The Will in its Theological Relations

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Contents

Notebook 1

That the problem with which we are to deal in this essay is an intensely practical one is witnessed to by its constant recurrence in the history of theology. And no marvel for it concerns our personal relation to God. Throughout our entire experience we face again and again the question of our relation to the infinite. Are we created or evolved, responsible or mere puppets of a blind force? Do we contribute to our own salvation or are we totally impotent and dependent on God alone?

For this is really the nature of the question. We are not primarily concerned with the will as a psychological faculty in distinction from the intellect; though this has sometimes been taken to be the important point at issue, but our interest lies first of all in the nature of our personal relation to God. This is of infinitely greater importance to us than the psychological question of the freedom of contrary choice, because if we as persons, as agents, are determined by fate, we are not responsible; Now this question of fatalistic determination cannot be made out on a psychological basis, for we can conceive of the possibility that we have no freedom of contrary choice and yet be free as persons and thus responsible. Moreover it is philosophically inadequate to settle or even thoroughly discuss any fundamental problem without relating it to some metaphysics.

The problem thus becomes the perennial one of the One and the Many; the Infinite and the Finite, God and man. We shall have to define these terms, for as the terms change the relation between the terms is also conceived of as changing, and, vice versa, as the relation is conceived of as changing, the terms will also vary.

We are told today that it is fruitless to discuss this problem in the form that it has taken in ecclesiastical history. Calvinism and Arminianism was a topic interesting to previous generations but we have superseded that standpoint. We can now set out to do the Lord's work without getting in any of the Devil's discussions. Now we would not plead for unnecessary hostile discussions, but would like to have clearness of thought on the fundamental relations of life. Then alone do we know where we stand; then alone will we know what is the Lord's work and go forth in the strength of the Lord of Hosts to perform it.

The problem that we are to discuss has become extremely intricate. Every advance in the history of philosophy has added a new factor that requires

consideration. And now although we rejoice in every added factor brought forward because we know that without it we cannot hope to find a solution, we shall have to recognize that we must limit ourselves in the discussion of all these factors to the immediate bearing they have upon the fundamental relation between God and man. If we should fail of this we would soon lose ourselves in a maze of technical psychology, logic and even mathematics. But on the other hand, nothing may be left out of consideration that can at all in any way affect our problem; one discordant note would jar our symphony. The intricacy of the problem as it presents itself to us at the present stage of thought, moreover, suggests our method of treatment. We shall proceed from the simple to the complex, as the current of history would lead us on. First of all we shall have to watch the giants of the ages wrestle with matchless strength, till exhausted in the struggle they writhe and pass away, the foe unconquered. Socrates would bear Xantippe's inexorable wrath rather than forsake his struggle with our problem. And Immanuel Kant, the moral athlete, ushered in the last garrisons of thought to gain the blessed prize. And if these men have failed to give an adequate solution shall we refrain from entering the fray? We could not if we would. Peace! peace! but there is no peace. The war is upon us. Already we hear the cannon's roar. In our feeble strength we too must do our bit. Why stand ye here as fatted cattle waiting for the butcher's knife! If ye are men gain yonder mountain pass and fight as did your sires at Thermopylae.

So we first watch the struggle; learn the art of war and perhaps notice some of the mistakes that have been made in mode of attack and thus prepare ourselves for the final fray. Or if you like not this martial spirit, I would entice you to the perfect shores, where the green pastures are; where vistas open, ever larger, pointing to the land of promise; where men eat of the Tree of Life pointing to the time when they shall know as they are known.

A review of the philosophical theories on the problem of the ages is therefore a prerequisite. For though the outcome prove that we stand on the tablelands of Biblical Theism, we must note the results of philosophy for it too has struggled with our problem. We can learn from its outcome. Through its tremendous expenditure of labor we enjoy a better working apparatus. Its failure becomes, negatively at least, a justification for our choice of a different standpoint and might lead others, through the power of the Spirit, to follow. Thus also we can give a reasoned account of our faith and state the problem correctly. This gained, we can proceed to review the historical attempts of the Christian Church to fathom the mystery and find what system of thought has done most justice to the implication of our starting point to which we were driven, namely Biblical

Theism, and see how far it can offer any solution for our problem and soothe the vexation of our souls.

Review of Philosophical Theories

In surveying the field of philosophical theories on this subject we might divide them irrespective of their time of appearance in the history of philosophy according as they are pantheistic, deistic or theistic. However it will give us the advantage of historical perspective if we view them as they are implicit or expressed in the various metaphysical theories that appeared in the course of time. We can see the human spirit moving through the ages from Thales to Kant and Hegel grappling with the problem of philosophy, and as its views develop from the immediacy of the Greeks to the synthesis of Hegel we see the theories of the One and the Many deepen and widen, but deepen and widen not sufficiently to be satisfactory.

Ancient Greek Philosophy

In our survey of philosophic speculations we begin with the Greeks. With them we have the first systematic thinking on the nature of the universe. In Greek philosophy it is in Plato that we meet with the first great metaphysician who reinterpreted the previous threads of thought and focused them into one theory.

With a deep appreciation of the beauty of nature and their conception of an immediate connection between man and the gods, the Greeks also saw an inexorable law above it all. Heracleitus¿~ and Xenophanes both looked upon the Absolute as something in which all the finite is lost. They, in a measure, sensed the dialectic of the finite, but this dialectic could lead only to an abstract unity. This strain of thought, already in evidence among the Pre-Socratics, faces us in Plato. But from another source there a tributary vein of idealism. There is a distinct tendency in Plato's thought not merely to escape the finite through abstraction but to interpret it in terms of mind. He is bent on establishing an ideal or spiritual conception of the principle of unity towards which the dialectic of the finite tends. Socrates in the "Memorabilia" had cleared the way. To him the mind is "a little ray of intelligence drawn from the great soul of the universe," like the body is taken from the matter of the world. But Socrates was no metaphysician. Only, this metaphysic was inherent in his ethics and Plato grasped and developed it. For Socrates each man for himself must search out the moral universal, the *summum bonum*, and live it. Whether he is a part of a greater teleological network makes no essential difference. If the individual does that

which is good he will also be of service to the whole; but the standpoint is always the ethical individual. Socrates' demon, however, already reveals the contradiction of his own theory. He does not always know clearly beforehand what course to pursue; and hence has recourse to the still small voice of the universal.

Plato

Plato combined these two tendencies of thought and interpreted the one with the other. He took the universal of the Pre-Socratics and the "reason" of Socrates, but converted the latter from an ethical ideal to a metaphysical reality. Thus he thought to cure the individualism of Socrates and give content to the negative universal of his predecessors.

Already in the *Protagoras* Plato faces the difficulty of the relation between the finite and the infinite. "If the premises be presupposed in the conclusion what is the use of drawing it, and if not, how can we legitimately draw it?" [1] The relation of the universal to the particular is at the same time the relation of the infinite to the finite. His first answer is the memory theory of the soul. The soul knows all in a dim implicit way. Plato's slave Meno works out a geometrical problem upon the slightest suggestion. They who do not know may still have true notions of that which they do not know. This marks the beginning of Idealism.

Moreover, to Plato all things are related to one another in organic union. You may know the whole from any of its parts, but no part can be entirely known apart from the whole. Plato makes no very sharp distinction between knowledge and ignorance. Opinion is not mere ignorance but a state between knowledge and ignorance. Right opinion is a sort of incidental grasping of the right without realizing its organic implications, as Poets and Prophets tell us truths but themselves do not entirely grasp the meaning of their own words. So the mind is possessed of a universal faculty; deduction must receive a place. In the *Gorgias* the universal is conceived of as the organizing principle which determines the relations of all the parts. This principle is not external but implicit in the parts, or at least in our conception of them, from the beginning.

Thus Plato seemed to be on the road to something far superior to that of his predecessors. He tries to harmonize their antagonisms and establish a vital teleological relation between the finite and the infinite. But with the principle of unity which he employed it was impossible to get the two together. His method

[1] Edward Caird, *Evolution of Theology among Greek Thinkers*, 1:92.

remained essentially that of abstraction though he tried hard to get away from it. Accordingly, in the later dialogues we still meet with a twofold train of thought which must eventually lead to an irreconcilable dualism. First there is a craving for separation from the things of sense and the body as a "muddy vesture of decay." Does this not already forebode the apotheosis of abstraction in which Neoplatonism later ran amuck? Yet even here Plato does not consistently use abstraction or make absolute separation between body and spirit. Even here opinion is not total ignorance but rather imperfect knowledge. Only through opinion "mediated by sense" can we rise to a knowledge of the ideality of things. Hence Plato's universals do not become merely the highest abstractions. His ideas formed a unity of differences. Yet in the *Phaedo* he emphasizes the negative of the dialectic so strongly as though "all that is necessary to attain the ideal is to turn away from the world of sense and opinion." [2]

Secondly, Plato makes an attempt to interpret the manifold of experience by the idea of a final cause. His imaginary Socrates thinks to find satisfaction in the Anaxagorean νους but found reality explained by efficient cause only. Plato sought for teleology but his teleology was too hasty. It could not include all of reality; some parts of it could not be idealized. His farmers and mechanics are instruments of a society whose higher advantages they do not share. He needs his philosopher kings. These are to tell the people that up to that time there had been no quarreling among people. Evil is to be kept out of sight, and treated as an impossibility. "Poetry is to tell its 'noble untruth' and no skepticism or criticism is to be allowed to breathe a breath of suspicion upon it." [3] In the *Republic* we meet with duality. Only the philosophers are to reach an optimism including a consideration of evil; the larger number of the people must be satisfied with the immediate unreflective optimism of previous mythology. Plato cannot see his way clear to draw the synthetic principle clear through to every part of the universe. The Idea sometimes seems to be an abstraction from common elements in the particulars; then again it is a synthetic principle explaining differences.

Now it is clear that whether we take the philosophical or the theological viewpoint, some comprehensive synthetic principle must be found if we are to have any satisfactory explanation of the problem of the will. This synthetic principle may not be large enough even if it be the generative activity of the finite intellect as we find it in modern philosophy. It may have to be a personal God synthesizing real finite personalities, but surely Plato's principle, since it is not wholly synthetic or synthetic of the whole, is unacceptable. The end of Plato's

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[2] *Ibid*., 1:122.
[3] *Ibid*.

philosophy is dualistic. There is a certain externality and necessity in the things of sense that even reason cannot overcome. Matter has some sort of chaotic existence before the infusion of reason which transforms it into a cosmos, and the nature of matter is even reluctant to receive perfect form and goodness. *Hinc illae lacrimae*; hence all the strife and conflict in the present world, hence also the lack of all genuine relation between the two worlds. Man's soul is a sort of middle term between the two, but since these are absolutely separate the middle term needs mediating terms both ways. Thus we are led into a vicious infinite. We, after all, only know God as far as we are material through a changing non-dependable world which can, at best, give us an adumbration of God. As far as we are spirits we indeed see God; but we can get no genuine connection between our spirits and our bodies. Nor can his idea of the universe as the only-begotten universe of God mediate between the two worlds because in the light of all his other philosophy this can be only a metaphorical expression of the close relation he wanted to have between the two. In the last analysis "evils can never pass away; for there must needs exist something which stands opposed to the good. They have no seat among the gods but of necessity they cling to the nature of mortal creatures and haunt the region in which they dwell." [4]

Aristotle

In Aristotle we meet with a similar dualism. At first glance it would seem that he has made a genuine advance upon Plato. He works out more logically the category of the organism as expressing the relation between the lower and the higher aspects of being. This, however, is constantly intermingled with the idea that, "all finite existence is a combination of elements which are not essentially related," so that in the end we obtain a view of matter not as the true correlate of form, but as something external in which the form needs to realize itself.

We see Aristotle struggling in his attempt to bridge the gulf between pure reason and matter. But again he takes refuge in a middle term. Now a middle term can never unite two objects that are, by hypothesis, entirely separate. Reason, the middle term must therefore carry a distinction within itself. In part it moves in the ethereal spheres of the universal and, as such, is free; in part it is conditioned by external influences of sense and is subject to them. But such a mediary, which is mechanically in part of one world and equally mechanically in part to the other world, can never form a real bridge between them. There is no real interpenetration. Aristotle conceived of man's relation to God as only

[4] Rudolf Eucken, *Main Currents of Modern Thought* (1912), 176.

theoretical, not practical. Therefore in contrast to Plato, who would at least attempt to form his ideal state upon the basis of knowledge of the Absolute Good, Aristotle separates ethics and politics from metaphysics entirely. Goodness is shown making the best of circumstances. The gods have no virtue because they do not descend to the practical; they have no evils to contend with. Nor is there any connection possible between the relative truth of ethics and the absolute principles of pure metaphysics. Man is a combination of reason and an irrational element. Reason is the real man, but yet the life of reason that man lives he really lives not as man but as manifesting something divine within. This theoretical reason which man manifests is of the nature of intuition grasping the universal in its completeness and therefore has absolute truth, but practical reason deals with the doubtful through discursive thought. The unity which theoretical reason reaches is not a unity of synthesis which embraces all things in their concrete nature, but only a synthesis of all things in their pure form without any matter; it is a unity which is reached by abstraction.

Aristotle does indeed think that he has established a firmer connection between the physical and the spiritual than his predecessors. The Pythagorean numbers and the Platonic Ideas do not satisfy him but his conception of the *actus purus* as the final cause is scarcely more satisfactory. Aristotle does not explain how pure thought only contemplating itself "can become the determination of anything but itself." He certainly feels the need of a God who is closely related to the things of sense but his synthesis can only be in "contemplative reason" which cannot see anything but an ideally complete whole in which every element is in perfect harmony and unity without every other. Now although this is the ideal of our search, and any explanation of the relation between God and man that would leave nothing further wished for must reach this stage, it is evident that in our present state of knowledge we can never attain thereto if all factors of experience are taken into consideration. The subjective and the objective are in the last analysis for Aristotle two distinct entities, the union of which they never presupposed, and yet the union of which must be presupposed if we are to solve the problem not only of the will, but even state it. For if by hypothesis God and man are entirely separate, there can be no problem as to their relation.

Plato and Aristotle "healed the hurt of philosophy slightly" because they could not probe its entire depth. There are not wanting in them intimations that point to a more thorough synthesis of experience as is claimed by modern idealism, and perhaps we might even go so far as to say that in them we find hints of a transcendental realism which begins with the absolute as the starting point from which to unify the finite. But the main motif in their philosophy is naive realism

which seeks false individuality for its objects, or mysticism which seeks its universal by subtracting from the particular, the universal which, in contrast to a worthless finite striving, can have no meaning. They started from a dualism of form and matter which they sought to overcome by subjection of the latter to the former.

Both, however, at least attempt to reach their systems by means of comprehension and synthesis, and this is more than can be said for their followers in Greek philosophy. The latter sought union by abstraction only. The various parts of reality are separated, some ignored, others explained away. Questions are put in exclusive alternatives. These systems then contribute no advance to the thought of Plato and Aristotle but find their justification in revealing the premature nature of the synthesis of the latter, only to destroy one another in skepticism. Thus they exhibit the deeper nature of the conflict calling for a peace, and not a compromise or truce. The truce of Greek philosophy only prepared for fiercer battle; the fiercer battle led to peace.

Stoicism and Epicureanism

When we go beyond Plato and Aristotle to Stoicism and Epicureanism, we find that the nature of the problem has changed somewhat. To the former, the distinction between subject and object was quite subordinate to the distinction between the universal and the particular. "To the latter the distinction between subject and object becomes all important. The antagonism between the active form and the passive matter is set aside; in its place we have the relative opposition of two elements, both of which are regarded as having ultimately the same nature and origin, both of which are viewed as in one aspect material and in another spiritual." [5] Thus taking the nature of the universal and the particular to be ultimately the same, Stoicism built up its psychology and metaphysics. Or rather it presupposed a metaphysic which *ipso facto* denies the real problem by identifying the infinite with the finite and substituting for it an imitation problem or display of arms by half of the absolute plus half of the finite on one side of a great gulf and half of the infinite plus half of the finite on the other. We have now a longitudinal division with slight carvings indicating the transverse, and a strange conglomeration results.

Zeno joined the individual sensationalism of the materialism of the Cynics with the Pantheism, idealism and intellectualism of the Megarians. The individual's independence is accordingly not the inverted independence of

[5] Edward Caird, *Evolution of Theology among Greek Thinkers*, 2:86.

Cynicism but a consciousness of the dignity of man in virtue of his connection with rational beings in general. Being most alone, the individual is least alone; in the mirror of the recesses of his soul rebounds the reflection of the glory of the gods and mankind. *Homo sum*; *humanic nihil a me alienum puto*. "Instead of admitting a relative difference between subject and object where the Cynics and Megarians an absolute one, he denied all difference and turned to an intuitional monism." [6] But thus he grasped only the negative element. Man's relation to the universe becomes such that he can choose to serve freely or accept forced servitude.

Consequently man's moral ideal is to live consistent with nature, with nature in general as it is manifest in the universe and with the nature of his own soul, for these two are essentially one. On this basis, morality can be nothing more than the sacrifice of the individual to the universe. The latter must drown his personality in the former. Stoicism is Pessimism when it looks at the particular things of this world. It claims to be optimistic as to the whole but such optimism means to deny the reality of the individual's struggles, to look upon him as a means exclusively and not as an end; it is optimism that is not all-embracive and hence no optimism at all. Stoicism did well to release the individual from the bondage of society, but when it placed upon him the obligation of a good will in harmony with nature it scarcely improved his condition. The individual comes on the one hand to stand absolutely alone without relations to his fellow-man; on the other hand he is identified with nature. The whole of Stoicism thus becomes a refined materialism unable to distinguish between matter and mind; its theory of knowledge is expressed by the term "impression" of one form of matter upon a more refined form of it. Thus the individual can, strictly speaking, only know himself or his own states and cannot enter into any but external relations with his fellow man; only with God can he converse because the latter is identical with him.

After the individualism of the Stoics and Epicureans came skepticism. It served the purpose of overthrowing the superficial epistemology of Stoicism and reveal its contradiction. Upon the basis of Stoic epistemology the world about us is only a show world; we must rest content in ourselves. But skepticism went the wrong way in refuting this epistemology. In refuting any kind of dogmatism it refutes its own dogmatism of the unknowable. It is as Caird expresses it, "Now any attack upon the possibility of knowledge is foiled by the impossibility of finding a

[6] *Ibid*.

ground upon which to place its batteries." [7] It is an attempt to get beyond the intelligible world by an act of the intelligence itself.

Thus far then in Greek philosophy the two worlds are either entirely separate or identical; responsibility in any deep sense has no place; the question of the will is ruled out of court.

Philo

Do we then expect to find a better solution from Philo, who intermingled Greek philosophy with Judaism? In Philo's theology God has to call in subordinates to "create a being that is not altogether good." He introduced the tendency to separate God and man, as it manifested itself in Greek thought, into the Old Testament. He thinks Greek philosophy has stolen this notion of separation from the Old Testament. Accordingly all anthropomorphism goes by the board. Creatures are related to God but God is not related to his creatures. When Philo introduces his middle term, his subordinate the Logos, he finds it difficult to connect this middle term with the two entities that it is to connect. And no great wonder. He was trying the impossible. Two entities entirely separate by supposition can never be brought together more than in a mechanical fashion by any mediary whatever, and mechanical connection cannot transmit responsibility. Sometimes this mediary of Philo partakes of the nature of one of his entities that he seeks to combine and then again of the other. No larger unity or relative distinction is allowed between the entities; only absolute separation and therefore only mechanical connection. Within the nature of man a similar distinction is introduced. He becomes a combination of "dross and deity"; the soul is related to God, the body is its prison house. As somewhat of an advance upon Stoicism, Philo offers his individual rescue from himself not only within himself but in God. But this refuge is obtained not by realizing the spirit of the divine through the faculties of man, but by renouncing these very faculties by being absorbed in ecstasy in immediate communion with God. So the main trend of his philosophy is an emphasis on the extreme transcendence of God.

Plotinus

Now Plotinus is the classic exponent of this emphasis on the transcendence of God and the only union conceivable upon such basis, namely negative mysticism. In him this tendency in Greek thought finds its culmination. That extreme

[7] Edward Caird, *Evolution of Theology among Greek Thinkers*, 2:177.

transcendence and mysticism should go together may seem strange at first sight but it is only natural. The soul cannot long bear entire separation from God. If a union cannot be effected through the ordinary faculties of the soul it must be sought in merging consciousness of self and the world, if possible, in the consciousness of God. In ordinary thought we presuppose the unity of the finite and the infinite; here it is not presupposed, rather the contrary, but is made an immediate object to strive after. God escapes our knowledge but does not entirely escape us. Thus Plotinus would steer free from agnosticism because even negative relation is relation and penetrates the impregnable aloofness of the Absolute. God is supposed to be in immediate contact with us. The mystical approach involves an entire reversal of our ordinary order of consciousness. Plotinus, though his language is often similar to that of Pantheism, is in his conception of the way of knowledge entirely opposed to Pantheism. He does not see God in everything in order to see God. With Spinoza he speaks of absolute indeterminateness but does not add to it the self-determination which Spinoza attributes to God. Plotinus cannot find the finite back within the infinite. "Thus we have the strange paradox that the Being who is absolute is yet conceived as in a sense external to the relative and the finite, and that he leaves the relative and the finite in a kind of unreal independence which has no value, and yet from which as finite it cannot escape." [8]

Now Plotinus' view is important; it marks the culmination of Greek philosophy. With him the abstraction process has reached its climax. Instead of seeking a higher synthesis in which the world of sense and evil can be overcome, Plotinus continues in abstraction. One drug is taken to overcome the effect of the former and the craving becomes ever greater. The union of the self-consciousness of the absolute he sought in a still further regress than did the Stoics. He would find it in the One preceding all difference or division, preceding even the distinction of self-consciousness. In reality we cannot even call it the One because that already involves relation to the Many, so our only recourse is silence. Plotinus does feel of course the necessity of some sort of relation of the finite to it but the expression of this relation involves him in all sorts of contradictions. Then he has to speak again of the one and the Good from which all springs. It is difficult to speak of the unknowable and yet we must. Mr. Spencer is the modern embodiment of such a dilemma. The Stoics had attempted to escape from dualism by identifying spirit with matter but Plotinus absolutely distinguishes these two and the only bond he could find was in the soul of man. The union of the soul with the Absolute is therefore different in Plotinus' philosophy than in that of Stoicism. In

[8] *Ibid*., 2:232.

Stoicism it is a certain identity of being in abstract individuals; both God and man are refined material. There is no distinction between matter and spirit. With Plotinus these are distinct. Union is sought in an eternal regression from all difference to the annihilation even of self-consciousness.

Thus in the end Greek philosophy is afraid to connect the finite and the infinite. It results in giving the finite a sort of semi-independence. Evil turns into a positive opposite to God; it is not entirely under his control. The power of God must be limited to excuse him from evil. Hence there can really be no question of the finite will. Each world is a law unto itself and has no relation to the other. The most we can give Plotinus, the last of the great Greek philosophers, credit for is that in his opposition to the Gnostics who conceived matter as absolutely evil he at least contended that it was the best possible image of the good. So Plotinus' philosophy at least points beyond itself. It brings strikingly to the foreground the great problem of the relation of the divine and the human and the necessity of reconciliation. Thus it prepared the thinking world for the solution offered by Christianity. Surely Christianity had to fight the solutions of Neo-Platonism. Witness the Christological controversies; but in these very controversies we see the Biblical solution expressed in the dogma of the person of Christ as very God and very man. In this lies the solution of the problem of the will.

Modern Philosophy

Our discussion so far leads by historical approach to modern philosophy. Modern philosophy has entered upon the inheritance of the Greeks; its problems are the same, its solutions slightly different. Moreover a discussion of Greek philosophy throws light largely by way of contrast on the Christian doctrine. Christianity came slowly to an ever larger consciousness of its own implications in reaction to Greek philosophy. The Christian consciousness was rudely awakened from its erstwhile satisfaction, joy, and immediacy and roused to a long and bitter struggle which could not help but lead to its victory. The value of Greek philosophy in this respect has often been underestimated. It goaded the Christian consciousness to render an account to itself of its treasure without losing the enjoyment of its possession.

