer to real questions. The questions themselves must be..understood before a genuine answer can be given. Herein lies the kernel of all responsiveness: it rejects apparent, make-believe answers as empty gestures ..all answer-giving throws us back to a testing of our own faith and thought..only in a self-critical attitude could communication take place with critics".¹⁹⁴

Berkouwer's distinction between the misuse and the proper use of apologetics is seen in his dogmatics. The apologetic significance of his work lies in the open way he discusses the meaning of Christian faith. The appeal of his work on election lies largely in his willingness to face honestly objections to the whole idea of election without rejecting its fundamental truth. Concerning this matter, he writes, "I, not without hesitation and persistent questions, published my book Divine Election".¹⁹⁵ The attraction of his view of Scripture is closely related to his refusal to accept the idea that a biblical faith involves a retreat from responsible scholarship. He acknowledges candidly that "every method by which Scripture is studied is in turbulence..there is no way to avoid turbulence".¹⁹⁶ The way of coping with this turbulence is not by avoiding difficult hermeneutical questions but by pointing to "the positive purpose of the Scriptures".¹⁹⁷

"We must keep looking for ways to reassure the church that we are not merely looking for problems, that we have indeed heard the answer and intend to keep hearing it, and that we know the answer transcends our questions and problems in a way that keeps them from becoming the main theme".¹⁹⁸

The apologetic value of his christological discussion is enhanced by his recognition of the limitation of dogmatics and his consequent identification with the enquirer in his questioning of dogmatic

formulations.

"We should not expect too much from theology, it will at best only give us incomplete knowledge and inadequate understanding".¹⁹⁹

"..theology ought not keep itself above the disturbances people experience, as though it had all wisdom and can work with the truth above the heads of the people in the congregation, as though it can afford to be unconcerned about the anxieties of the plebeians of faith".²⁰⁰

In Berkouwer's view, apologetics, properly conceived, has a significant part to play in Christian communication. Its significance is directly related to its recognition of both the limitations of theological reflection²⁰¹ and the "truly new" character of the Christian gospel.²⁰² Theology is called to "translate for our generation" this gospel of enduring relevance.²⁰³ Recognizing its own inadequacy, theology must acknowledge "all its questions and uncertainties".²⁰⁴ Recognizing the gospel's relevance, theology must fulfill its task as "a work of joy".²⁰⁵ This combination of honest reflection and joyful declaration determines the character of Christian apologetics as both humble and courageous.

"There is room for a humble and courageous defense of Christianity. The combination of humility and courage is the combination that Christianity in our day sorely needs".²⁰⁶

Such a combination is necessary if contemporary Christianity is to overcome the polarization between a dogmatics that is apologetically irrelevant and an apologetics that is dogmatically reductionist.

(3) The Extent to which Theology may make use of Apologetics

Berkouwer begins his discussion of "Faith and Reasonableness"²⁰⁷ with the question,

"Can we find grounds for Christian faith that not only are meaningful for believers, but can be, at least to some extent, convincing to nonbelievers?"²⁰⁸

This question requires to be answered if there is to be a more detailed understanding of the phrase, "a humble and courageous defense of Christianity".²⁰⁹ Berkouwer's response to this question can be viewed from various angles.

(a) He affirms the irreducible content of the gospel.

This affirmation is seen in his critique of both the traditional proofs for God's existence and Pannenberg's definition of God as "the power that determines everything that exists".²¹⁰

Concerning the proofs, he writes,

"There has been a growing sense that an abstract element filtered through the proofs, that they were really about being and existence and not about the living God or Christian faith. Once the existence of a "God" was demonstrated, one could define him further, in whatever way one was personally inclined".²¹¹

Concerning Pannenberg's definition of God, he writes,

"The Reality that determines everything" is not a promising concept for solving all problems. More likely, the problem of evil and the question of theodicy will be the more pressing as one takes such a God concept seriously. Everything depends on the two words "determines" and "everything"..if we abstract the quest for reasonableness from the content of faith we will always end up with bleak abstractions of a religious metaphysic that multiplies rather than solves questions".²¹²

The content of the gospel must not be devalued for the sake of apologetic relevance.²¹³ The end result may be irrelevance rather than relevance.

Berkouwer's emphasis on the irreducible content of the gospel is not merely a retreat from modern man's questions to a traditional theological system which is assumed rather than shown to be biblical. Berkouwer's strong biblical stance is directed against a scholastic theology which too easily assumes itself to be biblical as well as a modern trend towards dispensing with the normativity of Scripture. In the light of the entire biblical witness to divine salvation, Berkouwer takes great care to avoid both the tendency to demand that the interpretation of Scripture conform to a rather heteronomous concept of God and the tendency to exclude those aspects of biblical faith which do not appear to be apologetically relevant. Berkouwer is able to voice a strong protest against both these tendencies because he rejects the divine - human competition motif which is reflected in both positions.²¹⁴

(b) He affirms the essential reasonableness of the gospel.

In his discussion of the concepts of mystery and paradox and the charge of authoritarianism, he suggests that the gospel is essentially reasonable and must not be construed as a flight into the irrational.

Concerning mystery, he points out that the New Testament speaks of "the revelation of the mystery" (Romans 16:25).²¹⁵ Thus, it is illegitimate to identify mystery with enigma when discussing the

mystery of faith which does not arise "amid abstract problems of theoretical knowledge".²¹⁶ Recognition of the inseparable connection between the mystery of faith and the revelation of grace leads him to reject the idea of "mystery that is wholly impervious to human reflection".²¹⁷

Recognizing "a wide variation in understanding of what paradox is", Berkouwer relates his own view of paradox to the words of Luke 5:26 - "We have seen strange things today".²¹⁸ He emphasizes that paradox refers to "something out of the ordinary".²¹⁹ Paradox need not be understood in terms of logical contradiction. The theological idea of paradox is "not..a logical paradox, but..breaking through the wisdom of the world".²²¹

The charge of authoritarianism is rejected by Berkouwer. Citing various writers,²²² he distinguishes between an authentic authority and an unwarranted authoritarianism.

"Authority..cannot be a darksome power that compels us to subject ourselves without reason..Something happens in revelation that is totally different from the way the authorities on earth coerce people into servile obedience ..the difference begins with the content of that which is "over against" us".²²³

This theme is developed further in Holy Scripture, where Berkouwer writes,

"..the authority of God's Word is not being enforced like an arbitrary external authority..Its authority does not have the features of an external authority, which..does not allow an encounter with any insight, understanding or response. Scripture's authority does not demand blind obedience..Never does it have the features of a dark dictatorship that forces its will in a despotic manner, with no concern for man's way of life under this dictatorship..It is rather a subjection that spells redemption..not a general kind of obedience..but a subjection to Christ whereby he is never out of view..in which acceptance occurs with joy and willingness..the Spirit ..does not blind man but opens his eyes..Faith in terms of a sacrifice of the intellect is a perversion of the Christian faith and obedience..a dangerous view of faith..(as) a decision without inner conviction regarding the object and content of the faith".²²⁴

(c) He affirms the apologetic significance of the gospel.

Berkouwer's criticisms of certain types of apologetics which threaten to distort the content of the Christian message should not be understood as a negative evaluation of all apologetics. It does express his concern that apologetic activity should arise from the

gospel rather than being determined by modern man's questions.²²⁵ In keeping with his emphasis that "the whole Scriptural witness deals with the whole man in the actuality of his existence",²²⁶ Berkouwer expresses an interest in the idea that "human experience contained a hint of God",²²⁷ referring to Pannenberg's theological anthropology as "a dynamic apologetic theology"²²⁸ which is "not a capitulation to anthropology, as though he were reducing theology to a study of man".²²⁹ Berkouwer's interest in this type of apologetics should not, however, be exaggerated. His basic conviction that the gospel contains its own inherent apologetic significance dominates his discussion of apologetics. He insists that the gospel is neither irrational nor irrelevant. Its reasonableness and relevance do not depend on man's efforts to demonstrate that reasonableness and relevance.

This emphasis should not be seen as retreat into authoritarianism. There is, in this emphasis on the capacity of the gospel to demonstrate its own reasonableness and relevance, no hint of the pretentious idea of an absolute 'proof'. Rather, it may be seen as a person-relative approach which recognizes the basic need for a readiness to allow one's presuppositions to be challenged by the gospel. In contrast to Pannenberg's bold criticism of theological positivism as an "intellectually nonobligatory, merely subjectively accepted supernaturalistic standpoint",²³⁰ this approach recognizes that every apologetic (Pannenberg's included)²³¹ is person-relative in the sense that it depends for its value on a willingness to accept the gospel's presuppositions. Berkouwer's greater concentration on the 'human experience' apologetic does not mean that he sees it as essentially different from the traditional 'proofs'. He maintains that this approach, when it operates with the idea of God as "the reality that determines everything", is really "a form of the ontological argument".²³² Such an approach, no less than the ontological argument,²³³ can be charged with being dependent on a "prior faith".²³⁴

Berkouwer emphasizes the gospel's own intrinsic apologetic significance rather than any self-conscious apologetic, traditional or modern. He stresses that anthropological analysis, though by no means useless, could lead to disillusionment where it is given an exaggerated importance. He contends for "an apologetic that does

not isolate itself from the message it intends to make credible ..an apologetic that seeks its basic resources within the gospel itself".²³⁵

(d) He affirms the spiritual character of the gospel.

In his analysis of mystery and paradox, Berkouwer emphasizes that the gospel has a spiritual character. It displays a wisdom that is quite different from human wisdom.²³⁶ The genesis of faith must, then, be understood in spiritual categories. It is at this point that a self-conscious apologetic might be expected to have most difficulty with Berkouwer's emphasis on the gospel's inherent apologetic value.

As one who is "mostly concerned with the issue of apologetics,"²³⁷ Pannenberg might be expected to make three criticisms of Berkouwer's position.

First, he might be expected to view Berkouwer's theology as one which uses the Holy Spirit as "a kind of supernatural key to a Christian message which has meanwhile become incomprehensible",²³⁸ a compensation for our inability to understand, by which the "incomprehensible, indeed even the absurd, is nevertheless to be legitimized".²³⁹

Second, he might be expected to regard Berkouwer's theology as an object for his criticism of "belief in revelation on the basis of authority..as blind faith".²⁴⁰

Third, he might be expected to criticize Berkouwer's theology for an unwillingness to bring faith out of its ghetto.²⁴¹

Berkouwer's response to such criticisms is most instructive.

First, he insists that the Spirit, far from compensating for defects in faith's content, exercises his authority precisely through that content.²⁴² Thus, he places more emphasis on the gospel's content than Pannenberg who tends to select those elements which fit his apologetic best.²⁴³ Thus, Pannenberg, rather than Berkouwer, may be charged with ignoring the gospel's content to the extent that it is inconvenient to his apologetic purpose.

Second, he insists that faith is not blind since it is directly related to its object and its content - Christ.²⁴⁴ It could be argued that Berkouwer's theology opens avenues which are left closed by Pannenberg because of his excessive concentration on those elements which appear to him to have special apologetic

significance. Thus, there is a different kind of blind faith to be found in Pannenberg who pays scant attention to those elements of faith which do not fit easily into his conception of revelation.²⁴⁵

Third, he suggests that a self-conscious apologetic of Pannenberg's type may be charged with asking "an abstract existentialist question that is not really being asked by people in concrete human experience".²⁴⁶ The danger is present that God and Christian faith could be turned into "an abstraction, with no answer for actual questions"²⁴⁷ confronting people who are seeking meaning in life. The way of ensuring that real answers are given to "actual and authentic questions"²⁴⁸ is the way of bringing the gospel in its many-sidedness to bear on the whole of life. This is not the way of blind obedience which keeps theology in a self-constructed ghetto. Rather, it is the way of bringing theology out of the ghetto of providing theoretical answers to theoretical questions.

Berkouwer's response to these charges is a significant contribution to the discussion of apologetics. His perspective is spiritual, biblical and kerygmatic.

Apologetics must be spiritual rather than natural, recognizing the necessity of the Spirit's activity in every form of Christian communication.

Apologetics must be biblical rather than theistic, recognizing the normativity of the Bible for every form of Christian communication.

Apologetics must be kerygmatic rather than theoretical, recognizing, in every form of Christian communication, that the gospel's answer meets the whole man in the totality of his life.

When this perspective is dissociated from a sacrifice of the intellect, rationalistic biblicism and disinterest in modern man's questions, it is most helpful in avoiding a polarized view of apologetics.

Apologetics is not given an exaggerated and unwarranted importance that is independent of the gospel. Its significance arises directly from the nature of the gospel. This approach promises to overcome unfruitful polarization over the question of the extent of the usefulness of apologetics. There is no general and quantifiable answer to that question. The basic answer to the challenge of apologetics is the gospel which possesses its own

intrinsic apologetic significance. The extent to which the gospel's apologetic significance is brought to bear on the modern scene is integrally related to both the church's commitment to the gospel and its openness to men's questions. Both must be present if the gospel is to speak to modern men with apologetic relevance. If commitment to the gospel decreases, the gospel's relevance will diminish as its message is lost. If openness to men's questions decreases, the gospel's relevance will diminish as the significance of its message is lost. Christian communication, if it is to be apologetically virile, requires that the Christian message and the Christian mission are taken with equal seriousness.

II. Social Concern

This discussion of Berkouwer's contribution to a theology of social concern is divided into three major sections :

- (1) The Significance of Berkouwer's Concern with the Problem of Polarization;
- (2) Berkouwer as a ~~Biblical~~, Reformed and Contemporary Theologian;
- (3) The Basic Contours of Berkouwer's Theology of the Christian Life.

The opening section sets Berkouwer's theology of social concern in the context of his general concern with overcoming the problem of polarization. The main discussion is found in the second section where the contemporary contribution of Berkouwer, a biblical and Reformed theologian, is discussed in relation to the Christianity-Marxism dialogue. It is emphasized that Berkouwer's theology, which refuses to separate personal faith and social concern, provides a perspective through which Christian theology can avoid the twin dangers of a preoccupation with social concern which implicitly conceives of personal faith as a flight into illusion and a preoccupation with individualistic and 'other-worldly' religion which fails to provide any significant expression of social concern. The closing section relates Berkouwer's theology of social concern to particular areas where his concern with overcoming polarization promises to be particularly valuable in the development of a theology of the Christian life.

(1) The Significance of Berkouwer's Concern with the Problem of Polarization

In his introduction to the symposium, At the Edge of Hope,

Christian Laity in Paradox, H. Butt insists that

"transcendent hope and..immanent hope..must cohere..in order to intersect and overcome despair - the loss of expectation, both expectation for God's eternal Kingdom and expectation for the improvement of this world.. transcendent expectation and..immanent expectation form one complete Christian hope. The first says, turn to God because the human prospect is so bleak; the second says, the human prospect can be changed because of God".²⁴⁹

Butt continues,

"Everything is hopeless but God. Everything is hopeful because of God..we and our societies are nothing compared with God..we and our world are beloved of God".²⁵⁰

Berkouwer, like Butt, discusses social concern in the context of hope. He discusses the significance of "The Earthly Horizon"²⁵¹ in relation to

"the outlook on the future, the relationship between our actual todays and our expected tomorrows, between our narrow horizons and the hope that leaps over them into the promised future".²⁵²

Insisting that a proper understanding of the theology of social concern demands a proper understanding of the theology of hope, Berkouwer distinguishes between a caricature of Christian hope and a profile of Christian hope.

"Escape into the future is not eschatology, but eschaton fever..To become "this-worldly" is not to empty the future of its radical character of "beyond this world". What it ~~does do is close the door to flight into the "beyond."~~ It tells us that such a flight is a caricature, not a profile of Christian hope. The summons to "this-worldly" living is a response..to "God's redeeming love for the world in all its dimensions"".²⁵³

In his analysis of transcendent and immanent hope, Butt rejects the competition-motif.

"Conservative "otherworldly" hope and liberal "this worldly" hope are dangled like competing pearls of great price before the laity today. What tragedy, when they really form a single unified reality".²⁵⁴

Berkouwer, like Butt, rejects the competition-motif. Speaking of "the unfortunate dilemma - horizontalism or verticalism?"²⁵⁵, he writes,

"When we create false dilemmas like this we lose our vision for the many dimensions of reality".²⁵⁶

The reality which guides Berkouwer's theology of social concern is the reality of God's salvation. When the question of social

concern is set in this context, it becomes clear that

"It is a question that goes beyond typical differences between optimists and pessimists. It zeroes in on the significance for the present of the salvation that has appeared and is confessed and preached by the church of Christ".²⁵⁷

When the question of social concern is related to God's salvation, it may be formulated thus :

"Does the Christian faith call us away from the world or does it push us into it?".²⁵⁸

Berkouwer points out that

"In the total context of Christian faith almost no one contends for a total indifference to our world. The gospel testimony is too strong to allow complete unconcern. The image of him who was ever ready to stop, to see and care for the blind, the deaf, the sinner and publican, the poor and the sick, the sheep without a shepherd, to stop and be moved to compassion - the image of such a concerned One is too sharp to excuse indifference".²⁵⁹

He observes that the recognition of our Lord's concern does not resolve the tension concerning the theological evaluation of social concern.²⁶⁰

Berkouwer holds that "a scale of priorities is contrary to the gospel".²⁶¹ This conviction is rooted in the understanding of the gospel advanced in his Divine Election. In its proclamation of divine salvation, the gospel never minimizes the significance of human activity :

"The divine act makes room, leaves open the possibility for man's act. That possibility is not absorbed or destroyed by divine superiority, but created, called forth, by it..There is a superiority which is not that of a mechanical causality or of a coercion that obstructs man's activity; it is the personal superiority of love and grace, which in man's experience is making room for him to act by not destroying his freedom".²⁶²

In its proclamation of eternal salvation, the gospel never minimizes the significance of the temporal sphere.

"it is necessary to understand..how the words "time" and "eternity" function in the gospel..They are not placed in a context in which they make us dizzy in the face of an unapproachable "eternity"". ²⁶³

In its proclamation of gracious salvation, the gospel never minimizes the significance of the church's responsibility to turn towards the world in service. Regarding the antithesis between God's believing people and the unbelieving world, he

writes,

"The constant warning of the Word of God is not that we must speak no more of the reality of the antithesis, but that the antithesis must be correctly understood as being legitimate only by virtue of the grace of election..in the antithesis we are confronted with a truly unique contrast. This uniqueness finds its origin in God's mercy, and that is the reason why it finds its true expression not in isolation from the world, but in turning toward the world..This by no means implies a weakening of the distinction between good and evil, faith and unbelief. Rather, the Church, because of the seriousness of this antithesis, goes out into the world to witness. She does not do so despairing that the world cannot be saved, for then she would forget her own former lost condition as well as the sovereign election of God which called her from her darkness to His marvellous light. Every trace of a proud and legalistic antithesis is absent here. It is replaced by an apostolic fervor which..knows itself compelled by the love of Christ".²⁶⁴

While these passages from Divine Election do not refer directly to social concern, their relevance to this discussion is clear. Berkouwer's rejection of the competition-motif with respect to divine activity and human activity, time and eternity, and salvation and service points in the direction of a constructive approach to social concern. His rejection of the competition-motif is of great significance for his theology of social concern. Discussing "The Earthly Horizon", he insists that

"Human activity..cannot be reduced in priority to a "secondary" issue, as though it is of less importance to whatever is given top priority".²⁶⁵

He maintains that

"the gospel we believe is far removed from the picture of a future without bearing on the present, a heavenly hope without concern for the neighbor and his world".²⁶⁶

He emphasizes that

"We are not dealing with a synthesis between religion and morality..(but with) the divine concern for life within our human horizon".²⁶⁷

He contends that the Christian is called to

"a life of involvement in the deep divine philanthropy that has once for all appeared in history".²⁶⁸

This faith refuses "to let our full obedience become a tension between primary and secondary accents".²⁶⁹

The significance of Berkouwer's theology of social concern is integrally related to his concern with the problem of

polarization. This concern, which runs through his entire theology, is not merely pragmatic. His concern is that the fulness of Christian truth is properly represented in both Christian theology and Christian living. A theology which emphasizes one aspect of truth to the exclusion of another is reflected in a life which fails to live in accordance with the fulness of truth. The call to the Christian church is, in Berkouwer's theology, to allow both its thinking and its living to be governed by the fulness of God's truth.

(2) Berkouwer as a Biblical, Reformed and Contemporary Theologian

Throughout Berkouwer's theology, there is an intensely practical emphasis. The practical character of his theology is observable in every doctrinal discussion. The practical value of his discussion of social concern is derived not merely from the 'practical' character of the subject but from the practical character of every theological statement. Man cannot speak of God rightly without being practically involved. This practical note runs through the entirety of Berkouwer's theology. In his biblical exegesis, he points out the practical implications of the passages being discussed. In his discussion of historical theology, he draws out the practical significance of the most complex controversies. In his analyses of contemporary theology, he astutely relates each discussion to the practical concerns of Christian living. The practicality of Berkouwer's approach to biblical and theological interpretation undergirds and guides his discussion of social concern.

(a) Berkouwer as a Biblical Theologian

Any theology which claims to be a biblical theology is required by that very claim to relate its understanding of social concern to its understanding of Scripture. Thus, the theological evaluation of social concern is integrally related to the matter of biblical interpretation. A truly biblical theology of social concern seeks to hear and to heed all that Scripture has to say on the matter. Both current social attitudes and restrictive doctrinal interpretations are brought to the touchstone of Scripture. A truly biblical theology is motivated by the gospel which stands over against both a tendency to simply conform to the mood of the moment and the tendency to ignore the social problems of the day.

A truly biblical theology is neither a theology which is chiefly man's justification for positions taken on quite independent grounds nor a theology which suggests that the mere proclamation of God's justification of believing sinners, does, by itself, ensure that social injustice is overcome.²⁷⁰

Berkouwer presents a biblical theology of social concern which calls for "a life of involvement in the deep divine philanthropy ~~that~~ has once for all appeared in history",²⁷¹ a life which gives expression to "the divine concern for life within our human horizon",²⁷² a life in which neither God nor the neighbour are neglected.²⁷³ He insists that a truly biblical theology calls for full obedience without introducing a tension between primary and secondary accents.²⁷⁴ Berkouwer's biblical theology of social concern is developed from his exegesis of significant biblical passages drawn from both Testaments. He draws attention to the inseparability of love for God and concern for man. He comments on the Old Testament understanding of the relationship between love for God and concern for man.

"It is ridiculous to suppose that the Old Testament is guilty of being too heavily accented and one-sidedly concerned with the horizontal dimension of life, as though love for God might somehow get shortchanged by it. The service of the God of Israel and total concern for life within our horizon are inseparable. His people can truly give all their attention to him without being lured away from their neighbors".²⁷⁵

This interpretation of the Old Testament is based on his exegesis of significant passages drawn from the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the Prophets. In the Pentateuch, the poor and needy are to be the concern of Israel, God's redeemed people (Exodus 23:1-9).²⁷⁶ In the Psalms, there is no competition between God's praise and man's need (Psalm 146).²⁷⁷ In the Prophets, there is a call for worldly concern which does not relativize the transcendent message (Amos 5).²⁷⁸ This concentration on both God and man is continued in the New Testament. The Gospels demand that neither justice nor love of God (Luke 11:42)²⁷⁹ are to be neglected since man's relationship with God may not be isolated from his relationship with his fellow-man (Matthew 5:23-24).²⁸⁰ In the Epistles, concern for man is not regarded as a secondary matter (Romans 13:8-10)²⁸¹ since there is a "radical unity between the love of God and concern for man" (1 John

3:17).²⁸²

(b) Berkouwer as a Reformed Theologian

The Reformed character of Berkouwer's theology is directly related to its biblical foundation. Discussing the Reformed principle, "sola Scriptura" or "Scripture alone", he emphasizes that

"The function of the sola Scriptura in the Reformation was to focus attention on God's Word as a principle of interpretation over against human arbitrariness".²⁸³

A proper understanding of Berkouwer's use of this principle requires a clear understanding of what he is not saying as well as what he is saying.

The "Scripture alone" principle may not be isolated from the gospel since it emerges from a clearer understanding of the gospel and points to the place where the gospel is to be found. Berkouwer emphasizes the unbreakable connection between the "Scripture alone" principle and the doctrine of the gospel :

"The phrase sola Scriptura expressed a certain way of reading Scripture, implying a continual turning toward the gospel as the saving message of Scripture".²⁸⁴

The "Scripture alone" principle does not arise from a general preference for the old but from a rediscovery of the gospel.

"The Reformers were aware of being confronted with the original and canonical gospel, not because it was ancient as such, but because of this concrete and qualitative "originality."".²⁸⁵

The "Scripture alone" principle does not represent a general distaste for tradition but a re-establishment of the gospel tradition in the life of the church - "the term sola Scriptura represented "the struggle for the genuine tradition"".²⁸⁶ Berkouwer maintains that "(t)he Reformers did not wish to endanger the principle of tradition; rather, they wished to protect it".²⁸⁷ There is, in the Reformed principle of "Scripture alone", a "radical rejection of addition".²⁸⁸ but not a "simple repetition without new responsibilities for new times".²⁸⁹ The function of this principle is to preserve the church from being alienated from the gospel in the face of the challenge of communicating the gospel effectively in an ever-changing world.

The "Scripture alone" principle is not the product of a high-handed exclusiveness which draws attention to the pride of its proponents rather than the message of Scripture. Rather, it is a

"unique exclusiveness, deriving its structure from the broadness and universality of the gospel".²⁹⁰ Since the gospel is aimed at the whole world, proclaiming salvation to all peoples, the "Scripture alone" principle becomes important not for the sake of sectarian exclusiveness but for the sake of a clearer understanding and more effective communication of the gospel of salvation.²⁹¹ Berkouwer points out that, in this unique exclusiveness, the "alone" must be understood in the light of the "Scripture" :

"The confession of "Scripture alone" does not begin with the "alone" as a general principle, but with Scripture. For the meaning and weight of the "alone" can be perceived only along that route".²⁹²

The "Scripture alone" principle may not be isolated from the other Reformed hermeneutical principles - "grace alone", "faith alone" and "Christ alone". Removed from the context of the rediscovery of the gospel in Scripture, it becomes a rather colourless principle of authority which lacks depth of understanding of the message of Scripture. When, however, the principles of "grace alone", "faith alone" and "Christ alone" are allowed to operate independently of each other and of the "Scripture alone" principle, theological speculation reaches dangerous conclusions.

An important implication of the "Scripture alone" principle is the recognition of the importance of the whole of Scripture. Theology requires this perspective if it is to avoid a dangerous selectivity which is governed by personal preference. The tendency to emphasize what one wants to hear while ignoring what one does not ^{want} to hear requires to be kept in check by the insistence that every part of Scripture has its proper place and function and that no part of Scripture is to be regarded as unimportant.

This emphasis on the importance of every part of Scripture does not amount to a levelling procedure by which every part is ascribed equal importance. Scripture is to be regarded as an "organic whole".²⁹³ No part of Scripture is to be arbitrarily lifted out of this context. This emphasis on the whole of Scripture is important in the face of a universalistic distortion of the "grace alone" principle,²⁹⁴ an Arminian distortion of the "faith alone" principle,²⁹⁵ and a christomonistic distortion of the "Christ alone" principle.²⁹⁶ This emphasis excludes the heavy-handed approach to Scripture which tends to regard as insignificant those portions of Scripture which do not appear to place such a

heavy accent on the "grace alone", "faith alone" and "Christ alone" principles.

The "Scripture alone" principle, with its emphasis on the importance of the whole of Scripture, is of paramount importance for the discussion of social concern. The evangelism - social concern polarization results from a failure to listen to all that Scripture says concerning Christian living. This polarization can be overcome only where there is a determination to submit every theological preference to the authority of the whole of Scripture. A truly biblical and Reformed theology of social concern calls for a resolute refusal to bolster one's own theological preferences by emphasizing one's favourite passages while other passages are tacitly ignored.

Social concern is discussed here in relation to the views of Luther and Calvin concerning the relationship between Paul and James. This question is not merely a matter of historical curiosity. Rather, it points towards a way of overcoming the evangelism - social concern polarization. Both Luther and Calvin were committed to the principles of "grace alone", "faith alone", "Christ alone" and "Scripture alone". Both viewed the epistle of James in relation to what was regarded as "the incontrovertible and central message of salvation".²⁹⁷ They did, however, reach different conclusions concerning this epistle. Luther held that it "has no evangelical nature to it".²⁹⁸ Calvin wrote that "it contains nothing unworthy of an Apostle of Christ".²⁹⁹

Berkouwer insists that Calvin's favourable estimation of the epistle of James does not reflect a weaker commitment to the doctrine of the gospel.³⁰⁰ Berkouwer's interpretation of the Paul - James question is in line with Calvin's view. He holds that Luther's criticisms of James reflect a limited insight into the relationship between Paul and James.³⁰¹ Berkouwer interprets Luther both critically and appreciatively. His perceptive remarks are most pertinent to the development of a theology of social concern. Critical of Luther's use of the principle "that which sets forth Christ" in his interpretation of James, Berkouwer insists that every exegetical principle must proceed on the basis of the recognition of "the limitations and the continuing growth of our insight".³⁰² The recognition of the inadequacy of every theological

interpretation is important if theology is to avoid the twin dangers of a failure to rightly emphasize the gospel's impetus towards social concern and a failure to ground social concern in its gospel foundation.³⁰³ Appreciative of the biblical character of Luther's understanding of the gospel, Berkouwer issues this warning to contemporary theology :

"the methodology of every "canon-in-the-canon" is dangerous, especially when it manifestly contradicts the church's - and Luther's - recipere of the gospel".³⁰⁴

Berkouwer, like Luther, emphasizes the relationship between Scripture and the gospel. The confession of Scripture's canonical authority does not, for Berkouwer, involve an assertion that "its boundaries must be readily provable and perspicuous".³⁰⁵ He relates this confession to "the message of salvation..the foundation on which the church is built".³⁰⁶ The church confesses that she has heard and received the biblical testimony concerning Christ.³⁰⁷ The church was, in Berkouwer's view, "led, in the matter of the boundaries of the canon, by a basic commitment centered in the gospel".³⁰⁸ The deep relationship between the gospel and the Scriptures accents the privilege of seeking a deeper understanding of the unsearchable riches of Christ through reading the words of Scripture.³⁰⁹ This search for Christ in the Scriptures need not lead to "distinctions between "center" and "periphery" in the canon in a manner which presupposes that the periphery is unimportant".³¹⁰ The idea of "a reduction to the "canon-within-the-canon"³¹¹ is fraught with the danger that the canon of Scripture will be replaced by "a canon of our own creatim ..a projection of our own minds".³¹² This danger ~~must~~ be carefully avoided if Christian living is not to be impoverished by a one-sided emphasis on either personal faith or social concern.

Interpreting the relationship between Paul and James, Berkouwer uses theological principles used by Luther. He does not, however, reach the same conclusions as Luther did. Berkouwer points out that

"Luther is able to speak of the sure fact that Scripture is a light clearer than sunlight..It stands in immediate relationship to saving faith, and difficulties with some words do not affect the clarity".³¹³

Luther emphasized the importance of the "Scripture alone" principle :

"We must let Scripture have the chief place and be its own truest, simplest and clearest interpreter...I want Scripture alone to rule, and not to be interpreted according to my spirit or that of any other man, but to be understood in its own light and according to its own Spirit".³¹⁴

The relationship between Luther's view of Scripture and his view of the epistle of James is complicated.³¹⁵ Luther did not regard the epistle of James as apostolic yet he did regard it as canonical. He held that the epistle of James was, compared with Paul's epistles, "truly an epistle of straw" yet he frequently quoted James without criticism, especially 1:18 for which he had "a special love".³¹⁶ The tension between Luther's concern with "the apostolic, evangelical content of Scripture"³¹⁷ and his principle, "Scripture is its own interpreter" is not, in Berkouwer's view, an insurmountable tension. He suggests that Luther's criticisms of James reflect an "impetuous"³¹⁸ reaction to "Roman Catholic opposition..(which) emphasized the words about being justified "not by faith alone"³¹⁹. Berkouwer maintains that Calvin, who faced similar opposition, "saw a harmony in the witness of Paul and James which Luther missed".³²⁰ This harmony becomes clear when the "difficulties with some words"³²¹ are understood in the light of Luther's principle, "let Scripture..be its own truest, simplest and clearest interpreter".³²²

Berkouwer's view of the Paul - James question is most instructive for the discussion of the evangelism - social concern polarization. He holds that

"James is concerned with those who have not understood nor brought into practice the close connection between faith and works".³²³

He states that "on this point there is no divergence from Paul".³²⁴ Discussing James's reference to demonic faith(2:19), he states that "the mere faith James is against is existentially aloof from its object"³²⁵ and that "this "merely believe" is quite different from Paul's "through faith alone."³²⁶ A proper understanding of the relationship between Paul and James is, in Berkouwer's view, grounded in the recognition that Paul, in Romans 4:3, cites Genesis 15:6 - "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him for righteousness" - while James(2:21) begins from Genesis 22 - Abraham's willingness to offer his son Isaac.³²⁷ Berkouwer observes the relationship between Genesis 22 and Genesis 15 in the thought

of James :

"As to this "work", this act of faith, James makes this surprising statement that the Scripture is therewith fulfilled, which says : "And Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God"(James 2:23). James too, then, quotes the text from Genesis 15 which Paul had used. But James cites it in a special connection; Genesis 15 is fulfilled in what occurs in Genesis 22. Faith and work - James sees their inter-woven congruency over the totality of life".³²⁸

He contends that James's attack on "dead faith"³²⁹ and his protest for faith as "a truly experienced reality"³³⁰ which dominates the whole of life does not conflict with Paul who speaks against the works of the law but not against the works of faith.

"That this whole James vs. Paul affair could have arisen at all is ascribable to a failure to distinguish between works of the law and the works of faith".³³¹

This interpretation which refuses to be caught on the horns of a faith-works dilemma is of great significance for the discussion of the evangelism - social concern question. It presents a perspective in which the fulness of truth is preserved over against every tendency to emphasize one aspect or the other out of its biblical proportions, thus misrepresenting the message of the gospel.

Berkouwer approaches social concern from a biblical and Reformed perspective. In Ephesians 2:8-10, the emphases "by grace" and "through faith" lead directly on to the emphasis "for good works". Berkouwer underscores this connection between "Sola Fide" and "Sanctification".³³² He emphasizes that the true nature of good works cannot be understood apart from Christ who is our "sanctification"(1 Corinthians 1:30).³³³ Sanctification is not "the humanly operated successor to the divinely worked justification".³³⁴ "Genuine sanctification" has a "continued orientation toward justification".³³⁵ Berkouwer emphasizes the "by grace..through faith" context in which the "for good works" character of sanctification expresses itself. He draws attention to the nature of the Spirit's work in sanctification :

"The Spirit alone could perform the miracle of making man walk on the road of sanctity without a sense of his own worth".³³⁶

The life of sanctification has a gracious character which Berkouwer observes in the parable of the unprofitable servants³³⁷ and a social context which he sees in the parable of the good Samaritan.³³⁸

A Reformed theology, grounded in the "Scripture alone" principle, seeks to rightly represent the purpose of Scripture - "to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus..that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"(2 Timothy 3:15, 17). Berkouwer, in his discussion entitled "The Imitation of Christ",³³⁹ emphasizes both the gracious character and the social context of the Biblical teaching concerning sanctification.

Commenting on 1 Peter 2:21 - "Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example, that ye should follow his steps" -, he points to the finality of Christ's redemptive suffering - "by whose stripes ye were healed"(1 Peter 2:24), emphasizing that the call to be imitators comes to those who have returned to the Shepherd of their souls(1 Peter 2:25). Since the Example is the Shepherd, the call to follow in the steps of the Shepherd is a call which aims at "a conformity related to Christ's act of abolishing sin", a call "to live conformably to, and on the basis of the Atonement".³⁴⁰ As sheep of the Shepherd's flock, believers are called "to walk not on paths that will at length lead to communion with Christ but on the path that lies open because of the communion with Christ which they enjoy right along".³⁴¹ The connection between Christian living and the divine act of reconciliation in Christ is stressed in Paul's letters - "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us"(Ephesians 4:32 - 5:2);³⁴² "as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive"(Colossians 3:13);³⁴³ "let each of us please his neighbour for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me"(Romans 15:2-3).³⁴⁴ A similar pattern is found in Philipians 2:5-8 where the relation between Christian living and divine reconciliation is implicit, though the 'for us' element is not made fully explicit.³⁴⁵ In John's Gospel, Berkouwer sees the same pattern in the washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus. He views this action as a symbolic action, which points to Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin(John 13:8),³⁴⁶ thus grounding the the imperative "ye ought" in the indicative "I have done"(John 13:14-15).³⁴⁷ The divine foundation for human love is emphasized in John's first letter - "Beloved, let us love one

another; for love is of God..In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation (propitiation, A.V.) for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another"(1 John 4: 7, 9-11).³⁴⁸ Berkouwer concludes that

"according to the testimony of the entire New Testament, the imitation of Christ is founded on the Atonement".³⁴⁹

Berkouwer insists, in his discussion of "Sanctification and Law",³⁵⁰ that this teaching concerning the unbreakable connection between faith and works is based not merely on a New Testament innovation but on the testimony of the whole Bible. He draws attention to Calvin's insistence that the words, "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage", should be considered as a preface to the whole law.³⁵¹ When the law is seen as "indissolubly wedded to the salvation of God and to faith",³⁵² it becomes clear that obedience to the law is grounded in "a responsive gratitude to God for being brought out of the house of bondage"³⁵³ and is not given an independent significance apart from this divine act of redemption. Berkouwer stresses that, through grounding its thinking in Scripture,

"Reformed theology, and Calvin in particular, taught that it is precisely a free and spontaneous love which leads the believer to acknowledge the commandments of God".³⁵⁴

This free and spontaneous love for God leads not to "the seclusion of prayer and meditation" but to a life lived in "the broad daylight of commonplace affairs".³⁵⁵ The call to live the Christian life in the modern world presents a challenge to biblical and Reformed theology to be contemporary without surrendering the biblical and Reformed character of its faith.

(c) Berkouwer as a Contemporary Theologian

The Reformed character of Berkouwer's theology provides the foundation for its contemporary relevance. The nature of the Reformed faith paves the way for contemporary relevance without opening the door to a loss of its biblical foundation. A proper understanding of the Reformation observes two complementary emphases concerning the Reformed faith's relation to both the Word of God and the world of men.³⁵⁶ The Reformation represents a reformation

of the church according to the Word of God. When the priority of God's Word is maintained, the church is preserved from an unbiblical accommodation to the contemporary world. The Reformation represents a movement from within the world of men. When the human context of the Reformation is recognized, the tendency towards absolutizing one's own theological interpretation is avoided in view of the sovereignty of God's Word which is never fully and perfectly understood by men. This dual context of the Reformation points in the direction of a meaningful dialogue between the Reformed faith and the contemporary world.

Berkouwer's theology of social concern is set in the context of his conviction that

"theological reflection cannot survive as a repetition, a preservation of once-for-all achieved and now unchangeable dogmatic systems".³⁵⁷

Concerning the challenge of interpreting the Christian faith for the contemporary world, he writes,

"surely Reformation thinking is by definition willing to accept the challenge".³⁵⁸

As a Reformed theologian, Berkouwer seeks to be a biblical theologian, the boundaries of whose reflection are set by Scripture itself.³⁵⁹ As a Reformed theologian, he seeks to be a contemporary theologian who refuses to be limited by the boundaries set by a theological interpretation which has tended towards a fossilizing of the Christian faith.³⁶⁰

Approaching the contemporary social situation with the principle,

"Personal conversion and sanctification is not able to overcome the immorality of society.",³⁶¹

Berkouwer, in his rejection of the personal faith - social concern polarization, echoes the teaching of Calvin who insists that while

"civil government..is distinct from the spiritual and internal kingdom of Christ..they are not adverse to each other".³⁶²

The deepest roots of Berkouwer's approach to the contemporary social situation are not to be found in the sixteenth century but in Scripture. The moral law calls for a right relationship with both God and man.³⁶³

The words and works of Jesus represent a radical reversal of economic, political and social ideologies which are governed by self-interest rather than by justice and mercy.³⁶⁴

World-flight is excluded by a movement towards the world with a view to world transformation. A biblical and Reformed theology

confesses its faith in the sovereignty of God over the whole world and the love of God for the whole man. It cannot settle for the 'sacred' realm of inner piety while the 'secular' world is treated as though it existed independently of the sovereign love of God. Contemporary society is increasingly threatened by demoralization and dehumanization as the love of power and the love of money militate against the love of God and the love of the neighbour. This dual responsibility of love for both God and the neighbour demands that Christian witness in the contemporary situation may be neither reduced to its social implications nor emptied of them.

Berkouwer insists that it is necessary for Christianity to enter into dialogue with Marxism. Such dialogue is demanded by "mutual care for this world".³⁶⁵ Such dialogue need not involve "a willingness to relativize the antithesis between atheism and Christianity, .. capitulation of the Christian faith to Marxist ideology".³⁶⁶ Berkouwer maintains that such dialogue demands both a willingness to listen to the other side and a commitment to one's own position. Concerning the importance of listening to the other side, he writes,

"If a dialogue is meant to be more than a chance to deliver a message, or make a witness, more than a chance to speak to rather than with the partners, it can be a serious affair".³⁶⁷

Insisting that "serious dialogue (is) not a dialogue of phoney tolerance", Berkouwer cites the words of the Marxist writer, M. Machovec who said "that if there was to be dialogue he wanted an opponent who would really try to convert him" :

"We do not want half-baked believers in dialogue; we want to confront real Christians".³⁶⁸

Confronting Bloch's claim that

"only an atheist can be a good Christian" .. because an atheist knows there is "no God up there" who releases men from their responsibility",

Berkouwer insists that faith in God as Creator and Redeemer does not discredit what men do.³⁶⁹ A biblical view of divine transcendence, existential experience and eschatological hope gives no encouragement to world-flight into transcendence, existential experience or an eschaton fever which escapes into the future.³⁷⁰ Berkouwer does not advocate a demythologized version of the Christian faith. Rather, he emphasizes that a biblical understanding of divine - human relations does not permit any Christian doctrine to be regarded as

irrelevant to the present experience of the whole man in this earthly world.

Berkouwer maintains that Bloch's critique of theism is based on an inadequate view of both God and man. Christian faith does not involve a concept of divine majesty which "squeezes human action out of the scene for fear of God's jealousy".³⁷¹ Faith in God provides no excuse for human inactivity.³⁷² Rather, it sets "our human prospects, our expectations and our destiny"³⁷³ in an entirely different context from a faith in man which emphasizes "his readiness for new possibilities"³⁷⁴ without sufficiently recognizing the possibilities for evil which lie within the heart of man.³⁷⁵ An anthropocentric hope for the future can never be anything other than thoroughly ambiguous since it is founded on the nature of man which is constantly fluctuating between its possibilities for good and its possibilities for evil.

Berkouwer's theocentric hope is grounded not in mere human optimism but in "the sure promises of God".³⁷⁶ This theocentric hope awaits the return of Christ, not as an event which arises from history apart from the action of God but as the fulfillment of the divine promise given in the resurrection of Christ.³⁷⁷ This theocentric hope points to the future in a way that "must never.. induce passivity" in the present.³⁷⁸

The relationship between the future and the present in biblical eschatology has been well expressed by Berkouwer :

"Eschatology is not a projection into the distant future : it bursts forth into our present existence, and structures life today in the light of the last things. This actuality is not..to be confused with actualism..which suggests a denial of the future..Yet to oppose actualism by neglecting the actuality and relevance of the eschatological message as presented in the New Testament is certainly not the answer".³⁷⁹

"As presented in the New Testament, this hope for the future ..dominates and directs life in the present..the future.. steps into man's existence in the form of this hope. The Christian community is addressed from out of the future, because it cannot and may not remain unaffected by its message".³⁸⁰

This view of the relationship between the future and the present provides the foundation for Berkouwer's contribution to the discussion of the theology of social concern. Since the Christian awaits the return of Christ as an act of God, Christian hope cannot be purely anthropocentric. Since the expectation of Christ's return is filled with relevance for the present, Christian hope can never

be used to excuse inactivity in the present.³⁸¹

Berkouwer's theology of social concern provides a perspective through which the dialogue between Christianity and Marxism can be carried out on the basis of both genuine appreciation and sound criticism.

It is emphasized here that Marx's protest against bourgeois religion is to be received appreciatively for its penetrating critique of an inauthentic 'Christianity'. Four closely related aspects of Marx's protest are specified :

- (i) his critique of 'other-worldliness';
- (ii) his critique of individualism;
- (iii) his critique of the use of 'other-worldliness' and individualism to justify hypocrisy;
- (iv) his critique of the kind of philosophy which interprets the world without seeking to change it.

These four aspects of Marx's protest against bourgeois religion form the basis for the present discussion.

Marxist social philosophy is placed under the careful scrutiny of a theological perspective which takes seriously the Marxist critique of bourgeois religion.

Sections (i) and (ii) are primarily concerned with the relation of Marx's own thought to Christian faith.

Section (iii) analyses the problems involved in advancing theological interpretations on the basis of sociological observations.

Section (iv) develops a Christian theology of liberation in dialogue with the concept of liberation advanced by H. Marcuse whose thought represents a sympathetic yet critical interpretation of Marx.

The concern is not to prove beyond question that a theocentric philosophy of social concern is superior to an anthropocentric philosophy of social concern. A theocentric philosophy of social concern is grounded in faith's confession of Christ and is not a viewpoint reached as a direct consequence of rational argumentation. It can be argued that there are weighty reasons for calling in question the atheistic rejection of religion. It should, however, be acknowledged that such arguments are person-relative and that they do not offer any promise of a final resolution of the dispute concerning the question of God. An atheistic dismissal of religious belief as irrationality is not to be replaced by the notion that

God's existence can be 'proved' beyond question. Atheistic criticism may not be simply dismissed with an authoritarian assertion of God's existence. If there is to be genuine dialogue, theology must focus attention on the anthropological question and acknowledge the faith-character of its own statements.

This discussion of social concern is set in the broader context of the theological response to atheistic criticism. It is emphasized here that a Christian theology of social concern, properly understood, requires to be dissociated from both the kind of 'other-worldly' individualism which obstructs social concern and the kind of social concern which entirely dispenses with any kind of religious foundation for social ethics. Both these positions reflect a dangerous supernatural - natural dichotomy which theology must carefully avoid if it is not to be caught in the horns of a false dilemma.

An 'other-worldly' individualism which tends to separate personal faith from its caring expression in the world of men is rightly criticized by critics of religion. There is, in 'other-worldly' individualism, a tendency to set the 'supernatural' and the 'natural' over against each other. Thus, God is removed from the totality of life to the realm of inner piety. This kind of theology is unable to provide an adequate response to the naturalistic exclusion of the 'supernatural'. It tends rather to bolster the atheistic criticism that religion leads to an evasion of social responsibility. If theology is to respond adequately to this kind of criticism, it must do so on the basis of a unified view of reality.

A social concern which is cut loose from any kind of religious foundation reflects a naturalistic rationalism which obstructs the way towards the rediscovery of a rationality which refuses to place arbitrary restrictions on the range of human experience. On the basis of a postulate which is not empirically verifiable, naturalism assumes that the only kind of legitimate truth and knowledge is the empirically verifiable kind. This view is questionable not only on the basis of its lack of internal consistency but also in terms of its capacity to do justice to the total experience of man.

Christian theology's response to this supernatural - natural dichotomy requires to be stated carefully. The rejection of the

dichotomy does not mean that there can be no appreciation of the legitimate concerns of both 'other-worldly' individualism and the atheistic protest against a 'God' who absolves men of responsibility for this present world.

There must be an appreciation of the concern of 'other-worldly' individualism to affirm the reality of the transcendent God who can never be directly identified with the world he has created. There must, however, be criticism of the tendency in 'other-worldly' individualism to remove God to the realm of inner piety and thus devalue the divine concern for the totality of the world he has created.

There must be a sympathetic response to the atheistic protest against the idea of God as a self-evident 'fact' which is beyond dispute and the atheistic concern that the significance of the present is not lost in the face of a remote 'other-worldly' God. Theology must speak of God in faith in the full acknowledgment that many choose to live by sight rather than by faith. The acknowledgment of the faith-character of theological statements does not mean that theology should hesitate to speak of God simply because God-talk refers to that which is unseen and not, therefore, empirically verifiable in a conclusive sense. In its attempt to understand the total experience of man, theology relates man's search for ethical norms, personal love and ultimate meaning to its faith that man has been created by God and for God. From this vantage-point, theology ventures to question the adequacy of the atheistic anthropology. This theological critique of atheism is motivated not by world-flight but by a concern to understand the total experience of man in this present world.

The preceding discussion of the theological response to atheistic philosophy provides the general background to the discussion of the Christianity - Marxism dialogue. The discussion proceeds on the basis of faith seeking understanding. There is no question of a dilution of the faith in the interests of dialogue. The intention is to develop a clearer understanding of the social responsibility involved in Christian faith. It is argued that the Marxist critique of religion draws much of its strength from the weaknesses of 'other-worldly' individualism which is particularly vulnerable to the Marxist critique of religion. When

Christian faith is dissociated from the one-sidedness of 'other-worldly' individualism, the Marxist critique of religion loses much of its strength. The choice is not, then, between a metaphysic which has no social ethic and a social ethic which has no metaphysic. The Christianity - Marxism dialogue is a dialogue between two social ethics, one of which is religious while the other is secular. The present discussion approaches the dialogue from the vantage-point of the unbreakable connection between personal faith and social responsibility. The competition-motif, which underlies both a 'personal' religion which has little room for social concern and a humanistic social ethic which has no roots in religious faith, is rejected. The concern is to present a personal faith, the reality of which is demonstrated in 'this-worldly' concern, and a social ethic which, because of its foundation in divine revelation, does not become lost in the morass of ethical relativism.

Appreciation of Marx's Critique of Bourgeois Religion

(i) Marx's critique of 'other-worldly' religion, -

"Religion is indeed man's self-consciousness and self-awareness as long as he has not found his feet in the universe..The abolition of religion, as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness".³⁸³

-, may be received appreciatively as a call for a Christianity which refuses to use its future expectation as a means of escaping its present responsibility.

(ii) Marx's critique of the religious "cult of the abstract individual"³⁸⁴ may be received appreciatively as a call for the rejection of a 'Christianity' which permits private devotion to be divorced from social responsibility.

(iii) Marx's critique of the use of 'other-worldly' individualism to provide a hypocritical defence of capitalist exploitation may be received appreciatively as a call for a moral reformation in which the Christian church refuses to accept privilege without responsibility.³⁸⁵

(iv) Marx's call for deeds rather than words, -

"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however is to change it"³⁸⁶

-, may be received appreciatively as a call to Christian theology not to substitute theological interpretation for Christian living.

Critical Discussion of Marx's Critique of Bourgeois Religion

(i) The Critique of 'Other-Worldly' Religion

The rejection of the Christian hope concerning the future is not a necessary consequence of the Marxist criticism of 'other-worldly' religion. The Christian hope, far from being 'other-worldly', relates the future to the present in a way that fills the present with enormous significance. Rather than diminishing the significance of man's present activity, the Christian hope concerning the future accents its importance to the full.

In The Return of Christ, Berkouwer relates his discussion of "The New Earth"³⁸⁷ to his discussion of "Resurrection"³⁸⁸ thus :

"The discussion of the resurrection from the dead leads us directly to a consideration of the "new earth". The link between these two aspects of the eschatological promise is the fact that the resurrectio carnis talks about a future for the body. This body is not an abstract, spiritual existence having nothing to do with the earth, but something that has a place and a manifold function in the earth".³⁸⁹

Berkouwer emphasizes that these elements of the Christian hope should not be lost in view of "a kind of religious and soteriological self-centredness, a parallel to the one-sided interest in "heaven"³⁹⁰. Rejecting the notion of "an irreconcilable opposition between heaven and earth..a flight from this God-given reality to..an unearthly unreality",³⁹¹ Berkouwer insists that

"The true New Testament expectation includes the new earth, and the present life is founded on and proceeds from this expectation".³⁹²

Berkouwer comments further on the unity of transcendent hope and immanent hope in the New Testament expectation :

"The author of Hebrews speaks of seeing from afar(11:13) ..The joy of this pilgrimage is jeopardized if this "from afar" is abandoned in favor of the "nearby" of a city of human constitution(13:14). It also disintegrates if the promises of the heavenly country and Kingdom..are considered as threats to this earthly existence. This has happened..as a result of a hermeneutics that allows the joy of seeing from afar to disappear completely in favor of concern for the earth, or to rigidify into an empty knowledge about the end..The whole gospel militates against such hermeneutics, for it is precisely ordinary earthly existence that is redeemed..life on this earth is not devalued, but called. The expectation has consequences for this present existence".³⁹³

The difference between Marxism and Christianity is not that Marxism is this-worldly with no perspective concerning the future

while Christianity is other-worldly with no perspective concerning the present.

The Communist Manifesto points to a future which is placed entirely in the hands of men:

"The Communists..openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communitic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!"³⁹⁴

The Christian faith does not, however, replace this anthropocentric hope with a hope which is entirely removed from the sphere of human activity. Rather, it proclaims an eschatological expectation in which transcendent hope and immanent hope are not separated but united. When the greatness of this single eschatological expectation is recognized, it becomes clear that

"what Communism envisions as history's route to the eschaton of world revolution is child's play compared with the Christian vision".³⁹⁵

The Christian expectation, far from directing attention away from this world, has "limitless hope for the world".³⁹⁶

(ii) The Critique of Individualistic Religion

The rejection of the Christian understanding of man is not a necessary consequence of the Marxist criticism of the excessive individualism of bourgeois religion. Theological anthropology is concerned with the whole man. This concern with the whole man demands that neither the personal aspect nor the social aspect of man's life be treated as though it were the entirety of his life. The kind of religion which is excessively individualistic and lacks a significant concern for man's social needs is excluded by this emphasis on the whole man. Conversely, a proper perspective on social responsibility is maintained only where it is recognized that "the relation to God is of decisive and all-inclusive character in these other relationships".³⁹⁷

Discussing the biblical emphasis on the whole man, Berkouwer writes,

"the most striking thing in the Biblical portrayal of man lies in this, that it never asks attention for man in himself, but demands our fullest attention for man in his relation to God. We can doubtless characterize this portrayal as a religious one. With this term, we do not at all mean to imply that Scripture has no interest in

man's various cosmic and inter-human relationships. The opposite is unquestionably the case. For man's relation to God does not exclude these other relationships as unimportant, but rather implies the utmost importance of these other relationships. The characteristic of the Biblical view lies precisely in this, that man appears as related to God in all his creaturely relationships".³⁹⁸

Berkouwer's refusal to set the religious character of man's being over against its social component enables him to develop a perspective which D. Lyon, in his Christians & Sociology, describes as "full of insight relevant to the sociologist".³⁹⁹

Berkouwer insists that "common humanity...a gift of God..is never to be understood individualistically".⁴⁰⁰ Like Marx, he holds that man is not to be understood individualistically. Unlike Marx, he views man in relation to God. Commenting on the idea of common humanity, Berkouwer offers a penetrating analysis of humanistic social philosophy :

"Common humanity :..Man is - even when alienated from God - not alone..this common humanity..has always attracted attention..outside the Christian faith..his social relationships are the subject of perennial treatment. Impressed by this common humanity, which seemed evident in so high a degree that there seemed to be no need for a religious foundation for the relation between man and fellow man, men have attempted systems of ethics on a purely humanistic basis".⁴⁰¹

Building on Feuerbach's critique of religion, Marx develops a social philosophy based on Feuerbach's "great achievement of.. making the social relationship of 'man to man' the basic principle of his theory".⁴⁰² From this perspective, Marx distinguishes between "religious alienation" which is dissociated from "the real world of practice" and alienation "in the real, practical relation of man to his fellow man".⁴⁰³ Marx's account of alienation is basically a descriptive account of the phenomenon of alienation in society. The question remains, however, whether this alienation in society should be rooted in or dissociated from alienation from God.

Marx's account of alienation provides "an enlightening interpretation of his own historical period".⁴⁰⁴ His ethical imperative is not, however, based simply on an account of the prevailing economic conditions of his day. Rather, it is based on a whole philosophy of history which is both futuristic and atheistic. Marx's ethical imperative to the working men of all countries⁴⁰⁵ is based on his claim to have discovered "inexorable

laws of social development".⁴⁰⁶ Subsequent history has not, however, followed the course anticipated by Marx.⁴⁰⁷ The atheistic character of Marx's ethical imperative is grounded in his view that "history be interpreted out of the historical process itself" which led him to accentuate "the absolute priority of the actual here-and-now economically-defined life".⁴⁰⁸ Regardless of the prophetic value of the philosophy of history undergirding Marx's ethical imperative, the question remains whether Marx's praiseworthy concern for social justice should not be grounded in rather than dissociated from the divine ethical imperative.

Marx's philosophy of history is succinctly stated in the opening sentence of the first chapter in The Communist Manifesto :

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles".⁴⁰⁹

This philosophy of history is directly related to his conviction that the working men of all countries should unite in the interests of a Communist revolution aimed at the forcible overthrow of the capitalist regime. By pointing to the importance of the class struggle throughout history, Marx draws attention to a significant factor in history which had become enormously significant in Marx's own day. When, however, Marx uses the word 'all', he is saying much more than this. At this point, the Marxist philosophy of history becomes "a dangerous over-simplification".⁴¹⁰ The entire meaning of history is, then, encompassed in the struggle between capitalism and communism as alternative social systems.

The precise manner in which Marx develops this philosophy represents a combination of sociological and economic determinism and optimistic Utopianism. When Marx speaks of a society discovering "the natural law that determines its own movement", he thinks in terms of an "inexorable necessity" which prescribes "the predetermined path" which societal change must take.⁴¹¹ When Marx, denying that society "can..overleap the natural phase of its evolution", insists that "it can shorten and lessen the birth-pangs",⁴¹² he moves in the direction of an optimistic "Utopian blueprint" by means of which he "predicted, and tried actively to further, a development culminating in an ideal Utopia that knows no political or economic coercion".⁴¹³ Since, however, Marx's philosophy of history is interpreted according to an economic

determinism by which "the social system determines the actions of the individual",⁴¹⁴ his conception of social responsibility is entirely directed towards the replacement of one social system with another.

Marx's moral condemnation of the unrestrained capitalism of his own day may be laudable. His combination of this critique of his society with a philosophy of history which blends together determinism and optimism in his own peculiar way is, however, less convincing. Marx rejected the bourgeois religious preoccupation with individualistic needs as entirely illusory. The question remains, however, whether Marx himself has not developed an illusion of his own, a projected future society which has less to do with the real world than with Marx's own need for a comprehensive ideology on which to build his programme for social action.

Christian faith may be directly identified with neither the excessive individualism of the bourgeois religion of Marx's day nor Marx's passionate call for the forcible overthrow of the capitalist social and economic system. Christian faith involves allegiance to Jesus Christ. Christian faith may never be identified with unqualified allegiance to any political system. The Christian may, in Christ's name, protest against both capitalist exploitation and communist violence. Christian faith contains both a personal and a social aspect. Berkouwer, discussing the relation of faith to justification, sanctification and perseverance, emphasizes the personal aspect of faith.⁴¹⁵ This personal aspect may not be dissociated from the social aspect which is emphasized in his discussion entitled "The Earthly Horizon".⁴¹⁶ The obedience of the whole man to God involves both. The sincerity of a personal devotion which ignores social concern is questionable. The wisdom of a social concern which dispenses with personal devotion is no less questionable. The integrity of the church's witness in the world can never be enhanced by an arbitrary separation of personal devotion and social concern which fails to honour the unbreakable unity of obedience to Christ.

(iii) The Critique of Hypocritical Religion

The rejection of the Christian faith is not a necessary consequence of Marx's valid protest against the hypocritical defence of capitalist exploitation by the 'other-worldly' and

individualistic religion of his day. The charge of hypocrisy may be justly levelled against Christendom in every age of the church's history.⁴¹⁷ The discrepancy between Christian ideals and the moral standards of Christendom is enormous. There is also a great discrepancy between Marxist ideals and any existing Communist state. Any simplistic comparison between so-called Marxist societies and so-called Christian societies is thoroughly ill-advised. The theological inadvisability of a comparison concerned with the achievement of ideals is increased greatly where the comparison is extended in the direction of a comparative study of the balance of political power between two competing social and economic systems. The following discussion of hypocrisy in both Marxism and Christianity emphasizes both the theological irrelevance of such comparisons and the importance of a proper understanding of divine providence in a sinful world.

A comparison of the relative success or failure of Christianity and Marxism to produce societies which genuinely reflect their respective ideals is quite irrelevant to the discussion of the truth or falsehood of their respective philosophies. Such a comparison of two types of society is a sociological study. It may be regarded as a study in the sociology of religion. It compares a society significantly influenced by the Christian religion and a society based on the Marxist religious surrogate which performs analogous functions to a more traditional religion by attempting "to articulate an all-embracing system of meaning and an integrated way of life".⁴¹⁸ A study in the sociology of religion does not, however, provide the basis for making a "fundamental judgment over the 'reality' or 'unreality' of religion".⁴¹⁹ A high degree of conformity to professed religious ideals may indicate a significant correlation between ideals and practice but it does not guarantee the validity of those ideals. Conversely, failure to reflect professed ideals may not be used as a legitimate argument for departing from those ideals. A careful distinction requires to be drawn between sociological observation and theological affirmation.

This distinction between observation and faith may be applied to the Christianity - Marxism dialogue. H. Kung writes,

"from the undeniable influence of economic and sociological factors on religion and the idea of God, we can likewise draw no conclusion about the existence or non-existence

of God".⁴²⁰

The hypocrisy of the Christian church need not mean that the whole Christian faith is founded on an illusion. It may, however, suggest that the practice of the Christian religion can be influenced by illusory elements which are insufficiently grounded in a proper understanding of the meaning of Christian discipleship.

K. R. Popper criticizes "the doctrine that might is right",⁴²¹ insisting that deductions concerning the truth of a particular doctrine may not be drawn from the history of power politics :

"the history of power politics is nothing but the history of international crime and mass murder..To maintain that God reveals Himself in what is usually called 'history', in the history of international crime and of mass murder, is indeed blasphemy".⁴²²

Comparisons between one society and another, designed to vindicate one world view over against the other, come dangerously close to the kind of rationale which has been so influential in the history of power politics.

The distinction between observation and faith is important for theological reflection concerning divine providence if theology is to avoid reaching dangerously misguided conclusions. Warning against "the danger of going outside the sphere of faith into the area of observation", Berkouwer disputes "the legitimacy of interpreting the ways of Providence on the basis of facts".⁴²³ He aims to guard against the possibility that

"everyone according to his own prejudice and subjective whim (can) canonize a certain event or national rise as a special act of God in which He reveals and demonstrates His favor".⁴²⁴

Acutely aware that

"the interpretation of an historical event as a special revelation of Providence too easily becomes a piously disguised form of self-justification",⁴²⁵

Berkouwer insists that

"no event speaks so clearly that we may conclude from it a certain disposition of God - as long as God Himself does not reveal that His disposition comes to expression in the given event".⁴²⁶

Concerning events in the history of Israel which are recorded in Scripture, Berkouwer writes,

"The Divine disposition is, indeed, revealed in these events. But it is the word of revelation which explains them".⁴²⁷

Concerning the interpretation of contemporary events, he warns,

"we have not been given a norm for explaining the facts of history..in the absence of a norm only an untrustworthy plausibility remains".428

Using insightful exegesis of Scripture, Berkouwer warns against a misguided interpretation of contemporary events. Commenting on the words, "Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?"(Ames 9:7), he writes,

"the fact of the exodus may not be used as basis, isolated from revelation and seen by itself from which to draw selfish conclusions about God's disposition..As a mere historical fact, the exodus puts Israel on the same level with other nations. But accompanied by a proper faith in God, it constitutes a challenge and, given the proper response, further blessing".429

Neither Christendom nor Communism has a right to point to the failures of the other while remaining oblivious to its own inadequacies. Both are challenged to self-examination by their own professed ideals. Commenting on the advice of Gamaliel(Acts 5:38-39), Berkouwer cites the words of A. Kuyper,

"It is not true that God the Lord destroys forthwith that which is not from Him and crowns with success every endeavor of His believers".430

A comparison of societies may not be used to vindicate a particular world-view since worldly success does not necessarily imply truth.