We now take a leap from Plotinus to Descartes. It is not necessary to dwell on Gnosticism and Manichaeism here; they have been refuted implicitly in the survey of Greek thought. That we leap form Plotinus to Descartes does not mean that no thinking was done on the subject between their respective periods. Besides Scholasticism, there was Meister Eckhart who offers little of importance over the

ancient negative theology of the East. Of more importance is the thinking of the Renaissance. Its chief value, however, lay in its preparation for modern philosophy. The Renaissance thinkers have not only the inheritance of Greek philosophy but also that of Christian dogmatics and scholastic speculation. A new tendency shows itself first of all in an attempt to explain everything in terms of the individual man. "The inner became conscious of its unity and entrenched itself within its own territory while the outer world receded to take an inferior position and lost all inner life since its function of movement in space did not seem to need any explanation by a spiritual principle." [9] On the other hand there was a movement that gloried in the beauty of the external world, that dwelt upon its magnitude and grandeur and the insignificance of man in comparison with it. As the former was a movement toward the subject, this was a movement toward the object.

Thus we see the possibility arise of a new problem or a new aspect of the same problem—the psychological. It is now no longer only the relation of the sensuous, including man, to the super-sensuous, but within the one term a split has been made. The individual man as a spirit is set over against the rest of nature. The relation between these two now absorbs the greater interest. Metaphysics is largely abandoned for psychology. Now as far as its immediate consequence was concerned it was a loss, but if taken in its setting it was an immeasurable gain. Metaphysical relations, such as the problem of the will primarily is, cannot be settled without psychology even though it be subordinate in value. The whole of ancient philosophy tried to study metaphysics without any thorough psychological investigation. They had never taken the individual as a spiritual personality and thus studied him in all his relations. Thus now the problem of the will takes on a more variegated form. The sad consequence of it all was that men lost themselves in bypaths and thought that psychology alone was able to solve the problem, while in reality psychology alone cannot even touch it. The chief advantage of the new tendency at the dawn of modern philosophy lies in its opening the way for a better epistemology which led the great thinkers of a later period to a more fundamental handling of the problem of the will.

From Descartes to Kant we see two currents of thought based on the same psychological presupposition of absolute separation of the new subject and object. They wandered farther and farther apart until the cord that bound them together burst. Kant healed the breach and led them back to a new beginning. The one current is Empiricism. Through Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley and

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[9] Rudolf Eucken, *Main Currents of Modern Thought*, 19.

Hume it leads out into skepticism. The other current is Rationalism foreshadowed by Nicholas of Cusa and Bruna, worked out by Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, and finding its reduction to absurdity in Wolff.

Descartes

Both trends of thought are found in Descartes. "He placed the two worlds of mind and matter in direct opposition in the full conviction that each must be studied in itself, according to its own special laws and nature, and that it only remains to discover in what way these act upon one another as our consciousness assures us that they do." [10] So we find an explicit metaphysical dualism as an assumed basis for psychology and any adequate solution of the will is thus precluded. And this need not be criticism from an idealist standpoint only, but also from the standpoint we shall ultimately arrive at. Naive Realism with its external juxtaposition of totally independent entities which can never enter into relation with one another cannot be the basis for any satisfactory theory of the will. After Kant we must have either idealism or Realism but both transcendental. The ontological predicate of naive realism is absolute but abstract independence of entities. This precludes the possibility of any future relation also for even if we could conceive of a change of relations within one term *ex hypothesi*, the other term would thereby not be effected. The naive realist's own idea of his system is that it stands as a relationless entity and can, as such, not be true of his system. [11]

But even though Descartes' metaphysics are thus absolutely untenable and no statement of the metaphysical issue in hand can be accomplished, we may see what fortune attended an attempt to solve the problem on a psychological basis alone. Descartes stays about where Plato was, but in distinction from Plato he considers the spirit as a substance totally apart from matter. The essence of this spirit is self-consciousness of which thought is the highest function. The consciousness of self is turned against the external world, or against God, or against both. The external world is for Descartes not only extended and external to itself but also external to us. But this is already the result of his investigation. He has reached this by his famous method of doubt. The natural prejudices which we inherit tend to give us a wrong impression of things. We must begin with doubt. Now we can doubt the existence of everything except the existence of the doubter. But the last sentence is a judgment and implies the reality of self-consciousness. Even if a superior being sought to deceive me in all my thinking

[10] L. Nor, *Development of Philosophy from Thales to Kant*, 124.
[11] Josiah Royce, *The World and the Individual* (1899), 1, Lect 3.

he could not succeed unless I existed; he could not cause me not to exist so long as I thought. Now this *cogito ergo sum* is not to be thought of as a syllogism with a major premise that whatever thinks exists. We must rather turn this about. That whatever thinks exists is an inference drawn from my present self consciousness. The latter is to be the Archimedian που στω. Having this premise, it follows that whatever idea is as clear to me as the idea of my self-consciousness, exists also. Such an idea is God. Thus the ontological argument of Anselm that the idea of God is an integral part of human nature is changed to one of clarity of idea. This much established, Descartes is prepared to establish the reality of the remainder of the universe from the nature of God. The existence of nature is established via the consciousness of God. But all existences are external to one another and unrelated. His method must, therefore, become that of the scale and the yardstick, that of mathematics.

Now we have already seen that such a dualistic metaphysic is incapable of completely stating the problem of the finite and the infinite. Hence, when we have refuted Descartes we have refuted all of Empiricism and Rationalism also, and we can be brief in our review of them. The main criticism of Cartesian metaphysics is that it does not see the reciprocal implication of all the principles on which the world as an intelligible world rests. The question for him is how we are to know anything besides ourselves and our own ideas. And we cannot know upon his basis of a world of unrelated and mechanically separated units. Knowledge first of all implies the relation of subject and object. "Hence the value of mathematics in helping us to explain any phenomenon is in inverse ratio to the complexity and comprehensiveness of the phenomena themselves." [12] In a sense we may say that the inorganic world can be explained on Descartes standpoint because its chief essence consists in being externally exclusive entities, though even these cannot entirely be so explained; but when it comes to the things of the spirit, these surely cannot be known by the thumbrule and quart measure. "They are what they are just because they attract or repel each other chemically or mechanically, and which combined are never merely the sum of their parts." [13] As to a direct answer to our question we find little satisfaction. "The problem of moral obligation he shirks altogether or else resolves it in an eudaemonistic sense, as merely a proper computation in attaining the greatest happiness." [14]

The extravagance of the Cartesian metaphysic did not meet with serious criticism till the nineteenth century when the limits of the purely mathematical

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[12] Edward Caird, *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant* (1889), 1:30.
[13] *Ibid*., 1:30.
[14] *Idem*., 30.

method were finally discerned. Meanwhile, Rationalism and Empiricism occupied the metaphysical gym floor laid by Descartes and fought with vehemence the psychological battles of innate ideas.

Spinoza

For Spinoza, God is a substance which includes all possible attributes. There is no limited substance. There cannot be, for if limited then it must be limited by itself or by something else. If unlimited then it can be only one. So we are led to believe that God is the only substance. There is only one category of being. There are no two equal substances, nor can one substance procedure another, so there is no more in God's mind than is revealed in nature. For Descartes, nature was a limited substance, *natura naturata*; for Spinoza, God is nature, is substance, the only category of being. It follows that God has also the attribute of extension. Turning from his metaphysics to providence—Chapter 5 of the "Ethics"—his thought is explicit. Nothing exists or is intelligible without God. Whatever is, is necessary. Are there then no accidents in nature? No, since uncaused existence would be contradictory. Everything proceeds according to eternal law. There is no room here for any conception of the freedom of the will. What then has caused all the evil in the world? There is no confusion or evil at all. For you to say so would mean for you to know all possible laws and causes. It readily follows that we need little concern ourselves about human will. In any real sense there is no such thing. All qualitative distinctions are reduced to a difference of degree. The universe is immanent in God.

Yet the relation between finite and infinite is not consistently the same in Spinoza. On the one hand, man being one with God can know God absolutely as he knows the attributes of a triangle; on the other hand, we as finite beings cannot judge whether anything is evil because we do not know all causes. This inconsistency seems to be due to the fact that he attempts to build up a monism and yet accepts the Cartesian dualism of entities as only mathematically related. But whether we follow the monistic or the dualistic motif or take Spinoza's new brand of intermixture of the two, we nowhere find any satisfactory treatment of the will.

Locke

Before continuing the discussion of Rationalism in Leibniz we must briefly turn to Empiricism. "Descartes had divided ideas according to their origin into three classes, those which are self formed, those which come from without, those which

are innate, and had called the third class the most valuable." [15] Locke disputes the existence of ideas in the understanding from birth, and makes the mind receive the elements of knowledge from the senses, from without. Thus epistemology is turned about, the perceptions of external objects becomes the basis for the perception of self. Ideas come to us from without, not in the narrow sensationalistic way that thinking is mere transformed sensation, but in the sense that the mind itself is a *tabula rasa* upon which external and internal perception inscribes its characters. Thus passively the mind takes into itself knowledge of the primary qualities inherent in things perceived as caused by motion and secondary qualities caused by motion but not perceived as such. In the reception of simple ideas the mind is entirely passive. The activity of which it is capable is confined to the power of variously combining and rearranging simple ideas. Mind is active but not creative. Complex ideas from simple ideas through voluntary combination of the latter.

As to their validity, ideas are valid if they correspond to their archetypes as things real or possible or an idea of something. But our ideas are in the nature of the case inadequate as representations of the inner essences of things because we receive only copies of these essences upon the retina of our understanding. It follows that knowledge can never be direct but must always be only "relation of ideas among themselves." The mind can perceive and operate upon nothing but its own ideas cast upon it. Has the mind any criteria by which to know whether the ideas actually correspond to things? As for complex ideas they make no claim to represent things, except those of substances, since these ideas are only combinations of simple ideas so they need not be considered. As to simple ideas the passivity of the mind is the guarantee that they are not creatures of the fancy. The world does exist. As for ourselves every pain or pleasure, every emotion or thought is proof of our existence and as for God, since we know that a real world and a real self exist and since we cannot rest in finite regression, we cannot but conceive of an eternal infinite cause with infinite perfection.

We need not long dwell upon the philosophy of Locke. His contribution to the theory of freedom lays within the psychological sphere. We are here chiefly concerned in refuting his metaphysic as a basis for any sufficient theory of the will. Yet we cannot afford entirely to ignore his psychological solution.

Locke is not entirely consistent in his presentation of the nature of freedom. He is generally regarded as a philosophical necessitarian. We shall have to revert to this again in the discussion of Jonathan Edwards. "Locke anticipates Edwards in

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[15] Falckenburg, *History of Modern Philosophy*, 155.

combatting the proposition that choice springs from a previous state of indifferency, an absolute neutrality of feeling, either preceding the act of judgment or interposed between that act and the act of the will. Locke's conception of liberty as relating exclusively to the effects of choice, or events consecutive to volition, and not the origination of choice itself, is precisely coincident with that of Edwards. 'Freedom,' says Locke, 'consists in the dependence of the existence, or non-existence, of any action upon our volition of it.' Locke asserts that the question whether the will itself be free or not is unreasonable and unintelligible; and he precedes Edwards in seeking to fasten upon one who asks whether a man is free to choose in a particular way rather than in the opposite, the absurdity of assuming the possibility of an infinite series of choices, or of inquiring whether an identical proposition is true. 'To choose as one pleases' if it does not mean, 'to choose as one chooses to choose'—which involves the absurdity of a series of choices *ad infinitum*—can only mean 'to choose as one actually chooses,' a futile identical proposition." [16]

This interpretation of Dr. Fisher's seems to be the prevalent one and accords best with Jonathan Edwards's agreement with him. Yet already Edwards noticed the inconsistency in Locke and criticized him for making an invalid distinction between preference and choice, desire and will. Locke thus hoped to find room for the freedom of the will. "Not the thought, not the determination of the will, is free, but the person, the mind; this has the power to suspend the prosecution of desire, and by its judgment to determine the will, even in opposition to inclination." [17] Locke would distinguish four stages in our volitional process: "desire or uneasiness; the deliberative combination of ideas; the judgment of the understanding; determination. Freedom has its place at the beginning of the second stage; it is open to me to decide whether to proceed at all to consideration and final judgment concerning a proposed action." [18] Now this is clearly a jump in the dark and Edwards was quick to perceive that this suspension of desire is itself an act of choice, "determined, like every other, on Locke's principles, by the strongest motive."

Locke therefore posits some sort of unintelligible freedom which does not fit in with his metaphysics nor his psychology. In both of these he is a thorough determinist.

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[16] William P. Fisher, "Philosophy of J. Edwards." *North American Review*, (1879), 288.
[17] Falckenburg, *Modern Philosophy*, 176.
[18] *Idem*.

Berkeley

But we pass on to Berkeley. He grasped the notion of Locke's primary and secondary qualities. How could Locke know that there were any primary qualities inherent in things? Are not extension, motion, solidity just as purely subjective states as color, heat, and sweetness? We may note in passing, so as to avoid repetition, that Edwards, independently of Berkeley as is now generally conceded, came to a similar idealism. Both could not see that one of Locke's complex ideas should be so honored in distinction from others, namely that of substance, as to have something real corresponding to it. Hence both reject the existence of the external world in Locke's sense, as well as his idea of substance. [19] For Berkeley there is no abstract matter. Nothing exists except minds and their ideas. *Esse est percipi*. Thus spirit is made entirely independent of matter, a distinctive advance towards skepticism. Yet we receive ideas which we ourselves do not produce. These must therefore be the effects of a mightier Spirit than we. This forms some sort of subjective proof for the existence of God. Another important advance that Berkeley made was his denial of the reality of universal ideas which Locke, though a nominalist, had still maintained. General ideas and the existence of material things has been destroyed. That was the life work of Berkeley and he made such a thorough job of it that Hume could with little difficulty develop his philosophy into skepticism. Strictly speaking, Berkeley's position leads also to determinism. "Everything exists only in virtue of its participation in the one, permanent, all-comprehensive spirit; individual spirits are of the same nature with the universal reason, only they are less perfect, limited and not pure activity, while God is passionless intelligence." [20] But yet Berkeley wants to make an exception for the free acts of men from his determinism. It is indeed, he admits, a paradox to think of freedom on such a basis, but there are other things, such as motion, mathematical infinity, etc., that are beyond our comprehension, that we yet accept. Again it is difficult to see what freedom can mean on such a basis. It is adherence to a totally mechanical view of the universe, and yet somehow a positing of freedom.

Hume

Hume began with Berkeley's ultra-nominalism, though not rejecting the reality of the material world. He worked out the idea suggested by Berkeley's

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[19] H. Churchill King, "Edwards as Philosopher and Theologian." *Hartford Seminary Record*, 14:38.
[20] Falckenburg, *Modern Philosophy*, 219.

rejection of the primary qualities as subjective, to the point that immediate sensation includes less than is ascribed to it, as e.g. in vision we perceive colors only, and not distance. Then also our conception of causality is subjective. We see only temporal succession but have no guarantee of causal connection. The result is that substantiality can be denied to immaterial as well as to material beings. His psychology is in full accord with this. The combination of ideas is no longer left to the understanding, as with Locke, but is subjected to the laws of association. There is thus no synthetic activity of the mind at all. William James has later criticized this position as being true in so far that it accurately describes the physical phenomena of self-consciousness, but that the synthetic element is thus unreckoned with. This he tries to supply by his present moment of consciousness, representative and appropriative of all the previous states. The present moment is the just born, yet full grown son of the past, swaying the title deed of all his predecessors.

For Hume then, the will as a psychological faculty is absolutely determined, "man's volition and action present themselves as results of the mechanical working of the passions, which in turn point further back to more primitive principles." So also in a metaphysical sense, man is absolutely determined. All moral phenomena are of a "composite and derivative nature," and without exception products of the regular interaction of passion. He still wants to maintain responsibility on the basis that as we spontaneously pay tribute to beauty or talent we ought to do so also to moral character. Moral character is meritorious though determined. Now this is scarcely satisfactory for any thorough solution of the problem of the will. One of the terms, namely the finite personality, is either denied or else properties gratuitously ascribed to it without adequate explanation.

The great merit of the two series of thinkers just considered, Rationalism and Empiricism has been negative. They have reduced to absurdity the dualism of an external unrelated world.

Leibniz

Leibniz after a fashion tries to reconcile these opposing tendencies. A man of great productive genius and transforming powers, he tried to do justice to both. To Empiricism he imparted a relative justification but maintained for the necessary truths of reason a greater validity. In a controversy carried on with Locke on the question of innate ideas he argues that instead of ideas being impressed on the mind and contained in it spatially, they are rather forms of the

mind's activity and may be unconsciously present. They are not mechanically caused by bodies as Locke had supposed. All causality is ideal; i.e. that which causes the present is not the past but the future. We feel that in Leibniz we have lost some of the mechanism of empiricism and rationalism; there seems to be some growth in the process of knowledge. Yet the two are not really blended, as is evidenced in his maintaining the absolute distinction between geometrical and factual truths. The former is deductivism, pure logic with the impossibility of the contrary: it deals with analytic judgments; the latter is inductive with the possibility of the contrary: it deals with synthetic judgments. At first, Leibniz seems to hold that God thinks absolutely analytically, later he makes the principle of twofold truth metaphysical as well as psychological; the division goes through to ultimate reality, to God. Thus he gets two kinds of necessity, conditioned and unconditioned. The monad has some unconscious or minute ideas which really determine its decisions even when it thinks to act without cause. "The will is always determined, and that by an idea (of ends) which generally is of a very complex nature, and in which the stronger side decides the issue." [21] Yet Leibniz believes in some sort of freedom. Our resolutions are only physically or morally, not metaphysically, determined. They cannot happen otherwise, but the other is at least conceivable. Moreover there is what theology calls moral spontaneity; there is no external compulsion. Thus Leibniz thinks to overcome the "fatalism" of Spinoza but in reality it differs little from Spinoza's conception. "A decision is the more free the more distinct the ideas which determine it," and God is absolutely free because in him is no darkness at all.

When Leibniz comes to his explanation of evil we see that the same necessitarian position is maintained. Evil is a necessary creation, for God's knowledge is also partly synthetical. The present world is the best conceivable in this state of affairs. Hence Leibniz resorts to the yardstick and the scales to weigh the evil and the good and finds the latter to outweigh the former. This mechanism is after all the highest sort of relation that Leibniz can find between God and man.

Kant

Kant saw the essential dualism that underlay both Empiricism. Accordingly he subjects the entire knowing process to a critical examination. His question is whether real knowledge is possible. Are the mathematical sciences building on a sure foundation? Are synthetic judgments *a priori* possible? So long as *a priori*

[21] Falckenburg, *Modern Philosophy*, 285.

judgment is analytical there is no difficulty, or so long as your synthetic judgment is *a posteriori* you have no trouble. The difficulty comes with synthetic judgments that are *a priori*. Can I come to progress in knowledge which is still universal and necessary?

Kant gives to this a positive answer. Kant thinks to have found a genuine *a priori* for all of experience by absorbing the old subject and object of Descartes into a new subject. Objectivity is due to the creative activity of the mind. The manifold of experience pours into the mental forms of space and time, and the further mental activity relates all experience according to fundamental laws of thinking. Objectivity thus becomes an activity of the mind and hence has validity for all minds. The meaning of the ontological predicate for Kant is universal validity. But here exactly comes the difficulty with Kant's metaphysic. Can we feel satisfied with validity? Is there not more than validity? Kant has overreached himself. He has left the *noumena* in the cold, and thus can give no adequate explanation of *phenomena*. Upon his basis we are shut up in the world of phenomena. We cannot apply substantiality to the soul nor can we prove that it has no substantiality. Psychology may be able to show that to explain the unity we find between sense and intelligence you need the idea of a fundamental ground as a regulative principle, but it cannot make an intelligible object of this unity. If we try to do this we are forming a paralogism, i.e., we are trying to fit higher realities into inadequate categories.

In rational theology we fare no better; the ancient theistic arguments are demolished. That the existence of God is to be derived analytically from a concept, as the ontological argument tries to do, would imply a leap in the dark. So the cosmological argument can at best give us an infinite regress of finite causes, and even if it could bring us to the concept of absolute cause we would again be switched over into the track of the ontological argument and would still have to bridge the gulf between concept and reality. As for the teleological argument it can at best give a world framing architect.

The conclusion of the matter is that pure theoretic knowledge of God, the soul, and freedom is impossible. We cannot nor would we deny their existence, but we must acknowledge our limitations so as to make room for faith. "The '*Du Sollst*' is rooted in our very natures but cannot further be explained and forms the deepest foundation and highest authority in morals." [22] As far as form is concerned our religion and morality are based on our inmost nature, but as to content they are autonomous.

[22] Herman Bavinck, *Hedendaagsche Moraal*, Kampen: Kok, 1902, 27.

The thrust of Kant's philosophy was therefore negative in the main. He showed once for all that the methods of empiricism and rationalism with their ultimate dualism between subject and object is untenable. He has demonstrated the interrelation of experience. Why did Kant not extend this to the noumenal world? Upon his standpoint he could not do this. He still fought with essentially rationalistic weapons; we cannot, therefore, expect him to kill the dragon of skepticism.

Upon the basis of theoretical knowledge man is absolutely determined. He is a link in the inexorable chain of causality. "Freedom, like autonomy is no quality of the natural will. It is only the power of adopting the moral law as a maxim governing our will and adopting it so intimately that the maxim is thought as the very utterance of our own wills that we are free— in other words have a real causative originality—a power of absolutely commencing a series of events. Freedom, therefore is revealed by the moral law. When a statement unconditionally commanding action is accepted by the will as its own utterance; when the 'thou shalt' of the law becomes the 'I will' of the agent,—then in this high region, where the subjective volition is identified with the objective law, we have a synthetical judgment *a priori* which is practical and governs conduct." [23] " 'I am for I ought to be, the origin, the source of my own deeds.' And the faith thus asserted is, for Kant, rationally as unconquerable as it is for us unverifiable. This is the faith which Kant defines, in his *Critique of Practical Reason* as the postulate of the freedom of the will." [24] "*Wer immer strebend sich bemüht, den können wir erlösen.*" In these words of Goethe we can compress the ideas of Kant with respect to the possibility of sin and redemption. [25] But the untenability of such a concept of freedom is immediately apparent. It takes man out of the recognized sphere of his own limitations, and trusts to a blind faith. [26]

Now Kant was an important milestone in the history of philosophy and theology. No one can afford to ignore him. Having shown the untenability of Kant's position we have also done with Ritschlian theology which bases itself upon the epistemology of Kant and measures all experience by value judgments. Any theology as e.g. also that of Hamilton and Mansel which builds on such avowed agnosticism can have no intelligible, let alone adequate conception of

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[23] W. Wallace, *Kant*, 213.
[24] Josiah Royce, *Lectures on Modern Idealism*, New York: Yale University Press, 1919, 39.
[25] Herman Bavinck, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 3:618.
[26] Geerhardus Vos, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 2:14.

the will, for it has severed all intelligible relation between the finite and the infinite.

Before closing our philosophical review, it remains briefly to see whether modern idealism has overcome this dualism of Kant, and found the correct relation between God and man so that we may build upon it for our final conception of the will.

Hegel

We shall have to turn to Hegel, then, for a new beginning. If he cannot give us a firm basis for a valid conception of the relation of the finite and infinite we shall have to turn to revelation, for the modern movements of Positivism, Neo-Realism, and Critical Realism, and Pragmatism give us no essentially different metaphysic from all the historic forms of Realism.

Hegel tries to overcome the dualism not only of naive realism but also the dualism of Kant. Kant had been able to remove the absolute distinction between subject and object by placing them within the self. He had accepted the categories of formal logic without criticism as to their nature, but only as to their objectivity. He had thus only moved the playing ground. Kant did not see that the question was primarily one of logic. Kant's philosophy "läst die Kategorien und die methode des gewöhnlichen Erkennens ganz unangefochten." [27]

Kant had failed to see the true dialectic of experience. To him the synthetic activity of the mind consisted in a conjunction of disparate elements, to Hegel it became a conjunction of opposites. Now the intuitional school after Kant, though it did examine the nature of the categories, did not see the true nature of the dialectic. It left behind all mediation, all processes of the "*Verstand*" and returned to the level of the prophet and the poet. It wants to grasp more than abstract truth but it fails in its attempt, because it attempts to get at immediacy without mediation, which is impossible.

What Hegel wants to get at is the concrete Notion, '*Gott als Geist*.' Truth, to Hegel, has a twofold sense. First it means an inherent dialectic movement in all experience. In this sense we have grasped the truth of an object if we have seen that it points beyond itself, that it involves its own contradiction. Everything finite points beyond itself. Now as far as we have grasped the inner necessity of a thing to disintegrate and again become a factor in a higher resultant, we have in this

[27] Hegel, *Werke* (Berlin, 1832), 65.

sense grasped the truth. Then we realize that the ideal is the real, and we come to truth in the second sense i.e. in the comprehension of the Notion, *Idee*, or *Gott*, the concrete all-inclusive reality. If we see truth in the first sense we are sure to come to truth in the second. [28] All the finite is seen in its relation to the infinite; the infinite is seen as including the finite and the subject and object are no longer exclusive but complementary.

This in barest outline is Hegel's metaphysics and at the same time his logic, for to him logic is metaphysics: dialectic is truth; truth is dialectic. Hegel studies the categories in their own pure medium of thought. He perceives the genuine negative dialectic, and through negation of the negation comes to reaffirmation. He works within the truth, not outside of it, and comes to the "*Idee*" and its "*Erscheinungen*" not merely to "*Schein*." [29]

In Hegel we have the basis of much of modern idealism and we shall have to examine whether its position is tenable. The conception of freedom on the basis of it remains essentially the same in all modifications of it. To Hegel man, the finite individual, is an "*Erscheinung*" of the infinite. Imperfection and finitude must indeed remain, in this sense, that the individual is not the whole. This is Principal Caird's view as well as his brother Edward's. "The drama of human life is the struggle of freedom and necessity of spirit with nature which in all its forms within and without comes to the purely moral consciousness in the guise of an enemy. But the possibility of the struggle itself and of the final victory in it lies in this, that the enemy exists in order to be conquered; or rather that its opposition is in its ultimate interpretation, an opposition of the Spirit to itself and the struggle but the pains that accompany its development." [30] There is thus little distinction between the finite and the infinite and the will of finite personality receives scant recognition at the hands of Hegel or his followers. Time has little meaning; the entire temporal process receives little justice.

Josiah Royce

But no, in Josiah Royce you say we have an idealist who still does justice to the temporal process and to that of finite personality. He lived with James in the age of the prominence of the biological sciences. To him we will then turn for, as

[28] Hegel, *Werke*, 6:155.
[29] J. M. E. McTaggart, *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic* (1896).
[30] Edward Caird, *Hegel* (1883), 125.

we conceive it, the highest possible solution for the problem of the will on the basis of unaided natural reason. [31]

Thus we see in Royce a modern idealist of genial talent, standing on the shoulders of modern metaphysic, epistemology and psychology, grapple with the problem of the will. And yet we cannot rest satisfied. And we must needs seek for the reason of our dissatisfaction. Even modern idealism will have to be subjected to a new skepticism, which tests in turn its presuppositions.

The very fact that it has taken the human spirit all these centuries to see through the implications of the finite in a pregnant sense ought to warn us that there has possibly been some flood that has washed away parts of the road. The path is extremely difficult; we know there must be a way, we could have come no other way, but why can we not easily and quickly get back? On an idealistic basis there can in reality be no free human nature, for all are, even on Royce's basis, but moments in the infinite free necessity.

Idealism

In pressing our criticism of idealism, then, we may ask on its own basis what of the possibility of allowing the corroding influence of sin at the core of man's personality so that the ordinary means of approach to the infinite by means of the human faculties has been blocked. What is meant here is not a sort of influence of evil on the human mind that is akin to a curse of finitude, or that produces many intellectual errors, but an influence which makes the very supposition of idealism, i.e. of reasoning from the implications of the finite directly to the infinite, untenable. Idealism should have applied such skepticism to its basic principles. It is of prime importance to grasp the nature of the antithesis of which we have spoken. It is not on the one hand an abrogation of the faculties of the human mind in favor of supernatural revelation and on the other an acceptance of these. Thus it is ofttimes presented. Thus Dr. Orchard in his *Modern Theories of Sin*, "Thus even Principal Caird maintains or presupposes that to allow special revelation means to deny the faculties of the soul." Now these two, the consciousness that sin has disabled man to be judge of the relation between finite and the infinite and special revelation, are concomitants. The former posits the latter as the only alternative. But the relation between God and man as knowable through the human faculties is presupposed by the positively Christian viewpoint no less than by idealism. Only idealism should have

[31] Note by CVT in original MS, but these pages are missing—Eric Bristley

placed itself before the question whether there were not other possibilities as to the present relation between God and man.

Would it not perhaps be more philosophical, would idealism not be truer idealism if it would allow for the possibility that the Absolute Consciousness must determine the relation of the finite to it, instead of taking for granted that the finite can determine that relation?

But not only is Idealism thus untrue to its own principle. We may further state that we are definitely placed before the alternative to accept the idea of a special divine revelation from God to man or else to remain in illusion, at least to remain in uncertainty as to whether or no we live in illusion. Dr. Bavinck in his *Philosophy of Revelation* has given an excellent review of Idealism's attempt to escape illusion. But it cannot succeed. Says he: "*De dwaling van het idealisme bestaat daarin, dat het de werk zaamheid en den inhoud de functie en het object, de psychologische en de logische natuur van de waarneming met elkander verwart. De waarneming is eene daad van het subject, en de gewaarwording en voorstelling hebben, evenals het begrip en besluit, slechts een ideèel, immanent bestaan. Maar de waarneming zelve, als werkzaamheid, is op een object gericht, en de gewaarwording en voorstelling staan logisch, naar haar eigen natuur, in verband tot eene van haar onderscheidene realiteit. Psychologie en logica zijn daarom in wezen onderscheiden. Iets anders is het, de voorstellingen in mijn bewustzijn zelve te beschouwen, en iets anders, door en in die voorstellingen de werkelijkheid te leeren kennen. Wie dit onderscheid miskent, blijft in het psychologisme bevangen, komt uit zich zelven niet uit en bereikt de werkelijkheid nooit.*" [32]

Some idealists have tried to escape this charge of subjectivity by saying that the law of causality demands the existence of an objective reality corresponding to the perceptions which are its effects. But we have just seen that causality can be for any idealist only a weak argument, since we have no guarantee that the world of free spirits is subject to it.

Others argue from the nature of man, saying that it is not only intellectual but also volitive, that his essence lies primarily not in the "*cogitare*" but in the "*movere*." And this will drives man to the sense of reality back of his perception. But even the most radical idealist cannot escape from the fact that we do not conclude that there is reality after passing through a process of thought, but are immediately aware of it before all intellectualization. Nor does it help matters if

[32] Herman Bavinck, *Wijsbegeerte der Openbaring* (*Philosophy of Revelation*, New York, 1909), 47.

with Helmholtz and Von Hartmann we maintain that this sense of reality is due to the working of the unconscious within us. For either this unconscious judgment is a precipitate of many years of experience and then it would presuppose what it is to prove, or it is part of the nature of man to connect perception and reality, but then this activity is neither unconscious nor the result of ratiocination. Or if it be directly attributed to the one great Unconscious, then it is no longer our activity.

Whenever Idealism thus separates perception as to origin and nature from objective reality there is no opportunity later of bringing them together again. There remaineth then no sacrifice for that sin. The human spirit has built a wall about itself, and vainly thinking to have encased windows in it, it has installed only mirrors, and thus when it would look beyond it beholds only its own countenance and even that only darkly because there are no windows to let in the light required to give a clear reflection. Idealism is like a she-bear that nurses itself at its own breasts and thus devours itself. [33] Says James Orr, "Pantheism shares the fate of every incomplete system in being compelled to pass judgment on itself, and either to sink to something lower, or to pass up to something higher." [34] The sinking to something lower we see in the regress to Materialism. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel were followed by Straus and Feuerbach. The movement to something higher we may with Orr conceive of as culminating in Theism, now taken in its widest sense, of which we have reviewed a leading representative, namely Josiah Royce, "There may be difficulties at this stage as to whether the term 'personal' is a suitable term to apply to the Divine; but it is nevertheless a theistic conception of God which is shaping itself, and the purgation of the system from the remaining pantheistic elements is only a question of time." [35] In the Neo-Hegelian development in England we see this working out. Already Mr. T. H. Green speaks of relations between God and man that imply a metaphysical conception of the personality of God, and Prof. Seth talks in unequivocable terms "that if we are to keep the name God at all, or any equivalent term, subjectivity—an existence of God for Himself, analogous to our own personal existence, though doubtless transcending it infinitely in innumerable ways—is an essential element of the conception.... God may be, must be, infinitely more—we are at least certain that he cannot be less—than we know ourselves to be." [36] And then finally these men admit that there is a necessity of revelation. This is the climax of it all.

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[33] *Ibid*. 50.
[34] James Orr, *The Christian View of God and the World*, 1893, 71.
[35] *Idem*., 73.
[36] Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison, *Hegelianism and Personality* (1887), 224; by Orr. 75.

Now we may rejoice greatly that Idealism is thus more and more assuming the form of Theism. But the one main criticism still holds against this position that it too has not recognized the possibility of sin as a disjunctive factor in experience, disjunctive to such an extent that the breach cannot be healed except by special supernatural revelation on the one hand in the objective sphere, and special supernatural transformation on the other hand in the subjective sphere. Thus this position is not as philosophic as it might and should be. And yet it can not be more philosophic. Why?

Do we not in Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann have ample illustration of the impossibility of Idealism to lift itself by its own bootstraps? "Curse God who is so framed that he must have your existence and this without taking one iota of responsibility for its inevitable evil. Curse God who can do nothing to redeem you from sin into which his efforts have forced you. Die, because death being a negation of individuality is the one good in life." [37] So Schopenhauer would draw through the principles of idealism; only thus can evil in the last analysis for him be interpreted, for both God and man are both fatally determined by a power within them over which they have no control.

But some pessimist might object and say that Von Hartmann was less pessimistic. True, for "he united evolutionary optimism with metaphysically decreed misery. Active effort to annihilate pain is the burden of his teaching. Seeing mechanism in nature he yet must needs posit teleology." [38] The Unconscious ejects the phenomena. Thought and Being are not identical, as with Hegel. As to the individual soul it has no free will because its origin lies in an unintelligent first principle. There is little hope for him in the future, for the whole universe also is "an agonizing blister which the all-pervading Being intentionally applies to himself" in the first place to draw out and eventually to remove an inner torture. "Pity God who is a miserable Devil—and live to lessen his eternal wretchedness."

Now Prof. Wenley has remarked that the great merit of Von Hartmann seems to be this, that if the Absolute Being is impersonal, the gospel of despair necessarily follows. We would apply this criticism to all of idealism. This may appear a strong statement, but it seems to the demand of logic and life. Not that all idealists are temperamentally pessimists, but their philosophy, since it cannot get beyond illusion and refuses to take cognizance of the whole of experience,

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[37] R. M. Wenley, *Aspects of Pessimism*.
[38] *Idem*.

must lead to and is in germ metaphysical pessimism. The question of the One and the Many cannot be solved upon its basis; there is no power to bear.

Biblical Theism

Thus we have reached the point in our discussion where we have to part ways with all exclusively philosophical methods of settling the question of the will. We have found that no metaphysics is available that can serve as a foundation for an adequate view, or rather that itself expresses an adequate view. At the last we even reached the conclusion that we shall have to choose definitely between the alternative of building on natural reason and, if we be logical, turn to despair, or admit that we must get down from our pedestals as judges and let God pronounce judgment upon us. This sounds like moral terminology but it has equal force epistemologically and metaphysically. Hence we must choose. We may feign to let the various theories of epistemology pass before us and judge them upon their merits, but in actuality we cannot do so. If we speak of our reason as the impartial bar of judgment we have already taken sides. We have then chosen ourselves as an absolute and final standard. Equally, on the other hand, if we chose to accept special revelation we have used our reason. It has declared itself bankrupt. But it is exactly here that the difference between the two roads becomes clear because he who accepts the fact of sin at the core of his being, posits a force entirely independent to himself to be moving him. We may for the time being call this only an external force, which we shall later find to be the Holy Spirit, because for the time being we are concerned only with the absolute necessity of choice between two *principia*, this term being taken in a pregnant sense. Either we ourselves shall ultimately determine what is our nature, the nature of God, or we shall accept the opposite principle that God must determine. Since it is for us impossible to take the stand on our own human consciousness because that can at best lead to illusion, we must choose the other. Not as though because we now see the logical untenability of the philosophical position do we finally take the choice. That would be in the nature of the case impossible. That would again be lifting ourselves by our own bootstraps, and our attempt to do so would be the denial of the necessity of a higher power, and we would still be on our old standpoint. Hence it follows that if God is to determine the relation between himself and us, he must be the originator in drawing us out of our own position.

Before we can even begin to work out the question of the will in its theological relations in the more technical meaning of that phrase the problem is thus, as it were, thrust upon us unawares, who is to decide. Either we must decide

that we shall determine or that God shall determine. If we determine to decide for ourselves we have already by implication taken a stand on the relation between God and man. We have then refuse to accept two things. First, we have decided that sin is not of such a nature as to render us incompetent as judges. Secondly, we have refused to accept the position that the infinite must determine the finite. By virtue of the first we have refused the actuality and necessity of divine working upon us in the moral sphere and have thus asserted moral independence whether or not we actually possess it. By virtue of the second we have asserted metaphysical independence as well. If on the other hand we decide to let God determine our relation to him, that decision must be *ex hypothesi* already the result of God's work in us, otherwise we were the originators of divine act. But that God shall decide what is the relation between Him and us means that he shall decide for both the moral and the metaphysical sphere. For we, when we decided to let God determine, recognized that we ourselves through sin were totally unable to come to an adequate conception of our moral relation to him. But if God determines the moral relationship it means that he is absolute, that he is infinite, and the only standard of all existence and thus also the only determiner of our metaphysical relation to him. This implies that the moral is based upon the metaphysical though our argument does not proceed that way, for that question must be considered upon its own merits and cannot here be taken for granted. Here we would argue that once having accepted the fact of sin we cannot assume a halfway position and determine further for ourselves what our metaphysical relation to him shall be. And all this then means total dependence in the metaphysical and moral spheres upon God. As soon as we fairly begin to consider the question of our relation to God at all we have already decided it in its fundamental aspect.

Since we know that we have been taken by the Spirit of God from out of the mire of our own judgment we take the stand upon revelation alone, fully conscious of the fact that in so doing we have given up the claim to any moral or metaphysical independence. We have justified our position on the basis of philosophy as far as it can be justified. Our apologetic has been negative, and as far as it has been negative, if not misrepresented, it must also be coercive for those that assume a different position form ours. We do not contend that the positive argument must therefore also be convincing. That would be a contradiction of our own position. If you have lost a child and I have found one, it does not therefore mean that the child I have found is your child. With this illustration Dr. A Kuyper makes the position clear which we, following him, have presented. It is exactly our position that the absolute alone can furnish the positive apologetic. He must draw us out of darkness to his marvelous light. For

even if we should agree that reason needs a corrective, what guarantee is there that Scripture furnishes the same and that it is not a mere result of imagination?

The παλιγγενεσια splits mankind in two and consequently also the consciousness of mankind. Not at all as though the powers and the faculties of the soul were changed, as though the one could now think more logically than the other, as though creation were changed by recreation. "*Het terrein der palingenesie is geen nieuw geschapen erf maar vrucht van herschepping, zoodat het natuurlijk leven er in gesubsumeerd is, en dus ook het natuurlijke bewustzijn, d. w. z. die krachten eigen schappen en bestaansregelen, waaraan het menschlijk bewustzijn, uit zijn natuur, krachtens de schepping onderworpen is.*" [39] The antithesis is therefore not physical as has often been held by mystics of every description. On the contrary, regeneration builds on the only sound psychological basis, namely that of faith. Faith is here taken not as saving faith but as the general formal action of our consciousness that precedes and makes possible all science. Faith and science are therefore no opposites; logic never gives certainty. There must be faith at the basis of logic. Faith is the basis of all perception; the subject must have faith in the reality of the objects of perception; faith is the only link between phenomenon and noumenon. So also with our further mental activity. We must accept axioms by faith or we cannot even begin to reason. [40] What is more, we must have faith in the reality of self-consciousness. If it should be objected that the entire constitutive activity of the mind is accounted for on the stream of consciousness theory of the soul which sees in the last thought a synthetic "psychic integer" which as a full-grown son springs from the forehead of his father, the previous thought, proudly bearing the title deed, it is replied with John Stuart Mill that we are then placed before a paradox. We must either believe that the self-consciousness is distinct from the phenomena, or consciousness, or we have to accept the paradox that a series of perceptions can be conscious of itself as a series. [41] Thus we believe that in self-consciousness we are dealing with a *noumenon*, with a reality immovable previous to all ratiocination. In self-consciousness, then, our own existence is revealed to us, an act of God, and we accept it by faith, an act of God. This fundamental fact of self-consciousness as revealed to us again in turn implies our faith in reality beyond ourselves. In spite of the Criticism and even because of it we build the firmer on the faith given in consciousness that the *Ding an sich* operates upon our spiritual apperception within us, in a mysterious fashion beneath the threshold of

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[39] Abraham Kuyper, *Encyclopaedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid* (Amsterdam, 1894), 2:541.
[40] Anne Anema *Calvinisme en Rechtwetenschap*, Amsterdam: Kirchner, 1897, 32.
[41] Herman Bavinck, *Wijsbegeerte der Openbaring*, 1909, 51.

consciousness.[42] Thus by the very power of faith which is presupposed as a basis of all knowledge we are again driven to the conception of an infinite self-revealing God, and absolutely dependent, finite creatures.

Moreover, since the antithesis is not physical there may be territories in the field of science in which the unregenerate and the regenerate can cooperate, as e.g. in the collection of sense material, in the somatic aspects of the psychological science, and thirdly, in formal logic for the laws of reason were not abrogated by sin. But when it comes to an interpretation of facts there must be a parting of the ways, for then he that has fixed his foot on the basis of the παλιγγενεσια is guided by supernatural revelation because he recognizes that he himself has no light. He still has the machinery of perception and thought, but God must originate and guide its motion.

It would seem that an apologetic for Theism as has been presented is the only thorough and tenable one. Any apologetic for Theism that would base its claim to acceptance upon the positive coercive power of its arguments even for the unregenerated consciousness is foredoomed to failure, defeats its own purpose, and denies its principle. It is foredoomed to failure because it presupposes receptability in the unregenerate consciousness which only a Divine act can give. It defeats its own purpose of bringing others to its viewpoint; rather the drowning man is dragging him down. It denies its own principle which is that of the *principium speciale*, the nature of which is that it cannot be subjected to the judgment of the *principium generale*. Only when Biblical Theism builds firmly and exclusively upon this *principium speciale* can it expect to give a reasoned account of its faith and build up a metaphysic and system of theology that will do justice to both infinite and finite, and serve as a satisfactory solution for the problem of the will.

It is not necessary to exhaust every ounce of logic to show that the theistic arguments should be convincing for every unprejudiced mind. It seems that this is Professor Robert Flint's mistake in his great work on *Theism*. He forgets that every man is prejudiced. Dr. Bavinck gives these theistic arguments an entirely different treatment. Take e.g. the argument from causality. Professor Flint thinks that it must necessarily lead us back to the idea of a personal absolute cause of the world, because we cannot rest in an infinite regress. "Reason, if honest and consistence cannot in its pursuit of causes stop short of the rational will. That alone answers to and satisfies its idea of causes." In spite of such an assertion Dr. Bavinck maintains that all we can establish from the idea of cause is that the

[42] Jan Woltjer, *Ideèel en Reèel*, Amsterdam: Wormser, 1896, 34.

world needs a cause. "*Wie uit de wereld tot eene oorzaak besluit, welke zelve ook eene oorzaak behoeft, heeft aan de logische kracht van dit bewijs genoeg gedaan.*" [43] A finite effect can lead to a finite cause and we may regress ad infinitum into a vicious infinite, but who gives us the right to span the gulf between the finite and the infinite, and then to a personal God? Our idea of causation is not satisfied with less, says Professor Flint, but is this not perhaps already due to our theistic consciousness? To be sure, we cannot rest in a vicious infinite; some absolute is presupposed and only on its presupposition can the cosmological proof lead us to an absolute cause. But whether this cause is transcendent as well as immanent, personal as well as impersonal, conscious or unconscious, cannot be determined by the argument.

The only tenable position accordingly is, as we have found, to take our Archimedian που στω in the Action of the Spirit on the heart of man whereby he is brought into a new and living contact with truth. So also Dr. Charles Hodge, though often appealing to the common consciousness of man in presenting the reasonableness of faith in Christianity, maintains that in the last analysis the truth of God is the basis of all knowledge. "That our senses do no deceive us, that consciousness is trustworthy in what it teaches, that anything is what it appears to us to be, that our existence is not a delusive dream, has no other foundation than the truth of God. In this sense all knowledge is grounded on faith, i.e. the belief that God is true." [44]

Building upon the results worked out by these men, Dr. Valentine Hepp has elaborated his work on the Holy Spirit. The *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti generale*, which he distinguishes from the *speciale*, is to him the last ground of trustworthiness of our human nature. "*Het testimonium generale is die onmiddelijke en onwederstandelijke werking van den Heilgien Geist waarin Hij tot en in den mensch getuigenis geeft aan de waarheid in haar eentrum en daardoor in ieder mensch een onomstootelijke zekerheid doet geboren worden. Of philosophisch gesproken: het testimonium generale is de laatste zekerheidsgrond onzer kennis.*" [45] We are dependent for knowledge of self and God upon the Holy Spirit not only in the soteriological sphere but also in the natural. In conjunction with this, Dr. Hepp intimates that the knowledge of the truth of the content of Scripture is based on the *testimonium speciale* of the Spirit and this special testimony works on the basis laid by the *testimonium generale*. This is the logical consequence of the view of Reformed theology that creation is not abrogated by

[43] Bavinck, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 2:61.
[44] Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 1:437.
[45] Valentine Hepp, *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti*, 1914, 245.

regeneration or recreation but is subsumed under it, or rather that regeneration builds upon the basis of creation.

Now we have stated and justified from a philosophical viewpoint the metaphysic and epistemology upon which alone, it would seem, an adequate conception of the relation between God and man or more specifically of the will is possible. The position has been called transcendental Realism and we believe it to be "theism come to its own." To give a more explicit statement of this position, with direct reference to the problem in its more technical significance, to justify it as the only one true to the very concept of Theism and Revelation, and to trace how the history of Christian thought has wrestled through the ages to come to a clear statement of Biblical truth upon the question in hand remains for the remainder of this essay.

Notebook 2: Christian Theology of the Will

Methodology

Fundamentally anyone that has placed himself or who has been placed upon the basis of the *principium speciale* as before defined, will try to do justice to all the elements in revelation. He makes God's revelation the standard and adjusts his concept of liberty accordingly. On the other hand anyone standing on the basis of the *principium generale* will in the ultimate sense make himself the standard, will not without reservation submit himself to revelation and thus either come to determinism, whether it be pantheistic, materialistic or rationalistic, or to libertarianism according as his views of psychology, epistemology and metaphysics may vary. All the forms of liberty that we have discussed so far were of that nature. But there is a large class of those who profess to recognize the authority and ultimacy of the special revelation, but that have not fully grasped the absolute nature of the antithesis between the two *principia* and who thus also want to maintain the authority of the *principium generale*. Dr. E. Beecher in his *Conflict of Ages* presents an admirable example of such a position. He recognizes the authority of Scripture, but alongside of them maintains as an equal standard the universal principles of justice etc., inherent in the common consciousness of man. We do not contend that there are no such principles, but only that it is unscientific thus to combine two principles without giving ample justification for doing so. He has indeed appealed to the authority of previous scholars but has not asked himself what exactly men like Charles Hodge etc. mean by these general principles. Anyone making these general principles of the consciousness of man a court of appeal cannot justly do so till he has subjected the present state of consciousness to a searching scrutiny and established its foundation capacity. This search he cannot carry on except by using Scripture as a standard and this already implies that these principles must at any rate be subordinate to Scripture. Then he will have to ascertain the epistemological influence of sin, and how far common grace has made it possible for us to base argumentation on this sin-affected foundation.

There is here a very subtle enemy that seeks to entrench itself within the theistic camp. Failure to distinguish clearly at this point and establish the exact bearing power of the common consciousness of man almost always tends to fraternization with the *principium generale*. Surreptitiously a new head arises from the serpent of rationalism, and there results confusion worse confounded. If this is not the case it is a happy inconsistency. The views of God and man and of their

relations to one another, i.e. the views of the will, vary as they consistently or inconsistently keep out this rationalistic motif.

Even the very order in which the various loci of systematic theology are to be treated is controlled by the extent that this absolute character of the distinction between the two *principia* is recognized. Luther, for example, though claiming to base himself firmly on the Word, yet took anthropology as the starting point of his system and could therefore never do full justice to the theistic concept. It was inevitable that this false starting point of Luther would later wreak itself in the further development of the Lutheran system.