Berkouwer develops a christocentric approach to divine providence :

"It is possible to speak concretely about God's Providence only on the basis of the blood of the cross. Otherwise we will certainly fall into one of many possible arbitrary interpretations of history..All events are embraced in the one work of God, which is explained for all time by His Word. Thus, there can be no proceeding from facts or events isolated from that revelation".431

This christocentric doctrine of providence may not be identified with the Marxist conception of religion as "the opium of the people"⁴³² since it is grounded in the Christ who

"tells us to seek first the kingdom of God(Matt.6:33); which is to say that the peace of mind that the Gospel gives does not allow us to decline into the superficialities of comfortable bourgeois living".433

When Berkouwer writes,

"He who sees things this way will never succumb to the temptation to identify prosperity with blessing and adversity with curse. In faith, however, one can accept

prosperity as the gift of God, and adversity as God's hand graciously leading him to greater faith",⁴³⁴

he is far removed from a hypocritical attitude which is devoid of social concern.

A theological perspective which relates divine providence to divine salvation promises to provide a more enlightening analysis of the comparative study of Christianity and Marxism than an approach which tends to obscure the distinction between sociological observation and theological affirmation. Acknowledging that history can be interpreted economically and sociologically, Berkouwer insists that

"the course of history can also be seen from the one all determinative religious perspective".⁴³⁵

By insisting that the salvation of God in Christ forms the foundation for a theological understanding of the meaning of history, Berkouwer does not wish to detract attention from man. Divine salvation is concerned with the salvation of man. This christocentric approach rejects an anthropocentric approach which claims to have discovered a single meaning of history which can be inferred from historical events themselves without reference to this salvation. There is not, however, in this christocentric approach, a devaluation of the significance of man. Rather, there is a believing confession concerning the significance of man's entire existence. This confession of faith is inclusive of rather than exclusive of other less comprehensive interpretations of human existence.

An affirmation of divine salvation carries with it a recognition of human sin. The failure of both Christianity and Marxism to achieve their professed ideals may be related directly to man's sin. C. Hill points out that Marxism observes that history is the record of man's inhumanity to man yet has no answer to the question regarding why this should be so.⁴³⁶ While Hill regards Marxism as a useful analytical device for the examination of social phenomena, he maintains that it totally lacks the ability to diagnose the problems it exposes.⁴³⁷ Hill sees in the experience of Russian Communism the basic paradox between Marxism's pessimistic account of man's history and its optimistic hope for man's future. He maintains that Russian Communism

"must surely go down in history as contenders for the most repressive regime ever known to mankind. To replace one

group of oppressions with another is certainly progress of a kind, but it hardly fulfills the Marxist dream of freedom for all within a classless society!".⁴³⁸

This criticism of Marxism is not intended as a hypocritical defence of capitalism. It is a critique of both capitalism and communism which points out that under capitalism man exploits man while under communism it's the other way round.⁴³⁹ The theological explanation of this situation may be stated in terms of the doctrine of sin. Without any perspective on man's sin Marxist philosophy remains an ambiguous combination of a perceptive empirical analysis of social conflict and a basic diagnostic weakness which renders Marxism unable either to recognize the true nature of the conflict or to counter the problem of social conflict.⁴⁴⁰ A theological perspective on sin and salvation may not be used to excuse a hypocritical indifference to social and economic problems. It does, however, prevent an arbitrary separation of social and economic problems and policies from the problem of the whole man and the divine salvation which is oriented towards the whole man.

(iv) The Call for a World-Changing Philosophy

The rejection of Christian theology's attempt to provide an articulate expression of Christian faith is not a necessary consequence of Marx's protest against the tendency of philosophers to interpret the world rather than changing it. The contrast between interpreting the world and changing the world should not be overdrawn. Marx's emphasis on changing the world is grounded in an interpretation which characterizes Marxism as a secular 'religion'. Far from rejecting the need to interpret the world,

"Marxism provides a form of all-embracing cosmology and an eschatology similar to those of traditional Christianity".⁴⁴¹

Marx rejects not the need to interpret the world but the tendency to interpret the world in a way that does not lead to changing it. Marx's call for a social philosophy which seeks to change the world as well as interpreting it provides an important corrective to the kind of theology which remains rather remote from the concerns of this world. Christian theology does not need, however, to turn to Marx for a vital impulse towards changing the world. Christian theology looks beyond Marx to Christ who calls men to a relationship with God which expresses itself through both words which articulate the message of God's love for man and works

which demonstrate the nature of God's love as love for the whole man.

H. Kung, critical of Marxist ideology, asks the question :

"do we have to abandon hope when we abandon ideology?".⁴⁴²

Kung denies that "every kind of Marxism or every effort for a basic change of society has to be given up" while insisting that

"What must be abandoned is Marxism as a total explanation of reality., revolution as a cure-all substitute religion".⁴⁴³

This distinction between a concern for social justice and an atheistic world-view is important for a proper understanding of Berkouwer's analysis of Marxism.

Berkouwer emphasizes that both Christianity and Marxism have a hope for this world and a sense of social responsibility for bringing the expected future into the present. Concerning Christian hope and Christian responsibility, he writes,

"Christianity must mobilize the powers of the future. It must mobilize them so that we can bring something of the future into the personal, social, and political realities of the present time. The future has a liberating power that must now be engaged".⁴⁴⁴

This view of the relation of the future to the present need not lead to "a fear that it could lead to humanizing and horizontalizing of faith".⁴⁴⁵ Christian social responsibility is rooted in the expectation of a coming Kingdom which far transcends the Marxist expectation of a classless society.

Berkouwer notes Bavinck's concern with the continuity between the present and the future :

"Everything that is authentic, noble, just, pure, lovable and of sound repute in creation...will be brought together in the future city of God, but renewed, recreated, and raised to its highest glory".⁴⁴⁶

Berkouwer stresses that

"The passionate protest we have seen in our time., against an irrelevant consciousness of transcendence and against a hope for the future that is cut loose from affairs of our world, is not a secularized estrangement from the gospel".⁴⁴⁷

Berkouwer emphasizes "the connections between the gospel and human responsibility for the world", avoiding the impression of "offering an inner-worldly salvation that lies in our own hands".⁴⁴⁸

The difference between Marxism and Christianity is not that Marxism is concerned with changing the present world while Christianity is not. The difference concerns their

contrasting world-views and contrasting expectations for the future which underlie their respective social ethics. Christianity has a theology of the secular without propounding the philosophy of secularism. Faith is to be seen at work in the secular world and not merely in an 'other-worldly' and individualistic sphere which makes little significant contact with this world. Faith is not, however, to be reduced to the secularist philosophy of Marx which infers a single meaning of history from the events of history itself.

A Christian response to Marx's call for a philosophy which changes the world need not involve a movement towards a social ethic based on certain aspects of Jesus' teaching which are isolated from his proclamation of the coming Kingdom.⁴⁴⁹ Where 'other-worldly' individualism is exchanged for a de-eschatologized social ethic, the Marxists may rightly say, "it is we who have accented the transcendent".⁴⁵⁰ A Christian confession of the sin of hypocrisy, associated with a one-sided 'other-worldly' individualism, demands not a rejection of personal faith and future hope but a practical expression of such faith and hope in "a world plagued by poverty, social injustice, racial discrimination and oppression, and ridden by secularism and materialism".⁴⁵¹ Christianity, no less than Marxism, demands that the world be changed. The difference between Christianity and Marxism concerns the character of the change advocated by each.

The teachings of both Marx and Christ have been greatly influential in changing the world. The teachings of both have, however, been greatly distorted by later generations. Any critique of the development of Soviet Communism from the teaching of Marx is required to acknowledge honestly the atrocities which have been justified in the name of religion during the course of church history. Concerning "the old question whether people may be held responsible for the unintended consequences of their actions", R. Dahrendorf writes,

"many a great teacher would have to be acquitted of the errors of his disciples".⁴⁵²

The Marxist writer, M. Machovec points out that "critics practically never reproach Christians for being followers of Christ, but..for not being such..This may be a criticism of Christianity at any particular time, but not of the real ideals of Jesus".⁴⁵³ In view of Marx's call for "the forcible overthrow of all existing social

conditions",⁴⁵⁴ Dahrendorf rightly insists that "in other cases things are not so clear" and asks the question,

"Who can say whether the Soviet Union is Marx's fault?".⁴⁵⁵

In fairness to Marx, it must be admitted that

"Much of the "information" we get nowadays about Marxist ideology is rather thoroughly distorted by highly emotional preconceptions..derived in most cases..from political and religious reactions to the sort of inhumanities produced by Marxists and quasi-Marxists in generations long after Marx himself walked this earth".⁴⁵⁶

In the interests of fairness, this discussion develops the analysis of Marxism, its development and its future possibilities, given by a writer of basically Marxist orientation, H. Marcuse. Marcuse's perspective is particularly relevant to the present discussion because of the impetus it gives to changing the world and its interpretation of Marxism which invites dialogue.

Assessing the world-changing impetus in Marcuse's thought, D. Childs writes,

"It is impossible to estimate just how much influence Herbert Marcuse has exercised on the Left in the 1960s".⁴⁵⁷

Because of his particular interpretation of Marxism, Marcuse's influence has been largely confined to "revolutionary students" rather than "the old Marxist movements".⁴⁵⁸ His writings were "for a while..basic reading for revolutionary students".⁴⁵⁹ Childs observes that "the New Left movements..in Europe and America.. looked less to nineteenth-century Marxism" than to the writings of Marcuse and others.⁴⁶⁰ Marcuse's view represents a modification, which some would regard as an abandonment, of Marxism.⁴⁶¹ Like Marx, Marcuse advocates revolutionary violence.⁴⁶² Marcuse does, however, display a "profoundly un-Marxist" pessimism concerning the possibility of realizing the ideal of a classless society.⁴⁶³ This dual emphasis in Marcuse's thought explains both Marcuse's considerable influence on revolutionary students and his lack of influence on the Communists from whom "he has often met with hostility..when they have felt he was too dangerous to ignore".⁴⁶⁴

Marcuse's perspective is particularly conducive to dialogue because of the realism which he displays in his analysis of the development and future possibilities of Marxism. Marcuse is acutely aware of the political lesson which Engels described thus :

"people who boasted that they had made a revolution have always seen the next day that they had no idea what they

were doing, that the revolution made did not in the least resemble the one they would have liked to make".⁴⁶⁵

From this perspective, Marcuse is perceptively critical of both capitalism⁴⁶⁶ and communism.⁴⁶⁷

Marcuse's perspective is particularly conducive to dialogue because of his sensitivity to the contemporary problems of socialism. G. Lichtheim maintains that the contemporary problems of socialism are related to

"the fact that the classical approach in the nineteenth century provided no more than a rough-and-ready way of describing what was going on, (and) recent changes in the structure of society".⁴⁶⁸

Marcuse's interpretation of Marxism represents a serious attempt to take account of precisely these problems.

Marcuse's perspective is particularly conducive to dialogue because of his willingness to reinterpret the Marxist critique of capitalist society. A. MacIntyre speaks of

"the urgency of the task of providing for contemporary society a critique on the scale of Marx's critique of classical capitalism".⁴⁶⁹

This is precisely the task Marcuse has set himself. MacIntyre is critical of

"the doctrines of those who, because of the gap between the classical Marxist analysis and the realities of contemporary society, flee from the realities of that society into the private cloud-cuckoo lands of Marxist sectarianism".⁴⁷⁰

Marcuse has, in his reinterpretation of Marx's thought, persistently refused to take refuge in a theory which does not take adequate account of the character of contemporary society.

Marcuse's perspective is particularly conducive to dialogue because of his refusal to move beyond hopes for the future to a conception of historical inevitability. MacIntyre speaks favourably of the Marxist intention :

"The whole Marxist attempt to envisage societies from the standpoint of their openness to the future, of the possibilities of development inherent in them, runs **counter** to the spirit of an age in which the future is always conceived of as a larger edition of the present. It is important to be able to combat that spirit, if the virtue of hope is to survive in a secular form".⁴⁷¹

Marcuse's pessimism concerning the historical possibilities of realizing the Marxist ideal does not mean that he has no hopes for

the future. It does mean that, for Marcuse, the tension between present observations and future hopes does not encourage an optimism which is easily attainable. Marcuse does not reject the Marxist goal. He does, however, question whether that goal will be achieved. Marcuse's critique of contemporary society reflects both his hope for the future and his intention to work towards the fulfillment of that hope. It must, however, be recognized that this hope and the intention to work towards its fulfillment need not be equated with the acceptance of the notion that history is moving towards its culmination in the communist epoch.

The difference between Marcuse's perspective and that of traditional Marxism is that the former is less one-sided in its analysis of the development and future possibilities of Marxism. A Marxism which is acutely aware of capitalism's defects while remaining rather oblivious to the inadequacies of communism requires to take seriously Marcuse's criticisms of both capitalism and communism.⁴⁷² A Marxism which rather one-sidedly emphasizes the revolutionary effect on society of a working 'class for itself' requires to take seriously the dialectical interrelation between class interest and societal interest :

"The fate of classes is much more often determined by the needs of society than the fate of society is determined by the needs of the classes".⁴⁷³

A Marxism which uses the classical Marxist analysis of society as "a short-cut to understanding society and its problems"⁴⁷⁴ requires to take seriously the possibility that the revolution might result not in the abolition of social conflict but in a reversal of roles in a social conflict which continues to breed discontent and thus provide the fodder for successive revolutions. A Marxism which holds that

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles".⁴⁷⁵ must, by virtue of its own account of human history, take seriously the possibility that the revolutionaries might, in turn, be affected by the greed which dominated the bourgeoisie. The supposition that the revolutionaries will be exempt from the greed which has been characteristic of all hitherto existing society and that the post-revolution era will be exempt from the class struggles of all hitherto existing society is not only entirely gratuitous but is also in distinct tension with the Marxist evaluation of all hitherto existing society.

The present discussion of the Christianity - Marxism dialogue focuses attention on the self-critical reinterpretation of Marxism offered by Marcuse. The focal-point of the discussion is the concept of liberation. Attention is drawn to both general similarities between Marcuse's concerns and the concerns of a theological concept of liberation and particular differences emerging from the contrasting contexts in which the respective concepts of liberation are discussed.

In his books, Reason and Revolution⁴⁷⁶ and One-Dimensional Man,⁴⁷⁷ Marcuse develops a conception of the liberation of man which is basically a creative and sympathetic yet critical interpretation of Marx. Marcuse's work is of significant interest as a study of the historical development of Marxism. His conception of the liberation of man is of particular interest for the analysis of the theological concept of liberation.⁴⁷⁸

Marcuse's view of liberation is based on human autonomy rather than "the freedom of the man of God"⁴⁷⁹ which "has nothing to do with autonomy..and..does not stand opposed to submission to God".⁴⁸⁰ The structure of Marcuse's argument does, however, provide a valuable context for an analysis of the theological concept of liberation. Marcuse stresses that liberation is grounded in the truth, that there is a tension between the truth and its practice, and that there is a tension between the notion of liberation and its possibilities of historical realization. Each of these aspects has its parallel in a theological concept of liberation which relates present practice to both its foundation and its expectation.

Interpreting Marx's intention, Marcuse maintains that

"far more was involved than the liberation and rational utilization of the productive forces, namely, the liberation of man himself".⁴⁸¹

Marcuse notes that

"Marx (sic) conception of the "free" proletariat as the absolute negation of the established social order belonged to the model of "free" capitalism".⁴⁸²

Marcuse argues that history has taken a different course from that envisaged by Marx because of "the transformation of free into organized capitalism".⁴⁸³ This movement away from unrestrained capitalism has, according to Marcuse,

"transformed Marxism into Leninism and determined the fate of Soviet Society - its progress under a new system of repressive productivity".⁴⁸⁴

He maintains that

"(t)he consolidation of the capitalist system was greatly enhanced by the development of Soviet society..(in which the repressive and exploitative features of capitalist industrialization (were)..reproduced, on a new basis".⁴⁸⁵

While the "increasingly efficient organization" of capitalism may have rendered revolutionary communism less effective, it has not, in Marcuse's view, invalidated Marx's insistence on the irrationality inherent in the productive forces of unrestrained capitalism.⁴⁸⁶

Marcuse insists that the revolutionary hope for the liberation of man must not be surrendered :

"the triumph of regressive and retarding forces does not vitiate the truth of this Utopia. The total mobilization of society against the liberation of the individual.. indicates how real is the possibility of this liberation".⁴⁸⁷

Marcuse emphasizes that liberation is grounded in the truth.

He sees in Marx's thought an "absolutism of truth (which)..once for all separates dialectical theory from the subsequent forms of positivism and relativism".⁴⁸⁸ Marcuse describes this absolutism of truth thus :

"According to Marx, the correct theory is the consciousness of a practice that aims at changing the world. Marx's concept of truth, however, is far from relativism. There is only one truth and one practice capable of realizing it. Theory accompanies the practice at every moment, analyzing the changing situation and formulating its concepts accordingly. The concrete conditions for realizing the truth may vary, but the truth remains the same and the theory remains its ultimate guardian. Theory will preserve the truth even if revolutionary practice deviates from ⁴⁸⁹its proper path. Practice follows the truth, not vice versa".

Marx's call for a world-changing philosophy is, in Marcuse's opinion, directly related to the liberation of the individual since, for Marx, the transition from capitalism to socialism is necessary "in the sense that the full development of the individual is necessary".⁴⁹⁰ It is this goal of individual freedom which must be maintained where revolutionary practice has resulted in the replacement of one repressive system with another.

The New Testament conception of truth is quite different from that of Marcuse. The New Testament proclaims that Jesus Christ is the Truth(John 14:6) and that freedom comes through truth - "you will know the truth and the truth will set you free"(John 8:32). When truth is defined christologically, Jesus Christ is recognized as the Liberator. The practice of liberation is, then, rooted in

the confession of faith in him as the Liberator. When liberation theology is properly rooted in such faith in the Liberator, it does not become social activism which is independent of personal faith. Discussing the connection between christology and "political theology", Berkouwer writes,

"Helmut Thielicke..criticizes "political theology" on the grounds of its christology, not on the grounds of its concern for the affairs of this world. In this christology, Thielicke thinks, Jesus is viewed as a model of human activity in such a way that the issue of his divinity evaporates. He sees this as a natural upshot of a christology that has concern only with man and his world. Jesus becomes a substitute for an absent God. Transcendence is lost..and man tends to transgress his limits in order to replace the absent God. Naturally, in the mind of "political theologians" Thielicke's fears are misplaced. For, they say, what they want is not to replace the gospel, but to trace its bearing on worldly affairs".⁴⁹¹

According to Berkouwer,

"the problem for Christian theology lies in the manner in which the work of man is integrated into the work of God".⁴⁹²

Man's liberating activity must be rooted in rather than arbitrarily separated from the liberating activity of God in Christ.

The New Testament proclamation concerning the work of Jesus Christ the Liberator emphasizes the uniqueness of his redemption through which man, by faith, receives God's gracious gift of justification(Romans 3:24-25). In view of this teaching concerning the uniqueness of the work of Jesus Christ the Liberator, salvation is described thus : "this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God"(Ephesians 2:8). The call to Christian obedience is issued on the basis of the divine mercy(Romans 12:1; Ephesians 2:10). A Christian theology of liberation may be regarded as an attempt to understand the gospel and follow its practical implications in the contemporary world without implying an unbelieving replacement of the gospel of divine redemption with an ethic of social action.

Marcuse draws attention to the tension between the truth and its practice. Discussing the relationship between the theoretical truth of the critical theory of society and the practice for which the theory calls, he writes,

"the facts and the alternatives are..like fragments which do not connect..Dialectical theory is not refuted, but it cannot offer the remedy..the dialectical concept, in comprehending the given facts, transcends the given facts. This is the very token of its truth. It defines the historical possibilities, even necessities; but their realization can

only be in the practice which responds to the theory, and, at present, the practice gives no such response".⁴⁹³

In a way that echoes Marx's call for a world-changing philosophy which refuses to remain content with interpreting the world, Marcuse emphasizes the unbreakable connection between theory and practice. He does not assert that the theory will ever find the practice which responds to it. Rather, he maintains that if the theory and the practice should meet this would produce a thoroughgoing transformation of society.⁴⁹⁴

The New Testament ethical imperative is quite different from that of Marcuse. The New Testament calls for obedience to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Berkouwer, acutely aware of the danger of separating Christian theology from Christian living, seeks to faithfully maintain the Biblical call for the practice of the truth. Since faith is not an abstraction which can be isolated from Christian living, the biblical summons to action must be viewed as enclosed within faith and not as a secondary accent artificially attached to faith.⁴⁹⁵ This accent on the unbreakable unity between faith and practice is emphasized by Berkouwer in the closing words of both Faith and Justification and Faith and Sanctification :

"As sola fide-sola gratia has established the relationship between "faith and justification", it must guide us through "faith and sanctification." All of which is to paraphrase the words of Paul : "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"(Rom. 6:1,2)."⁴⁹⁶

"In the bond between faith and sanctification we perceive, no less than in the bond between faith and justification, the pulsebeat of the Gospel. If faith will but lift its blossoms to catch the sunlight of God's grace, the fruit will be a life imbued with holiness".⁴⁹⁷

The practice of the truth is the present calling of the Christian as he lives "within the "time between"". ⁴⁹⁸ The practice of the truth is grounded in "the salvation already obtained for us" yet remains thoroughly imperfect "till after this life we arrive at the goal of perfection".⁴⁹⁹

The Christian proclamation is that the presence of the future has appeared in history in the deed-word revelation of God in Christ.⁵⁰⁰ A theology of liberation, properly understood, is not a plea for human activity which is quite unrelated to this proclamation. It is an attempt to understand "(t)he church's mandate..to live on its way to the future out of this salvation and the constant

consciousness of it".⁵⁰¹ as "Christ's presence..a communion that keeps and preserves".⁵⁰² A privileged people must live as a responsible people, showing by deeds and words that Christ is present in this world and not absent from it. This demonstration of Christ's presence in the world must carefully avoid the twin dangers of both the 'words only' approach of 'other-worldly' religion and the 'deeds only' approach of a social activism which rejects the religious foundation of social ethics.⁵⁰³ The Christian life demands both a continuing awareness of being "sustained by God" and a continuing concern with being "helpful to men".⁵⁰⁴ Berkouwer's writings may not deal quite so directly with the issues which concern the theologians of liberation.⁵⁰⁵ His theology does, however, point in the direction of a practice which seeks earnestly to avoid the dangers which arise from the separation of the 'this-worldly' and 'other-worldly' aspects of Christian hope.⁵⁰⁶

Marcuse observes the tension between the notion of liberation and its possibilities of historical realization. He maintains that

"On theoretical as well as empirical grounds, the dialectical concept pronounces its own hopelessness".⁵⁰⁷

Marcuse draws this conclusion on the basis that

"The human reality is its history and, in it, contradictions do not explode by themselves".⁵⁰⁸

He asks,

"Does this mean that the critical theory of society abdicates and leaves the field to an empirical sociology..? Or do the dialectical concepts once again testify to their truth..?"⁵⁰⁹

Marcuse is both critical of and sympathetic to the dialectical analysis of society. He suggests that

"Liberation of inherent possibilities" no longer adequately expresses the historical alternative".⁵¹⁰

while contending that

"the critique of society would still be valid and rational (even if)..incapable of translating its rationality into terms of historical practice".⁵¹¹

This tension between Marcuse's notion of the rationality of the dialectical analysis of society and his recognition of the decreasing likelihood of any historical realization of its ideal does not quench his revolutionary hope :

"the chance is that..the historical extremes may meet again: the most advanced consciousness of humanity and its most exploited force. It is nothing but a chance".⁵¹²

Acknowledging that the critical theory of society remains negative, holding no hope and showing no promise, Marcuse continues to advocate the absolute refusal to accept the established system despite the political impotence of this refusal.⁵¹³

The New Testament hope for the future is quite different from that of Marcuse. Marcuse's hope is directed towards the end of capitalism. The Christian hope is directed towards the end of sin. Marcuse speaks of the irrationality of capitalism which is characterized by internal contradiction. The Christian faith speaks of the irrationality of sin :

"There can be no reason for sin in God's creation and the gifts of God, or in anything that God has wished for man and has given to man".⁵¹⁴

Sin, in Christian theology, speaks of the internal contradiction which is central to man's whole being - man, created in the image of God, has rebelled against his Creator.

Marcuse maintains that organized capitalism has a deceptive character which is designed to cover up the social and economic alienation which it has created - "deceptive liberties (are)..made into a powerful instrument of domination" which "sustain(s) alienation".⁵¹⁵ This, according to Marcuse, is

"one of the most vexing aspects of advanced industrial civilization : the rational character of its irrationality".⁵¹⁶

According to the Bible, sinful man has a deceptive character which is designed to cover up his self-alienation from God -

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?"(Jeremiah 17:9);

"All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong; no one does good, not even one." "Their throat is an open grave, they use their tongues to deceive.""(Romans 3:12-13).⁵¹⁷

Marcuse holds that the complete overthrow of the capitalist system is highly unlikely. Observing that the critical theory of society defined "the actual contradictions in nineteenth century European society",⁵¹⁸ Marcuse insists that

"Confronted with the total character of the achievements of advanced industrial society, critical theory is left without the rationale for transcending this society".⁵¹⁹

He analyzes advanced industrial society thus :

"advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative changes for the foreseeable future..forces and tendencies exist which may break this containment and explode the society..The first tendency is dominant,

and whatever preconditions for a reversal may exist are being used to prevent it".⁵²⁰

The Christian faith maintains that a radical reversal of man's sinful nature is humanly impossible.⁵²¹ Christian 'this-worldly' hope is quite different from the idea of a secularized 'eschaton' inferred from history itself.⁵²² Christian 'this-worldly' hope is not based on any anthropocentric attempt to logically infer the nature of society's future from a particular interpretation of its past history.⁵²³ Christian 'this-worldly' hope is entirely bound up with faith in Jesus Christ the Liberator. Christian 'this-worldly' hope is set in the context of Christ's redemption which "consists in being redeemed from and redeemed unto".⁵²⁴ Christian 'this-worldly' hope sets about changing the world, believing that Christ's redeeming power is already operative in this present world. Christian 'this-worldly' hope, believing that Christ's redemptive purpose awaits its final consummation beyond this present world, may never identify itself directly with the kind of optimistic Utopianism which tends towards a premature anticipation of the fulness of that redemption.

S. H. Travis emphasizes that

"We do not have to choose between this world and the world to come, because the purpose of God embraces both".⁵²⁵

The falsity of the 'this-worldly' - 'other-worldly' dilemma is pointed out by Berkouwer who writes,

"On the route of faith and action, along with hope, we see that the gospel we believe is far removed from the picture of a future without bearing on the present, a heavenly hope without concern for the neighbor and his world".⁵²⁶

Understanding Christian hope thus, Christian theology can receive the Marxist critique of religion appreciatively without surrendering the religious foundation for its social ethic. The Marxist critique is to be received with a humble confession of sin and a greater commitment to demonstrating, through deeds and words, the love of God for the whole man.

(3) The Basic Contours of Berkouwer's Theology of the Christian Life.

The present discussion of Berkouwer's theology of social concern provides a suitable context for drawing attention to the practical character of his entire theology. This study has focused special attention on Berkouwer's concern with the problem of polarization. Attention has been drawn to various areas of

theological discussion where his treatment of this problem is particularly instructive. The following account of his theology as a theology of the Christian life reviews the overall discussion contained in this study, accenting its practical significance.

Berkouwer's emphasis on the practical character of theological reflection is grounded in his understanding of the doctrines of (a) God; (b) revelation; (c) reconciliation. Underlying his interpretation of these doctrines is his understanding of grace. The divine grace in revelation and reconciliation is not, in Berkouwer's view, a coercive power which devalues the significance of human activity. Human activity is not, however, given an entirely autonomous significance that is quite independent of divine grace. Man knows, through divine revelation and reconciliation, that he is dependent on divine grace without being destroyed by divine power.⁵²⁷

(a) The Practical Significance of Berkouwer's Doctrine of God

It was emphasized, in Chapter One, that Berkouwer's theology is set against a historical background in which contrasting theological emphases tend to move in the opposite directions of objectivism and subjectivism. It was noted that Berkouwer seeks to construct a theology which does full justice to both the true objectivity of the Christian faith and the necessity for that faith to be a subjectively experienced faith.⁵²⁸

In Chapter Two, it was emphasized that Berkouwer's concern with the objectivity - subjectivity question has led him to reject both a purely heteronomous concept of God and the conception of autonomous man. God and man are not seen as competitors. Man's true freedom is found precisely in willing and glad submission to the sovereign God of salvation.⁵²⁹ This theological anthropology is concerned not with a 'religious' part of man but with the whole man.⁵³⁰

Berkouwer's rejection of a purely heteronomous concept of God enables him to reject an ethical passivity which lacks the urgency of the gospel's ethical imperative.⁵³¹ His rejection of a conception of God which is merely accommodated to the notion of human autonomy enables him to reject an irreligious moralism which operates independently of the gospel's gracious indicative.⁵³² His rejection of any conception by which God is restricted to a 'religious' sphere of life enables him to reject an individualistic otherworldliness which lacks the comprehensiveness of the gospel's orientation towards

the whole man. 533

A proper understanding of the Christian life is, in Berkouwer's view, rooted in a proper understanding of the doctrine of God.

(i) Ethical passivity is excluded by the gospel's demand for obedience.

(ii) Irreligious moralism is excluded by the gospel's demand that such obedience is to be offered in gratitude to God.

(iii) Individualistic otherworldliness is excluded by the gospel's demand for the obedience of the whole man.

The character of Christian living and its relationship to God is well expressed by Berkouwer in a single passage contrasting conformity to the law of God with obedience to God :

"A conformity is possible which is abstracted from the consideration of the Giver of the law, while the defining characteristic of obedience lies in listening to God's command. The commandment of God is not an inert law, which man can impersonally fulfill or not, but something which calls for a total and personal relationship, in the giving over of the heart, and therein of the whole man, to obedience. In this relation, any abstraction is illegitimate. Obedience is always response to the divine demand and excludes every merely legalistic understanding of the law". 534

Such a personal relationship with the living God, characterized by thankful obedience, is the indispensable presupposition for Berkouwer's theology of the Christian life.

(b) The Practical Significance of Berkouwer's Doctrine of Revelation.

In Chapter Three, it was emphasized that Berkouwer's writings point in the direction of a doctrine of revelation which seeks to do full justice to the creational, incarnational, biblical, proclamatory and pneumatological dimensions of divine revelation. 535 This approach was used, in Chapter Four, as the basis for a critical analysis of deism, biblicism and christomonism, each of which are adjudged to have advanced inadequate conceptions of revelation. 536 In Chapter Five, the perspective afforded by Berkouwer's doctrine of revelation concerning the investigative disciplines of philosophy, biblical criticism and science is examined. 537

An important issue in the discussion of the doctrine of revelation concerns the relationship between the divine activity of revelation and the human activity of investigation. The manner in which a theology addresses itself to this question is a matter of great importance for the development of a theology of the Christian

life. The relationship between revelation and investigation is essentially a matter of the relationship between God and man. When it is affirmed that God is not merely the object of study for the intellectual discipline known as theology, the question concerning revelation and investigation becomes a question concerning the manner in which the Christian life is to be lived.⁵³⁸

By emphasizing the divine initiative in revelation, Berkouwer rejects an anthropocentric subjectivism which makes human experience the ultimate criterion by which truth is judged.⁵³⁹ By emphasizing the active character of man's reception of revelation, he rejects an authoritarian objectivism which tends to remove the confession of biblical authority from its context in the life of faith.⁵⁴⁰ By emphasizing the decisive character of man's reception of revelation, Berkouwer rejects an ontological speculation which tends to minimize the significance of man's believing response to Christ.⁵⁴¹

A proper understanding of the Christian life is, in Berkouwer's view, rooted in a proper understanding of the doctrine of revelation. The Christian life is to be lived by man. Its foundation is not, however, to be found in man.

"This directedness of the gospel is and remains focused on man, but cannot in its structure and horizon be hermeneutically approached from human existence itself - through a neutral analysis - but only from the content and direction of the evangel itself".⁵⁴²

With this emphasis on the content and direction of the evangel itself, Berkouwer dissociates himself from three dangerous theological interpretations which tend to distort the character of the Christian life.

(i) The normativity of the evangel excludes the idea of human experience being given "constitutive importance in the determination of the central focus of Holy Scripture".⁵⁴³ The normativity of the evangel demands that there be no disrespect for "the concrete words" of Scripture through which the Spirit seeks to bind men to Christ.⁵⁴⁴

(ii) The normativity of the evangel excludes the idea of biblical authority being isolated from the evangelical purpose of Scripture.

"When the "acceptance" of Holy Scripture as the Word of God is separated from a living faith in Christ, it is meaningless and confusing to call this acceptance belief in Scripture or an "element" of the Christian faith. This does not imply an underestimation of Scripture or of belief in it, but rather a great respect for Scripture, which addresses itself to our faith".⁵⁴⁵

Insisting that "(b)elieving Scripture does not mean staring at a holy and mysterious book, but hearing the witness concerning Christ", Berkouwer refuses to separate the acceptance of the Bible's authority from the experience of "being gripped by the message to which its words testify".⁵⁴⁶ The meaning and intention of the words must be understood if their authority is to be properly acknowledged.

(iii) The normativity of the evangel excludes the idea of the self-revelation of the gracious God being related to the existence of sinful man in a manner which lacks the urgency of the biblical proclamation which "cannot be silenced..(and) is the very opposite of passivity or fatalism".⁵⁴⁷

"Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation"(II Cor. 6:2)..the gospel..does not only seek man in a timeless sector of his life - his intellect or feeling - but seeks to reach him in his total and concrete existence. It is not sufficient to refer here to preaching in its "objective" reality, with which any kind of subjectivity must correspond. God's Word does not address man in an abstract isolation but in his real life".⁵⁴⁸

Salvation is "not presented to us as a deed which as a matter of course comes to all, but as a calling of God..an invitation, a call to conversion".⁵⁴⁹

The personal relationship with the living God which is, for Berkouwer, the indispensable presupposition of the Christian life is entered upon through receiving with faith the Christ to whom the biblical witness points. The sustenance of this relationship is rooted in a continual turning to this Christ in faith. This emphasis requires to be maintained in the face of both a materialism which seeks to live by bread alone and a mysticism which, though it may continue to speak of a 'Christ', has dispensed with the biblical Christ.⁵⁵⁰

(c) The Practical Significance of Berkouwer's Doctrine of Reconciliation

Three inter-related aspects of divine reconciliation were discussed in Chapters Six to Eight :

- (i) Reconciliation to God(Chapter Six);
- (ii) Reconciliation between men(Chapter Seven);
- (iii) Reconciliation within man himself(Chapter Eight).

These aspects of divine reconciliation may not be arbitrarily separated from each other.

- The full meaning of divine reconciliation is not exhausted by an ethical analysis of human existence. Even where such an analysis

proceeds on the basis of the ethical teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, it must be adjudged to be inadequate because of its failure to recognize the foundational character of reconciliation to God for a theological understanding of both the work of Christ and the human experience of reconciliation.⁵⁵¹

- The full meaning of divine reconciliation is not exhausted by the individualistic notion of a reconciliation to God which does not significantly affect relationships between men. Those who are brought into fellowship with God through Christ are brought into fellowship with one another in Christ's church which is called to be "one body in Christ".⁵⁵²

- The full meaning of divine reconciliation is not exhausted by an anthropology which relates God to a 'religious' part of man. It is the whole man who is both reconciled to God and called to live under the Lordship of Christ. Reconciliation to God involves neither a form of emotional escapism by which a man commits intellectual suicide nor a form of other-worldly mysticism which is irrelevant to the concerns of this world.⁵⁵³

(i) Discussing the meaning of Christ's work of reconciliation, Berkouwer writes,

"Reconciliation can be misconceived by ascribing the final decision to man, but also by objectifying it in preaching and by disqualifying unbelief not as sin and guilt but as a relatively unimportant foolishness (compared with God's decision)".⁵⁵⁴

Rejecting the former misconception, Berkouwer insists that

"The admonition "be ye reconciled to God" is not an admonition to co-operation in the work of reconciliation, but the call to live in faith out of this reconciliation".⁵⁵⁵

Rejecting the latter misconception, he contends that

"God does not so much call our attention to the abyss from which we have been saved and the judgment that lies behind us, as to the judgment that lies ahead, "namely, if we do not believe that in Christ (the former judgment) lies behind us.""⁵⁵⁶

Rejecting the idea that "God works half, and man the other half" and emphasizing that "God works all, and man does all",⁵⁵⁷ Berkouwer draws attention to the gospel's emphasis on the absolute necessity of both grace and faith. Concerning the significance for the Christian life of the 'by grace - through faith' character of reconciliation, he writes,

"it is the marvel of the work of the Holy Spirit that those who really respond to the proclamation of reconciliation

claim no merit whatsoever for that response, but rather find the essence of their joy and gratitude in God, who reconciled us unto himself".⁵⁵⁸

There is no question of overemphasizing either grace or faith. Both are to be given the full emphasis given to them by the gospel. There can, however, be a wrong emphasis - a failure to give both grace and faith their full emphasis. This represents a misunderstanding of the relationship between grace and faith which produces a distorted view of the Christian life. A proper understanding of the Christian life is based on a proper understanding of the gospel of reconciliation, in which both sides of its 'by grace - through faith' character are given their full emphasis.⁵⁵⁹

(ii) Berkouwer discusses the meaning of "Fellowship" in terms of both privilege and responsibility :

"The fact of belonging to Christ - in indicative and imperative, in gift and calling - entrusts a great deal to the Church, specifically the right, even in brokenness, to testify to true, new fellowship".⁵⁶⁰

The privilege and responsibility of fellowship is rooted in

"God's saving, reconciling action..(through which) (e)very individual need receives His undivided attention; yet, at the same time,..by which the individual receives a human fellowship, ending all individualism".⁵⁶¹

By emphasizing both the privilege and the responsibility of fellowship, Berkouwer rejects both a pessimism which is insufficiently aware of the reality of grace and an apathy which pays insufficient attention to the responsibility of faith. Berkouwer has resolutely refused to develop his theology in the direction of a religious individualism which pays scant attention to complex ecclesiological issues. The perspective in which he sets those issues is most valuable because of his concern for both unity and truth. He affirms the importance of both unity and truth from the standpoint of involvement. He does not seek a 'unity' which tends to ignore the complexity of the problems which have given rise to pessimism and apathy. He does not, however, advocate the kind of commitment to 'truth' which is narrowly sectarian in outlook. He expresses his view thus :

"the search for common denominator ecumenicity is a fruitless way to seek unity. But it is no compromise of the faith to point to a common call to discipleship of Jesus Christ and to the gospel Paul preached, Jesus Christ and Him crucified".⁵⁶²

(iii) Berkouwer emphasizes that "it is the whole man who is

restored and saved".⁵⁶³ In view of the comprehensiveness of God's salvation, no single aspect of Christian communication - proclamation, apologetics, social action - can be regarded as the entirety of Christian witness. Finding "its basic resources within the gospel itself,"⁵⁶⁴ apologetics will carefully avoid turning the gospel into "an echo of what was present in our heart before we came to it, a rewording of what we had already thought".⁵⁶⁵ Grounded in the gospel, social action will complement rather than compete with devotion to "prayer and...the ministry of the word".⁵⁶⁶ The gospel of reconciliation excludes an intellectualism which remains rather remote from the life of faith, an individualism which remains rather remote from the life of fellowship, and an otherworldliness which remains rather remote from the life of service.⁵⁶⁷

General Conclusion

Berkouwer avoids an objectivism which tends to relativize the decisive significance of personal faith and a subjectivism which tends to misrepresent the character of personal faith. His approach to theological polarization is not, however, a matter of sheer pragmatism. It is rooted in his understanding of the gospel as the gospel of God and the gospel for man. As the gospel of God, it is a gospel of grace. As the gospel for man, it is a gospel which calls for faith. As the gospel of God, it can never be perfectly understood by man. As the gospel for man, it calls man to the privileged responsibility of seeking to understand its message more adequately. As the gospel of God, its message may not be reduced to what modern man might be expected to believe. As the gospel for man, the relevance of its message must be demonstrated to modern man.

The theological task of understanding and communicating the Christian message requires both humility and courage, and the wisdom to discern which is most required in a given situation. Theology must not adopt an authoritarian stance where a humble acknowledgment of the limitation of its insight is called for. Theology must avoid a false humility which evades its responsibility to speak with clarity and conviction. The writings of Berkouwer provide a perspective which promises to be of enormous value in the confused climate of contemporary theology.

Introduction to the Footnotes

1) References to the Writings of Gerrit Cornelis Berkouwer

A list of the major works of G. C. Berkouwer used in this study is provided here. The English editions of each of these books is published by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. The Dutch editions, from which the English editions are translated, are published by J. H. Kok, Kampen, the Netherlands. The titles and dates of publication of both English and Dutch editions are listed below. Footnote reference to the books listed here is by title only. Berkouwer's name is not specifically given where any of the listed books is cited. Where a reference to any of the listed books appears as the first of a string of references to that particular book, the second and subsequent references will be identified by page number only. References to other writings of Berkouwer not listed here are cited in full in the footnotes. The present list is made up of the titles included in Berkouwer's "Studies in Dogmatics" and four separate studies.

- ii) "Studies in Dogmatics" (listed alphabetically according to title)
- a) Divine Election (1960) (De Verkiezing Gods (1955)), translated by Hugo Bekker.
- b) Faith and Justification (1954) (Geloof en Rechtvaardiging (1949)), translated by Lewis B. Smedes.
- c) Faith and Perseverance (1958) (Geloof en Volharding (1949)), translated by Robert D. Knudsen.
- d) Faith and Sanctification (1952) (Geloof en Heiliging (1949)), translated by John Vriend.
- e) General Revelation (1955) (Algemene Openbaring (1951)), translator's name not given.
- f) Holy Scripture (1975) (De Heilige Schrift, Vol. I (1965), Vol. II (1967)), translated and edited by Jack B. Rogers.
- g) Man : The Image of God (1962) (De Mens het Beeld Gods (1957)), translated by Dirk W. Jellema.
- h) Sin (1971) (De Zonde I : Oorsprong en Kennis der Zonde (1959), De Zonde II : Wezen en Verbreiding der Zonde (1960)), translated by Philip C. Holtrop.
- i) The Church (1976) (De Kerk, Vol. I (1970), Vol. II (1972)), translated by James E. Davison.
- j) The Person of Christ (1954) (De Persoon van Christus (1952)), translated by John Vriend.
- k) The Providence of God (1952) (De Voorzienigheid Gods (1950)), translated by Lewis B. Smedes.
- l) The Return of Christ (1972) (De Wederkomst van Christus, Vol. I (1961), Vol. II (1963)), translated by James Van Oosterom and edited by Marlin J. Van Elderen.
- m) The Sacraments (1969) (De Sacramenten (1954)), translated by Hugo Bekker.
- n) The Work of Christ (1965) (Het Werk van Christus (1953)), translated by Cornelius Lambregtse.
- ii) Other Studies (listed alphabetically according to title)
- a) A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives (1977) (Een halve eeuw theologie: motieven en stromingen van 1920 tot heden (1974)), translated and edited by Lewis B. Smedes.
- b) Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith (1953), first published in English (series of lectures given in the U.S.A.).
- c) The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism (1965) (Het Tweede Vaticaanse Concilie en het Nieuwe Theologie (1964)),

translated by Lewis B. Smedes.

d) The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth (1956) (De Triomf Der Genade in de Theologie van Karl Barth (1954)), translated by Harry R. Boer. (References in the present study refer to the U.K. edition, published in 1956 by The Paternoster Press, London by special arrangement with Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan).

Several volumes of Berkouwer's "Studies in Dogmatics" are available from Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester - Faith and Sanctification, General Revelation, Man: The Image of God, The Church, The Person of Christ, The Providence of God, and The Work of Christ.

2) References to articles and books by other authors

The first reference in each chapter to a particular article or book provides full bibliographical information. Subsequent references in the same chapter are indicated by author and title. The second and subsequent references in a string of consecutive references to the same article or book are indicated by the page number.

i) The 'author and title' method is used to avoid an unnecessary search for the title referred to by the expression, 'op cit'.

ii) The 'page only' method is used to avoid unnecessary repetition of the expression 'ibid' in lists of references to the same source.

General Remarks Concerning the Footnotes

The present study is concerned with the problem of polarization. It is concerned with presenting a particular perspective within which this problem can be discussed.

i) The general concern with polarization demands that a dialogical method is used, i.e. the author's perspective is presented in dialogue with the views of other writers.

ii) The concern with presenting a particular perspective demands that a certain amount of dialogue is included in the footnotes rather than the main text.

In the interests of both including discussion pertaining to the matters discussed in the main text and maintaining the flow of the main discussion, these footnotes contain much extended discussion.

Passages are frequently quoted in full in the interests of the reader who may not have the books at hand. Although this method makes the notes much longer, it vastly increases their value for the reader.

Footnotes to Introductory Preface (Pages i-vi).

1. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.208.
2. The use of these terms requires explanation at the outset because of the distinctive way in which they are used.
3. These intellectual disciplines can be developed in either direction.
4. Berkouwer uses both expressions in A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.186-187.
5. This description of Berkouwer's view of faith is given by L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, Second Revised Edition, 1969). The idea of the total person or the whole man is used extensively in the present study and requires to be explained at the outset. The expression 'the whole man' is not used in the present study in connection

with discussions regarding the meaning of terms such as 'body', 'soul' and 'spirit'. Its use has a more general function. It is used to emphasize that man's relationship to God must be understood not in terms of the primacy of a particular aspect of man, e.g. primarily intellectual, primarily emotional, primarily ethical, but in terms of a comprehensive relationship in which man is, in the entirety of his existence, called to respond to God. It is hoped that the meaning and significance of this emphasis on 'the whole man' becomes increasingly clear as different types of anthropology are analyzed in the course of this study.

6. In the preface to his book, Evangelism in the Early Church (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., 1970), M. Green states a personal reason for writing this book - "Most evangelists are not very interested in theology: most theologians are not very interested in evangelism. I am deeply committed to both. So the study of this subject was particularly congenial to me." (p.7). Green's book contains a brief but helpful section entitled "Teaching Evangelism" (pp.204-206).

7. B. Demarest, review of G. C. Berkouwer's A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives in Themelios, Vol.4, No.1, New Series, September 1978, pp.40-41. This particular phrase describes Berkouwer's view of faith and reason (p.41).

8. The phrase, "the service of others for Jesus' sake" alludes to the words of 2 Corinthians 4:5 where the service of others is not dissociated from but grounded in the service of Christ.

9. L. B. Smedes, "G. C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p.95 - a description of Berkouwer's theological method. It is hoped that the precise meaning and significance of this theological method becomes clearer as the present study progresses.

10. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.74. This phrase occurs in the context of Berkouwer's account of Karl Barth's reaction to the theological method of Rudolf Bultmann.

11. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.208.

12. Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p.93

13. p.93.

Footnotes to Chapter One (Pages 1-20)

1. L. B. Smedes, "G. C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.), edited by P. E. Hughes. (1966), p.63.

2. The Person of Christ, p.90.

3. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.104-106.

4. p.105; cf. G. Bogue, A Hole in the Dike: Critical Aspects of Berkouwer's Theology, (Hack Publishing Company, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, U.S.A.), 1977, p.8 - "one key word..appears as fundamental to his historical understanding of theology. Intent!" (underlining mine).

5. This statement of Friedrich Schleiermacher's is cited in P. Tillich, Systematic Theology, (The University of Chicago Press, Harper and Row Publishers, New York and Evanston, three volumes in one published 1967), Vol.I, p.87, n.8 as "the only consistent Protestant attitude".

6. Divine Election, p.190.

7. p.181.

8. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.285(pp.282-286 for further discussion of this question).
9. A. L. Baker, Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election : Balance or Imbalance?(Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1981), p.60. cf. my review of this book in "Reformed Review", (Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan, U.S.A., Spring 1982, Vol.35, No.3, p.164).
10. J. J. Arnold, "A Study of the Christologies of H. Emil Brunner and Gerrit C. Berkouwer"(unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut, 1967), p.121, cited in Baker's book at p.60.
11. C. Brown, Philosophy and the Christian Faith, (Tyndale Press, London, 1969), p.59.
12. B. Pascal, Pascal's Pensees, introduction by T. S. Eliot, Dutton Paperback(E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1958), p.78. It should be noted that Pascal did not retreat into sheer mysticism. He spoke of "Two excesses : to exclude reason, to admit nothing but reason" and insisted that "Reason's last step is the recognition that there are an infinite number of things beyond it", (Pensees, translated by A. J. Krailsheimer(Hammondsworth, Penguin Books, 1966), p.85.
13. "Christianity Today", VI(August 31, 1962), pp.31-32.
14. Divine Election, p.189, n.31.
15. Faith and Justification, p.87. The present discussion suggests that it may be useful to distinguish between the view of Arminius and the later development of Arminianism.
16. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.104-105.
17. C. Bangs, Arminius : A Study in the Dutch Reformation, (Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1971). For a critical review of this book see H. E. Osterhaven, Reformed Review , Winter 1973, Vol.26, No.2, pp.99-101.
18. p.21.
19. Divine Election, p.216.
20. Bangs, Arminius : A Study in the Dutch Reformation, p.63(cited from "Oration on the Object of Theology" in The Works of James Arminius, D.D.(London edition 1825, 1828, 1875), I, p.264.
21. Divine Election, pp.26, 65.
22. C. Bangs, Arminius : A Study in the Dutch Reformation, p.340. Bangs contends that Arminius should be regarded as a Reformed theologian. A significant part of the argument is concerned with Arminius's exposition of Romans 9(see Chapter 14 - "Theology in Amsterdam: Romans 9; The Conference with Junius", pp.193-205). cf. Divine Election, pp.64-79, 209-217 for Berkouwer's view of Romans 9.
23. p.343(cited from "Certain Articles" in The Works of James Arminius (London edition, 1956), I, p.497).
24. p.343(cited from The Works of James Arminius(London edition, 1956) pp.253-254).
25. Divine Election, p.60ff.; cf. The Return of Christ, p.444.
26. Divine Election, p.49; cf. p.46.
27. Bangs, Arminius : A Study in the Dutch Reformation, p.18. cf. A. P. F. Sell, The Great Debate, Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation(Studies in Christian Thought and History), (H. E. Walter Ltd; Worthing, West Sussex, 1982), p.97 - "in important respects Arminius was not an Arminian".
28. Bogue, A Hole in the Dike : Critical Aspects of Berkouwer's Theology, has difficulty in classifying Berkouwer within his own Calvinist-Arminian distinction(p.19). A helpful manner of stating the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism is found in A.P.F.

- Sell, The Great Debate, Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation, p.1
- "Arminianism says that half the work is God's and half the work is man's. Calvinism asserts that the whole is God's and the whole is man's also." This is a quotation from Colloquia Peripatetica...being notes of conversations with the late John Duncan, edited by William Knight (Oliphant, Edinburgh and London, 6th edition, 1907), p.29.
29. C. Bangs, Arminius : A Study in the Dutch Reformation, pp.460-461.
 30. p.350.
 31. p.315.
 32. p.21.
 33. William Ames, probably the most well-known representative of this type of theology opens his book The Marrow of Theology, translated and edited by J. D. Eusden (Pilgrim Press; Boston, Philadelphia, 1968) with a definition of theology as "the teaching of living for God" (Ames I, i, 1; Eusden, p.77). One theologian who regards Ames as being of significant interest in the history of theology is G.W. Bromiley who, in his book Historical Theology : An Introduction (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., 1978), devotes several pages to discussing the views of Ames, pp.307-316, 324-328, 332, 336-338. Bromiley, acknowledging Ames's intention of "relating theology more closely to life" (p.310), suggests that there might be "a legalistic element" in the type of covenant theology propounded by Ames (p.316). This is not, however, the place to discuss this question further.
 34. M. E. Osterhaven, "The Experiential Theology of Early Dutch Calvinism" in Reformed Review, Spring 1974, Vol.27, No.3, p.188. This article (pp.180-189) gives a useful survey of this school of theology.
 35. Man : The Image of God, pp.31, 194.
 36. pp.31-33, 195-196.
 37. The inclusion of a volume on Faith and Sanctification in his "Studies in Dogmatics" emphasizes Berkouwer's concern for spiritual growth.
 38. Volumes such as Faith and Justification, Faith and Sanctification and Faith and Perseverance emphasize the importance of the personal motif in Berkouwer's thought.
 39. S. Meijers, Objectiviteit en Existentiatiet (Objectivity and Existentiality), (J. H. Kok, Kampen, 1979) observes that Berkouwer's theology demonstrates "a consistent apologetic intention..directed at scholasticism" (p.448 - English summary). In personal correspondence (Spring 1979), Meijers informed me that Berkouwer has acknowledged the validity of this observation.
 40. M. E. Osterhaven, "The Experiential Theology of Early Dutch Calvinism", p.188.
 41. C. Bangs, Arminius : A Study in the Dutch Reformation, p.21. For a study of twentieth-century pietism, D.G. Bloesch, The Crisis of Piety (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A., 1968) in which Berkouwer is described as a theologian of "biblical personalism" (p.96). This outlook is contrasted with "mystical spirituality" (Chapter 7, pp.95-124).
 42. While Berkouwer does not accept uncritically everything Calvin says, he clearly has greater respect for Calvin than he has for some of Calvin's more speculative followers. This is not the place to engage in a detailed discussion of the relationship between Calvin and the development of Calvinism. The concern here is simply to draw attention to Berkouwer's concern that theology does not move in the direction of a speculative theological system-building which has become rather dissociated from a

- warm biblical piety which is actively and earnestly involved in seeking "true and solid wisdom..the knowledge of God and of ourselves", J. Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book One, Chapter I, Section 1(edition used - Calvin's Institutes (Associated Publishers and Authors Inc., Grand Rapids, Mich., p.7).
43. G. C. Berkouwer, "Vragen rondom de belijdenis" in Gereformeerde Theologische Tijdschrift, February 1963, Vol.63, pp.1-41. This article is concerned with questions regarding the interpretation of Confessions of faith, paying special attention to the Canons of Dordt.
 44. J. Tanis, "The Heidelberg Catechism in the Hands of the Calvinistic Pietists" in Reformed Review, Spring 1971, Vol.24, No.3, pp. 156-157.
 45. H. Berkhof, "De Methode van Berkouwer's Theologie", in Ex Auditu Verbi : Theologische Opstellen Aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. G. C. Berkouwer, edited by R. Schippers, G. E. Meuleman, J. T. Bakker, and H. M. Kuitert, (J. H. Kok, Kampen, 1965), pp.37-55. Berkhof uses the expression "the existential direction of Scripture" to describe the theological tendency of the later Berkouwer(pp.48-53). The meaning of this phrase is discussed further in the present study, pp.130-135.(The book in which Berkhof's analysis of Berkouwer's theological method appears is a volume of theological essays dedicated to Berkouwer on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary of teaching at the Free University of Amsterdam. This volume contains essays written by such notable theologians as K. Barth, O. Cullmann, H. Kung, T.F. Torrance).
 46. Helpful applications of this theme are found in Man : The Image of God, p.27; Divine Election, pp.307, 326-329; The Return of Christ, p.248.
 47. Holy Scripture, pp.180, 322 - the goal of Scripture is to bring knowledge of God.
 48. The Marrow of Theology, I, xxvii, 26, 28; cf. G.W. Bromiley, Historical Theology : An Introduction , pp.336-338(discussion of the teaching of Ames on sanctification), especially survey, p.338.
 49. Holy Scripture, pp.9-10.
 50. Man : The Image of God, p.35.
 51. L. B. Smedes, "G. C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p.94. The term 'scholasticism' is used in this general way throughout the present study. It denotes a tendency rather than a precisely identifiable theological position.
 52. S. Meijers, Objectiviteit en Existentialiteit, p.448.
 53. L. B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, pp.94-95.
 54. J. Timmer, "Recent Developments within the Reformed Church (Gereformeerde) in the Netherlands"(a series of lectures delivered at Kobe Reformed Seminary, Fall of 1968), in The Reformed Journal, (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan), Sept-Dec 1969(from the Sept. article.(December article on Berkouwer).
 55. H. Bavinck, The Doctrine of God, translated, edited and outlined by Wm. Hendriksen, (The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh) 1977, p13.
 56. J. H. Kok, Kampen, 1979.
 57. p.446.
 58. p.446.
 59. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.11.
 60. Meijers, Objectiviteit en Existentialiteit, p.447.
 61. p.447.
 62. p.448.
 63. Personal correspondence(Spring 1979).

64. p.448.
65. cf. G. Bogue, A Hole in the Dike, p.8.
66. General revelation is understood in the context of salvation, p131.
67. Divine election is understood in the context of salvation, p153 n38.
68. Divine Providence is understood in the context of salvation, p178.
69. L. B. Smedes, "G. C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P. E. Hughes, pp.63-64.
70. Hepp is, for example, not referred to at all in Divine Election and The Providence of God, works in which Berkouwer is especially concerned to dissociate himself from scholasticism.
71. H. Berkhof, "De Methode van Berkouwer's Theologie" in Ex Auditu Verbi, edited by R. Schippers et al., pp.37-55. cf. this present study, pp.130-135 for further discussion.
72. I. John Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology" in Reformed Review, Winter 1973, Vol.26, No.2, pp.81-82.
73. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.81.
74. Geloof en Openbaring in de Nieuwere Duitse Theologie, (Kenink, Utrecht, 1932). In this doctoral dissertation concerned with faith and revelation in modern German theology, Berkouwer's position is primarily that of conservative reaction. Nonetheless, there is, at this early stage, a refutation of a totally formal concept of biblical authority. There is a recognition that the authority of Scripture is closely connected to the content of Scripture. cf. present study, p.132.
75. cf. Foreword of A Half Century of Theology, pp.7-9.
76. J. Timmer, "The Fall of Assen" in The Reformed Journal, October 1969, pp.15-20; cf. present study, pp.178-179.
77. I possess an almost verbatim account of this report, in English translation, in the form of unpublished ^{notes} by M. E. Osterhaven, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan, U.S.A.. cf. present study, pp.179-181.
78. The other members of the committee were W. H. Gispen, K.G. Idema, J. L. Koole, A. D. R. Polman, N. H. Ridderbos, D. van Swigchem, and S. van Wouwe. cf. present study, p.180.

Footnotes to Chapter Two (Pages 21-42).

1. cf. H. M. Kuitert, The Reality of Faith, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968), translated by L. B. Smedes. A valuable study of modern theological discussion concerning "the relationship..between what is believed and the act of believing"(p.9).
2. Oxford University Press, London, 1969.
3. S.C.M. Press, London, 1955.
4. Christian University Press, (A Subsidiary of Christian College Consortium, Washington D.C. and William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1978.
5. Divine Election, pp.228-241 (especially pp.232, 240).
6. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.290, 296.
7. Holy Scripture, pp.9-10.
8. p.10.
9. p.10.
10. Faith and Justification, p.9.
11. p.9.
12. Holy Scripture, p.32. cf. present study, pp.78-95.
13. p.25.
14. p.23. cf. p.137.

15. p.23.
16. Faith and Justification, p.9.
17. p.9.
18. Holy Scripture, p.33 n.70.
19. pp.33-34.
20. H. Berkhof, "De Methode van Berkouwer's Theologie" in Ex Auditu Verbi, edited by R. Schippers et al.(J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1965),p50.
21. Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election : Balance or Imbalance?(Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1981), p.40.
22. Faith and Justification, p.30.
23. Holy Scripture, p.20.
24. A Half Century of Theology, p.8(brackets - mine).
25. Holy Scripture, p.59.
26. pp.349-350.
27. p.348.
28. p.348.
29. p.348(underlining mine).
30. p.348(Brackets mine).
31. p.348.
32. p.348.
33. present chapter,pp.22-26, 30-33.
34. present chapter, pp.33-34.
35. present chapter, p.36.
36. present chapter,pp.37-42.
37. Sin, p.14(underlining original).
38. General Revelation, pp.131-132(underlining original).
39. The Providence of God, pp.45, 47.
40. The Person of Christ, pp.10, 14(underlining mine).
41. The Work of Christ, p.10(underlining mine).
42. Faith and Justification, p.29.
43. Faith and Sanctification, pp.26, 42-43(emphasis original).
44. Faith and Perseverance, p.14(underlining mine).
45. Faith and Justification, p.44(emphasis original, brackets mine).
46. The Church, p.19.
47. The Sacraments, p.26.
48. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "Works of Professor Berkouwer" in The Evangelical Quarterly, 28, (January - March, 1956), p.46.
49. A. L. Baker, Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election; Balance or Imbalance?, p.6; L. B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.64.
50. cf. present study, Chapters Four and Six.
51. The present study sets the practical issues involved in theological polarization in the context of understanding the gospel. This approach emphasizes the unbreakable connection between theology and practice. It is carefully distinguished from (a) a pragmatism which is insufficiently concerned with the truth of the gospel; and (b) a theological method which tends to remain rather remote from the world of practice.
52. S. E. Ahlstrom, "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology" in Church History, Vol.24(1955), pp.257-271(especially p.268); R. D. Knudsen, "Rudolf Bultmann" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P. E. Hughes, p.155.
53. S. E. Ahlstrom, "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology",p268.
54. The Old Princeton and Westminster theology represents the writings of such writers as C. Hodge, B. B. Warfield(Old Princeton), E. J. Young and C. van Til(Westminster). The link with the Scottish Common Sense Philosophy is clearest in the writings of Hodge(e.g.

- Systematic Theology, Vols. I-III (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1970). For a fuller discussion of Hodge's theology in relation to philosophy, cf. J. G. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture : a study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology (Mack Publishing Company, Marlton, New Jersey, 1978), pp.120-147. Vander Stelt is sympathetic with Hodge's intention to present a biblical theology (p.123). This criticism of Hodge intends to take seriously G. H. Marsden's comment that "all attempts to be purely biblical...end up with some degree of synthesis with alien philosophies", "Scotland and Philadelphia : Common Sense Philosophy from Jefferson to Westminster" in The Reformed Journal, Vol.29, Issue 3, March 1979, p.10 (Article - pp.8-12). cf. P. Tillich, Systematic Theology, (The University of Chicago Press, Harper and Row Publishers, New York and Evanston, 1967), Vol.I, pp.34-40 where Tillich presents the Bible, church history and the history of religion and culture as the sources of systematic theology. Berkouwer writes, "we do not intend to be biblicistic, to neglect or belittle the light which the Church has accumulated in her history of many ages.. no one any longer approaches Scripture as if it were a blank sheet of paper" (The Work of Christ, p.15). His use of the Bible is, however, rather different from that of Tillich, cf. present study, pp.61-62, 65-67, 69-70, 73-74, 77-78. For further comment on the thought of Warfield, Young and van Til, cf. present study, Ch.4, n.183 (Warfield), Ch.4, n.163 (Young), Ch.4, n.223 (van Til).
55. Mack Publishing Company, Marlton, New Jersey, 1978. cf. S. E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, I (Image Books, New York, 1975), pp.431-433.
 56. Space, Time and Resurrection, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976), p.17 n.25.
 57. p.17 n.25; cf. pp.1-26 for Torrance's view of theological science.
 58. The Reality of Faith, p.76.
 59. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976.
 60. Jesus - God and Man, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1968), pp. 175-176.
 61. The Groundwork of Christian Ethics, (William Collins, London, 1971), p.239 (underlining mine).
 62. p.185 (underlining mine).
 63. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.296.
 64. Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, p.53.
 65. p.53.
 66. The present writer has found helpful an unpublished paper, delivered by T. F. Torrance at Glasgow University Theological Society, 1976-77, entitled "Christian Theology in the Context of Scientific Revolution".
 67. Holy Scripture, p.24. cf. present study, pp.78-95.
 68. Holy Scripture, p.25.
 69. W. Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology II (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1971), translated by G. H. Kehm, p.69.
 70. B. Demarest, review of A Half Century of Theology : Movements and Motives in Themelios, Vol.4, No.1, Sept.1978, p.41.
 71. Faith and Justification, p.21.
 72. Divine Election, pp.150, 168.
 73. L. B. Smedes, "G.G. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.68 n.5. Smedes uses this phrase in connection with Berkouwer's understanding of the Confessions. Berkouwer uses this principle to understand Scripture also (cf. his view of predestinarian and eschatological language).