When we aim to place ourselves firmly on the *principium speciale*, our investigation will have to be entirely inductive. We shall have to trace the argument from all angles and then follow that argument whithersoever it may lead us. If we should come to find an absolute determinism taught in the Scriptures we would have to submit, or if we should find libertarianism or anything else taught we shall have to submit. Even if our own logic should have to recognize and openly declare its own bankruptcy to comprehend all the threads of revelation, we shall have to trust to a logic that is higher than ours. And this is then the logical thing to do for logic, because if it did not do this it would be placing itself back upon the *principium generale*. If we shall find that there are two parallel lines leading us on to eternity which do not meet on this side of the grave, we shall have to believe that they meet beyond. Scrupulously even, will we have to be on guard then, against subjecting one line of revelation to the other.

But you say that our search can no longer be purely inductive. Previously it has been stated that before we can fairly state the problem we have already taken position. This is true. Our position on the basis of the *principium speciale* demands that we make God the standard and we can never come to a strictly libertarian point of view. But our very position is given us by revelation, a revelation of the nature of ourselves which the Holy Spirit gives us by the very act of regeneration. Whether the Holy Spirit does this in conjunction with or in independence of the Scriptures may for the time being be left out of consideration. So much is clear that we could never have assumed our position upon the basis of the *principium speciale* or at least we could not work consciously upon that basis if we had no revelation of God about ourselves. This contention is not detrimental to the idea that the work of the Spirit within the individual is no objective revelation; it is the application of objective revelation and is thus a subjective revelation based upon the objective.

Moreover, our position so far has been entirely general. In the nature of the case we must begin with our own consciousness and because we have passed through the experience of sin and regeneration we must turn to post-redemptive special revelation and see what God there reveals of himself and his relation to man even before the entrance of sin and also after it.

Then we shall further impartially have to ascertain whether the relation of our will to God, in the condition that we are now, is to be taken as the normal standard that God adopts for man or whether we have perhaps in Adam the true test case of the concept of the will, or whether there is a more general concept of the will underlying both and inherent in the nature of man of which both Adam's and ours are modifications. Now we believe with John L. Girardeau (*The Will In its Theological Relations*) that in Adam before the fall we deal with the original and real relation of God to man. The present condition after the entrance of sin is, to be sure, abnormal. Extreme Pelagianism even admits that Adam's example has a rather seducing influence and we are fortunate if the whirlpool does not drag us down. And if we conceive of Adam's posterity as it would be in case Adam had not fallen, their wills would not have been the same as Adam's; they would have been confirmed by grace. We have our choice then between viewing Adam's case as abnormal and not having any relation to ours, or viewing him as the only pure test case. We shall find our relation to God to be entirely independent of Adam because his was an abnormal case, or we shall find our relation to God exactly focused in Adam.

It will be our first task then, since we cannot accept the Pelagian position that we have no essential relation to Adam, to ascertain exactly what Adam's relation was to God.

Our method in doing this will be to apply the several conceptions of the will that have been held through the history of the Church whether with direct reference to Adam or to man in general, and see whether they fit Adam's case. Which of these conceptions moreover, if any, corresponds with the revelation of God concerning his own nature, attributes, and decrees, for that is our ultimate standard.

Jonathan Edwards

The first conception of the will that we take up is that of psychological contrary choice. We call it psychological, because a position might be maintained which denies contrary choice to the faculty but not to the subject. It was this

conception of the will that was especially prevalent in Jonathan Edwards' time. "Out of the Arminian doctrine that the will was free, in the sense of possessing a self-determining power, grew, as he thought, the arrogant disposition to despise the Calvinistic notion of God's sovereignty and moral government, the contempt for 'the doctrines of grace,' the dislike for experimental religion, the cultivation of a morality which read out the divine existence from the sphere of human interests." [46] The view of those whom Edwards includes under the general term of Arminians is that of liberty of indifference or of contrary choice of the faculty of the will. Now Edwards finds it necessary to enter even into a subtle discussion of the possibility of God's choosing to create one world or another in order to refute these Arminians. This is not necessary. To refute the theory of liberty of indifference for the will it is not necessary and creates confusion to turn to metaphysical considerations. Edwards tried to catch two birds in one trap. In refuting the liberty of indifference for the faculty he at the same time tried to refute that prerogative for the agent. He was arguing not only against psychological but also against metaphysical indifference. This we should not do. We shall have to separate these two. True, anyone who maintains psychological contrary choice will also have to posit independence for the subject. But the converse is not true. One might conceive of liberty of contrary choice for the agent but not for the faculty of the will. Hence we shall separate the argument.

But against the liberty of contrary choice for the faculty Edwards has given us conclusive psychological argument. Edwards psychology is, to be sure, now out of date. This has been pointed out by his followers or friends as e.g. J. Day, as well as by his Arminian enemies as e.g. A.V.G. Allen. Edwards practically identifies the will and the affections. Yet sometimes it seems as though he would distinguish between them and limit the faculty of the will to the power of choosing. "The will is that by which the mind chooses anything." "An act of the will is the same as an act of choosing or choice." Usually, however, he does not clearly distinguish between the will and the affections. Yet his main psychological argument is conclusive. He establishes the undeniable relation between the faculties of the mind. Edwards shows that the Arminian view of the faculty always implies a vicious infinite. Every act of the will is the effect of a will, and this will of another will, and so on ad infinitum. A liberty of indifference is accordingly impossible and absurd. It presupposes an act of the free will previous to the first choice of the will. [47]

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[46] Allen, *Jonathan Edwards*, 282.
Jonathan Edwards, *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will* (1754), 35.

It seems that on this point Edwards thoroughly refuted his opponents. The will as a faculty is, according to Edwards, always determined. "By determining the will, if the phrase be used with any meaning, must be intended causing that the act of the will or choice should be thus and not otherwise; and the will is said to be determined, when in consequence of some action or influence its choice is directed to and fixed upon some particular object. Now the cause of a volition is a motive and the mind follows the strongest motive, and the strongest motive is that which is seen to be the most agreeable, and this is the same as the highest good. Any sort of liberty as of the separate faculty is impossible." Edwards time and again demonstrates the unity of the mental faculties, and shows the impossibility of the will's acting independently of the understanding.

Even a man like H. H. Tappan, one of Edwards' later critics, argues from the revolting consequences that he thinks must follow from Edwards' system rather than from his own position on the freedom of the will. Stewart also did not attack the arguments but feared practical consequences. "I am afraid," says he, "that Edwards' book (however well meant) has done much harm in England, as it has secured a favourable hearing to the same doctrines, which, since the time of Clarke, had been generally ranked among the most dangerous errors of Hobbes and his disciples." These men can see nothing in Edwards' presentation than a form of physical or idealistic determinism. So also Allen, "There is no difference between his doctrine and that of the ancient Stoics, or of the famous philosopher Hobbes. The invariableness of the order of nature, man as a creature of outward circumstance, the iron chain of necessity which controls human character and conduct,—these things as Mr. Mill has taught them, are paralleled by Edwards' view of a world in which every event in nature or in human experience is decreed by an Infinite Will, and in the nature of the case cannot be otherwise than it is." [48] These statements go, to be sure, beyond the psychological sphere, and we shall later see that Edwards came dangerously near to a pantheistic determinism. But what these statements prove conclusively is that the idea of liberty of contrary choice for the faculty has scarcely, if at all, been defended since Edwards' time. Modern psychology of every type will have nothing of it. Scripture gives us no intimations anywhere of such a psychology. We need not then consider seriously the question whether Adam had such liberty. His psychology is generally conceded to have been similar to ours. If he had any liberty of contrary choice at all it must be that of the subject, not that of the faculty.

Accordingly we shall next have to consider that conceivable view of the will, that though recognizing the impossibility of contrary choice for the faculty, thus

[48] Allen, *Jonathan Edwards*, 289.

placing itself upon a spontaneous psychology of the will, yet maintains the absolute power of contrary choice for the subject. Such a position accepts the validity of Edwards' psychological argument but does not grant his metaphysical conclusions. This position implies, further, the power of originating a new series of acts or events. There are numberless adherents of this view. It represents the view of the average unsophisticated mind. We feel that we are free; I know I can do what I please, says the man in the street. It is the position assumed, also, by many that take the norms of common sense to be more fundamental than the norm of Scripture, or that do not take the trouble to compare the value of the two. It is the view of the Pelagian who has not openly broken with Scripture. All men alike have the power of *aliter se determinandi* quite independent of God. In fact what exactly is the relation of God upon this basis is never inquired into, because this position wants to maintain the Biblical idea of God and yet cling to this self-determination of man. A modification of this view is that it does not pertain to all men but only to Adam. Now this theory whether applied to all men or to Adam is palpably against Scripture. It is out of harmony with the revelation of God as the Absolute, the origin of all, and man as his creature, derived, dependent. It is out of harmony with the certainty of God's decrees. Hence it is of importance to maintain that Adam also was not free in this Pelagian sense.

Julius Müller

Nor does it help us any to take this conception of the will and view it as absolutely necessary to place responsibility and guilt for sin, and therefore because we cannot find this freedom in man today or in Adam, to posit a preexistent state in which this was the case. Müller is the outstanding modern exponent of this view. He tries very hard to gain for man so much independence that he can originate a new course of action and thus be held responsible for his deeds. Müller has a very deep conception of sin. None of the individualistic Pelagianizing theories will suit him, and since Augustinianism is to him the same as fatalism he is driven to the unique position of a pre-temporal fall of every individual so that man may still be held responsible. Müller thus transfers his Pelagianism to a previously existing world. This previously existing world is to form a transcendental basis for the present one. This world of his is a temporal creation without preservation. It is absolutely necessary in order to explain the existence of evil. "The existence of evil as a positive contrast to the good, can just as little be denied away from life as explained by a necessity grounded on the divine plan of the world; which in truth is only another way of denying evil." [49] "If

[49] Julius Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, 1885, 2.

we are to succeed in breaking through this circle, it can manifestly only be done by our pointing out in the very nature of the creature, in which evil exists, a primitive principle of such independence, that the causality of the same is able to make a new beginning, and therewith to set a boundary beyond which the origin of sin is absolutely not to be sought for."

This is the impossible task that Müller sets before himself. He wants to create, or rather let God create a series of little gods with each a little kingdom of his own. Thus he hopes to find a true basis for a full-fledged theory of freedom and thus for sin, which in his more immediate motive. He sets out to develop a theory of freedom in which the action described by the predicate can be attributed to the finite subject alone and to nothing else. To explain evil as originating in man and not in God, to explain our sense of guilt we must posit a certain independence for man even in relation to God. Müller says it is easy enough to object to this and say that the very notion of man as a creature involves absolute dependence, but this argument is not valid. An unconditioned principle in man is fully reconcilable with the unlimited determination of God. To understand this fully we must needs introduce the concept of personality into our notion of God. We shall briefly have to follow Müller in the argument for his position of freedom for man lest it be said that we have left out of consideration the most subtle defense of all. For, if Müller's position holds that man can be endowed with an unconditioned principle without detracting from the unlimited determination of knowledge of God, then we have solved the problem, and we see no reason why that should not be applied to Adam. What need then to posit a pre-temporal and yet temporal world, to becloud the beauty of our solution.

According to Müller then, the personal essence distinguishes or discretes itself in itself and indeed not merely formally, since the self-conscious, the subject, sets itself at the same time as object, but also in a real manner. [50] Now self-consciousness is the self retirement of the Ego from another, but self-determination is the self extension of the Ego to another, in order to possess in this other itself. [51] But this applies to human personality only. The contents of the self-consciousness of God is an "internal infiniteness of determinations." "Consequently this conditionateness of the self-consciousness by the exclusion of another is not contained in the idea of personality itself but in particular limitations and relations which attach to the personality of man, to his self-consciousness, according to the peculiar nature of its contents. [52] God did not

[50] *Idem*. 2:126.
[51] *Idem*. 2:130.
[52] *Idem*. 2:136.

require another being to become manifest to himself. Thus Absolute personality is possible, and God's actions will all be personal. He will not be merely the Absolute Cause of finite existence. Here is no mathematical necessity of Spinoza "nor dualistic necessity of more modern philosophy; here only the freedom of love, of the will in which the production of another being makes this new self its own end, that it may partake of the goods of existence in so far as it is receptive for the same in the highest and perfect good, in the fellowship with God." [53] Now that which can persuade God who is absolutely sufficient to himself, to create a being distinct from himself is love alone; creation is the free self communication of God. Neither can we call this a moral necessity, because of the fact that God's love is conditioned by his own nature. No, God finds within the Trinity itself sufficient distinction of personality to return his love upon his own essence. Perfect love to another essence is possible only for him who is absolutely "self dependent and self-sufficient."

By this line of argument Müller thinks he has opened the way for essential existence without and beside God, in so far as this is compatible with the notion of derived being and especially the way is open for the existence of beings like God, to finite personalities who can know and love God. An essence that does not know and love itself cannot love God. They must therefore not only have being from God, "but also a being in and for themselves." God in his inscrutable love could give and has given man such self-dependent personal existence. "In this will of God that there may also be in the sphere of creaturely existence personality as the copy of divine personality as eye and heart of the world, the will is at the same item contained that there may also be besides God essential essences which as undetermined are able to determine themselves, and in so far of themselves to ground themselves as *causa sui*." [54]

A sigh of relief! At last we stand on the high tablelands of Müller's new platform. If this platform will only hold we have the που στω from which to move the world of sin; we have the leverage. We shiver, we tremble, we hear some creaking of the joints. Our leader himself is not perfectly sure of himself. To be sure he shows no visible sign of perturbation because that might demoralize our courage. But he has his misgivings. We overhear him in his private speech to Mrs. Müller. Says he to her, "To make the freedom of man the unconditioned principle of all determinations of the human essence, therefore to consider the totality of its determinations as self-determination is most certainly contradictory to the

[53] *Idem*. 2:145.
[54] *Idem*. 2:152.

notion of its derivation of being." [55] In this we see Müller have recourse to compromise. "Not the totality of the human essence but only a determinate sphere of the same can human freedom have for its immediate, creative principle,—it can only have that sphere, in which the capacity for the love and divine peace is contained, by the power of which the existing limitations are at the same time as limitations canceled." [56] This sphere is the moral. "That which man as moral essence is in his natural condition apart from that which he may and will become by means of Redemption, has its origin in the unconditioned state i.e. in his self grounding." [57] Yet in the moral sphere there is a presupposition "to which it must in some way stand related although it is not thereby determined and bound in its self decision. Wherever we may have to seek the first decision of human freedom, one thing is certain—that it is preceded by God and His will and that the human will by freedom may abide in fellowship with Him. Müller does not indicate, nor could he, what exactly is meant by his statement that human freedom is always preceded by the will of God. And yet he should on his position; for his aim is nothing less than to give an adequate explanation of the origin of sin. But to continue his argument. "The freedom of this primitive decision concentrates itself in, or reduces itself to, the choice between fellowship with and departure from God, in the choice whether man shall determine to abide by or sever himself from his origin in order to be absolutely himself."

Thus we see Müller break down nearly all he has built up. A human freedom altogether self-dependent in its decision and yet having God as its presupposition is the final upshot of Müller's position. In spite of himself he comes back to an essentially Biblical point of view. Müller seeks earnestly not to do injustice to any thread of revelation, witness his deep insight into the nature of sin, and his refusal to detract one bit from it in his formulation of freedom. Hence he comes back from his perilous attempt to run on one track into the realm of mystery and returns to safer ground, but in proportion that he does this he has refuted his own position of absolute freedom for man.

The weakness of his argument is further apparent in the fact that he has to admit that even in the notion of absolute freedom as such the result would not necessarily be evil, for that would contradict our notion of the freedom of God who cannot sin. Another objection is that man cannot absolutely originate the good, as Müller admits. Then why should he be able to originate the evil? God

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[55] *Idem*. 2:153.
[56] *Idem*. 2:154.
[57] *Idem*. 2:154.

wills, "in an eternal and immutable manner the absolutely perfect in Himself and nothing else, but man cannot lay the foundation of good in himself in an absolutely original and self dependent manner, and therefore does not possess it as his own essence but he can only be good by his relation to an essence different and separate from him, conditioning him in his inmost existence, namely God. But because man has the good not as his own essence in him by virtue of his self-determination, the possibility and the immanent imperative of the good are found together with the possibility of evil, of departure and falling away from God." [58] Thus Müller wants on the one hand an absolutely new beginning for the will of man, for otherwise he cannot be held responsible, but on the other hand he must admit that man is derived and that even his will is based on presuppositions. Such a position is certainly no more logical than the Calvinism against which it militates, and if it is no more logical it has no *raison d' etre* because its only attempt was to offer a logical explanation of evil. This is sufficient refutation as to his theory of the will in general.

Then further the untenability of his pre-temporal appeal is seen in his attempt at Theodicy. "If there is to be truth in the declaration of religion that God is not the author of sin but its enemy, then the freedom of man must have its beginning on the sphere beyond the domain of time, in which alone pure unconditioned self-determination is possible." This is certainly a leap in the dark, and that backwards, for which neither experience nor Scripture gives us any basis. And even if the transition were valid how could we be certain that pure self-determination is possible there? To Müller God is so far as he wills personality outside of Himself. He also wills the self-grounding of personal essences. This self-grounding is, as we have seen, only possible outside of the realm of time. Yet it does not take place in eternity, otherwise man were another God. There must therefore be a realm between eternity and the present temporal dispensation. But here Müller, dissatisfied with the unsolved mysteries of Calvinism, has certainly entangled us into confusion worse confounded. What intelligible meaning may be ascribed to an extra-temporal and yet not eternal self-grounding of finite essences is difficult to see. Here Müller himself can only resort to figurative language and calls it, "this silent, timeless, shadowy kingdom is as it were the maternal womb in which the embryos of all personal essences lie inclosed." [59] We might place the emphasis on the word "shadowy" in the preceding sentence. The very figure he uses indicates that here he himself must bow to mystery. Then why not bow to the mystery of experience or of revelation instead of rejecting these and forming a more obscure one for ourselves?

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[58] *Idem*. 2:156.
[59] *Idem*. 2:167.

Finally, the unscriptural position of Müller is seen in the fact that he maintains that God has created man to be an end in himself. Now the explicit statements of Scripture are many, that God has created all things for himself. In fact there really remains no question of the will in its theological relations on his basis. Man has been so thoroughly severed from God that we can scarcely conceive of any relations between him and God except negative. Thus we seek after all too easy a solution of the problem. We try by every means to detract from man's dependence on God in order to solve the relation. We try to solve the mystery of the relation by attempting to show that there is little or no relation. This is cutting off one of the terms of the equation. Now plainly whatever may be the nature of the solution we can find, a solution that has not taken all factors into consideration cannot satisfy us. Müller has been unfaithful, in spite of his earnest endeavor to the contrary, to the *principium speciale*. He has prematurely tried to subject that golden thread of revelation in which God is held up as the absolute being, the source and determiner of all finite creation, to that other equally golden thread of revelation in which man is held responsible for his sin. These he has tried to harmonize, by an appeal, in the last analysis to the *principium generale*, because any position that does not absolutely submit to the authority of Scripture, leaving the harmonizing of its apparent contradiction to a logic that is higher than ours has in so far in his consciousness slid back from the position which he desires to maintain.

Hence we shall have to return from the "shady" and "silent" region of Müller's pre-temporal but non-eternal sphere, and descend once more to paradise, where the conditions may still be remote enough from our common experience but where at least we can again walk by the torch of the Word.

Edwards on the Will

The theory of the will that we are next to discuss saw the danger of any tendency that seeks for independence of man from God. It felt keenly that in the realm of grace all must come from God and nothing from man. Jonathan Edwards was the father of it. Not as though others before him had not felt man's absolute dependence on God. But Edwards gave Augustinianism and Calvinism a peculiar interpretation in order to maintain it intact. The occasion for Edwards' writing his monumental work on the will was the growing influence of a somewhat liberalizing theology, propounded by men of various theological affiliations, of whom Daniel Whitby and John Taylor were the leaders in New England. H. Churchill King describes the state of affairs at the time of Edwards as

being a general decline from Calvinism in its stricter sense. [60] Instead of making God the source of all salvation men asked themselves, "What can I do to place myself so that God will most likely save me?" A sort of synergism was creeping into the church.

To oppose this movement Edwards wrote his work on the will. In order to understand his theory in general however, it is not sufficient to study his work on the will alone. We must know something of Edwards' philosophy or we are sure to misinterpret him. When a mere youth Edwards already studied the "Essay" of Locke and criticized Locke's illustration by which the latter sought to support his distinction between preference and choice; and he likewise shows that Locke does not rightly distinguish between desire and will. "In this point," says Edwards, "Locke goes counter to the descriptions which he gives of the will in the context according to which it cannot be at variance with predominant desire." "Edwards could easily detect the inconsistency of Locke in postulating a power to suspend the prosecution of desire; since this act of suspension must itself be a choice, determined, like every other, on Locke's principles, by the strongest motive." [61] Here we have a taste of the psychology that underlies the "Inquiry," and which we have already seen to be, though defective in details, yet conclusive against the liberty of indifference of the faculty of the will. But more important than Locke's influence on Edwards was that of Berkeley. Or if he was not influenced by Berkeley, as some maintain, his idealism at least closely resembles that of Berkeley. We have already reviewed Berkeley's Idealism in the first part of this paper. We shall only quote here a sentence in which Edwards thought his Idealism was included. "That which truly is the Substance of all Bodies, is the infinitely exact, and precise, and perfectly stable Idea, in God's mind, together with his stable Will that the same shall gradually be communicated to us, and to other minds, according to certain fixed and exact established Methods and Laws; or in somewhat different language, the infinitely exact and precise Divine Idea, together with an answerable, perfectly exact, precise, and stable Will, with respect to corresponding communications to Created Minds and effects on their minds." H. C. King calls this in, distinction from Berkeley's phenomenalism, "a carefully stated theistic rational idealism," in which the intellectualistic emphasis of Hegel and the volitive of Schopenhauer are combined, bringing us very near to a position similar to that of Royce. [62]

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[60] H. Churchill King, *Hartford Seminary Record* 14:23–57.
[61] *North American Review*. V. 128, 288.
[62] H. C. King, *Hartford Seminary Record* 14:30.

Yet we believe that this is not entirely correct. Edwards' idealism seems rather to be a peculiar combination of the Berkeleian type and the Biblical theistic type. There were two motifs running through it that could never be entirely recognized. *Hinc illae lacrimae*. In all his later works Edwards never entirely overcame his Berkeleian Idealism, and as far as this is able to assert itself we have that which has always been taken by his opponents for sheer mechanical determinism, and which closely approaches to it. It is this identity philosophy which lies at the basis of his thought, that does not permit Edwards to do justice to human personality. It is that identity philosophy that accounts for his somewhat abstract mystical strain, and lies at the basis of his theory of virtue. It is this also that influences his conception of the will. Berkeleian idealism must always tend to abstraction from the finite in order to do justice to the infinite. Mysticism on this basis becomes a denial of the finite processes; a theory of the will on this basis can never do complete justice to man. The influence of this identity motif is also noticeable in his conception of our relation to Adam, which to him is realistic. Moreover, Edwards approaches the emanation theory which would be the logical result of Berkeleian Idealism; witness his continuous creation hypothesis which comes dangerously near to doing away with the relative independence of second causes.

But on the other hand Edwards equally place himself upon theistic ground, so that through all his philosophy there runs a vein of emphasis on the responsibility of man, and a tendency away from the abstract idealism of Berkeley to a higher, theistic idealism, of synthesis between the infinite and the finite not through negation of the latter but through the realization of it. And this is after all the predominating element in all of Edwards' thought so that those who see in Edwards nothing more than the determinism of Locke or Hobbes have failed to grasp his central thought. Yet we must in the main allow that though Edwards was faithful to the theistic notions that God is the source of all existence and that all creation exists for and through him. Yet he did not fully grasp the implication of that equally important principle that it must be through the realization of, and not through the subtraction from, finite personality that man is to realize his end of living to the glory of God.

Knowing this twofold tendency in the thought of that mastermind we can perhaps better appreciate the very divergent lines of theology that his system has produced. We have already spoken of the deterministic interpretation of his works. But *mirabile dictu*, there arose the later New England theology, quite opposed to determinism and which still claimed the paternal benediction of the

master. Now however much Edwards was misinterpreted on this score he seems at least to have given occasion for stumbling.

In order to escape the accusation that he made sin a physical necessity that comes upon us with inexorable laws, Amyraldus, Testardus, and Venema had already distinguished between moral and natural necessity. This Edwards developed at great length. He thought thus to be able to save the doctrine of man's total depravity and still not subject it to causal laws. "We are said to be naturally unable to do a thing when we cannot do it if we will because what is most commonly called nature does not allow of it, or because of some impeding defect or obstacle that is intrinsic to the will; either in the faculty of the understanding, constitution of body, or external objects." [63] Moral inability consists not in any of these things; but either in the want of inclination, or the strength of a contrary inclination, or the want of sufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the will, or the strength of apparent motives to the contrary." [64] Moral inability "consists in the want or opposition of inclination." This distinction between natural and moral ability throws light on his conception of freedom. He speaks of moral freedom only and shows that any other kind involves a vicious infinite. But that is only the psychological aspect of it. This very distinction wrought the opposite result in the metaphysical sphere than what Edwards intended. The distinction can be correctly understood but is not likely to be. Natural can have reference to that which is original as when we say that the image of God is natural; inability to do good is then not natural, rather the contrary. Again natural may mean the physical substance and power of any creature, and also then inability is not natural because all substance and power is of God. But usually the term natural, when used in theology, means the attributes of the fallen nature of man, in order to express the thought that inability to do the good is now a characteristic of every man, with which he is even born. Now the later Edwardians, failing to keep this clearly in mind and misled somewhat by the realism of Edwards, introduced synergism and thus entirely opposed the aim of Edwards himself.

The twofold tendency in Edwards' thought was further responsible for his failure to distinguish clearly between Adam's will and ours. To him the two cases were practically identical. Girardeau has rightly criticized Edwards for this lack of distinction. Adam's is undoubtedly not only a unique case but also a case of unique importance.

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[63] *Inquiry*, 35.
[64] *Inquiry*, 35.

When we develop further the following concepts of the will we shall have to follow direct Scripture evidence more closely because in them there is not as great an admixture of philosophy and then it will also become more apparent why Edwards' theory is not sufficient. For the time being it suffices that we have pointed out Edwards' failure to harmonize entirely all the givens of revelation. And again this was due to the fact that he tried to combine to an extent the *principium generale* with the *speciale*, or at least that he did not fully see their complete antithesis. From time to time the old leaven of Berkeleian Idealism asserted itself; then Edwards lost to an extent the purely Biblical theistic conception of God and man.

Girardeau on the Will

So we see the pendulum of the various theories of the will swing from one side to the other; there is still a disturbing influence brought to bear upon it that keeps it from coming to rest. From the extreme emphasis on the independent freedom of the creature, we were led in Edwards to the other extreme, dangerously near to philosophical determinism, pantheistic and rationalistic. The theory now about to be discussed aims at nothing less than bringing the pendulum to rest, and that not by holding it in the extreme of creaturely independence as e.g. Whedon tries to do, tying it with the cords of pre-existence, but by doing justice to all angles of revelation. Girardeau in his book on *The Will in its Theological Relations* makes an avowed attempt to place himself firmly upon divine revelation. His is a close-reasoned work, and seeks largely to be a refutation of Edwards' "Inquiry." Making Adam's the deciding case, he exhausts all logical possibilities of God's relation to Adam and then chooses the one that seems to him least beset with difficulties. He aims to defend the infra-lapsarian view of the decrees of God, and practically identifies supralapsarianism, Edwardianism, and philosophical necessity.

Girardeau denies the validity of the distinction between necessity and certainty that Reformed theology has made with reference to God's decree and sin. Certainty to him is also necessity. Further, he also rejects the distinction between natural and moral ability which Edwards made. His unwillingness to distinguish between the faculty of the will and the man is not essential; with him we now wish to consider his notion of the freedom of the man. Yet it is interesting to note that Girardeau sees the core of personality in the faculty of the will. At the root of each faculty of the mind there are certain laws operative that govern the activity of that particular faculty. "Now, reasoning simply from analogy, we would conclude that there are also fundamental laws at the root of

the faculty which we denominate the will, by which its process and acts are regulated. We do not undertake an exposition of such voluntary principles, but we venture the suggestion that the law of causal efficiency is entitled to that determination." [65] In these principles at the root of the will Girardeau finds the "fountain of causal activity in the soul." Here he finds a "derived, dependent and limited, but real, originating power—a power of the will, at least in its original condition, to determine itself to action. By virtue of this law, it becomes a true cause of acts, in contradistinction, on the one hand, to a substance manifesting itself in phenomenal properties, and on the other, to a faculty determined to activity by its mere spontaneity." Still the will furnishes no standard. According to the law of obedience it seeks the true, the beautiful, the right. "And did the will, according to its design, choose as its own the ends proposed by the other powers—truth, pleasure, righteousness and holiness—happiness would be the generic result." We would merely ask at this point whether sin has then not also thoroughly affected the other faculties so that they cannot present the correct ends.

This view of the will, Girardeau thinks will fit the case of Adam. It avoids, he thinks, on the one hand all libertarian views and on the other hand the theory of Moral Necessity or Certainty. Moral Necessity confines itself to the present subjective state of man and fails to show "how man has determined his present sinful spontaneity. It suffices to explain 'self-expression' but not 'self-determination.' " But the question is, "Did he have any voluntary agency in inducing that moral type of being which now characterizes him beyond his power to change it?" Now this criticism of Moral Necessity may be true to an extent of Edwards but does not hold against later Reformed Theology, which has duly distinguished between the condition of man before and after the Fall. Girardeau does not deny that certainty and freedom allow of combination, for with God all is certain and yet God possess the highest freedom, but he denies that it applies to Adam. Back of Adam's spontaneity Girardeau places the power of *aliter se determinandi*, not the liberty of contrary choice of the faculty, nor the liberty of indifference, but still a power of determining himself which in some mysterious way is quite apart from God.

It is difficult to see exactly what Girardeau understands by this power that he ascribes to Adam. Adam had somehow the power to make "phenomenal changes" in existence though not the power to produce a new substance. "We, therefore, assume that God, in creating man, endowed him with a causal efficiency, as to acts, somewhat analogous to his own—not a power creative of

[65] John L. Girardeau, *The Will in its Theological Relations*, Columbia SC, 1891, 31.

existence, but a derived, dependent, and limited power, productive of phenomenal changes in the mode of man's being. Now this causal efficiency in man has its seat precisely in the will, and expresses itself in the determinations of that faculty." [66] Thus no absolute beginning is involved and yet in his power to produce phenomenal changes enough originality is left with man to fix responsibility for the entrance of sin.

How then exactly to fix the origin of sin? It could not have originated from motives presented by the intellect, for the understanding was morally right. Nor could it have originated in the affections because they also were pure. "Where then, was the source of those motives? We have seen that in all probability it was as Butler has profoundly suggested, in the blind impulses implanted in their constitution by the hand of their divine Maker. Possessed of no intrinsic moral character, they might be correlated either with lawful or forbidden objects, by virtue of the inherent adaptability of their nature." [67] The external tempter working upon these blind impulses produces sin.

But here we must hold Girardeau to as strict an account of the meaning of his words as he generally seeks to hold his opponents to an account of their words. By what scriptural or psychological evidence can Girardeau thus separate the faculty of the will from the others and find the origination of sin in the blind impulses at the root of it? Does not this go counter to the Scripture presentation that the whole of man in all his psychological manifestations is affected by sin? We have already seen that Girardeau holds that even now, after the fall, happiness would be the generic result if only the will would follow the ends presented by the other faculties. This presentation detracts from the scriptural view of the influence of sin. But an insuperable difficulty presents itself in these "blind impulses" without any moral character. Why should the intellect present absolutely only the good, the affections be turned to God, the conscience to the right, and the impulses at the root of the will be left neutral? Either the whole of Adam was neutral or he was wholly, also in his will, inclined to God. And what is most important of all is that Girardeau by his own statement says that God has created these impulses. Time and again Girardeau reverts to the term "relative" and "dependent" when it comes to man's metaphysical relation to God and of necessity he must. Yet he thinks to have found enough moral independence in man to fix responsibility for sin.

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[66] p. 113.
[67] p. 110.

But we need only pursue the whip of his own argument that he employs against those that seek shelter under the "*decretum permissivum*" to drive him also into the open. He says, and rightly so, that in order to escape the charge of ascribing the origin of sin to God it does not help to distinguish between act and quality of sin, as though God gave the power for the former and man produced the latter. This was already refuted by Dr. Thornwell. "Evil, it is said, is no real being, no creature, therefore God did not make it. It would be as legitimate a conclusion, therefore man did not make it; and another step seems to be inevitable, therefore it does not exist." Moreover, a more efficient argument would be that also the quality of evil must in some way be related to God's plan. Nor does the position of Dr. Twisse the Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, that God decreed not *efficere* but *efficaciter procurare*, help the difficulty any. God must then in some way have made it impossible for Adam to refrain from the act of sin and God is still responsible.

Still less will it do to maintain with Dr. Bledsoe that God abstained from all decree with reference to sin. A finite will cannot be left absolutely alone. This would be introducing a moral Manichaeism. Then if Edwards maintains that God decreed "so to order and dispose Adam's case as to render his sin necessary, without himself proximately producing it," we still explain nothing, for God still has created things so that sin was necessarily connected with it. But now we may add that similarly we gain nothing if we speak of "blind impulses" at the root of the will that have no inherent moral qualities and can be attached to any object good or bad by their inherent adaptability. Is not God then responsible for the dangerous neutrality of these impulses? Has he not left open in his own creature, which he certainly could have created differently, the possibility of falling into sin? And what of that external tempter? Why did not God clip his wings so as to hold him within the infernal abyss, or rather why not prevent the existence of the tempter by never permitting evil to enter into the universe at all?

The arguments that Girardeau advances against Bledsoe are in modified form equally valid against himself and all those who with him try still to seek a vicious metaphysical, neutral independence for man in order to fix responsibility. Girardeau again, like those that we have reviewed, tries to subtract from one of the numbers of the puzzle in order to solve it. And this argument is of special force as an *ad hominem*. Girardeau has scrupulously maintained that in regeneration it is God alone who works in us both to will and to do. With what right then does he deny this relation in the case of Adam? Because of sin? Yes that is his ground but that is here insufficient. The question here is not whether sin has totally disabled man to do any spiritual good. That is granted, whether we

call this natural or moral inability. But the question is whether sin has essentially modified the metaphysical relation of the creature to the creator. It is the implication of Girardeau that it has. For, though he would not call it a metaphysical independence that he has sought for Adam, yet it was a moral independence so independent of God that it had power to produce "phenomenal changes" without direct relation to God.

Now it helps little to posit this moral independence and still speak of metaphysical dependence. The two cannot thus be distinguished. The moral independence which Girardeau wants is inseparable from metaphysical independence which he does not want. He cannot get the daughter without the mother-in-law. Girardeau has purchased Adam's freedom at too great a price. But after all, he admits that he is driven to this position because all others are untenable. But because all other roofs leak, it does not follow that the last one under which I have found shelter does not, simply because it is the only one left. "He decreed efficiently to produce Adam as an actual being, or he would have forever remained in the category of the merely possible. But having decreed to reduce him from that category to actual existence, God did not decree to prevent him from sinning." [68] "Having decreed to create Adam, he also decreed to endow him with the power freely to obey his law, 'and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of his own will, which was subject to change.' "

But here Girardeau is back on the basis of the Westminster Confession and thus implicitly admits that his explanation has not offered us anything beyond the confession, which does not seek in the last analysis to explain, but to leave it to the judge of all the world who must do right. As far then as Girardeau seeks to give us any explanation that comes within the compass of our logic he has tried to reduce one of the threads of revelation to the other, he has flirted with the *principium generale*, and been for a moment unfaithful to the object of pure faith. And as far as he has fallen back on Calvin and the Confessions he has not attempted to give any explanation but has left the explanation to a logic that is higher than ours.

Yet Girardeau maintains that his position is exactly that of sub or infra-lapsarianism. Hence he goes at great length into the question whether Calvin and the Confessions of the later Calvinistic churches were infra or supralapsarian. But it makes very little difference whether he can establish them to be entirely infra or not, for his position is neither one nor the other. There is, we must maintain,

[68] p. 76.

when it comes to the relation of God's decree to the will of man far more harmony between supra and infra-lapsarianism than between infra-lapsarianism and Girardeau's view. Both infra and supra have scrupulously avoided to introduce the notion of positing any sort of freedom for man that is the result of some creaturely domain not included within the decrees if God. While to find such a place in man's original blind impulses, that were totally neutral, and in man's ability to produce phenomenal changes in creation.

Whatever else may be the difference between supra and infra, both are equally agreed that their difference is not as to God's decree being the source of the certainty of the fall of man. Anyone who doubts this is no longer infralapsarian. To place one thing in the history of the race beyond the control of God, would make God's plan, in no matter what relation, even for redemption, dependent on man. Pelagianism then reasserts itself in subtlest form. To place the fall beyond the decree of God would be to bring the crucial point in the entire history of the race under the control of man. Then what of his eternal covenant of peace? "*God heeft niet slechts in zijn besluit van den val geweten en met den val gerekend, maar overmits alle dingen hunne zerkerheid en hunne vastheid in zijn raad hebben moeten, indien wij niet een tweede grond der dingen naast God willen stellen,*[69] *zoo kan het ook met het vreeselijke feit der zonde niet an ders zijn. Ook dat moest om zijn zekerheid te erlangen door den raad Gods heen. Hoe groot en hoe onoverkomelijk ook de moeilijkheden mogen zijn, die deze stelling op den voet volgen, toch mag er niets worden afgenomen. Wie hier begint te twijfelen staat op den rand van een bodemloos dualisme.*"[70] This makes it abundantly clear that Girardeau's appeal to the infralapsarianism of Calvin and the Confession helps a little. And what is more, Dr. Vos here speaks that anyone assuming the position that the fall, due to some independence in man, does not derive its certainty from God posits a second ground of things next to God. This is, after all, the position maintained by Girardeau. In the early Church when theological perspective was still clouded we should expect such, as we do in reality even in a giant thinker like Augustine. Augustine maintained at this point that exactly at the fall the decree of God was dependent upon his foreknowledge, while in all other cases it was the other way. Later Wallaeus also said that God knowing man would fall, decreed to save him.

Now this question of the relation of God's knowledge to the freedom of man is important and since Edwards has made much of it, and Girardeau has again

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[69] I underscore.
[70] Geerhardus Vos, *Dogmatiek* 1:145.

considered it and found it not to be contradictory to his view, it is well that we here consider it in its various forms and manifestations.

Both Edwards and Girardeau agree that we cannot detract ought from the extent of God's knowledge, of man in his origin and being and in all his ways, Psalms 139, night and day, Psalms 139:11–12, hell and corruption, Proverbs 15:11; evil and sin, Psalms 69:6; also the conditional, 1 Samuel 23:10–13, even the future, Isaiah 41:22f., are open to him. God knows all things moreover not as man knows them *a posteriori* but *a priori*, from eternity. 1 Cor 2.7, Rom 8.29, Eph 1.4–5, 2 Tm 1.9 He knows things through one simple deed, through his own essence, and sees things intuitively in his own decrees. He is therefore not at all dependent upon the acts of his creatures for any of his knowledge. Hence the attempt of the Jesuitical theory of mediate knowledge in order to reconcile God's knowledge with the free activity of man helps nothing. It maintains that God's knowledge is dependent on the fulfillment by man of certain conditions. God e.g. gives to some the word and the Spirit and knows that man will then convert himself by a free act of his will. The object of this knowledge is therefore not the merely possible, nor that which is to be real because of a decree of God, but it is that part of possibility which may become actuality upon fulfillment of certain conditions. This doctrine of mediate knowledge gained much vogue in the Catholic church. Lutherans and Remonstrants also were favorably inclined to it.

Now the question is not whether or not many things are interrelated; they surely are. But the question is whether a Pelagian notion of the will can be harmonized with the knowledge of God. For upon the basis of this theory it is man that from his free choice in the last analysis decides. God has then not decreed all things; if he had he would have destroyed the very will of his rational creatures. But he is omniscient, knows also the future contingent events. We have mentioned that Augustine already made a distinction between the relation of the decrees of God and his knowledge, to sin. But this is not the same as mediate knowledge. With Augustine, God's knowledge or foreknowledge is previous to and therefore does not depend upon the acts of man. Moreover, Augustine sometimes even speaks of knowledge as identical with power and therefore as causing things. No, the followers of the theory of mediate knowledge are rather disciples of Origen who already spoke of God's *praescentiae* being dependent on the free acts of man. Man has received his *esse* and *posse* from God but once having them he controls his own *velle*.

This theory of the *scientia media* falls by its own weight. Between the purely possible and the actual it tries to create another realm, that of the conditionally

possible. But this is impossible. Every conceivable object is either only possible or it is really actual. That which is merely possible is the object of the *scientia necessaria*, i.e. that knowledge which God has of himself and all the possible. And anything that has become actuality is the content of the *scientia libera*, i.e. that knowledge which God has of all created existed. There is no third territory conceivable.

Moreover the exponents of this system do not accomplish what they desire. They want to harmonize the freedom of the will in the sense of indifference with the *praescentia*. It maintains that if God's *praescentia* is conceived of as *scientia media* it leaves man's will free. This is true but then it ceases to be *praescentia*. For if God knows the actions of man beforehand, this can only be if man's motives are determined in one direction and the will is no longer indifferent. On the other hand if liberty is of indifference then there is only a *scientia post factum possible*. God's *praescentia* and the freedom of the will in this sense are absolutely exclusive. Men that have had no concern with harmonizing them have readily recognized this. "*Si enim scit, Cicero said, certe illud eveniet; sin certe eveniet, nulla fortuna est.*" [71]

Nor does it help if appeal is made to God's eternity in order to maintain God's knowledge of absolutely free deeds. It has been stated the future is for God the ever present. "If God is merely the potent computer and predictor, whose expectations have never yet been disappointed, then he remains merely on the level of a mighty fortune teller and fortune controller—a magician after all." [72] Hence Royce has recourse to the position already maintained by St. Thomas that God sees everything *totum simul*. But whether we take this in the pantheizing sense of Royce or in the deistic Pelagian sense, in each case there is an increase in the knowledge of God, which at once militates against his eternity.

For Scripture support, appeal is often made to 1 Samuel 23:9–12, where God tells David that the men of Keilah will surely deliver him up to Saul. But here God only reveals to David what was the attitude of mind of the men of Keilah or otherwise the *regula fidei* at least demands that we interpret such a passage in the light of others and maintain that God knew the future acts of the men of Keilah because their certainty lay within his plan. So also in Matthew 11:22–23, we do justice to the text if we interpret it as an hyperbolic expression of the hardening of heart of Jesus' contemporaries.

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[71] Herman Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 2:195.
[72] Josiah Royce, *William James and Other Essays on the Philosophy of Life* (New York: Macmillan, 1911), 262.

Now all these arguments against the *scientia media* hold against the position of Girardeau. He expressly denies that the coming of sin was a certainty. [73] He thinks to have shown that even the supralapsarians, because they admit the distinction between efficacious and permissive decrees, must hold his position and then appeals again to the Westminster Confession. "Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory." But here Girardeau again quotes the confession against his own position. For how could God have purposed to order it to his own glory if the coming of it was not certain. Hence also because Girardeau does not understand the confession at this point he accuses the supralapsarians—but he might have included the infras because as we have shown they take the same position on this question—of reasoning in a circle. "Necessary causes prove the certainty of events; the certainty of events proves necessary causes," or in other words God based his plan upon the certainty of the fall and the certainty of the fall was based upon God's plan. Now this interpretation is due to the fact that Girardeau has so enveloped himself in his own circle of thought that he sees everything else also move in circles. It is not true that God's plan on the one hand rests upon the certainty of events, in any sense in which Girardeau conceives of it. For then it is either a certainty that is certain because of the plan of God, and then the plan of God is the foundation of certainty as the Confession presents it, or this certainty is certain in some fashion outside of the plan of God, i.e. then it rests upon uncertainty and itself ceases to be certain. There is here no circle reasoning at all. There is only parallel reasoning; mystery remains but we lead it on a double track toward heaven. His further argument that because even the supralapsarian denies that God is the author of sin, he must therefore come to the position of admitting absolutely contingent causes, is equally invalid. This would be the case if the Confessions, or Calvinistic theologians offered their position as a final explanation, but it is exactly the high ambition of consistent Calvinism to accept the whole of revelation and not subject one part to the other. It bows reverently before the mystery of the possibility of the entrance of the first sin, and does not dash off on a tangent either of subtracting sin from the certainty of God's plan or of subjecting man to fatalistic laws.

The argument "that as there is an infallible connection between foreknowledge and the events upon which it terminates, the foreknown events must necessarily occur," Girardeau grants but claims the necessity is not causal

[73] Girardeau, p. 264.

but logical. This is in accord with his position that God has "presentative knowledge" of future events and not inferential. This is true, and no causal relation is ever maintained between God's foreknowledge and sin, except perhaps by fatalists. But as for Girardeau's own position that "logical necessity" explains all, we would grant him that phrase if he means to include within it that unknown x of God's relation to the certainty of sin which no human mind can fathom. Beyond this, it can have no other meaning except fatalism or Pelagianism, both of which both he and we wish scrupulously to avoid.

Finally, the relation between God's decree and foreknowledge does not essentially alter our position. Though it may be regarded as a sound Biblical concept that God's consciousness builds upon his essence, it in reality makes little difference which we conceive of as preceding with reference to the question in hand. In each case the relation to man's will is the same; certainty remains on the basis of praescience as well as on the basis of decree, and we certainly try to harmonize certainty with responsibility, unless as before stated, we assume the position that for us they cannot now be harmonized.

Calvinism and the Will; Decree and Covenant

We shall now have to consider that view of the will, already met with incidentally through the criticism of Girardeau, namely the view of Calvinistic or Reformed theology which we believe has done better justice to the theistic motif than any other. Strikingly Dr. Warfield has expressed it: "Calvinism is Theism come to its own." By virtue of the elimination of other views we already have received many glimpses of what our final view aims to be. Especially the criticism of Girardeau, whose position had to be carefully distinguished from ours, necessitated a closer examination of the relation of God's decrees to man.

We are now prepared to give a more positive statement of that view and show that it is the Biblical doctrine. The view then that we hold to be the one doing greatest justice to all the factors of revelation is that of the Reformed covenant-theology. It exactly tries to establish the relation between God and man before the fall, maintaining even then the absolute dependence of man upon God, or in other words maintaining the Absoluteness of God and yet allowing of a finite covenant personality with ample room, and exactly enough room for the highest and only possible form of freedom conceivable for a creature. This view of the relation of God to man tries to be faithful to three great principles which it thinks to have found in the Scriptures, namely, first that all work of man must find its basis in a preceding work of God. Secondly, that in all his works man ought to

reveal the image of God and be a means to revelation of the virtues to God and thirdly, that this purpose must be attained not passively, but actively through the mind and will, through the conscious life of the finite creature. [74] Thus it tries to avoid all tendency towards Pantheism and any form of necessitarianism on the one hand, and all forms of pelagianizing thought on the other hand. Other systems, e.g. that of Edwards and Girardeau, have made a similar attempt but it has been maintained that Edwards leaned too much towards necessitarianism and Girardeau, in spite of himself, landed into the pelagianizing camp.

By covenant or federal theology is not meant that theory about the relation of Adam to his posterity that is opposed to Realism, but rather it is that larger view that looks upon the entire relation between God and man in creation and redemption to be of a federal nature.

The philosophical basis of this federal theology is transcendental realism which, as we have seen, has negatively justified itself over against modern idealism and realism, and positively stands on the *principium speciale*, thus embodying the very principles of Biblical Theism. It was not until in the recent development of Reformed theology when this transcendental Realism was worked out that federal theology has really come to its own. Since the time of the Reformation, we see on the one hand those Calvinists that opposed fatalism but were impressed with the need of certainty constantly reverting either to a naive realism or a Berkeleian idealism, with difficulty if at all, escaping philosophic necessitarianism. On the other hand we see those impressed with the need of maintaining man's responsibility constantly reverting to some sort of Pelagian independence for man. So federal theology wavered. Though the correct view in principle, it had no consciously worked out metaphysical basis. But in transcendental realism, which has made clear the absolute distinction between the general and the regenerated consciousness of man, i.e. between the *principium generale* and the *principium speciale*, federal theology has its firm and conscious metaphysical basis. Thus it is better able to work out the implications of its own system through the several *loci* of dogmatic theology, and more readily wards off any subtle entrance of foreign elements, necessitarian or libertarian.