74. Holy Scripture, p.254. Berkouwer rejects an existentialist conception of truth which is dissociated from the "once for all" character of the gospel events(p.262) and which makes the modern world-view the norm by which the nature of the gospel is determined(p.261).
75. p.253. Concerned with "how(emphasis original) the Spirit wishes to guide us to salvation and joy through the real(underlining mine) Scripture"(p.263) , Berkouwer refuses to set the existential(i.e. involving man in the entirety of his existence) work of the Spirit over against the real Scripture. Thus, he avoids creating a 'mythical' Bible which is not the real one but a projection of the existentialist(i.e. the hermeneutical principle used by Bultmann) imagination.
76. p.253 - Berkouwer emphasizes the importance of biblical statements concerning the historical reality of the gospel events for his understanding of truth; p.264 - Berkouwer emphasizes the importance of the purpose of Scripture for his understanding of truth. cf. present study, pp.67-70, 89-94 for further discussion.
77. Divine Election, pp.150, 168.
78. The Return of Christ, p.16(pp.14-19 for further discussion).
79. p.247.
80. pp.246, 248.
81. cf. R. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, (Collins, London, 1960); J. Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1955) - a comparative study of the thought of Bultmann and M. Heidegger; J. Macquarrie, Studies in Christian Existentialism, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1965) - a collection of studies with a bearing on Bultmann's thought.
82. cf. W. Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology I, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970), p.113; W. Pannenberg, The Idea of God and Human Freedom, (published in the U.K. by S.C.M. Press, London, 1973 under the title, Basic Questions in Theology III), (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1973), p.66ff.; W. Pannenberg, Jesus- God and Man, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1968), p.242.
83. U.S. title of Basic Questions in Theology III(S.C.M., 1973).
84. Collins, London, 1971.
85. J. Timmer, "G.C. Berkouwer" : Theologian of Confrontation and Correlation" in The Reformed Journal, December 1969, pp.17-22.
86. M.J. Arntzen, "Worden alle mensen zalig?" in Gereformeerd Weekblad, February 21, 1964. Holding that the Bible speaks of hell in terms of admonition, Berkouwer contends that it is not necessary to go beyond the admonition in order to be seriously confronted with the reality of hell. Unhappy with this position, Arntzen asks, "Is there a hell or not?". If there is not, the warnings are, in Arntzen's view, hollow. Appealing to Hebrews 2:3, Berkouwer maintains that salvation is proclaimed and then, for those who neglect this great salvation, there is the warning of hell. The position held by Arntzen is, in Berkouwer's view, rather different. According to Berkouwer, Arntzen's view puts the warning of hell before the proclamation of salvation from hell. Concerning this debate, Timmer points out that neither convinced the other and that this is an enlightening conflict between ontological and functional thinking. For further discussion, cf. present study, pp.210-213.
87. Man : The Image of God, p.35.
88. Timmer, "G.C. Berkouwer : Theologian of Confrontation and Correlation", p.20.
89. cf., for example, the opening chapters of Faith and Justification

and The Providence of God.

90. The Person of Christ, p.91.
91. Faith and Justification, p.21.
92. Berkouwer shows considerable ability as a systematic thinker when, for example, he criticizes both the traditional doctrine of election and Barth's view of election on the grounds that they share the same faulty objectivity - subjectivity schema. This ability of Berkouwer to see not only what the faith means but also what it does not mean marks him out as one of the great theologians (D.G. Bloesch, The Crisis of Piety, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968), p.61).
93. C. Van Til contends that Berkouwer has been influenced by the "philosophy of the utter relativism of history" with the "modern view" of a "would-be autonomous man" concerning whom Van Til writes, "This man lives and moves and has his being in Kant's noumenal realm..In order to escape the charge of contradiction, of determinism, man now says that the distinctions between determinism and indeterminism do not concern him. He now lives in.. the world of person-to-person confrontation." (The Sovereignty of Grace : An Appraisal of G.C. Berkouwer's View of Dordt, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1969), p.86(cited in C. Bogue, A Hole in the Dike : Critical Aspects of Berkouwer's Theology, (Mack Publishing Company, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, 1977), pp.26-27. This type of thinking has, in Van Til's view, led Berkouwer to hold a doctrine of election which is, in the words of H. C. Hoeksema, "a radical departure(emphasis original) from all that has ever been recognized as Reformed with respect to the dogma of predestination." ("A Critique of Dr. G. C. Berkouwer's Een Halve Eeuw Theologie, Chapter IV," Protestant Reformed Theological Journal 8(May 1975) : 42(cited in A. L. Baker, Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election : Balance or Imbalance?, p.9). It is Van Til's view that Berkouwer's theology constitutes a flight into a "storm-free harbor of suprahistory" (Bogue, p.27). It can, however, be argued that this is a misconstruction of Berkouwer's thought. It may be said that Berkouwer's whole intention is to avoid a flight into a suprahistory which relativizes the significance of events in history (Divine Election, p.153 n.38). In his interpretation of the words of Scripture, Berkouwer is concerned to avoid a suprahistorical doctrine of Scripture which tends to isolate the idea of 'sola Scriptura' from the historical context in which the New Testament writers seek to confess their faith in divine grace by means of words which are not fully adequate for this great purpose (Divine Election, p.152). It may be argued that Berkouwer is not concerned with "would-be autonomous man" but with man who, in his concepts and words, can never conclude that he has understood and said all that requires to be said about divine revelation. It must, then, be said that Berkouwer's theology is ^{not} to be dismissed as a 'system' which has been developed with the primarily pragmatic purpose of winning modern man to an acceptance of the gospel but that it is based on a deeper understanding of the gospel's own pattern of teaching regarding objectivity and subjectivity. It must, therefore, be insisted that criticisms that Berkouwer has adopted a non-Reformed theological methodology are based on a questionable notion of objectivity. For further discussion, cf. present study, pp.149-157.
94. This book first appeared as a Th.D dissertation (Dallas Theological Seminary, 1976) with the title, "A Critical Evaluation of G. C.

Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election." It is my view that, apart from providing a catchy title, the revision of the title adds nothing but ambiguity. Baker clearly holds that Berkouwer's doctrine of election does not give a balanced account of the biblical teaching on election. Berkouwer, on the other hand, would argue that the strength of his doctrine of election is closely related to his rejection of the 'balance' of the equal ultimacy concept (cf. Divine Election, "Election and Rejection", Chapter Six, pp. 172-217). In view of this ambiguity, the original title might have been preferred unless, of course, this element of ambiguity has been deliberately introduced to arouse interest. There is, however, hardly any indication that Baker is aware of this ambiguity.

95. Baker's background is indicated by his three main criticisms of Berkouwer - (a) he is "too subjectivistic in his analysis of the Canons of Dort"; (b) "he continually fails to expound the full teaching of the Scriptures in relation to the sovereign "before" of election"; (c) he is "in opposition to the testimony of Scripture in his denial of reprobation" (p.viii). A direct discussion of these issues is found in an unpublished "Confessional-Revision Gravamen", presented to the Christian Reformed Church in the U.S.A. by Dr. Harry R. Boer. Boer, adopting a similar position to Berkouwer on divine election, argues that Dordt's doctrine of reprobation is based ^{not} on viable Scriptural exegesis but on gratuitous theological assumption. Boer, in agreement with Berkouwer (Divine Election, p.168), maintains that a proper understanding of election does take account of the eternal character of God's election without giving the impression of arbitrariness on God's part. Rather, it points to "the eternal foundation (of salvation) in the love of God" (Divine Election, p.168, brackets mine). Baker's background is indicated by his criticism that "Berkouwer no longer holds to infallibility or verbal inspiration" (p.37). Despite Baker's statement that "it would be wrong to think that Berkouwer no longer accepts Scripture as authoritative" (p.39), the former statement creates a misleading impression which could have been avoided by the more accurate observation that Berkouwer reinterprets infallibility and verbal inspiration in a different context from Baker's use of these terms. cf. present study, pp.84-85, 133.
96. Baker writes, "The expression, "before the foundation of the world", in Ephesians 1:4 is also found in John 17:24 and I Peter 1:20. Berkouwer has never commented at any length in any of his Dogmatics on the significance of these words." (p.102). In my review of Baker's book (Reformed Review, Spring 1982, Vol.35, No.3), I maintain that "Baker's failure to discuss "at any length" (p.102) Berkouwer's concept of the "depth-aspect" of salvation weakens Baker's criticism of Berkouwer's interpretation of the "before" element of election. This failure may reflect the existence of "extra-biblical presuppositions" (Baker detects such presuppositions in Berkouwer's thought, p.96) in Baker's thinking concerning the use of religious language (cf. J. C. Vander Stelt's Philosophy and Scripture). " (p.164).
97. p.8.
98. I suggest in my review (Reformed Review, Spring 1982, Vol.35, No.3, p.164) that Baker's book is marred by "a lack of self-criticism" which keeps him from seeing that Berkouwer does not wish to dispense with the "before" element in God's election but rather to understand it in a way that does not diminish the significance of the historical revelation of God's love in Jesus Christ (Divine Election, pp.150, 168).

99. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1974), p.56. Rogers notes a definition of theology given by Berkouwer to first-year students : "Theology is scientific reflection on the normativity of revelation for faith". Rogers comments, "The scientific theologian and the simple believer both begin from a personal faith commitment to God revealed in Jesus Christ. They both accept revelation as normative for them.. they treat the Biblical data as having ultimate value and valid application to their lives..The professional theologian is distinguished from any other believer only in that the theologian has the training and tools for doing "scientific" reflection."
100. cf. E. J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London), p.157ff. where the author presents his views on reprobation. Commenting on John 12:40, Young writes, "it was ^{God} who had blinded their eyes" (p.158). It may be noted that the text says, "He hath blinded their eyes..and I shall heal them". There is a suggestion that the "He" and the "I" are distinct. The "He" could be taken to refer to "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4). Even if "He" is taken to refer to God, cf. Matthew Henry's comments on John 12: 39-40 - "God damns none by mere sovereignty..They could not believe, that is, they would not; they were obstinately resolved in their infidelity..God is not the author of sin..yet..(t)here is a righteous hand of God sometimes to be acknowledged in the blindness of those who persist in impenitency and unbelief, by which they are justly punished for their former resistance of divine light." (p.379); Isaiah 6:9-13 - "...when they should obstinately reject the gospel and should thereupon be rejected by God.." (p.836); Romans 9:18,22-24, "Those who are saved must thank God only, and those who perish must thank themselves..Sinners fit themselves for hell but it is God who fits saints for heaven." (p.575). Henry sees a "reserve" in the biblical treatment of such matters which is "sufficient to keep a door of hope open to particular persons; for each one might say, "Why may I not be of that remnant?" (in commentary on John 12:39-40, relating the "prophecy" in Isaiah 6 concerning "the body of the Jewish nation" to the preservation of a remnant, p.379). (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 1960). This position taken by Henry requires to be carefully distinguished from the kind of view presented in Young, pp.157-158. Young sets divine sovereignty and human responsibility over against each other in a heteronomous way. Henry, by avoiding the idea of a competition between divine and human activity, presents a theonomous perspective which is not heteronomous.
101. cf., for example, the contrasting modes of theonomous thought in Berkouwer, Tillich and Pannenberg. For further discussion of the theologies of Tillich and Pannenberg, cf. present study, pp.60-78, 118-119, 198-199 (Tillich); pp.157-163, pp.231-238, 245-250 (Pannenberg).
102. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.158.
103. p.159.
104. p.159.
105. p.159.
106. Holy Scripture, p.349.
107. p.350.
108. p.349.
109. p.350.
110. Man : The Image of God, Chapter 9, pp.310-348.
111. p.312.
112. p.312.
113. p.313.
114. p.313.

115. p.321.
116. p.321.
117. p.322. Note New Testament references cited by Berkouwer.
118. p.323.
119. p.323.
120. p.325.
121. p.325.
122. p.327.
123. p.328.
124. p.329.
125. Divine Election, pp.46, 49-50. cf. p.26 where Berkouwer writes, "the election of God is not made dependent on man's faith, but is recognized and confessed by way of his faith".
126. "G. C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P. E. Hughes, p.65.
127. p.65.
128. p.95.
129. p.95.
130. The Reality of Faith, p.95 n.14. cf. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.63-64 for discussion involving Berkouwer, Barth and Tillich. Discussion of Panenberg in this connection is also of interest, pp.70-71, 165ff..
131. p.95 n.14.
132. A Half Century, Movements and Motives, pp.63-64.
133. p.64.
134. This point is central to Berkouwer's analysis of Barth's theology, cf. present study, pp.111-117, 198-204.
135. Faith and Justification, p.17.
136. Man: The Image of God, p.33.
137. p.54, citing K. Schilder's view ; p.59 - basic approval of this view.
138. p.32 n.42.(cited in text, source given in note).
139. p.32 n.43.(cited in text, source given in note).
140. p.32.
141. pp.32-33.
142. p.25.
143. p.25.
144. p.25.
145. pp.28-29.
146. p.24. Words cited from G. C. Van Niftrik, "Hoe ziet de moderne Mens zichzelf en hoe ziet de Bijbel de Mens?", Kerk en Theologie, (1952), p.164(source given, p.24, n.27). Berkouwer disagrees with Van Niftrik's view, pp.24-26.
147. p.29(emphasis original).
148. p.91(emphasis original). This statement appears as part of an account of Barth's view which is supported, in principle, by Berkouwer though he feels that Barth's christological interpretation of this idea is wrongly developed in an ontic direction which Berkouwer contrasts with the noetic direction of the thought of Calvin and Bavinck(pp.93ff.). For further discussion of the meaning of the terms 'ontic' and 'noetic', cf. present study, pp.106-109. Relating to quotation in text, cf Man.,pp.34-5.
149. p.91.
150. p.29(emphasis original).
151. p.30(emphasis original).
152. p.13(emphasis original).
153. p.30.
154. p.27.
155. p.27(emphasis original).
156. p.27(emphasis original).

157. pp. 20-21(citing Calvin, Institutes, One, I, 2).
158. For fuller discussion concerning apologetics, cf. present study, pp.218-251.

Footnotes to Chapter Three (Pages 43-59).

1. cf. W. Pannenberg, "The Crisis of the Scripture Principle" in Basic Questions in Theology I (S.C. M. Press, London, 1970), pp.1-14.
2. J. D. Smart, The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1973).
3. D.H. Kelsey, The Uses of Scripture in Recent Theology, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1975).
4. C. E. Braaten, History and Hermeneutics, New Directions in Theology Volume II, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1966) - "any theology which deserves to be called Christian will include the notion that man's knowledge of God presupposes God's revelation of himself. We can know God only when, where and how he reveals himself"(p.12).
5. General Revelation, p.132; Holy Scripture, p.10.
6. cf. present study, pp.37-38.
7. Faith and Justification, p.17.
8. Man: The Image of God, p.35 for helpful comments regarding a false dilemma between relational and ontological thinking. Rejecting the "erroneous" notions that "man exists only in relation to God, and God only in relation to man", Berkouwer insists that there is no need to choose between relation and reality.
9. Man: The Image of God, Chapter 6, pp.194-233: "we must indeed deny that the religious in man is specifically related to one or another anthropological part of man as such..the whole Scriptural witness deals with the whole man in the actuality of his existence"(pp.201, 230). An interesting study, which lies beyond the immediate scope of this study, would be a comparative study of Berkouwer's thought with other writers who have characteristically emphasized the importance of the whole man for Christian theology such as S. Kierkegaard from the nineteenth-century and R. G. Smith from the twentieth-century(The Whole Man: Studies in Christian Anthropology, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1969), published in the U.K. as The Free Man, note especially Chapter II, "Man in His Wholeness", pp.24-43). Because of the enormous significance of Kierkegaard in the history of thought, a general comment concerning his thought is in order. Depending on the interpretation given to Kierkegaard, similarities would be either emphasized or minimized. T. F. Torrance, Theological Science, (Oxford University Press, London, 1969) writes of Kierkegaard as "the avowed enemy of all objectivism..rationalization of truth into a system of ideas" while insisting that "his emphasis on subjectivity was never intended to mean the abrogation of objectivity"(p.5). He continues "That 'truth is subjectivity' (Kierkegaard) does not mean that the object of faith is to be confounded with faith nor does it mean that the knowing subject construes the object out of, or ~~discovers~~ discovers the truth, in his own subjectivity"(p.6). J. Brown, Subject and Object in Modern Theology, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1955) writes concerning Kierkegaard's "feeling for the complete reality of the individual existing human being"(p.39) and emphasizes that, in Kierkegaard's thought, objectivity and subjectivity are "poles of a relation, not opposite realities in conflict"(p.46), stressing that "subjectivity in Kierkegaard is not the negation of objectivity"(p.52). M. Westphal, "Kierkegaard and the Logic of Insanity" in Religious Studies 7,

(September 1971), pp.193-211, emphasizes that, for Kierkegaard, the question of faith is the question of obedience, the opposite of faith is not doubt but sinful disobedience and the limitations of reason are primarily due to sin(pp.203-205, sources cited by Westphal). Westphal points out that Kierkegaard's concept of paradox is concerned not with formal self-contradiction but with being "against the common human understanding and its 'immanence thinking'"(pp.208-209). Pointing out that "Kierkegaard affirms that reality is a system for God"(p.207, source cited by Westphal), Westphal maintains that "however problematic he (Kierkegaard) may find theological claims..his affinities lie with the eschatological verificationists rather than with the non-cognitivists"(p.207, brackets mine). Comments made by Berkouwer, in his discussion of "Faith and Reasonableness"(A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, Chapter 6, pp.144-178), suggest that a constructive comparative study might be profitable. Distinguishing between "the foolishness and weakness of God in 1 Corinthians 1 and a positing of absurdity as the essential content of faith", Berkouwer points out that Kierkegaard never adopted the latter position(p.149). Citing A. McKinnon's view that Kierkegaard was not an irrationalist and that he did not teach an "objective paradox", Berkouwer writes, "We cannot go into the problem of Kierkegaard interpretation, but if McKinnon is right.." then proceeds to develop his discussion on the basis of a favourable evaluation of McKinnon's view(p.153ff.). Since Kierkegaard interpretation is not germane to the present study, "(w)e cannot go into Kierkegaard interpretation" in a detailed analysis in the main text though it is a matter which has interested the writer and merits comment here.

10. cf. W. Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology : Vol. I(Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970). The content of faith in Jesus "cannot consist simply in a particular understanding of human existence which is common to the New Testament writings, but would itself be independent of the historical Jesus"(p.149).
11. C. E. Braaten, History and Hermeneutics, p.14. While Braaten's point is appreciated, it is emphasized in the present discussion that revelation and reconciliation should be understood such that they are held together rather than set over against each other. As revelation and reconciliation reach man in his experience, believing man becomes aware that revelation has reconciliation as its content and reconciliation is experienced not as his own discovery but as revelation. The idea of revelation becomes depreciated only where it is related to man's intellect rather than to the whole man in his relation to God.
12. The Work of Christ, p.19.
13. The Person of Christ, pp.105-106.
14. p.110.
15. p.108.
16. p.110.
17. p. 108.
18. p.110.
19. Speaking of Scripture's specific intention, Berkouwer does not wish to deny the distinctiveness of different parts of Scripture and the consequent diversity which this brings to Scripture. He does not, however, adopt the scepticism which sees no fundamental unity within the diversity of the biblical writings. Holy Scripture, p.125 - concerning the intention of Scripture.
20. p.142.

21. p.125. Note especially reference to John 20:31.
22. p.49.
23. p.166. cf. J. C. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture : A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology, (Mack Publishing Company, Marlton, New Jersey, 1978), p.331 - "Scripture does not work rationally apart from the Spirit, and neither does the Spirit work mystically apart from the Scriptures."
24. Holy Scripture, p.333.
25. p.241.
26. p.32(underlining mine). It should not be supposed that Berkouwer himself has no doctrine of the infallibility of Scripture. His criticism is directed not against the notion of biblical infallibility as such but against a particular conception of infallibility - "a rationally developed infallibility".
27. cf. E.J. Young's Thy Word is Truth, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1963). Young's views are discussed more fully in the section entitled "Biblicism"(present study, pp.78-95). The principles underlying the selection of Young's position for inclusion in this discussion are stated in Chapter 4 n.141.
28. pp.29, 103.
29. p.266. Contrast Holy Scripture, p.349.
30. Holy Scripture, p.317 - Berkouwer speaks of the "completely fruitless" debate concerning "whether Scripture was also truly God's Word "before and apart from its use" or whether it became God's Word "only by its use". (cf. present study, p.82 for further comment). The reality of Scripture being God's Word is not to be set against the working of God through the words of Scripture. To make the 'is/becomes' dilemma the context for discussing Scripture is to make the dynamic aspect of truth (the powerful operation of the Spirit through the words of Scripture) a factor which is additional to the basic concept of truth, thus creating an unnecessary tension between two inter-related aspects of truth. cf. present study, pp.85-86.
31. Holy Scripture, p.180.
32. Contrast E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, p.108.
33. Holy Scripture, p.162. cf. p.163 and p.33, especially n.70.
34. p.162.
35. p.162 n.75.
36. p.165.
37. p.167.
38. p.24.
39. The kind of fundamentalism espoused by E.J. Young seeks "to do full justice to what the Bible has to say about its human side" (Thy Word is Truth, p.65) while maintaining that "Without Him (God) there could have been no Bible. Without men, however, there could have been a Bible."(p.79, brackets mine). Young rejects "a mechanical dictation theory"(p.65). When, however, he speaks of the possibility of a Bible being given by God"(w)ithout men", he is speaking of a hypothetical Bible which would be entirely different in character from the actual Bible. This type of hypothetical speech, even where it is used to emphasize the freedom of God's grace in giving Scripture in a particular way rather than in some other way, tends to point in the direction of a divine-human competition. It would, in view of the emphasis on the human side of Scripture, be inaccurate to say that Young's type of fundamentalism has been determined by a competition-motif. It would, however, be accurate to say that this kind of fundamentalism has been guided by a competition-motif(cf. present study, p.80 for further detail).

This distinction between "determined" and "guided" is not a matter of hair-splitting. Rather, it is an important distinction by which it becomes possible to observe both the biblicist attempt to do justice to the human side of Scripture and the tendency to set divine and human activity over against each other.

40. Holy Scripture, p.167.
41. p. 147 n.17; p.335.
42. "The God-Breathed Character of Holy Scripture"(Chapter 5, pp139-16).
43. p.180, 322.
44. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1974), p.136.
45. p.136. cf. Holy Scripture, pp.24-25.
46. p.136.
47. On the dust-cover of Holy Scripture, the following recommendation is given: "Freedom from fear is near to the very heart of the doctrine of Scripture worked out in this book."(inside, rear).
48. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.134. The conflict between 'conservatism' and 'liberalism' can be rather confusing as C. Van Til has observed, "Each will charge the other with imposing upon Scripture a system of interpretation derived from human experience as such instead of from Scripture"(cited in J.C. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture: A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology, p.225, source given by Vander Stelt.) This statement is cited in a discussion of the theologies of Van Til, Berkouwer, K. Barth and E. Brunner. Vander Stelt comments, "Assumed in this manner of formulating the problem is the validity of the competition problematics: interpretation is derived ~~either~~ from experience or from Scripture. In the latter case, interpretation itself is not thought of as being a part or expression of human experience!"(p.225, n.198(emphasis original). It is in his rejection of this competition motif - either Scripture or experience - that Berkouwer transcends "the extremes of both conservatism and liberalism" by relating Scripture and experience to each other in a helpfully constructive manner.
49. E. J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, p.163 - "The Bible..is infallible in all that it says, or we cannot be sure that it is infallible in anything".
50. J. C. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture, p.325. Concerning the doctrine of Scripture advocated by Young, Vander Stelt writes, "This emphasis on the supernatural origin of Scripture presupposes an erroneous way of thinking about the relationship between God and man's activities."(p.326).
51. cf. Vander Stelt's protest against "the formalized idea of truth that results in an equating of imprecision or incorrectness with lie and sin"(p.328; in a footnote to this statement Vander Stelt refers the reader to Berkouwer's work on Scripture. It is of interest to note that in "Acknowledgements"(p.vii), Vander Stelt writes, "I am particularly grateful to Professor G. C. Berkouwer, my teacher and (until the fall of 1977) my dissertation director, for showing me how to avoid many false problems, for helping me to take issue in love, and, most of all, for challenging me to be dogmologically excited about God's grace in Jesus Christ.") Vander Stelt contrasts the formalized idea of truth with biblical truth - "To maintain that Scripture's truth is always confessional, and not just theoretical, mathematical, geographical, or historical, does not relativize biblical truth in any way. In fact, not to maintain this confessional nature of scriptural truth jeopardizes the nature

of redemptive truth and undermines the incomparable normativity of Scripture."(p.334).

52. General Revelation, p.132. The term "creational revelation" is used in the present study with the same basic meaning as the term "general revelation" has in Berkouwer's thought.
53. p.15.
54. p.133.
55. Chapter II, pp.21-33.
56. p.21. Berkouwer, following Calvin, writes, "Only by distinguishing between general revelation and natural theology can we do justice to the message of Scripture."(p.153). For further discussion of this question, cf. present study, pp.96-100.
57. p.92; cf. p.25.
58. p.93.
59. p.30.
60. p.30.
61. Chapter VI, pp.117-134.
62. pp.128, 131. B. A. Demarest, General Revelation : Historical Views and Contemporary Issues, (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982) discusses Berkouwer's view of general revelation(pp.141-147) and concludes that Berkouwer shares Barth's "Christomonism as it relates to revelation"(p.147). The present writer holds that this is an inaccurate interpretation of Berkouwer and that it would be more accurate to say that Berkouwer shares Barth's protest against natural theology as a way of coming to a true knowledge of God. The interpretation given in pp.55-57 of the present study is, in the author's view, a more accurate interpretation of Berkouwer's view of general revelation.
63. p.26. This phrase is used by Berkouwer in an account of Barth's view(emphasis original). This does not imply precise agreement.
64. The Work of Christ, p.28. This point is made by Berkouwer in his favourable citation of Calvin's rejection of Osiander's idea of the "incarnation even without sin". Berkouwer points out that "he could not at all accept the separation of the incarnation as an "idea" from the historical connection among God's acts of salvation"(pp.25-26).
65. Holy Scripture, p.333.
66. The discussion of "Promise and Fulfillment" in The Person of Christ, (Chapter VII, pp.113-152) where Berkouwer is concerned with "the significance of the Old Testament"(p.113). He emphasizes that the New Testament views Christ as "the fulfillment of the entire Old Testament" which is regarded as "the great, historical, preparatory illumination of the coming redemption."(p.117).
67. Proclamation is used in a broad sense and is not to be confined to the restricted sphere of 'preaching' or 'pulpit ministry'.
68. Holy Scripture, p.344.
69. p.338.
70. General Revelation, p.31.
71. The affirmation of Christ's Saviourhood requires to be carefully distinguished from the idea of Jesus of Nazareth as a moral example and nothing more than that. For a helpful critique of the view which sees Jesus solely as a moral authority, cf. N.H.G. Robinson, The Groundwork of Christian Ethics, (Collins, London, 1971), pp.104-109. Robinson develops this argument in the direction of a critique of a religious teacher and no more than that view (pp.116-120). Robinson maintains that "He is not just a pioneer of faith but the object and content of faith, even if this object of

faith is given to men through a human career which is a veritable pattern of faith"(p.117).

72. Holy Scripture, p.57, Berkouwer favourably cites "Calvin's rejection of a spiritualism that makes great display of the superiority of the Spirit, but rejects all reading of Scripture itself".
73. The Return of Christ, p.132. Emphasizing that "(t)he tie between eschatological expectation and mission call is essential and indissoluble", Berkouwer insists that there can be "no distinction in this area between the "being" and the "well-being" of the church. It is a matter of the church's very being to turn towards the world".
74. Holy Scripture, p.289 - "the Spirit stands in opposition to the letter when it is severed from its intention and deep meaning, thus receiving a separate function opposed to the purpose of God".
75. J. C. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture, p.332.
76. p.332. "Through this Testimonium Spiritus Sancti, the believer can sense the religious meaning and fundamental relationships between the Biblos, Christos, and Logos". To this statement Vander Stelt provides this note : "The sequence of these terms denotes the cognitive soteriological priority of Scripture. This priority may not be confused with the ontic or chronological priority of the Logos"(P.332 n.105).
77. p.316 n.28. Vander Stelt defines knowing "religiously" in terms of "an all-encompassing, radically concentrated way, at the core of his being". He comments further, "Because God's Word is in a real sense more than merely the Scriptures, to understand the latter implies being conquered by and coming to stand under the compelling, Life-giving Spirit of the living Word of God. Such a person is enabled, then, to do the Truth, to walk in the Way, and to manifest real Life."(p.316). In the accompanying note(n.30), he writes, "Knowing the meaning of creation, fall, and redemption is heart-knowledge, not primarily analytical knowledge".

Footnotes to Chapter Four(Pages 60-117).

1. "Deism" is discussed by A. Richardson(The Editor) in A Dictionary of Christian Theology, (S.C. M. Press Ltd., London, 1969), pp.89-90. This phrase occurs on p.89. The reader should note the distinctive way in which the term 'deism' is used in the present study. There is no direct concern with the movement known historically as deism. There is no attempt to make any direct identification between the theology of Tillich and deism. The concern is more general - to analyze a tendency in modern theology to use a concept of God which threatens to relativise the absolute significance of Christ and the Scriptures for Christian theology. Hopefully, the rationale behind the use of the term 'deism' will become increasingly clear as the analysis progresses.
2. p.89.
3. The Providence of God, p.26.
4. A. Richardson, "Deism", A Dictionary of Christian Theology, p.90.
5. The Providence of God, p.26.
6. A. Richardson, "Deism", A Dictionary of Christian Theology, p.90.
7. The Providence of God, p.26.
8. p.26.
9. A. Richardson, "Deism", A Dictionary of Christian Theology, p.90.
10. p.90.

11. Systematic Theology, (The University of Chicago Press, Harper & Row Publishers; New York and Evanston; Three volumes in one, 1967), Vol. I, p.237.
12. Vol. I, p.262.
13. A. J. McKelway, The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich, A Review and Analysis, (Lutterworth Press, London, 1964), pp.140-141.
14. Systematic Theology, Vol. I, p.262. Hopefully, the strength of this type of criticism of Tillich's thought will become increasingly clear as the discussion progresses.
15. K. Hamilton, "Paul Tillich" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P. E. Hughes, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Second, revised edition, 1969), p.469.
16. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.165.
17. K. Hamilton, "Paul Tillich", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P. E. Hughes, p.473(emphasis original).
18. p.473.
19. A. Richardson, "Deism", A Dictionary of Christian Theology, p.89.
20. General Revelation, pp.145-154.
21. R.S. Anderson(editor), Theological Foundations for Ministry, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979), p.12.
22. General Revelation, pp.128-129.
23. The Providence of God, p.26.
24. p.26 (reference to World Wars).
25. D. G. Bloesch, The Crisis of Piety, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968), pp.95-124 for a useful comparative study of "Two Types of Spirituality", one of which (mystical devotion) "seeks a God beyond and outside of the personal" while the other(biblical personalism) emphasizes that "God is wholly personal and not less than personal nor above the personal"(p.122).
26. Psalm 8:4-6; Revelation 3:19.
27. Systematic Theology Vol. I, p.157.
28. Vol. I, pp.44-45.
29. K. Hamilton, Revolt Against Heaven : An Enquiry into Anti-Supernaturalism, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1965), p.163.
30. Systematic Theology, Vol.I, pp.238-239. The significance of this point should become increasingly clear as the present discussion progresses.
31. Vol. I, p.60.
32. K. Hamilton, "Paul Tillich", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p.475.
33. A. J. McKelway, The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich : A Review and Analysis, p.268.
34. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.159.
35. pp.7-9.
36. J. H. Thomas, Paul Tillich, (The Carey Kingsgate Press Ltd., London, 1965), p.13.
37. "Reviewing the Proofs", Christianity Today(March 30, 1959), p.54.
38. p.54.
39. L. Berkhof, Systematic Theology, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1958), p.168(brackets mine).
40. The Providence of God, p.211.
41. p.211.
42. Systematic Theology, Vol. I, p.21.
43. Vol. I, p.116.
44. Vol.I, p.262.

45. Vol. II, p.162.
46. Vol. II, pp.153-158. Tillich's view of the resurrection is analyzed closely in the present discussion.
47. The Providence of God, p.211.
48. p.216.
49. p.215.
50. p.215.
51. For Tillich's account of "God's sustaining creativity", Systematic Theology, Vol. I, pp.261-263.
52. The Providence of God, p.215.
53. p.212.
54. p.215(emphasis original).
55. p.214.
56. Systematic Theology, Vol.I, pp.18-28.
57. E. J. R. Cameron, "The Historical Problem in Paul Tillich's Christology" in Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.18, No.3, September 1965, p.272.
58. K. Hamilton, "Paul Tillich", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P. E. Hughes, pp.452-453.
59. Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.65.
60. Vol.I, p.65.
61. Vol.I, p.120(emphasis original).
62. Vol.II, p.155.
63. Vol.II, p.9.
64. Vol.II, p.11.
65. K. Hamilton, "Paul Tillich", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P. E. Hughes, p.474.
66. Systematic Theology, Vol.II, pp.156-157.
67. Vol.II, p.157.
68. Vol.II, p.157(underlining mine).
69. Vol.II, p.157.
70. Vol.II, p.153.
71. Vol.I, p.120.
72. Vol.I, p.120.
73. Vol.II, p.157.
74. Vol.II, p.165.
75. Vol.II, p.153.
76. The Work of Christ, p.181.
77. p. 200 n.21.
78. E. J. R. Cameron, "The Historical Problem in Paul Tillich's Christology", p.272.
79. p.264.
80. This phrase is an English translation of Schleiermacher's words, "das schlechthinnige Abhängigkeitsgefühl". Developing his discussion of Schleiermacher's view from the words of Schleiermacher in The Christian Faith, p.12, C. Brown, using the word "sense" rather than "feeling"(p.111 n.1) draws a parallel between Schleiermacher and Tillich. Comparing Schleiermacher's idea of the "sense of absolute dependence" and Tillich's idea of "ultimate concern", Brown maintains that both have attempted "to cut away from both biblical theology and the older natural theology in favour of an analysis of religious experience"(p.114, underlining original). Brown comments, "Not far beneath the skin of Tillich's 'bearer of the New Being'..is the early-nineteenth-century Christ of Schleiermacher"(p.115). Noting that both Schleiermacher and Tillich approach the Christian faith in the light of their own general world-view, armed with "certain rigid principles of interpretation", Brown writes, "In evaluating their work, it is

important that they should be judged not only by what they put in but also by what they leave out."(p.116, underlining mine). This is precisely the point being made at this stage in the present study. Quotations from G. Brown, Philosophy and the Christian Faith, (Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1969), the section on Schleiermacher, pp.108-116. This book also contains a section on Tillich, pp.192-200.

81. 'Commitment' can be dissociated from faith's content in different ways. An obvious example is Marxist commitment(cf. present study pp.266-293 for further discussion of the relationship between Christianity and Marxism). An example of 'religious' commitment which is dissociated from faith's content is Bultmann's demythologized version of the gospel. G. Brown writes, "there are times when Bultmann speaks with eloquence and insight on the choices before man and his need to commit himself. But it is never really clear to what Bultmann is inviting us to commit ourselves. So often it seems to be a blind trust in a message which Bultmann himself has been at pains to show to be untrustworthy. For Bultmann, the resurrection of Christ 'is utterly inconceivable' as a historical fact..Yet..Paul wrote..'If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.' It is only by a most curious piece of double-think that Bultmann can make the preaching of the cross and resurrection of Christ the means of our self-understanding and the way to authentic existence"(p.190; "Bultmann",pp.185-191).
82. T. Dowley(Organizing Editor), Eerdman's Handbook to the History of Christianity, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977), p.489(in "Reason and Unreason", C. Brown).
83. p.491(in "The Reasonableness of Christianity", J.R. Moore).
84. The present study emphasizes that the proper alternative to a purely intellectualist notion of certainty is not an approach which sets other aspects of man's experience over against the emphasis on intellectual assent. This procedure leads, in the author's view, to an understanding which represents a partial perspective on both divine redemption and human response.
85. Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.243.
86. Vol.I, p.243.
87. Vol.I, p.243.
88. T. Dowley(ed.), Eerdman's Handbook to the History of Christianity (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), p.489.
89. The expression 'ontological truth' is used in the sense of "Whatever is, is true".
90. e.g. P. Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol.II, p.117.
91. Vol.II, p.44.
92. Vol.II, p.31.
93. Vol.II, p.44.
94. Vol.II, p.29.
95. Vol.II, p.44.
96. Vol.II, p.45.
97. Vol.I, p.64.
98. This is not deny that Tillich has provided insightful expositions relating to divine forgiveness(e.g."You are accepted", The Shaking of the Foundations, (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1949), pp.155-165; "To whom much is forgiven...", The New Being, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1956),pp.3-14). It is, however, to maintain that Tillich's treatment of sin and forgiveness is inadequate. cf. N. F. S. Ferre, "Three Critical Issues in Tillich's Philosophical Theology", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.10,

- No.3, September 1957, p.233 - "We can participate in Reality, adjust ourselves to It by powers inherent in It and available to us, but God never literally acts on our behalf(e.g. forgiving our sins)". Ferré then states that he believes that "Christian supernaturalism" is "not only religiously but also intellectually more adequate" than the idea that "an impersonal unconditional is ultimate".(underlining and brackets mine).
99. Systematic Theology, Vol.II, p.44.
100. Vol.II, p.44.
101. Sin, Chapter Two, pp.27-66.
102. Systematic Theology, Vol.II, p.47.
103. Vol.III, p.225.
104. Vol.II, p.47 - "sin is conquered because estrangement is overcome by reunion"; Vol.III, p.226, Tillich speaks of "the infinite divine goodness, which is beyond good and bad and which gives itself without conditions and ambiguities" and maintains that "(t)he courage to surrender one's own goodness to God is the central element in the courage of faith. In it the paradox of the New Being is experienced, the ambiguity of good and evil is conquered, unambiguous life has taken hold of man through the impact of the Spiritual Presence".(underlining mine).
105. Sin, p.14(emphasis original).
106. p.146(emphasis original).
107. p.384(emphasis original).
108. Faith and Justification, pp.184-185.
109. Systematic Theology, Vol.II, pp.29-44(Section entitled "The Transition from Essence to Existence and the Symbol of "The Fall"").
110. Vol.II, p.41("in" - emphasis original; "absurd" - underlining mine).
111. Vol.II, p.40.
112. Vol.II, p.109(underlining mine). Tillich rejects the idea of Christ as "a half-god, a particular being between God and man" (p.109). Tillich's attack on an absurd story must, however, be set in the context of Christian theology which has not taught that Christ is to be regarded as a half-god, a being which is neither God nor man. e.g. D.M. Baillie, God was in Christ: An Essay on Incarnation and Atonement, (Faber and Faber Limited, London, 1956) - "Jesus was not something between God and Man: He was God and Man"(p.80, emphasis original); G.C. Berkouwer, The Person of Christ, p.31 n.15 cites Baillie, p.96-7, "the Christian doctrine of Incarnation ..has always found in the life of Jesus on earth God and man in simultaneous union - the Godhead 'veiled in flesh' but not changed into humanity"(emphasis Baillie's). "Simultaneous union" does not mean "half-god"!
113. N.F.S. Ferré, "Three Critical Issues in Tillich's Philosophical Theology", p.237(emphasis original); cf. Systematic Theology, Vol.II, pp.94-95.
114. Systematic Theology, Vol.II, p.158.
115. Vol.II, p.158(underlining mine).
116. P. Tillich, The Interpretation of History, Part I translated by N.A. Rasetzki, Parts II-IV translated by E.L. Talney, (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p.34.
117. The Person of Christ, pp.34-35.
118. Luke 1:1-4; 1John 1:1-3; 2 Peter 1:16.

119. The gospel writers did not use a form of historiography which follows the rules of modern historical criticism. This point is made by Berkouwer who writes, "In its historiography, Scripture follows "its own direction and purpose." The sacred story is religious history which does not offer "that kind of accuracy which we often desire.", Holy Scripture, pp.243-244. This does not, however, demand the positing of a radical contrast between 'the biblical picture of the Christ' and 'the historical Jesus'. This is emphasized by Berkouwer who rejects "an absolute contrast between kerygma and that which happened" (p.247, citing H.N. Ridderbos). Opposing a false objectivism, Berkouwer writes, "If absolute preciseness and exactness is seen as the ideal, excluding all interpretive subjectivity, in order to render "facts" as objectively as possible, we must conclude that the Gospels do not coincide with this ideal and therefore are not reliable..Even if we are aware of the problems posed by the connection between event and interpretation, we may not withdraw into the postulate of an historiography that separates story from interpretation for the sake of objectivity"(pp.248-249, underlining original). Opposing an a-historical interpretation of the gospels, Berkouwer writes that the recognition of "a freedom in composing and expressing the mystery of Christ" must not be set over against the observation that "(w)hat happened is decisive for all evangelists"(p.252).
120. Holy Scripture, p.254, citing Kittel-Friedrich(ed), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol.IV, p.786.
121. The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich : A Review and Analysis, by A.J. McKelway, p.100.
122. Acts 2:32; cf. McKelway, p.99.
123. C.H. Pinnock, "On the Third Day" in C.F.H. Henry(editor), Jesus of Nazareth : Saviour and Lord, (The Tyndale Press, London, 1966), p.155.
124. p.148. cf. The Truth of God Incarnate, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1977), edited by Michael Green, p.130(from the article, "Jesus and Historical Scepticism" by M. Green, pp.106-139).
125. Systematic Theology, Vol.II, p.108.
126. C.H. Pinnock, "On the Third Day" in C.F.H. Henry(editor), Jesus of Nazareth : Saviour and Lord, p.155.
127. p.150(emphasis original).
128. p.151(emphasis original).
129. Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.262.
130. Vol.I, p.116.
131. Holy Scripture, p.20(emphasis original).
132. Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.7.
133. Vol.I, p.7.
134. cf. J. Daane, The Freedom of God : A Study of Election and Pulpit, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1973), p.74.
135. C. H. Pinnock, "On the Third Day" in C. F. H. Henry(editor), Jesus of Nazareth : Saviour and Lord, p.152.
136. p.150.
137. Tillich seeks to avoid "the danger of religious objectification" by emphasizing that God "precedes the subject-object structure" (Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.172). While Tillich's attempt to avoid the kind of 'objectivity' which is devoid of subjectivity(Vol.I, p.173) can be appreciated, it must be stressed that the endeavour to understand subject-object relations does not, of itself, guarantee that the gospel is

rightly understood. The question arises whether Tillich, in his concern with emphasizing the uniqueness of God, has not undermined the uniqueness of the gospel by demanding that it conform to his particular interpretation of the relationship between objectivity and subjectivity.

138. Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, p.56.

139. p.49.

140. p.84.

141. It is hoped that the strength and the precise meaning of this contention becomes ^{clearer} as the present discussion develops. A word of explanation is ^A required concerning the scope of this analysis. The approach taken requires to be carefully distinguished from that of J. Barr, Fundamentalism, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1977). The present writer refrains from describing 'fundamentalism' as "a pathological ^(mine) condition of Christianity"(p.5)! He is concerned less with negative criticism than with a constructive approach to the doctrine of Scripture (much of Barr's book is negative in tone - the closest Barr comes to stating clearly his own doctrine of Scripture is, in the present author's view, to be found on pp.287-289). The present author has carefully avoided the tendency to group Inter-Varsity Press publications together without sufficient attention to the distinctive emphases of individual authors (Barr(p.20) does not explicitly do this though there is a definite tendency in this direction). Some of Berkouwer's books have been made available in U.K. by I.V.P.. It is clear from his Holy Scripture that his doctrine of Scripture would have to be carefully distinguished from the 'fundamentalism' criticized by Barr. The importance of making careful distinctions may be emphasized with reference to the writings of the two theologians to whom special attention is given in the present discussion - E.J. Young and H. Lindsell. These writers have been specially chosen for consideration in the present study because they, in the author's view, fit the description of 'fundamentalism' given by Berkouwer more precisely than other writers with whom the author is acquainted.

(a) Young - The position taken by Young (Thy Word is Truth, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1963) is not carefully distinguished by Barr from that of R.K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament, (Tyndale Press, London, 1970). It should, however, be pointed out that Harrison writes concerning "the true meaning of infallibility", "This will need careful examination if it is not to go beyond what the Bible actually claims for itself in this regard. Here Scripture makes it explicit that its testimony to the saving revelation and redemption of God in Christ is reliable, and that it furnishes an authoritative norm of faith and conduct for the believer"(p.475). This view requires to be carefully distinguished from the view of Young who resolutely resists the idea that infallibility should be defined only in terms of faith and practice ("Is the Bible Infallible Only in Faith and Practice?"(pp.99-103)).

(b) Lindsell - J. Packer, Under God's Word, (Lakeland, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 1980) reviews H. Lindsell, The Bible in the Balance, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979). In this review (pp.142-146), Packer, who describes himself as an 'inerrantist' (p.146), makes some perceptive criticisms of Lindsell's approach - "Lindsell almost (not quite) implies that you don't believe in inerrancy unless you interpret all Scripture as he does..One wishes he had somewhere highlighted that in all the

communications which made up the history of revelation God accommodated himself to the historical and cultural situation of the human speaker and hearer. This does not mean that what God said was culture-bound in the sense of not applying universally, but that in applying it cultural and historical differences must be borne in mind and no interpretation unrelated to what was being conveyed to the first addressees can be right.. his argument..would gain much by reangling. For(a) what is centrally and basically at stake..is the functioning of Scripture as our authority, the medium of God's authority, for faith and life. Inerrancy is basic to authority, inasmuch as what is not true cannot claim authority in any respectable sense..Lindsell nowhere focuses on biblical authority as that for the sake of which he fights the inerrancy battle. For (b) lacking this reference-point, he makes himself appear as an evangelical(or should I say, fundamentalist) scholastic, doing theology as it were by numbers, concerned only to maintain the frozen finality of some traditional formulations of the doctrine of the nature of Scripture - and that is to make this whole discussion seem a great deal less important than it really is.. it really is important that we inerrantists move on to crystallize an a posteriori hermeneutic which does full justice to the character and content of the infallible written word as communication, life-embracing and divinely authoritative. Otherwise we could win "the battle for the Bible" and still lose the greater battle for the knowledge of Christ and of God in our churches, and in men's hearts."(pp.145-146).

The above quotations are given in order to indicate that the present analysis is not intended as an indiscriminately critical analysis which pays little attention to differences in emphasis. The concern is less with the people as with the issues. The concern is not primarily with negative criticism of particular writers(or by general implication, of a wider range of writers). Rather, it is to develop a constructive approach to the place of Scripture within the total context of divine revelation. The author has been interested to note that writers such as C. Pinnock and B. Ramm, generally associated with biblicism, have shown clear appreciation of the approach adopted by Berkouwer (Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers, (Word Books, Publisher Waco, Texas, 1977), "Three Views of the Bible in Contemporary Theology", C. Pinnock, pp.47-73; "Is "Scripture alone" the Essence of Christianity?", B. Ramm, pp.107-123. Of particular interest is Pinnock's statement concerning Berkouwer's Holy Scripture - "It will doubtless stand for years as the most complete defense of the full authority of Holy Writ, and will also help to carry the evangelical discussion on inspiration forward and lead it to a higher level."(Inside/Front Cover of Holy Scripture)). The 'ideal type' methodology is used here to analyse the dangers of a rather one-sided doctrine of revelation and to stress the importance of a more comprehensive doctrine of revelation. Since the term 'biblicism' is used as a hypothetical construct, no single writer's views are to be identified directly and unambiguously with this term as it is used here. The writings of Young and Lindsell come closer to this 'ideal type' than any writers read by the author. Comments made with reference to the writings of Lindsell and Young should not be extended indiscriminately to the writings of others who have, in the author's view, shown a greater awareness of the complex-

- ity of the issues involved in the formulation of a doctrine of Scripture.
142. Holy Scripture, pp.18-19. The use of the term 'docetic' is not directly bound up with the christological analogy; "Whatever we may think of the analogy between the doctrine of Scripture and Christology, a form of Docetism can enter the discussion of the former"(p.18, underlining mine).
143. p.23.
144. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, p.67.
145. p.65. To use the terminology of the manifest function(consequences intended and recognized by the system) - latent function (consequences neither intended nor recognized by the system) paradigm used in sociology(cf. Fifty Key Words : Sociology, edited by D. Martin, (Lutterworth Press, London, 1970), p.31)), one might say that the manifest function of the biblicist doctrine of Scripture is to draw attention to the divine-human character of Scripture while its latent function is to emphasize the divine aspect with the human aspect being taken with less seriousness than it demands.
146. For an example of this type of harmonization, cf. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, Chapters 5 and 6. For a critique of this procedure, cf. J. Barr, Fundamentalism, pp.55-72. Barr's general critique of fundamentalism has been described by I.H. Marshall, Biblical Inspiration, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1982) as "shrewd, wide-ranging and(it must be confessed) sometimes intemperate"(p.11). The present study seeks to take seriously Barr's critique of fundamentalism while avoiding its intemperate element in the analysis of biblicism.
147. Holy Scripture, p.18.
148. cf. Chapter 2, note 54, present study.
149. The Work of Christ, p.15.
150. It should be noted that, in Berkouwer's writings, there is a continuous interaction with the history of theology - its confessions, creeds and major theological writings - as well as with the Scriptures.
151. The Person of Christ, p.96.
152. This characteristic of Berkouwer's writings is most valuable.
153. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, gives quotations from various theologians from different times in church history at the outset of most of his chapters. These statements are neither accompanied by any explanatory comment nor set in any historical context.
154. J. Rogers, "The Church Doctrine of Biblical Authority" in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers interprets the history of the church's teaching concerning the authority of Scripture quite differently from Young(pp.15-46). However one evaluates Rogers' interpretation of historical theology(J. Packer is critical in his review of The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible : an Historical Approach, (Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1979) which Rogers co-wrote with D.K. McKim.), it is important that historical theology is discussed properly and not used in a loose and selective way to support one's one viewpoint. (Packer's review is printed in Under God's Word, pp.146-151.)
155. The concern to be biblical stated in E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, pp.17, 65, 94 is shared by Berkouwer. This should not be obscured as differences of biblical interpretation are discussed.
156. Holy Scripture, p.181(underlining and brackets mine). Berkouwer

- rejects "the formalization of inerrancy"(p.181, underlining mine), "a mechanical, inflexible "inerrancy""(p.265, underlining mine), "a rationally developed infallibility"(p.32, underlining mine). He does, however, seek to interpret both infallibility and inerrancy positively when he writes, "the Holy Spirit..does not lead us into error but into the pathways of truth..The Spirit, with this special concern, has not failed and will not fail in this mystery of God-breathed Scripture" (pp.265-266). In view of Berkouwer's criticism of a wrong use of both terms and his attempt to interpret both terms positively, the author begs to differ from J. Packer, Under God's Word, pp. 53-56 and C.F.H. Henry, God, Revelation and Authority, Vol.IV, God who speaks and shows : Fifteen Theses, Part Three, (Word Books, Publisher, Waco, Texas, 1979), pp.189-190, both of whom maintain that Berkouwer prefers the term 'infallibility' to the term 'inerrancy'. This infallibility - inerrancy distinction, as it is understood by Packer and Henry, does not, in the author's view, provide a useful key to the accurate interpretation of Berkouwer's thought. It would be more accurate to hold that where these terms derive their meaning from biblicist rationalism, they are both unacceptable to Berkouwer. Neither term is, in Berkouwer's view, unintelligible apart from the presuppositions of biblicist rationalism. Both can be interpreted in a context which is not dependent on biblicist rationalism. It is precisely this that Berkouwer seeks to do.
157. p.183.
158. p.183(brackets mine; it is this notion that Berkouwer opposes, i.e. the identification of inerrancy with correctness).
159. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, p.7; cf."The Chicago Statement on biblical inerrancy", Article XVI - "We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history. We deny that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism" (cited from Themelios, Vol.4, No.3, New Series, April 1979, p.106).
160. Holy Scripture, p.24. The question of the interpretation of the historical origins of the fundamentalist movement, with the accompanying question, Is this the time-honoured doctrine of Scripture or not?, is complex and stretches beyond the confines of the present study which restricts itself to the interpretation of Scripture rather than discussing the historical issue.
161. p.19. This phrase is used in a discussion of H. Bavinck's view. Bavinck rejected the competition-motif. Berkouwer points out that, for Bavinck, the human character is "of the utmost importance for a deeper understanding of Holy Scripture"(p.19).
162. p.33 n.70(brackets mine).
163. Despite biblicism's recognition of the human character of Scripture, it can be demonstrated that, as it argues for its doctrine, the supernatural - natural dichotomy becomes an important part of the argument. Attention is drawn in the present discussion to the way in which E.J. Young uses this type of argument in his Thy Word is Truth. Young turns to the Bible "to discover what it has to say of itself"(p.40). It is questionable, however, whether Young's view is not grounded in a notion which tends to set divine and human activity over against each other rather than in any clear biblical teaching on the matter. Although Young rejects a mechanical theory of inspiration(p.65), his own view is really no more than a modification of this view(pp.

79-80 : Young's interpretation of the working of the Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture is not directly identifiable with mechanical dictation though it does contain a tendency to move in that direction.) Critical of this position, Vander Stelt maintains that, in view of "Scripture's unique and indispensable function" to point sinners to Christ, "the believer is challenged to confess the infallibility or trustworthiness of what God has done and is doing in Jesus Christ and through the Spirit", to confess and not to speculate about "that to which theopneustic Scripture refers"(pp.327-328, Philosophy and Scripture : A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology, (Mack Publishing Company, Marlton, New Jersey, 1978). According to Vander Stelt, Scripture is miraculous not in the sense that Young asserts but in the sense that "man's words have been legitimized by God in such a way that, through the Spirit, they can be heard as the authoritative Word of God"(p.329). (theopneustic - underlining original)

164. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, p.79 (brackets mine).
165. p.40.
166. p.23 (brackets mine).
167. p.73.
168. p.123 (brackets mine).
169. p.99.
170. pp.99-103. Discussion of the question, "Is the Bible infallible only in faith and practice?". Young does not suggest that the Bible is a textbook on geography or geology. He does say that when the Bible speaks on such matters, it speaks infallibly (p.103). cf. "The Chicago Statement on biblical inerrancy", Article XII : "We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science." This statement should be interpreted in the light of the further statement (XIII) - "We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to the standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational description of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations."! When a statement such as this is taken into account, the precise definition of inerrancy becomes a matter of drawing the line concerning matters of interpretation and issues concerning authority. When the Chicago Statement is compared with the view of Berkouwer, the major issue depends not so much on particular matters concerning the extent of inerrancy but on the general question of what is Scripture's "usage or purpose". When this is recognized, the central issue becomes the nature rather than the extent of inerrancy since both affirm not a limited trustworthiness of Scripture but a full trustworthiness of Scripture according to the purpose of God in Scripture. When this is appreciated, Berkouwer's view will be recognized as an interpretation rather than a denial of the reliability of Scripture.
171. Holy Scripture, p. 190.
172. p.190.
173. p.194 (emphasis original).
174. p.190 (underlining mine).

175. Verontrusting en Verantwoordelijkheid (Concern and Responsibility), (J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1969), p.119 (cited in Westminster Theological Journal, (33 : pp.73-80), Review by L. Praasma.
176. Divine Election, p.15. This principle is used to guard against both an objectivism which tends to impose a system on Scripture where Scripture is less systematic than advocates of the system might wish and a subjectivism which tends to make a norm of its own interpretation of human subjectivity rather than receiving the instruction of the Scriptures concerning human subjectivity in the light of the gospel.
177. p.18 (Underlining mine).
178. Holy Scripture, p.125 where Berkouwer cites John 20:31, Romans 15:4, Romans 4:23-24, 1 Corinthians 10:11, 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 Timothy 1:18-19.
179. p.125.
180. p.142.
181. p.142.
182. pp.140-141. E.J. Young makes the same point in Thy Word is Truth, p.20. The difference between Young and Berkouwer does not lie at this point but at the point of interpreting how this activity of God relates to the activity of the human writers.
183. Holy Scripture, p.143 (emphasis original). This emphasis on the deep relationship between origin and authority reminds one of the title of B.E. Warfield's major work on Scripture - The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1948), edited by Samuel G. Craig and Introduction by Cornelius van Til. The difference between Berkouwer and Warfield lies not at the point of emphasizing the unbreakable connection between origin and authority but at the point in which divine and human activity are related to each other. Both Berkouwer and Warfield emphasize the divinity and the humanity of the Scriptures. Their different interpretation of the relationship between Scripture's divine and human aspects is closely related to their different interpretation of the boundaries set by Scripture for theological reflection. The present study emphasizes that the decisive question for both Berkouwer and the biblicism opposed by him is, What does the Bible teach? The present study proceeds on the basis of this question, holding that the Bible has a unity within its diversity which makes it legitimate to ask the question in this general way. It should be borne in mind in the present analysis of biblicism that differences in precise interpretation should not be permitted to obscure the shared concern with affirming biblical authority.
184. pp.317-318 (emphasis original). cf. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, pp.22-23. Though Berkouwer and Young oppose subjectivism differently, it should be noted that they are united in their concern with opposing subjectivism.
185. Holy Scripture, p.318.
186. p.185.
187. p.318.
188. p.317.
189. p.317.
190. G.W. Bromiley, reviewing Berkouwer's Holy Scripture in Christianity Today, (November 21, 1975; XX, 4, pp.42-45) poses the question, "Why should not the scope or intent be culture bound as well? Why should anything in Scripture be relevant to this age and place when all of it was written for other ages and places?" (p.44). He comments further - "there seems to be no way that Berkouwer can prevent others from using his distinction along the lines of

Harnack's husk-and-kernel procedure or Bultmann's demythologizing."(p.44). It might be noted that questions of a similar type might be addressed to "the Chicago Statement on biblical inerrancy" - e.g. If the concept of inerrancy requires to be qualified in so many ways, why should it be retained in the form which includes assertions in the fields of history and science as well as redemptive themes? If the concept of inerrancy is to be qualified in so many ways, how are we to know where to draw the line between questions of interpretation and questions of authority? Concerning Berkouwer's theological method, it should be noted that (a) he carefully avoids setting an existentialist interpretation of man's existence over against the historical character of the gospel; (b) he carefully avoids a preoccupation with how we are to understand Scripture at the expense of listening to what Scripture says ("The Words of the Word", Christianity Today, "Current Religious Thought", July 28, 1972, (XVI, 21, p.42)); (c) he carefully avoids "all hard-hearted vivisection of the Bible" which does not subject itself to the authority of the message of Scripture (Christianity Today, "Current Religious Thought", VIII, 22, p.48). When Berkouwer's emphasis on the scope or intent of Scripture is set in the full context of his approach to Scripture, it may be regarded as providing clearer guidelines for the interpretation of Scripture than is suggested by Bromiley's remark which, though it may appear shrewd, tends to lift a single aspect of Berkouwer's thought out of its total context.

191. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, pp.18-26(2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21); pp.26-27(John 10:35); pp.48-49(Matthew 5:17-18).
192. p.73.
193. p. 123.
194. Holy Scripture, p.32.
195. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, p.113. Berkouwer would accept this statement though he would interpret it differently from Young. Concerning the authority of Scripture, J.A. Taylor writes, in the Presbyterian Journal, April 12, 1978, on the question, "Must the Bible be an Infallible Book?"(pp.7-9)(Cited in J. Packer, Under God's Word, pp.60-61), "The lively issue of Bible inerrancy today is very little a matter of whether one can or cannot find contradictions in the Bible. It is very much a matter of how respectfully one is prepared to treat the material found in the pages of Holy Writ....One does not pray, "God, help me to resolve the seeming contradictions I have found in the Bible." One rather prays, "God, help me to receive Thy Word wholly, unquestioningly, obediently. Let me make it indeed and altogether the lamp unto my feet and the light unto my pathway". (emphasis original). Packer makes a one-word comment on Taylor's words - "Amen!"(p.61).
196. Holy Scripture, p.302.
197. p.175(emphasis original).
198. p.264(underlining mine), cf. Chicago Statement(Article XIII).
199. p.265.
200. pp.240-241.
201. pp.265-266.
202. p.266(underlining mine).
203. The phrase "escape from reason" was suggested to the author by the title of F. Schaeffer's book, "Escape From Reason, (Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London, 1968). The author agrees with Schaeffer when he writes, "It is not a question of God revealing Himself in Jesus Christ only, because

there is not enough content in this if it is separated from the Scriptures. It then becomes only another contentless banner, for all we know of what that revelation was comes from the Scriptures. Jesus Himself did not make a distinction between His authority and the authority of the written Scriptures. He acted upon the unity of His authority and the content of the Scriptures."(p.83). The present writer would be careful not to understand the nature of biblical authority such that matters of interpretation tend to be elevated to the level of issues concerning authority. Schaeffer rightly criticizes the modern tendency to set autonomous reason over against biblical authority : "People judge the Bible, the Word of God, and try to tell God what should be in the Bible and what shouldn't. They judge what they think is acceptable to the twentieth century, and what is not!"(F. and E. Schaeffer, Everybody Can Know, (Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1973), p.101). The present writer would insist that this comment must be directed not only towards critical rationalism but also towards a conservative rationalism which tends to be rather bold in its assertions concerning what the Bible must be if it is to be the Word of God(cf. present study, pp.134-135). Both types of rationalism require to take seriously Berkouwer's words : "People have dealt with the Bible like a student preparing for an examination....But the Bible will not let itself be used in this manner."("Hearing and Doing the Word" in Christianity Today, (Current Religious Thought), October 28, 1966, (XI, 2, p.64).

204. cf. present study, pp.89-94.

205. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, p.238.

206. pp.238-239.

207. p.202 n.4.

208. For a helpful discussion cf. C. Pinnock, "Biblical Authority in Conservative Evangelical Theology" in J. Rogers(editor), Biblical Authority, pp.60-70.

209. A. W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God, (Marshall, Morgan & Scott Ltd., London, 1961), p.73(also included in W.W. Wiersbe(compiler), The Best of Tozer, (Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1978), p.20). In the Introduction to The Pursuit of God, S.M. Zwemer writes that there is, in Tozer's thought, "a catholicity of outlook that is refreshing"(p.6).

210. p.75(p.21).

211. p.81(p.25).

212. p.81(p.26).

213. p.81(p.26).

214. pp.81-82(p.26).

215. p.73(p.20).

216. p.82(p.26).

217. p.82(p.26).

218. In his General Revelation, Berkouwer emphasizes that "general and special revelation do not stand..opposite each other..in a relationship of..competition(the natural and the supernatural).. they find their unity in the sovereign activity of God"(p.292). Seeking to avoid the devaluation of general revelation, he favourably cites F.W.A.Korff(sources given by Berkouwer) who insists that ""Revelation..(as such) will no doubt always be special"..revelation..always..is personal"(p.293 and p.293 n. 21). In general revelation, men are confronted with "the living and personal God who reveals himself sovereignly and mightily" (p.293). It is this continuous speaking of God which antedates

the Bible. Thus, Berkouwer writes, "the particular revelation in Christ is never the revelation of God, who..now for the first time is concerned with the world"(p.304). He maintains that while God is continuously speaking, there is a "concealment" which operates "in and through non-receptivity" (p.304) and which is only overcome when "in the particular revelation in Jesus Christ the way is again opened to us whereby we know God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, in his universal doings."(p.306). In his Holy Scripture, he speaks of "problems (which) begin to arise when Scripture is lifted out of its context..(when) the living Word is seen as the opposite of the frozen, rigid Word" with this comment : "A dualism of this kind is..not only unbiblical but also unnatural..the written Word..is related to the living message both in origin and in aim"(p.334) in "a perspective that is not locked in the past, but one in which the future is embraced and disclosed through the Spirit"(p.344).

219. Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, p.14(emphasis mine). The key emphases of Holy Scripture are found in this book.
220. p.14.
221. Holy Scripture, p.162(underlining mine). This statement occurs as a favourable citation of H. Bavinck's view.
222. p.344.
223. Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, p.14.
224. p.14.
225. p.14.
226. Holy Scripture, p.349(underlining mine).
227. B. Ramm, "Is "Scripture Alone" the Essence of Christianity?" in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers, p.116.
228. J.C. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture, A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology, p.309, detects the latter tendency in "the Princeton conception of revelation" though he does make an exception of G. Van Til(p.309 n.7; cf. General Revelation,p.312 where Berkouwer draws attention to Van Til's article "Nature and Scripture" in The Infallible Word(A Symposium by the Members of the Faculty at Westminster Theological Seminary), (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Third Revised Printing, 1967), pp.263-301 : Berkouwer used the 1946 edition while the present writer used the 1967 edition. Van Til's article remained unchanged(Preface to the Third Revised Printing)). The fact that The Infallible Word is issued in the name of Westminster Theological Seminary suggests that any generalized criticism of "the Princeton(and Westminster) conception of revelation"(brackets mine) of the kind made by Vander Stelt should be made cautiously. As a matter of emphasis, general revelation has not been prominent in the writings of this theological school. Any observation based on the fact that Van Til's placed at the end of the book in contrast to G.F.H. Henry, Revelation and the Bible, (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1959) which begins with Berkouwer's article, "General and Special Divine Revelation"(pp.11-24) must recognize that observations relating to order are outweighed by the fact that Van Til's article is included and not excluded. However one evaluates the Princeton - Westminster view as it relates to general revelation, the point of the present discussion is that Scripture may not be treated as though it were the entirety of divine revelation without an impoverishment of theological understanding. cf. Vander Stelt on Van Til(pp220-270).

229. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture, p.305.
230. B. Ramm, "Is "Scripture Alone" the Essence of Christianity?" in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers, p.117(my underlining).
231. cf. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture, p.331.
232. Holy Scripture, p.182.
233. p.182(brackets mine).
234. p.182.
235. p.182.
236. p.191(citing H. Bavinck; brackets mine).
237. p.180.
238. p.180.
239. p.180. This statement is motivated by a concern with emphasizing the particular purpose of the Scriptures rather than with any uncritical attitude towards all that is said in the name of science. For further discussion of science, cf. present study, p.126 where it is maintained that there is no direct connection between science and atheism; pp.139-142 where the unity of knowledge is maintained.
240. H. Lindsell, The Battle for the Bible, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976), p.18. The volume Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers is a direct response to Lindsell's book. On its front cover(dust-cover) are found these words, "Turn Your Bible from a Battlefield into a Source for Spiritual Strength". In its foreword entitled "Embattlement or Understanding?" by P. Rees, attention is drawn to the contrasting interpretations of Warfield and Berkouwer(pp.9-10, 13). Rees writes helpfully, "is it not right to say that there is a difference between the evangelical attitude toward the Bible and an evangelical's views about the Bible? Go back to Warfield and Berkouwer. Their views of how to construe the Bible's matchless revelatory quality and authority are not precisely the same..But their attitude toward the Bible is identical - God's Word that shines in our world's darkness, the unerring pointer to the One "who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven...." (p.13, underlining original).
241. p.18.
242. p.18.
243. p.18.
244. p.25.
245. B. Mickelsen, "The Bible's Own Approach to Authority" in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers, pp.84, 87(emphasis original).
246. Holy Scripture, p.181.
247. p.127. cf. p.183.
248. cf. J. Barr, Fundamentalism, pp.53, 55.
249. p.55. cf. D. Hubbard, Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers. In his article, "The Current Tensions : Is There a Way Out?", Hubbard writes, "The false alternatives often posed between biblical inerrancy and biblical errancy are not themselves biblical choices. They are imposed from without in a way that tries to force the Bible to give answers that God, who inspired the Book, apparently had no intention of giving."(p.168). This statement is illustrated by Hubbard's helpful note - "The recent interplay between Harold Lindsell and Robert Mounce illustrates my point that the key issue among evangelicals is not errancy or inerrancy, but what do we mean by error? Lindsell baits Mounce in a letter to Eternity(November 1976, p.96) : "Let Dr. Mounce say clearly that he believes that the Bible is free from

- all error in the whole and in the part' or let him say he believes there are some errors, however few, in the Bible." Mounce, perceptive theologian that he is, refuses to bite : "The Bible is without error in whole and in part. The whole controversy is over what constitutes an error"(p.195 n.13). The inclusion of Barr alongside Hubbard(with his citation of Mounce) does not imply agreement on the part of these writers. The point is that while none of these writers would accept Lindsell's understanding of inerrancy, they would not see themselves as champions of errancy who make the case for errancy. For a discussion of Berkouwer's view of biblical criticism, cf. present study, pp.130-139.
250. Berkouwer, for example, would not ask these questions in precisely the way that Lindsell asks them. He would not, however, see himself as a champion of errancy who makes the case for errancy.
251. The Battle for the Bible, p.37.
252. Holy Scripture, p.25.
253. cf. E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, Chapters 5-7(pp.113-182).
254. J. Barr, Fundamentalism, p.40. Barr's comments are perceptive though they should be treated with caution. They may not legitimately be applied to a writer such as R.K. Harrison who writes, "Perhaps the safest course would be to speak simply of the inspiration of Scripture, without introducing any other kind of qualification that could be taken as pointing to some opinion as to the mode of inspiration which the situation clearly does not warrant."(Introduction to the Old Testament, p.472).
255. p.47. In Barr's view, the notion of inerrancy hinders a proper understanding of the Bible. He maintains that, in critical scholarship, "discrepancies and 'errors' can be important as indications of source differences and the like"(p.55) This matter of taking the Bible literally requires to be discussed not only in relation to inerrancy but in relation to the relationship of revelation to history. Barr denies that the historical-critical approach entails a denial of miracles and the supernatural(p.237). He favourably cites as "precisely what Christian faith affirms"(p.259) the view of the resurrection proposed by G.E. Ladd : "a direct, unmediated act of God..without historical explanation or historical causality and analogy" (p.258, referring to G.E. Ladd, The New Testament and Criticism, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1970), pp182ff, 186-187).
256. From the Foreword to The Battle for the Bible by H.J. Ockenga.
257. Fundamentalism, p.61. C. Pinnock, in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers, p.68 is critical of "artificial harmonizations on stock questions"(accompanying note : "The poor rooster to Lindsell's mind had to crow six times to make inerrant sense out of Peter's denial story!"Battle for the Bible, pp.174-176)-n.37 printed on p.190). Pinnock is nonetheless deeply concerned to affirm the authority of Scripture.
258. p.61(underlining mine). In an autobiographical book, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical,(The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1974), J. Rogers writes, "you can become less conservative and more evangelical"(p.12). He states his own experience thus : "I can no longer be conservative and talk about what the Bible must be, or ought to be - reasoning logically from some idealized human notion of perfection. I want to be evangelical and accept the Word that God has given me, with all its magnificent

- surprises in both content and form."(p.26).
259. p.341. cf. pp.260-261. On p.261, Barr draws attention to "the inward work of the Holy Spirit", citing the Westminster Confession of Faith. In this connection, the reader is referred to J.B. Rogers, Scripture in the Westminster Confession, (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967). Rogers gives a summary of the background to and content of this book in Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, Chapter 8 "Scripture and Confessions", pp.93-105.
260. Present study, Chapter One.
261. C. Bangs, Arminius: A Study in the Dutch Reformation, (Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1971), p.21.
262. S. Meijers, Objectiviteit en Existentialitet, (Objectivity and Existentiality), (J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1979), p.448.
263. This is his basic concern in Holy Scripture, Chapter One.
264. cf. Holy Scripture, p.127 - "authority is only honored in a correct interpretation according to God's purpose, when hearing and understanding lead to heeding and doing". Discussing the question, "Ought inerrancy to be the test of evangelical authenticity?", C. Pinnock in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers(pp.68-70), notes that "Lindsell says that no one who rejects biblical inerrancy has any right to claim the "evangelical badge"(accompanying note,n.39 on p.190 -"Lindsell, The Battle for the Bible, p.210. Calling our evangelical heritage a "badge" is not a happy way of referring to it".)" (p.68). Pinnock insists "Inerrancy must not become a "shibboleth" to be wielded like a sledge hammer to destroy the work of God" (p.68). He offers helpful comments - "I am convinced that most of the conflict over inerrancy could be avoided if the defenders of it, on the one hand, would explain carefully what they mean and do not mean by it, and those who are hesitant, on the other hand, would make it plain that their hesitation has nothing to do with a decline in their respect for Scripture"(p.69). He continues, "we need to recognize that what God desires from us is not empty praise for the book but obedience to it"(p.72).
265. Holy Scripture, p.32.
266. Contrast Holy Scripture, p.344.
267. Fundamentalism, p.339.
268. C. Pinnock in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers, pp.64, 65-66, 67, 72-73(underlining mine).
269. Contrast Divine Election, pp.47, 49.
270. A useful discussion relating to this matter is found in N.H.G. Robinson, The Groundwork of Christian Ethics, (Collins, London, 1971) - "neither the Church nor Scripture introduced moral terms into human language. Men are moral beings apart from Church and Scripture"(p.16).
271. Berkouwer's discussion of "Holy Scripture and Preaching"(Holy Scripture, Chapter Twelve, pp.327-345) is most valuable in this connection.
272. K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.1ff, (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1956). Translators, G.T. Thomson and H. Knight. Editors - G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. The central issue in the interpretation of Barth's christocentric theology concerns whether or not it should be described as 'christomonism', an unnecessary wresting of doctrines out of their Biblical context in order to fit a particular christology. Whatever judgment is reached, this matter needs to be discussed cautiously.
273. Vol.I, 2, p.1. Barth states that Scripture attests the revelation

- of God which is the incarnation of the eternal Word, Jesus Christ. God is known in Jesus Christ to whom Scripture points and not through a natural theology which operates independently of Christ and the Scriptures. Concerning the biblical writings, Barth writes, "their conception of what is possible with God is guided absolutely by their conception of what God has really willed and done, and not vice versa"(p.7, emphasis original). Following this method, Barth rejects the way of philosophical speculation about religion(p.7), insisting that "(t)he incarnation of which Holy Scripture speaks can be understood only from the standpoint of Holy Scripture"(p.14).
274. Vol. I, 2 : "The Old Testament is the witness to the genuine expectation of revelation"(p.70, underlining mine); "The New Testament is really the witness to recollection of revelation" (p.116, underlining mine); "we distinguish the Bible as such from revelation. A witness is not absolutely identical with that to which it witnesses..but it sets it before us"(p.463). Barth defines "revelation itself" as "Jesus Christ Himself"(p72).
275. General Revelation, Chapter II(pp.21-33). Berkouwer's criticism of Barth is not based on a denial of the absolute importance of christology for Christian theology but on a disagreement concerning Barth's particular use of christology.
276. p.25. cf. G.W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes; Bromiley speaks positively yet cautiously of the use of the term 'christomonism' in relation to Barth's theology. He expresses his caution thus: "this falls rather wide of the mark in view of the ultimate Trinitarianism of the Dogmatics and the lofty New Testament view of Christ.
277. General Revelation, p.25. Berkouwer criticizes Barth's particular interpretation of a Christ-centred theology rather than the ideal of a Christ-centred theology as such.
- 278 p.25. cf. C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, (Tyndale Press, London, 1967), pp.12, 149-150.
279. Church Dogmatics, Vol.II, 1, pp.85-126(T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1957), translated by T.H.L. Parker, W.B. Johnston, H. Knight, and J.L.M. Haire, edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance. These three reasons are succinctly stated by G.W. Bromiley : "(a) It is thought to be possible and practicable..(b) It is thought to be pedagogically useful at least as an introduction to theology..(c) It is thought to have a biblical sanction in that strand of scripture which appeals to man's confirming witness with creation"(Historical Theology : An Introduction, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978), p.426.)
280. General Revelation, p.27. cf. T.H.L. Parker, Karl Barth, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1970), pp.96-99 for a short account of Barth's protest against natural theology in relation to the theology of E. Brunner.
281. General Revelation, p.15, Berkouwer asks whether there is an indissoluble unity between general revelation and natural theology. Following his discussion of Karl Barth's attack on natural theology(pp.21-33), Berkouwer discusses the reaction to Barth's attack on natural theology(pp.37-57). Concerning himself chiefly with the thought of E. Brunner and P. Althaus, Berkouwer shows where he agrees and disagrees with Brunner and Althaus. If Berkouwer's critique of Barth is to be properly understood, it requires to be carefully distinguished from the

- views of Brunner and Althaus. Berkouwer's critique of Barth is based on a clear distinction between general revelation and natural theology (p.153, following Calvin), a distinction which he holds is not sufficiently clear in Brunner (pp.44-46) and Althaus (pp.50-51). Despite acknowledging the weakness of the protest against Barth's position issued by Brunner and Althaus, Berkouwer points out that "they have nevertheless emphasized some questions which theology may not and cannot neglect" (p.52). To dismiss those questions with a protest against natural theology, which involves general revelation in this protest as well, is, in Berkouwer's view, quite illegitimate.
282. General Revelation, p.21 (emphasis original). G.W. Bromiley, Historical Theology: An Introduction, p.436 interprets Barth rather differently: "His rejection of natural theology applies strictly to natural theology, not to natural revelation." In view of Bromiley's acknowledgment of Barth's "failure to make a clear distinction between natural revelation and natural theology" (Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p.55), the present writer would emphasize the word "strictly" in his interpretation of Bromiley's view. Bromiley explains his position thus: "when it is seen that Barth's reference is to the natural theology of fallen man, and that he does not deny that there may be partial lights and words and truths even outside special revelation, it is hard to maintain that he is not basically right in his understanding, that he does not give a more correct account of, for example, Romans 1-2 (as well as I Corinthians 1) than many who try to see here a foundation of knowledge rather than of guilt, and that his examination of natural theology is not among the most acute and helpful in this whole area." (Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p.56). The present writer would accept the general thrust of Bromiley's words with the comment that it is not a matter of choosing between a theology which fails to make a clear distinction between natural theology and natural revelation and a theology which relates Romans 1-2 to knowledge rather than guilt. Berkouwer presents another option which exposes the falseness of such a dilemma. He proposes an emphatic affirmation of general revelation and an emphatic rejection of natural theology.
283. General Revelation, p.57. cf. Chapter VII, "Revelation and Knowledge" (pp.137-172).
284. p.131.
285. pp.147-148.
286. p.132.
287. pp.150-151.
288. p.169.
289. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.27. The title of this book displeased Barth since he thought it might create the misunderstanding that grace is to be viewed as an impersonal principle which can be isolated from the person of Jesus Christ. Barth described Berkouwer's book as "a great book on myself" (Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 2, p.xii, (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1958)). Since, however, Barth has been critical of its title (Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 3, pp.173ff, (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1961-1962)), it is important to note Berkouwer's response to Barth's criticism - "I had never thought for a moment that Barth's doctrine of grace was an abstraction from which theologians were free to make their own deductions. Barth guessed that I had perhaps taken the title from Hans Urs von

Balthasar's remark that, for Barth, Christendom was a "triumphal affair." But von Balthasar's words had struck me as being too "triumphalistic" for Barth, especially in reference to Christendom. I had in mind what Barth himself had written: "This history is a triumph only for God's grace and therefore for God's sovereignty" (CD II/2, p.194). But here, the triumph is not of Christendom, but of the acts of God in Jesus Christ within history. Clearly the "triumph of grace" (including the title of my book) can mean only the grace of Jesus Christ the Lord. Barth recognized that "one could speak of it this way." A Half-Century of Theology, p.67. It is worth noting that two pages later (p.69), Berkouwer cites another passage where Barth uses this type of language - "no praise can be too high for the mighty and triumphant grace of God in the atonement as the fulfillment of the covenant" (CD IV/1, p.69). It is interesting to note that D. G. Bloesch, using the personal title Jesus is Victor! - Karl Barth's Doctrine of Salvation, (Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976) rather than the impersonal title "the triumph of grace" (following Barth's own suggestion that "Jesus is Victor" would describe his theological emphasis better than "the triumph of grace"), reaches similar conclusions to those of Berkouwer. Acknowledging that Barth's notion of universal election is neither a metaphysical presupposition nor a rational conclusion but an affirmation of faith and hope which Barth holds is implied in the biblical witness, Bloesch argues that Barth has failed to hold together the objective and the subjective poles of salvation and that his logic leads in the direction of universalism. The present writer holds that Barth felt the force of Berkouwer's argument and that his complaint concerning the title does very little to lessen the force of Berkouwer's argument. It is hoped that the present study achieves a fairness to both Barth and Berkouwer in its discussion of these issues.

290. Man: The Image of God, p.142.
291. p.143.
292. p.143 (emphasis original).
293. pp.131-132 (emphasis original).
294. p.146.
295. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, 72.
296. Vol.I, 2, pp.80,116. These statements occur in Barth's discussion of "The Time of Expectation" (pp.70-101) and "The Time of Recollection" (pp.101-121).
297. Vol.I, 2, p.43.
298. Vol.I, 2, p.1.
299. Vol.I, 2, p.123.
300. Vol.I, 2, p.131.
301. W. Pannenberg, Revelation as History, (The Macmillan Company, New York; Collier-Macmillan Ltd., London, 1968), p.6. Pannenberg co-wrote this book with others. This statement is found in his own Introduction.
302. General Revelation, p.153.
303. p.57.
304. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.306.
305. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.53-54.
306. p.54.
307. p.54 (emphasis original).
308. General Revelation, p.101.
309. p.101.

310. p.103.
311. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.43.
312. Vol.I, 2, p.43.
313. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.256
(emphasis original). cf. pp.255 ff.
314. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.37.
315. Vol.I, 2, p.43.
316. General Revelation, p.104.
317. K. Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, (Study Edition), translated by
G.T. Thomson, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1966), p.46. cf. pp.46-49.
318. p.47.
319. pp.101ff.
320. pp.54,57.
321. Although the present study discusses Barth's theology under the heading "Christomonism" it does not intend to make a direct and unambiguous identification of the one with the other. Rather, it explores the matter, inviting the reader to decide for himself the extent to which the term 'christomonism' can legitimately be applied to Barth's theology.
322. While neither Barth nor Berkouwer are satisfied with the view of Reformed scholasticism, both continue to speak of grace in terms of divine election. In connection with Barth's criticism of Reformed scholasticism, Berkouwer writes, "We..must listen to his warning not to separate God's sovereignty from His love, and His election from Jesus Christ, for in view of the many dangers and misunderstandings that have become evident in the course of history this warning becomes necessary" (Divine Election, p.161).
323. Berkouwer maintains that Barth's particular christological doctrine of election "cannot escape the objectification and fixedness" (Divine Election, p.161) of Reformed scholasticism since Barth himself moves beyond "the way of faith" (p.161) towards a false objectivism (p.232). A universal election "which may be disregarded in unbelief, but which cannot be undone" (p.161) makes the life of faith "'an accidental but not necessary affirmation of the one decisive witness" (p.290, underlining mine). Barth's concern with pointing to Christ as faith's foundation is praiseworthy. Faith must not be turned into a 'work' by which salvation is earned. A proper recognition of faith as the way in which salvation is received does not lead to faith being regarded as accidental, unnecessary or non-decisive simply because its foundation is not itself but Christ. It is hoped that these issues will become increasingly clear in the present discussion as well as in the related discussion of the doctrine of grace (present study, pp.145-172).
324. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.112 - "the asking of the apokatastasis question..is warranted by the simple fact of taking Barth seriously". (underlining mine).
325. p.266 - "Barth's express rejection of the doctrine of the apokatastasis must be fully taken into account, but it is precisely when we do so that the tensions within his teaching become the more visible" (underlining mine).
326. pp.267-275.
327. Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.20, No.4, December 1967, pp. 423-436.
328. p.423.
329. p.423.
330. pp.425-426, 429.

331. Berkouwer dissociates himself from the idea of the double decree in Divine Election (Chapters Six - "Election and Rejection" (pp.172-217) - and Seven - "Election and the Preaching of the Gospel" (pp.218-253) - are of special interest). In The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, he writes, "I am of the opinion that..one can judge soundly of the scriptural doctrine of election only when one rejects this symmetry (i.e. the "equal ultimacy" of election and reprobation)" which he describes as "an unbiblical distortion of the message of the Divine election" (p.391, brackets mine).
332. "Is Karl Barth a Universalist?", p.426. According to Bettis, Brunner and Berkouwer hold that "because Barth fails to accept either Brunner's Arminianism or Berkouwer's double decree, he must be a universalist" (p.426) The discussion of "Brunner's Arminianism" lies beyond the scope of this study (cf. E. Brunner, Our Faith, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1949), Chapter 7 - "Eternal Election" (pp.33-36)). In Divine Election, Chapter Seven, where Berkouwer discusses Barth's view in relation to universalism, Berkouwer makes it clear that he does not accept the idea of the double decree (especially pp.220, 223-228, 236-237). cf. present study, pp.220-223 for his view in 1974.
333. The key chapter in The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth regarding this matter is Chapter X, "The Universality of the Triumph", (pp.262-296). This chapter, like the entire book, is based on a detailed knowledge of Barth's writings. Berkouwer acknowledges "Barth's express rejection of the doctrine of the apokatastasis" (p.266). It is precisely because Barth is, by his own profession, not a universalist that the discussion of his theology is so important. Bettis asks the question, "Is Karl Barth a universalist?". In terms of Barth's own words, this question can simply be answered, "No". The subsequent question, "Is Karl Barth's rejection of universalism convincing?" is the central issue. If Bettis had made the latter question more central, he might have followed through his critical remarks found on p.433 more fully (the present study seeks to do this) rather than being chiefly concerned with a defence of Barth which disposes of his critics by means of misrepresentation. Bettis could not have been so uncritical of Barth if he had taken Berkouwer's critique seriously. This would have demanded genuine dialogue rather than unfair dismissal!
334. "Is Karl Barth a Universalist?", p.423.
335. Berkouwer's rejection of this structure of alternatives is observable in his Faith and Justification where he writes, "Everything is really said in an unobtrusive phrase, in Christ.. faith..is not added as a second, independent ingredient which makes its own contribution to justification in Christ..faith does nothing but accept, or come to rest in the sovereignty of His benefit..we are not acceptable to God because of the worthiness of our faith. Grace is exclusively and totally God's" (p.43, emphasis original); "a speculative logic can invade a scriptural proclamation of salvation and torture it beyond recognition..When speculation on time and eternity, with eternity swallowing up the significance of time, determines the line of thought, there is no possibility of doing justice..to justification through faith within the temporal reality of our lives" (p.150); "Barth's conception of the relation between election and faith..(bears) a similarity to universalism" (pp. 196-197, underlining mine) by which he is brought "continually

to the precipice(underlining mine) of apokatastasis(italics in the original) or universalism"(p.165) - this raises the question whether "Barth really does justice to the depth of earnestness in the scriptural witness"(p.165). It is clear, then, from Berkouwer's Faith and Justification as well as his Divine Election and The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth that Berkouwer rejects the system of alternatives: Arminianism - the double decree - universalism. It is, therefore, inaccurate to say that Berkouwer accepts a system of alternatives rejected by Barth. Both reject this system of alternatives. The crucial question is:- Which rejection of this system of alternatives is the more convincing - Berkouwer's or Barth's?

336. "Is Karl Barth a Universalist?", p.427(underlining mine).
337. Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 3, first half, p.477, (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1961); cited in Bettis, p.433(underlining mine).
338. "Is Karl Barth a Universalist?", p.427.
339. Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 3, first half, p.477; cited in Bettis, p.433.
340. Vol.IV, 3, first half, p.477; cited in Bettis, p.433.
341. In criticizing this aspect of Barth's thought, it is not being denied that there is a "(k)erygmatic universality"(Divine Election, p.240). It is, however, to question whether Barth has rightly represented the nature of this universality. As well as the present discussion, the analysis of Barth's theology found in pp.201-204 of the present study is of interest here.
342. "Is Karl Barth a Universalist?", p.433. Since Barth thinks of the election of grace in universal categories, it follows that his rejection of universalism is presented in universal categories. The ontic structure(cf. present study, pp.106-107) of Barth's thinking concerning the universal election of grace lies behind Barth's rejection of universalism. Bettis comments, "Barth does not reject universalism because the future of the pagan is uncertain. He rejects universalism because the future of all men is uncertain"(p.433). Since Barth thinks of 'man' and his relation to the divine gracious election in universal categories, he cannot, without undermining the whole structure of his theology, posit a withdrawal of grace from some men(i.e. believers) only for this would be to make man's faith(or unbelief) decisive in a way that Barth has consistently refused to do(cf. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.113 - Berkouwer describes Barth's view thus : "The divine decision..can..not be undone by any human decision"). If the freedom of God is to be used as a basis for rejecting universalism, it must, in Barth's view be a freedom to withhold grace not only from some men but from all men. While Barth states that both the idea of universal reconciliation and the idea of the damnation of all men are "formal conclusions without substantial content"(Die Kirchliche Dogmatik, Vol.II, 2, p.461, (Zollikon, Zurich, 1942), cited in The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.117), it must be pointed out that even the suggestion of the possibility of the damnation of all men has drastic consequences for the understanding of the faithfulness of the God of revelation and the unity of his redemptive work. A rejection of universalism on this basis does not represent a defence of free grace but the introduction of a rather formless freedom which relativizes the divine faithfulness. If universalism and this type of rejection of universalism are adjudged to

be unsatisfactory, there needs to be further reflection concerning the meaning of kerygmatic universality, cf. present study, pp.107-109. Other aspects of Barth's rejection of universalism are considered in the next footnote(n.343).

343. pp.435-436 (accompanied by footnote(n.1) to Church Dogmatics, Vol.II, 2, pp.76-93, (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1957)). Bettis rightly points out that Barth's rejection of universalism is consistent with his clear intention of refusing to identify the gospel with a cosmic plan of redemption and the gospel with information about that plan. He might, however, have raised the more important question of whether either of these motifs is consistent with other aspects of Barth's thought. Bettis writes, "Barth rejects universalism because the premise of its argument is that God's love is good because it saves men" (p.436). A universalist might, however, argue, with some justification, that this represents a reversal of the universalist argument. A universalist might contend that the effect ("it saves men") is grounded in the cause ("God's love is good") and is not seen as the factor which determines his view of God's love. A universalist might even state that Barth has been a formative influence on his doctrine of God! Bettis maintains that universalism is concerned with an "ontological reorganisation of the universe" concerning which men are to be informed while "Barth knows that men are not justified by knowledge, even knowledge of God's plan for their lives. Men are justified through faith" (p.436). There appears to be a selectivity in Bettis' analysis which leads to a failure to acknowledge adequately the tension in Barth's doctrine of salvation. Barth speaks of the "eternal destruction" of those who do not believe that they are God's children from eternity (Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.238). On what basis are those who are God's children from eternity to be committed to eternal destruction? Is it on the basis of a lack of a "(s)ubjective revelation" which, in Barth's view, is "not the addition of a second revelation to objective revelation" (p.238)? Is it on the basis of the raising and answering of the question of our destiny at a different point from the Son of God's assumption of humanity (p.238)? Barth answers both questions in the negative. Barth holds that "the truth" (p.238; i.e. the objective truth) is that he is a child of God from eternity ("In Christ" ..reconciled..elect..called..justified..sanctified" (p.240)) even when he is "not in the truth" (p.238; i.e. subjectively). It is questionable whether Barth has understood the relationship between salvation and judgment in a biblical way. It might also be asked whether Barth's belief in the reality of eternal destruction might not have led him to think and to speak differently of the relationship between objectivity and subjectivity. For further discussion, cf. present study, pp.112-116.

344. The Return of Christ, p.422.

345. p.423.

346. p.423.

347. p.423.

348. p.423; cf. present study, pp.209-213.

349. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.45-49; Berkouwer emphasizes Barth's "strong opposition to theological arbitrariness" (p.46). Concerned to draw attention to "the free and gracious gift of God" (p.49, emphasis original), Barth

- insists that "(t)here is no way leading from us to grace.. (since) (t)hat..would be the worst kind of Pharisaism"(p.49 (with reference to though not a direct citation of Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 1, p.617, (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1956)), underlining and brackets mine). It is against the arbitrariness of "all false boasting"(p.48) that Barth emphasizes the freedom of God's grace. The present writer would, however, maintain that an appeal to the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ is precisely the opposite of arrogating to ourselves that which can be given and received only as a free gift. It is a looking away from ourselves to the Saviour. There is no genuine appeal to the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ where there is any thought that salvation can ever be anything other than a free gift. Barth's intention in Church Dogmatics, Vol. IV, 3, first half, p.477 may be to warn against false boasting. His manner of speaking does, however, open the door to a conception of divine freedom which contains an element of arbitrariness which goes beyond a protest against false boasting.
350. Divine Election, p.240.
351. p.240. Berkouwer's protest against Barth's doctrine of salvation is vitally related to the proclamation of the gospel. In his Sin, pp.280-281, Berkouwer discusses Barth's use of the term "das Nichtige"(chaos) in his treatment of sin. Berkouwer describes Barth's view thus - "this expression in no way suggests that"evil is nothing, that it does not exist, or that it has no reality""(Sin, p.281, citing Church Dogmatics, Vol. IV, 3, first half, p.178); "the point is that it has no rightful existence and no ground. It is "impossible, meaningless, illegitimate, valueless and without foundation".. Evil is "absolute inferiority.""(Sin, p.281, emphasis original, source of first quotation - Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 3, first half, p.178; no source stated for phrase "absolute inferiority!") In Sin, p.281 n.145, Berkouwer cites Barth at length - Evil "does not exist as God does, nor as His creatures, amongst which it is not to be numbered. It has no basis for its being. It has no right to the existence which to our sorrow we cannot deny to it"(Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 3, first half, p.178). Berkouwer emphasizes that, in his own The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth(pp.70ff), he has underscored the reality-character of sin in Barth's theology. Berkouwer's critique of Barth's theology is not focused on either his view of the reality of sin or the uncreaturely nature of sin in isolation from the proclamation of salvation. The question arises most pointedly in view of Barth's affirmation of the reality of eternal destruction(Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.238) whether it is sufficient for Barth, in his preaching of the gospel, to say, "By grace you have been saved! - this is true, even though we may not believe it, may not accept it as valid for ourselves" even allowing for his words, "and unfortunately in so doing may forego his benefits"(K. Barth, Deliverance to the Captives, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1961), p.40, emphasis original). cf. n.394.
352. cf. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, Section 17 "The Revelation of God as the Abolition of Religion", pp.280-361.
353. General Revelation, Chapter VI, "The "Nature Psalms", pp.117-134
354. Chapter VII, "Revelation and Knowledge", pp.137-172.
355. Man : The Image of God, pp.96-97.
356. pp.87-98.

357. pp.87-89(Calvin and Bavinck), pp.89-96(Barth), pp.96-98
(comparison of the two approaches).
358. p.93.
359. p.93.
360. p.91; citing Kirchliche Dogmatik, Vol.III, 2, pp.43-50, 54-55,
(Zollikon, Zurich, 1948) as a general reference.
361. cited in Man : The Image of God, p.91.
362. p.96.
363. p.97.
364. p.98.
365. p.101.
366. p.102. Berkouwer places inverted commas round the word "natural"
to indicate that he is not implying that Barth teaches salvation
by nature rather than by grace. He uses the word "natural" to
raise pointedly the question whether the way in which Barth
emphasizes salvation by grace provides a proper perspective
concerning the "through faith"(Ephesians 2:8) context in which
the divine salvation reaches man.
367. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.251(source
given by Berkouwer, p.250 n.68).
368. p.250(emphasis original).
369. p.250.
370. p.250.
371. Man : The Image of God, p.56(emphasis original).
372. p.96. cf. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth,
p.54.
373. Kirchliche Dogmatik, Vol.IV, 1, p.835, (Zollikon, Zurich, 1953),
(cited in The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth,
p.266 - emphasis in Berkouwer).
374. References in Barth and Berkouwer - as in n.373.
375. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, Chapter IV,
"The Triumph of Election", pp.89-122.
376. p.212. This is borne out by Barth's preference for the phrase,
"Jesus is Victor" rather than the expression, "the triumph of
grace"(Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 3, pp.173-180.)
377. Man : The Image of God, p.107. The centrality of christology in
Berkouwer's thought is observable throughout his "Studies in
Dogmatics". Berkouwer's theology is no less christocentric than
Barth's though he uses christology differently from Barth.
378. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.222, 246.
Berkouwer is particularly concerned in these passages with
Barth's doctrine of sin.
379. pp.250, 256. By questioning the capacity of Barth's theology to
ascribe decisive significance to history, Berkouwer does not
"wish to accuse Barth of being guilty of subscribing to a
consistently idealistic conception of history in which history
serves only to illustrate an eternal idea."(pp.256-257,
emphasis original).
380. cf. J. Jocz, The Covenant : A Theology of Human Destiny, (William
B. Eerdmans, Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968),
p.217.
381. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.349
(emphasis original).
382. p.349.
383. p.349.
384. p.369.
385. p.369.
386. pp.369-370.

387. p.368. Berkouwer is concerned to emphasize the unbreakable bond between reality and relation(cf. Man : The Image of God, p.35). It is the reality of God's salvation that is known in the relation of faith. It is precisely in this relation that this reality is known.
388. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.371 (emphasis original).
389. p.378(emphasis original). The expression "in Christ" must not be isolated from the context of faith. The present writer holds that great care needs to be taken in the interpretation of the word "all" in relation to being in Christ in Romans 5:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:22. In the immediate context, Romans 5:17 and 1 Corinthians 15:23 suggest that the word "all" may not be understood in an unqualified way. The word "all" may not be interpreted in isolation from the words, "justified by faith" (Romans 5:1) and "the gospel, which you received, in which you stand, by which you are saved, if you hold it fast"(1 Corinth-15:1-2). The expression "in Christ" requires to be interpreted such that the urgency of the decision of faith is emphasized - "if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation"(2 Corinthians 5:17; implying that there are others who are not in Christ, who are not a new creation); "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"(Romans 8:1; implying that there are others who are not in Christ Jesus about whom it may not be said, "There is therefore now no condemnation"); Paul's desire to "be found in him."(Philip- pians 3:9) is filled with urgency. These brief comments are not intended as a full exposition of these passages. They are included here merely to indicate that theology requires, in its interpretation of the phrase "in Christ", to think carefully about the view of the relationship between object- ivity and subjectivity implicit in that interpretation. The dangers to be avoided are a false objectivism which tends to devalue subjectivity and a false subjectivism which tends to misunderstand the entire orientation of faith towards grace.
390. p.382(underlining mine). (cf. n.431).
391. p.382(underlining mine).
392. p.383(underlining mine).
393. There is no exclusion of the freedom of God here. In his article, "The Reformation Continues : A Study in Twentieth Century Theology", Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2, Winter 1980, the present writer maintains that an 'a priori' exclusion of the possibility of God's being gracious to all is to be carefully avoided since it would tend towards a presumptuous statement concerning what God must do. This position is taken only on the clear understanding that Scripture gives us no encouragement to presume upon such a superabundant bestowal of grace upon all. This position is summed up thus : "If God chooses to be gracious to all, who are we to argue? But then again, who are we to presume on such universal grace?"(p.79). The author's concern here is to maintain that the bestowal of grace is God's prerogative without relativizing either the divine promise of grace or the divine demand for faith. The proclamation of peace with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ(Romans 5:1) must be carefully dissociated from a proclamation which says, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace"(Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11). The article referred to here is

- a short(pp.73-81) comparative study of the theologies of G.C. Berkouwer and L. Berkhof.
394. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.274, (brackets original). Berkouwer opposes a deterministic notion of 'sola gratia' regardless of the direction it takes - particularist or universalist. He resists the tendency to set grace and faith over against each other. His view is set in contrast with a synergistic interpretation of grace and faith (cf. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp. 349-350). It is important to note that Paul, in the epistle to the Romans, contrasts grace with works(11:6) and faith with works(9:32) but does not contrast grace with faith. It is works (as a way of salvation not as a fruit of salvation(Ephesians 2: 10; cf. present study, pp.262-263)) which is set over against both grace and faith. Any hint of a tension between grace and faith suggests an unbiblical way of thinking. Faith cannot, by its very nature, be construed as a 'work' by which grace is earned. Grace cannot, by its very nature, be construed as a 'reward' which is given to faith. Barth rightly opposes such thinking. The question arises, however, whether his own theology rightly represents the relationship between grace and faith. Without wishing to choose Barth's texts for him(!), the present writer feels that Barth's sermon, "Saved by Grace", Deliverance to the Captives, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1961), pp.35-42, could have been a clearer statement of the full message of the gospel if he had used the text, "By grace you have been saved through faith"(Ephesians 2:8) rather than the text, "By grace you have been saved"(Ephesians 2:5).cf. present chapter, n.351.
395. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.274.
396. The Return of Christ, p.393.
397. p.393(brackets mine).
398. General Revelation, pp.30-31.
399. p.154; Man : The Image of God, pp.95-96; The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.232-233, 269ff., 368, 371.
400. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth,p.267, 279, 290.
401. It is hoped that, in the course of the discussion contained in the present chapter, it has become increasingly clear what the present writer means and does not mean when he affirms that Christ is the Truth. It is clear that deism in its original form had no real place for Christ at the core of its thinking. It has been argued in the present study that Tillich's system is complete without Christ(cf. present study, p.62).
402. D.G. Bloesch, "The Sword of the Spirit The Meaning of Inspiration", Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2, Winter 1980, p.68.
403. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.463. On issues relating to the witness-character of Scripture, cf. Holy Scripture, p.73, p.147 n.17, p.161 n.72, p.162 n.75.
404. Vol.I, 2, p.463. cf. Holy Scripture, pp.105-106, 137.
405. Vol.I, 2, p.532. cf. Holy Scripture, p.166.
406. Vol.I, 2, p.534. cf. Holy Scripture, p.10.
407. Vol.I, 2, p.537(emphasis original). cf. Holy Scripture, pp.317-318, 348-349.
408. Vol.I, 2, p.537. cf. Holy Scripture, Chapter Two, "The Testimony of the Spirit", pp.39-66.
409. General Revelation, pp.104-105(emphasis original).
410. p.105.
411. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.70(underlining mine).

412. General Revelation, p.104(revelation - underlining mine; actually - emphasis original).
413. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.463.
414. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.270 (emphasis original).
415. pp.275ff. This is not to suggest that there is no exhortation to faith in Barth's sermons. In his sermon, "The Gospel of God", Deliverance to the Captives, pp.67-74, he says, "Repent and believe in the gospel! We must hear this in the same way as we hear a call to arms. This is a command. Act now, immediately.." (p.69, emphasis original). It is, however, to emphasize that while "Barth calls unbelief "fatally dangerous"..this now and then repeated expression is flanked by extensive reflections on the ontological impossibility of unbelief" which emphasize that "unbelief has been put away..by the decisive grace of God, which is so decisive that the inevitability of faith lies involved in it."(The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.269-270, emphasis original). It is to emphasize that "the "open situation" of the proclamation cannot solve the problem posed by Barth's doctrine of election..(since) God's decision, which is the content of the proclamation, leaves room for only one transition: from not-knowing to knowing"(The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.293, emphasis original, brackets mine).
416. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.203.
417. Vol.I, 2, p.239.
418. Vol.I, 2, p.265.
419. In Vol.I, 2, p.202, discussing the relationship of the virgin birth to the incarnation, Barth uses the words "ontically" and "(n)oetically", giving the reader some indication of how he understands these ways of understanding. It is significant that he speaks of noetic understanding in terms of recognition and acknowledgment which is precisely the terminology he uses in speaking of the Spirit's work in man(Vol.I, 2, p.239). The present writer shares Barth's concern to point to the foundation of salvation in Christ. He would, however, question whether Barth has not introduced an unbiblical tension in his understanding of the relationship between salvation and faith. When it is understood that faith is not "a creative component of salvation.. a merit which takes the place of good works..(and that it) does not compete" with the sovereignty of grace(The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.275 (emphasis original, brackets mine), it becomes possible to lay full emphasis on the necessity of faith for salvation(not an ontological inevitability but an urgent admonition, cf. Berkouwer's comments on Hebrews 4:2 ,The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.271). Berkouwer's discussion of "The Value of Faith"(Faith and Justification, Chapter VII, pp.171-201) provides an excellent analysis of the relationship of faith to salvation. Berkouwer writes, "penitent faith..in its very nature, can know nothing but God's mercy..We must not allow ourselves, in reaction to the doctrine of faith's meritoriousness, to become too timid to speak of its necessity.. God's salvation..has been devised by no human mind and has risen from no human heart..this sovereign grace must be accepted in faith..To interpret faith as a condition that comes along with salvation to supplement and complete it, would be to manipulate faith into..a peculiar kind, of work of the law..the way of salvation is the way of faith just because it is only in faith

that the exclusiveness of divine grace is recognized and honored..faith, directed only to divine mercy, excludes all worthiness..The potency of faith..is not an autonomous power side by side with the power of God; it exists only because faith is completely directed to the power and blessing of God. Faith is no competitor of sola gratia;..Only rationalism can make an unevangelical condition out of this correlation..a cooperating cause"(pp.185, 188-189). The present writer would maintain unhesitatingly that this approach opens the way to an understanding of the gospel which is, in his view, unquestionably more biblical than Barth's theology(cf. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.196-198 where Berkouwer succinctly states the difficulty Barth has in emphasizing fully the significance of faith in the light of divine grace).

420. The present writer finds the conception of a single truth concerning man's relationship to divine salvation regardless of man's acknowledgment of it most problematic. He finds this notion to be thoroughly inadequate for the interpretation of John 1:11-13 where a contrast is drawn between those who receive Christ("there is hardly any difference of opinion concerning the fact - which indeed is undeniable - that John's prologue..clearly point(s) to Jesus Christ, even though his name is not yet mentioned", General Revelation, p.243) and those who do not. The emphasis is placed not on a 'new birth' which has taken place in every man by virtue of the incarnation regardless of whether this is acknowledged or remains unacknowledged but on the new birth which takes place in those who receive Christ. Since these verses appear in the much-discussed prologue, some words of explanation are required regarding the interpretation of the prologue. The interpretation given by Berkouwer in General Revelation, Chapter IX, "Revelation and Illumination", pp.233-261 is followed here. A dilemma between cosmologic and soteriologic is avoided(p.244). The soteriologic is set against the backcloth of the light and the darkness(vs.5, 9-10) - "the complete breach between this light and this darkness"(p.254, underlining mine) : "The entire universe and all things are wrongly interpreted, wrongly seen. But this want of appreciation and this blindness do not abolish the nature of light of all things, created in Christ. To the contrary, all that is left here is guilt..in the knowledge of Jesus Christ we see the world in his light"(p.259, emphasis original). There is, then, nothing in the words of John 1:9 - "The true light that enlightens every man" - to require the kind of ontic-noetic distinction used by Barth in his understanding of the relationship between salvation and faith.

421. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.238. The way in which Barth relates 'the truth' to man's being 'in the truth' is questionable. The present writer would carefully distinguish the view that there is salvation available for every man in Jesus Christ and that this salvation is to be received through faith in him and the notion that Barth suggests in the words, "we are His children, even if we ourselves do not perceive it". The present writer's view entails neither a denial of the love of God for all sinners nor the suggestion that faith becomes the basis of salvation rather than the way in which the divine grace in Christ is to be received.

422. Vol.I, 2, p.238.
423. Vol.I, 2, p.239.
424. Vol.I, 2, p.240 (in connection with Vol.I, 2, p.238).
425. C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, pp.136-137 (brackets mine; Brown's concern is with justification). Sanctification is added here in view of Barth's words in Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.240 (cf. Vol.I, 2, p.238).
426. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.238.
427. G.W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.49 (reference given by Bromiley - Church Dogmatics, Vol.IV, 3, Section 70, 2, (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1961-62).
428. p.54.
429. p.54.
430. Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p.138 (emphasis original).
431. p.139. Berkouwer discusses the Adam-Christ analogy in relation to human responsibility and not from the vantage-point of either the double decree or an 'a priori' universalism. He insists that the doctrine of original sin must not be used "as a means of excusing ourselves or of hiding behind another man's guilt" (Sin, p.435, emphasis original). Rather, it is "a confession of our guilt" (Sin, p.465, emphasis original). Our relationship to Adam, seen in terms of our own sin and our own guilt, is a matter filled with responsibility and not a theological abstraction which bypasses personal responsibility. Our relationship to Christ, set in the context of the confession of sin and the removal of guilt, is filled with urgent admonition and may not be regarded as a theological abstraction which lacks the urgency of the gospel's call to faith. Being in Adam may not be understood apart from personal sin and guilt. Being in Christ may not be understood apart from personal confession of sin and removal of guilt. This approach seeks to avoid the heteronomous tendency in both particularism and universalism. Particularism answers the question, "Who is (How many are) in Christ?" with the unambiguous answer, "the elect only". Universalism answers this question with the unambiguous answer, "all men". The present concern is to emphasize the universal significance of Christ without moving towards universalism. Attention is focused on the decision concerning Christ which confronts all men, a decision which may not be removed from the realm of human responsibility by means of either a particularist or a universalist view of divine sovereignty. It is not to be supposed that a full emphasis on human responsibility relativizes the gracious character of salvation. Man does not, by his confession of sin, earn God's favour. Rather, he receives God's forgiveness as a free gift through trusting the Christ who died for sinners. (The author holds that the limited atonement-universal atonement dilemma is rather unfortunate. The idea that every sinner for whom atonement has been made (either the elect only or all men) must be saved suggests a heteronomous divine activity which devalues human activity. When the objectivism underlying both these conceptions of the atonement is rejected, it becomes possible to more adequately emphasize both the universality of the gospel which invites all men to receive grace through faith in Christ and the absolute significance of the personal response through which this grace is received (cf. Divine Election, pp. 232ff. Note especially p.232 n.28)).
432. Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p.152.

433. p.152, cf. p.12.
434. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.238.
435. Vol.I, 2, p. 239.
436. Vol. I, 2, p.238.
437. Vol.I, 2, p.238.
438. The present writer finds Barth's attempt to do justice to the significance of personal faith in Christ in relation to man's eternal destiny both confusing and unconvincing. Concerning those who are "not in the truth"(i.e. subjectively), Barth says that "the (objective) truth" that they are "His (God's) children..from all eternity" is true to their "eternal destruction"(Vol.I, 2, p.238, brackets mine). This eternal destruction appears to be determined not by God's decision that all men should be his children from all eternity but by man's decision to reject this "truth". If man's decision to reject this "truth" leads to his eternal destruction, Barth's attempt to reject the idea that "at quite a different point (from the Son of God's assumption of humanity) the question of our destiny is necessarily raised and answered"(Vol.I, 2, p.238, brackets mine) becomes utterly confusing. It would appear that he is saying precisely the opposite of what he claims to be saying. He claims to hold that man's eternal destiny is settled at the point of the Son of God's assumption of humanity and not at the point of a man's personal response to Christ. He appears, however, to be saying that a man's rejection of Christ determines his eternal destiny as one of eternal destruction. When Barth writes, "He (Christ) is the Rejected, as and because He is the Elect. In view of His election, there is no other rejected but Himself" (Church Dogmatics, Vol.II, 2, pp.352ff., (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1957); cited in G. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p.133), it becomes rather unclear what he means when he speaks of a man facing the reality of eternal destruction. Barth's legitimate protest against a "predestination..to sin and death" (Vol.II, 2, pp.172ff., cited in Brown, p.132) may be appreciated. It would seem, however, that his view of Christ as the Elect and the Reprobate is presented in such a way that it excludes not only an 'a priori' rejection of men on the basis of predestination but also an 'a posteriori' rejection of men on the basis of their rejection of Christ. The introduction of the notion of the eternal destruction of those who do not recognize and acknowledge that they are "His (God's) children ..from all eternity..reconciled..elect..called..justified..sanctified.."(Vol.I, 2, pp.238, 240, brackets mine) seems, in the present writer's view, to be a rather unconvincing attempt to avoid universalism. The author holds that it is much more biblical and much less speculative to relate the threat of eternal destruction to the rejection of the love of God which invites men to receive the blessings of salvation through faith in Christ rather than speaking of the eternal destruction of those who are "reconciled..elect..called..justified..sanctified..children in the Father's house"(Vol.I, 2, p.240).
439. cf. G.W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes - Barth's doctrine of the Spirit is appreciated in the section entitled "Qualities"(especially pp. 55, 57) and criticized in the section entitled "Defects"(especially p.53). Concerning the relation of Barth's view of election to his rejection of universalism, Bromiley writes, "God's manifest purpose in Christ is to save, but under the sovereignty

- of the Spirit some might not be saved. The question is whether the Christological reference finally helps or matters very much. Is not the ultimate decision still taken apart from the revealed election - that is, not in the prior counsel of the Father but in the inscrutable operation of the Spirit? In other words, the decision regarding individuals is simply removed from the inscrutability of sovereign predetermination to the inscrutability of sovereign calling."(p.53). Bromiley is referring here to the tension within Barth's theology between his christological conception of election and his view that those who have not, through the working of the Spirit, experienced the subjective revelation by which they perceive themselves to be God's children from all eternity will face the reality of eternal destruction. Barth does place the giving of faith within the domain of the Spirit's working(cf. Deliverance to the Captives, pp.41, 73, 116) though he carefully avoids arbitrariness - "to believe..this is to be the concern of our prayers. No human being ever prayed for this in vain. If anyone asks for this, the answer is already being given and faith begins..Ask that you may believe this and it will be given you"(p.41); "We are grateful to know that we do not pray in vain and never will"(p.74); "the Lord our God has never failed anyone who prayed for power and strength to remember him"(p.116).
440. In one sense, the present author would hold that there is a single truth. Jesus Christ is the Truth(John 14:6). The truth concerning him is that he is the Way by which men receive Life (John 14:6). This understanding requires, however, to be carefully distinguished from the idea of a single truth concerning mankind which can be deduced from the affirmation of Christ as the Truth without reference to the presence or absence of faith in a man. The former conception of truth is, in the author's view, thoroughly biblical while the latter is dangerously speculative.
441. cf. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.30,33.
442. p.266(citing Kirchliche Dogmatik, Vol.IV, 1, p.835).
443. p.264-5; cf. C. Brown, p.137 n.8.
444. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.265; cf. C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, pp.136-137.
445. Berkouwer makes some helpful observations concerning the importance of the change which takes place in man's relationship to God at the point of his conversion in The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.257(comments on Ephesians 2).
446. p.276.
447. p.276(emphasis original).
448. p.275(emphasis original). Berkouwer acknowledges Barth's conception of the 'open situation' of preaching (pp.275-276) which he adjudges to be inadequate(p.296).
449. Karl Barth, Kirchliche Dogmatik, Vol.III, 2, pp.43-50 and 54-55; cited in Man : The Image of God, p.91(reference - n.54).
450. Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, p.240.
451. Vol.I, 2, p.240.
452. Vol.I, 2, p.240.
453. Vol.I, 2, p.238.
454. Vol.I, 2, p.240.
455. Vol.I, 2, p.240. Despite Barth's intention to point to Christ and to honour the Spirit, these emphases could lead to "a false and dangerous optimism"(C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p.137).

Footnotes to Chapter Five(Pages 118-144).

1. This expression is difficult to define precisely. R.W. Hepburn begins his article, "Philosophy of Religion" in A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1969), thus : "Philosophy of religion is the logical study of religious and theological concepts, arguments, language: the scrutiny of various interpretations of religious experiences and activities."(p.258).
2. The present writer does not regard Berkouwer's theological method as unphilosophical and unconcerned with questions of reasonableness. cf. present study, pp.218-251(brief summary, pp.250-251).
3. An interesting account of the history of "The Theological Encounter with Philosophy" is found in D.G. Bloesch, The Ground of Certainty : Toward an Evangelical Theology of Revelation, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1971), Chapter Two, pp.26-50. Bloesch's basic position is stated in the "Foreword" - "Philosophy can be of considerable aid to theologians, but they must take care not to let philosophical concepts determine the meaning of faith. Reason can be enlisted in the service of revelation, but it cannot establish the truth of revelation....What we uphold is not an autonomous reason but an obedient reason..this ideal has support in the history of theology as well as in the Bible. Our principal criticism is directed not at philosophy but at a theology that has turned away from its own criterion..Theology is not rationalistic philosophy but reason in obedience to revelation."(pp.7-8).
4. cf. present study, pp.60-78 for a fuller discussion of Tillich's theology.
5. Systematic Theology, (The University of Chicago Press, Harper & Row Publishers, New York and Evanston, 1967, (three volumes in one), Vol.I, p.22(underlining mine).
6. Vol.I, pp.22-23(brackets mine).
7. Vol.I, Part I, "Reason and Revelation"(pp.71-159).
8. J. H. Thomas, Paul Tillich, (The Carey Kingsgate Press Limited, London, 1965), p.45-46(romanticism); cf. present study, pp.65-70.
9. In his General Revelation and Holy Scripture, Berkouwer is particularly concerned to ground truth for us in truth in itself.
10. In Man : The Image of God, pp.26-27, Berkouwer makes perceptive criticisms of a 'knowledge' which does not lead to a better understanding of ourselves.
11. The "for us" element is, for Tillich, a matter of ultimate concern. It is questionable whether the gospel's "for us" element can be taken with ultimate seriousness apart from the historical character of the gospel events being treated with the same ultimate seriousness as "truth in itself"(i.e. true regardless of whether or not one has experienced the "ecstatic experience" which Tillich speaks of in his account of Jesus' resurrection, Systematic Theology, Vol.II, p.157).
12. e.g. J.A.T. Robinson, Honest to God, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1963).
13. P. Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.6.
14. e.g. D.H. Freeman, Tillich, (International Library of Philosophy and Theology - Modern Thinkers Series, editor : D.H. Freeman), (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1962).
15. Tillich considers this to be an important issue though it is questionable whether he has dealt with it adequately.
16. cf. present study, pp.22-29, 67-70.

17. This is not done by an undue appeal to philosophy but by an emphasis on the unity of truth, in its objective and subjective aspects, which is maintained throughout his writings.
18. Holy Scripture, pp.9-10.
19. p.10. cf. General Revelation, pp.131-132.
20. Berkouwer's religious methodology has been compared with that of E. Pascal (cf. present study, p.6). J.S. Dunne, The Reasons of the Heart, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1978) comments thus on Pascal's statement - "The heart has its reasons that reason does not know! Although reason does not know them, they can become known to the mind. It is when the reasons of the heart become known to the mind, I believe, that insight occurs." (p.xii). Berkouwer concerns himself with the same issue in his article, "The Significance of Pascal (1662-1962)" in Christianity Today, (August 31, 1962, VI, 2, 31-32) - "When we forsake the traditional proofs for God, do we forsake all genuine apologetic?" (p.32). He cites Pascal's statement, "the heart has reasons which the reason does not know" in support of a negative answer to this question (p.32), emphasizing that Pascal "talked not to an abstract thing called reason, but to the actual, the concrete person" and that "His God was not an idea, but a Person; his faith was not the capstone of an intellectual structure, but the reality which is in Christ" (p.32).
21. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.77.
22. p.76.
23. Contrast P. Tillich's view of the philosopher's "detached objectivity" (Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.22).
24. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.77.
25. p.77.
26. For further discussion, cf. present study, pp.218-251.
27. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.76-77.
28. Tillich's whole theology may be viewed as a reaction against the intellectual abstraction of the old natural theology. It is, however, questionable whether he has not produced a different type of natural theology which removes the living God to a comfortable distance. Tillich maintains that faith is the experience of grace when all the human securities of belief and action are shattered (Dynamics of Faith, (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1957), p.88). This view is acceptable to the present writer as a critique of the old natural theology. When, however, it is used by Tillich to present an a-historical interpretation of the Christ-event (cf. present study, pp.74-77), the question arises whether he has not treated faith's divinely-given foundation as a human security. While Tillich's theology may have a certain appeal to modern man, it may also have the effect of turning the living God into a rather contentless concept which contains no fundamental challenge to modern man to rethink the presuppositions upon which his whole life is based.
29. The proofs' emphasis on ontology and teleology may be placed in the context of doxology rather than natural theology (i.e. God's existence is not 'proved' but certain aspects of God's character are specified which, when received as an expression of faith's understanding, can evoke worship).
30. Theistic belief, without the incarnation at its centre, threatens to remove God to the periphery of human experience, thus making the matter of the existence of God a matter of considerable indifference.
31. When the 'God' of deism is made central to discussions in

philosophical theology, this 'God' is rightly treated as a puzzle in an intellectual game since this 'God' has remained at the perimeter.

32. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.77. Modern atheism has answered this question negatively. It is, however, debatable whether much of modern atheism has paid sufficient attention to the question, "Who is God?" and other related questions. Where the theism - atheism discussion does not focus sufficient attention ~~on~~ such questions, it tends to be rather remote from human experience because it creates a hiatus between the 'God' under discussion and the living God who is to be clearly distinguished from a rather characterless Supreme Being who might be aptly described as the "unknown God"(cf. Acts 17:23).
33. The close relation between these two questions is well brought out in H. Kung's Does God Exist?, translated by E. Quinn, (Collins, London, 1980). An important part of Kung's answer to the question posed in the title is his answer to the further question, "Who is God?".
34. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.77.
35. Berkouwer's discussion of "The Crisis of the Providence Doctrine in Our Century"(The Providence of God, Chapter I, pp.7-30) aptly emphasizes the relation between the question of God and questions of meaning and purpose.
36. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.77.
37. General Revelation, p.134. On the basis of God's salvation (and not that of natural theology's attempt to prove God's existence) is the believer deeply moved to worship God.
38. p.134. The dangers of natural theology need not inhibit theology in its confession of the revelation of God in creation.
39. Holy Scripture, pp.351-352.
40. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.157ff.
41. Christian faith involves "acceptance..with joy and willingness" and an obedience to "Christ whereby he is never out of view" (Holy Scripture, p.350).
42. Faith and Justification, pp.21-22.
43. Divine Election, pp.276-277.
44. Holy Scripture, pp.289-290.
45. Berkouwer writes, "we must not speculate beyond the boundaries which God in His wisdom has set us"(Divine Election, p.15). He emphasizes the faith-character of theological statements(Divine Election, pp.25-26). When theological affirmation is understood as a confession of faith which is relative to divine revelation, it is preserved from the kind of authoritarian assertiveness which fails to recognize sufficiently the limitation of theological understanding.
46. In his discussion, "Election and the Hiddenness of God" in Divine Election, (Chapter Four, pp.102-131), Berkouwer emphasizes that God's hiddenness is not be set over against his salvation. He rejects a concept of God's hiddenness which "separates the God of revelation from our lives and mitigates the absolute trustworthiness of that revelation"(p.125). Even in confessing God's salvation, faith acknowledges that it does not know everything about God(pp.120-121; especially the citation of Isaiah 45:15). Although our knowledge of God in Christ is confessed to be true and reliable, we must not presume upon complete knowledge(p.124; especially the citation of John 14:9). The attempt to attain to complete knowledge is admonished for its spiritual pride when Christ speaks of these things which are hidden from "the wise and understanding" yet revealed "unto

- babes"(p.123, especially the citation of Matthew 11:25. This biblical passage concludes Berkouwer's study of divine election, p.330 where he is concerned that knowledge of God is not to be sought apart from a simple faith which looks to Christ as Saviour.)
47. A rationalism which purports to reduce the mystery of revelation to the level of human reason is quite illegitimate because faith recognizes that God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts(Note citation of Isaiah 55:9 in Divine Election, p.81). Even in the knowledge of God through his revelation, the believer acknowledges his inability to comprehend God fully. An excellent discussion of the fundamental importance of "God's Incomprehensibility" for theological reflection is found in H. Bavinck, The Doctrine of God, translated, edited and outlined by W. Hendriksen, (The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1977), Chapter I, pp.13-37.
 48. A mystical experience which cannot be communicated in words is far removed from the Christian experience of salvation for which the words of Scripture have a "decisive importance"(Holy Scripture, p.289).
 49. Both these characteristics of Berkouwer's thought are clearly observable in the "Foreword" to A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.7-9.
 50. This phrase is used by B. Demarest to describe Berkouwer's discussion on the relation between faith and reason. Review of A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives in Themelios, Vol.4, No.1(New Series), September 1978, p.41(review: pp.40-41).
 51. J. Rogers, in his Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1974) points out the openness of Berkouwer's approach in areas where there is a tendency to adopt closed attitudes. (a) "In America we often do theology as if it was a game of cops and robbers. We choose.. sides, thinking that the "good guys"(those we agree with) say and do all the good things and that the "bad guys"(those we disagree with) say and do all the bad things. Life isn't like that. I can remember how puzzled I was when I started reading G.C. Berkouwer to discover his quoting Rudolf Bultmann, for instance, with great approval in one place and then a few pages later vigorously disagreeing with him. He didn't seem to need to add a footnote to remind us that Bultmann was a bad guy. He dealt with the issues instead of putting down the people."(p.60). (b) On being personally attacked because of his involvement in ecumenical affairs, Berkouwer cited "II Tim.2:9.."The word of God is not bound"", emphasizing that "as long as we read the same Bible with conservatives or liberals, Catholics or sectarians, we can't predict the outcome. God's Spirit will work through his Word."(p.142). When asked about his participation as an official observer at the Second Vatican Council, "Don't you think that participation in the Council is a dangerous thing?", Berkouwer replied, "Danger is not a theological word".(p.137).
 52. cf. the present writer's own article, "The Reformation Continues A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology" in Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2, Winter 1980, pp.73-81.
 53. Berkouwer's theology is experiential but it is not experience-based in the sense that nothing can be said to those who have not had the experience except, "You'll understand once you've had the experience".
 54. This concern may be seen in different ways in the writings of P.L. Berger, W. Pannenberg and P. Tillich. P.L. Berger, A Rumour of Angels, Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the

- Supernatural, (Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1969), Chapter 3, "Theological Possibilities : Starting with Man", pp.66-96; W. Pannenberg, What is Man?, translated by D.A. Priebe, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970) - A useful account of Pannenberg's "Theological Anthropology" is found in A.D. Galloway, Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Contemporary Religious Thinkers Series, General Editor : H.D. Lewis), (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1973), Chapter I, pp.13-34; P. Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol.I, p.7, while emphasizing that apologetic theology must be based on the kerygma, sets apologetic or "answering Theology" over against kerygmatic theology. Tillich's method is the method of correlation which "tries to correlate the questions implied in the situation with the answers implied in the message."(p.8).
55. Berkouwer's approach to theology is different from the approaches of Berger, Pannenberg and Tillich. Berkouwer's approach is not, however, to be described in terms of sheer heteronomy. Berkouwer's critique of the "from above - from below" dichotomy is discussed with particular reference to Pannenberg's christology in the present study, pp.230-238.
56. For a helpful approach to the heteronomy - autonomy question, cf. N.H.G. Robinson, The Groundwork of Christian Ethics, (Collins, London, 1971), pp.96, 168, 170, 221.
57. These words of A. Willingdale (from a review in The Evangelical Quarterly) are cited on the front/inside dust cover of Man : The Image of God. Also of interest is J. Riches, "Berkouwer on Common Grace", in Theology 78 : pp.302-309 (January 1975). While Riches finds Berkouwer's The Providence of God and Faith and Sanctification most unsatisfactory since they are "caged in his own tradition"(p.303), he maintains that the difference between these two volumes and Man: The Image of God is "enormous"(p.303). Riches appreciates Berkouwer's application of a soteriological perspective to all theological themes and his readiness to acknowledge the positive value of human actions outside of the church.
58. Man : The Image of God, p.20.
59. pp.22-23. This is not an authoritarian imposition of theology upon anthropology but a consistent development of the faith in the living God which holds that since man is made in the image of God he cannot be properly understood apart from God. It is worthy of note that D. Lyon, in his Christians & Sociology, (Inter-Varsity Press, Downer's Grove, Illinois, 1976), describes Berkouwer's Man : The Image of God as "full of insight relevant to the sociologist"(in list for "Further Reading" at the end of the book). (Lyon's book is also published by The Tyndale Press, Leicester, 1975).
60. Divine Election, p.46.
61. p.49. Berkouwer discusses "Human Freedom" in Man : The Image of God, where he emphasizes that man finds his true human freedom in and through true submission to the divine sovereignty (Chapter Nine, pp.310-348). Berkouwer stresses that any other conception of human freedom leads to man's sovereignty and the reduction of God to an idea - the freedom of autonomous man "is not honored with this name in the New Testament, but is rather rejected and unmasked"(p.325); the New Testament presents freedom as "freedom in and through Christ..no..abstract concept of freedom but.. freedom..in a completely relational sense."(p.321).
62. Man : The Image of God, p.127. Berkouwer is not concerned with "a simple "part corrupt, part not", a simple quantitative reduction"(p.128). He insists that "man (does) not have the

power to begin by himself any change in spiritual things"(p.131-132; brackets mine, emphasis original). Berkouwer insists that, even in his fallenness, man's humanness is preserved and that fallen man cannot escape from his relation to God into an area beyond humanness and responsibility(as is implied in expressions such as demonization and dehumanization)(pp.134-135). Berkouwer describes fallen man's relation to God thus : "man stands and remains standing in his human responsibility and in his human guilt over against God"(p.135).