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[74] Geerhardus Vos, *De Verbondsleer in de Gereformeerde Theologie*. Grand Rapids: "Democrat" Drukers, 1891, English translation*: Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation*, Richard B. Gaffin Jr. ed., Phillipsburg NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1980, 15.

The Trinity

The theological or doctrinal basis of this view is the doctrine of the Trinity. Through a long series of struggles the early church at last clearly formulated the doctrine of the Trinity. On the one side the danger of Sabellianism lurked, which wanted to see in the persons of the Trinity emanations from the divine essence or, as some said, the divine essence revealed itself in the form of persons to man. On the other hand there was the danger of tritheism which would very little improve on the pagan polytheism. Tertullian was the first to use the Latin form of the word trinity. He speaks of a '*Trinitas Unius Divinitatis*.'

According to the orthodox doctrine there is only one Divine being. Dt 6.4, Is 44.6, Jas 2.19 In this one being there are three modes of existence which are each of them very God: Father, Son, and Spirit. These three persons, though together the one divine being, are in so far distinct that they assume objective relations to one another, they address and love one another. Moreover, the divine essence is not divided among them so that each person possesses a third part of it, neither is the divine essence distinct from the persons, nor is it a mere abstraction as nominalism claims but in a manner, of which we have no analogy in human life, each of these three persons has the entire divine being. As far as the order of personal existence is concerned the Father is logically the first, the Son the second and the Spirit the third. The Son is by eternal generation of the Father and the Spirit of both Father and Son. As to the relation of the persons of the Godhead one to another, the church fathers further spoke of a περιχορησις or ενυπαρξις or in Latin, *circumcessio* or *Inexistentia*, i.e. the persons of the godhead exist mutually in one another (Jn 17:21). There is a sort of inward circulation of the Godhead, an eternal movement within the being of God. The persons are distinct from the Divine Essence not *modaliter*—Sabellianism, nor *essentialiter*—Tritheism, nor *formaliter* or *ratione*, but *realiter*, which can have meaning for us only by negation of the others because admittedly we here peer into mystery.

Now as God is, so He works. This ontological Trinity forms the basis of the economical Trinity. All the decrees, having reference to creation or recreation, i.e. to all finite existence, are accordingly of the nature of an agreement between the persons of the Divine Essence; i.e. the relation between the Divine persons is a covenant relation. In this eternal covenant, the covenant of the decrees, God deals with man. In one sense these decrees are *opera ad intra*, because they still effect nothing historical, yet in another sense they are *opera ad extra*, because they have reference to that which will historically occur. But in each case they are a covenant activity within the Godhead by which the relations of man to God are

established. All the relation of God to temporal existence is accordingly a covenant relation. It is the One God that creates, yet it is through covenant relation that He creates; it is the One God that redeems but it is through covenant relation that he redeems. The Father e.g. does not want salvation for all and the Son effect it, and then have the Holy Spirit apply it to some.

Covenant

We have so far been discussing the nature of the trinitary existence and activity without relation to actual history. Not that actual history is excluded from the covenant. It is included as far as the plan of God is concerned, but not yet realized. Now important conclusions follow forthwith from this covenant relation within the Trinity. In the first place it means that since it is the divine essence that makes the covenant within itself with reference to creation, all temporal events are forever certain. God has within his own eternal being dealt with finite man, so that all his acts are known from before the foundation of the world. The certainty of sin is therefore also included within the decrees of God. We may call it a permissive decree to avoid the appearance of irreverence, but the certainty of it must in a way, mysterious indeed, still be connected with God's plan. On the other hand the reality and vitality of the personal and therefore covenant relation within the Trinity, however unharmonizable it is for our logic, with the Oneness of the divine essence also forms the basis for a real freedom of the finite person. God can thus also enter into historical covenant relation with man, and have this relation be real and vital, giving to man a genuine free finite covenant personality. The covenant relation is therefore the only relation in which the finite stands to the infinite, because the eternal persons of the divine Trinity stand to one another in covenant relation. Nor is it a valid objection to say that you cannot speak of a covenant relation within the Trinity because there is only one will in God. The same argument would also destroy genuine personality. There is, to be sure, one will only in the Godhead but here exactly lies the mystery of the relation of the divine persons to the divine substance. So also there is only one will of God with relation to the creature, and yet also there is a threefold relation. The Father is always represented as the ultimate origin of all acts in the temporal world, whether it be in creation or redemption, as he within the divine essence eternally generates the Son, the Son is the second and the Spirit the finisher. God creates the world but he creates through the Logos, and the Spirit broods upon the void to give perfect shape to creation. So in the history of redemption the Father is the architect of the Covenant of Peace, and the Son as the second person of the Trinity fittingly becomes the son of man, God incarnate, and the Holy Spirit applies salvation to the heart.

Now this covenant relation between God and the finite world enables us, therefore, to maintain in the last analysis, the absolute dependence of creation upon God, so that no substance, or power or "phenomenal chance, act or quality has its certainty outside of the plan of God, and yet also it gives to creation that reality outside of God that must be maintained over against Pantheism. The world is no emanation of God, nor is it in deistic fashion independent of Him.

Providence

So also in Providence, first and second causes do not stand antagonistically opposed to but supplement one another. Second causes come to their right only when related to first causes; if we give them more independence they themselves become first causes. There has been much argument in the history of theology about the relation of these two kinds of causes, and essentially it is again the old struggle between necessitarianism and libertarianism. There are those that make the primary causes the only real origin of things and are in the danger zone of fatalism; but there are also those that emphasize the originality of second causes and they almost always succumb to the siren song of Deism. This problem of providence in general is then the larger setting of the question of man's freedom. Does man as a second cause originate an absolutely new series of events, or is his power merely a manifestation of the divine power? These would seem to be the only possible alternatives. But here exactly it is again necessary to maintain that in the last analysis second causes have no power to originate but that still they are real, and find their reality not in their subsumption under but in their covenant relation to primary causes. On the one hand Scripture tells us that God works all, so that men are but instruments in his hand Is 44.24, Ps 29.3, Ps 65.11, Ps 147.16, Mt 5.45 and yet that the real existence and self activity is presupposed in creation and Providence. Gn 1.11, Gn 1.20, Gn 1.22, Gn 1.24, Gn 1.28etc. In accordance with this the theology of the Christian Church has always maintained that the second causes are subordinate to God as *prima causa*, but that in this very subordination they remain true causae. "*God vloeit met zijne almachtige kracht in iedere causa secunda in en is met zijn wezen in haar tegenwoordig, bij haar begin, voortgang en einde.*" [75] "*Providentia Dei causas secundas non tollit sed ponit*."

It is well briefly to review the various parts of the doctrine of providence, because at each point Pelagianizing thought has sought to pry in its wedge. In the first place we must distinguish between creation and preservation. When we

[75] Herman Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 2:663.

make an object we do not need to exert any continuous activity to keep it from going back to nothingness. This notion we readily apply to creation and thus conceive of creation when once there, able to stand by its own power. But the Absolute nature of God demands that creation cannot exist for one moment without God. Nor is God's continued preservation of the creature merely a negative activity existing in his preventing its destruction. God with his immanence sustains every moment all of finite reality. On the other hand we must not consider the nature of preservation as of a continuous creation. The older dogmaticians, as Ursinus, Heidegger, Alsted, and as we have seen also Edwards, spoke of *conservatio* as a *creatio continua*. They thus sought to maintain the immediate dependence of the creature upon God but again detracted from his reality. It is very significant and not without warning that men like Descartes, Malebranche and even Spinoza held to this doctrine. But this identification of the act of *creatio* and *conservatio* takes away the element of continued permanence from creation. Yes in another sense also the permanence of creation is dependent upon God, but it must be sought through the realization of second causes, not by their denial. In fact, if this doctrine were consistently carried through it breaks up the moral life of man into an infinite number of fragments and we would in vain seek for responsibility. To avoid these extremes, then, we are to understand by *conservatio* an act of God whereby he maintains finite spiritual and material substances each according to its peculiar identity, and the form and quality of things as well as powers in as far as these are latent, and not conceived of as in actual operation, in which case they fall under the caption of *concursus*.

The second act of Providence, then, is *Concursus*, which has reference not to the substance but to the working of things. Whenever substance and working differ we must posit a separate activity of God to uphold the power also, because no more can substance subsist without conservation than can second causes work without *concursus*. This again is not trying to explain at this point the relation between finite and infinite but again is attempting to make both divine and human come to their own. In God we live and move and have our being. God maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good (Mt 5:45), gives us rain from heaven (Acts 14:17), in short, works in all the second causes of nature. "And all the inhabitants of earth are reputed as nothing and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hands, or say to Him, What doest thou" (Dn 4:35)? Sacred history speaks of a constant teleological operation of God. Also the life of every individual in all its acts is dependent upon God. Prv 16.1, Prv 21.1, Ps 114.4

So again in our view of *concursus* we avoid two extremes of Deism and Pantheism. Deism maintains that the laws of nature had their source in God but once existing operate by their own strength. Pantheism sees in the laws of nature only abstractions of the modes of working of the absolute. The former denies God's immanence, the latter God's transcendence. Now after we have maintained the distinction between God and his creation it follows that we also must maintain the reality of the second causes. It would be illogical to posit a world outside of God in which still God is the only efficient cause. God has created powers in the universe e.g. gravitation. Whatever may be the nature of these causes, God concurs with them, to maintain them as he conserves the once created substance. It is not a physical or metaphysical power by which God effects his concurrence, because that could lead only to identification with the second causes or to a mechanical separation giving half to each, but it is by an act of the will, whereby He also has created the world. To forget this important distinction is again to lay one open to the inroads of Pantheism. That which works in the world is not *propro sensu* of God, but it is a genuine power in the world, which still is every moment dependent upon the will of God. Moreover these powers or laws are congruous with created substance, yet not identical with them or even immediately given with them. If that were the case God could not abrogate a law of nature without at the same time destroying substance, [76] and miracle were impossible. From what has been stated it is clear that the meaning of *concursus* is not fully contained in the term "*concursus generalis*," as used by Jesuits, Socinians and Remonstrants. What is meant by that term is that God has given to all second causes a sort of neutral power, through which they now are able to work, but which leaves the how of these workings to the second causes themselves. The Sun gives to all plants the same heat, but these grow differently according to their own nature. The limitation of *concursus* to this general activity was e.g. on the part of a Reformed theologian like Gravemeyer an attempt to keep man responsible for sin. But we have already seen that the distinction between *materia* and *forma* of sin does not help to keep God separate from the origin of sin, for even the forma of sin cannot lie outside of the sphere of the certainty of God's plan. So also we must in the *concursus* maintain this closer and yet not pantheistic relation between second causes, otherwise we find again a pelagian free will or a pantheistic emanation. The act is an entire act of God and an entire act of the creature simultaneously. [77] Yet the work of God is primary in order, it is not a mere *causa occasionalis* of the activity of the creature.

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[76] Geerhardus Vos, *Dogmatiek*,1:190.
[77] *Ibid*., 1:192.

Positively then, we can conceive of the activity of God in *concursus* in a threefold fashion. First, it is a "*concursus praevius sive praedeterminans*." The first impulse to all working in nature and man must come from God. The powers of both dynamite and a spark are maintained by God's conservation but the very possibility at all of its beginning operation, as it were, is dependent on God's *concursus praevius*. Secondly, there is the *concursus simultaneous* which terminates not on the created powers to start their motion but on these powers in operation. Both of these are equally necessary. The Jesuits want to accept the latter only, even some Reformed theologians have denied the *concursus praevius* with reference to evil in order thus again to make man responsible. But this they could do only at the price of Pelagian independence of God. "*Men kan hier echter geen onderscheid maken tusschen goede en niet goede daden; ten opzichte hunner realiteit staan alle op gelijke lijn, en wanneer eene goede werking niet tot uiting komen kan zonder concursus praevius, zoo zal hetzelfde van eene kwade moeten vastgehouden worden.*" [78] Thirdly, there is *concursus immediatus*. God works upon the working secondary causes immediately. God works mediately through second causes, but the working of these second causes themselves is accomplished by an immediate act of God. God destroys Sodom through the means of fire, a secondary cause, but by an immediate concurrence enables fire to burn. This *concursus immediatus* is *quoad suppositum* in view of the fact that no substance interferes between God's activity and the second cause as e.g. a chisel in the hand of a sculptor, or it is *quoad virtutem* in the sense that there is no power intervening between the activity of God and that second causes, "*maar in ieder krachtsomzetting en kracht voortplanting is God met zijn onmiddelijken concursus praevius en simultaneous in ieder moment tegenwoordig.*" [79]

The third part of providence is *gubernatio*. After all that has been brought forward with respect to *conservatio* and *concursus* there is still one territory or rather one manner in which God comes into contact with the second causes of nature and that is in the interrelation of the powers sustained by his concursus. The peculiar configurations and constellations of events, the groupings and possible combinations of occurrences are due not to chance but to the gubernation of God as it concurs with the activity of the second causes also in this sphere. God collocates and arranges series of events so that they come together. The falling of a tree on a man is not beyond God's control. Even the casting of lots is under God's control (Prv 16:33). It has sometimes been presented by a Deistic tendency in theology that the gubernation is identical with the immanence of God. But we have seen that in the *conservatio* and *concursus*

[78] *Ibid*., 1:193.
[79] *Ibid*., 1:194.

God is immanent so that even if the *gubernatio* were denied the immanence would still not be lost. The providence of God, therefore, extends over all things great and small, at every turn, in every sphere. God is related to finite creation, but related in such a way that the finite is not abrogated through this relation, but realized through it.

We have now before us the *complexus* of the relation between the Infinite and the finite in a general fashion. In attempting to describe this relation as far as we are able we have constantly had to steer clear, if we could, from the Scylla of Pantheism and the Charybdis of Deism. But Theism itself does not claim to be able to give a satisfactory theory at every point or even at one point. Its aim is to live by faith, for as Dr. A. A. Hodge says: "It is very evident that since we are able to comprehend neither God's essential being nor his mode of existence superior to the limits of either time or space, nor the nature of his agency in creating, upholding in being, or in governing his creatures, we cannot by any central principle or *a priori* mode of reasoning think out a perfect theory of his relation to the universe. We can only state severally the separate facts as we know them, leaving their completer elucidation and reconciliation to the future." [80]

Upon the background of this *complexus* we must now study Adam in paradise in order to ascertain his relation to God. Scripture does not give a long description of the condition of paradise. Even man himself is not fully described for we must turn to the New Testament to gain a complete picture of him. In general we may say that Adam fits into the *complexus* just sketched for indeed he is part of it. Yet he also rises above it, so that when we have discussed the relation of God to second causes in general we have not yet completely covered Adam's case. For he was created in the image of God. Significant phrase! Herein lies expressed the complete relation of man to God. Man cannot be thought of, or expressed in terms of a phenomenon of nature; he is related to God and finds his explanation in him.

The Christian Church has agreed on this, though there have been many views as to the nature of the *imago et similitudo Dei*. Some have placed a great temporal difference between the two, saying that originally man possessed only a certain talent, reason, spirit and free will and that through his own endeavor had to obtain the likeness to God. Others have placed a logical difference between the two. Thus Romanism teaches that man was, by virtue of creation, a naturally good creature, but that this was not sufficient; he had to become supernaturally good and therefore had to receive a *donum super additio* which did not really

[80] A. A. Hodge, *Presbyterian Review*. 8:5.

belong to his essence. Over against both of these tendencies the Reformation maintained that image and likeness formed an organic whole, and that both belonged to the very essence of man, and that in the measure that he ceases to be like God he also ceases to be truly man. [81] The whole of man, not only his soul, is thus created in God's image. There is therefore by nature no enmity between flesh and spirit. As for the content of this image, Reformed theology has distinguished between the image in a wider and the image in a narrower sense. In Genesis 1:26 we have no further description of this content but immediate reference is made to the purpose wherewith it was given, namely that man should rule over all creation. Yet in Genesis 1:27, 28, we notice that even the sexual relation belongs to this image, then also uprightness Gn 1.31, Gn 2.16, Eccl 7.29 and knowledge (Gn 2:19–20). In addition to this Ephesians 4:24 and Col. 3:10 have usually been cited as completing the picture. Paul speaks here of regenerated man being renewed after the image of God in knowledge, righteousness and holiness. That we may conclude from this to the original image given to man is clear from the fact, first, that Paul makes a clear allusion to Genesis 1:26; secondly, because Paul makes the image consist in exactly those things that have clearly been lost through sin and which Adam must therefore have possessed and thirdly, because Scripture has only one general concept of man. [82]

We distinguish accordingly between the image of God in the broader sense meaning reason and will, or that which constitutes man a rational creature and which he could not lose without ceasing to be a man, and the image of God in the narrower sense consisting of knowledge, righteousness and holiness. So we see in man a complete finite personality and we expect him to have freedom similar to the freedom of God, only in a derived and dependent sense. Such we find to be the case. Now the highest freedom has always been ascribed to God, and yet He also possessed the highest necessity, for He can do nothing contrary to his nature. So of the activity within the Godhead we must say that it was at once necessary and free. In God there is perfect freedom because in him there is the perfect interaction of divine personalities. Hence we seek a similar freedom of finite personality in man. There is no external straint¿~ upon man nor anything inherent in the nature of man whether of body or soul that prevents spontaneous expression of personality.

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[81] Herman Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1920), 87.
[82] *Idem*., 91.

This finite personality is placed in the garden of Eden. He is an idealist. The implications of his finite consciousness enable him to climb up to the Infinite. In every judgment he makes he affirms the Absolute, and his affirming is an at-one-ment with the Absolute. In fact it is the universe that affirms in him; in every finite judgment of Adam he denies his own ultimacy and affirms that of God—transcendence. At the same time Adam is affirmed in his affirming—immanence. Adam is the human subject that modern idealism has all the while been operating upon, or rather has been trying to operate upon. Before the entrance of sin we can speak of the finite ascending to the infinite by cosmological proof. Adam could read God in the trees of the garden. Yet even so it might be maintained that the revelation was initiated by God; at least there was constant interaction. Adam knows his place as a creature, totally dependent upon God and yet as a rational being also responsible to him. The law of God was engraved upon the tablets of his heart, and he fulfilled this law from an inward urge. He sought his very freedom in the realization of the purpose with which God had created him. We have been speaking of a covenant relation of God to all finite reality. This could be only figuratively applied to subrational creation since there was no finite consciousness in which to reflect this relation, though still it remained a covenant relation because the covenant was in the consciousness of God. But now in the rational creature there is a self-conscious finite reflex to the covenant relation within the Trinity and in relation to the Trinity, so that the relation of all creation to God is now centered in that finite consciousness and man is to rule over the universe, making it subservient to the revelation of God's covenant beauty.

We need not now discuss the question of how far Adam fully understood the intellectual implications of his consciousness. We could only speculate upon it. But so much is clear that Adam stood in personal contact with his Maker, due to the revelation of God to Adam through nature and his own soul. This perfect knowledge of God produced in his soul appropriate reactions in thought, feeling, and will, i.e. true religion and as such Adam was free. But as though it were not enough that God has placed man at the pinnacle of creation and set him as ruler over the works of his hands, God opens to him the prospect of still greater glory.

We must speak therefore of a pre-redemptive special revelation of God to man. In the midst of the garden stood the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These trees were to Adam a symbolic revelation of a still higher relation of himself to God than that in which he had been placed by virtue of creation. All the trees in the garden spoke to Adam but these two trees spoke to him of a special relation that he might sustain to God and how he could

attain it. And now the mystery of Adam's personality becomes still larger. Was Adam susceptible for still greater perfection than he had already reached in Paradise? Tree of life! With what mysterious summons does thou beckon on, to a still more luxurious paradise. But what, there grows that tree of the knowledge of good and evil! Does it not speak of the possible alienation of man from God? Yes, two new roads open up to Adam. His personality is herewith at once raised out of the *complexus* of the general relation of God to the world. Just because he is created in the image of God he is susceptible of still greater perfection than he had obtained. Subjectively he could ever grow in the more glorious reflection of his maker; objectively he still was in the position of *posse peccari* and could thus be raised to the plain of *non posse peccari*.

And now it is important to note that this relation into which man enters with God through this special revelation is the covenant revelation par excellence. Step by step we have seen the covenant relation, which had its foundation in the relations of the Trinity, reveal itself ever clearer in the finite response, till now in this positive and special pre-redemptive revelation which man receives over and above the general revelation, this covenant relation reaches its climax. Here finite personality is given its largest scope, its mysterious freedom. Here all the elements of the covenant are present, the parties and the agreement, *monopleuric* and *dupleuric* at the same time. Hosea 6:7 and Romans 5:12 are usually brought forward as proofs that God here dealt with Adam in covenant fashion. But the entire analogy of Scripture, with its teaching of the nature of God and man, is still stronger proof. This relation in which Adam is here placed to God is called the covenant of works in order to distinguish it from the later historical covenant of grace. Yet the covenant of works was itself a free gift of God to man. But what is more, this covenant of works we may not only take in contrast to the covenant of grace, but in a larger sense call it the relation that God has maintained with man both before and after the Fall. In Adam God deals with mankind, not *en masse* in Realistic fashion, but in a covenant relation. Only thus is finite personality acknowledged to the full. The covenant relation of God to Adam implies the covenant relation of Adam to his posterity. Herein, it would seem, lies the greatest mistake of Realism. It tries to construct a theory of the sinful man's relation to Adam not analogous to the relation of Adam to God. Instead of running on the clear federal tracks through Adam to God, it forces finite personality to be mortared to identity in Adam, and when thus destroyed man must still take the federal line to God.

So we see that the federal relation between God and finite creation must be drawn through at every point in order to maintain it at one. Through the person

of Adam every finite personality comes to its own, and reaches its highest covenant perfection, and its greatest and only true freedom. The introduction of any other sort of relation at one point or another is bound to wreak itself in a pantheistic ulcer, or a deistic frost. The current of divine influx into temporal life descends through the copper line of the covenant and is mediated through the covenant personality of Adam and dispatched without obstruction to his posterity.

On this basis we may return to Girardeau's urgent question: Could Adam have remained standing as well as fallen? Was his probation real and no mere puppet play of the Almighty with his helpless creatures? And if our piety forbids to ascribe to God any such meaningless performance with his creatures, then of what nature was Adam's liberty of *aliter se determinandi*? We have demonstrated that Girardeau's conception of liberty in the last analysis introduced the vicious pelagian leaven. Must we then choose the Necessitarian alternative as he would have us do? No, we cannot accept the alternative. We maintain both that Adam had and that he had not the liberty of *se determinandi*. On the one hand we may not subtract the certainty of the Fall from the Plan of God, but it is equally revealed to us that Adam's freedom was no sham. And here we may apply the warning of Moses to ourselves that the revealed things are for us and the hidden things for God himself. Yet it is the contention that the federal theology does the greatest justice to both these truths of revelation, because it allows the greatest development of finite personality. Thus on the one hand it upholds the truth that all exists for God alone, and yet on the other hand that all this must be actualized through the mind and heart of man. Man on this basis becomes more of a self-conscious and responsible being than on any other, because it does not seek his dependence in the subtraction of God's absoluteness.

Thus we have at last come to what seems to be that conception of the will that does justice to the entire theistic motif. The differences between supra and infralapsarianism do not effect this essential relation of God to man. The entrance of evil is not explained but it is maintained that man is responsible, and the nearest explanation that can be offered is to posit his development as a finite covenant personality. Take with this the Biblical presentation of sin as a *actuosa privatio* and we remain within the limits of revelation. It will be necessary, therefore, to give a brief review of the Biblical doctrine of sin, because if sin is to be considered as something physical, or as a shortcoming in creation, then it would still have no relation to man's will and our inquiry were useless.

The Biblical Doctrine of Sin

Sin first of all is not a metaphysical reality. Christian theology has sometimes gone too far in emphasizing the negative aspect of sin. If sin were either a material or a spiritual substance there would have to be a substance that God has not created and God would not be God. Otherwise, God is the cause of sin. Both alternatives are emphatically denied by the Scriptures.[83] Augustine said: "*Omnis natura in quantum natura est bona est.*" Therefore "*non potest esse illum malum nisi in aliquo bono quia non potest esse nisi in aliqua natura.*" Sin itself is "*nulla natura, sed Amissio, privatio, curruptio boni, vitium, defectus naturae.*" Sin needs a creaturely and moral substratum. Creaturely because otherwise it could be in God; moral because it is an act of the intelligence, though no intelligent act. Hence sin can assume as many forms as the nature of angels or men can assume. Any theory that conceives of sin as consisting in sensuousness, or selfishness is condemned on this basis. Sin is always a moral act that proceeds from the center of man or angel. In this center sin is a corrupting influence. We can scarcely say, therefore, that it originated in any one faculty of the finite consciousness. Augustine conceived of it as originating primarily in the will. So also Girardeau finds his blind impulses at the root of the will. Dr. A Kuyper ascribes it rather more to the intellect and imagination. But the unity of consciousness makes it difficult to give these distinctions much value, as long as we hold that sin originated at the core of man's personality.

Though not a metaphysical reality, the Bible ascribes to sin the greatest activity. Sin is described in very positive terms especially as transgression of the law. It is therefore a morally active principle. Now the law in man's heart we saw to be his own recognition of his covenant relation to God. Since then sin is the breaking or transgression of the law it follows that sin may also be called a breaking of the covenant. Man thus misses the entire purpose of his existence, as is brought out by the terms חָטָה and αμαρτανειν. The עֹשֶׁק 70 ασεβεια means separation from and rebellion against Lv 16.16, Lv 16.21; עָרַל is *decedere*, depart from; מָעַל a falling away from Jehovah. רֶשַׁע opposed to עַרְיָה is like αδικια versus δικη. רַע most etymologists derive from רָעַע meaning to break. אָשָׁם is guilt; מָעַל unfaithfulness, שָׁוא falsity and נְבָלָה foolishness. Then we have the Greek words παραβασις and παραπτυμα, the preposition para standing for a-privans rendering these words self-explanatory. All this etymology is in accord

[83] Herman Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 3:133f.; Kuyper, *De Peccatto*, 27ff.; Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 11; Strong, *Systematic Theology*, 2:552ff.

with Romans 8:7 where sin is pictured as εχθρα εις τον θεου, i.e. enmity in the core of man's being against God, His will, His law, His justice.

Sin is thus ανομια (1 Jn 3:4) and is always brought into connection with the law of God. [84] The law of God for man demands perfect obedience. Love is the fulfillment of the law. Hence sin is not confined to actions as such but may be in the disposition of the heart. Matthew 5:22—anger in the heart is murder; 28—impure desire is adultery. Luke 6:45—the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil.

The state of the soul which gives rise to the wrong acts and desires is even sinful. John 8:34, "Every one that committeth sin is a bondservant of sin." Romans 7:11, 13, 14, 17, 20—"sin beguiled me … working death to me.… I am carnal sold, under sin … sin which dwelleth in me." Sin therefore exists in the soul prior to consciousness and is awakened by the law. Romans 7:8, "Apart from the law sin is dead." The law acts upon the heart bringing to light the sins which are there as the Sun thaws the ice of a marsh and arouses to action the dormant hordes of insect life. "The fire in a cave discovers reptiles and stirs them but they were there before; the light and the heat do not create them. A beam of light piercing into a room reveals thousands of moats floating in the air, never before suspected." The law assumed various forms through the history of revelation and so it may seem that sin has changed in nature, but this is not the case. In both Testaments sin is a transgression of the law, a breaking of the covenant with God. Man seeks autonomy; he wants to be a law unto himself. Eve apologizes for God to Satan saying that God has forbidden to eat of one tree only but admits by implication that if God had forbidden to eat of all the trees he would have trodden under foot the rights of man. Herein exactly lies the character of sin, that man thinks to have rights absolutely his own, that he does not wish to be lime in the hands of the potter. Thus sin is an active though negative moral principle at the core of man's being and consciousness by which man uses his own powers to oppose the law of God and break his covenant.

Why then should a being created in the image of God seek to cut himself loose from the very source of his existence to attempt a freedom that can not suit his being? How can a totally derived being originate sin? To explain the dilemma we may not ignore any of its parts. Hence we admit that we on this plane of existence have no explanation. God being what he is, must have his wise reasons for the permission of sin; we wait for light.

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[84] Hodge, *Systematic*, 2:182; Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 3:124.

But we are still in Paradise. We hasten to flee before the angel with the two-edged sword to see how God has maintained his covenant relation with man in spite of sin. In all the further relations between God and man we are now prepared to look for the initiative of all action from God alone; for this is always the case in the covenant relation and especially since we have seen the nature of the principle of sin as of such enslaving character that man is sold under sin. But we are also prepared to find appropriate conscious reaction in man when once he has been reinstated to the covenant relation.

Seeing mankind thus wallowing in the mire of sin, enclosed by chains of its own forging we must trace how God reinstates him. All Arminian or Pelagian views of man's power to work out his own salvation or even to accept salvation is impossible due to the nature of sin. But on the other hand we have in the doctrine of common grace the presentation that man has lost the moral qualities of true knowledge, righteousness and holiness, of God's image; but the image of God in the wider sense, consisting of man's rationality, has not been lost. This doctrine of common grace is of great value in maintaining a balanced view of the relation of God to man in the sphere of grace. Lutheranism e.g. not holding this doctrine says that God's image in man was entirely lost; so that man in sin is as a block, and then again not being able to finally to maintain this position it comes again to a vicious congruism. Similarly even Dr. W. G. T. Shedd, though maintaining the doctrine of common grace, yet misinterprets it and sees in it a sort of preparation for special grace, and really in his *Calvinism Pure and Mixed*, identifies it with the well meant offer of salvation to all, and finally again lands in congruism when he says that salvation is in the highest degree probable for those that make diligent use of the means of grace. [85]

What men like Dr. Hodge, Vos, Bavinck and Kuyper means by common grace then is not something qualitatively the same as special grace, and leading up to it unless resisted, [86] but a checking of the power of sin so that the principle of sin did not work through immediately to the entire destruction of man, so that man himself exists and still has his rational powers, retains responsibility and forms a reactive point of contact to the initiative of the Holy Spirit. There remains much still to be worked out in this concept of Common Grace, because the bearing it has, if any, upon the judicial relation of man to God after the fall is not developed, but as it stands it is of extreme importance to maintain it together with total depravity and the absolute antithesis between sin and grace. These two principles of common grace and absolute antithesis are not opposites to one

[85] W. G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, 1889, 2:511Ð28.
[86] James Orr, *Christian View of God and World*,1893.

another but rather supplementary. It was not an inconsistency in Dr. A. Kuyper that he developed the doctrine of common grace after first strongly emphasizing the antithesis, as Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema have maintained. Nor was he unfaithful to the one principle in the measure that he clung to the other. These are not two masters, the one of which if we love, the other we despise. In order to avoid the danger even of congruism, for extremes meet, it is imperative to hold firmly to the doctrine of common grace alongside of the antithesis.

Predestination

Seeing mankind then in this sinful state, totally unable of himself to do any moral good yet possessed of the image of God in the wider sense, we turn first of all to the doctrine of predestination, for of God must come the initiative. In theological terminology praedestination includes the acts of election and of reprobation. Predestination is therefore not identical with election.

Now as justification through faith is the *articulus stantis et candentis* ecclesiae to Lutheranism, so the doctrine of election is the *cor ecclesiae* of the Reformed churches. And this is no great marvel. It alone does justice to the full, to the theistic motif of making God all in all. Hence also this doctrine perhaps more than any other has been again and again attacked. Sin is enmity against God; sinful man can not allow that he must be saved by God alone. We shall first have to discuss this doctrine, then, as the foundation of all others in the realm of grace. It is the direct result of the doctrine of God's sovereignty; they stand and fall together. It is the direct concomitant of total depravity; they too stand and fall together, for if man is not totally depraved he himself in the last analysis decides; if he is, God elects. Election and the doctrine of the mystic union in Christ also fit into one another. The body of Christ cannot be patched together by voluntary contributions of the finite wills. Election is the basis also of a more complete view of the work of Christ. The view of Christ's passive obedience might perhaps still be maintained, but Christ's active obedience by which he earned the Holy Spirit for the believers, who in turn gives regeneration, faith, etc. is denied on any other basis than election, for then regeneration, faith, etc, are the acts of man himself and not the gifts of the Spirit. Then finally, election forms the foundation for the perseverance of the Saints. [87]

It is necessary then, that first of all we trace the etymology of the words used in Scripture for it. The first term is יָדַע, διαγνοσκειν, προγιγνοσκειν, προγνοσις and in Romans 8:29 προεγνο. Now it is true that the meaning of these words in

[87] Geerhardus Vos, *Dogmatiek*, 1:98.

Scripture is sometimes similar to the classical meaning, of having intellectual knowledge of before hand as e.g. 2 Peter 3:17, "Therefore, beloved, seeing ye know before," but never are these words so used in connection with election as though election had for its object faith and good works seen beforehand. This is immediately evident from the fact that in the places where these terms are used, Romans 8:29; Romans 11:2; 1 Peter 1:2, 20; there is no mention of what God knows beforehand in those he elects, which would be necessary if the classic meaning were used, while in places like 2 Peter 3:17 and Acts 26:5 where simple foreknowledge is meant, the direct objects of that knowledge are mentioned.

Moreover, that we have in the term foreknowledge no mere intellectual foresight is evident from the arrangement in Romans 8:29–31. Here foreknowledge becomes the highest and last link to which Paul ascends through calling and purpose, and from which he descends again, making the other acts of grace depend upon it. The love to God in vs. 28 is dependent upon the calling; this calling has an eternal and sure side in the προθεσις. Then those whom he προεγνο, he has foreordained to be like to the image of the Mediator. So the foreknowledge through the foreordination effects the likeness of believers to Christ, for those that he has predestinated he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified. Then also in Romans 11:2 the presentation of Paul is that rejection of God's people and foreknowledge are absolutely incompatible. This would have no meaning if simple intellectual foreknowledge or foreknowledge dependent upon man's action were meant. To be sure, we can base no direct argument upon 1 Peter 1:2 for it is not clear just what Paul means by the term elect, but in 1 Peter 1:20, where Christ's human nature is spoken of as foreknown by God, it is clear that foreknowledge is taken in the pregnant Jewish sense, because the human nature is admittedly an object of God's foreordination. In Matthew 7:23 Christ says to those whom he rejects never εγνον you. Now since Christ certainly knew of them, to know them here can only mean to know them as his own. Then in 1 Corinthians 8:3 we have as it were the two kinds of knowledge placed in direct opposition to one another. Those that think they know something in this world are placed in a class directly over against those that love God and only the latter class εγνοσται of God. Then in Galatians 4:9 Paul appeals to the Galatians not to return to the weak and beggarly elements because they have known God but chiefly because they have known God but chiefly because γνοσθεντες of God as their Father. The latter must be therefore, something far greater than mere knowledge of acquaintance of God.

So also in 2 Timothy 2:19, "The Lord knoweth them that are his" must mean more than acquaintance. Those even that have received a place of honor in the visible church may fall away, and draw many after them, but amidst such apostasy it is a comfort to the simple believer that the Lord knoweth them that are his and will not permit them to fall away any more than a shepherd will permit his sheep to be lost. Jn. 10:27, 28;. There is therefore in all these places where mention is made of God's knowledge of his people, nothing in them, no faith, no love, not even a receptivity to which an activity would have to correspond, on account of which he chooses them. God is the source of the entire process; He the sovereign God has placed them in a relation of love to himself; for infinitely wise reasons unknown to man. This knowledge of his own is then fruitful of a great series of beneficial acts terminating in their being placed at his right hand. Hosea 13:5, "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought." Amos 3:2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Psalms 144:3, "Lord what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him … " This Hebrew meaning of the verb יָדַע then is almost identical with בחר, to choose, and has passed into N.T. usage. Even the preposition προ points to the eternity of the act for in Romans 8:29 it is used only with those acts of God that take place in eternity. This foreknowledge has taken place before the very existence of the objects, so that the initiative surely proceeds from God.

The second Greek term used is εκλεγεσθαι, which corresponds entirely to בָּחר 174. It means taking preference, a sovereign choosing, a separation or dedication to a certain new relation. Taking preference lies in the preposition εκ, which is sometimes repeated. In Deut. 18:5 Levi is chosen out of all the tribes and מִין 174 is even placed after the verb. Others therefore might equally have been chosen. To choose by sovereign pleasure does not necessarily lie in the term but the analogous Latin words *diligere*, *delectari*, which are closely related to λεγειν, point to a reading out of certain ones due to one's good pleasure. So also Genesis 6:2 "and they took them wives of all which they chose," which generally points to an act of good pleasure. Back of this choosing always lies the foreknowledge which never acts on account of merits in the object, hence the same is true of εκλεγεσθαι. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number" etc (Dt 17:7). Thirdly, there is dedication to Jehovah implied in the term as evident from the middle voice. God has chosen for himself. So in Numbers 16:7—"and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose he shall be holy." Deut. 7:16—"For now I have chosen and sanctified this house." Thus election is always election to a special holy relation to Jehovah; the elect are

dedicated to Him. "*God verkiest zich tot een eigendom Hij praedestineert tot de eeuwige zaligheid. En beide verzellen elkaar steeds.*" [88] Dt 14.2, Eph 1.4

The third term used is προοριξειν, which in Romans 8:29 follows immediately upon προεγνο. It means to foreordain to some condition. The word itself is neutral and may be used *malum partem* as well as *bonam partem*. Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23). The more special meaning is evident from Ephesians 1:5 where we are said to be προορισας unto the adoption of children and in Ephesians 1:11 where we are said to be foreordained according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will. Thus as the purpose of election is to place persons into a holy relation to God the purpose of foreordination is, to place in a condition. We are foreordained to become like unto the image of his son. This is the general distinction though in James 2:5 election to wealth, i.e. a condition is spoken of.

Finally the term προθησις from προτιθεναι deserves consideration. It emphasizes the willing side of God's predestination. Occasionally, as in 2 Timothy 1:9, purpose is used as an all-inclusive term, but usually as in Romans 9:11 where Paul speaks of a purpose according to election it has this narrower meaning in distinction from foreordination.

Now we do not find as many terms for rejection as we do for election. In Jeremiah 33:24 the verb מאם means rejection of that which was once accepted. Hence there is in Isaiah 14:1 mention of a continuous election. Only in Isaiah 4:9, "I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away" the opposition seems to be absolute. But we cannot conclude from this that there is no rejection. The preposition εκ already points to the passing by of some. The Greek term αποθειν corresponds to מאם. From the meaning of these words it is clear that the Bible speaks of an election of peoples, tribes etc. which he may later reject, but this does not mean that there may also be a rejection of those individuals that are elected and objects of the eternal foreknowledge. From the exegesis of these Scripture passages it follows then that in theological terminology praedestination is a term inclusive, first of foreordination and election and also of reprobation. Moreover predestination seems to include the means whereby foreordination to a condition is accomplished. Those that he has foreordained he has also called, etc.

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[88] *Ibid.*, 1:106.

With these etymological and exegetical givens we turn to Romans 9 and the following chapters, for this passage has been a bone of contention, many maintaining that here Paul speaks of a national election and rejection only. But this is clearly opposed to the whole argument. Paul sees that most of the Israelites have fallen away, though chosen as a race. Yet God's word has not fallen out because it was only the seed of the promise that was the true seed of David. Election is brought out clearer in the case of Jacob and Esau than in any other. Isaac was still the son of the chosen mother and might thus be said to have an advantage over Ishmael, but Jacob and Esau were of the same mother, born even at the same birth, and the one chosen and the other rejected even before their birth. The one thus elected is a child of Abraham, vs. 7, and will receive the future glory, vs. 23. Opposed to these are those predestined to dishonor, vs. 21, to wrath, vs. 22, to corruption, vs. 22. God has used no utilitarian principle in his choice, but only the revelation of his virtues. To be sure, even so there is mention of a national predestination in which Esau shall serve Jacob but Paul's meaning is not therewith exhausted, because Paul seeks to explain the unbelief of his fellow Jews vs. 1, 2, 24. So the question is, how can Paul give to national relations a personal application, and the only possible answer seems to be that Paul sees in these national affairs a type of what happens to all those living under the dispensation of the gospel, in order that it might be evident that all was due to the grace of God.

Nor is this controverted by the presentation of man's responsibility (9:30 to 10:21). Both man's responsibility and still absolute predestination are stressed. God stretches forth his hand all the day long, and yet election is by his sovereign will. Paul makes no attempt to harmonize these two; he waits for a higher logic. For God is surely not unrighteous (9:14). If we object to the discriminating element in election, Paul only cites O.T. examples of those that have freely received God's mercy and those that have been hardened. Herewith the objection is not answered but ruled out of court. If man discriminates he is to be held to account because he discriminates between creatures which have relative rights with respect to him, but not so with God. He is the potter; we are the clay. Even the rejection is due to the sovereign will of God. Pharaoh is raised up for this very purpose. עמר, to be sure means mostly to keep standing that which already stands as e.g. a pillar, [89] but the N.T. translation of this by εγειρειν always means to appear on the scene of history, e.g. Matthew 11:11, "Of all those born of women there is non greater raised up." If Paul had meant anything else, he could have retained the Septuagint translation of διετηρηθης.

[89] *Ibid*., 1:120.

So the general conclusion follows that God hardens whom he will. We may tone the meaning of these words down as we will by saying this plan of hardening follows after the sin of the man himself, but even then we are forced to go back to the mystery of why God permitted such creatures to be born that would harden themselves. In either case we have no explanation and must rest in the mystery of God's *voluntas beneplaciti*. We are here, then, face to face with the question of Supra and Infra lapsarianism. Does it make any essential difference to the question of the will? Is God's justice and sovereignty better maintained on the supra standpoint; is man's responsibility better brought out on the infra view? Romans 9 especially in vs. 18 and vs.19, where as the climax of Paul's line of reasoning the image of the potter and the clay is used, it seems as though the supra interpretation is necessary, for the potter has first adefinite purpose in mind which he wishes to reach and then determines how he is to reach this purpose.[90] But as Dr. Bavinck says, supralapsarianism must constantly turn to infra and infra to supra. The question hinges on the point of what the quality is of the objects of predestination. Are they viewed in God's plan as already fallen or are they conceived of as *creandi et labiles*? Otherwise put, the question is one of comprehensiveness. Did God, as supra maintains, have always the end of his own glorification in view only and subject the decrees of the means to the decree of the end, or must we say that we can posit no relation between the several decrees, subjecting one to the other, but that we accept them without any attempt at harmonizing them, following out their meaning as history progresses, taking the decree of election after that of creation and fall?

Now against supra it is no argument that it deals only with abstract men *creandi et labiles*; supra also figures with sin, and we should rather speak of men *creaturus et laburus*. It is then not altogether fair it seems to the supralapsarian viewpoint when Dr. Bavinck says of it that it really adds a series of decrees with reference to mere possibilities in Amyraldian fashion, upon which a series of decrees that have to do with historical entities follows.[91] Supra's decrees do not deal with mere *homines possibiles*, it deals with men which shall actually be. Still, it may be objected to supra that we have no right to make one decree of God subservient to the other. Perhaps God had an independent meaning with some historical appearances that supra all too readily subjects to the ideal teleological relation of the final purpose. Moreover it is not possible to say that God needed the rejection of some as well as the acceptance of others to enhance his glory. Abstractly considered, we cannot see why God should not be equally glorified by the salvation of all. "*Einddoel van al Gods werken is en moet zijn zijne heerlijkheid;*

[90] *Ibid*., 1:125.
[91] Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 2:402.

maar de wijze waarop deze heerlijkheid schitteren zal, is daarmede niet vanzelf gegeven." [92] And then there is the further objection that supra makes the rejection of [93]

The Person of Christ

brought together again. The Covenant Relation has been restored. All those represented by Adam fell through his act; all those represented by Christ are restored through his work. Corresponding to the doctrine of election then, in which God takes the initiative, is the doctrine of the nature of Christ's person and work. First the nature of his person must be such that he can be the medium of the covenant restoration. If we have a correct view of God and man we shall likely obtain a correct view of Christ also. This correct view of God and man we obtained by making God the starting point. Christ must be absolutely divine. Any theology that does not make God the starting point will obtain a view of Christ that cannot make him the medium of covenant restoration.

In the early Church it was especially Eutychianism that conceived of the person of Christ as neither divine nor human, but somewhere between. Thus it is impossible to find a solution for the will, because God and man are not entirely distinguished and their real relation is obliterated in the person of Christ. It is important to note that Lutheranism did not entirely overcome this evil. Luther himself taught the doctrine of election and justification by faith. But his starting point was anthropological. So in his notion of the sacraments and of the person of Christ we see already the baneful fruit of his starting point. This is my body; "*das Wort sollen Sie stehen lassen*," says Luther. Christ as human becomes ubiquitous. The incommunicable attributes of God must then be entirely communicable to human nature. This was bound to wreak itself in the various loci of theology. Later Lutheranism felt that on this basis it would have to modify its conception of the Trinity. Gess' kenoticism is built upon the idea that the Logos gets its divinity due to an act of the divine will and not of divine necessity. Thomasius thinks it is the freedom or absolute power of God that enables him to lay aside his relative attributes and become genuinely human. [94] Thus the strong desire to bring God and man together drove Lutheranism to a false view of Christ's person. Upon the basis of this false view in turn we do injustice to the

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[92] *Ibid*., 2:401.
[93] R. B. Kuiper says that Van Til was supra; *The Banner* (June 17, 1960): 18. Van Til apparently followed Vos over Bavinck in affirming supra. 2 pages missing—Eric Bristley
[94] Geerhardus Vos, 3:85.

distinction between God and man, and cannot bring them together in the genuine covenant relation as presented in the Scripture.

We shall have to build our view of the will then on the old Chalcedon Christology, which rejects all Eytychianism, Monophysitism and Nestorianism, maintaining the true divinity and perfect humanity of Christ, these two existing in one person, without intermixture, transmutation, division, or separation. The *enhypostasia* of the human nature of Christ must be maintained, and yet monotheism rejected. "*Wij kunnen niet verklaren op welke eene wijze het menschelijk verstand, de menschelijke wil, het menschelijk en gevoel verbonden waren aan en vereenigd waren met den persoon des Zoons van God.*" [95] There is only one place of identy. "*Het bewustzijn der persoonlijkheid was voor Christus goddelijke en voor zijn menschelijke natuur èen en hetzelfde.*" Christ's person then is the central point of unification between God and man. This view of Christ's person enables us to keep God and man distinct as they are presented in Scripture. Such a person can sustain the relation to mankind that Adam did and by the eternal value of his divine person restore the covenant relation.

Hence it is also of importance to have a correct view of the nature of Christ's work. All theories of Christ's atonement that do not conceive of it as substitutionary and expiatory are solidaristic reparatory and conceive of Christ's work as having accomplished only the possibility of salvation while it now depends upon the will of man to appropriate it. This is the character of all mystical and ethical theories. All these theories of the nature of the atonement, which we cannot here severally review, reveal the Arminian view of the nature of the will and are the natural outcome of it. "*Alle Arminianen hebben wanneer zij logisch doordachten de dadelijke gehoorzaamheid op zij geschoven, althans voorzoover zij eene toegerekende was.*" [96] And the Roman Catholic view of man's cooperation in justification originates from the same principle.

Now if Christ bore only the guilt of sin and not eternal life through active obedience, then the satisfaction terminates on all men alike and it is up to the individual to merit eternal life afterwards. Concomitant with this Arminian view of the work of Christ is that the incarnation would have taken place even if sin had not entered the world. For sin is then something entirely beyond the plan of God. Sin is a disappointment to God; hence he has slightly modified the incarnation, which would take place anyway, in order to take away sin. [97] We shall have to

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[95] Geerhardus Vos, 3:56.
[96] Geerhardus Vos, 3:144.
[97] Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 3:294.

reject all these theories and maintain the necessity of the incarnation on account of sin. We shall have to hold fast to the twofold part of Christ's work not temporally but logically distinct, namely Christ's passive and active obedience. With his passive obedience he removed our guilt, the guilt of sin; with his active obedience he merited eternal life for us, including the gift of the Holy Spirit through whom the work of Christ is applied to us. Only on this view do we draw the parallel through between Adam and Christ as it is given to us in Romans. The condition upon which the covenant promises were to be fulfilled to Adam was perfect obedience to God. When Adam refused this, two things were necessary. First the guilt of disobedience had to be removed; secondly eternal life had still to be obtained through the active obedience asked of Adam. Christ fulfilled both requirements. In Him the Covenant with works is carried through. The Covenant relation that God established with every man in Adam is now transferred to Christ. So we do justice to finite personality, give largest scope to the will of man, and maintain the absolute character of God.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

On this basis then we can go on and do justice also to the relation between God and man after the restoration of man to God. Opinions then also differ. Many want to present it as though man after receiving grace, now in turn becomes as it were a puppet to the influence of the Spirit, as formerly he was a puppet to the principle of sin. Or on the other hand others insert again and again on every point of soteriological doctrine the old leaven of pelagian freedom, so that they make the final completion of salvation rest with man. But on the basis of our doctrine of God and man, of election, and now especially of the nature of the person and work of Christ, we are prepared again to do full justice to the personality of man, his will and spontaneity, and yet maintain again the character of God, so that salvation from beginning to end, from origination to completion, is at every point both the absolute work of God alone and yet mediated through the personality of man. "*Want de opvatting van de applicatio salutis als werk Gods sluit niet uit, maar sluit in de volle erkenning van al die zedelijke factoren, die onder de leiding van Gods voorzienigheid, inwerken op verstand en hart van den onbekeerden mensch.*" [98] This applies to the further development of the Christian life as well as to its initiation. All the blessings of salvation applied are merited by Christ and present in Him. He himself is the dispenser of these blessings through the Holy Spirit, but at every point the personality of man is recognized. How otherwise could we do justice to all Scripture presentation with reference to these

[98] Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 3:659.

gifts of regeneration, conversion, etc.? On the one hand we are told time and again that we must turn to God and convert ourselves; the well-meant offer of salvation comes to all and we ourselves are responsible if we do not accept it. On the other hand at every point we are told that it is the work of the Spirit alone.