63. p.141(Context : discussion of the Flood in Genesis).
64. p.142.
65. pp.31-32(Berkouwer discusses the meaning of this term here).
66. cf. present study, pp.230-238 for further discussion.
67. Man : The Image of God, p.35.
68. p.13(emphasis original).
69. p.18.
70. pp.14ff. A humanist contribution to the Christianity-humanism dialogue is found in H. Hawton, Controversy : The Humanist/Christian Encounter, (Pemberton Books, London, 1971). Of particular interest is the statement of "(t)he fundamentals of modern Humanism"(pp.241-243 : "A Humanist Manifesto", from the first congress of the International Humanist and Ethical Union at Amsterdam in 1952).
71. Berkouwer himself stresses the "existential character" of the question of man(p.18). When we seek to understand "man", we are seeking to understand "ourselves" which means that we are involved in the entirety of our own existence(p.18, emphasis original). Berkouwer's opposition to existentialism(pp.24ff) is directed against (a) the tendency for existentialism to retain "all sorts of idealistic motifs"(p.24) - "in existentialism generally, the search for the hidden center, the "real man" is strikingly evident..existentialism does not continue its concentration on man's misery, but points to his(self-produced) salvation..There is actually no thought of a radical unmasking, since at the critical moment the search for the hidden center of man reappears, which results in finding man, in his freedom, as self-choosing subject"(p.25, brackets original). Thus, Berkouwer writes, "The antithesis to a Biblical view of man lies in idealistic anthropology - even if it incorporates within itself a certain amount of realism and unmasking of evil."(p.25, underlining mine); Berkouwer is primarily concerned with Sartre's thought here. (b) the interpretation of man given by atheistic existentialism in which "the essential religious aspect of man's being is lost in a horizontal analysis"(p.29). Berkouwer maintains that "the way to self-knowledge is impossible to traverse with this kind of horizontal analysis, since the decisive dimension of man's nature, his relation to God, remains outside the analysis"(p.29). Berkouwer's concern here is with the thought of Heidegger in which there is, according to Berkouwer, an implicit "new form of humanism"(p.28) since the threat to man's existence leads not to nihilism but to "a "heroism" of trust and courage"(p.28). An important critique of Heidegger's thought is found in J. Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology : A Comparison of Heidegger and Bultmann, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1955), pp.74-76. Macquarrie holds that the "mood of ontological anxiety" may be interpreted in two ways - (a) an acceptance of the situation; (b) a search for "a Creator who is author both of man's being and of the being of nature"(p.74). Macquarrie writes, "Heidegger appears.. to stop at

the first possible interpretation" and then proceeds to argue that "if that were the only possible interpretation" it would lead to "pessimism and nihilism which, not altogether unfairly, can be regarded as the logical consequences of Heidegger's philosophy." (pp.74-75). Macquarrie himself speaks of "a feeling of creatureliness..which makes possible the quest for God, the ground of being, which man can find neither in himself nor in the world." (p.75). Macquarrie emphasizes that "the quest for God is not an accident or a luxury or an abnormality, but arises from the very constitution of man's being" (pp.75-76).

72. Man: The Image of God, p.13 (emphasis original).
73. p.13.
74. p.13 (emphasis original).
75. p.14.
76. p.15.
77. p.24.
78. p.24.
79. p.24.
80. p.25. Berkouwer is favourably citing the view of Van Peursen that existentialism may not be viewed as a translation of the Heidelberg Catechism's section on human misery.
81. p.25.
82. p.25 (brackets mine).
83. p.28.
84. p.25.
85. p.29 (emphasis original). It is not being suggested here that all existentialist thinkers should be grouped together indiscriminately. There is a difference between religious and atheistic existentialism and there are differences within both religious existentialism and atheistic existentialism. The reader may be interested in a single-volume which contains articles on the thought of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Camus, Sartre, and Buber - N.A. Scott Jr., Mirrors of Man in Existentialism, (Collins; New York, Cleveland, London, 1969; first published in Great Britain, 1978) provides an interesting study of the variety of different types of existentialism.
86. Berkouwer's emphasis on actual man (p.13) and his protest against a horizontal analysis of man (p.29) imply the question whether an atheistic philosophy can provide an adequate anthropology. cf. S. Neill, Christian Faith and Other Faiths; The Christian Dialogue with Other Religions, (Second Edition), (Oxford University Press, London, 1977), p.172.
87. S. Neill, Christian Faith and Other Faiths, p.175 emphasizes his concern with "the right use of reason". He particularly emphasizes his concern "not to exclude any of the questions that can be asked, and not to exclude the possibility that the answer may come by way of dialogue with an unseen power and not through the exercise of our own powers of ratiocination alone." Neill then cites on p.176 Macquarrie's view that "theism is a much more reasonable belief than atheism..The very fact that there is a world rather than nothing, that this is an ordered and structured world rather than just chaos, and that this world has brought forth spiritual and personal beings, makes atheism a most improbable thesis." (from J. Macquarrie, God and Secularity, (Lutterworth Press, London, 1968), p.108).
88. S. Neill, Christian Faith and Other Faiths, pp.171ff. - Neill questions the adequacy of the atheistic response to the "three ultimate questions..Where did it all come from? Where is it all

- going to? Why are things the way they are?"(p.171).
89. R. Brow, Religion : Origin and Ideas, (Tyndale Press, London, 1966), maintains that there are only two answers to the question of meaning - either meaning or no meaning - and stresses that if man seeks to give meaning to his own existence, he adopts "(e)go-theism..a real theological position" involving "faith in the one who makes meaning out of meaninglessness" and having the creed, "I believe in myself, only giver of meaning.."(p.77).
 90. A. Flew, God and Philosophy, (Hutchinson of London, 1966), p.48.
 91. p.48.
 92. For an important discussion of this whole question, cf. J. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, (Macmillan, London, 1966).
 93. Citing J.R. Hick, Philosophy of Religion, (Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1963), p.43, A. Flew, God and Philosophy, p.57 makes this criticism, "they are mistaking an ineradicable contradiction between their own beliefs for an insoluble mystery about human freedom". The present writer holds that the God of the Christian faith may not be rejected on the basis that the fact of evil is irreconcilable with the power and love of God. A distinction requires to be made between the affirmation that "God is not the Author of Sin" and unwarranted assertions about what must follow from the Christian confession of faith in the power and love of God. The Christian, confessing his faith in the power and love of God, puts his trust in the wisdom of God to determine how he is to exercise his power and love.
 94. A. Flew, God and Philosophy, p.194. This statement is qualified in three ways : (a) The possibility of "correction by further evidence and further argument" is acknowledged; (b) It is acknowledged that scientific findings change "from time to time"; (c) It is acknowledged that scientific development is a provisional norm.
 95. R. B. Mayers, Religious Ministry in a Transcendentless Culture, (University Press of America, Washington D.C., 1980), p.31 (emphasis original). This book is reviewed by the present writer in Reformed Review, Vol.34, No.2, Winter 1981, pp.144-145.
 96. p.31.
 97. p.31.
 98. p.42(emphasis original).
 99. p.42.
 100. R. Brow, Religion : Origin and Ideas, distinguishes between meaning and meaninglessness in his chapter entitled "Meaning or Meaningless". He suggests that it is "foolish to suggest an opposition between science and religion" though he does insist that "(t)here is a clear contradiction between a monistic view of science and Christian Theism"(p.77).
 101. p.78 - "Even if a scientist's only article of faith is 'I believe in progress', he is still religious. He has a faith, a goal, a system of ethics and a religious experience which take him into something greater than its own nothingness".
 102. The problem of evil is not only a problem for Christianity with its doctrine of God. It is a 'problem' for a humanism which tries to establish a moral code. It is a 'problem' for an existentialism which seeks to lead men into authentic living. It is a 'problem' for everyone who refuses to accept a nihilistic outlook. However this 'problem' may be defined, it may not be viewed merely in connection with the questions of coherence and self-contradiction in the Christian doctrines of God and sin.

It is a 'problem' for everyone who lives his life on the basis that one way of life is to be ^{morally} preferred to another. Whether or not man speaks in terms of the problem of evil, he faces precisely this problem when he is aware of a gap between his own ideals (whether or not they are viewed as God-given) and his failure to live up to those ideals. The theoretical dimension of this existential problem then becomes not the question of theodicy but the question concerning the validity of making any kind of moral judgments on the basis of an atheistic world-view. The problem of morality for atheism is, in the present writer's view, a greater problem than the problem of evil for Christianity.

103. The problem may take on different forms, depending on the overall context in which one views life. It is, however, a problem (however it may be defined) which confronts man the moment he wishes the world (or his own life) was better than it is (i.e. morally).
104. Sin, p.14 (emphasis original).
105. p.14. cf. citation of Bavinck on pp.17, 53.
106. Chapter Two, pp.27-66.
107. J.R. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, speaks of "The Augustinian Type of Theodicy" (Part II - pp.43-204), the dual emphasis of which is the goodness of God and the sinfulness of man.
108. N.H.G. Robinson, "Theodicy" in A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1969), p.335.
109. From a strict Augustinian standpoint, it is arguable that this is what is done in J.R. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, Part IV, "A Theodicy for Today".
110. The Providence of God, Chapter VIII, pp.232-275.
111. pp.249-250. Empirical reality is confusing apart from revelation.
112. p.250. Note "usually" - no hint of an absolute necessity here.
113. cf. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.90-92, 177.
114. The Providence of God, pp.254, 233.
115. Sin, p.41 (emphasis original, brackets mine). The word "theodicy" is used here in the sense of an affirmation of the gospel of the goodness of God to sinful men. The attempt to discredit God by blaming him for the evil in the world is disarmed not by vague statements such as "There's more good in the world than evil" but by the knowledge that comes through faith that God "did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all" (Romans 8:32). Statements such as "There's more good in the world than evil" reflect a shallow outlook which simply has not taken the problem of evil with sufficient seriousness. The Christian believes that God has treated the problem of evil with absolute seriousness not by explaining to questioning man every aspect relating to the problem of evil but by disarming the principalities and powers and making a public example of them, triumphing over them in him (i.e. in Christ and, in particular, his death on the cross) (Colossians 2:15), thus enabling believing man to be assured that the problem of evil has been dealt with by God himself in a way that clearly declares the love of God for sinners.
116. John 14:9 (cited in The Providence of God, p.256).
117. God's answer to man's question is his work of redemption. The gospel is God's answer to the problem of evil. It is, therefore, illegitimate to set an "answering theology" over against a "kerygmatic theology" as Tillich does (Systematic Theology, Vol.I, pp.6-8). Although Tillich does not wish to dissociate his answering theology from the kerygma (Vol.I, p.7), his actual use

- of the answering theology - kerygmatic theology distinction has been criticized by G. Brown in his Karl Barth and the Christian Message, when he writes, "it is ironical..that..it is Barth and not Tillich who gets more closely to grips with modern thought and culture. Whereas Tillich talks vaguely and generally, Barth in the small-print passages of the Church Dogmatics carries on a continuous dialogue in much detail with the great thinkers of the past and present."(p.93).
118. Sin, p.15(emphasis original).
119. p.15.
120. p.65(brackets mine, emphasis original).
121. p.17(citing Romans 1:20; 2:1; 1John 1:8, 10).
122. Romans 5:7-8.
123. D.G. Bloesch, The Ground of Certainty, p.124.
124. p.124.
125. This expression is used by T.F. Torrance in his God and Rationality, (Oxford University Press, London, 1971), p.165. This expression occurs in the chapter entitled "The Epistemological Relevance of the Holy Spirit"(pp.165-192) which was originally published in honour of G.C. Berkouwer in Ex Auditu Verbi, edited by R. Schippers, G.E. Meuleman, J.T. Bakker and H.M. Kuitert, (J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1965), pp.272-296.
126. Man : The Image of God, p.13.
127. Sin, p.15.
128. cf. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, pp.165ff.
129. Holy Scripture, p.10; cf. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, p.181.
130. cf. present study, p.32; cf. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, pp.168, 177. The objectivity of divine revelation and the subjectivity of human response are not to be set over against each other(cf. present study, pp.22-29).
131. T. F. Torrance, God and Rationality, pp.165-192.
132. cf. Holy Scripture, Chapter Five, "The God-Breathed Character of Holy Scripture", pp.139-169; cf. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, pp.168, 185.
133. Holy Scripture, p.10; cf. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, p.115; cf. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1974), p.58.
134. cf. Man : The Image of God, p.27 where Berkouwer emphasizes that a true knowledge of man is not possible apart from the self-knowledge which comes through knowledge of the living God.
135. Concerning the problem of evil, D.G. Bloesch writes, "Christianity offers no all-encompassing explanation of evil. But it does point to the sure and final answer - Jesus Christ."(The Ground of Certainty, p.124). The conclusions reached concerning a particular question reflect the way in which that question is asked.
136. p.61 - Bloesch holds that Berkouwer's greatness as a theologian is directly related to his ability to "explain what the faith does not mean as well as what it means".
137. The value of Berkouwer's approach to the issues with which philosophy has concerned itself lies in his consistent emphasis on the existential character of these questions. This existential character requires to be recognized by all who discuss these questions if the discussion is not to be merely theoretical and lacking in moral seriousness. Thus, the Christian's concern is not simply with winning an argument but with leading others in the entirety of their existence to faith in Christ and the non-Christian approaches the discussion with a real openness to the

- possibility of being converted to Christ.
138. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Iowa, 1964.
 139. De Heilige Schrift I and II(1966, 1967); Holy Scripture(1975).
 140. These lectures were given at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A..
 141. Note especially Chapter Thirteen, "Faith and Criticism", pp. 346-366.
 142. "De Methode van Berkouwers Theologie" in Ex Auditu Verbi, edited by R. Schippers et al., pp.37-55.
 143. In fairness to Collard, it must be acknowledged that H. Berkhof has the advantage of close personal acquaintance with Berkouwer.
 144. "De Methode van Berkouwers Theologie" in Ex Auditu Verbi, p.41.
 145. p.45.
 146. pp.44-45(underlining and brackets mine). L.B. Smedes gives a helpful account of Berkouwer's doctrine of perseverance in his article, "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, (Second, Revised Edition, 1969)). - "Assurance is not the prerogative of the person who can reason inferentially from a doctrine of election. Assurance is the gift that everyone finds who finds God at the Cross..the only place where the faith-certainty of perseverance is found." (p.91).
 147. p.50(underlining mine). L.B. Smedes gives a helpful account of Berkouwer's interpretation of the doctrine of original sin: "a theological knowledge of universal guilt is gained only by a personal knowledge of personal guilt. From the low vantage point of my own confession, I perceive that the divine judgment of guilt is not a judgment on me for Adam's (and not my) sin. Divine judgment is levelled against my real sin. And in my guilt I perceive my solidarity with mankind..in the matter of imputation of guilt, sin and guilt are known for what they are only by faith in Christ. For it is within faith that repentance is real. And only as repentance is real does knowledge of sin and guilt become real."("G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, pp.87-88; brackets original).
 148. This point is made in Berkhof's account of Berkouwer's "third phase" in which he emphasizes "the existential direction of Scripture"(pp.48-53). It should be noted that Berkouwer has criticized H. Berkhof's eschatology on the grounds that its interpretation of certain matters is insufficiently related to the existential purpose of Scripture - The Return of Christ, pp.307-309, 341-342, 350-351.
 149. Berkouwer clearly does not mean to suggest this since he writes "A priori answers cannot be found by means of a special method or a hermeneutical technique whereby all scriptural questions could possibly be solved by excluding them on the basis of a childlike faith."(Holy Scripture, p.348; italics in the original).
 150. This point is made in the final section of Berkhof's article. cf. L. E. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes - "Berkouwer has called orthodox Reformed theology away from its love affair with metaphysics..he has called it back to its proper and humble service as hand-maid to the preaching of the Gospel."(p.96, emphasis original). H. Berkhof's appreciation of Berkouwer's thought is specified in his Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of the Faith, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand

Rapids, Michigan, 1979). It is important that H. Berkhof's appreciation is precisely noted here since Berkhof's article on Berkouwer is known to English readers primarily through the writings of three writers who are severely critical of the developments which have taken place in Berkouwer's theology - A.L. Baker, Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election: Balance or Imbalance?, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1981), pp.37-40; C. Bogue, A Hole in the Dike: Critical Aspects of Berkouwer's Theology, (Mack Publishing Company, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, 1977), pp.18-19 (a passing reference to Berkhof's article), p.25 (an account of Berkhof's article); C. Van Til, The Sovereignty of Grace: An Appraisal of G.C. Berkouwer's View of Dordt, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1969), circa pp.65ff.. Berkhof, in Christian Faith, maintains that Berkouwer gives a "good orientation" to combining "the original and the guilt" (p.204), describes Berkouwer's Faith and Perseverance as "(a) fine dogma-historical and dogmatic discussion" of the theme that the doctrine of perseverance should not make people careless and indifferent (p.478) and describes Berkouwer's Divine Election as a "worthwhile attempt at reformulating the classical problems and placing them in a biblical framework" (p.482).

151. Ex Auditū Verbi, p.41. Berkhof emphasizes that the developments which have taken place in Berkouwer's thought are consistent developments from motifs which were present in the 'first phase'.
152. cited in Ex Auditū Verbi, p.41 (underlining mine).
153. p.41.
154. In Holy Scripture, p.120 n.42, Berkouwer points out that "in Geloof en Openbaring in de nieuwere Duitse Theol. (Faith and Revelation in Modern German Theology - 1932 doctoral thesis), p.222..I used the word "correlation"..in the sense of the mutual involvement of faith and revelation on the way of faith." Berkouwer, in his statement of his understanding of the concept of correlation, cites favourably the words of Melancthon: "the promise and faith are to be correlated" and "the promise of mercy must be correlated with faith, for it cannot be apprehended without it" (p.120 n.40). He distinguishes his concept of correlation from that of Tillich, the structure of whose thought is, in Berkouwer's view, dominated by a form of subjectivism (p.120 and accompanying note 42): Berkouwer cites the account of the concept of correlation given by Tillich in Systematic Theology, Vol.II, p.13 (p.120 n.41)). For further discussion of Tillich's theological system, cf. present study, pp.60-78.
155. J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1938.
156. p.247. This statement is cited by C. Van Til, The Sovereignty of Grace: An Appraisal of G.C. Berkouwer's View of Dordt, in his discussion of "The Earlier Berkouwer on Scripture" (circa pp.57 ff). The underlining of "this" is in Van Til's citation. Of interest concerning the respective views of Berkouwer and Van Til is G.C. Berkouwer, "The Authority of Scripture (A Responsible Confession)" in Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Theology and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til, edited by E. R. Geehan, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1971), pp.197-203.
157. Berkouwer's concerns in this book are outlined in the present discussion.

158. p.14(from Chapter 1; "The Authority of Holy Scripture in Our Time").
159. p.14.
160. p.19.
161. p.22. cf. Holy Scripture, Chapter Ten, "Clarity", pp.267-298; A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.8 - "the hesitations and doubts that are indeed present at many points do not in themselves indicate a deep and final uncertainty..an alienation from the gospel".
162. "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.94(emphasis original).
163. pp.94-95(underlining mine).
164. This use of the word "existentialism" requires to be carefully dissociated from the kind of existentialism which detaches personal experience from the historicity of Christ's resurrection and from a real eschatological expectation. In The Work of Christ, Berkouwer insists that "It is impossible to separate the fact from the significance of the resurrection, as though the main thing were the idea rather than the historical reality of the resurrection."(p.181). In The Return of Christ, he distinguishes between concentration and reduction, insisting that "(c)oncentration..does not amount to "de-eschatologizing" ..Its aim is not to weaken the eschatological expectation but to get at the meaning of the eschatological promise, which has come to us couched in images and concepts whose understanding requires a patient effort."(p.16). The distance between Berkouwer's emphasis on the existential direction of Scripture and the kind of existentialism which concerns itself exclusively with personal experience is clearly indicated when, in The Return of Christ, he rejects a "subjectivism" which "relativize(s) the reality of the promise(the resurrection of Christ) and expectation(the Christian hope which is grounded in Christ's resurrection)"(p.16, brackets mine). The gospel is directed towards man in the entirety of his existence. It is not, however, solely concerned with man's experience. cf. present study for a discussion of the significance of the present in the light of the gospel's message concerning the past and the future, pp.163-172.
165. "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p.95(underlining mine except "always" - emphasis original). Smedes points out that the "most notable example" of a doctrine which is interpreted by Berkouwer in this context is "the doctrine of election"(p.95).
166. cf. Man : The Image of God, p.35.
167. A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, p.8.
168. Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, p.19.
169. Holy Scripture, p.33 n.70.
170. Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, p.19.
171. Holy Scripture, p.104.
172. Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith, p.19; cf. Holy Scripture, pp.155, 165, 172.
173. Holy Scripture, pp.346-348.
174. p.346.
175. pp.346-347. Note Berkouwer's comments regarding Mark 10:15 - "one has all but lost a real scriptural faith if he does not immediately relate it to the call to become "as a child".. "receiving" as a child..should not tempt anyone to..push aside ..searching reflection..by means of a simplistic interpretation

- of this "childlikeness". Someone who is inclined in that direction has his own limited idea of "being a child", interpreting this..as a form of naivete that can scarcely be distinguished from immaturity". Berkouwer points out that certain aspects of the child's way of living are to be given up (1 Corinthians 13:11) and that this does not relativize Christ's insistence on "receiving the kingdom as a child"(p.347).
176. This, in Berkouwer's view, is the heart of the Reformation doctrine of the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Important in this connection is Holy Scripture, Chapter Seven, "The Servant-Form of Holy Scripture", pp.195-212 (especially pp.206ff.).
177. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.59 draws attention to a significant point made by H. Bavinck - "personal resistance to God can dwell quite as comfortably in dead orthodoxy as it can in the most extreme liberalism". C. Pinnock makes this point most forcibly when he writes: "In the case of biblical authority, we need to recognize that what God desires from us is not empty praise for the book but obedience to it. Yet it often seems that we conservative evangelicals are more concerned to prove the Chronicler was accurate than to stand by what Amos or Jeremiah said. How ironic it would be if the very stalwarts on behalf of biblical authority were the ones who fell into the trap of allowing North American materialism and worldliness to be the norm for our behavior rather than the Word we so highly praise. The great peril of conservative religion in our day, as it was in Jesus' time, is that it will be used to bolster up unbiblical behavior behind a cloak of impeccable orthodoxy. If so, we are nothing more than liberals ourselves, who neglect and suppress the Word and go willingly into cultural captivity. God did not give us his Word simply to reinforce our earlier ideas and structures, but to critically challenge and renew them. Perhaps this ought to be the test henceforth of evangelical soundness." ("Three Views of the Bible in Contemporary Theology" in Biblical Authority, edited by J. Rogers, (Word Books, Publisher, Waco, Texas, 1977), p.72).
178. Holy Scripture, p.347.
179. p.347.
180. p.347.
181. p.348. cf. pp.134, 137.
182. p.104. cf. Faith and Justification, p.9 - "theology is occupied in continuous attentive and obedient listening to the Word of God..listening, unlike remembering, is always a thing of the present moment" (underlining mine).
183. Holy Scripture, p.180.
184. Holy Scripture, Chapter Thirteen, "Faith and Criticism", pp. 346-366.
185. p.356 - Citing Romans 9:20, Berkouwer writes, "That kind of criticism..was resisted by Paul: "But who are you, a man, to answer back to God?"".
186. p.358.
187. pp.358-359, 363.
188. p.356. cf. Chapter Nine, "Reliability", pp.240-266.
189. p.356.
190. pp.349-353.
191. p.349.
192. p.349.
193. p.351.
194. p.352.

195. p.351.
196. p.137.
197. Care must be taken to avoid positing as an "interpretation" a view which might be more aptly described as a denial of the truth of the gospel. This is, for instance, the central issue involved in the interpretation of the theology of Tillich. cf. present study, pp.60-78.
198. Holy Scripture, p.162.
199. No direct analogy to christology is intended here. cf. Holy Scripture, pp.17-19 for Berkouwer's discussion of docetism in relation to the doctrine of Scripture.
200. The Reformers' rejection of spiritualism(cf. Holy Scripture, pp.55-59) led to a great increase in the actual study of Scripture and the production of commentaries on Scripture. Berkouwer describes the Reformers' position thus: "The Reformers linked the confession of the Spirit's testimony harmoniously with a great concentration on the witness of Holy Scripture.. the Reformers never devaluated the message on the basis of a misunderstood testimony of the Spirit that in essence is no more than a mystical and immediate revelation"(pp.55-56). In his article, "Calvin the Commentator", R.Wierenga (Reformed Review, Vol.32, No.1, Fall 1978, pp.4-13) examines Calvin's commentary on Romans instructively. Wierenga begins by citing G.E. Wright's statement, "the commentaries of Calvin must surely be ranked among the chief monuments of Christian scholarship"(p.4) and ends by stating that Calvin's approach to Scripture "has much to teach the church in the current debate over biblical authority"(p.12). Wierenga's study is set in the broader context of the Reformation in general(pp.4-5).Wierenga draws attention to Calvin's concern that his commentaries might be of service to the church, opening up the Scriptures to the laity(p.8). It is in this tradition of the Reformation with its emphasis on the integral relation between the Word and the Spirit that Berkouwer stands in his rejection of spiritualism.
201. Holy Scripture, p.248.
202. pp.251-252.
203. pp.180-181.
204. pp.181-182.
205. p.263. The existential context in which Berkouwer understands this reliability relates to both the existential experience out of which the biblical writers write and the existential experience in which the reader receives their words with faith. It is important to note here that the connecting link is the words of Scripture. If theology is to do full justice to the existential context in which the words of Scripture were written and are received, it must be careful not to develop a concept of reliability which is not significantly related to this context. If theology is to do full justice to the connecting link, it must be careful not to do violence to the words of Scripture by making man's self-understanding the norm by which the words of Scripture are understood. Emphasizing that the Scriptures were written by men who were involved in the entirety of their existence and is to be read as a message which addresses us in the entirety of our existence does not mean that revelation arises out of man's experience and that Scripture must be interpreted according to this presupposition.
206. p.366.
207. cf. present study, pp.90ff.

208. cf. present study, p.80.
209. Berkouwer discusses the relationship between faith and science in Holy Scripture, pp.133ff. It is significant that this discussion appears in the chapter entitled "Authority and Interpretation" (Chapter Four, pp.105-138) since, in this area, an important distinction requires to be drawn between the believing confession of biblical authority and particular interpretations of the meaning of either biblical authority or particular passages of Scripture. There is no suggestion, in Berkouwer's theology, that biblical teaching requires to be accommodated to a supposedly normative "science". There is, however, a clear warning against "exegetical bungling", i.e. taking something "as in conflict with Scripture too quickly.. without serious study or through sheer ignorance" - a warning which has "not always (been) heeded by theologians" (p.134, n.82, brackets mine; Berkouwer is citing Bavinck here who is, in part, citing St. Augustine).
210. p.135.
211. p.32.
212. p.135.
213. The question of residual deism in the thought of Tillich is discussed in the present study, pp.60-78.
214. cf. present study, pp.65-70, 73-78 for discussion of the idea that Tillich's theology may be viewed as "a theological variation of the naturalistic world-view" (p.67) and an examination of his self-transcending naturalism and its consequences for his doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus with particular interest in the question of the validity of Tillich's theology as an answering theology which claims to be based on the kerygma.
215. The present writer holds that, while a dualism between faith and science is untenable, there is a basic contradiction between faith and "scientism as a religious creed" (present study, p.126), between an open view of reality which recognizes the freedom of the Creator's activity in his creation and a closed view of reality which, though it may not be directly identified with scientism as a religious creed, restricts the freedom of the Creator's activity in his creation (present study, p.65). This position should not be understood as suggesting that the issues raised by "science" can be conveniently disregarded by means of a bare assertion of biblical authority. A readiness to take "science" seriously is demanded by the recognition of the difficulties involved in a completely unequivocal statement regarding the precise meaning of either biblical authority or of particular biblical passages. A useful orientation to the faith-science question has been provided by D. Kidner in his Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary, (The Tyndale Press, London, 1967) - "How the two pictures, biblical and scientific, are related to each other is not immediately clear and one should allow for the provisional nature both of scientific estimates (without making this a refuge from all unwelcome ideas) and of traditional interpretations of Scripture. One must also recognize the different aims and styles of the two approaches: one probing the observable world, the other revealing chiefly the unobservable, the relation of God and man." (p.26) "to try to correlate the data of Scripture and nature is not to dishonour biblical authority, but to honour God as Creator and to grapple with our proper task of interpreting His ways of speaking..the interests

and methods of Scripture and science differ so widely that they are best studied, in any detail, apart. Their accounts of the world are so distinct (and each as legitimate) as an artist's portrait and an anatomist's diagram, of which no composite picture will be satisfactory, for their common ground is only in the total reality to which they both attend. It cannot be said too strongly that Scripture is the perfect vehicle for God's revelation, which is what concerns us here; and its bold selectiveness, like that of a great painting, is its power. To read it with one eye on another account is to blur its image and miss its wisdom." (p.31). (Underlining in these quotations is mine; brackets - Kidner's). When it is held that the authority of Scripture is such that it is not unequivocally bound up with with one particular interpretation of Scripture, a constructive approach to the faith - science question can be adopted. This constructive approach requires that (a) science, as an intellectual discipline is carefully distinguished from scientism as a religious creed which excludes God; (b) the distinctive purpose of Scripture (D. Kidner expresses this purpose aply in the opening words of his "Commentary" on Genesis - "It is no accident that God is the subject of the first sentence of the Bible, for this word dominates the whole chapter and catches the eye at every point of the page..The passage, indeed the Book, is about Him first of all; to read it with any other primary interest (which is all too possible) is to misread it." (p.43, emphasis original, brackets original)).

216. Holy Scripture, p.135.

217. P. Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol.I, pp.6-8.

218. Vol.I, pp.6-8. Tillich speaks of an "undignified procedure (which) has discredited everything which is called "apologetics" (p.6) and maintains that "kerygmatic theologians are inclined to deny any common ground with those outside the "theological circle." (p.6). The question of apologetics is discussed in the present study, pp.218-251. The present writer agrees with Tillich's insistence that apologetics may not simply be rejected. He shares Tillich's concern that apologetic theology should be "based on the kerygma" (p.7). The point at which Tillich's theology requires to be questioned concerns whether, in his legitimate protest against a one-sided reaction against "everything which is called "apologetics" (p.6), he has not developed a theology which is based less on the kerygma itself than on his own philosophical outlook which determines the way in which the kerygma is allowed to function in his theology (cf. present study, pp.70-78).

219. Cf. W. Pannenberg, Theology and the Philosophy of Science, translated by F. McDonagh, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1976; Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, London, 1976) for a useful study of "Karl Barth and the Positivity of Revelation" (Part Two, Chapter Four, Section 6, circa pp.265ff.). Pannenberg does not use the expression "christomonism" in his account of Barth's view. The present writer has, in his review of this book (Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.1, Fall 1979, pp.60-61), described Pannenberg's view of the relation of faith and science thus: "Theology is not concerned with the authoritarian assertion of the Christian revelation. It is concerned to show the rationality of the Christian world-view as it relates to all truth. This must be done in competition with other views such as those of science and other religions. Such other views

- cannot simply be ignored. Christianity must be put to the test alongside those other views." (p.60). The criticism of Barth's theology offered by Pannenberg is not precisely the same as the criticism made in the present study. The differences as well as the shared features are noted in the immediately following sentences in the main text and the accompanying footnotes.
220. W. Pannenberg writes, "...the task of theology goes beyond its special theme (i.e. the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as this is attested in Scripture) and includes all truth whatever." (Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, translated by G.H. Kehm, (S.C.M. Press, London and Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970), p.1). It is this concern with "all truth whatever" which underlies Pannenberg's bold protest against Barth's theology as "the furthest extreme of subjectivism made into a theological position...the irrational subjectivity of a venture of faith with no justification outside itself." (Theology and the Philosophy of Science, p.273). cf. present study, pp.249-250 for a brief discussion of how Berkouwer might respond to this kind of criticism, i.e. that his theology represents an irrational authoritarianism.
221. Pannenberg maintains that "This universality of theology is unavoidably bound up with the fact that it speaks of God...the power that determines everything that exists." (Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, p.1). For Berkouwer's critique of Pannenberg's definition of God, cf. pp.245-246, present study.
222. W. Pannenberg (editor), Revelation as History, translated by D. Granskou, (The Macmillan Company, New York; Collier-Macmillan Ltd., London, 1968), p.6. C.F.H. Henry, discussing "Basic Issues in Modern Theology" in Christianity Today, Vol.IX, No.7, (January 1, 1965), pp.14-17 describes Pannenberg's view thus: "Pannenberg...stops short of a commitment to general revelation. Although he insists that everyone has a general knowledge of God, he does not equate this with revelation" (p.15).
223. Berkouwer, in his article "Reviewing the Proofs" in Christianity Today, Vol.XVI, No.3 (November 5, 1971), pp.53-54, observes that article after article has posed the "question whether we were not being too simplistic in our No to natural theology" (p.53) while noting that "Pannenberg spoke more positively about what he called "the unconquered natural theology"" (p.53). Assessing the situation, he writes, "The new situation is not ripe for approval or rejection", emphasizing that we must "wait and see whether the new direction can stay clear of the old rationalism and avoid the vague categories of the old natural theology" (p.54).
224. In his General Revelation, Berkouwer draws a clear distinction between general revelation and natural theology - "Only by distinguishing between general revelation and natural theology can we do justice to the message of Scripture" (p.153 - from a favourable account of Calvin's view). This is the background to Berkouwer's analysis of Pannenberg's thought. He shares Pannenberg's concern with the "universality of theology" (Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, p.1) but would see this universality as grounded not in an unconquered natural theology but in the reality of general revelation. While recognizing "a real courage in this demand to enter the world with a reasonable stance", he maintains that "questions surround the effort, questions provoked by the fact that the Gospel...is not according

- to man(Gal.1:11), not even religious man, and that the Gospel is..a scandal to natural thought."("Reviewing the Proofs" in Christianity Today, Vol.XVI, No.3(November 5, 1971), p.54). This concern to avoid a natural theology which distorts the gospel underlies Berkouwer's reservations with respect to the definition of God which underlies Pannenberg's conception of the universality of theology(cf. present study, pp.245-246).
225. Berkouwer's protest against Barth's theology focuses attention on its failure to provide an adequate understanding of general revelation. Pannenberg's protest is grounded in his concern with the apologetic significance of the gospel. The present study, pp.96-100, discusses the differing views of Berkouwer and Barth with respect to general revelation and natural theology. The present writer prefers Berkouwer's approach to the universality of theology to that of Pannenberg(cf. present study, pp.231-238) who has tended to distort the biblical presentation of the history of God's gracious redemption by demanding that the Bible is read according to his particular philosophical presuppositions.
226. This is not to suggest that Barth has no interest in the realm of nature. In his discussion entitled "God the Creator"(Dogmatics in Outline, translated by G.T. Thomson, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1966), pp.50-58), he cites favourably Calvin's description of the created world as "The theatre of His glory" (p.58). T.F. Torrance, in the Preface to his Space, Time and Resurrection, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976), pp.ix-xiii, gives an indication of both Barth's interest in "the interrelation between theological and natural science"(p.ix) and the direction of his thought - "Karl Barth expressed full agreement with my interpretation of his thought"(p.x). Torrance who speaks of Barth as "my old teacher"(p.xi) has, in Space, Time and Resurrection, attempted "to be in serious dialogue with what contemporary natural science can teach us about reality - particularly what scientists since Einstein have contributed to our conceptual picture of the universe."(from back cover of paperback edition). Torrance interprets Barth's rejection of natural theology as a rejection of "an independent natural theology.. (which) cannot stand on its own as an independent logical structure detached from the actual subject matter of our knowledge of God"(p.x). Given this interpretation, one can appreciate G.W. Bromiley's view that "His(Barth's) rejection of natural theology applies strictly to natural theology, not to natural revelation."(Historical Theology : An Introduction, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978), p.436). One can, however, appreciate equally well Bromiley's critical comments : "The whole handling of natural theology suffers from a failure to come to grips with natural or general revelation..The movement of Barth's thought is not always as clear to his readers as it was no doubt to himself. His basic points are simple but their force is blunted by surrounding complexities which lead to confusion and(often unnecessary) disagreement."(p.436). It is this element of complexity and confusion which can lead to the impression that Barth's concept of revelation tends to make the pursuit of natural science a rather secondary matter. Such a hierarchy of priorities may be contrary to the intentions of Barth who thinks of Jesus Christ as "the ground and meaning of creation.. the great Light that floods the whole of creation."(The

- Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.60 with accompanying footnote reference to Kirchliche Dogmatik III/1, (Zollikon, Zurich, 1945), p.137). The lack of clarity in Barth's writings with respect to general revelation make this impression very possible even if it is admitted that it may be an unnecessary inference.
227. Holy Scripture, p.135.
228. pp.162-167.
229. cf. present study, pp.65-67.
230. cf. present study, pp.55-57.
231. The attitudes of opposition, accommodation and indifference to science may not be identified directly with the views of biblicism, deism and christomonism. This would be to oversimplify the positions of the writers whose views are discussed under these general headings in the present study. The avoidance of the attitudes of opposition, accommodation and indifference in theology's relation to science is, however, comparable to the avoidance of one-sidedness in the doctrine of revelation (cf. discussion of biblicism, deism and christomonism, present study, pp. 60-117).
232. p.133 n.80.
233. Cited in J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.56. Commenting on this definition, Rogers writes, "The scientific theologian and the simple believer both begin from a personal faith commitment to God revealed in Jesus Christ. They both accept revelation as normative for them..they treat the Biblical data as having ultimate value and valid application to their lives..they both reflect..about God. The professional theologian is distinguished from any other believer only in that the theologian has the training and tools for doing "scientific" reflection."(p.56).
234. While ideological factors cannot be excluded from natural science, they are more obviously influential in the social sciences. Similar principles apply to the relation of faith to the social sciences. Creational revelation may be viewed in relation to both man and the world. It may be argued that the complex question, "What is man?", cannot be fully answered while remaining within an anthropocentric perspective. The recognition that the perspective of the social sciences is a limited perspective rather than a total one opens up the question of a divine dimension underlying the human. A useful study of the Christian faith in relation to the social sciences is found in D. Lyon, Christians & Sociology.
235. Holy Scripture, p.134.
236. p.134.
237. L. B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.76 - "the fact of divine election..is hidden to those who in pride are offended by the grace of God..But it is revealed to those who humbly accept their need of grace at the foot of the Cross."
238. Holy Scripture, p.134, n.82.
239. K. Hamilton, "Paul Tillich" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, - "Revelation..is not for Tillich in the first place Christian revelation"(p.468, emphasis original); "Tillich's theology..is not so much Christian theology as a translation of Christian theology into the language of theosophical-ontological speculation"(p.475).
240. W. Pannenberg who admits to being a "rather peculiar Barthian"

(Private correspondence with D.H. Olive, 7 July 1969; cited in D.H. Olive, Wolfgang Pannenberg, (Makers of the Modern Theological Mind; B.E. Patterson, editor), (Word Books, Publisher, Waco, Texas, 1973), p.25 (source stated in p.109 n.21), reacts against Barth's separation of a redemptive history from the rest of history and his view that the meaning of this redemptive history is "available only to faith, not to critical history" (A.D. Galloway, Wolfgang Pannenberg, (Contemporary Religious Thinkers Series; General Editor - H.D. Lewis), (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1973), p.43). Pannenberg regards Barth's view as "more gnostic than Christian in character" (Galloway, p.43) and insists that "the theologian cannot escape into a realm where he does not have to submit himself and his thought processes to the rigors of rationality" (Olive, p.70). Discussing Pannenberg's concern "to lead faith out of its ghetto and theology out of its isolation..(to) meet the substantial challenge of the sciences", Berkouwer warns against the danger that the "from below" methodology might produce an apologetic which is isolated from "the message it intends to make credible" and which might then lead its users to experience the loss of perspective which "Pannenberg feared for the kerygmatic theologians" (A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, pp.164,171,177-178).

241. A simplicistic dichotomy of this kind represents a form of divine-human competition. For Berkouwer's helpful rejection of this kind of competition motif, cf. present study, pp.37-38.
242. Holy Scripture, p.135.
243. p.135.
244. p.185.
245. p.172.
246. T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, p.97. The present writer understands the word "nature" with reference to both man and the world, thus emphasizing that this statement is understood in relation to both the social and the natural sciences.

Footnotes to Chapter Six (Pages 145-172).

1. This book is fundamental to the discussion contained in the present chapter. A further discussion of divine election is contained in Berkouwer's A Half Century of Theology, Movements and Motives, Chapter 4, "The Heart of the Church", pp.75-106 (cf. present study, pp.220-223 for further discussion).
2. Divine Election, p.21.
3. cf. present study, pp.57-58.
4. Divine Election, p.52.
5. Chapter 2, pp.28-52.
6. p.52.
7. Chapter 3, pp.53-101.
8. pp.64ff.
9. p.81.
10. p.87.
11. p.61.
12. cf. present study, pp.34-38.
13. Divine Election, Chapter 4, pp.102-131.
14. p.119; cf. citation of Isaiah 45:15 on p.120.
15. pp.115ff.
16. p.119.

17. pp.106-108, 153 n.38. Both Berkouwer and Barth register a christological protest against the idea of a hidden election. Their respective interpretations of election in Christ are, however, rather different(Chapter 5, "Election in Christ", pp. 132-171).
18. L. B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, (Second, Revised Edition, 1969)), p.76.
19. p.76.
20. Divine Election, p.108. This statement accurately reflects the thinking of Paul in Romans 10:6-13, a passage which lies at the heart of a section of Scripture(Romans 9-11) which invariably comes to the fore in discussions of divine election.
21. Chapter 5, pp.132-171. In the closing paragraph of Chapter 2 (p.52), Berkouwer explains why he has discussed election in relation to arbitrariness and the hiddenness of God(Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 53-131) prior to discussing election in Christ.
22. p.124 - citation of John 14:9 and accompanying comment.
23. p.133.
24. p.153 n.38.
25. p.154(discussing Barth's view and agreeing with him here).
26. p.154. Of interest here is Berkouwer's discussion of Calvin's use of the term "mirror of election"(pp.138ff.). Calvin boldly stated that "some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation"(Calvin's Institutes, (Associated Publishers and Authors Inc., Grand Rapids, Michigan, no date of publication given), Book Three, Chapter XXI, 5(p.491)). He also wrote, citing John 3:16; 5:24 and 6:35, "there is no room for fear that anything which he(Christ) tells us will vary from that will of the Father after which we inquire..He (God) would have us rest satisfied with his promises"(Book Three, Chapter XXIV, 5, brackets mine (p.517)). Berkouwer comments, "It certainly is not correct to say that Calvin did not see the question(regarding Christ and election), although it may be asked whether Calvin always answered that question clearly and adequately." (Divine Election, p.156, brackets mine(discussing Barth's criticism of Calvin's view of election - outlined on p.155).
27. Divine Election, Chapter 7, "Election and the Preaching of the Gospel", pp.218-253.
28. The relationship between (a) Calvin and Reformed scholasticism; and (b) Barth and universalism requires to be interpreted most carefully. (a) It requires to be noted that Calvin did say and did not refrain from saying, "By predestination we mean the eternal decree of God, by which he determined within himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man..some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation"(Three, XXI, 5). Thus, it is inaccurate to draw an absolute contrast between Calvin and "the decretal theology that developed after Calvin"(this phrase occurs in J. Daane, The Freedom of God : A Study of Election and Pulpit, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1973), p.37. Daane maintains that Calvin "rescued election and reprobation" from the idea that they are "mere instances of a cosmic, wall-to-wall doctrine of predestination" by transferring his discussion of election and predestination to "the locus of soteriology"(p.38). Contrasts based on the order in which Calvin discussed particular doctrines require to be set alongside what Calvin actually said.

The desire to either claim Calvin's support for one's own view or to dissociate one's view from Calvin's can easily lead to a misrepresentation of Calvin's view. Care must be taken to avoid the impression either that Calvin gives us nothing more than the definition of predestination in Institutes, Three, XXI, 5 or that he did not give this definition at all. Berkouwer writes, "Calvin's whole view does not come to light in this stark expression..(yet) it is undeniable that it was his definition that was worked out into the decretal theology of post-Reformation thought"(A Half Century of Theology : Movements and Motives, p.86, underlining and brackets mine). Berkouwer assesses Calvin's view both critically - "the difference between his doctrine of election and the "absolute might" he rejects is not at all clear"(p.87) - and appreciatively - "Christ as the "mirror of election" (was) a facet of election concerning which Calvin did not feel the urge to be silent" (p.88, brackets mine). (b) Berkouwer maintains that precisely because of his protest against divine arbitrariness in Calvin's thought Barth "cannot counter the apokatastasis doctrine by pointing to God's freedom. For, according to Barth, it was precisely this freedom which was not arbitrary, but the freedom whereby He bound Himself in love, namely, in the concreteness of the decision : the election of Jesus Christ"(The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.295, emphasis original). G.W. Bromiley maintains that there is, in Barth's theology, "a dark corner, which is not illumined by the spotlight on Christ(since) (t)he Father wills the election of all, the Son accomplishes it, but unaccountably the Spirit may not bring all to election"(Historical Theology : An Introduction, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978), p.437, underlining and brackets mine). The present writer finds it rather unaccountable, in view of this criticism, that Bromiley, stating that "(i)n his development of the vicariousness of Christ's person and work Barth has seldom been excelled", describes as an "insight" the idea that "universal sufficiency means universal reality..Things really are as God wills them, even if those who defy this truth may achieve a negative and false reality of their own"(p.436). Bromiley states that the idea that "there can still be a living in rejection as though Christ had not borne it(the rejection of all)..is hard to grasp" (p.437, brackets mine). It seems to the present writer that Bromiley, dissatisfied with both Barth's method of rejecting universalism and "(a) lurking universalism" in Barth's thought (p.437) yet appreciative of Barth's view of the atonement and the notion of two realities(p.436), does not provide any more clarification at this point than Barth himself does. The unbelieving man can, in Barth's view, know of the reality of God's love for him only from the vantage-point of "a negative and false reality of (his) own"(Bromiley, p.436, brackets mine). Barth does not hesitate to use the expression, "eternal destruction" here(Church Dogmatics, Vol.I, 2, translated by G.T. Thomson and H.Knight, general editors - G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance, (T.&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1956), p.238). Barth holds that the saving grace of God has been revealed towards mankind in Christ. It seems that this grace - as saving grace - is hidden from unbelieving man who knows of that grace only as a grace which has been rejected to his "eternal destruction"(Vol. I, 2, p.238). Barth's notion that a man's eternal destiny can

be determined by a negative and false reality of his own making raises a serious question concerning how the normativity of the positive and true reality is to be understood. The question arises concerning how far Barth is justified in his radical critique of Calvin when there is hidden within his own view of the positive and true reality a negative and false reality which can be described in terms of "eternal destruction" (Vol. I, 2, p. 238, underlining mine). Barth has shifted the problem of divine arbitrariness to another level of the relation between God and men without making at all clear how he himself has been able to avoid that problem. The idea that an ontologically impossible unbelief can determine a man's eternal destiny is most problematic (Berkouwer distinguishes between "the noetic problem of the incomprehensibility of sin" and "the ontological impossibility of sin" (The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p. 223, emphasis original)). In this extended note, the aim has been to demonstrate that (a) Calvin's view may not be directly identified with that of Reformed scholasticism though it is difficult to interpret accurately the precise relationship between the two; (b) Barth's view may not be identified with universalism which he rejected with "earnestness", emphasizing that "election must be proclaimed to men and by received by them in faith" (The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p. 116, emphasis original), though it is quite unclear how "the unresolved tension between the triumph of decisive election and the rejection of the apokatastasis doctrine" is to be interpreted (The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p. 121). Berkouwer emphasizes that "election is identical with grace" and that Christ is "the mirror of our election" (L. B. Smedes, "G. C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p. 77). He emphasizes that this grace comes to men "as an urgent life-and-death summons to believe" (Smedes, p. 77). Election, in Berkouwer's view, is not to be interpreted in quantitative terms (i.e. the election of "the elect, and the elect only" or the election of all) but as "a confession of faith arising from the hearts of those who have experienced God's grace" (C. M. Cameron, The Reformation Continues: A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology, in Reformed Review, Vol. 33, No. 2, (Winter 1980), p. 77). Christian faith is entirely oriented towards the grace of God in Christ. There is no need to adopt either the type of predestinarianism which is suspicious of Berkouwer's concept of the depth-aspect (cf. present study, pp. 149-157) or the type of christomonism which says, "You have been saved. Faith is merely a recognition of this fact" (cf. present study, pp. 111-116) in order to avoid turning faith into a meritorious act. When it is properly understood that "faith, directed only to divine mercy, excludes all worthiness", the words of Jesus - "Thy faith hath saved thee" (Luke 7:50) - can be taken at their face value without having to carefully avoid Arminian nuances by referring to either a particular redemption or a universal election (Faith and Justification, pp. 189, 176). It is hoped that this extended note, together with the discussion of "christomonism" (present study, especially pp. 160ff) and the doctrine of grace (present study, pp. 145-172), emphasizes clearly the value of Berkouwer's attempt to overcome the Reformed scholasticism - universalism polarization (especially in relation to other attempts which are adjudged to be less adequate).

29. Divine Election, p.232; cf. pp.46, 49.
30. p.230.
31. p.230 - Berkouwer raises this question here and answers it negatively in the discussion which follows.
32. p.232.
33. p.155 n. 43. For further discussion - pp.155ff.
34. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.111ff.; The Return of Christ, pp.399ff.
35. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.116.
36. p.265.
37. The Return of Christ, pp.408, 412; The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.267, 273ff.
38. The Return of Christ, p.411.
39. A.L. Baker, Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election : Balance or Imbalance?, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1981), p.139. Cf. L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, pp.64, 96; Berkouwer's Divine Election(Chapter 7, "Election and the Preaching of the Gospel", pp.218-253) and A Half Century of Theology : Movements and Motives, (Chapter 4, pp.75-166 - the title, "The Heart of the Church", emphasizes Berkouwer's view of the vital importance of the doctrine of election for the church's proclamation of the gospel).
40. A.L. Baker, Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election : Balance or Imbalance?, p.138. Accompanying note - "...notice how often he devotes whole chapters to considering how a doctrine relates to preaching.."(p.138 n.106). Baker states that "the church stands indebted to Berkouwer" for his emphasis on preaching(p.139). For discussion of Baker's analysis of Berkouwer's doctrine of election, cf. present study, pp.149-151.
41. p.114(emphasis original). Baker praises Berkouwer's emphases on the urgency of the gospel and election's relation to Christ.
42. John 14:9(cf. Divine Election, p.124).
43. There is no suggestion here of either setting the Gospels over against the rest of the New Testament or of implying that if one could isolate "the Jesus of the Gospels" from the total context of the New Testament, one would find a criterion by which the remainder of the New Testament could then be judged. The present writer has in mind Berkouwer's words in Divine Election, pp.201-202 where, citing John 3:16-18, he warns against pressing the gospel into a system "in such a manner that many of the simple words of the gospel can no longer be comprehended"(p.201).
44. When the gospel is interpreted according to a particularist objectification of "the elect", the reality of the grace of God as it has been experienced by the Christian believer becomes identified with an objectivism which threatens to relativize the significance^{of} the human context in which man comes to experience the grace of God and testify to the working of that grace of God in his life. It is hoped that the discussion of theological language in the present study, pp.153-157 helps to clarify this point.
45. A universalist objectification of "the elect"(whether or not this notion is combined with an acceptance of the apokatastasis) represents, in the present writer's view, a replacement of one misconception concerning election with another.
46. The Return of Christ, pp.395-396. Berkouwer draws attention to several biblical passages which are important in relation to

the development of a proper understanding of kerygmatic universality - John 3:16, John 1:29, 2 Corinthians 5:19, 1 John 2:2, John 4:42, 1 Timothy 4:10, 1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9, Titus 2:11. Two dangers require to be avoided in the interpretation of such passages - (a) The tendency to de-emphasize this universality out of fear of universalism; (b) The tendency to wrongly emphasize this universality in a universalist way out of fear of particularism. Both these dangers are grounded in the same view of the relationship between objectivity and subjectivity, a view which is, in the present writer's view, highly questionable.

47. The Return of Christ, p.422. This statement is found in Berkouwer's discussion of "The preaching of hell" (pp.417-423). This question requires comment because Berkouwer's teaching regarding "hell" has been controversial. A.L. Baker points out that "Berkouwer dislikes speaking of hell as an independent topic" (Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election: Balance or Imbalance?, p.12). He then cites the view of M.J. Arntzen who "questions whether Berkouwer believes in the reality of hell" (pp.12-13) with the following comment: "Arntzen is reacting to Berkouwer's view that Scripture does not intend to give objective data about the future. God does not intend to give Christians a special "gnosis" The Bible always speaks in relation to waking faith. "The proclamation of the future is always existential", according to Berkouwer. Arntzen rightly has difficulty in accepting Berkouwer's presentation..Arntzen correctly maintains that unless one is prepared to state that hell exists, all warnings continue to be hollow threats." (p.13). Baker also writes, "Hell is not primary, but its reality emphasizes the glory of heaven. Berkouwer's methodology strips Christians of the means of answering questions Scripture also speaks on." (p.46). It is this methodology which Baker has in mind when he writes concerning Arntzen's difficulties with Berkouwer's view: "Arntzen questions whether it is still possible to hold to the objective existence of hell if Berkouwer's methodology is accepted" (p.13). Several comments may be made by way of response to Baker: (a) When Berkouwer writes "every treatment of "hell" as an independent topic lacks genuine seriousness", his concern is not to deny the reality of hell but to guard against speaking about hell in a way that is not properly grounded in "the salvation proclaimed" (The Return of Christ, p.421, underlining mine). He protests against a "moralistic preaching of "hell" as the final outcome of "sin" without the light of the joy of the gospel" in which ""Hell" can easily assume a magical, terrifying dimension that speaks only of the incalculable, all-consuming wrath of God, and says nothing of His love" (p.416, underlining mine). It is this divorce of the subject of "hell" from the gospel that Berkouwer opposes. (b) When Berkouwer speaks of "an exorcism of it(hell) - in faith", specifically stating that "(t)his is not demythologizing of hell" (p.421, brackets mine, underlining - "in faith", original and "not" mine), he is indicating that he does not intend to deny the reality of hell. (c) When Berkouwer states that "(t)he proclamation of the future is always existential" (p.12), he is protesting against an interest in the future that is more concerned with the satisfaction of curiosity (p.11) than with "a proclamation that compels man to decide with respect to what is coming" (i.e. with respect to the one who is coming) (p.12, underlining mine). This decision which involves man in the entirety of his existence requires to be

carefully distinguished from both an existentialism which is bound up with de-eschatologizing and a moralism which affords no real perspective concerning the assurance of salvation.

(d) Baker's statement, "Hell is not primary, but its reality emphasizes the glory of heaven" (Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election: Balance or Imbalance?, p.46) merits comment here. (i) Commenting on a much more extreme statement made by Hoeksema concerning the function of rejection in emphasizing the glory of election, Berkouwer warns against speaking of necessity in relation to God, i.e. God had to reject in order to show the glory of his election (Divine Election, p.207), with the accompanying note: "I hesitated to cite these words because they contain something frightening and alarming and they could - in reaction - cast a shadow on the doctrine of election, but for the sake of objectivity (i.e. in his account of Hoeksema's views) I include them" (p.207 n.72, underlining mine, brackets mine). Baker is more guarded in his statements - "excessive statements have been made about what the logic of election necessitates God doing" (p.130 - in the accompanying note he cites H. Hoeksema, Reformed Dogmatics, (Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1973), p.161 as such an extreme (n.75)). (ii) In Holy Scripture, p.125, Berkouwer favourably cites "Bavinck who sees great truth in Baronius' statement that Scripture does not tell us what things are like in heaven but rather how to get there". The contrast may be overdrawn if taken as an absolute contrast between what heaven is like and the way to get there. Nonetheless, the emphasis is most valuable - Scripture is not concerned with satisfying our curiosity with information about heaven but with creating the desire in our hearts to get there and pointing us to Christ who is "the way" (John 14:6). A similar observation might be made concerning Berkouwer's interpretation of the biblical proclamation of "hell". Its concern is to create, by way of warning, the desire to get to heaven. This warning, then, takes its place in the proclamation of Christ as "the way" (John 14:6). (e) The present writer is not so convinced as Baker that Berkouwer's treatment of the question of "hell" is entirely bound up with a particular methodology which excludes certain questions "a priori". In The Return of Christ, p.423, Berkouwer cites the words of Luke 13:23 - "Strive to enter by the narrow door". It may be pointed out that Berkouwer does not cite the second half of this verse - "for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able" - which clearly indicates that there will be the lost as well as the saved. It should be noted, that these words as well as other words in the next few verses are included in Berkouwer's citation since he cites Luke 13:23f. and not simply Luke 13:23a. His concern is not to isolate the exhortation from the verses which follow it but to emphasize that these verses are set in the context of exhortation. Man's concern is to take this exhortation seriously as a call to faith in Christ. By taking this exhortation seriously, man takes seriously the reality of hell. Berkouwer does not speculate concerning a withdrawal of the threat of judgment. In The Return of Christ, p.417, he refers to the mercy of God in the book of Jonah. He does not make any inferences from "Jonah". He simply points to the contrast between God's willingness to forgive and Jonah's unwillingness to forgive. The present writer notes the starkness of Jonah 3:4 - "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" - and the divine demonstration of mercy (3:10). Admittedly, there

was repentance between the proclamation and the demonstration of mercy(3:5). It should not, however, be overlooked that the proclamation itself was simply a prediction of judgment and contained no promise of restoration to a repentant people(3:4). The penitents had no assurance of such restoration(3:9) yet they found God to be gracious and merciful towards them(3:10). The present writer would draw no direct deductions from the book of Jonah concerning precisely what God will or will not do in the eschaton. He would, however, maintain that the Christian church, like Jonah, is to be God's spokesman, which involves a fearless and faithful proclamation of the warning of the gospel as an essential part of the total gospel proclamation. Having proclaimed Christ in the contexts of both invitation and admonition, God's spokesmen must avoid the reaction which attempts to tell God what he should and should not do(4:1-5) and was rebuked by God who emphasized the freedom of his grace(4:6-11). The present writer would clearly distinguish between the idea that God may exercise his freedom in withdrawing his mercy from all men and the idea that God may exercise his freedom in withdrawing the threat of judgment from all men. The former idea contains an arbitrariness which represents a denial of the saving purpose of God in Christ. The latter idea contains no such arbitrariness since it is essentially an extension of that saving purpose which we can by no means expect yet which should not elicit our complaints if God should work in this way. S.H. Travis makes some useful comments at this point: "He would be a strange Christian who did not feel the pull of universalism. Anyone who has deeply sensed the love of God must surely long that somehow God would bring every man and woman to experience that love. Universalism has a fine emphasis on God's love and his sovereignty in achieving his purpose. It offers hope and comfort to the bereaved..yet these advantages are dearly bought, for the doctrine is a serious distortion of biblical teaching"(I believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1982) (part of the "I believe.." series, editor - M. Green), p.201). Cf. further comments regarding "necessity" and "preaching" in the next footnote(n.48).

48. The Return of Christ, p.423. A 'necessary' salvation of 'the elect, and the elect only' or of 'all' each raise the question of an element of subjectivism in the affirmation of the ultimate significance of preaching. Berkouwer, who emphasizes here the "one necessity" of preaching the gospel, insists that the unchangeable feature of divine election is its "style" - "not of works" (The Return of Christ, p.351). This "style" may not be identified with either a particularist or a universalist "necessity". Berkouwer describes as "unbiblical" "any argument against the apocatastasis that requires the justice of God to be satisfied in an eternal punishment" since "God's justice is revealed precisely in the cross"(p.393, underlining mine). In "(t)he history of the doctrine of the apocatastasis" Berkouwer sees and warns against "a persistent and almost irresistible inclination to go outside the proclamation of the gospel, whether in the form of certain knowledge or only as surmise"(p.423). Assessing the relationship of particularism and universalism to the preaching of the gospel, Berkouwer writes, "universalism..and..particularism..seem to be irreconcilable opposites, but they do meet at one decisive point: both formally maintain the seriousness of the preaching, but for neither can the preaching any longer genuinely function in a way that is worthy of faith"(p.412).

49. The Return of Christ, p.423(emphasis original).
50. The present chapter seeks to understand and interpret this concept.
51. Divine Election, p.133.
52. cf. John 3:16.
53. L. Berkhof, Systematic Theology, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London, First British edition 1958), p.113. For a discussion of L. Berkhof's theology in relation to Berkouwer's, cf. C.M. Cameron, "The Reformation Continues : A Study in Twentieth Century Theology" in Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2, (Winter 1980), pp.73-81.
54. J. Atkinson, "Universalism" in A Dictionary of Christian Theology, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1969), p.352. Atkinson stresses that this doctrine is "more properly known as Apocatastasis and is not to be confused with..(t)he view..that God's purposes were not to be limited to the Jewish race but embraced other (or all) nations"(p.352, emphasis original, brackets mine). In his discussion entitled, "Apocatastasis?" (The Return of Christ, Chapter Thirteen, pp.387-423), Berkouwer draws attention to another important distinction - "A distinction is usually made between absolute universalism and relative universalism. The latter is derived from the universality of Christ's sacrifice - Christus pro omnibus mortus est - but does not conclude the salvation of all, since not all accept the reconciliation in faith."(p.387 n.1, italics in the original).
55. Berkouwer writes, "We may plead for recognition of God's sovereignty, but we must beware that no deterministic interpretation is attached to it."(Divine Election, p.249). This comment which is directed against a particularist determinism might also be interpreted as a warning against a doctrine of apocatastasis in which "the kerygma fades away into the positive announcement of an unassailable end, upon which the human decision of faith or unbelief has no bearing."(The Return of Christ, p.411).
56. The present writer has reviewed this book in Reformed Review, Vol.35, No.3, (Spring 1982), p.164.
57. p.67(citing The Return of Christ, p.333).
58. pp.102-103.
59. Mack Publishing Company, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, 1977.
60. Bogue, p.19(citing Divine Election, p.172, italics in original).
61. p.19(brackets original).
62. p.19.
63. p.19(brackets original).
64. p.26(following C. Van Til, The Sovereignty of Grace : An Appraisal of G.C. Berkouwer's View of Dordt, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1969), p.86).
65. p.27(alluding to W. Pannenberg's "profound criticism of the theology of redemptive history which fled into a "storm-free harbor of suprahistory" to be safe from the "critical historical flood tide.""(p.27; cf. W. Pannenberg, "Redemptive Event and History"(Chapter Two, pp.15-80) in Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, translated by G.H. Kehm, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970).
66. Bogue(p.7 n.6 and p.8 n.9) draws attention to G.C. Berkouwer, "Vragen Rondom de Belijdenis" in Gereformeerde Theologisch Tijdschrift 63(February 1963), pp.1-41(especially pp.4-5). Bogue discusses Berkouwer's interpretation of Dordt in pp.17ff. Baker discusses Berkouwer's interpretation of Dordt in Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election : Balance or Imbalance?, pp.39, 41-42, 115-126. P. Y. de Jong(editor), Crisis in the Reformed Churches : Essays in commemoration of the great Synod of Dordt, 1618-1619,

(Reformed Fellowship, Inc., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968), pp. 90-92, 168-170 contains discussions of Berkouwer's view of Dordt. Passing references are also found on pp.56, 164 (the latter reference is to Calvin's view rather than Dordt's). A discussion of Berkouwer's influence on others is found on pp.172-173 (cf. A.L. Baker, pp.10, 14-15).

67. Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election : Balance or Imbalance?, p.67.
68. Divine Election, p.51.
69. p.68.
70. p.168.
71. p.217.
72. p.308.
73. Berkouwer emphasizes that a full emphasis on the significance of faith does not relativize the gracious character of salvation - "The character of faith resolves all tension between objectivity and subjectivity. For faith has significance only in its orientation to its object - the grace of God. Thus sola fide, instead of directing our attention to the believer, points us away from him to grace and God...Sola fide and sola gratia mean the same thing." (Faith and Justification, pp.29, 44, italics in the original).
74. Divine Election, p.172.
75. p.153 n.38. cf. the helpful opening paragraph (pp.74-75) of L.B. Smedes' account of Berkouwer's doctrine of election (pp.74-79) in "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes.
76. Rejecting an interpretation which threatens to relativize the significance of history by setting time and eternity over against each other, Berkouwer emphasizes the deep harmony between salvation's "eternal foundation" (p.168) and "the historical gospel" (p.151, Divine Election).
77. The question of how the "pre" and the "destination" elements of predestination are to be interpreted in relation to Jesus Christ has been answered in different ways. These differences of interpretation require to be related to the common faith in Jesus Christ in whom it is revealed that the unchanging feature of God's gracious election is that salvation comes to men through Jesus Christ as a gift of God's grace and not as a reward for good works.
78. Bogue's criticism of Berkouwer implies that the predestinarian language used in Scripture must be interpreted as Bogue interprets it. Berkouwer may not be a Calvinist on Bogue's terms. The central issue is "speaking in the light of the entire Biblical message..in the light of the full context of the gospel message" (Divine Election, pp.18, 21). It is, in the present writer's view, far from self-evident that the kind of "Calvinism" proposed by Bogue understands the "meaning and intention" of the gospel more adequately than Berkouwer (Divine Election, p.23). Bogue states that he does not criticize Berkouwer from the standpoint of "a determinism that makes God the author of sin" (A Hole in the Dike : Critical Aspects of Berkouwer's Theology, p.18). Bogue is content to acknowledge "the mystery of election" (p.18). It would seem to the present writer that, for the concept of "the mystery of election" (as used by Bogue) to be coherent, there must be an implicit recognition of a depth-aspect in predestinarian language. Even if Bogue rejects the notion of a depth-aspect and retains a literal interpretation of predestinarian language, it would seem that his use of the concept of "the mystery of election" in connection with his rejection of deter-

minism carries with it the implication of a depth-aspect in the use of predestinarian language. Even if "the mystery of election" is never understood by men (either in this life or in the eschaton) and the ultimate meaning of this mystery is fully understood only by God, the denial of determinism contains a tacit acknowledgement that predestinarian language is not used in precisely the same way as we normally use temporal language (i.e. it contains a depth-aspect).

79. Divine Election, pp.176-177, 200-201.

80. A sensitive discussion of the difficulties involved in a causal system is given by K. Runia, "Recent Reformed Criticisms of the Canons", Crisis in the Reformed Churches : Essays in Commemoration of the great Synod of Dort, 1618-1619, edited by P.Y. de Jong, (Chapter 9, pp.161-180). Runia draws attention to the central issue in pp.174-175 - "the Canons..emphasize that unbelief is man's fault. "The cause of guilt of this unbelief as well as of all other sins is no wise in God, but in man himself"(1,5)..But there is also a second line of thought in the Canons, namely, the line of 'causality'..in 1,6,.."That some receive the gift of faith from God, and others do not receive it, proceeds from God's eternal decree"..one cannot help wondering whether there were some traces of the idea of 'absolute power'..we gratefully notice that the fathers of Dort rejected it, but was it not a valid implication of their second line of thought?". Runia states that the first line of thought is "part of the clear teaching of Scripture"(p.174) and that, for the second line of thought, "the main 'proof' in Reformed theology has always been the 'logic' of the situation"(p.175). Concerning the second line of thought, he writes, "why does Scripture itself not draw this conclusion, if it is so natural and so logical? It is very striking indeed that the Canons themselves, in 1,15, do not mention any Scripture proof at all. In other articles, which touch upon the same matter, the Scripture proof given is very weak, to say the least. The same is true of Reformed theology in general. The texts that are usually mentioned are all ambiguous and they allow a different and better interpretation"(p.176). Whenever Runia praises the Canons, he expresses his appreciation critically - (a) Noting that election in Christ is taught in 1,7, he immediately writes, "it cannot be denied that in the Canons this central aspect of the biblical doctrine of election does not receive the emphasis it deserves."(p.164, underlining mine). (b) He commends the biblical character of the Canons(i.e. their proximity to "the fulness of the biblical message") "in spite of their 'causal' way of thinking"(p.168, underlining mine). (c) Noting that the Synod of Dort recognized that the gospel is the only correct starting-point for all our thinking about election and rejection (1,1-5), he writes, "Unfortunately, it has not adhered to this one starting point. In 1,6 it has added another line of thought, namely, one that starts from the counsel of God"(pp.177-178, underlining mine). In his concluding paragraph, Runia writes, "The problems can definitely not be solved by a mere historicizing and actualizing of election and rejection. But at the same time, we must say that the Gospel may not be robbed of its power by a method of thinking that takes its starting point in an eternal counsel and then proceeds to draw logical conclusions from this counsel. I often wonder whether the 'solution' is not to be sought in a deeper study of what we mean by the word 'eternal' when we speak of God's eternal counsel. Did Reformed

theology perhaps overemphasize the pre-temporal nature of the divine counsel?"(p.178, underlining mine). Runia whose view bears a certain similarity to Berkouwer's gives an appreciative account of Berkouwer's doctrine of election(pp.168-171). While Bogue tends to view Berkouwer's theology as a retreat into irrationalism, Runia gives a more accurate account, observing that Berkouwer does not want to "limit God's power and sovereignty", rejects "every form of synergism..including that of the Arminians", is "not motivated by the desire to give some place to even a partial autonomy of the human will" and fully agrees with the Canons' formulation in 1,5 : "'Faith in Jesus Christ and salvation through Him is the free gift of God.'"(p.173).

81. In his Divine Election, Berkouwer, at the outset of a chapter specifically concerned with the question of "Election and the Certainty of Salvation"(Chapter Nine, pp.278-306), writes "the relationship between election and the certainty of salvation has already come to the foreground several times and each time it was clear how intimately this matter of certainty is related to the election of God."(p.278). Relevant passages include pp.61, 114, 124, 150-151.
82. In his A Half Century of Theology : Movements and Motives, Berkouwer recalls a man who claimed that "nothing could help him "if he were not elect" and his own break from the church could not hurt him "if he were elect", pointing out that "pastoral warning is really powerless over against this sort of logic"(p.81). Berkouwer is, in his interpretation of election, concerned to effectively counter this kind of reasoning in a way that, in his view, Reformed scholasticism is unable to do.
83. Cf. the present writer's "The Reformation Continues : A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology", Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2, (Winter 1980), p.79 where attention is drawn to the different concepts of objectivity used by Berkouwer and L. Berkhof - "Berkouwer's emphasis on the importance of the subjective element in faith for the formulation of Christian doctrine is never meant as the abrogation of objectivity..Berkouwer affirms that authentic subjectivity only comes through encounter with the objectivity of the living God himself. Berkouwer's insistence on the importance of God as the object of faith that decisively determines the nature of faith must, however, be distinguished from an artificial objectivism that tends to rationalize truth into a system of ideas. Berkhof..is open to the charge of not drawing a sufficient distinction between the true objectivity of God and the false objectivism of the system."
84. I take this to mean a kind of spiritual intuition without any objective foundation. Berkouwer does hold that "in the Reformed Confessions, there is an intuitive and reflexive understanding of the Scriptural message of election"(Divine Election, p.195). Berkouwer emphasizes that "the election of God is confessed as the foundation of salvation out of mercy and grace without any merit"(p.196). The intuitive character of the faith by which the believer trusts in the mercy and grace of God as the foundation of salvation is to be contrasted with the kind of objectivism associated with Reformed scholasticism. This intuitive aspect may not, however, be dissociated from the mercy and grace of God which, as the object of faith, provides its truly objective foundation.
85. Divine Election, p.124(especially citation of John 14:9).
86. A Hole in the Dike : Critical Aspects of Berkouwer's Theology, p.26.
87. Divine Election, pp.114, 150-151.

88. Man : The Image of God, pp.320-322, 324-325, 327.
89. Cf. Divine Election, pp.150-151, 250-251.
90. It is precisely the kind of supra-history associated with Reformed scholasticism that Berkouwer is particularly concerned to avoid in his discussions of "Election in Christ" and "Election and Rejection" (Divine Election, Chapters 5-6, pp. 132-217).
91. Karl Barth was unable to recognize himself at all in C. Van Til's The New Modernism : An Appraisal of the Theology of Barth and Brunner, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 2nd edition, 1947) (cited in The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.388). It might be expected that Berkouwer would be unable to recognize himself in Bogue's account of his view.
92. Berkouwer maintains that, in his opposition to Barth, Van Til has "drawn a picture of orthodoxy in which I cannot recognize the features of the real Reformed orthodoxy" (The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.390). Berkouwer might be expected to respond similarly to Bogue's theological position. ^(emphasis original).
93. Divine Election, p.152.
94. Divine Election, p.152. This statement is made in the particular context of the discussion of the doctrine of election and should not be understood as a broad generalization which can be applied indiscriminately to every theological statement. In The Person of Christ, Berkouwer favourably cites the words of H. de Vos : "One cannot avoid teaching Christ's pre-existence : if Jesus Christ be God, then he existed before he became man." (p.54). In this statement, as in Divine Election, p.152, Berkouwer's concern is to emphasize that the historical is grounded in the eternal and that both the historical and the eternal are grounded in the love of God. It is the divine love which undergirds the eternal salvation which has become historical reality in Christ (cf. Divine Election, p.168).
95. Divine Election, pp.113, 150, 168.
96. pp.113-114 (in discussion of biblical statements concerning "the Book of Life").
97. Cf. Ephesians 1:4 for a biblical statement concerning divine election which uses this phrase. (This phrase also occurs in John 17:24 and 1 Peter 1:20. The context and content of each passage is different and there is no clear uniformity of usage). For related discussion, see present study, pp.149-151.
98. Divine Election, pp.150-151. Berkouwer also stresses that the depth-aspect of salvation should also be recognized in the use of the expression "God's good pleasure" concerning which Berkouwer writes, "This pleasure does not stand in contrast to the historical gospel" (p.151). L. B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.77 n.32 - "The "good pleasure of God" according to which we are chosen in Christ is sometimes taken to mean that God simply does anything that he arbitrarily decides, whereas the "good pleasure of God" is His gracious purpose to save : Christ is the revelation of His "good pleasure."" (The idea of God's good pleasure occurs in the Authorized Version's rendering of Ephesians 1:5, 9. The idea of God's good pleasure is also found in Philippians 2:13 (Authorized Version and Revised Standard Version) and 2 Thessalonians 1:11 (Authorized Version). In these latter passages, the theme is sanctification and there is no suggestion of arbitrariness at all. In examining these texts, I referred to the two afore-mentioned translations.)
99. Divine Election, p.168. Berkouwer shares Bavinck's protest against the description of God's counsel as ""an act of God in the past"" (p.152), emphasizing that the word "decree" can be thoroughly misleading when it is "interpreted out of its context in Scripture"

(p.152). J. Philip discusses helpfully the relation between time and eternity in his The Westminster Confession of Faith : An Exposition, Part 1, Chapters 1-8, (Holyrood Abbey Church, Edinburgh - series of expositions given at midweek services in 1966, issued in four parts). "The word 'decree' has a rather unhappy and unfortunate connotation in its use in the thought of election and predestination. It is not in fact used in the New Testament in relation to this subject..The word suggests something completed long ago..The phrase 'before the foundation of the world' implies something away back at the beginning of time, and behind us in relation to the direction in which we are now travelling..time is thought of in terms of a straight line, with eternity at either end of it..we may ask ourselves whether this linear conception of time and eternity is really what the Scriptures mean to convey. It is by no means a self-evident conception.. there is a sense in which it is self-contradictory. We should perhaps think of eternity as something all round us and liable to break in at any moment..This is rather how the New Testament thinks of eternity. We speak of the gospel breaking into the darkness of a man's soul. Where..does it come from? Not far away: 'The word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth....' As near as that! Life as we know it is surrounded and encompassed by eternity, which touches it at every point." (pp.26-27, underlining mine). Criticism of the linear conception of time does not imply that time is co-eternal with eternity. The present writer holds that the temporal character of the present world is recognized in the biblical doctrines of creation and eschatology. Criticism of the linear conception of time in relation to predestination does not imply criticism of either Christ's pre-existence or the reality of the Christian hope (cf. The Person of Christ, p.54 and The Return of Christ, p.16 for Berkouwer's protest against a demythologizing of Christ's pre-existence and the de-eschatologizing of the Christian hope). The affirmations concerning the person of Christ and the return of Christ emphasize the eternal character of a salvation which has neither its ultimate origin nor its ultimate goal in man's present experience. The interpretation of predestination in terms of eternity encompassing time at every point is aimed not at denying the eternal character of salvation but at understanding the way in which this eternal salvation reaches man in his present experience without devaluing the significance of that experience. Life as we know it is neither 'everything' nor 'nothing'. The ultimate significance of man's present experience is found not in that experience itself but in the eternal God whose eternal purpose transcends man's present experience. This eternal God and eternal purpose does not strip man's present experience of significance but rather affords to it eternal significance.

100. Ex Auditu Verbi, Theologische opstellen aangeboden aan Prof.G.C. Berkouwer, (J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1965), edited by R. Schippers et al.
101. First published in Ex Auditu Verbi, pp.272-296; Reprinted in T.F. Torrance, God and Rationality, (Oxford University Press, London, 1971), Chapter 7, pp.165-192.
102. In his Theological Science, (Oxford University Press, London, 1969), he writes, "Authentic theological thinking must carry its inquiry into the very heart of grace." (p.128). Cf. J. Philip, The Westminster Confession of Faith : An Exposition, Part 1, Chapters 1-8 - "The notion that God predestinates first, then proceeds to be gracious is a falsification of the truth. Grace is

- eternal. We may look back as far as we will, but will never discover a time when God is not gracious."(p.29).
103. Theological Science, p.128 n.2. Cf. J. Philip who insists that we are "not to enter into a world of logical speculation and speak of a God who before all worlds damned men for His pleasure" since "Predestination..simply means 'God in action', the hand of God stretching out from beyond to claim men for a destiny bright beyond all understanding and almost beyond belief."(The Westminster Confession of Faith : An Exposition, Pt.1, p.36).
104. T.F. Torrance, "Predestination in Christ", The Evangelical Quarterly, XIII, (April 1941), p.119(article - pp.108-141).
105. p.120.
106. Torrance draws an analogy between Christ as truly human and truly divine and the divine encounter in which there is a really human decision and a really divine one. Berkouwer does not use this kind of analogy in the development of his doctrine of election.
107. T.F. Torrance, "Predestination in Christ", p.117; cf. Divine Election, Chapter 4("Election and the Hiddeness of God"), pp. 102-131.
108. T.F. Torrance, "Predestination in Christ", p.117; cf. Divine Election, p.153 n.38. Berkouwer emphasizes that "divine election is identical with the grace of God that was revealed in Jesus Christ..(and) is..not to be confused with a notion of an arbitrary, graceless decree of a purely Sovereign Deity"(L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.74, brackets mine). Emphasizing that it is only out of the experience of divine grace that a man can speak of divine election, Berkouwer carefully avoids any suggestion of a christological objectivism in which 'man' and 'the world' are understood to be standing in a relationship of grace by virtue of the incarnation and apart from faith(for further discussion, cf. present study, pp.106ff.). The 'personal relation' of which Scripture speaks is "a relation as it becomes visible in and through the reality of salvation", a relation which it is "completely impossible to hypostasize..as an actuality in se, since Scripture's "in Christ" and "by faith" so clearly determines it"(Man : The Image of God, p.101, italics in original). Apart from faith in Christ, man's relation to God is one in which he "stands..in his human responsibility and in his human guilt over against God"(Man : The Image of God, p.135).
109. T.F. Torrance, "Predestination in Christ", pp.117-118.
110. Man : The Image of God, Chapter 9("Human Freedom"),pp.310-348.
111. "Universalism or Election?", Scottish Journal of Theology, 2, (1949), p.313(article : pp.310-318). Recognizing that Torrance has "correctly" rejected a necessary universalism as a violation of free grace which threatens to make the cross of Christ meaningless, Berkouwer maintains that Torrance has difficulty in rejecting universalism in view of his idea of universal election (The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.363-364 with accompanying notes 17-19). In Divine Election, pp.230-241, Berkouwer speaks of the universality of the gospel without speaking of a universal election.
112. God and Rationality, p.184.
113. pp.186-188.
114. Berkouwer does not advocate a 'spiritualism' which devalues the words of Scripture(Holy Scripture, pp.57-59, 288-290). An interesting general study of the complex problem of theological language is provided in F. Ferre, Language, Logic and God, (Eyre &

- Spottiswoode(Publishers) Ltd., London, 1962) - this book contains a useful discussion of a variety of different ways of understanding theological language.
115. Divine Election, p.18.
116. No theological interpretation can ever be considered final and conclusive. Berkouwer recognizes the clear difference between Scripture and interpretations of Scripture in both his view of historical theology and his own theological method. In "Chalcedon a Terminal Point?" (The Person of Christ, Chapter V, pp.85-97) emphasizes that "(t)he limits of dogmatic reflection on Christology lie..in Scripture itself" stressing "that Chalcedon is not as rich as that Scriptural fullness on which the church, in its preaching, is continually allowed to draw..that the confession is not intended to replace the riches and fullness of the Scriptures..(and that)(i)t is precisely the purpose of the confession to point out that fullness and those riches"(p.96). In the "Foreword" to A Half Century of Theology : Movements and Motives, he writes, "I regret every sign that theologians have lost their curiosity..without the tensions of curiosity there is little hope for any essential correction in one's own insights. A complacency sets in, a feeling that the gospel has been adequately thought about and understood, and that we can restfully settle down with what has already been said. A curiosity that works itself out in passionate study and serious listening to others promises surprises, clearer insight, and deeper understanding - no matter from which direction they come."(pp.7-8).
117. Language, Logic and God, Chapter 7, pp.78-93.
118. Chapter 8, pp.94-104.
119. N. Smart, The Philosophy of Religion, (Sheldon Press, London, 1979), Chapter 2, pp.41-73. (This book is No.6 in "Studies in Philosophy and Religion", General Editor - P.R. Baelz).
120. Cf. citation of John 14:9 in Divine Election, p.124.
121. 2 Corinthians 9:15(R.S.V.).
122. cf. J. Calvin, Institutes, Three, XXI, 5 ; L. Berkhof, Systematic Theology, pp.109-118.
123. W.Pannenberg, Theology and the Kingdom of God, edited by R.J. Neuhaus, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1975), p.12 (from "Wolfhart Pannenberg: Profile of a Theologian" by Neuhaus).
124. pp.54, 59.
125. Human Nature, Election and History, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1977), p.101.
126. p.107 (underlining mine). This statement is immediately preceded by the statement - "Participation in the Kingdom of God is a matter..of spiritual rebirth". In view of Pannenberg's radical church-kingdom distinction, it is difficult to determine precisely how, in Pannenberg's thought, the "spiritual rebirth" which he relates to "participation in the Kingdom" is related to the "individual faith" which is "fundamental in the concept of the Church" (underlining mine).
127. p.107 (underlining mine).
128. Theology and the Kingdom of God, p.73.
129. W. Pannenberg, A. Dulles S.J., C.E. Braaten, Spirit, Faith and Church, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1970), p.111.
130. p.116.
131. Theology and the Kingdom of God, p.78. It would be inaccurate to state that Pannenberg is a universalist. It should, however, be observed that the universalist tendency of his entire theology makes it rather difficult to state clearly how his view differs

- from the universalist position.
132. Berkouwer's discussion, "Apocatastasis?" (The Return of Christ, Chapter 13, pp.387-423), is most valuable for its emphasis on grounding our thinking in Scripture rather than imposing our own system of thought on the Scriptures.
 133. What is Man? : Contemporary Anthropology in Theological Perspective, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970) (German edition, 1962), translated by D.A. Priebe, p.80.
 134. p.81. Of the individual under judgment, Pannenberg writes, "he will not simply become nothing; he will be destroyed in the face of his infinite destiny, that is, his destiny to a total, healed life"(p.79).
 135. Pannenberg does write, "Only for the person who is in communion with Jesus does the resurrection mean eternal life as well as judgment"(p.81). It is, however, rather difficult to determine precisely how this statement is to be understood in view of Pannenberg's general theological emphasis.
 136. In his discussion of "The seriousness of the gospel proclamation" (The Return of Christ, pp.413-417), Berkouwer, emphasizing that "this great seriousness..is not based on human legalism or moralism..(but) is rooted in the reality of the gospel"(p.414, emphasis original, brackets mine), asks a question which must be asked of every eschatological perspective - "Has the church's preaching always warned, in a responsible way, against provoking the love of God?"(p.416, emphasis original). This call for a responsible proclamation of judgment is directed against both an 'a priori' universalism which teaches that "in the final analysis, the irresistible power of grace will force the capitulation of all rebellion against it"(p.407, emphasis original) and a "moralism" which makes it "well-nigh impossible to free the word "hell" from totally false associations" which speak "only of the incalculable, all-consuming wrath of God", saying "nothing of His Love"(p.416).
 137. Eschatology brings unity to history which is fragmented by contradictions. The relationship between eschatology and history is, in Pannenberg's thought, a parallel to the relationship between church and kingdom.
 138. J.M. Robinson, "Revelation as Word and History" in Theology as History, edited by J.M. Robinson and J.B. Cobb Jr., (New Frontiers in Theology, Vol.III), (Harper & Row, New York, 1967), p.63.
 139. Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.II, translated by G.H. Kehm, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1971), p.24; Revelation as History, edited by W. Pannenberg, translated by D. Granskou, (The Macmillan Company, New York; Collier-Macmillan Ltd., London, 1968), p.18; The Idea of God and Human Freedom, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1973; published in the U.K. by S.C.M. Press Ltd., London 1973 under the title, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.III), pp.174,177.
 140. The charge of pantheism is, in Pannenberg's view, "(t)he most effective theological charge against Hegel's philosophy" (The Idea of God and Human Freedom, p.160). In making this comment, Pannenberg points out that "Hegel defended himself against the charge of pantheism..repeatedly and explicitly defend(ing) his philosophy against that label"(p.161). In his discussion of the pantheistic tendency in Hegel's thought(pp.160ff), Pannenberg is clearly dissatisfied with both the notion that Hegel's thought is pantheistic and the development of elements in Hegel's thought in a pantheistic direction by "the Hegelian left wing..(which) more or less openly professed pantheism"(p.161). In Pannenberg's view, Hegel need not be interpreted pantheistically. It is

- the pantheistic interpretation of Hegel which developed "from the time of D.F. Strauss onwards"(p.161) from which Pannenberg is particularly concerned to dissociate himself.
141. It is important to understand that "(w)hen Hegel avails himself of Christian categories, he never implies acceptance of the Christian faith in the supernatural, in miracles, or in the incarnation and resurrection; he merely finds the Christian myths more suggestive and appropriate anticipations of his philosophy than the myths of other religions"(W. Kaufmann, Hegel: Reinterpretation, Texts and Commentary, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, U.K. edition, 1966(first published, 1965), p.274). Pannenberg adopts an entirely unHegelian stance when he writes, "the assertion that Jesus is risen..implies a historical claim, because it is the assertion of a particular past event; and with such an assertion it lays itself open to historical enquiry and examination..Consequently Christianity will have to get used to the fact that the basic assertion of its faith will remain a matter of dispute in this world"(The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, translated by M. Kohl, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1972), p.114). In view of Pannenberg's emphasis on the inseparability of fact and meaning, M. Westphal contends that, despite his admiration of and indebtedness to Hegel, "Pannenberg may well be the most articulate anti-Hegelian since Kierkegaard"("Hegel, Pannenberg and Hermeneutics" in Man and World, Vol.4, No.3, August 1971, (M. Nijhoff, The Hague), p.276(entire article - pp.276-293).
142. Revelation as History, (edited by W. Pannenberg), translated by D. Granskou, pp.16-17; Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.II, translated by G.H. Kehm, pp.21ff. It is important to note the way in which Pannenberg uses the concept of "universal history". For Pannenberg, the language of apocalyptic is to be understood in terms of "the expectation of the end of history as a future event" (A.D. Galloway, Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Contemporary Religious Thinkers Series, General Editor: H.D. Lewis), (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1973), p.73 n.5). Pannenberg sees apocalyptic language as symbolic "in the sense that we have no direct experience of it (the reality to which apocalyptic language points) and therefore no resources out of which we can picture or imagine it literally"(Galloway, p.72, brackets mine). This understanding of the symbolic function of apocalyptic language as it points towards the world's future requires to be carefully distinguished from a symbolic interpretation which sees the universality of apocalyptic language not in terms of the world's future but solely in terms of a particular understanding of man's existential experience.
143. The Idea of God and Human Freedom, Chapter 5, pp.144-177.
144. p.160. For Pannenberg's answer - pp.160ff.
145. A.D. Galloway, "The New Hegelians", Religious Studies, 8, pp.367-371, December 1972, (quote on p.371).
146. A.D. Galloway, Wolfhart Pannenberg, p.64.
147. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vol.2 (G-Pre), editor : G. Brown, (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976), p.383(from B. Klappert, "King, Kingdom", pp.372-390).
148. p.385.
149. Theology and the Kingdom of God, p.78.
150. E.F. Tupper, The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1973), p.246.
151. Jesus : God and Man, pp.270-272; The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, pp.91-92.

152. Pannenberg's discussion of Christ's descent into hell is an "Excursus" to his discussion of the vicarious character of Jesus' death on the cross(Chapter 7).
153. Pannenberg's discussion of the phrase, "He Descended into Hell" is found on pp.90-95.
154. Jesus - God and Man, p.272.
155. The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, pp.94-95.
156. For discussion of Romans 5:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:22, cf. present study, p.347 n.389. For discussion of the relationship between sovereignty and salvation, cf. present study, pp.107-109 where it is emphasized that the affirmation of divine sovereignty need not entail universal salvation. The use of Ephesians 1:10 in support of universalism requires to take account of other emphases in Ephesians : (a) salvation is not only "by grace" but "through faith"(2:8); (b) a presumptuous attitude with respect to "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" is solemnly warned against(5:5). Concerning the use of Colossians 1:20 in support of universalism, G.E. Ladd writes, "Such an interpretation can indeed be read into such verses as Colossians 1:20 if they are taken out of the context of the total Pauline teaching"(A Theology of the New Testament, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1974), p.568). Commentators who do not accept a universalist exegesis of Colossians 1:20 have related this passage to the teaching in Romans 8:19-22 concerning the redemption of "creation" - cf. H.M. Carson, The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and Philemon, (The Tyndale Press, London, 1960), pp.46-47; E.G. Ashby, "The Letter to the Colossians", in G.C.D. Howley, F.F. Bruce, H.L. Ellison(editors), A New Testament Commentary, (Pickering & Inglis Ltd., London, 1969), p.485. Regarding this cosmic element of redemption, cf. The Return of Christ, p.211f. B. Milne speaks of both "the ultimate, cosmic triumph of God's purpose" and "the doom of those who will bow the knee only by constraint, not in joyful, adoring surrender"(Know the Truth : A Handbook of Christian Belief, (Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, 1982), p.275).
157. e.g. Matthew 7:13-14, John 3:36, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. B. Milne warns against both presumption and complacency - "We need to beware..of attempting to take the final judgment into our own hands by apportioning people to hell or heaven..If we are truly trusting in Christ, we have no need to fear for ourselves. For the rest, we must leave matters in the hands of God and press on with the task of spreading throughout the world the one hope of sinners, the gospel of Christ"(Know the Truth, p.274).
158. Human Nature, Election and History, p.101.
159. p.107.
160. p.107.
161. This evaluation by R. Nicole(Gordon Divinity College) appears on the back cover of the paperback edition of G.E. Ladd, The Presence of the Future, (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1974).
162. A Theology of the New Testament, p.111.
163. p.111f.
164. p.87(brackets mine).
165. p.74.
166. p.99.
167. pp.97, 101(this phrase appears on p.101 in this form).
168. The Presence of the Future, p.333(statement cited as n.8).
169. p.333.
170. E.F. Tupper, The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1973), p.302.

171. p.302.
172. A. Dulles S.J., Models of the Church, (Gill and Macmillan Ltd., Dublin, 1976), pp.97-98. Dulles makes this point in his discussion, "The Church and Eschatology" (Chapter VI, pp.96-114) while emphasizing the cosmic significance of the eschaton (p.114). Dulles' statements regarding this cosmic element could be developed in a universalist direction though it is doubtful whether this is the direction of Dulles' own thought.
173. Relevant references are given in n.139 (present chapter).
174. God after God : The God of the Past and of the Future as seen in the Work of Karl Barth, (The Bobbs Merrill Company, 1969), p.178 (cited in E.F. Tupper, The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg, p.288).
175. Cited in E.F. Tupper, The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg, p.288.
176. Tupper notes Pannenberg's response to this criticism (p.288; referring to "A Theological Conversation with Wolfhart Pannenberg", Dialog 11, Autumn 1972 in which Pannenberg, speaking of a "process of glorification" ..from "glory to glory".." (pp.287-288), points out that he does not think in terms of a process reaching an end but rather in terms of "an entirely different process beyond an end event" (Tupper, p.288).
177. p.299.
178. cf. R.P.C. Hanson's comments on 2 Corinthians 6:2 in The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, (Torch Bible Paperbacks), (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1967) - "Now men and women are being saved (it is now THE DAY OF SALVATION); now men and women are being ruined. Now the destiny of each person is being decided according to their response to that final and irrevocable standard of judgment, Jesus Christ. It is true that the Arrival has not yet taken place, but the Arrival is the end of judgment and not the beginning of it; the Arrival is the disappearance of the last chance, but now, this moment may be the Last Chance..the ACCEPTED TIME, tense with urgency, burning with hope, terrible with the possibilities of glory or ruin." (p.52, emphases original). Hanson points out that while this view may be "(v)astly different..from the complacent unconcern..(of) many Christians", it is "consistent..with the message of our Lord himself" (p.53, brackets and underlining mine).
179. For a brief outline of Berkouwer's approach to eschatology, cf. C.M. Cameron, "The Reformation Continues : A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology", Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2 (Winter 1980), p.79.
180. cf. present study, pp.380-381 (latter part of extended note 47).
181. cf. present study, pp.209-213.
182. The Return of Christ, pp.246-248.
183. pp.246-248.
184. cf. present study, pp.209-213.
185. The Return of Christ, p.397 - Berkouwer emphasizes the connection between the Bible's eschatological language and "preaching, appeal, and demand for response". If the relationship between the promise and the warning in preaching is to be properly understood and responsibly followed, two dangers must be avoided - (a) The proclamation of the promise as "a static eschatological fact" (p.412) which implicitly disregards "the context of the New Testament words about judgment" in which there is no suggestion that "the ultimate extinction of resistance is self-evident" (p.407); (b) The proclamation of a warning which takes on the "characteristics of terror" without echoing "the compelling voice of a guide, of the gospel itself" (p.422).
186. p.423 (emphases original).

187. cf. present study, pp.29-34, 67-70.
188. cf. W.L. Schutter, "A Continuing Crisis for Incarnational Doctrine", Reformed Review, Vol.32, No.2(Winter 1979), pp.82-83.
189. Edited by J. Hick, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1977). The reader is also referred to M. Green(editor); The Truth of God Incarnate, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1977).
190. "Eternal Life: Life After Death?", Heythrop Journal, XIV, 3, July 1978, p.281.
191. G.E. Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, p.258. This phrase occurs in Ladd's discussion of the use of the concept, 'eternal life', in the fourth gospel(especially pp.256-259). Ladd, who views New Testament theology in terms of "diversity within a basic unity"(p.33), writes, "In the sayings about eternal life as an eschatological blessing, John is in agreement with the Synoptic Gospels. In his emphasis upon life as a present spiritual reality, John goes beyond the Synoptics with a different emphasis."(p.258).
192. cf. present study, pp.149-157.
193. cf. present study, pp.157-163.
194. Faith and Justification, p.145(italics in the original).
195. p.147.
196. p.150.
197. p.157
198. p.159.
199. p.159.
200. p.160.
201. p.161.
202. p.160.
203. p.159(emphases original).
204. The Person of Christ, p.41. This statement should be set alongside J. Rogers' observations concerning Berkouwer's statements concerning Bultmann(cf. present study, p.357 n.51).
205. Holy Scripture, pp.243-244.
206. pp.247-248.
207. p.257. cf. The Work of Christ, p.15. A Half Century of Theology: Movements and Motives, pp.7-8.
208. The Person of Christ, p.35.
209. Holy Scripture, pp.251-252(brackets mine, emphasis original).
210. pp.254, 256
211. Note the titles of the opening chapters of, for example, Faith and Justification("Relevance"), Faith and Sanctification("Timeliness and Relevance") and Faith and Perseverance("Timeliness and Relevance").
212. The Person of Christ, p.54.
213. The Work of Christ, p.106. For further discussion relating to the interpretation of the biblical accounts of Jesus' birth, cf. present study, pp.232-235.
214. The Work of Christ, p.181. Cf. present study, pp.67-70, 73-76.
215. cf. The Truth of God Incarnate, edited by M. Green, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1977).
216. Divine Election, pp.218-227; A Half Century of Theology: Movements and Motives, pp.98-104; present study, pp.220-223.
217. "Universalism", Christianity Today, I, 16(April 29, 1957), pp.5-6.
218. The concern here is primarily with transcendent hope. For a discussion of the relationship between transcendent and immanent hope, cf. present study, pp.251-255.
219. E. Schlink, The Coming Christ and the Coming Church, (Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh and London, 1967) underlines the connection between future hope and present response - "We have no right to

speak of Christ as the hope of the world unless we humble ourselves before God and recognize Him as the judge of the world ...Only when we have repented and confessed that we have wasted our life in God's sight shall we ever know Christ as the hope of the world"(p.258). Schlink describes "the actions born of Hope" thus : "The first act of hope is the preaching of the gospel to the whole world..The second action born of hope is accepting responsibility for the just ordering of society"(pp. 261-262, italics in the original).

220. Two points of departure from the New Testament hope must be carefully avoided - (a) an entirely "other-worldly" hope which has no consequences for action in this world; (b) an entirely "this-worldly" hope that has no perspective on the eternal future beyond this present world. cf. present study, pp.272-273.
 221. Holy Scripture, p.256; The Return of Christ, p.166 n.60.
 222. The Return of Christ, pp.403-423.
 223. Holy Scripture, p.256.
 224. G.E. Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, p.329.
 225. R.D. Knudsen, "Rudolf Bultmann", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.155.
 226. The Work of Christ, p.181; cf. G.E. Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, pp.30-32; W. Pannenberg, The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, pp.10-11(cf. present study, pp.232-235 for further discussion of Pannenberg's view).
 227. Holy Scripture, p.256(citing W.G. Kummel - source given).
 228. p.256(citing W.G. Kummel - source given).
 229. G.C. Berkouwer, "Current Religious Thought", Christianity Today, III, 13(March 30, 1959), p.39; cf. W. Pannenberg, The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.114.
 230. G.C. Berkouwer, "The Church in the Last Days", Christianity Today, II, 14(April 14 1958), pp.3-5.
 231. The Return of Christ, pp.246-248.
 232. p.243.
 233. p.256.
 234. p.255.
 235. p.247.
 236. p.255(cf. present study, p.34).
 237. p.244.
 238. p.245.
 239. pp.14-19.
 240. p.16.
 241. p.244.
 242. p.405.
 243. p.406.
 244. p.407.
 245. p.414.
 246. p.416(cf. p.421 - "not demythologizing of hell" but "an exorcism of it - in faith"(emphasis original)).
 247. p.416(emphasis original).
 248. p.418.
 249. p.422.
 250. p.423(citing Luke 1:79).
 251. p.422(brackets mine).
-

Footnotes to Chapter Seven(Pages 173-215).

1. I. Pitt-Watson, A Kind of Folly : Toward a Practical Theology of Preaching, (The Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1976), pp.11-12 (emphasis original).
2. L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Second Revised Edition - 1969), p.64.
3. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1974), pp.141-142(brackets original).
4. p.52(italics in the original).
5. Faith and Justification, p.21.
6. p.9. Berkouwer's writings are full of valuable discussions of a wide range of theological opinion. To understand his writings properly one must, however, look beyond the many discussions to the spiritual reality of the salvation of God in Christ to which they relate.
7. Berkouwer discusses many seemingly 'peripheral' issues with a view to understanding their relation to the salvation of God in Christ.
8. Berkouwer's concern is to be helpful to the church's life of faith and not to cause confusion with obscure theological complexities.
9. cf. present study, pp.22-29, 34-38.
10. cf. present study, pp.52-53.
11. cf. present study, pp.33-34, 153-157.
12. cf. present study, pp.38-42.
13. The Church, Chapter Two, pp.29-50.
14. p.29(italics in the original).
15. pp.34-35(brackets original).
16. pp.35-37.
17. pp.36-37.
18. pp.37-39.
19. p.37.
20. pp.39-43.
21. pp.40-41.
22. pp.43-46.
23. pp.45-46.
24. p.49.
25. p.50.
26. "Trinitarian Unity and the Church"(pp.48-50).
27. p.48.
28. p.50(italics in the original).
29. p.50.
30. pp.46-48.
31. p.46(citing Bavinck - source given; emphasis original).
32. p.48.
33. p.50.
34. I.J. Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", Reformed Review, Vol.26, No.2(Winter 1973), p.69.
35. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.143.
36. J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1969(reviewed by L. Praasma in Westminster Theological Journal, 33, pp.73-80); cf. G.C. Berkouwer, "Conserve and Progress"("Current Religious Thought"), Christianity Today, XIV, 11, pp.45-46 - Concerning the conservative-progressive discussion, Berkouwer writes, "The way in which a person tends to think about things is influenced by psychological and character traits. It is influenced by experiences that have profoundly affected his response to what is going on in the world...In

- turning to the Scriptures, we do not get a quick endorsement of either mentality..It is highly important that words like conservative and progressive not be used as slogans or derogatory labels"(p.45).
37. For an account of the Synod of Assen, 1926 and the 1967 Report, cf. J. Timmer, "The Fall of Assen", Reformed Journal, October 1969, pp.15-20.
 38. For detailed information concerning this committee and its report, cf. H.E. Osterhaven, unpublished notes on the Report from the Committee for Advice concerning the Doctrinal Statement of the Synod of Assen, 1926 to the General Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, meeting in Amsterdam, 1967.
 39. H. Bavinck, Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, (J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1928(first published, 1895-1899), Vol.I, p.414.
 40. Vol.I, p.414.
 41. p.162 n.73; p.172 n.5.
 42. p.357; cf. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.59.
 43. Osterhaven's unpublished notes, p.2.
 44. p.2.
 45. p.2(emphasis original).
 46. p.7.
 47. Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.143.
 48. Concerning the use of the term, "evangelical", cf. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical - "you can become less conservative and more evangelical"(p.12); "We must beware of demanding that the Bible conform to abstract idealizations which suit our conservative culture. To have an evangelical view of Scripture is to accept the whole Bible as it really is..The divine saving message - the gospel - is recorded again and again in real ways that offend our idealized notions of what its form should be. I can no longer be conservative and talk about what the Bible must be, or ought to be - reasoning logically from some idealized human notion of perfection. I want to be evangelical and accept the Word that God has given me, with all its magnificent surprises in both content and form."(p.26).
 49. Osterhaven's unpublished notes, p.2.
 50. cf. present study, pp.139-142. The term "biblicism" may not be used indiscriminately if important differences in the exegesis of the early chapters of Genesis are not to be obscured(e.g. the positions of E.J. Young and B. Milne). In his sections on "Revelation" and "Scripture"(Know the Truth : A handbook of Christian belief, (Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, 1982), pp.19-51), B. Milne refers the reader to a number of books, two of which contain articles by Young - (a) Revelation and the Bible : Contemporary Evangelical Thought, edited by C.F.H. Henry, (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1959) - E.J. Young, "The Canon of the Old Testament", pp.153-168; (b) The Infallible Word: A Symposium, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1946) - E.J. Young, "The Authority of the Old Testament"(pp.55-91). It is perhaps significant that Milne does not refer the reader to E.J. Young's Thy Word is Truth, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1963). While there may be broad agreement between Milne and Young regarding the doctrine of Scripture, there are significant differences in the precise manner in which each approaches Scripture. In his Genesis 3: A

devotional & expository study, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1966), Young insists on "a straightforward realistic interpretation of the text" (p.15 - commenting on Genesis 3:1), maintaining that "Everything in the chapter leads to the conclusion that the writer is giving straightforward prose." (p.55 - regarding Genesis 3). Commenting on "The Fall of Mankind" (Know the Truth, pp.102-103, Milne shares Young's dissatisfaction with "(t)he mythical view (which) rejects any historical element" in Genesis 3 (p.102, emphasis original, brackets mine). Milne does, however, distinguish between "(t)he literal view (which) sees the Genesis record as a direct historical description" (p.102, emphasis original, brackets mine) and "(t)he 'historical' view (which) asserts that while Genesis 2-3 are not to be interpreted in a literal sense at every point, space-time events are certainly being recounted" (p.102, emphasis original, brackets mine). Milne points out that the literal view "is less frequently adopted even among those who unquestionably acknowledge the full inspiration of Scripture" (p.102) and suggests that "a degree of symbolism" (p.103) is used in the biblical account of man's fall. Both Young and Milne relate biblical inerrancy to the intention of the writer (Thy Word is Truth, pp.129-131, 137, 150, 154, 158; Know the Truth, p.43). In the interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis, Milne is less inclined than Young toward dogmatizing concerning the intention of the writer. Young approaches Genesis 1 with the question, "Are there errors in the first chapter of the Bible?" (p.165). He maintains that no error has been proved or demonstrated (pp.103, 166 - for Young's discussion of Genesis 1, pp.101-103, 165-170). Discussing "The Question of Origins" (Know the Truth, pp.77-79), Milne writes, "The divine origin of the universe is..not in question; the real issue is the correct interpretation of the biblical teaching" (p.77). Seeking the intention of the writer, Milne asks, "Is this a poetic-religious passage, or is it a scientific account of the cosmological origins of the universe? Or is it something combining both: an account of real events, conveying religious truth?" (p.77). Seeking to resolve these questions, Milne writes, "1...The Bible is concerned to convey a message of salvation to all people of all ages and therefore adopts popular, non-technical language..2. Biblical language is 'phenomenal', i.e.it..describes things from the viewpoint of the observer..the sun 'rises and sets'..3.Biblical language is non-theoretical. The Bible...does not teach a specific cosmology. 4. Biblical language is cultural, communicating its divine revelation primarily through the culture of its time. All these factors need to be weighed carefully before dogmatizing about the correct interpretation of Genesis 1 -2." (p.78). Milne distinguishes between "some degree of liberty in interpreting the biblical account of cosmological beginnings" and any denial of "a genuine act at the 'beginning' of time by which God brought the universe into existence out of nothing" (pp.78-79). Emphasizing that "there is need for caution in asserting what Genesis 1-3 must or must not mean" (p.95), Milne insists that "Dogmatism is inappropriate here unless we can show that Scripture necessarily requires a particular interpretation." (p.93).

51. Osterhaven's unpublished notes, p.7.

52. cf. present study, pp.156-157.

53. cf. present study, pp.80f..
54. Osterhaven's unpublished notes, p.3(emphasis original).
55. Holy Scripture, p.166(emphasis mine).
56. Osterhaven's unpublished notes, p.3(brackets mine).
57. From front fly-leaf of Holy Scripture. Cf. G.M. Cameron, "The Reformation Continues: A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology", Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2(Winter 1980), p.74.
58. J. Richmond, "Religionsgeschichtliche Schule" in A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1969), p.289.
59. From front fly-leaf of Holy Scripture.
60. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.143.
61. p.143.
62. E. Heideman, "The Descendants of Van Raalte", Reformed Review, Vol.12, No.3(March 1959), p.36.
63. p.34.
64. p.34.
65. I. J. Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", Reformed Review, Vol.26, No.2(Winter 1973), p.69.
66. A. Mulder, Americans from Holland, (J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and New York, 1947), pp.99ff..
67. E. Heideman, "The Descendants of Van Raalte", p.36.
68. p.37.
69. p.37.
70. p.37.
71. I.J. Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", p.69.
72. p.69.
73. Hesselink describes the Hervormde Kerk of that era thus : "the established Hervormde Kerk(but not "established" in the manner of the Church of England)"(p.70) while noting that "in 1951..the H. K...was re-constituted as "A Fellowship of Faith Confessing Christ", which meant that the H.K. was now completely freed from the control of the state."(p.72). Hesselink describes this reorganization of the Hervormde Kerk as "a parallel..to the development of the Confessing Church in Nazi Germany."(p.72). This development is discussed in the present study, pp.184-187.
74. E. Heideman, "The Descendants of Van Raalte", p.37.
75. p.37.
76. p.38.
77. pp.37-38.
78. A. Kuyper, The Work of the Holy Spirit, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1975), p.xiii.
79. p.xiii.
80. p.xiii.
81. p.xiii.
82. pp.xiii.
83. pp.xiii-xiv.
84. p.xiii.
85. Death in the City, (Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1969), pp.9-10.
86. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1971.
87. Chapter III, pp.72-87.
88. Chapter V, pp.110-143.
89. J. Rogers (editor), Biblical Authority, (Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1977) contains criticisms of Schaeffer's biblicism - (a) Rogers (p.187 n.129) sees in Schaeffer, Escape from Reason, (Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London, 1968), p.35 an "uncritical commitment to Aristotelian thought forms"(footnote to Rogers, p.45 -

"The demand for reasons prior to faith in the authority of the Bible seems wedded to a prior commitment to Aristotelian philosophy."); (b) C. Pinnock criticizes the claim that "belief in biblical inerrancy is the only sure bulwark against apostasy" (p.66) which he observes in Schaeffer, No Final Conflict, (Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1975, p.9(p.189 n.33); (c) D. Hubbard criticizes Schaeffer's Genesis in Space and Time, (Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1972) for paying "almost no attention to the literary character of Genesis as an ancient oriental book that must be read on its own terms..In other words, the other half of the space-time question, the space and time in which the book was composed, is virtually ignored." (pp.193-194, n.6 - footnote to p.161 where Hubbard's basic point is that "The human process by which God chose to make his Word known in earthly languages is as crucial to our knowledge of what he is saying in Scripture as is our recognition of Scripture's full inspiration.")

90. Osterhaven's discussion, "Reformed According to the Word of God" (The Spirit of the Reformed Tradition, Chapter III, pp.72-87) is more similar to Berkouwer's Holy Scripture than to either E.J. Young's Thy Word is Truth or H. Lindsell's Battle for the Bible, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976). Osterhaven makes his position more explicit in a review of Lindsell's The Battle for the Bible, (Reformed Review, Vol.30, No.1(Autumn 1976), p.61) where he notes that Lindsell "claims that his doctrine of inerrancy is that which the whole church, until recently, has always held" with the remark that "The author's claim that this was the position of Luther and Calvin cannot be sustained". Osterhaven recalls "a conference on biblical authority at Wenham, Massachusetts, ten years ago" at which "proponents of a tight doctrine of inerrancy had to qualify their position in seventeen different ways". Osterhaven makes three remarks concerning this situation - (a)"What happens to an idea when so many concessions have to be made?"(b)"Calvin, as can be noted in his commentaries, would never allow himself to be put into such an impossible position." (c)"It is unfortunate that some conservative theologians today feel that the case for Christianity is bound together with such a rigid doctrine of Scripture. The result for them is endless attempts at harmonization and a battle with other conservatives that ought not to be fought".
91. "The Descendants of Van Raalte".
92. p.38.
93. p.38.
94. I.J. Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", p.70 (italics in the original).
95. p.72(cf. present chapter- note 73).
96. p.70.
97. "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.63.
98. p.63.
99. From back cover of paperback edition of A Half Century of Theology.
100. pp.7-9.
101. L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.63.
102. A Half Century of Theology, pp.7-8(underlining mine).
103. L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.63.

104. C. Van Til, The Sovereignty of Grace : An Appraisal of G.C. Berkouwer's View of Dordt, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1969) gives the impression of a radical change in Berkouwer's theological position by contrasting the 'earlier Berkouwer' with the 'later Berkouwer'. For a critique of Van Til's position, cf. J.C. Vander Stelt, Philosophy and Scripture : A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology, (Mack Publishing Company, Marlton, New Jersey, 1978), pp.220-270 (especially pp.258ff).
105. Ex Auditū Verbi, edited by R. Schippers et al., (J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1965), pp.37-55; cf. present study, pp.130-132.
106. cf. present study, pp.12-13.
107. "G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.65.
108. p.65.
109. pp.65-66 (Note that Berkouwer writes on faith and justification, sanctification and perseverance).
110. p.66 (Berkouwer avoids making "an illicit jump from the correct understanding of exclusive redemption in Christ to an incorrect notion of exclusive revelation in Christ" (p.67); cf. present study, pp.97-100).
111. Faith and Justification, pp.200-201 ("Sola gratia, sola fide, a priori" - italics in the original; "we..technique"- underlining mine).
112. L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, pp.67-68.
113. I.J. Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", p.75; L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.65. An interesting comparison may be drawn between the thought of Berkouwer and the work of the Hervormde Kerk theologian, Hendrikus Berkhof in his Christian Faith : An Introduction to the Study of the Faith, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979) -
(a) Berkhof writes, "the title of the book is not "The Christian Faith". Such a claim would be presumptuous" on the part of "little people, still on the way " toward understanding the inexhaustible riches of the gospel (p.xii). Berkhof does not hesitate to speak of the faith in his sub-title. Emphasizing that "(t)here are bound to be many theological articulations of the faith" (p.xii, underlining mine), Berkhof does not refrain from using the expression, "the Christian faith" ("Study of the Christian Faith", pp.26-40). Cf. present study, p.iii (n.4 -p.302).
(b) Berkhof begins his book with Alfred Tennyson's words :
"Our little systems have their day; They have their day and cease to be: They are but broken lights of Thee, And Thou, O Lord, art more than they." (facing main title page). Cf. present study, p.ii.
(c) In view of the present study's critical analysis of the theological systems of Tillich (pp.60-78) and Barth (pp.95-117), the present writer notes with interest Berkhof's statement, relating to Barth and Tillich, concerning "the danger, which they..did not always avoid, that the step-by-step-discovered unity and convergence becomes a principle from which the next step can logically be deduced" (p.39).
114. I.J. Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", p.75. In Handbook: Member Churches, World Council of Churches, edited by A.J. van der Bent, (W.C.C., Geneva, 1982), the possibility

- of "a federal union or even a complete reunion in the future" (p.155) is suggested.
115. Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.143 (underlining mine). Berkouwer's A Half Century of Theology: Movements and Motives is essentially an account of Berkouwer's own life-long concern with central theological problems. The word "problems" is used here to indicate that Berkouwer does not write as one who knows all the answers but as one who is "conscious..of the unrest and hesitations..the self-corrections..the limitations of all theological thought" which are part and parcel of "the quest for a deeper and richer understanding of the unsearchable riches of the gospel"(p.263). Berkouwer's writings provide ample evidence that his work on these central theological problems has been immensely fruitful in deepening theological understanding.
 116. J. Rogers, Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, p.141.
 117. p.141.
 118. pp.143-144.
 119. The New Delhi Report: The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1962), p.4.
 120. The Church, p.391.
 121. The Coming Christ and the Coming Church, (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh and London, 1967), p.xii.
 122. This is recognized by the Roman Catholic theologian, H. Kung, The Church (Search Press Ltd., London, 1968), pp.279, 311; cf. Berkouwer's The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, pp.21-22.
 123. L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.69.
 124. E. Schlunk, The Coming Christ and the Coming Church, p.272 (brackets mine).
 125. L.B. Smedes, "G.C. Berkouwer", Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, pp.65-66.
 126. E. Schlunk, The Coming Christ and the Coming Church, p.272 (brackets mine).
 127. The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism (from L.B. Smedes' Translator's preface), p.4.
 128. H. Kung, The Church, pp.276-277.
 129. The Conflict with Rome, translated by D.H. Freeman, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1968); Recent Developments in Roman Catholic Thought, translated by J.J. Lamberts, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1958).
 130. The major importance of this work has been emphasized by the Roman Catholic theologian, H. Kung who writes that Berkouwer, "extremely well qualified to report on the theological problems" associated with Vatican II, has written "both wisely and critically - exactly the way we Catholics need it!" (From Outside, Rear Cover of The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism).
 131. p.5.
 132. p.6.
 133. p.30.
 134. p.32 (emphasis original); (cf. H. Kung, The Church, p.x for a similar emphasis on the gospel.)
 135. cited on p.22 (emphasis original).
 136. cited on p.24 from A. Bea, The Unity of Christians, (Chapman, London, 1963), p.97.
 137. R.J. Ehrlich, in a review of this book, writes "Reformed Churchmen..believe that sound work for unity must safeguard

not the integrity of Roman dogma but unswerving loyalty to Christ to whom the teaching of both Churches must be subjected and in accordance with whom all doctrines must be reformed and corrected." (Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.17, No.4, December 1964, p.482). An examination of Bea's thought from this perspective sets Berkouwer's appreciative comments relating to the views of Bea (and Pope John XXIII) in their proper context. (a) "The words of John XXIII and Cardinal Bea do not give us justification for supposing that a confessional watering-down or relativizing of dogma is taking place in Rome." (The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, p.25). (b) John XXIII spoke of "an "ecumenical" council" (p.13) - Cardinal Bea said emphatically that the Pope meant by the term "ecumenical" a council of all bishops of the inhabited earth who are bound to the chair of St. Peter." (p.14 n.6 underlining mine). (c) Bea writes, "No less than the Roman Catholic Church does the Eastern Church stand on the unchangeability of the traditional inheritance of the faith." (Stimmen der Zeit, 1961-1962, p.427; cited in The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, p.21 n.28). Bea insists "What the Church has once for all declared as a matter of faith was declared under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as a divinely revealed truth, over which the Church can no longer in any way dispose." (Stimmen der Zeit, p.246; cited in The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, p.23 n.32). (d) Berkouwer notes that "(o)n May 30, 1960, John XXIII mentioned the established of a special secretariat " which will make it possible for separated brethren to follow the work of the Council and thus to make easier their reunion in the one fold of Christ", comparing this reference to A. Bea, The Unity of Christians, p.50 (The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, pp.13-14 n.5; underlining mine). It is important to pay close attention to the view of Bea for precisely this reason - he "probably exercised an influence at both sessions of Vatican Council II second only to that of the Supreme Pontiff" (J.A. O'Brien, Steps to Christian Unity, The crucial issues of Christian Unity discussed by 24 outstanding ecumenical leaders, (Collins, Fontana Books, London and Glasgow, 1965), p. 283).

138. The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, p.22.

139. p.26.

140. p.26.

141. pp.32-33.

142. I.J. Hesselink, "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", p.81.

143. The Church, p.289 (underlining mine). H. Kung's concern with truth has led him to raise serious questions concerning Roman Catholic dogma, notably in his book, Infallible? : An Enquiry, translated by E. Mosbacher, (Fount Paperbacks, Collins, London, Glasgow - German edition, 1970, first English edition, 1971, Fount Paperback edition, 1977). In "A Candid Foreword" (pp.9-25), Kung writes, "The renewal of the Catholic Church willed by the Second Vatican Council has come to a standstill, and with it ecumenical understanding with other Christian Churches and a new opening out towards the contemporary world." (p.9). Concerning the theologian's concern with truth, Kung writes, "He (i.e. the theologian) must bear witness for the sake of the gospel and humanity, must state the truth and not shrink from practical

intervention, in a spirit of modesty and objectivity and full awareness that no one is infallible but God himself." (p.197). The resultant conflict between Kung and the Church of Rome is recorded and discussed in P. Hebblethwaite, The New Inquisition? Schillebeeckx and Kung, (Collins, Fount Paperbacks; Glasgow, London, 1980). "Declaration of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, 15 December 1979" is given by Hebblethwaite as Appendix 2 (pp.154-157) - "this Sacred Congregation..is constrained to declare that Professor Hans Kung, in his writings, has departed from the integral truth of Catholic faith, and therefore he can no longer be considered a Catholic theologian nor function as such in a teaching role..the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II approved this declaration..and ordered its publication." (p.157) "Declaration of the German Bishops' Conference" (18 December 1979) is given by Hebblethwaite in Appendix 3 (pp.158-162) - "Professor Kung loses his licence to teach theology in the name of the Church. He is not excluded from the Church and remains a priest." (p.162). In the words of Hebblethwaite, Kung was, by this decision, "relegated to a rather curious limbo where he could be a priest and a Catholic but not actually utter as one." (p.77, emphasis original). In his Appeal Statement (Hebblethwaite, Appendix 4, pp.163-165), Kung said, "As a Catholic theologian I had and have a special concern for the 'Catholic Church', that is the 'general, the all-embracing, the universal Church'. For that reason I have tried and try to teach Christian Truth in all its Catholic breadth and depth." (p.163). "Declaration of the Holy See, 30 December 1979" (Hebblethwaite, Appendix 5, pp.166-167) rejected Kung's appeal, stating that "all the participants in the consultation" agreed that Kung's appeal statement "did not provide sufficient grounds to alter the decision laid down in the 15 December Declaration." (p.166). Hebblethwaite helpfully discusses the important question of the relationship of Pope John Paul II to this judgment passed on Kung. Noting that "'liberal' Catholics sought refuge" by trying "to drive a wedge between Pope John Paul II and the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith", Hebblethwaite contends that "(t)here was no evidence that John Paul was not fully committed to the actions of the CDF, and a certain amount of evidence that he actually was." (p.103). Hebblethwaite ventures to hope that "John Paul II will be unhappy in the role of unyielding autocrat" and that he will put into practice his philosophy of "listening and learning, of being perpetually open to new experiences." (p.125).

144. The Riddle of Roman Catholicism : Its History, Its Beliefs, Its Future, (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1960), Chapter IV, pp.44-56.
145. p.200.
146. p.16.
147. The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, p.32.
148. pp.40-41.
149. p.57.
150. p.58.
151. p.62 (source given by Berkouwer in n.9).
152. p.62.
153. p.63.
154. pp.64-65.

155. p.65(source given in n.17). Cf. present study, p.155.
156. Cf. present study, pp.29-34, 153-157.
157. This article is concerned with questions regarding the confession of faith - Gereformeerde Theologische Tijdschrift, February 1963, pp.1-41.
158. Berkouwer stresses the importance of the new theology's being able to dissociate itself from modernism(The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, p.73), observing Kung's concern to avoid a modernistic position(p.72, citing Strukturen der Kirche, p.349).
159. The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, pp.65-66.
160. p.80.
161. p.82(emphasis original).
162. p.66.
163. p.82.
164. p.85.
165. p.6 - This dual hope is expressed by L.B. Smedes(translator).
166. pp.249-258.
167. p.250.
168. p.250.
169. p.251.
170. pp.251-253(emphasis original).
171. p.253.
172. p.254(emphasis original).
173. pp.254-255.
174. pp.255-256.
175. p.257.
176. p.258. The words with which the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, New Delhi, 18 November - 5 December 1961, reached its culmination express aptly and succinctly what it means to stand under the cross as we pray for and work towards a clearer visible expression of the Christian Church's unity in Christ - "We confess Jesus Christ, Saviour of men and the light of the world; Together we accept his command; We commit ourselves anew to bear witness to him among men; We offer ourselves to serve all men in love, that love which he alone imparts; We accept afresh our calling to make visible our unity in him; We pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit for our task." (cited in Despatch from New Delhi, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1962), p.108 by K. Slack).
177. Cf. present study, Chapter Four, pp.60-117, for a detailed discussion of these theological tendencies.
178. The use of the term 'deism' in the present study is explained in the introductory preface, p.iii. The term 'liberalism' is "somewhat vague" though "it is possible to attempt a characterization of it"(J. Richmond, "Liberal Protestantism, Liberal Theology, Liberalism", in A. Richardson(editor), A Dictionary of Christian Theology, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1969), pp.191-194). While the present writer finds Richmond's account of the origins of liberalism helpful, he is primarily concerned to draw attention to Richmond's comments relating the thought of Barth and Tillich to liberalism(cf. notes 179-180 below). Concerning the origins of liberalism, Richmond holds that Kant's critique of "the validity of traditional natural theology" was immensely important(p.192). The natural theology of deism should, in the author's view, be regarded as another important strand in the background of liberalism though it should be noted that

- the kind of liberalism which has a closer affinity to natural theology bears a different character to the kind which is sharply critical of natural theology.
179. J. Richmond, p.193 - Barth "has stressed the centrality and the kerygmatic character of the biblical writings, the radical discontinuity between God and human nature, and has made much of the concepts of crisis, judgment and grace."
 180. Concerning Tillich (and Bultmann), Richmond writes that his position is "partly continuous with the liberal tradition" (p. 193). Tillich, together with Bultmann, has "tried to avoid the excesses into which the older liberalism fell; but..their critics frequently bring against them the criticisms which were brought against their theological predecessors in the second decade of the twentieth century." (p.194).
 181. Cf. present study, pp.67-70, 106ff..
 182. While Barth's theology stands over against liberalism in a way that the theologies of Tillich and Bultmann do not (e.g. Barth's words concerning the "bodily resurrection", spoken to T.F. Torrance a few weeks before Barth's death - T.F. Torrance, Space, Time and Resurrection, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976), p.xi), the present writer is inclined to agree with A.P.F. Sell when he says, "Sadly, such theologians as Barth, Bultmann and Tillich, have been in danger of disengaging the gospel from history in all its ambiguity and messiness." (God our Father, (The Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1980), p.14. The point at which the difficulty in relating Barth's view of the divine transcendence to historical reality is most observable is the point where he seeks to speak adequately of the urgency of the decision between faith and unbelief. Cf. present study, pp.114-116.
 183. From the perspective of his doctrine of God as Being, Tillich may be regarded as heavily accenting the transcendence of God over all that is finite and conditioned. Attention is drawn here not to this aspect of his thought but to the contrast between the theological methodologies used by Barth and Tillich which might be broadly described as the 'from above'-'from below' contrast. Cf. present study, pp.230ff, for discussion of this type of contrast in relation to the interpretation of christology.
 184. C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, (Tyndale Press, London, 1967), p.12 (underlining mine).
 185. p.137 (underlining mine).
 186. pp.77-78 (Brown refers (p.78 n.3) to P. Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1962), pp. 63ff. for an illustration of this tendency).
 187. At the outset of his book, Paul Tillich, (The Carey Kingsgate Press Limited, London, 1965), J.H. Thomas maintains that "(t)he liberal roots of Tillich's theology are very evident". (p.5). Cf. present study, p.62 for further reference to Tillich's rationalistic tendency to approach Christian truth in a way that is highly appealing to rationalistic man who does not take the biblical witness to Jesus Christ particularly seriously.
 188. B. Cameron, "The Historical Problem in Paul Tillich's Christology" in Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.18, No.3, September 1965, pp.257-272.
 189. The present emphasis on Barth's teaching concerning divine transcendence should not be permitted to obscure the fact that Barth has written on The Humanity of God, (John Knox, Atlanta,

- 1960) in which he writes, "It is when we look at Jesus Christ that we know decisively that God's deity does not exclude, but includes His humanity." (p.48, emphasis original). J. Macquarrie rightly observes that Barth's use of the expression, "the 'humanity' of God" does not carry with it any suggestion that "Barth's theology is humanistic" ("Barth, Karl" in A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1969)). Barth's concern is to emphasize that the doctrine of God is to be approached not from the vantage-point of an abstract conception of deity but rather from the standpoint of the incarnation. While this emphasis on the incarnation is essential if the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be clearly distinguished from the God of natural theology, the particular way in which Barth relates his whole theology to the incarnation does raise the question of the adequacy of his treatment of the human response to the gospel (cf. present study, pp.106ff.).
190. C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, pp.12, 152; K. Hamilton, "Paul Tillich" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.473.
191. Christian theology must take care to avoid emphasizing a particular biblical truth in such a way that other aspects of biblical truth, equally important for a clearer understanding of the gospel, tend to be misrepresented.
192. C.M. Cameron, "The Reformation Continues: A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology" in Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2, (Winter 1980), p.74.
193. p.79.
194. cf. present study, pp.134-135.
195. The Return of Christ, p.403.
196. p.403.
197. p.403.
198. C.M. Cameron, "The Reformation Continues: A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology", p.79. Cf. present study, pp.379-381.
199. The term 'theocentric' is used here to describe a notion of divine sovereignty which is determined by a competition motif which tends to set the divine and the human over against each other. The term 'Calvinist' has been deliberately avoided because this term is interpreted differently by different writers. This variety of usage makes it difficult to use this term here without an element of confusion.
200. The term 'anthropocentric' is preferred to the term 'Arminian' because the author has in mind a more general theological tendency than that which is denoted by the term, 'Arminian'. The existentialism of R. Bultmann is in view here. Bultmann emphasizes "The Necessity of Decision" (Jesus and the Word, translated by L.P. Smith and E. Huntress, (Ivor Nicholson & Watson Ltd., London, 1935), pp. 51-57; Cf. "Topical Index", p.224 for other references to "Decision"). While the Arminian "over-estimation of faith as a spiritual achievement" (Faith and Justification, p.87) must be resisted in a theology which glories in divine grace, an excessive preoccupation with the Calvinist-Arminian question might tend to obscure the danger of dissociating the decision of faith from the content of the gospel (Cf. N.H.G. Robinson, "Rudolf Bultmann's ethical message: the demand of love", The Groundwork of Christian Ethics, (Collins, London, 1971), pp.181-190 for a useful discussion of this danger in relation to Bultmann's thought).

201. J. Jocz, The Covenant : A Theology of Human Destiny, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968), p.217.
202. Theology requires, in its speaking about the relationship between divine sovereignty and divine salvation, to carefully avoid any suggestion that God either could not, because of man's sin, save all men or that he must, because of the universality of the gospel, save all men. The present writer, ("The Reformation Continues : A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology", p.79), states the situation thus : "If God chooses to be gracious to all, who are we to argue? But then again, who are we to presume on such universal grace?"
203. Cf. present study, pp.100-109 for a discussion of these issues with reference to the thought of Barth and Berkouwer.
204. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.29. Regarding the description of Barth's thought as 'christomonism', cf. C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, pp.12, 152 and G.W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, p.52. While the term 'christomonism' may not be used without qualification as a description of Barth's thought(cf. Bromiley), its properly qualified use does help us to see the central issue in the analysis of Barth's theology - the relationship between the 'Christ' of Barth's theology and the Christ of the New Testament(cf. Brown).
205. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.30.
206. p.30.
207. p.30.
208. p.33(emphasis original).
209. Cf. present study, pp.95-100.
210. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.349 (emphasis original).
211. p.349(emphasis original).
212. p.349(emphasis original).
213. p.364(emphasis original).
214. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.368-369; The Return of Christ, p.401.
215. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.368-369(brackets mine).
216. pp.369-370(emphasis original).
217. p.296.
218. p.370(emphasis original).
219. C. Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p.12.
220. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.112 (emphasis original). Berkouwer asks this question of Barth's theology - "Is God's decision not true and effective before and apart from the answer that follows it(belief or unbelief)?"(p. 112(emphasis original)). Acknowledging "the indisputable fact that Barth has himself emphatically rejected the doctrine of the apokatastasis"(p.112, emphasis original), Berkouwer does raise the question of the adequacy of Barth's theology at this point. Cf. present study, pp.111-116.
221. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.267(citing H. Berkhof, Crisis der Middenorthodoxie, (1953), p.38 - Cf. translator's note : "'Middenorthodoxie" or middle-orthodoxy designates the predominant theological viewpoint in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands(Hervormde Kerk). It has been strongly

- influenced by Barth's theology and steers a middle course between the liberalism which earlier characterized much of this communion..and the older orthodoxy..In distinction from liberalism..and in common with orthodoxy, it is evangelical in word and spirit."(Berkouwer, p.267; brackets mine - note: De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland(the denomination to which Berkouwer belongs) means "The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands" and is to be distinguished from the communion referred to in the above translator's note and with which the Hervormde Kerk theologian, H. Berkhof, is chiefly concerned in his book.)
222. Cf. K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, IV, 3, 1, pp.173-180 for Barth's response to Berkouwer's The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Grace - "we are not concerned here with the..triumph of a principle, even..the principle..of grace. We are concerned with the living person of Jesus Christ.."Jesus is Victor" is better than "The Triumph of Grace""(p.173); "Jesus is Victor..This statement does not contain any paradox. It is incontrovertible. It gives no ground for suspicion. Where does the Bible teach the contrary? With reference to a logical principle of grace and its triumph, I concede that it might be doubted or that something might be said for the assertion of paradox. But in relation to the name of Jesus, I see no alternative to my understanding." (p.176). For Berkouwer's response to Barth's statement, cf. A Half Century of Theology - (a) "I had never thought for a moment that Barth's doctrine of grace was an abstraction from which theologians were free to make their own deductions."(p.67); (b) "the "triumph of grace"(including the title of my book) can mean only the grace of Jesus Christ the Lord"(p.67, brackets original). In The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.12, n. 6, Berkouwer, discussing the use of the expression, 'christomonism', with reference to Barth's theology, writes: "It is, according to Barth, "hardly a beautiful term" when it is used polemically, KD III/3, p.v. He asks"whether a Christian theologian can with good conscience and a joyful heart do anything else than put 'Christ only' first and last in all his thinking?" It is clear that this question does not answer the question put by the expression "Christo-monism" because this did not intend in any way to detract from the"solo Christo" but only to reflect on the validity of the Christological foundation of Barth's dogmatics..". The present writer holds that precisely this point may be made with reference to Barth's criticism of the title of The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth(cf. present study, pp.107-109 for related discussion which, in the present writer's view, serves to highlight the superficiality of Barth's criticism of Berkouwer's book.).
223. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.116.
224. p.121(emphasis original).
225. p.121.
226. pp.114-115(emphasis original).
227. p.367(emphasis original).
228. p.361(emphasis original).
229. For a study of some extreme forms of this kind of church-world dualism, cf. B. Wilson, Religious Sects : A Sociological Study, (World University Library, London, 1970), Chapter 7("Introversionists"), pp.118-140.
230. This problem is posed by the theology of Barth, cf. present study, pp.95-101 for related discussion.

231. The idea of an anonymous or secret Christian may be seen as an abuse of the doctrine of common grace. N.H.G. Robinson holds that "the non-Christian is still a moral being, not..a secret Christian" (The Groundwork of Christian Ethics, p.268). Berkouwer draws attention to V. Gardavsky's comment concerning K. Rahner's notion of anonymous Christianity - "a communist would not accept the honorary title 'anonymous Christian'" (A Half Century of Theology, p.188).
232. Man: The Image of God, pp.153-154 (underlining mine).
233. p.169.
234. Properly understood, the common grace - special grace distinction gives no encouragement to a self-righteous church which presumptuously passes judgment on the world by attempting a precise delineation of the boundaries between common grace and saving grace. When due emphasis is placed on the word 'grace', the church's stance vis-a-vis the world will be characterized by an openness which recognizes the freedom of the operation of divine grace. Theology requires to avoid (a) a particularist scheme (symmetry between election and reprobation) "in which the gospel can no longer be preached" (Divine Election, p.223) (Particularism is not bound up with a rejection of common grace. One writer who does reject the notion of common grace is H. Hoeksema (cf. Man: The Image of God, pp.155-159 where Berkouwer describes "Hoeksema's warning against the relativizing of evil and total corruption" as "necessary and worthwhile" (p.159) while questioning the validity of Hoeksema's rejection of common grace (pp.158-159)); (b) K. Barth's notion of "man's being..to stand in grace" as "an essence unchanged and unchangeable by sin" (cf. present study, p. 106 for fuller details of this position) which could be interpreted by an indifferent world to support its evasion of the urgent challenge of the gospel (cf. present study, p.107 for a critique of the ontic structure of Barth's thought).
235. Divine Election, pp.150-151 where Berkouwer views the relation between time and eternity in terms of the depth-aspect of salvation; The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.256-257 where Berkouwer is concerned not with 'a priori' universalism as such but with Barth's "revised supralapsarianism (which) blocks the way to ascribing decisive significance to history" (p.256 - brackets mine; this statement should be set alongside the immediately following sentences where Berkouwer makes it clear that he is not suggesting that Barth subscribes to "a consistently idealistic conception of history". Emphasis original - "decisive").
236. Divine Election, p.249 - "We may plead for recognition of God's sovereignty, but we must beware that no deterministic interpretation is attached to it."; In The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.362, Berkouwer protests against a speculative 'a priori' universalism (Karl Barth, though not a universalist, is in Berkouwer's view, "standing at the threshold of the apokatastasis" (underlining mine)). The kind of universalism which Berkouwer warns against here is the kind espoused by W. Barclay, who says, "I am a convinced universalist" (Testament of Faith, Mowbrays, London and Oxford, 1975, p.58-61). Berkouwer points out that "(i)t is noteworthy that the debate centering about universalism has always borne a strongly exegetical character." (p.362). It is clear that Barclay's discussion (pp.58-61) is not unrelated to his exegesis of Scripture. There are, however, in Barclay's position, the speculative elements which Berkouwer

finds unacceptable. Barclay writes, "God has eternity to work in..God using an eternity of persuasion and appeal until the hardest heart breaks down and the most stubborn sinner repents. As I see it, nothing less than a world is enough for the love of God."(p.61). This kind of thinking is placed under critical scrutiny by S.H. Travis, I believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1982), pp.203-205. Concerning the 'purgatory' notion, Travis writes it is "quite different from Jesus' message of present salvation to be received or lost in immediate response to his preaching"(p.204). Concerning the relationship between the love of God and the notion of universal reconciliation, Travis writes, "love by definition must allow its object freedom to choose whether to respond or not"(p.203). Maintaining that "(i)f we are free to reject God, we must be free to reject him for ever"(p.203)(citing on p.204, the words of C.S. Lewis to the effect that if the gates of hell are locked, they are "locked on the inside"(The Problem of Pain, Collins, Fontana Books; London and Glasgow, 1940, p.115, emphasis original)), Travis insists that the dogmatic assertion that "God's love will be successful in winning all men "(p.203) is ruled out(p.205). Berkouwer makes a most important point for theological reflection when he draws attention to "Paul's warning..that we ought "not to go beyond the things which are written"(I Cor.4:6(ASV))..(as this limit - which structures one's listening - the focal point of the entire doctrine of Scripture."(Holy Scripture, p.17; "as" added by myself).

237. Divine Election, pp.233-234 - Berkouwer cites favourably Bavinck's view that "the acts of God may not be presented as an objective reality "for all" apart from the kerygma and faith..that the preaching of the gospel does not say: "Christ died in your place, all your sins are reconciled and forgiven." Rather, the gospel ..of salvation..contains a call to faith, which..is implied in God's act in Christ."(p.233; referring to H. Bavinck, Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, IV, 709; underlining mine). Berkouwer's concern is not to call in question the "Christus pro omnibus"(Christ for all) of the gospel(p.234) but to properly understand the "universal significance" of Christ's coming as "a crisis in the world"(p.233). Emphasizing that "the salvation of God concerns a historical act of God, which itself gives direction, and which has an appealing, inviting, promising and commanding force"(p.233), Berkouwer warns against "a peculiar shifting in the message of salvation in the direction of this supposedly evident conclusion (of universalism)"(The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, p.362, emphasis original, brackets mine). The character of the preaching of the gospel is, in Berkouwer's view, severely distorted "when the gospel is overshadowed by an objective message about election which bears no vital relationship to the proclamation"(The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.369-370, emphasis original. This critique may be directed against (a) A particularism which operates on the basis of a symmetry between election and reprobation; (b) Karl Barth's doctrine of election; (c) the 'a priori' universalism to which Barth refuses to commit himself.
238. The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.268-271.
239. Divine Election, pp.240, 242.
240. A Half Century of Theology: Movements and Motives, p.81.

241. Over against 'a priori' universalism which threatens to lessen the gravity of sin, Berkouwer sets "The Biblical A Priori" (God is not the Author of Sin - Sin, Chapter 2, pp.27-66).

The seriousness of sin must never be minimized, not even by the idea that "the irresistible power of grace will force the capitulation of all rebellion against it" since it is doubtful whether such a view maintains a "biblical seriousness" which "never suggests that the ultimate extinction of resistance is self-evident" (The Return of Christ, p.407).

242. Man : The Image of God, pp.54-55, 59, 87ff.

243. This inference (despite Barth's refusal to move unambiguously in the direction of universal reconciliation) could easily be drawn from Barth's view of "The Triumph of Grace in Creation" (The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, Chapter III, pp.52-88) in which he teaches that "sin is ontologically impossible" (p.88, emphasis Berkouwer's; this particular statement is not a direct citation of Barth. On p.226 n.58, Berkouwer cites K. Barth, Kirchliche Dogmatik, III/2, p.174 regarding the ontological impossibility of sin and God's gracious election: "Here, in this understanding of man's being as resting in God's election, lies the basis and sense of our thesis of the ontological impossibility of sin as descriptive of man.") In "The Nature of the Triumph" (Chapter IX, pp.215-261), Berkouwer is centrally concerned with "that strange expression: the ontological impossibility of sin" (p.226, emphasis original). While recognizing that "(t)he ontological impossibility of sin is not intended as praise for self-justifying man (and that) (i)t signifies, rather, the "from the beginning" of grace" (p.249 (underlining and brackets mine)), Berkouwer is rightly critical of the effect this conception can have on the preaching of the gospel as an urgent call to faith (pp.267-281).

244. A.L. Baker is intent on defending the doctrine of reprobation when he writes, "All men are sinners by nature and unbelief is sin. Men do not possess a natural bias toward the gospel. It is only as God opens hearts that man ever responds in faith" (Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election: Balance or Imbalance?, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1981), pp. 135-136). Berkouwer, who interprets "Election and Rejection" (Divine Election, Chapter 6, pp.172-217) quite differently from Baker, is no less emphatic about the total depravity of man and the absolute necessity of grace: "(In) Scripture..(m)an is viewed in terms of his total life-direction: man the sinner.. there is no possibility of escape and no way out of man's guilty lostness..no return to a restoration or regeneration in man himself.. this is exclusively the work of God's grace" (Sin, p.241) "Sinful man is seen in the New Testament as lost, and apart from any recourse or escape. Yet the wonder of the Gospel is that even that lostness is not definitive. It is God who makes the dead to be alive" (p.371). Emphasis original in both passages.

245. Man : The Image of God, p.51.

246. p.45.

247. p.45.

248. p.59.

249. pp.45-55.

250. p.142.

251. p.144.

252. p.143(emphasis original).
253. p.146.
254. Chapter 9, pp.310-348.
255. p.312.
256. p.313.
257. p.314.
258. p.315.
259. pp.321-322.
260. cf. present study, pp.150-151.
261. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980.
262. Punt's book is reviewed by M.E. Osterhaven in Reformed Review, Vol.34, No.3, Spring 1981, pp.221-222(quote - p.221).
263. p.221.
264. p.221.
265. Punt, p.132; cited in Osterhaven, p.221(emphasis original).
266. Osterhaven, p.221(brackets original -refer to source in Punt).
267. This does not make election subjective but does recognize that the objectivity of grace is not known apart from subjective experience.
268. Osterhaven, p.221.
269. Cf. Berkouwer's discussion of "The Great Misconception"(Divine Election, Chapter X, pp.307-330) by which "man takes his election for granted so that it becomes an occasion for subtle self-justification."(p.307).
270. The Return of Christ, p.423(emphasis original); cf. present study, p.380.
271. The Return of Christ, p.419.
272. Divine Election, p.327.
273. Man: The Image of God, p.27.
274. For instance, Ephesians 1:9-10 and Colossians 1:19-20 might be set against Matthew 7:13-14 and John 3:36 in the universalism - dualism debate while Luke 9:50 and Luke 11:23 might be set against each other in the debate concerning a mediating position. The inconclusiveness of such a process of interpretation simply highlights the need for caution on the part of systematic theology in its interpretation of Scripture.
275. The Return of Christ, p.397.
276. p.397.
277. p.413.
278. The Church, p.161.
279. p.161.
280. p.161.
281. pp.159-164.
282. pp.161-162.
283. Chapter Six(pp.131-164 - especially pp.139-144).
284. From a review of The Church by E. Heideman, Reformed Review, Vol.32, No.1, Fall 1978, p.65(full review - pp.64-65). Of interest are the comments of S.H. Travis concerning those who have no real opportunity to ^{hear} the message of Christ - "it is possible to affirm the possibility of salvation for such people, without surrendering the belief that Jesus is God's unique means of salvation. People who lived before Christ or after him in non-Christian cultures may find salvation through Christ, even though they do not know his name, by casting themselves on the mercy of God. If a Hindu finds salvation, it is not by virtue

- of being a good Hindu, any more than a Christian is saved by being a good Christian. Whatever a person's religious background, 'saving faith' involves coming to an end of one's own 'religion' and abandoning oneself to the grace of God." (I Believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, p.204, emphasis original). A similar point is made by M. Green (drawing on L. Newbigin's The Finality of Christ) who writes, "It is one thing to claim that all salvation is through Christ..It is quite another to claim that nobody finds life with God unless they pass through the doorway of explicit Christian faith..The Christian Church has never maintained that overt knowledge of the person and work of Jesus was essential for salvation..So to maintain ..that "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12) does not mean that no man can be saved unless he has heard of Jesus: it does mean that Jesus is the only saviour of men." (The Truth of God Incarnate, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1977), pp.118-119 - emphasis mine).
285. The Church, pp.73-74 (emphasis original). J.T. McNeill offers a helpful warning from historical theology against the dangers of an exclusive sectarianism : "That churches of the Calvinist stamp should recover fellowship with others from which they have been severed would have caused the sixteenth-century fathers of Reformed Protestantism to rejoice..Calvin himself taught many doctrines that he did not regard as terms of communion. He adopted what he called 'the judgment of charity', which acknowledges 'as members of the Church all those who by confession of faith, exemplary life, and participation in the sacraments profess the same God and Christ with ourselves'..(Institutes IV,1,9). On such a basis sectarian limits of fellowship and communion are excluded." (The History and Character of Calvinism, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1954), p.389.
286. cf. 1 Peter 2:9-10.
287. cf. Amos 3:2.
288. cf. Amos 9:7-12 - God's people have no right to presume that God is exclusively concerned with them(vs.7, 12). God's people need to be purified by the Lord himself(v.9) if they are not to become "the sinners of my people" who say, "Evil shall not overtake or meet us."(v.10, RSV) upon whom judgment is pronounced.(This challenge initially addressed to Israel is most pertinent as a warning against an empty profession of Christ on the part of a church which is called "from a churchliness that has withdrawn into itself"(The Church, p.418) to the renewing presence of Christ in whose power the church is commissioned to serve the world for Christ's sake.)
289. The Church, p.162 (italics in the original) (Source given in n.112).
290. pp.162-163.
291. cf. 1 Corinthians 9:16.
292. The Church, p.162.
-

Footnotes to Chapter Eight (Pages 216 - 300).

1. 2:52. The concern here is not to set one type of anthropological analysis over against another but to stress the ideas of the whole man and the unity of man's nature and to use these ideas as criteria by which different types of anthropological analysis are assessed.
2. Berkouwer insists that man's relation to God must not be seen in relation to a 'spiritual' part of man (Man : The Image of God, pp. 29-33) which is less than 'the whole man' (pp.194-196). A relation to God which is added to a 'human nature' which is already complete without reference to this relation to God must, in Berkouwer's view, be resisted by a theological anthropology which maintains that man cannot be understood apart from God.
3. An interesting book which emphasizes the importance of recognizing the complementarity of different types of anthropological analysis is D. Mackay, Brains, Machines and Persons, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980) which has been reviewed by the present writer in Reformed Review, Vol.35, No.2, Winter 1982, p.101. Drawing attention to Mackay's emphasis on complementarity, the present writer describes Mackay's view thus : "Man may be viewed from different angles. Christian faith concerns itself with his personal relation to his Creator. Brain science studies the working of a physical mechanism. Neither approach can claim to present the complete picture. Each needs the other."
4. J. Stott makes a useful point - "Although we should resist polarization between evangelism and social action, we should not resist specialization. Everybody cannot do everything. Some are called to be evangelists, others to be social workers, others to be political activists." (J. Stott's "The Response" in R.J. Sider, Evangelism, Salvation and Social Justice, (Grove Books, Bramcote, Notts., 1977), p.22 (whole article : pp.21-24)). In this critique of Sider's view, Stott raises a significant practical issue : "Ron is right that if Jesus combined preaching the gospel with healing the sick and feeding the hungry, the same kind of combination should be seen in all his disciples. But I still want to ask what this means in practice. Are we going to say that no evangelistic campaign should ever be held without an accompanying programme to bring aid to the poor, food to the hungry and justice to the oppressed? Or conversely that no social programme should ever be undertaken unless it is accompanied by evangelism?" (p.22 - Stott answers this question negatively, drawing attention, to the situational factor as well as the aspect of specialization).
5. The Apologists and the Reformers are remembered for characteristically different emphases. It would not, however, be an accurate analysis of their historical significance to draw an absolute contrast between these emphases.
6. The word-deed character of communication is rooted in the word-deed character of revelation (cf. G.E. Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1974), p.31).
7. Man's relation to God may not be set in antithesis to his social relationships without doing violence to biblical teaching (cf. present study, pp.255ff.).
8. A Half Century of Theology : Movements and Motives, p.191.
9. Situational witness is as variable as human experience itself. As a situation develops, it is important to re-assess the relative importance attached to any particular form of Christian witness.

10. Such a 'perfect balance' seems rather far removed from the complexities of human experience which constantly confront us with both the unattainability of 'perfection' and the inadequacy of every claim to 'perfection' on the part of man.
11. Holy Scripture, p.166.
12. General Revelation, pp.131, 151-153.
13. The Providence of God, Chapter I - "The Crisis of the Providence Doctrine in Our Century", pp.7-30.
14. Divine Election, Chapter 7, "Election and the Preaching of the Gospel", pp.218-253.
15. Sin, p.65.
16. The Person of Christ, p.96; The Work of Christ, p.18.
17. I allude to Romans 10:17(R.S.V.) and Berkouwer's Faith and Justification, Faith and Sanctification and Faith and Perseverance.
18. Man: The Image of God,
19. The Church,
20. The present writer has found Berkouwer's discussion of "Infant Baptism" (The Sacraments, Chapter Eight, pp.161-187) particularly instructive (especially pp.176ff where Berkouwer emphasizes that "The predominant aspect of the grace of God lies not in the temporal priority of the acts of God in baptism in comparison with the conscious acceptance of the divine promise, but in the temporal priority of the cross of Christ with respect to the baptized person, whether child or adult." (p.176, emphasis mine) from which standpoint he criticizes the notions of "presumptive regeneration" (p.180) and "an automatic guarantee of regeneration" (p.183), insisting that "the conjunction of sign with the reality signified may not be used for a purpose other than that for which it is presented to us in calling, admonition and comforting.. (since) God's promise is truly given..in promise and calling, in consolation and admonition in unbreakable connection." (pp.183-184, underlining and brackets mine)).
21. The Return of Christ, pp.246-248, 404-406.
22. Attention is drawn here to the breadth of his thought rather than to a restrictive definition of 'proclamation'.
23. A study of Berkouwer's theology would be incomplete without any detailed attention to this late work (1974, Dutch; 1977, English).
24. A Half Century of Theology: Movements and Motives, p.7.
25. p.9 (underlining mine).
26. Chapter 2, pp.25-38.
27. p.25.
28. p.25.
29. pp.25-26.
30. Chapter 3, pp.39-74.
31. p.54.
32. p.55.
33. p.55.
34. p.55; cf. G. Brown's remarks regarding this aspect of Barth's Church Dogmatics - "it is ironical to note that..it is Barth and not Tillich who gets more closely to grips with modern thought and culture. Whereas Tillich talks vaguely and generally, Barth in the small-print passages of the Church Dogmatics carries on a continuous dialogue in much detail with the great thinkers of the past and present." (Karl Barth and the Christian Message, (Tyndale Press, London, 1967), p.93).
35. cf. present study, Chapter 3 (pp.43-59).
36. A Half Century of Theology, p.79 (italics in the original).
37. p.79.

38. p.78.
39. p.25(from account of V. Hepp's position).
40. p.56(from account of K. Barth's position).
41. p.89.
42. p.89.
43. p.89.
44. p.90.
45. p.91.
46. p.91.
47. p.92(emphasis original).
48. p.91.
49. p.101.
50. p.91(referring to Matthew 20:15).
51. p.91(used with reference to Matthew 22:14 and Matthew 20:16).
52. p.91(emphasis original).
53. p.92(followed by citation of Romans 11:33).
54. p.90(describing K. Barth's view favourably); cf. Divine Election, pp.209-217.
55. A Half Century of Theology, p.93(citing O. Noordmans, source given).
56. cf. Divine Election, pp.65, 147-149.
57. A Half Century of Theology, p.103(citing H. Bavinck - the reference to "the nonbeliever" here is not intended to be taken in the direction of the apocatastasis. Concerning Bavinck's statement, Berkouwer writes, "Here..is the suggestion of a positive view of election, one that does not reason in terms of two groups of people eternally separated from each other by the decree, but of a single humanity made up of sinners, in the light of him who justifies the godless without respect to works."(pp.103-104)).
58. p.93.
59. p.95(cf. Man : The Image of God, Chapter 9("Human Freedom"), pp. 310-348).
60. A Half Century of Theology, p.100; cf. Divine Election, p.71.
61. A Half Century of Theology, p.101.
62. p.102(citing Ridderbos who "sees election connected, not with a definite number of people, but with Christ") and p.103(citing Dijk who holds that "it is better "not to speak of another decree that lies behind the gracious choice that is in Christ" lest we cut election loose from Jesus Christ,"(emphasis, Berkouwer's)). cf. present study, pp.201-204(contrast with Barth).
63. p.102(Berkouwer refers here to a more general "reconsideration of election" rather than merely his personal view). cf. present study, pp.105-109(contrast with Barth).
64. p.102(italics in the original).
65. When election is set in the context of 'a priori' universalism rather than that of faith's confession of the divine grace which it has come to experience through Christ, it becomes difficult to do justice to the gospel's urgent warning against unbelief. When, however, it is held that one cannot speak of election apart from faith, the gospel's urgent call to faith is maintained. These matters are discussed in Chapter 6 of the present study -(a)the divine character of election is affirmed(pp.150-151); (b)the faith-character of predestinarian language is emphasized(pp.156-157); (c)Care is taken to avoid relativizing the urgency of the gospel (pp.146-149).
66. cf. present study, pp.89-94.
67. A Half Century of Theology, p.118(citing Barth's view favourably).
68. p.110.cf. present study, pp.130-139.
69. A.P.F. Sell, in a perceptive parenthetical remark, raises a significant question for those who "accept much of Christ's teaching" while rejecting the Bible's testimony concerning his person and work - "the grounds on which they think he was correct in his

moral principles and wrong in all his claims about himself are not usually made very explicit" (God our Father, (The Saint Andrew Press, London, 1980), p.23).

70. No direct analogy to christology is intended here.
71. A Half Century of Theology, p.139; Holy Scripture, p.351.
72. A Half Century of Theology, p.113 (describing K. Barth's view favourably); cf. Holy Scripture, pp.166-167 where Berkouwer criticizes "a view of faith which would be compelled to accept the revelation of Scripture on the basis of its God-breathed quality before being gripped by the message to which its words testify."
73. Holy Scripture, p.166.
74. Fundamentalism, while not rejecting a legitimate concern for the human aspects of the Scriptures, does tend to minimize this concern (cf. present study, pp.79-80, 89-90).
75. A Half Century of Theology, p.113 (describing favourably K. Barth's view); cf. p.116 - "Holy Scripture is given in words that cry out for intensive research."
76. Holy Scripture, p.32.
77. A Half Century of Theology, pp.140-141 (citing Bavinck favourably). Against this position, biblicists may say that their view is the only one which is intellectually respectable since it refuses to accept what is, in the biblicist view, an untenable dualism (it is interesting to note that Berkouwer acknowledges that he once accepted this argument though he no longer accepts it (A Half Century of Theology, p.140)).
78. p.120. cf. present study, pp.134-135.
79. A Half Century of Theology, p.120.
80. pp.120-121.
81. p.121.
82. "Current Religious Thought", Christianity Today, July 28, 1972, (XVI, 21), p.42 (emphasis original).
83. A Half Century of Theology, p.121 (citing favourably F.W. Grosheide).
84. p.121 (citing favourably F.W. Grosheide's view).
85. p.121 (citing favourably F.W. Grosheide's view).
86. p.121 (emphasis original, citing favourably F.W. Grosheide's view).
87. p.121; cf. Holy Scripture, pp.245-253 for further discussion concerning the interpretation of the gospels.
88. cf. present study, pp.65-70, 73-77.
89. A Half Century of Theology, p.133 (contrasting the views of O. Cullmann and R. Bultmann). Berkouwer's concern here is to emphasize that there is, in the attempt to take history seriously, no denial of the kerygmatic purpose of the gospels and that the attempt to take seriously the gospels' kerygmatic purpose does not entail an unhistorical approach to the gospels.
90. The Work of Christ, p.181; cf. present study, pp.68-69 where Berkouwer's view is compared with Tillich's.
91. C.F.H. Henry, "Basic Issues in Modern Theology", Christianity Today, IX, 7 (Jan.1, 1965), pp.14-17 (citing Berkouwer here).
92. Holy Scripture, back flap (inside) of dust cover, - "Freedom from fear is near the very heart of the doctrine of Scripture worked out in this book."
93. The term "theological reductionism" is used here with reference to a reduction of faith's content in the interests of making faith acceptable to modern man.
94. J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1938.
95. A Half Century of Theology, pp.137-138.
96. p.139.

97. p.138.
98. p.139(Concerning Scripture and science, Berkouwer cites Bavinck, Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, II, p.459.)
99. p.218.
100. p.215.
101. p.218(emphasis original; citing Jude 3 and 1Timothy 6:20 here).
102. p.217.
103. p.221(emphasis original).
104. "Vragen Rondom de Belijdenis"(Questions concerning the confession of faith), Gereformeerde Theologisch Tijdschrift, 63, (February 1963), pp.1-41.
105. A Half Century of Theology, pp.218ff..
106. p.241(citing Calvin, Institutes, I,XIII,5 where Augustine is cited).
107. pp.239-240(emphasis original).
108. p.243.
109. p.243(emphasis original).
110. pp.226ff.(discussion concerning Christ's divinity and humanity).
111. p.233.
112. J. Timmer, "G.C. Berkouwer : Theologian of Confrontation and Correlation", The Reformed Journal, December 1969, pp.17-22.
113. Man : The Image of God, p.35(concerning relation and reality).
114. A Half Century of Theology, p.235.
115. p.235.
116. p.237.
117. p.237.
118. p.237(underlining mine).
119. p.237.
120. p.237.
121. p.238.
122. p.238(emphasis original).
123. p.238(emphasis original).
124. W. Pannenberg, Jesus : God and Man, translated by L.L. Wilkins and D.A. Priebe, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1968(first published in German, 1964), pp.33-37.
125. Pannenberg accepts Kirm's definition of the historical method : "A historical conclusion can be regarded as certain when... despite the fact that it is not removed from all possible attacks, it is nevertheless in agreement with all the known facts."(Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, translated by G.H. Kehm, (S.C.M. Press, London; Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970), p.54). Adopting this approach to Jesus' resurrection, Pannenberg concludes that "(t)he Easter appearances are not to be explained from the Easter faith of the disciples; rather, conversely, the Easter faith of the disciples is to be explained from the appearances."(Jesus : God and Man, p.96).
126. Insisting that "the idea that Jesus had received divinity only as a consequence of his resurrection is not tenable"(Jesus : God and Man, p.135), Pannenberg writes, "That God is revealed in Jesus can only be asserted on the basis of his resurrection from the dead..If Jesus as a person is "the Son of God", as becomes clear retroactively from his resurrection, then he has always been the Son of God."(Jesus : God and Man, p.141). For further exposition of Pannenberg's notion of the retroactive power of Jesus' resurrection, cf. G.M. Cameron, "The Doctrine of God in the Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg"(Dr. Andrew Miller Prize Essay, 1975 - available at the University of Glasgow Library for reference), pp.7-9.

127. Jesus : God and Man, pp.327, 332.
128. pp.330,332.
129. Pannenberg's concern with the modern search for freedom is reflected in the title of his The Idea of God and Human Freedom, translated by R.A. Wilson, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1973) (Published in Great Britain by S.C.M. Press (1973) under the title, Basic Questions in Theology, Volume Three).
130. C. Pinnock, "Pannenberg's Theology : Reasonable Happenings in History", Christianity Today, 31, 3, (5th November 1976), p.22.
131. In his discussion of "Holy Scripture as Canon" (Holy Scripture, Chapter Three, pp.67-104), Berkouwer cites favourably the view of H. Ridderbos that "in Christ are based both salvation and its trustworthy communication, and..that "here lies to the present day the principium canonicitatis" (p.86; citing Ridderbos, The Authority of the New Testament Scriptures (1963), p.47 (italics in the original)). Berkouwer observes that Ridderbos does not intend to put forward a criterion by which a 'canon-in-the-canon' might be established but rather to "set forth relationships which make impossible any attempt to abstract the canon from Christ" (p.87).
132. cf. A Half Century of Theology, pp.159ff..
133. cf. my 1975 prize essay, "The Doctrine of God in the Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg", p.22. Pannenberg regards the "so-called passion predictions" as "vaticinia ex eventu" (i.e. written by the gospel-writers with hindsight rather than spoken by Jesus himself prior to the events) (Jesus : God and Man, p.245). The present writer can appreciate A.D. Galloway's evaluation of Pannenberg's "account of Jesus' progress toward his fate" as "both humanly credible and deeply moving" (Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Contemporary Religious Thinkers Series, edited by H.D. Lewis), (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1973), p.68) especially when the emphasis is placed on these words of Pannenberg, cited by Galloway : "Jesus' claim to authority by itself cannot be made the basis of a Christology,..everything depends upon the connection between Jesus' claim and its confirmation by God." (Pannenberg, p.66, Galloway, p.69). The present writer does not, however, see any necessary connection between Pannenberg's insightful emphasis on the resurrection as the divine confirmation of Jesus' claim and his interpretation of the passion predictions. C. Brown's words are worthy of consideration here : "if the traditional understanding of his mission is at all valid - and surely this possibility ought not to be ruled out a priori - the very thing we should expect to find is that Jesus would have tried to convey to his followers something of the meaning of his death and resurrection." (Philosophy and the Christian Faith, (Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1969), p.282 (italics in the original)).
134. cf. my 1975 prize essay, "The Doctrine of God in the Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg", p.6 (Pannenberg's emphasis on the unity of fact and meaning), pp.21-22 (the relationship between Jesus' birth and his resurrection in Pannenberg's thought). This latter aspect is developed more fully here.
135. Jesus : God and Man, p.143.
136. It is, in the present writer's view, far from self-evident that the erroneous notion that Jesus became the Son of God at the moment of his conception in Mary's womb is, in fact, embodied in the biblical narratives concerning Jesus' birth. Concerning the way in which the eternal Son of God assumed humanity, M. Furness wisely comments : "The Incarnation is a unique event and therefore we cannot say how it ought to take place." (Vital

Doctrines of the Faith, (Lutterworth Press, Guildford and London, 1973), p.33, underlining mine). Pannenberg accurately expresses today's questions when he writes, "Today the assertion of Jesus' virgin birth seems..to be a diminution of his true humanity. Nor can we see any longer why Jesus as Son of God should come into the world in a different way from anyone else."(The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.72). It seems to the present writer that Pannenberg's interpretation of the birth narratives has been more strongly influenced by today's questions than by the narratives themselves.

138. The present writer finds Pannenberg's use of the expression - intention distinction in relation to both the virgin birth story and the Apostles' Creed rather confusing. (a) The virgin birth story : It is not clear how Pannenberg's use of the words, "intention" and "meant" is to be understood when he accepts the story's "theological intention (which) lies in the implication that Jesus..was the Son of God from the beginning"(The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.75, underlining and brackets mine) while rejecting "the explanation which (the story) ..originally meant to offer for his divine sonship"(p.76, brackets and underlining mine). (b) The Apostles' Creed : (i) Pannenberg holds that its expression "cannot be our own" yet, speaking in this connection of entering into "the confession of faith of others", he maintains that the Apostles' Creed has an "irreplaceable function in the services of the church today"(p. 77, underlining mine). One wonders if Pannenberg sees the confession of a faith which "cannot be our own"(though it may be the "faith of others") as an irreplaceable function of the church! (ii) Pannenberg holds that agreement with the Creed's intention justifies the adoption of the Creed as "an expression of the faith of the church, not only today but from its very beginnings"(p.77, underlining). The question arises how we are to understand Pannenberg's justification for the adoption of the Creed in view of his statements that its expression cannot be our own(today) and that the story and the original meaning(which Pannenberg sees in it)are to be rejected(the church's very beginnings - going beyond the Apostles' Creed to the gospel-writers). Pannenberg may know exactly what he means. It is not particularly clear to this reader.

139. The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.72. (a) Pannenberg's "strong historical objections" are rather ambiguous(e.g. his analogy between Christ's birth and Greek mythology)(pp.71-72). A. Richardson criticizes this type of analogy : (i) "pagan mythology is full of legends of a superhuman hero born of intercourse between a god and a human woman. But this is scarcely virgin birth, and there is no real parallel to the story of the birth of Christ in pagan literature." (ii) "The Jewish mind(and Matt.1 and Luke 1 are intensely Jewish) would have been revolted by the idea of physical intercourse between a divine being and a woman."("Virgin Birth", A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1969), p.357, emphasis and brackets original). (b) The interpretation of Paul and John given by Pannenberg tends, in the present writer's view, to be rather distorted by Pannenberg's questionable interpretation of Matthew and Luke. Paul and John do move in the opposite direction from the idea that Jesus became the Son of God at the moment of his physical conception.

- It is less clear that Paul and John move in the opposite direction from Matthew and Luke for the simple reason that it is not at all clear that this notion is contained in the writings of Matthew and Luke. Pannenberg's interpretation of Paul and John (influenced by his prior interpretation of Matthew and Luke) is questionable : (i) Paul - Pannenberg suggests that it seems "improbable that Paul was even so much as familiar with the idea of Jesus' virgin birth" (p.72). This view is contested by R.A. Cole - "If Luke, the author of the Gospel, was also the author of Acts and travel-companion of Paul, it is inconceivable that Paul should have been ignorant of the birth-stories of Luke i, ii." (The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians : An Introduction and Commentary, (The Tyndale Press, London, 1965), p.115).
- (ii) John - Pannenberg suggests that "there is a phrase in the Gospel of John which must perhaps even be construed as a polemical allusion to the tradition" (p.72). A. Richardson holds that John 1:13 is "too ambiguous" to be used in support of the virgin birth (A Dictionary of Christian Theology, p.357). Pannenberg might well have exercised such caution before enlisting the support of John 1:13-14 for his view that "Paul and John expressed themselves more or less clearly in the opposite direction" from "(t)he tradition about Jesus' virgin birth (which)...appears in..Luke and Matthew" (p.72, brackets mine).
139. "Viewed from the confirmation of Jesus' claim by his resurrection, the inner logic of the situation dictates that Jesus was always one with God..even before his earthly birth" (Jesus : God and Man, p.153).
140. cf. pp.68, 134.
141. p.149.
142. The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.73. It is not being suggested that Pannenberg's arguments - historical, biblical and logical - bear no weight at all. What is being questioned is the degree of confidence Pannenberg places in those arguments. In the view of the present writer, none of Pannenberg's arguments justify his use of the words "with complete certainty" (p.73, the emphasis in the main text is mine). Any attempt to speak with complete certainty regarding either the historicity or the non-historicity of the virgin birth on the basis of the kind of arguments adduced by either side of this controversy is, in the present writer's view, rather misguided. Discussion of the kind of issues raised by Pannenberg is unlikely to settle the matter one way or another. Whatever position is taken, it must be taken in the recognition that there are arguments on both sides and that neither side may speak with the kind of complete certainty which is likely to silence its critics. Advocates of the historicity of the virgin birth must frankly acknowledge the important difference between the birth narratives which come ultimately from Mary herself and the resurrection narratives which are related to the testimony of many witnesses (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:4-8). Those who accept the kind of arguments put forward by Pannenberg require to recognize that these arguments are not nearly so conclusive as Pannenberg might lead us to think.
143. A. Richardson, An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1958), p.172. The gospels' lack of concern with explanation makes questionable not only Pannenberg's "complete certainty" concerning "the ~~notive~~ motive for the legendary rise of the tradition" (The Apostles' Creed in the Light of

Today's Questions, p.73) but also the attempts made by advocates of the historicity of the virgin birth to provide an explanation which purports to give a reason why the virgin birth was necessary. Critical of attempts to explain how Christ's "deity..incarnation..(or) sinlessness required the virgin birth", E.J. Carnell begins his article on "The Virgin Birth of Christ" with these words of warning against this type of speculation: "The Bible says that Christ was born of a virgin, but it does not say why. This silence has encouraged theologians to compose reasons of their own. These reasons, at times, are more ingenious than wise." (The Case for Biblical Christianity, edited by R.H. Nash (a compilation of Carnell's writings - published after Carnell's death), (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1969), p.141 (article originally published in the December 7, 1959 issue of Christianity Today)). Italics -original; Brackets - mine.

144. The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.74, emphasis mine. Pannenberg's negative evaluation of attempts to show the motive for the development of the resurrection narratives does not give him the right to assert that "a demonstration of the origin of the Christian Easter faith has never been attempted" (p.74, emphasis mine)! The whole approach of, for example, Paul Tillich is based on the possibility of developing an alternative explanation of the development of the resurrection narratives to that proposed by Pannenberg (cf. present study, p.68 for outline of Tillich's view). If Tillich, who specifically refrains from using the word "psychological" to describe his account of Jesus' resurrection (Systematic Theology, Vol. Two, p.156 (The University of Chicago Press, Harper & Row Publishers, New York and Evanston, Three volumes in one, 1967)), is not regarded by Pannenberg as one of the "severest critics" of "the Christian Easter faith" (Pannenberg, p.74), attention may be drawn to the cognitive dissonance theory to which Tillich's restitution theory does, in the present writer's view, bear a distinct similarity. Cognitive dissonance is defined as "psychologically uncomfortable tension arising from contradictory conditions" which, according to the cognitive dissonance theory, "(p)eople are motivated to avoid..and reduce..when it occurs" (D.L. Wollitzky, "Cognitive Control and Cognitive Dissonance", Thought and Personality, edited by P.B. Warr, (Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1970), p.349). R. Brown, without referring specifically to the resurrection narratives, suggests that "primitive Christianity" can be viewed from the standpoint of the cognitive dissonance theory (Social Psychology, (Collier-Macmillan International Edition; New York, London, 1970 (first published, 1965), p.591). If, in Pannenberg's view, "a demonstration of the origins of the Christian Easter faith has never been attempted", one wonders precisely what would, in Pannenberg's opinion, constitute such an attempt! (Pannenberg, p. 74, underlining mine).

145. It is difficult to understand Pannenberg's vigorous protest against existentialist interpretations of Jesus' resurrection without seeing it as a reaction against an attempt (adjudged by Pannenberg to be unacceptable) to direct attention away from the resurrection as a unique, unrepeatable historical occurrence to the idea of the resurrection as a 'myth' or 'symbol' which gives particularly vivid expression to a certain type of human self-understanding.

146. Pannenberg holds that "even after a careful examination of early Christian traditions, the assertion that Jesus is risen can be justified" while recognizing that "the assertion that Jesus is risen from the dead remains a matter of dispute in a special degree because it cuts so deeply into fundamental questions of the understanding of reality" and that "Christianity will have to get used to the fact that the basic assertion of its faith will remain a matter of dispute in this world" (The Apostles' Creed in Light of Today's Questions, p.114). Pannenberg's concern with historical research is rooted in his concern with the basis (prior to the subjective act) of faith while his recognition of the controversial status of the resurrection is rooted in the recognition that our evaluation is based on anticipations of a totality which is not yet completed and that this produces different anticipations and approaches and, therefore, controversy (Theological Conversation with Wolfhart Pannenberg, Dialog 11, Autumn 1972, pp.286-295). Both sides of Pannenberg's thought require to be recognized if a rather one-sided misrepresentation of Pannenberg's protest against existentialist reinterpretations of the resurrection is to be avoided.
147. Pannenberg is particularly concerned to ground the Christian faith in history in his article "Redemptive Event and History", Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, pp.15-80 (For brief accounts of Pannenberg's position in relation to the views of K. Barth, R. Bultmann and O. Cullmann, cf. A.D. Galloway, Wolfhart Pannenberg, pp.43-44 and D.H. Olive, Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Makers of the Modern Theological Mind: edited by Bob E. Patterson), (Word Books Publisher, Waco, Texas, 1973), pp.66-75).
148. Theology and the Kingdom of God, p.57.
149. Jesus: God and Man, p.321.
150. p.321.
151. In The Person of Christ, p.347, Berkouwer is not dealing directly with Pannenberg's conception of Christ's self-consciousness. His comments concerning Brunner's incognito-theory are most pertinent to the analysis of Pannenberg's theology. "The incognito-theory is something different from the idea of the self-concealment of Christ in the progression of his Messianic action. Indeed, this concealment is part of a holy pedagogy serviceable to the revelation of his Messianic mission. But the theory of incognito implies absolute and, as long as he is on the earth, uninterrupted concealment. Here, in my opinion, lies the fundamental error of the incognito-theory." (emphasis original). In "Christ Incognito?" (Chapter XIII, pp.329-364), Berkouwer offers a penetrating analysis of the incognito-concept, arguing that "the incognito-concept is not fruitful as an interpretative principle for the gospels. He who wishes to employ it must proceed to eliminate, with ruthless consistency, all the moments of glory (doxa) from the earthly course of Jesus' life." (p.348, brackets original). Thus, Berkouwer maintains that Brunner "pictures Christ, not as he appears in the gospel, but as he must have been in terms of the incognito-concept" (p.348, emphasis original). Berkouwer, insisting that he does not wish "to detract from the characterization of the entire life of Christ as a life of humiliation", rejects "a schematization of the life of Christ which, by means of an a priori concept of revelation, eliminates the doxa-element from his life in every respect." (p.350, emphasis

original). Citing Calvin (Institutes II, XIII, 2), Berkouwer stresses that God's appearance in our humanity - "the comforting character of the Incarnation" - is not to be approached via an a priori necessity in the structure of revelation (pp. 354-355). In "A Study of the Christologies of H. Emil Brunner and Gerrit C. Berkouwer" (Hartford Seminary Foundation, Ph.D., 1967), J.J. Arnold points out that Brunner, unlike Berkouwer, regards the virgin birth and the empty tomb traditions as 'foreign bodies' in the Christian faith (cf. E. Brunner, The Mediator, translated by O. Wyon, (The Lutterworth Press, London, 1934), pp. 322ff., 576 ff.). Although Pannenberg shares Brunner's view of the virgin birth, he would not accept Brunner's separation of the fact of the resurrection from the fact of the empty tomb (p. 578). Pannenberg's reference to division of opinion regarding the empty tomb tradition does not prevent him from emphasizing the fact of the empty tomb (The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p. 113). Pannenberg's theological outlook is quite different from Brunner's, especially with respect to faith's relationship to history (cf. A.D. Galloway, Wolfhart Pannenberg, p. 43). Berkouwer's criticism of Brunner's view may not, therefore, be indiscriminately ^{applied} to Pannenberg's thought. Nonetheless, Berkouwer's careful avoidance of the restrictive influence of an a priori principle which determines how the gospels must be interpreted is most important in the evaluation of Pannenberg's application of the principle of historical contingency to the question of Jesus' Messianic self-consciousness.

152. cf. Jesus : God and Man, p. 322 where Pannenberg's manner of speaking of the "hiddenness" of Jesus' unity with God shows a distinct similarity to the kind of incognito-concept criticized by Berkouwer (i.e. an a priori concept which determines how the gospels are to be interpreted). The present writer holds that it is most questionable to apply an a priori concept to the interpretation of the gospels which suggests a rather artificial harmonization of the "sayings of Jesus..in which he disclaims knowledge" of that day or that hour" (Mark 13:32)" (A Half Century of Theology, p. 228, underlining mine) and other passages where the gospel writers present Jesus as claiming knowledge of his death and resurrection (Matthew 16:21, Mark 8:31, Luke 9:22). Concerning Mark 13:32, Berkouwer writes, "if Jesus anywhere prohibits a docetic view of himself it is here" (A Half Century of Theology, p. 228 (cf. pp. 226ff. for Berkouwer's discussion of modern christology's opposition to docetism). We need not infer from this prohibition of a docetic view of Jesus that a negative evaluation of the historicity of the passion predictions is demanded.

153. When W. Hamilton, acknowledging Pannenberg's "attack on Bultmann" to be "one of the most useful and needed attacks in our day", writes, "it remains to be seen how effective and decisive has been Pannenberg's attempt to separate himself from the persuasive Bultmannian position", he suggests that "Pannenberg, with his special understanding of historical method, is doing much the same thing as Bultmann is doing with his distinction between Geschichte and Historie..He is looking for a way to translate statements concerning past events into statements about the present life of faith. Pannenberg's subjectivism is not that of experience but of historical methodology. But his

- way seems fully as escapist as does Bultmann's." ("The Character of Pannenberg's Theology" in Theology as History, edited by J. M. Robinson and J.B. Cobb Jr., (Harper & Row, New York, 1967), pp.177, 192-193). Hamilton's concern is with Pannenberg's application of the historical method to the interpretation of the resurrection narratives. In his "Response to the Discussion" Pannenberg maintains that there is "no essential contradiction in basing a sure trust on an event which we can know historically only with probability" (Theology as History, p.273) (cf. A Half Century of Theology, pp.126-128 for discussion of this aspect of Pannenberg's theological method). When attention is directed towards the interpretation of other aspects of the gospels (e.g. the 'passion predictions'), the comparison with Bultmann becomes quite different. Pannenberg holds that we cannot assume that Jesus knew himself to be the Servant of Isaiah 53 (Jesus : God and Man, p.327). Bultmann writes, "I am personally of the opinion that Jesus did not believe himself to be the Messiah" (Jesus and the Word, translated by L.P. Smith, E. Huntress, (Ivor Nicholson & Watson Limited, London, 1935), p.9). The present writer shares the view of I.H. Marshall who, observing that "the resurrection of Jesus..gave the decisive stimulus to Christological thinking (and that) (t)he firm recognition that Jesus was Lord and Messiah stemmed from the resurrection", holds that "(t)he roots of Christology lie in the pre-Easter period in a stronger sense " than would be allowed for by either Bultmann or Pannenberg (The Origins of New Testament Christology, (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1976), p.128; cf. p.61, n.41 where Marshall contrasts his own Luke : Historian and Theologian, (The Paternoster Press, London, 1970), pp.125-128 with W. Pannenberg, Jesus : God and Man, p.327. Underlining mine.)
154. C.C. Dickinson, "Pre-existence, resurrection, and recapitulation. An Examination of the Pre-existence of Christ in Karl Barth, Wolfhart Pannenberg and the New Testament", (University of Pittsburgh Ph.D., 1973), p.81.
155. H. Ridderbos, Studies in Scripture and its Authority, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1978), p.70, emphasis original).
156. A Half Century of Theology, p.239 (citing H. Ott, Die Antwort des Glaubens, (The Response of Faith), (1972), p.257).
157. p.239.
158. The Crisis of Piety, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1968), p.96.
159. The Person of Christ, pp.355-356.
160. pp.102-104, brackets mine.
161. A Half Century of Theology, p.257.
162. p.257 (referring to H.W. Kuitert, The Necessity of Faith (1975)).
163. p.258.
164. pp.254-257.
165. p.254.
166. p.254.
167. p.255.
168. p.257.
169. p.257.
170. p.257, underlining mine (citing Ik Geloof (1969)*, p.124).
171. Chapter 8, pp.232-275.
172. The Providence of God, p.249, emphasis original.

* Ik Geloof listed as (G.F. Callenbach N.V., Nijkerk, 1967) in "Van Ruler Bibliography" (Reformed Review, Vol.26, No.2, p.144).

173. p.250, emphasis original.
174. p.250, underlining mine(cf. present study, p.362, n.111-112).
175. p.254.
176. pp.254-255.
177. Note contrast between "fuller" and "restricting".
178. The Providence of God, p.260, emphasis original.
179. p.265.
180. p.265.
181. p.178.
182. p.179.
183. p.215.
184. p.225, underlining mine.
185. p.225.
186. A Half Century of Theology, p.263, underlining mine.
187. p.8.
188. p.27.
189. p.27.
190. p.36.
191. p.37.
192. p.37.
193. p.37.
194. pp.37-38.
195. p.100, underlining mine.
196. p.142, underlining mine.
197. p.143.
198. p.143.
199. pp.262-263.
200. p.262.
201. p.8.
202. p.9.
203. p.9.
204. p.9.
205. p.9.
206. G.C. Berkouwer, "Current Religious Thought", Christianity Today, III, 13, (March 30, 1959), p.39.
207. A Half Century of Theology, Chapter 6, pp. 144-178.
208. p.144.
209. Christianity Today, III, 13(March 30, 1959), p.39.
210. Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, p.1.
211. A Half Century of Theology, p.146(cf. present study, pp.64-65).
212. p.177.
213. cf. The Person of Christ, p.41(criticism of Bultmann's view).
214. Berkouwer's protest against these tendencies is essentially concerned with theological method. While not wishing to deny the concern of 'biblicism' to "do full justice to what the Bible has to say about its human side"(E.J. Young, Thy Word is Truth, (The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1963), p.65), he is critical of a scholastic tendency in the 'biblicist' doctrine of Scripture (cf. J.I. Packer who suggests that H. Lindsell, in his The Bible in the Balance, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979), "makes himself appear as an evangelical(or should I say, fundamentalist) scholastic"(Under God's Word, (Lakeland, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 1980), pp.145-146; cf. present study, pp.326-327(n.141) for further detail concerning Packer's criticism of Lindsell's book. Underlining mine.). While not wishing to deny Bultmann's concern with the question, "How Does God Speak to Us through the Bible?"(R. Bultmann, Existence and Faith(shorter writings of

- Rudolf Bultmann; selected, translated and introduced by S.M. Ogden), (Collins - The Fontana Library Theology and Philosophy, London and Glasgow, 1964 (first published in English, 1960), pp. 196-201 (This article was first published in 1934 in The Student World, xxvii, pp.108-112). Emphasis in the title mine.), Berkouwer protests against the type of existentialism which dissociates personal experience from the historicity of Christ's resurrection (cf. present study, p.366, n.164 for further detail). The principle on which Berkouwer is critical of both tendencies is expressed in Divine Election, p.15 - "we may not be silent where God speaks.. we may not speculate beyond the boundaries which God in His wisdom has set us" (cf. present study, p.331 n.176 for comment).
215. A Half Century of Theology, p.148, underlining mine.
216. p.148.
217. p.149.
218. p.150, underlining mine.
219. p.150; cf. R.W. Hepburn, "Paradox" in A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson - "A paradoxical statement is one that runs 'against opinion' (Greek: para and doxa), often one that is prima facie self-contradictory or absurd, but which may or may not prove to be so on examination." (p.251, italics in the original). L. Morris, commenting on Luke 5:26, writes "strange means 'beyond expectation'" and makes the remark, "Human achievement could not explain what had happened." (The Gospel According to Luke; An Introduction and Commentary, (The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), (Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1974), p.118, "strange" - emphasis original, "Human" - emphasis mine.).
220. A Half Century of Theology, p.151; cf. A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson, p.252 - "The theologian's task will be to demonstrate that the paradoxes ("in philosophy of religion") are not in fact contradictions, that more outrage would be done to his total experience by denying any part of the paradox than by affirming it." (brackets mine - to indicate the context of this statement (bracketed words - original; earlier in paragraph).
221. A Half Century of Theology, p.153 (citing Barth on I Corinthians 1).
222. pp.156-158.
223. pp.158-159, emphasis original.
224. Holy Scripture, pp.349-352, brackets mine.
225. "Berkouwer represents the finest flowering of a Calvinist tradition that has developed primarily in terms of its own inner dynamics rather than a response to the changing intellectual environment." (J.B. Cobb Jr., Living Options in Protestant Theology, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1962), p.138.
226. Man: The Image of God, p.230, underlining mine.
227. A Half Century of Theology, p.146, emphasis original.
228. p.167.
229. p.168.
230. Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.II, p.69 (cited in A Half Century of Theology, p.169.)
231. cf. A Half Century of Theology, p.176 where Berkouwer questions whether Pannenberg's apologetic "would actually be effective in dialogue with modern atheism", asking "to what extent his analysis of the human condition is convincing, and..whether it would in fact open the listener to the meaningfulness of the Christian religion and the perspectives of the Christian future."
232. p.169.

233. cf. N.H.G. Robinson, "The Ontological Argument"(Section 5 in larger article entitled, "God"), A Dictionary of Christian Theology, edited by A. Richardson, pp.139-140 - "if one were confronted by God in his self-revelation as the one who exists out of himself..one might well have a concept of God of which the ontological argument is perhaps a clarification..one's belief in the existence of God does not rest ultimately upon a demonstration but on the revelation."(p.140).
234. A Half Century of Theology, p.167(discussing Pannenberg's view).
235. p.177.
236. pp.151-154.
237. p.171.
238. The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.133; cited in A Half Century of Theology, p.172.
239. The Apostles' Creed in the Light of Today's Questions, p.130; cited in A Half Century of Theology, p.172.
240. A Half Century of Theology, p.160(emphasis original). Berkouwer indirectly refers to W. Pannenberg, "The Crisis of the Scripture Principle" in Basic Questions in Theology, Vol.I, pp.1-14.
241. A Half Century of Theology, pp.164, 171. cf. Pannenberg's What is Man?: Contemporary Anthropology in Theological Perspective, translated by D.A. Priebe, (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970 - German edition, 1962)(cited on p.164) and Theology and the Philosophy of Science, translated by F. McDonagh, (Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd. London, 1976; The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1976)(German edition cited on p.163).
242. A Half Century of Theology, p.173.
243. cf. p.71 where Berkouwer conjectures that Barth "would have asked Pannenberg..for more exegesis, more understanding of the Word."(emphasis original).
244. pp.156ff..
245. Concerning "The Ascendancy of History" in modern theology, C.E. Braaten asks, "what justification is there for reducing all the media of revelation to history?..Is the idea of history really capable of exhausting what the Scriptures mean by revelation?" (New Directions in Theology, Volume II: History and Hermeneutics, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1965), p.17. Citing J. Barr, "Revelation Through History in the Old Testament and Modern Theology", Interpretation, 17(1963), pp.193-205, Braaten contends that "the formula "revelation through history" cannot be our only hermeneutical guideline without doing violence to the Biblical texts..(since (a))in the Wisdom Literature God is not seen as communicating with men through special historical events..(b)according to the self-understanding of the Biblical narrators of the exodus event, God revealed his will to his people not only through the event itself but before, during, and after this event..((c)) God's way of declaring himself is much too complex to allow its reduction to a single, simple formula." (p.17). Braaten is not here concerned directly with Pannenberg's thought. Braaten emphasizes that Pannenberg seeks "to free the category of history from..naturalistic, positivistic determinants" (p.19 - this refers to Pannenberg's emphasis on the unity of fact and meaning). Braaten describes Pannenberg's view thus : "Revelation comes not merely in or through history but as history." (p.27, emphasis original). Braaten points out that Pannenberg's emphasis on historical reason is not intended "to depreciate the role of the kerygma and the Spirit in bringing a person to faith" (p.51, citing W. Pannenberg, "Einsicht und Glaube: Antwort an

an Paul Althaus" (Reason and Faith : An Answer to Paul Althaus), Theologische Literaturzeitung, 88(1963), pp.81-92). After pointing out the important differences between Pannenberg's theology of revelation as history and the views against which Pannenberg protests (e.g. Barth's "primordial history" (Urgeschichte) which "Pannenberg sees..as an-unhistorical, mythological concept", Bultmann's "somewhat artificial distinction..between..Historie ..the bare recounting of the facts" and "Geschichte..history interpreted in its existential significance for us", and Gullmann's "Heilsgeschichte or 'salvation history'" which "separates off a special strand of history..from the rest of history"), A.D. Galloway suggests that "(t)here is a sense in which Pannenberg does tend to turn..theologians into historians" (Wolfhart Pannenberg, pp.43-44, emphases and brackets original). To the extent that Galloway's observation is accurate, Pannenberg will have a rather one-sided influence on modern theology. Galloway expresses particular concern regarding the relationship between history and metaphysics in Pannenberg's thought. He describes Pannenberg's theology as "a theology in search of a metaphysic", adding the explanatory comment, "This arises partly from the fact that he tries to make history do too much for him. He tries to make history settle metaphysical questions." (p.136). Galloway writes, "We need a metaphysical system which can accommodate the novel, the contingent and the creative in history; and one which can accommodate the personal, the unpredictable and the historically active in God..History alone, no matter how perceptively it is studied, will not provide the answer. It requires also systematic, philosophical thinking." (p.137). Insofar as Galloway's analysis of Pannenberg's thought is accurate (Galloway himself begins his description of Pannenberg's theology as "a theology in search of a metaphysic" with the words, "It would not, I think, be unfair to describe.." (p.136)), it highlights a one-sidedness in Pannenberg's thought. In assessing Pannenberg's position, it is significant that both Braaten (p.51) and Galloway (p.136) draw attention to the flexibility of Pannenberg's thought. Theology requires, in its reflection concerning divine revelation, to carefully avoid "the tyranny of a single principle" (Braaten, p.51) and to seek to give more adequate expression to the diversity as well as the unity of divine revelation (cf. present study, pp.57-58).

246. A Half Century of Theology, p.178, underlining mine.
247. p.178, underlining mine.
248. p.178.
249. H. Butt with E. Wright, At the Edge of Hope, Christian Laity in Paradox, (A Crossroad Book), (Seabury Press, New York, 1978), pp. 6-7.
250. pp.8-9.
251. A Half Century of Theology, Chapter 7, pp.179-214.
252. p.179.
253. pp.181, 214, emphasis original.
254. At the Edge of Hope, Christian Laity in Paradox, p.7.
255. A Half Century of Theology, p.189.
256. p.190.
257. p.181.
258. p.189.
259. p.190.
260. p.190.
261. p.191.

262. Divine Election, pp.46, 49.
263. p.150.
264. pp.324-325, 327.
265. A Half Century of Theology, p.190.
266. p.214.
267. p.191, brackets mine.
268. p.195.
269. p.195.
270. cf. p.209 - comments regarding different forms of social action.
271. p.195.
272. p.191.
273. p.195.
274. p.195.
275. p.193.
276. p.193.
277. p.193.
278. pp.192-193.
279. p.195.
280. p.191.
281. p.192.
282. p.191.
283. Holy Scripture, p.306, italics in the original.
284. p.306, italics in the original.
285. p.306.
286. p.306, italics in the original.
287. p.313.
288. p.304, emphasis original.
289. p.304.
290. p.308.
291. pp.308-309.
292. p.306.
293. p.192 - Note Berkouwer's accompanying comments.
294. The Return of Christ, pp.422-423.
295. Faith and Justification, p.87.
296. General Revelation, pp.104-107.
297. Holy Scripture, p.95.
298. p.93. cf. C.E.B. Cranfield, "The Message of James", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.18, No.2(June 1965), p.182.
299. Calvin's Commentaries(Vol.12: Ephesians - Jude), (Associated Publishers and Authors, Wilmington, Delaware, (no date of publication given)), p.2552(from "The Argument on the Epistle of James", pp.2551-2552); cf. Cranfield, "The Message of James", p.183.
300. Faith and Justification, pp.131-139.
301. Holy Scripture, p.96.
302. p.96; cf. C.E.B. Cranfield, "The Message of James", p.182 n.6 where it is suggested that words written by Luther two days before his death(cited from W. Niesel, Reformed Symbolics : A Comparison of Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Protestantism, translated by A.D. Lewis, (Edinburgh, 1962), p.227) "seem to indicate a humbler attitude toward Scripture, and perhaps Niesel is right in seeing in them something of a recantation of earlier too cocksure utterances"(Cranfield, p.183(continuing n.6 begun on p. 182), referring to Niesel, p.230). Berkouwer says, "It is incorrect to say that Luther later retracted his criticisms(of the epistle of James)"(Holy Scripture, p.95 n.111, brackets mine). Berkouwer is quite correct since there was no specific retraction

- of Luther's criticisms of the epistle of James. Irrespective of the particular question of Luther's view of the epistle of James, the words written by Luther two days before his death embody an important recognition of the limitation of theology's grasp of the meaning of the Scriptures.
303. cf. present study, p.263 - relationship between Christ as Saviour and Christ as Example.
304. Holy Scripture, p.97; "and Luther's" - underlining mine, "recipene" - italics in the original.
305. p.89 (further discussion of perspicuity, Chapter 10, pp.267-298).
306. pp.90-91.
307. p.90.
308. p.90.
309. pp.102-103: "A true confession of Holy Scripture is possible only when one has yielded himself to the testimony of Scripture.. one can never legitimately devaluate Scripture while intending to pay attention to the content of the message."
310. p.90.
311. p.102, emphasis original.
312. p.103.
313. p.277.
314. M. Luther, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, translated by P.S. Watson, (James Clarke & Co. Ltd., Cambridge & London, 1953), p.9 (cited in the "Editor's Preface" from the Weimar edition of Luther's Works, (Weimar: Böhlau, 1938), Vol.7, pp.97ff.).
315. Faith and Justification, p.130 n.50.
316. p.130 n.50 (citing J. Haar, Initium creaturae Dei, (1939), pp.28ff.).
317. Holy Scripture, p.93.
318. Faith and Justification, p.130 n.50.
319. Holy Scripture, p.94. Berkouwer points out that Luther "at first, in his commentary on Romans,..saw no contradiction between Paul and James (and that) he later arrived at his critical position regarding the latter" (brackets mine). Cf. Luther, Lectures on Romans, translated and edited by W. Pauck, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia; S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1961), pp.100-102.
320. Faith and Justification, p.131.
321. Holy Scripture, p.277.
322. Luther's Works (Weimar edition), Vol.7, pp.97ff..
323. Faith and Justification, p.132.
324. p.133.
325. p.134.
326. p.134.
327. p.135.
328. pp.135-136, emphasis original.
329. p.137, emphasis original.
330. p.136.
331. p.137.
332. Faith and Sanctification, Chapter II, pp.17-44.
333. p.21.
334. p.78.
335. p.78.
336. p.78.
337. p.41.
338. A Half Century of Theology, p.191.
339. Faith and Sanctification, Chapter VII, pp.135-160.
340. pp.142-143.

341. p.143.
342. p.144.
343. p.144.
344. p.144.
345. pp.143-144.
346. pp.147-148.
347. p.148.
348. p.150(The N.I.V. avoids the expressions, "expiation" and "propitiation", preferring the expression, "atoning sacrifice".)
349. p.159.
350. Chapter VIII, pp.163-193.
351. p.167.
352. p.167.
353. p.167.
354. p.168.
355. p.160(citing John 17:15).
356. cf. M.E. Osterhaven, The Spirit of the Reformed Tradition, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1971), pp.32-35.
357. A Half Century of Theology, p.8.
358. p.8.
359. Holy Scripture, p.105 -- "the church confesses the Bible as its canon..the norm and rule for its entire existence in this world".
360. cf. C.M. Cameron, "The Reformation Continues : A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology", Reformed Review, Vol.33, No.2(Winter 1980), p.73.
361. A Half Century of Theology, p.185.
362. Institutes IV, xx, 2.
363. Exodus 20:1-17.
364. e.g. general statements such as Matthew 6:19-21, 24 and Luke 6: 24-25a and episodes relating to the call to discipleship in Mark 10:17-31 and Luke 19:1-10
365. A Half Century of Theology, p.189.
366. p.187. Marxism is not the only humanistic social ethic in the contemporary scene. Its significance is such that special attention is drawn to the Christianity-Marxism dialogue in both Berkouwer's discussion and the present discussion. The problem of precisely identifying Marxism has been noted by R.K. Merton who draws attention to "the exegetic problem of closely identifying Marxism" with the comment, "we have only to recall Marx's "je ne suis pas Marxiste"(Social Theory and Social Structure, (The Free Press, New York; Collier-Macmillan Limited, London, 1968. Enlarged Edition), p.516, italics in the original). Merton concentrates on the thought of Marx and Engels "primarily"(p.516). While the present discussion is not concerned exclusively with the thought of Marx himself, the author does seek to indicate how later 'Marxist' perspectives are related, by way of contrast as well as affinity, to the thought of Marx himself.
367. A Half Century of Theology, p.187, emphasis original.
368. p.188, underlining and brackets mine.
369. p.201.
370. p.199.
371. p.208.
372. p.190.
373. p.183.
374. p.201.

375. cf. Man : The Image of God, pp.122-125, 140 where the biblical and Reformed perspectives are contrasted with I. Kant's view.
376. The Return of Christ, p.10.
377. cf. p.18 where Berkouwer cites the words of H. Ott - "The message of Jesus' resurrection is the foundation and source of all Christian eschatology" (Eschatologie. Versuch eines dogmatischen Grundrisses(1958), p.15). On p.19, Berkouwer emphasizes that "(e)schatological expectation is not just ordinary longing..It is rather the response to a promise..(1Pet 1:3)".
378. p.21.
379. p.19.
380. p.20.
381. A Half Century of Theology, p.207.
382. D. Bonhoeffer's opposition to the tendency to think "in terms of two spheres" such as "natural and supernatural" is instructive (Ethics, translated by N.H. Smith and edited by E. Bethge, (Collins(The Fontana Library, Theology and Philosophy), Glasgow and London, 1964(first German edition, 1949; first English edition, 1955)), p.198). He writes, "In Christ we are offered the possibility of partaking in the reality of God and in the reality of the world, but not in the one without the other. The reality of God discloses itself only by setting me entirely in the reality of the world..I never experience the reality of God without the reality of the world or the reality of the world without the reality of God."(p.195). Opposing "shallow this-worldliness", Bonhoeffer maintains that "it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to believe"(Letters and Papers from Prison, (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1953; S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1967), pp.225-226. He emphasizes that "the relation of the Church to the world is determined entirely by the relation of God to the world" and not by "the world as it understands itself" (Ethics, pp.204-205). Bonhoeffer maintains that "(t)he 'heart' in the biblical sense is not the inward life, but the whole man in relation to God"(Letters and Papers from Prison, p.214). Bonhoeffer's theme of "The "Worldly" Christian" is helpfully discussed by K. Hamilton(Life in One's Stride, A Short Study in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1968), pp.64-69). Hamilton observes that "Bonhoeffer categorically refuses to demythologize the resurrection..(and that he) finally walked to his execution saying that for him it was the beginning of life"(pp.65-67, brackets mine). Bonhoeffer's thought is not determined by the ultimacy of this world but by his opposition to "(t)he separation..(of) the two spheres of the sacred and the secular" and his insistence that "faith is always ..an act involving the whole life"(Hamilton, pp.65, 67(first passage quoted), 69 n.49(second passage - quoting Letters and Papers from Prison, p.224).
383. Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy, edited with an introduction and notes by T.B. Bottomore and Maximilien Rubel, (Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1963)(first published by C.A. Watts, 1956)), pp.141-142.
384. p.119.
385. cf. K.R. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, Volume II : The High Tide of Prophecy: Hegel, Marx, and the Aftermath, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1945), pp.200-201. J. W. Beardslee III writes "the Marxist social passion corresponds to the deep aspirations of suffering people who intend to suffer no longer..This sign of the times..has stimulated, what seems to be a more sensitized conscience on the part of privileged

- Christians..The weaker the church's involvement in social struggles, the more men and women of good will will be led by the effects of the Christian heritage into the Marxist fold."
("Theocracy in Today's World : Some Considerations Regarding Marxism, Islam, and Zionism", Reformed Review, Vol.34, No.2 (Winter 1981), p.91.
386. This statement from Marx's Theses on Feuerbach(1845) is cited in Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy, edited by Bottomore and Rubel, p.84. Popper refers to this emphasis as an "important corrective"(The Open Society and Its Enemies, p.201).
387. The Return of Christ, Chapter Seven, pp.211-234.
388. Chapter Six, pp.170-210.
389. p.211, emphasis original.
390. p.211.
391. p.228.
392. p.230.
393. pp.233-234.
394. K. Marx and F. Engels, The Communist Manifesto, (introduction by A.J.P. Taylor), (Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1967) (This translation, by Samuel Moore, first published 1888)), pp.120-121, emphasis original.
395. A Half Century of Theology, p.205. Precise interpretation of Marxism's expectations concerning the future is most difficult. R. Blackburn writes that Marxism is "not..some uniform and homogeneous alternative to bourgeois ideology", emphasizing that "(w)ithin Marxism there is continual development and discovery based on both political struggles and on new interpretations of what was really important in the writings of Marx himself." ("Introduction", R. Blackburn(editor), Ideology in Social Science, Readings in Critical Social Theory, (Fontana/Collins, Glasgow, 1972), p.12). E.J. Hobsbawm, while describing himself as a Marxist, nonetheless speaks of "the break-up of Marxist orthodoxies inimical to original scientific work"("Karl Marx's Contribution to Historiography", Ideology in Social Science, p.283). M. Nicolaus writes, "Marx was not a vendor of ready-made truths but a maker of tools. He himself did not complete the execution of the design..the construction of Marxism as a revolutionary science which exposes even the most industrially advanced society at its roots has finally become a practical possibility"("The Unknown Marx", Ideology in Social Science, p. 333). It is clear from the above quotations that an oversimplified interpretation of Marxism requires to be carefully avoided since there is a variety of interpretations offered by those who would accept the designation, 'Marxist'.
396. A Half Century of Theology, p.205. M. Hill, in his discussion of secularization, rejects the "other-worldly"- "this-worldly" contrast, viewing "'other-worldly' and 'this-worldly' concerns as complementary and equally authentic aspects" of religion(A Sociology of Religion, (Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1973), p.238.
397. Man : The Image of God, p.195.
398. p.195.
399. D. Lyon, Christians & Sociology, (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1976. First published by The Tyndale Press, Leicester, 1975), "Further reading"(at the end of the book).

400. Man : The Image of God, p.183.
401. p.183, underlining mine.
402. Karl Marx : Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy, edited by Bottomore and Rubel, p.85 (from Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts(1844)).
403. p.177, underlining mine (from Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, (1844)).
404. K.R. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, p.121.
405. The Communist Manifesto, p.121.
406. K.R. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, p.191. Commenting on the idea that "the economic development of capitalism must involve 'the increasing misery' of the proletariat", J. Rex says, "If this is not actually experienced and is unacceptable then Marxism must be considerably revised" (Key Problems of Sociological Theory, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1961), p.144, emphasis original).
407. K.R. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, pp.185-189. Observing "the persistence of the structural inequalities of capitalism" and hoping for "a coherent and powerful radical impulse", J.H. Westgaard contends that "the argument that a continuous trend towards income equalization and a wide diffusion of property are dissolving the class structure of capitalist society can hardly be sustained." (Ideology in Social Science, edited by R. Blackburn, p.125). Arguments against the Marxist theory based on current observations may be countered by the "sooner or later" element in Marxist thought (R.K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, (The Free Press, New York; Collier-Macmillan Limited, London, 1968. Enlarged edition), p.533, emphasis original).
408. The Providence of God, p.119, underlining mine.
409. The Communist Manifesto, p.79.
410. K.R. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, p.116.
411. K.R. Popper, The Poverty of Historicism, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London (paperback edition, 1961) (first published - 1957), p.51. R.K. Merton holds that "(t)here is no strict determinism of ideas by economic conditions, but a definite predisposition." (Social Theory and Social Structure, p.532).
412. K.R. Popper, The Poverty of Historicism, p.51. Critical of the Marxist theory of history, S.H. Travis writes that there is "no logical reason why his (the Marxist's) series of epochs should end with the communist epoch. He cannot say why history should not be an endless succession of epochs" (I believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1982), p.231). Emphasis original.
413. K.R. Popper, The Poverty of Historicism, pp.73-74. Optimism regarding the outcome of Marxist political action does not suggest either that this outcome can be achieved without a struggle or that that there is always a calm assurance concerning the best method of producing the desired result.
414. K.R. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, p.114.
415. cf. his Faith and Justification, Faith and Sanctification and Faith and Perseverance.
416. A Half Century of Theology, Chapter 7, pp.179-214.
417. The term 'Christendom' is used here because the present discussion is concerned with the attempt to draw metaphysical conclusions from societal comparisons.
418. M. Hill, A Sociology of Religion, p.243.

419. p.17.
420. Does God Exist?, translated by E. Quinn, (Collins, London, 1980), p.245, emphasis original.
421. The Open Society and Its Enemies, p.41, emphasis original.
422. pp.270-272, emphasis original.
423. The Providence of God, pp.164-165.
424. p.164, brackets mine.
425. p.166.
426. p.170.
427. p.171, underlining mine.
428. p.171.
429. p.176, emphasis original.
430. p.173(citing Revisie der revisie-legendes, 1879).
431. p.178.
432. Karl Marx : Selected Writings on Sociology and Social Philosophy, edited by Bottomore and Rubel, p.41.
433. The Providence of God, p.181. J. Calvin spoke out forcibly against a comfortable bourgeois living which is essentially godless - "They that are rich of the goods of the world..ought to be as rivers, and to water the places where they pass through, with the abundance that God has given them. But what? - they overflow their banks, and there is nothing else with them but of overthrowing one and of turning up another..such men are enemies to nature, and work spite unto God."(The Best of John Calvin, compiled by S. Dunn, (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan), p.312).
434. The Providence of God, p.179. Calvin does encourage the poor man to "take patiently whatsoever it pleases God to send him" but he also insists that the rich man "advance not himself through pride and stateliness, but always behave himself mildly", maintaining that "he which shuts his ears at the crying of the poor, shall cry himself unto God and not be heard"(The Best of John Calvin, pp.319-320).
435. The Providence of God, p.186.
436. The Day Comes : A Prophetic View of the Contemporary World, (Collins, Fount Paperbacks, London(printed, Glasgow), 1982), p.233. Hill, distinguishing between description and explanation, maintains that Marxism has value as a descriptive account of history while being inadequate as an explanatory analysis of history.
437. p.234.
438. p.234.
439. The present writer found this statement in a sociology textbook several years ago. It is important to understand that "to criticize Marxism is not to endorse capitalism"(S.H. Travis, I believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, p.234).
440. C. Hill, The Day Comes, pp.235-237.
441. M. Hill, A Sociology of Religion, (Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1973), p.243.
442. On Being a Christian, (Collins, (Fount Paperbacks), Glasgow, 1978 (German edition, 1974:- translated by E. Quinn), p.50.
443. p.50, emphasis original. The question here concerns whether or not hope and efforts for a basic change of society should be described as a "kind of Marxism" when they are dissociated from the Marxist world-view.
444. A Half Century of Theology, p.204.
445. p.204.

446. p.211(citing Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, IV, p.702).
447. p.212, emphasis mine.
448. p.212.
449. cf. W. Pannenberg, Theology and the Kingdom of God, p.102 -
"The teaching of Jesus, including his ethical radicalism, was dependent on his message of the imminent Kingdom of God."
450. A Half Century of Theology, p.188 . This statement was made by Marxists at a conference at Marienbad, East Germany in 1967 in response to a confession by theologians that "Christianity often preaches..transcendence too much and immanence too little". This Marxist statement is a rather apt response to a theology which has become somewhat embarrassed by transcendence and tends to restrict its thinking to life within the earthly horizon.
451. T. Dowley(Organizing Editor), Eerdman's Handbook to the History of Christianity, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977; Lion Publishing, Berkhamsted, Herts, 1977), p.640(from C.R. Padilla, "The Age of Liberation").
452. R. Dahrendorf, Homo Sociologicus, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1973(first published in his Essays in the Theory of Society, (same publishers, 1968)), p.80.
453. Cited by H. Kung in On Being a Christian, p.558. Cf. M. Machovec, A Marxist Looks at Jesus, introduction by P. Hebblethwaite, (Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 1976(German edition, 1972)).
454. The Communist Manifesto, pp.120-121, underlining mine.
455. R. Dahrendorf, Homo Sociologicus, p.80.
456. E.M. Eenigenburg, Review of Karl Marx : The Roots of his Thought, by J. van der Hoeven, (Wedge Publishing Foundation, Toronto, 1976) in Reformed Review, Vol.32, No.1(Fall 1978), p.59.
457. Marx and the Marxists, (Ernest Benn Limited, London; Barnes and Noble Books, New York, 1973), p.324. It is important to observe the kind of influence Marcuse himself wishes to have on the New Left. In Counter-Revolution and Revolt, (Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, London, 1972), Marcuse concerns himself with providing guidance for the opposition to the "counter-revolution"(i.e. capitalism's preventive measure by which it "reorganizes itself to meet the threat of a revolution)(pp.1-2). Marcuse protests against "the anti-intellectualism" of a "misplaced radicalism" (p.129) which advocates 'dropping out'. Marcuse, citing R. Dutschke, advocates "the long march through the institutions : working against the established institutions while working in them..and at the same time preserving one's own consciousness" (p.55, emphasis original). It is in this context that we are to understand Marcuse's words : "Capitalism produces its own gravediggers - but their faces may be very different from those of the wretched of the earth, from those of misery and want"(p.57).
458. D. Childs, Marx and the Marxists, p.324, underlining mine.
459. A. Burton, Revolutionary Violence, The Theories, (Crane, Russak and Company, Inc., New York, 1978), p.14.
460. D. Childs, Marx and the Marxists, p.303, underlining mine.
461. p.324.
462. A. Burton, Revolutionary Violence, The Theories, pp.14-15.
463. D. Childs, Marx and the Marxists, p.327.
464. p.324.
465. p.8(preface), (citing R.V. Daniels, Red October: The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, (London, 1967)).
466. H. Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of

- Advanced Industrial Society, (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1964), p.23 (cited in D. Childs, Marx and the Marxists, p.325).
467. One-Dimensional Man, p.48 (cited by D. Childs, Marx and the Marxists, p.325).
468. G. Lichtheim, A Short History of Socialism, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1970), p.300, underlining and brackets mine.
469. A. MacIntyre, Marxism and Christianity, (Gerald Duckworth, London, 1969), pp.139-140.
470. pp.140-141.
471. p.142. It is noteworthy that MacIntyre contributed the volume entitled, Herbert Marcuse, An Exposition and A Polemic, (The Viking Press, New York, 1970) to the Modern Masters Series.
472. cf. present study, pp.287-288.
473. K. Polanyi, The Great Transformation, (Beacon Press, Boston, 1957), p.152 (cited in G. Lichtheim, A Short History of Socialism, p.300).
474. D. Childs, Marx and the Marxists, p.338.
475. K. Marx and F. Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p.79, underlining mine.
476. This book is sub-titled Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory. References to this book are to the 2nd edition with supplementary chapter, (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1955).
477. This book, to which reference has already been made, has been described by R.E. Meyers as Marcuse's "most definitive book" (Religious Ministry in a Transcendentless Culture, (University Press of America, Inc., Washington D.C., 1980), p.22).
478. In this comparison of Marcuse's concept of the liberation of man with the theological concept of liberation, the author emphasizes what he regards to be key aspects in the theological concept of liberation while recognizing that there is no general consensus concerning precisely what is meant by the term, "liberation theology".
479. Man : The Image of God, p.313.
480. p.320.
481. Reason and Revolution, p.435, underlining mine.
482. pp.435-436. Where Marcuse uses the term "free", K.R. Popper uses the expression "unrestrained" (The Open Society and Its Enemies, p.117 n.10 (note given on p.327)).
483. p.435.
484. p.435.
485. p.438, brackets mine.
486. p.436.
487. p.439.
488. p.322, underlining and brackets mine.
489. pp.321-322, underlining mine.
490. p.317.
491. A Half Century of Theology, pp.208-209, emphasis original.
492. p.209, emphasis original.
493. One-Dimensional Man, p.253, underlining mine.
494. When Marcuse maintains that "Dialectical theory..cannot offer the remedy"(p.253), he uses the word "theory" in isolation from "practice". When he maintains that dialectical theory defines "the historical..necessities"(p.253), he immediately clarifies his use of the word "necessities" by relating it to "the practice which responds to the theory"(p.253).

495. G.C. Berkouwer, "Orthodoxy and Orthopraxis" in God and the Good, edited by C. Oberleke and L. Smedes, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1975), pp.13-21.
496. Faith and Justification, p.201, emphasis and brackets original.
497. Faith and Sanctification, p.193.
498. Sin, p.546.
499. p.547(referring to The Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 12, Question 31 and Lord's Day 44, Question 115), emphasis Berkouwer's.
500. The expression, "the presence of the future" is taken from G.E. Ladd's The Presence of the Future, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1974) which is a revised and updated version of Jesus and the Kingdom, (Harper and Row, New York, 1964). The expression, "the deed-word revelation" is taken from G.E. Ladd's A Theology of the New Testament, p.31.
501. The Return of Christ, p.150.
502. p.143.
503. "Ideal types" are being used here(cf. D.O. Moberg, The Great Reversal : Evangelism versus Social Concern, (Scripture Union, London, 1972), pp.19-20 - "ideal types"..select certain key characteristics for the purpose of making the distinctions clear. In actual life, most persons and groups do not fall purely and completely into either category").
504. H. Kung ends his On Being a Christian on this note(p.602).
505. Reviewing Berkouwer's The Church from the standpoint of "the North American church", E. Heideman maintains that "it cannot be the book on the church for us..(and that) Berkouwer's book leads us to place alongside it the writings of others such as Jürgen Moltmann, The Church in the Power of the Spirit, and Jose Miguez Bonino, Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation, in order that his own vision of the church may be lived out in our land as well as in his."(Reformed Review, Vol.32, No.1(Fall 1978), p. 65, emphasis original, brackets mine). It should be noted from the way in which Berkouwer begins and ends The Church that he does not presume to have written the book on the church in any exclusive sense. At the outset, he notes that theological reflection concerning the church brings one face to face with "a long series of varied questions, all closely linked to the fact that there are so many churches as well as so many differing views of the essence of the Church"(p.7). It is within this context that Berkouwer addresses himself to the "challenging and serious" "question of the Church's relevance"(p.7). When Berkouwer concludes his book with the words of John 21:25 - "were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written."(p.420) -, he leaves the reader with the thought that there is infinitely more to be said about the reality and relevance of Christ's church in the world than Berkouwer himself has been able to say. Thus, Heideman's point is well taken - "Berkouwer's book leads us" beyond itself in order that "his own vision of the church" might be "lived out" in situations that are very different from the particular context out of which The Church is written(Heideman, p.65, emphasis mine).
506. Cf. A Half Century of Theology, Chapter 7("The Earthly Horizon"), pp.179-214.
507. One-Dimensional Man, p.253.
508. p.253, emphases mine.

509. p.254.
510. p.255, underlining mine.
511. pp.254-255, underlining and brackets mine.
512. p.257.
513. pp.255-257.
514. Sin, p.136, underlining mine.
515. One-Dimensional Man, pp.7-8, brackets mine.
516. p.9.
517. The use of the expression, "according to the Bible" does not imply the idea of an artificial uniformity in the biblical writings. Rather, it emphasizes that there is, within the rich diversity of Scripture, a basic unity in the biblical perspective concerning the sinfulness of man who stands before God in his undeniable guilt and his absolute need of divine grace.
518. One-Dimensional Man, p.xiv.
519. p.xiv, underlining mine.
520. p.xv.
521. The contrast between "highly unlikely" and "humanly impossible" emphasizes that, from the standpoint of man's radical alienation from God, the Marxist concept of alienation is not radical enough since man does not have the power within himself to overcome this alienation which lies at the centre of his life (cf. S.H. Travis, I Believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, p.232).
522. Bertrand Russell, whose hostility to religion was as uncompromising as Marx's and who has been "one of the intellectual leaders of the left in politics" in the present century, discounted the predictive element in Marx's thought as "unscientific, in the sense that there is no reason whatsoever to suppose (it) true" with this scathing comment - "Marx professed himself an atheist, but retained a cosmic optimism which only theism could justify." (History of Western Philosophy, (Allen and Unwin, London, 1946), p.816; cited in G. Brown, Philosophy and the Christian Faith, (Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1969), p.137.
523. A penetrating critique of the anthropocentric attempt to logically infer the nature of society's future from a particular interpretation of its past history is found in K.R. Popper, The Poverty of Historicism.
524. Faith and Sanctification, p.181, emphasis original.
525. S.H. Travis, I Believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, p.250. Critical of the Marxist future expectation, Travis writes, "any quest for a perfect society which has no possibility of a life beyond death is illusory. It offers nothing to those who are sacrificed in the present time for the sake of those who are expected to enjoy the promised utopia. And even for those who experience the future perfect society, their enjoyment of it will be short-lived" (p.233). He contrasts this "illusory and short-lived" hope with "a real hope of eternal life with God (which) sets us free from anxiety about death, and frees us to work for the transformation of this world" (p.250, brackets mine).
526. A Half Century of Theology, p.214.
527. cf. Divine Election, pp.47-50.
528. present study, p.1.
529. pp.37-38.
530. p.41.
531. cf. Divine Election, Chapter 7 ("Election and the Preaching of the Gospel"), pp.218-253.
532. The title, Faith and Sanctification, emphasizes the inseparable connection between faith and sanctification.

533. Bonhoeffer, whose emphasis on the "deep this-worldliness of Christianity" does, in Berkouwer's view, "close the door to flight into the "beyond"" without "de-eschatologiz(ing) the gospel" (A Half Century of Theology, p.214), writes, "Our relation to God is not a "religious" relationship..but..a new life in "existence for others"" (Letters and Papers from Prison, (S.C.M. Press, London, 1967) (3rd revised and enlarged edition), p.210). R.G. Smith, who, in his discussion of "This-Worldly Transcendence", cites those words of Bonhoeffer (The Whole Man : Studies in Christian Anthropology, (The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1969), p.102) describes the Christian relation to the world thus : "The Christian cannot be indifferent to this world which God made and loves.Yet how can he be other than against it in its evil and sin and hopelessness? Both positions are necessary, and both at the same time, and without reserve."(p.107).
534. Man : The Image of God, pp.177-178, underlining mine.
535. present study, pp.57-59.
536. cf. present study, p.iii for explanation of the methodology used in this particular analysis.
537. cf. present study, p.iii.
538. If theological reflection is to avoid becoming barren intellectualism, it is important to remember that the faith of the church "comes out of the experience of God's people struggling to hear his Word in the context of life" (M.E. Osterhaven, The Faith of the Church : A Reformed Perspective on Its Historical Development, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982), p.7).
539. Present study, pp.49, 70.
540. pp.49-50, 88.
541. pp.50-51, 106-107.
542. Holy Scripture, pp.123-124.
543. p.124; cf. p.120 regarding Tillich's theological method.
544. p.166.
545. p.54.
546. pp.166-167.
547. p.328, brackets mine.
548. pp.328-329, underlining mine, brackets original.
549. Divine Election, pp.235-236.
550. Biblical faith is neither a retreat into an 'other-worldliness' which has no real significance for this world nor a retreat into a 'this-worldliness' of the secularist type. R.G. Smith makes some useful remarks in this connection : "In a fundamental sense we have already passed in faith even the last trial of faith, which is death. It is all over, and we live in faith as though nothing mattered. But we cannot be indifferent. For faith casts us back into the world...It is only because man is freed from the world that he is free for the world." (The Whole Man : Studies in Christian Anthropology, pp.20, 42).
551. cf. The Work of Christ, pp.254-294 for Berkouwer's discussion of reconciliation. If the discussion found in Chapter Six of the present study appears to the reader to be rather 'other-worldly' in orientation, it should be set in the context of Chapters Seven and Eight where the author is more directly concerned with 'this-worldly' aspects of reconciliation.
552. Romans 12:4; cf. The Church, pp.78-81. The importance of the discussion in the present study, Chapter Seven is related to the

- insight that "the severance of unity is a catastrophe for the world" concerning which Berkouwer writes, "John 17 says as much, but we are so accustomed to disunity that we are in danger of becoming immune to its warning." (The Church, p.46).
553. Apologetics and social concern are integrally related to the gospel of reconciliation and not artificially attached to it.
554. The Work of Christ, p.294, brackets original.
555. pp.291-292.
556. pp.293-294 (citing H. Berkhof, Crisis der Middenorthodoxie, pp.37-40); H. Berkhof comments helpfully on the relationship between judgment and proclamation in Christian Faith : An Introduction to the Study of the Faith, translated by S. Woudstra, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979) - "The Bible speaks much about the terror of the judgment, but almost exclusively it concerns God's enemies..all who knowingly and willingly oppose the proclamation and realization of his holy love in the world. Who are the ones who do that "knowingly and willingly"? We cannot point them out. The judgment will reveal it..Ours is the duty to call people to conversion in this life, and what God does with them in eternity is not our business." (pp.530-531).
557. A.P.F. Sell, The Great Debate : Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation, (Studies in Christian Thought and History), (H.E. Walter Ltd., Worthing, West Sussex, 1982), p.98, underlining mine (citing the words of 'Rabbi' John Duncan from W. Knight (editor), Colloquia Peripatetica...being notes of conversations with the late John Duncan, (Oliphant, Edinburgh and London, 6th edition, 1907), p.30). Duncan's words aptly express Berkouwer's view.
558. The Work of Christ, p.294.
559. Berkouwer's view of grace and faith has, in the present study, been carefully distinguished from Reformed scholasticism (pp.149-157) and the theology of Karl Barth which comes so close to the doctrine of universal reconciliation (pp.100-105; cf. H. Berkhof who describes Barth's position thus - "Barth... is to be counted among the supporters (of the apokatastasis doctrine) because of his belief in the predominance of grace, which controls all of his thinking; only he refuses..to draw the ultimate consequence, for fear of making grace into a system." (Christian Faith : An Introduction to the Study of the Faith, p.533, brackets mine). Account requires to be taken of criticism of Berkouwer's thought from the Arminian standpoint (e.g. J.W. Cottrell, "Conditional Election" in G.H. Pinmock (editor), Grace Unlimited, (Bethany Fellowship Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1975), pp.51-73). It is important to understand that Berkouwer shares Cottrell's concern to maintain that (a) grace is not "absolute power" but "a totally different kind of power, namely, the drawing power of love and compassion and self-sacrifice" (p.66); and (b) there is an important "biblical distinction between faith and works...namely faith and works are qualitatively different" (pp.65-66). The difference between the positions of Berkouwer and Cottrell revolves more around the interpretation of temporal language when it is used in relation to God. Berkouwer criticizes "the application of a temporal order to eternity" (Divine Election, p.266; favourably citing L. Van der Zanden, Predestination in Christus, p.39) as "a clear form of humanization of God" (p.267). Berkouwer would be in greater agreement with I.H. Marshall's statement : "our language of predestination..applied to divine-human relationships..does break down" (Grace Unlimited, p.135, emphasis original) than with Cottrell's emphasis on the

literal interpretation of the temporal aspect of the expression "foreknowledge" - "real knowledge..of something before it actually happens"(p.59, underlining mine). Berkouwer would be in greater agreement with G.R. Osborne's note on "foreknowledge" - "Note the use of this term in 1 Pet.1:2, where it is used as a synonym for election. The word "know" is used often for God's gracious love in the Old Testament - cf. Gen.18:19; Ex.33:12; Jer.1:5; Amos 3:3; Hos.13:5; and in the New Testament, 1 Cor.8:3; Gal.4:9."(Grace Unlimited, p.188, n.45)-~~than~~ with Cottrell's note - "Most Calvinists try to avoid the clear implications of God's foreknowledge by changing the meaning of it from "foreknow" to "forelove" or something similar..This is an arbitrary definition"(p.71, n.21). It is the present writer's view that Cottrell's account of Berkouwer's position would have been less caricatured(especially pp.65-66) if he had paid closer attention to Berkouwer's statements regarding the use of temporal language with respect to God. Cottrell might then have recognized that Berkouwer's problem with the Arminian use of the idea of "foreknowledge" lies not in his opposition to the Arminian 'order' as such but to the whole notion of a temporal order in respect of God's salvation. If Cottrell had drawn attention to this aspect of Berkouwer's thought(even if he did not agree with Berkouwer at this point), he would have been able to appreciate the extent of the agreement between himself and Berkouwer rather than implying that their views are more widely divergent than they really are. Since Cottrell does not observe the significant difference between himself and Berkouwer with respect to the use of temporal language in respect of God, he remains content to state that in Divine Election Berkouwer's "main concern is to avoid the conclusion of individual reprobation as a symmetrical counterpart of individual election"(p.71, n.5). This summary of Berkouwer's concern with the doctrine of grace hardly begins to uncover either the depth of Berkouwer's thought or the extent of his sympathy with the basic concerns of an Arminian such as Cottrell. While Berkouwer has a large measure of agreement with Cottrell regarding the relationships between grace, faith and works, he would not accept Cottrell's attempt to understand these relationships by means of a system based on the idea of a temporal succession(i.e. foreknowledge precedes election). Berkouwer's words of caution are in order here - "We shall never be able to analyze exactly the interrelation between faith and reconciliation. Outside of faith nothing can be understood here."(The Work of Christ, p.294). Another statement from Grace Unlimited which demands comment here is G.R. Osborne's statement that Berkouwer, in Faith and Perseverance, pp.9-10, "speaks of the timelessness of the doctrine of final perseverance, founded on"the richness and abidingness of salvation.""(Osborne, p.188, n.50, underlining mine). This single-sentence comment on Berkouwer's view hardly gives a fair indication of the type of thinking found in Chapter 1 of Faith and Perseverance - "Timeliness and Relevance", pp.9-14. Berkouwer insists that "the living preaching of the Scriptures, which offer no metaphysical and theoretical views about.. "permanency"" as an independent theme in itself, does nothing to encourage "a continuity which is..opposed in any way to the living nature of faith"(p.13). Berkouwer stresses that "The perseverance of the saints is not primarily a theoretical problem but a confession of faith"(p.14) and that "The perseverance of the saints is unbreakably connected with the assurance of faith"(p.11).

The use of the expression "timelessness" in respect of Berkouwer's perspective on faith and perseverance seems particularly misleading in view of Berkouwer's favourable citation of Barth's words : "It has to be a relation whose being must be renewed every moment to remain true, as much through the speech of the good God who is new every morning as in the knowledge and act, the faith and obedience of man."(p.13, citing K. Barth, Prolegomena(1927), p.296). A helpful account of Berkouwer's view of faith and perseverance is given by L.B. Smedes - "The doctrine of perseverance is an assurance gained only in faith, in the faith that finds its way to assurance through doubt and temptation, in the faith that is directed only to Christ. The faith that looks to Christ realizes that grace has priority over his doubts and weakness. Our duty to persevere is oriented to God's preservation. And we find confidence in God's preservation of us when we see His powerful grace at the Cross. Assurance is not the prerogative of the person who can reason inferentially from a doctrine of election. Assurance is the gift that everyone finds who finds God at the Cross. The admonitions of Scripture to persevere lest we fall, the temptation to disbelieve, and the weakness of the human will, are the ways along which faith comes to rest in the reliability of grace. For these, within the Christian life of faith, are goads to drive us to the Cross, the only place where the faith-certainty of perseverance is found."("G.C. Berkouwer" in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, edited by P.E. Hughes, (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Second, revised edition, 1969(first edition, 1966)),p.91, underlining mine). It has been noted, in the present study, that Berkouwer's view of grace and faith has been misrepresented(cf. pp.101-102, 149-153 and the present note). The present writer holds that Berkouwer's theology reflects the dual emphasis on grace and faith found in such New Testament passages as Ephesians 2:8 and 1 Peter 1:5. Since Berkouwer's work is, at present, not widely known in Great Britain and is known to some only by means of a misrepresentation of his teaching, the present writer hopes that this study brings us closer to the point "when history gives us a perspective of the total effect of his work"(L.B. Smedes, p. 91). If the present study helps to clarify Berkouwer's teaching in the face of both ignorance and caricature, it may be that his writings will become more widely read and that subsequent history will accord him the kind of tributes found on the rear dust-cover of his "Studies in Dogmatics" - "one of the genuinely significant leaders of Christian thought in our day"(E.T. Ramsdell, Professor of Systematic Theology, Garrett Biblical Institute), "among the best theological writers of our day..the theological student who neglects him is not wise"(Dr Dale Moody, Professor of Systematic Theology, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary), "Dr. Berkouwer's vigorous volumes on dogmatics not only deserve to be read on both sides of the Atlantic, but the present tensions in theology make the reading of these works an imperative."(Dr. Carl F.H. Henry, Editor, Christianity Today).

560. The Church, p.101, underlining mine.

561. p.77, brackets mine.

562. The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism, p.257.

Concerning "that mistaken kind of ecumenism which glosses over genuine differences and seems to suggest that every point of view is equally valid, so long as it is sincerely held", J.

Macquarrie writes, "Those who think in this way are really saying that there is neither truth nor untruth in theology; and this implies, in turn, that the whole theological enterprise is a waste of time." (Principles of Christian Theology, (The Library of Philosophy and Theology, edited by J. McIntyre and I.T. Ramsey), (S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1966), p.viii).

563. Man : The Image of God, p.229.
564. A Half Century of Theology, p.177.
565. p.73 (favourable citation of Barth's position in his dialogue with Bultmann). While differing with the Roman Catholic theologian, K. Rahner with respect to the precise meaning of the term, "Christian dogma" and sharing Berkouwer's reservation with respect to Rahner's notion of 'anonymous Christianity' (A Half Century of Theology, p.188), the present writer notes with appreciation (a) Rahner's emphasis on giving people "confidence from the content of Christian dogma that they can believe with intellectual honesty"; and (b) Rahner's vivid illustration relating to man's limited understanding - man's knowledge is like "a small island in a vast sea that has not been traveled..a floating island..(which) may be more familiar to us than the sea, but ultimately it is borne by the sea and only because it is can we be borne by it." (Foundations of Christian Faith : An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity, translated by W.V. Dych, (Darton, Longman, & Todd Ltd., London, 1978 (German edition, 1976)), p.12, emphasis original; p.22, brackets mine).
566. Acts 6:4. The episode described in Acts 6:1-6 is most instructive for the modern church. "Prayer and the ministry of the word" and social concern are not treated as mutually exclusive alternatives. Neither are expendable since they belong together in the total context of the church's witness in the world.
567. In his Principles of Christian Theology, J. Macquarrie seeks to avoid the dangers of (a) an intellectualism in which theology, forgetting "its roots in experience..becomes a mere scholasticism" (pp.5-6); (b) an individualism in which theology becomes "subjective, introspective, and individualistic" because of a failure to "keep in view the experience of the whole community of faith" (p.6); and (c) an otherworldliness in which theology insulates itself against "all contact with the changing forms of secular culture" and thus fails to address itself "to its own day and generation"(p.13). The present writer notes with interest Macquarrie's concern with maintaining "a proper balance..between ..experience and revelation"(p.7) without "try(ing) to be modern for the sake of modernity,..(without) accommodat(ing) the revelation to the mood of the time"(p.13, brackets mine). The central problem of the present study has, in Macquarrie's words, been "(t)he problem..of maintaining a fine balance..(, of) find(ing) a way between..dangerous extremes"(p.13, brackets mine). While there may not be precise agreement between the present writer and Macquarrie, there is agreement that the problem of theological polarization is one which requires the close and careful attention of contemporary theology.
-

Bibliography

Since full bibliographical information is provided in the notes, an abbreviated form of reference is used here. Books are listed according to place and date of publication. Titles are suitably abbreviated by the omission of sub-titles. Translators' names are not listed. A single listing is given for multi-authored volumes. The following abbreviations are used for theological journals : Reformed Review - RR; Christianity Today - CT; Scottish Journal of Theology - SJT. The works listed here include only those referred to in either the main text or the notes of the present study. A more complete list of books and articles by Berkouwer, journal articles reviewing Berkouwer's works and works on Berkouwer is found in A.L. Baker, Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election, (Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1981), pp.181-189. In some cases where the present writer has referred to material cited by another author who has not provided full bibliographical information, the entry is incomplete because the present writer does not have the information at hand. The bibliography is divided into sub-sections - books published in English, journal articles, book reviews, unpublished material, publications in a language other than English.

Books published in English

- Ahlstrom S.E., A Religious History of the American People I (New York, 1975).
- Ames W., The Marrow of Theology, (Boston and Philadelphia, 1968).
- Arminius J., The Works of James Arminius D.D., (London, 1825, 1828, 1875); The Works of James Arminius, (London, 1956).
- Baillie D.M., God was in Christ, (London, 1956).
- Baker A.L., Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election, (Phillipsburg, 1981).
- Bangs C., Arminius, (Nashville, 1971).
- Barclay W., Testament of Faith, (London and Oxford, 1975).
- Barr J., Fundamentalism, (London, 1977).
- B Barth K., Church Dogmatics, I.2, II.1, IV.2, IV.3, (Edinburgh, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1961-1962); Deliverance to the Captives, (London, 1961); Dogmatics in Outline, (London, 1966); The Humanity of God, (Atlanta, 1960).
- Bavinck H., The Doctrine of God, (Edinburgh, 1977).
- Bea A., The Unity of Christians, (London, 1963).
- Berger P.L., A Rumour of Angels, (Harmondsworth, 1969).
- Berkhof H., Christian Faith, (Grand Rapids, 1979).
- Berkhof L., Systematic Theology, (London, 1958).
- Berkouwer G.C., See pp.301-302 of the present study for a list of his major works; Recent Developments in Roman Thought and The Conflict with Rome (both Grand Rapids, 1958).
- Blackburn R. (ed.), Ideology in Social Science, (Glasgow, 1972).
- Bloesch D.G., Jesus is Victor!, (Nashville, 1976); The Crisis of Piety and The Ground of Certainty, (Grand Rapids, 1968, 1971).
- Bogue C.W., A Hole in the Dike, (Cherry Hill, New Jersey, 1977).
- Bonhoeffer D., Ethics, (Glasgow and London, 1964); Letters and Papers From Prison, (New York, 1953; London, 1967).
- Bonino J.M., Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation, (Philadelphia 1975).
- Braaten C. History and Hermeneutics, (Philadelphia, 1966).

- Bromiley G.W., Historical Theology, (Grand Rapids, 1978).
- Brow R., Religion: Origin and Ideas, (London, 1966).
- Brown C., Karl Barth and the Christian Message and Philosophy and the Christian Faith, (London, 1967, 1969); Ed., The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vol.2, (Grand Rapids, 1976).
- Brown J., Subject and Object in Modern Theology, (London, 1955).
- Brown R., Social Psychology, (New York and London, 1970).
- Brunner E., Our Faith and The Mediator, (London, 1949, 1934).
- Bultmann R., Existence and Faith; Faith and Understanding and Jesus and the Word, (London, 1960, 1969, 1935).
- Burton A., Revolutionary Violence: The Theories, (New York, 1978).
- Butt H. with Wright E., At the Edge of Hope, (New York, 1978).
- Calvin J., Commentaries, 12(Eph-Jude), (Wilmington, no date given); Institutes, (Grand Rapids, no date given); The Best of John Calvin (compiled by S. Dunn), (Grand Rapids, 1981).
- Carnell E.J., The Case for Biblical Christianity, (Grand Rapids, 1969).
- Carson, H., Colossians and Philemon, (London, 1960).
- Childs D., Marx and the Marxists, (New York, 1973).
- Cobb Jr., J.B., Living Options in Protestant Theology, (Philadelphia, 1962).
- Cole R.A., Galatians, (London, 1965).
- Cullmann O., Salvation in History, (London, 1967).
- Daane J., The Freedom of God, (Grand Rapids, 1973).
- Dahrendorf R., Homo Sociologicus, (London, 1973).
- Daniels R.V., Red October, (London, 1967).
- de Jong P.Y. (ed.), Crisis in the Reformed Churches, (Grand Rapids, 1968).
- Demarest B.A., General Revelation, (Grand Rapids, 1982).
- Dowley T. (ed.), The History of Christianity, (Grand Rapids, 1977).
- Dalles A., S.J., Models of the Church, (Dublin, 1976).
- Dunne J.S., The Reasons of the Heart, (London, 1978).
- Evans C.S., Subjectivity and Religious Belief, (Washington D.C., 1978).
- Ferre F., Language, Logic and God, (London, 1962).
- Flew A., God and Philosophy, (London, 1966).
- Freeman D.H., Tillich, (Philadelphia, 1962).
- Furness M., Vital Doctrines of the Faith, (London, 1973).
- Galloway A.D., Wolfhart Pannenberg, (London, 1973).
- Geehan E.R. (ed.), Jerusalem and Athens, (Philadelphia, 1971).
- Green M., Evangelism in the Early Church, (Grand Rapids, 1970); Ed. - The Truth of God Incarnate, (London, 1977).
- Hamilton K., Life in One's Stride and Revolt Against Heaven, (Grand Rapids, 1968, 1965).
- Hanson R.P.C., The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, (London, 1967).
- Harrison R.K., Introduction to the Old Testament, (London, 1970).
- Hawton H., Controversy, (London, 1971).
- Hebblethwaite P., The New Inquisition?, (Glasgow and London, 1980).
- Henry M., Commentary on the Whole Bible, (London, 1960).
- Hick J., Evil and the God of Love, (London, 1966); Philosophy of Religion, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1963); Ed. - The Myth of God Incarnate, (London, 1977).
- Hill C., The Day Comes, (London, 1982).
- Hill M., A Sociology of Religion, (London, 1973).
- Hodge C., Systematic Theology, Vols. I-III, (Grand Rapids, 1970).
- Hoeksema H., Reformed Dogmatics, (Grand Rapids, 1973).
- Howley G.C.D. et al (eds.), A New Testament Commentary, (London, 1969).
- Hughes P.E. (ed.), Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, (Grand Rapids, 1969).
- Jenson R.W., God After God, (Indianapolis and New York, 1969).

- Jocz J., The Covenant, (Grand Rapids, 1968).
- Kaufmann W., Hegel, (London, 1966).
- Kelsey D.H., The Uses of Scripture in Recent Theology, (London, 1975).
- Kidner D., Genesis, (London, 1967).
- Kittel G. and Friedrich G. (eds.), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. IV, (Grand Rapids, 1964).
- Kuitert H.M., The Reality of Faith and The Necessity of Faith, (Grand Rapids, 1968, 1975).
- Kung H., Does God Exist?; The Church, (London, 1980, 1968); Infallible?, (London, Glasgow, 1977); On Being a Christian, (Glasgow, 1978).
- Kuyper A., The Work of the Holy Spirit, (Grand Rapids, 1975).
- Ladd G.E., A Theology of the New Testament; The Presence of the Future, (Grand Rapids, 1974); Jesus and the Kingdom, (New York, 1964); The New Testament and Criticism, (London, 1970).
- Lewis C.S., The Problem of Pain, (London and Glasgow, 1940).
- Lichtheim G., A Short History of Socialism, (London, 1970).
- Lindsell H., The Battle for the Bible; The Bible in the Balance, (Grand Rapids, 1976, 1979).
- Luther M., Galatians, (Cambridge and London, 1953); Romans, (Philadelphia, 1961); Works, Vol. 7, (Bohlaus, 1938).
- Lyon D., Christians & Sociology, (Leicester, 1975; Downers Grove, 1976).
- Machovec M., A Marxist Looks at Jesus, (London, 1976).
- MacIntyre A., Herbert Marcuse, (New York, 1970); Marxism and Christianity, (London, 1969).
- MacKay D., Brains, Machines and Persons, (Grand Rapids, 1980).
- McKelway A.J., The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich, (London, 1964).
- McNeill J.T., The History and Character of Calvinism, (New York, 1954).
- Macquarrie J., An Existentialist Theology; God and Secularity; Principles of Christian Theology, (London, 1955, 1968, 1966); Studies in Christian Existentialism, (Philadelphia, 1965).
- Marcuse H., Counter-Revolution and Revolt; Reason and Revolution; One-Dimensional Man, (London 1972, 1955, 1964).
- Marshall I.H., Biblical Inspiration; Luke: Historian and Theologian, (London 1982, 1970); The Origins of New Testament Christology, (Downers Grove, 1976).
- Martin D. (ed.), Fifty Key Words in Sociology, (London, 1970).
- Marx K., Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (1844); Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy; The Communist Manifesto, (Harmondsworth, 1963, 1967); Theses on Feuerbach (1845). (The Communist Manifesto - co-authored with F. Engels).
- Mayers R.B., Religious Ministry in a Transcendentless Culture, (Washington D.C., 1980).
- Merton R.K., Social Theory and Social Structure, (London, 1968).
- Milne B., Know the Truth, (Leicester, 1982).
- Moberg D.O., The Great Reversal, (London, 1972).
- Moltmann J., The Church in the Power of the Spirit, (London, 1977).
- Morris L., The Gospel According to Luke, (London, 1974).
- Mulder A., Americans from Holland, (Philadelphia and New York, 1947).
- Newbigin L., The Finality of Christ.
- Neill S., Christian Faith and Other Faiths, (London, 1977).
- Niesel W., Reformed Symbolics, (Edinburgh, 1962).
- Oberleke C. and Smedes L. (eds.), God and the Good, (Grand Rapids, 1975).
- O'Brien J.A. (ed.), Steps to Christian Unity, (London, Glasgow, 1965).
- Olive D.H., Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Waco, Texas, 1973).
- Osterhaven, M.E., The Faith of the Church; The Spirit of the Reformed Tradition, (Grand Rapids, 1982, 1971).

- Packer J., Under God's Word, (London, 1980).
- Pammenberg W., Basic Questions in Theology I and Basic Questions in Theology II, (Philadelphia and London, 1970, 1971); Basic Questions in Theology III (U.S. title - The Idea of God and Human Freedom) (London and Philadelphia, 1973); Jesus : God and Man, (Philadelphia and London, 1968); Human Nature, Election and History, (Philadelphia, 1977); Revelation as History, (New York and London, 1968); editor; Spirit, Faith and Church, (Philadelphia, 1970), co-authored with A. Dulles S.J. and C.E. Braaten; The Apostles' Creed, (Philadelphia and London, 1972); Theology and the Kingdom of God, (Philadelphia, 1975); Theology and the Philosophy of Science, (Philadelphia and London, 1976); What is Man?, (Philadelphia, 1970).
- Parker T.H.L., Karl Barth, (Grand Rapids, 1970).
- Pascal B., Pascal's Pensees, (New York, 1958); Pensees, (Harmondsworth, 1966).
- Pelikan J., The Riddle of Roman Catholicism, (London, 1960).
- Philip J., The Westminster Confession of Faith, (Edinburgh, 1966).
- Pinnock C. (ed.), Grace Unlimited, (Minneapolis, 1975).
- Pitt-Watson I., A Kind of Folly, (Edinburgh, 1976).
- Polanyi K., The Great Transformation, (Boston, 1957).
- Popper K.R., The Open Society and Its Enemies, (London, 1945); The Poverty of Historicism, (London, 1961).
- Punt N., Unconditional Good News, (Grand Rapids, 1980).
- Rahner K., Foundations of Christian Faith, (London, 1978).
- Rex J., Key Problems of Sociological Theory, (London, 1961).
- Richardson A., A Dictionary of Christian Theology (editor); An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, (London, 1969, 1958).
- Ridderbos H., Studies in Scripture and Its Authority; Paul; The Authority of the New Testament Scriptures, (Grand Rapids, 1970, 1975, 1963).
- Robinson J.A.T., Honest to God, (London, 1963).
- Robinson J.M. and J.B. Cobb Jr. (eds.), Theology as History, (New York, 1967).
- Robinson N.H.G., The Groundwork of Christian Ethics, (London, 1971).
- Rogers J., Biblical Authority (editor), (Waco, Texas, 1977); Confessions of a Conservative Evangelical, (Philadelphia, 1974); Scripture in the Westminster Confession, (Grand Rapids, 1967); The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach (co-authored with D.K. McKim), (San Francisco, 1979).
- Russell B., History of Western Philosophy, (London, 1946).
- Schaeffer F., Death in the City; Escape From Reason, (London, 1969, 1968); Everybody Can Know, (co-authored with E. Schaeffer), (Wheaton, 1973); Genesis in Space and Time; No Final Conflict, (Downers Grove, 1972, 1975).
- Schleiermacher F., The Christian Faith, (Edinburgh, (1928) 1960).
- Schlink E., The Coming Christ and the Coming Church, (Edinburgh and London, 1967).
- Scott Jr., N.A., Mirrors of Man in Existentialism, (New York, London, Cleveland, 1969 (first U.K. edition - 1978)).
- Sell A.P.F., God Our Father, (Edinburgh, 1980); The Great Debate, (Worthing, West Sussex, 1982).
- Sider R.J., Evangelism, Salvation and Social Justice, (Bramcote, Notts., 1977).
- Slack K., Despatch from New Delhi, (London, 1962).
- Smart J.D., The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church, (London, 1973)

- Smart N., The Philosophy of Religion, (London, 1979).
- Smith R.G., The Whole Man, (Philadelphia, 1969) (U.K. title - The Free Man).
- Thomas J.H., Paul Tillich, (London, 1965).
- Tillich P., Systematic Theology, (New York and Evanston, 1967); The Dynamics of Faith; The Interpretation of History, (New York, 1957, 1936); The New Being, (London, 1956); The Shaking of the Foundations, (Harmondsworth, 1949).
- Torrance T.F., God and Rationality, (London, 1971); Space, Time and Resurrection, (Grand Rapids, 1976); Theological Science, (London, 1969).
- Tozer A.W., The Best of A.W. Tozer (compiled by W.W. Wiersbe), (Harrisburg Pennsylvania, 1978); The Pursuit of God, (London, 1961).
- Travis S.H., I believe in the Second Coming of Jesus, (London, 1982).
- Tupper E.F., The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Philadelphia, 1973).
- van der Bent A.J. (ed.), Handbook: Member Churches, World Council of Churches, (Geneva, 1982).
- Vander Stelt J.C., Philosophy and Scripture, (Marlton, New Jersey, 1978).
- Van Til G., The Sovereignty of Grace, (Philadelphia, 1969).
- Warfield B.B., The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, (Philadelphia, 1946).
- Warr P.B. (ed.), Thought and Personality, (Harmondsworth, 1970).
- Westminster Theological Seminary, The Infallible Word, (Philadelphia, 1946) 1967).
- Wilson B., Religious Sects: A Sociological Study, (London, 1970).
- World Council of Churches, The New Delhi Report, (London, 1962).
- Young E.J., Thy Word is Truth, (London, 1963).

Journal Articles

- Ahlstrom S.E., "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology", Church History, Vol.24(1955), pp.257-271.
- Barr J., "Revelation Through History in the Old Testament and Modern Theology", Interpretation 17(1963), pp.193-205.
- Beardslee III, J.W., "Theocracy in Today's World: Some Considerations Regarding Marxism, Islam and Zionism", RR, Vol.34, No.2(Winter 1981), pp.89-97.
- Berkouwer G.C., "Conserve and Progress", CT, XIV, 11, pp.45-46(February 27, 1970); "Current Religious Thought", CT, III, 13, p.39(March 30, 1959); "Current Religious Thought", CT, VIII, 22, p.48(July 31, 1964); "Hearing and Doing the Word", CT, XI, 2, p.64(October 28, 1966); "Reviewing the Proofs", CT, XVI, 3, pp.53-54(November 5, 1971); "The Church in the Last Days", CT, II, 14, pp.3-5(April 14, 1958); "The Significance of Pascal(1662-1962)", CT, VI, 23, pp.31-32(August 31, 1962); "The Words of the Word", CT, XVI, 21, p.42(July 28, 1972); "Universalism", CT, I, 16, pp.5-6(April 29, 1957).
- Bettis J.D., "Is Karl Barth a Universalist?", SJT, Vol.20, No.4(December 1967), pp.423-436.
- Bloesch D.G., "The Sword of the Spirit The Meaning of Inspiration", RR, Vol.33, No.2(Winter 1980), pp.65-72.
- Cameron B.J.R., "The Historical Problem in Paul Tillich's Christology", SJT, Vol.18, No.3,(September 1965), pp.257-272.
- Cameron C.M., "The Reformation Continues: A Study in Twentieth Century Reformed Theology", RR, Vol.33, No.2(Winter 1980), pp.73-81.
- Cranfield C.E.B., "The Message of James", SJT, Vol.18, No.2(June 1965), pp.182-193.

- Ferre N.F.S., "Three Critical Issues in Tillich's Philosophical Theology", SJT, Vol.10, No.3(September 1957), pp. 225-238.
- Galloway A.D., "The New Hegelians", Religious Studies, Vol.8, pp.367-371(December 1972).
- Heideman E., "The Descendants of Van Raalte", RR, Vol.12, No.3(March 1959), pp. 33-41.
- Henry C.F.H., "Basic Issues in Modern Theology", CT, Vol.II, No.7 (January 1, 1965), pp.14-17.
- Hesselink I.J., "Contemporary Protestant Dutch Theology", RR, Vol.26, No.2(Winter 1973), pp.67-89.
- International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, "The Chicago Statement of Biblical Inerrancy"(Cited in the main text of the present study from Themelios, Vol.4, No.3(New Series), April 1979, p.106, the full text is given in the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy Catalog, (P.O. Box 13261, Oakland, California 94661; 1983), pp. 45-50("The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics") and pp.51-55("The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy") (This catalog contains details of other publications recommended by the Council)).
- Lash N., "Eternal Life: Life After Death?", Heythrop Journal, Vol.XIV, No.3(July 1978).
- Lindsell H. and Mounce R., Letter and Response, Eternity(November 1976), p.96.
- Marsden G.M., "Scotland and Philadelphia: Common Sense Philosophy from Jefferson to Westminster", The Reformed Journal, Vol.29, Issue 3, (March 1979), pp.8-12.
- Osterhaven M.E., "The Experiential Theology of Early Dutch Calvinism", RR, Vol.27, No.3(Spring 1974), pp.180-189.
- Pannenberg W., "Theological Conversation with Wolfhart Pannenberg", Dialog, 11, Autumn 1972, pp.286-295.
- Pinnock C., "Pannenberg's Theology: Reasonable Happenings in History", CT, 31, 3(5th November 1976), pp.19-22(pp.147-150). (This article is followed in CT, 31, 4(19th November 1976), pp. 14-16(pp.218-220) by a further article by Pinnock, "No Nonsense Theology: Pinnock Reviews Pannenberg").
- Riches J., "Berkouwer on Common Grace", Theology, 78(January 1975), pp.302-309.
- Schutter W.L., "A Continuing Crisis for Incarnational Doctrine", RR, Vol.32, No.2(Winter 1979), pp.76-91.
- Tanis J., "The Heidelberg Catechism in the Hands of the Calvinistic Pietists", RR, Vol.24, No.3(Spring 1971), pp.154-161.
- Taylor J.A., "Must the Bible be an Infallible Book?", Presbyterian Journal, April 12, 1978, pp.7-9.
- Timmer J.J., "Recent Developments within the Reformed Church(Gereformeerde) in the Netherlands", The Reformed Journal, September - December 1969(Two of the articles are cited in the present study - "The Fall of Assen"(October, pp.15-20) and "G.C. Berkouwer: Theologian of Confrontation and Correlation" (December, pp.17-22)).
- Torrance T.F., "Predestination in Christ", The Evangelical Quarterly, Vol.XIII, (April 1941), pp.108-141; "Universalism or Election?", SJT, Vol.2(1949), pp.310-318.
- Westphal M., "Hegel, Pannenberg and Hermeneutics", Man and the World, (M. Nijhoff, the Hague), Vol.4, No.3, August 1971, pp. 276-293; "Kierkegaard and the Logic of Insanity", Religious

- Studies 7(September 1971), pp.193-211.
Wieringa R., "Calvin the Commentator", RR, Vol.32, No.1(Fall 1978),
pp.4-13.

Book Reviews

- Bromiley G.W., "G.C. Berkouwer: Holy Scripture", CT, Vol. XX, No.4
(November 21, 1975), pp.42-45.
Cameron C.M., "A.L. Baker: Berkouwer's Doctrine of Election", RR,
Vol.35, No.3(Spring 1982), p.164.
"D. MacKay: Brains, Machines and Persons", RR, Vol.35,
No.2(Winter 1982), p.101.
"R.B. Mayers: Religious Ministry in a Transcendentless
Culture", RR, Vol.34, No.2(Winter 1981), pp.144-145.
"W. Pannenberg: Theology and the Philosophy of Science",
RR, Vol.33, No.1(Fall 1979), pp.60-61.
Demarest B., "G.C. Berkouwer: A Half Century of Theology", Themelios,
Vol.4, No.1(New Series), (September 1978), pp.40-41.
Eemigenburg E.M., "J. van der Hoeven; Karl Marx: The Roots of His
Thought", RR, Vol.32, No.1(Fall 1978), p.59.
Ehrlich R.J., "A. Bea: The Unity of Christians", SJT, Vol.17, No.4
(December 1964), pp.481-482(part of a larger review of
three books by different authors, pp.480-482).
Heideman E., "G.C. Berkouwer: The Church", RR, Vol.32, No.1(Fall 1978),
pp.64-65.
Hoeksema H.C., "A Critique of Dr. G.C. Berkouwer's Een Halve Eeuw
Theologie, Chapter IV", Protestant Reformed Theological
Journal 8(May 1975), pp.38-45.
Lloyd-Jones D.M., "Works of Professor Berkouwer: Faith and Justifica-
tion; The Person of Christ; Modern Uncertainty and
Christian Faith", The Evangelical Quarterly, 28,
(January-March, 1956), pp.46-48(In The Evangelical
Quarterly, 25, (April-June, 1953), Lloyd-Jones
reviews Faith and Sanctification and The Providence
of God in his "Professor Berkouwer's Theology").
Osterhaven M.E., "C. Bangs: Arminius", RR, Vol.26, No.2(Winter 1973),
pp.99-101.
"H. Lindsell: The Battle for the Bible", RR, Vol.30,
No.1(Autumn 1976), p.61.
"N. Punt: Unconditional Good News", RR, Vol.34, No.3,
(Spring 1981), pp.221-222.
Packer J., "Three Reviews"(G.C. Berkouwer: Holy Scripture; H. Lindsell:
The Bible in the Balance; J.B. Rogers and D.K. McKim, The
Authority and Interpretation of the Bible), Under God's
Word, pp.140-151.
Praasma L., "G.C. Berkouwer: Verontrusting en Verantwoordelijkheid",
Westminster Theological Journal 33(November 1970), pp.73-
80.
Willingdale A., "G.C. Berkouwer: Man: The Image of God", The
Evangelical Quarterly 35(April-June 1963), pp.108-113.

Unpublished Materials

- Arnold J.J., "A Study of the Christologies of H. Emil Brunner and
Gerrit C. Berkouwer", Ph.D. dissertation, Hartford
Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut, 1967.
Boer H.R., "Confessional-Revision Gravamen" presented to the

Christian Reformed Church in America.

- Cameron C.M., "The Doctrine of God in the Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg" (The University of Glasgow Reference Library: Dr. Andrew Miller Prize Essay, 1975).
- Collord P.D., "The Problem of Authority for Dogmatics in G.C. Berkouwer" Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1964.
- Dickinson C.C., "Pre-existence, resurrection and recapitulation.." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1973.
- Osterhaven M.E., Notes on the 1967 Report on Assen, 1926.
- Torrance T.F., "Christian Theology in the Context of Scientific Revolution" (Address given at Glasgow University Theological Society, Session 1976-1977).

Works in Languages other than English

- Arntzen M.J., "Worde allen mensen malig?", Gereformeerd Weekblad, February 21, 1964.
- Barth K., Die Christliche Dogmatik in Entwurf; Die Kirchliche Dogmatik II.2; III.1; III.2; IV.1, (Zurich, 1927; 1942, 1945, 1948, 1953). (English translations of KD, 1957, 1958, 1960, 1956).
- Bavinck H. Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, I-IV; Kennis en Leven, (Kampen, 1928-1930; 1922).
- Bea A., Stimmen der Zeit, (1961-1962).
- Berkhof H., Crisis der Middenorthodoxie, (1953).
- Berkouwer G.G., Geloof en Openbaring in de Nieuwere Deutsche theologie, (Utrecht, 1932); De Heilige Schrift II, II, Het Probleem der Schriftekritiek; Verontrusting en Verantwoordelijkheid, (Kampen, 1966-1967, 1938, 1969); "Vragen rondom de belijdenis", Gereformeerde Theologisch Tijdschrift 63 (February 1963), pp.1-41.
- Bouillard H., Conversion et grace chez Thomas d'Aquin, (1941).
- Haar J., Initium creaturae Dei, (1939).
- Korff F.W.A., Het Christelijk geloof en de niet-Christelijke godsdiensten, (1946).
- Kummel W.G., "Mythos im NT", Zeitschrift fur Theologie und Kirche, (1950).
- Kung H., Strukturen der Kirche, (1962) (English translation - 1964).
- Kuyper A., Revisie der revisie-legende, (1879).
- Meijers S., Objectiviteit en Existentialiteit, (Kampen, 1979).
- Noordmans O., "Predestination", Geestelijke perspectieven, (1930).
- Ott H., Die Antwort des Glaubens, (1972); Eschatologie. Versuch eines dogmatischen Grundrisses, (1958).
- Pannenberg W., "Einsicht und Glaube: Antwort an Paul Althaus", Theologische Literaturzeitung 88(1963), pp.81-92.
- R. Schippers et al. (eds.), Ex Auditu Verbi, (Kampen, 1965).
- Van Niftrik G.C., "Hoe ziet de moderne Mens zichzelf en hoe ziet de Bijbel de Mens?", Kerk en Theologie, (1952).
- Van Ruler A.A., Ik Geloof, (Nijkerk, 1967).