Again it was due to the inheritance of Calvin upon which the Reformed Churches entered that enabled them to do justice to a far greater extent to this relation between God and man as it is realized through Christ and the Holy Spirit. We have already seen the importance of maintaining the doctrine of common grace in this respect. It was John Calvin that gave in Reformation times the fullest development to that doctrine. It was also Calvin who together with this developed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. These two doctrines maintained together enable us to gain the Biblical viewpoint of the will of man in the application of salvation. Calvin has been called preeminently the theologian of the Holy Spirit. Briefly sketched, his doctrine of the Holy Spirit, according to Dr. Warfield, who paraphrases and explains Calvin's first book of the *Institutes*, in his "Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God," [99] is as follows. On account of sin man finds himself in a miserable ruin. To be rescued from this he must truly know self and God. Man as unfallen, by the very implication of his nature would have known God, the sphere of his excellence. But for man as fallen Calvin seems to say that the strongest force compelling him to look upwards to God above him streams from his sense of sin filling him with a fearful looking forward to judgment. Calvin holds that all men have an ineradicable *sensus deitatis* and this is not only as a bare perception of God but as something producing reaction to this knowledge in thinking, feeling, and willing. This native endowment may consequently also be called a *semen religionis*. "For what we call religion is just the reaction of the human soul of what we perceive God to be." Knowledge of God and religion then are universal. This knowledge is not, however, a competent knowledge of God. In the state of purity this knowledge would show only love and trust. But in sinful man this knowledge produces the reaction of fear and hatred until the grace of God intervenes with a message of mercy.

In addition to this innate knowledge comes the revelation of God in nature and providence. This revelation is clear, universal, and convincing in itself. But sin has altered the condition of man's soul, so that he is unable to know God adequately in nature and is accordingly incapable of giving the proper reactions in his soul. However convincing then the ontological, teleological, and other proofs of God may be in themselves, they cannot serve to effect the true

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[99] Benjamin B. Warfield, "Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God," In *Calvin and the Reformation*, William P. Armstrong ed., New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1909.

knowledge of God in sinful man because his mind is not normal. "Were man in his normal state he could not help under this double revelation, external and internal, fail to know God as God would wish to be known." But sinful man is incapable of reading God's revelation in nature aright, and the instinctive knowledge of God embedded in his very constitution is dulled and almost obliterated.

What is needed now is a special supernatural revelation objectively and a special supernatural illumination subjectively. The needed revelation is found in the Scriptures. It is a special revelation documented for the universal use of man. It serves as spectacles to enable those of darkened visage to see God. Of course the Scriptures do more than this. They not only reveal the God of nature more brightly to sin darkened eyes; they reveal also the God of grace. But in a larger sense this is the same; for it is the covenant God that is revealed anew to man. But man needs not only light, he also needs the power of sight. This spiritual sight is the result of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*.

What does Calvin understand by this testimony? It is that operation of the Holy Spirit on man's consciousness which restores to him his true sense of God. The abnormality produced by sin in man's consciousness is removed, and man is made normal in principle, so that he can again recognize the divine revelation, thus gain true knowledge of God and produce appropriate reactions of soul in the form of religion.

The change effected in man by the Holy Spirit we generally speak of as faith. But what is this faith except the experience of an act of God? In other words faith is the fruit of election. "Faith according to Calvin renews the whole man in his being and consciousness, in soul and body, in all his relations and activities." Man thus becomes perceptive and receptive of divine revelation in Scripture. Scripture is there manifesting its divinity objectively by its style of speech, its content etc., just as plainly as snow reveals itself as white, and now through faith man's spiritual sight is restored so that he can again see the divinity revealed in Scripture, as his natural eye perceives the whiteness of snow.

The action of the Spirit then, Calvin conceives of as coalescing with consciousness. Faith is not a new faculty of the soul but it must be brought about before man's faculties can again function normally. It is not an immediate revelation of divine truth as the Mystics conceive of it. "To attribute to the Holy

Spirit renewed or continued revelations would be derogatory to the Word which is His inspired product." [100]

Neither does Calvin conceive of it as in the nature of a blind conviction as has often been alleged by the followers of the so called "free attitude toward Scriptures." These people maintain that upon Calvin's theory of faith one can reject as unauthoritative any part of Scripture which does not immediately commend itself to the religious judgment as divine. True, in the French and Belgic confessions it would seem as though the nature of faith is spoken of as a blind conviction. They say that we accept the canon of Scripture not so much because the Church says so, but because of its immediate commendation of divinity. Dr. Warfield explains this as being due to the fact that the term "canon" is used not only quantitatively, having reference to the historical right of a book to a place within the canon but also qualitatively as meaning divine. In the latter meaning of the term it is used in the Confessions. Calvin conceives of faith then not as a blind conviction but as a grounded conviction founded in men's spirits by the Holy Spirit, "by an act which rather terminates immediately upon the faculties, enabling and efficiently persuading them to reach a conviction on grounds presented to them rather than producing the conviction itself apart from the grounds." [101] These grounds presented to them are the indicia of divinity spoken of before.

Now as to the action of these indicia in conjunction with the Holy Spirit Calvin does not appear to speak expressly. "He sometimes appears to speak of them rather as if they lay side by side with the testimony of the Holy Spirit, than acted along with it as cofactors in the production of the supreme effect." [102] "Nevertheless, there are not lacking convincing hints that there was lying in his mind all the time the implicit understanding that it is through these indicia of the divinity of the Scripture, that the soul under the operation of the testimony of the Spirit reaches its sound faith in the Scriptures," and that he has withheld from more explicitly stating this only by the warmth of his zeal for the necessity of the testimony of the Spirit, which has led him to a contrasting of this divine with these human testimonies. The Spirit must act first before the indicia have any value, or at most they have value in conjunction with the working of the Spirit. But once the supernatural revelation is again accepted by man as divine, his reason is restored to its normal place, at least in principle. Reason, man's

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[100] Warfield, *Calvin and the Reformation*, 85.
[101] *Ibid*., 174.
[102] *Ibid*., 174.

intellectual volitive and emotional faculties, now assume their original functions besides those made necessary through sin.

Calvin thus worked out the root principle of Augustine by his doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of common grace and was thus able to lead the later Reformed churches to maintain the Biblically theistic principle also in the various steps in the application of salvation to the individual. Justice could thus be done to the human faculties and also to the corrosive influence of sin. Man's faculties of intellect and will can be restored to normal; in fact only through these faculties can man ever know God. For generations men have been guided upon the right path by the use of his compass. Calvin does not yet distinguish between regeneration and faith in the narrower sense. To him the term faith means the implanting of the new life. It was for later theology to work out systematically the relations of the various steps in the soteriological series. But from the root principle of Calvin the Reformed Churches have never departed. Calvin gave us that view of Scripture and that view of the Holy Spirit which enable us to do justice to both God's and man's activities in salvation.

Calvin's doctrine enables the Reformed Churches to steer clear of the errors of Romanism, Lutheranism, and Arminianism. Rome's soteriology is based on its wrong view of the nature of man. The original righteousness being a *donum superadditum*, "the conflict between the flesh and the spirit is normal and original and therefore not sinful." [103] Man by his natural reason can attain to some knowledge of absolute truth. This was already the principle of Aquinas, and was ratified by Trent. In immediate connection with this the sacerdotalism or Rome which externalizes evil and makes its destruction possible by the mechanical action of the sacrament upon the mere intellectual assent of the recipient. Sin thus becomes not something at the core of man's heart that needs to be uprooted by the Holy Spirit and a new life implanted.

This is especially clear from the Romish doctrine of second causes. God is presented as desiring the salvation of all, by putting the work of its accomplishment entirely into the hands of the Church which must administer salvation through the sacraments. "As this system of second causes has not been instituted with a view to the conveying of the sacraments to particular men, but belongs to his general provision for the government of the world, the actual distribution of the grace of God through the Church and the sacraments lies outside the government of his gracious will." [104] Salvation therefore depends

[103] Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2:103.
[104] B. B. Warfield, *The Plan of Salvation* (Philadelphia, 1915), 68.

upon the working of these second causes; if one is lost it is not God's fault. But we see here that Rome is again detracting from the omnipotence of God and his direct operation in the work of redemption. At the basis of Roman soteriology lies a semi-pelagian view of the will. Man is after all the one that makes the decision whether or not he shall accept the proffered salvation. And what is more, Romanism does not only leave it up to every individual man but rather puts salvation under the sway of fate. Rome even does injustice to the Pelagian concept of man, through its externalization of the means salvation in the sacraments.

Lutheranism

While Romanism thus clung to its quasi-supernaturalism we might expect that in Lutheranism we would find an expulsion of all pelagianizing notions of the will. Yet as we have already seen that Luther's starting point was anthropological, and his doctrine of the sacraments was already pregnant with the germs of kenoticism and he consequently had an insufficient view of God and man, we already hesitate to find a sound soteriology. In his work on the Will against Erasmus, Luther wanted to discuss "whether the will does anything or nothing in the matter of salvation." Erasmus had stated, "Moreover by free will here I mean that power of the human will, whereby a man is able to apply himself to those things which lead to eternal salvation or to turn himself away from them." [105] Now Luther certainly opposed the Pelagian and nominalistic position of Erasmus. "*Es giebt kein liberum arbitruim, das zum Guten fahig ist, sondern nur einen unter der Sunde geknechteten Willen, ein servum arbitrium, das zum Guten fähig ist, sondern nur einen unter der Lünde geknechteten Willen, ein servum arbitrium oder einen von der Gnade befreiten Willen, ein arbitrium liberatum. Dieses hat er an sich selbst erfahren, dieses hat das Wort Gottes ihn gelehrt und mit gewaltiger Kraft verteidigt er diese Wahrheit gegen die Werkheiligkeit seiner Zeit.*" [106]

Luther reinforces his arguments with philosophical considerations. He wants to meet Erasmus on his own ground. "*Die Alleinwirksamkeit Gottes, die in der religiösen Fassung nur auf das Heil bezogen wird, wurde also zu einem metaphysischen Princip—Deum tam bona quam mala in nobis operari; meraeque necessitatis esse omnia quae fiunt, (p. 196)—und die Unveränderlichkeit Gottes, die … wird in der metaphysischen Fassung zur einer starren Unveränderlichkeit des absoluten Machtwillens.*" [107] In accordance with this we find Luther at first

[105] Fox, *Luther Qua*. (October 1899): 463.
[106] Benson, *Zur Frage nach der menschlichen Willensfreiheit* (Rostock, 1900), 34.
[107] *Idem*., 34.

teaching predestination in the most absolute sense, and making a sharp distinction between *deus absconditus* and *deus praedicatus*. Then, "*In seinen späteren Werken treten die praedestinationischen Gedanken immer mehr zuruck, wie vor allem die Trostschrift vom J. 15:28, und die Auslegung der Genesis beweisein*." [108]

Now both Luthardt¿~ and Benson think that this change of view in Luther was due to the fact that Luther thought, "*dass die Heilsgnade an die Gnadenmittel, besonders an das Wort gebundend ist.*" If Luther wanted to maintain his doctrine of the sacraments he had to change his view of predestination, for in his view of the Word he was closely allied to the Catholic principle that salvation depends on an external, rather fortuitous application of a means of grace. Now it would have been no loss to Lutheranism to have lost its philosophical necessitarianism wherewith Luther opposed Erasmus if only it had substituted the more Biblical concept of God, but instead it later chose sides with the implication of Luther's doctrine of the Word. Luther in vain attempted to harmonize philosophical necessitarianism with libertarianism or impersonal fatalism. Intent primarily on the practical joy of salvation, Luther held these two disparate elements in his thinking till his dying day. He never recalled praedestination. Here at the birth of Lutheranism, we expect great things. "Justification by faith" reverberates through the saved soul of Luther. But alas Luther, at an evil hour tried to defend this doctrine by a false conception of God, the conception of God as absolutely causing the acts of man. He thus could not give full scope to the finite personality. Through sin, he thinks the entire image of God is lost because it exists primarily in moral qualities so that man after the fall is like a block. Benson does indeed say that Luther and the Lutheran confessions see in man's essence the image of God, but Dr. H. Bavinck correctly argues that the soteriological and subjective basis of Luther's theology led him soon to emphasize the moral qualities as being the chief elements, or almost exclusive elements in the image of God in man. On such a basis Luther, at first emphasizing God's side in the matter of salvation, almost entirely disregarded the activity of the human faculties and came nigh to a philosophic necessitarianism. Recoiling from this, Luther made the last deciding principle in salvation the action of the Word. But this still does no justice to the retained image of God, to the human faculties. So things remain with Luther.

Benson recognizes the unharmonized elements in Luther's theology. He sees quite an advance in Melanchthon's distinction between the relation of God to the natural and the relation of God to the moral sphere. "*Der grosse Fortschritt*

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[108] *Idem*., 38.

besteht vor allem darin dass zwisschen dem Verhältniss des Menschen zur Wirksamkeit Gottes im Gebiet des Physischen und dem Verhältniss des Menschen zur Wirksamkeit Gottes auf dem Gebiet des Sittlichen klar und deutlich unterschieden wird." [109] To be sure, this was a "*Fortschritt*" to bring out the implications of Luther's inherent inconsistencies.

The inherent pelagianizing tendency of Luther's doctrine of the means of grace now comes to the fore in the form of synergism. It could not be expected that salvation should long be thought to depend upon the fortuitous distribution of the word. The faculties of man would reassert themselves. In Calvinism as we have seen they wore recognized in the doctrine of the image of God in the wider sense, and in the doctrine of common grace and the Holy Spirit. But with Melanchthon they reassert themselves in their vicious independence. Philosophical necessity swings to pelagianizing independence. Already Luther put to the fore emphasis on the *voluntas signi* instead of the *voluntas beneplaciti*. There is a universal will of God for the salvation of man. "The fundamental presupposition of such an assumption is no other than that God owes all men salvation, that is to say that sin is not really sin and is to be envisaged rather as misfortune than as ill desert." [110]

Now Melanchthon freely introduces the logical consequence of this that man cooperates with God as an independent ally, in the production of salvation. Such a principle was bound to work rapidly. When at the Synod of Dort in 1618–19 five articles were formulated against the Remonstrants, many Lutherans identified themselves with the cause of these men and in 1724 Mosheim declared that the five articles contained the pure Lutheran doctrine. Later Haller taught that man cannot cooperate with God in producing salvation but he can fatally resist and that, "an absolutely new power is created in him by God, the action of which for blessing or for cursing is dependent on the subject's subsequent or even already operative decision." [111] Thus we see a vicious independence allowed to the will of man. Alas for poor Luther. How he would disown many of those calling him, father, father. He would not recognize the admixture of synergism, universalism and sacerdotalism poured into the vessels still containing much of the original elixir of justification by faith. But Luther had dropped in the still hard lump of anthropology that would in time dissolve, under the chemical action of the pelagian heart of man, into a seething cauldron of hostile elements that we now see Lutheranism to be. The soteriology of Luther then is not true to the Biblical

[109] Benson, 43.
[110] Warfield, *Plan of Salvation*, 91.
[111] *Idem*., 98.

conception of the relation of God to man. It either, as in its earliest period, emphasizes the part of God in salvation but then conceives of God in a more or less fatalistic fashion and man as devoid of any remnant of the image of God, or it, as in later Lutheranism, emphasizes the part of man but then conceives of man as contributing a part that he has not first received from God.

There is however, a system that goes farther than Lutheranism in attributing an independent part to man in the production of salvation, thus introducing a pelagianizing notion of the will—namely Arminianism.

Arminianism

Already at the time of the Reformation the doctrine of predestination with its concomitant that man is absolutely sinful and that therefore salvation in its entire process is the work of God, was opposed by men like Erasmus, Bibliander, Pighius, Bolsec, etc. The Socinians taught that predestination was only a plan of God to give them salvation, who should see fit to do His commandments and exchanged the omniscience of God for entire freedom of the will. But it was especially Arminius who formulated the doctrine that God would save those whom He saw would by virtue of *gratia praevenians* believe and by virtue of *gratia subsequens* maintain their faith. Here he still maintains the necessity of grace and faith but man has the power to resist. Salvation becomes dependent upon man. Man is not to such an extent the slave of sin, but that he can determine his future lot. God again wills the salvation of all; if man does not resist he will be saved. Even the Saumur School yielded to some extent to this position. Amyraldus taught a double decree. The first one is general and consisted in the plan that God wishes all men to be saved. But knowing through his praescience that none could believe of himself God added to this first decree a second particular and absolute decree which determined to grant to some and maintain in them the grace of faith. [112] This is an inconsistent position for it contends at one and the same time that Christ died for all and that God nevertheless determined that Christ's death should avail only for those whom God should select. Moreover this introduces temporal categories into the eternal decrees and again makes God dependent upon the action of man. On such basis too they would have to form a conditional substitution theory of atonement, which is a contradiction in terms. Consequently the Saumur school has actually adopted a theory of atonement by which God made salvation possible for all men through

[112] Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 2:375; Warfield, *Plan of Salvation*, 120.

the removal of obstacles. Pajonism even went so far as to deny *gratia efficax* and spoke only of a suasive influence of the Spirit upon the heart of man. [113]

Everywhere Arminianism crept into the Reformed Churches during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Neonomianism, deism, Quakerism, Methodism, all showed some relation to Arminianism. Only a few theologians such as Comrie, Holtius and Brahe in the Netherlands, Boston and Erskine in Scotland, and especially Jonathan Edwards in America have clung closely to the Calvinistic principles.

Now all these various views cannot form an adequate basis for a Biblical doctrine of salvation. They do not do justice to the conception of God as omniscient, omnipotent, all wise, infinite and eternal; he is made dependent upon temporal conditions; it is man that determines the final issue. Sin is not a very real thing because it has not taken away from man all his independence, and back of Arminianism lies Pelagianism, for if man can decide about salvation after he has fallen in sin, he must have creaturely independence enough to start an absolutely new series.

The doctrines of Romanism, Lutheranism and Arminianism are in the treatment of the *ordo salutis* all to a degree nomistic. They have not entirely cast out the pelagianizing view of the will. According as their theories of God, man and Christ are unsound their theories of the order of salvation are unsound and vice versa. In fact the order in which the various parts, as regeneration, faith etc. are taken up we see the underlying principle of the will involved.

It is characteristic of all nomistic or pelagianizing soteriology that it turns about the Biblical teaching of the relation of Christ's work and the work of man in the accomplishment of salvation. In proportion that man is able to initiate, continue and persevere in spiritual life, Christ's work recedes. Christ then has at most opened the possibility of salvation, giving to man the opportunity to be saved if he wishes to. The pelagian view of the *ordo salutis* wipes out in the last analysis the distinction between the Christian and the non-Christian religions, for salvation is effected by the wisdom and effort of man. Hence all subtler forms of pelagianizing thought that have entered into the Christian church by just so much detracts from the true concept of Christianity.

In accordance with this detraction from Christ's actual and complete accomplishment of salvation for the sinner goes a changing about of the judicial

[113] Warfield, *Plan of Salvation*, 120.

and reformatory work of Christ in the hearts of men. All forms of nomistic soteriology give precedence to the reformatory work of Christ and make the judicial element secondary. This is a very serious error. Another indication of this form of soteriology is that as a rule it does not distinguish between those acts that take place within consciousness as e.g. faith, and those that take place below consciousness, e.g. regeneration. It conceives of all of these acts as taking place within consciousness, for it is the will of man that ultimately decides and no room is left for an immediate subconscious working of the Spirit. Moreover it does not make regeneration the basis of the later reformatory acts but places all these acts on a par, and finally, it does not conceive of every part in the *ordo salutis* as being a putting away of the old man and a putting on of the new, but emphasizes chiefly the putting on of the new for the sinfulness of man is then not a very serious matter.

In order to be true to the Biblical concept of God, man, Christ's person and work, election, common grace and the Holy Spirit, we shall have to avoid all of these points and emphasize above all the judicial relation of Christ's work to the sinner and upon it build the reformatory. There is here a distinction of fundamental importance between Roman Catholicism and the Reformation principle. Romanism thinks that at the basis of the changed judicial relation there must be a changed moral relation and thus smuggles in the principle of salvation through works. This is opposed to the Pauline doctrine that salvation is first and above all the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the sinner. On the basis of Romanism man again receives part of the honor; on Paul's basis God alone is the author. Paul is even so insistent on salvation through the free imputation of Christ's merit, that his opponents accuse him of denying the value of good works (Rom 5:1). Paul expressly says that upon imputation moral regeneration must follow.

Equally with reference to the distinction between that which occurs beneath and that which occurs within consciousness, Paul in Rom. 8:28–30 makes it plain that calling and justification as conscious acts follow upon foreordination. Back of calling and justification lies an act of God at the centre of man's being, that does not appear above the threshold of consciousness.

We shall have to maintain these general principles in the consideration of the various steps in the *ordo salutis*. The first of these steps is regeneration. Here immediately we see the false principles reassert themselves. In the early eastern church, regeneration became the implanting of the germ of immortality. The entire early church emphasized the moral above the judicial side. In the western

church the priest through the sacraments bestowed the *gratia infusa*, *justificans et sanctificans*. This relieves the baptized of guilt and punishment in so far as these rest upon him for past sins, and rids him of the pollution of sin because it bridles *concupiscentia*, allowing it to continue only as *fomes peccati*. Positively, it consists of a "*divina qualitas, in animo inhaerens*," identical in being with the lost *donum superadditum*. This makes man like God, engrafts him into the church, the body of Christ, enables him to do supernatural good works and thus permits him to earn eternal life for himself. Thus regeneration is not first of all a change of judicial relation pronounced by God, but a moral change within man. The church is the medium of administration through the action of the sacraments. The work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer is dispensed with also so that as a result regeneration is not something permanent because produced by the Spirit, but may be lost because it depends upon the acceptance of man.

We have noticed in this Roman doctrine that its error was due in part to its false conception of man and the image of God. By the theory of the *gratia infusa* the theistic conception of the distinction between God and man is to an extent obliterated. This same practical result was reached in Etychianism or any form of kenoticism. We do not greatly marvel then that all forms of theology that have had a false Christology have had a correspondingly false soteriology and have emphasized the moral at the expense of the judicial., conceiving of the work of Christ for man as of some mystical inpouring of the divine essence. The *Vermittelungstheologen* present an apt illustration of this. These men represent a type of thought that seems at first sight very attractive and warm. Modern idealism rejected the superficial Pelagianism of the *Aufklärung*, gave much more place to the concept of historical development, had a deeper notion of sin and thus reemphasized the need of regeneration. Schleiermacher even placed it in the centre of his *ordo salutis*. If Christ works in upon us the erstwhile weak God-consciousness is revived and comes once more to a power over the consciousness of sense. A new religious personality is born within us which reveals itself in moral renovation. But with Schleiermacher the regeneration of the individual is a moment in the regeneration of mankind through the appearance of Christ. But Christ is not the divine-human personality of theology, nor is God offended through the act of man's sin.

The *Vermittelungstheologie* was in the main true to Schleiermacher's theology. In Müller it developed a deeper view of sin and in Dorner it emphasized the divine nature of Christ, but Christ's nature is still an intermixture of the divine and the human. Christ has brought the divine-human life to mankind, and what Christ has done for mankind as a whole regeneration does for the individual. There is a

mystical influx of the divine essence of Christ. The Spirit then does not need to work regeneration in the heart of each one individually, but the Church again becomes the dispenser of this *gratia infusa*. There is on this basis no clear distinction between the work of the Logos in creation and the work of Christ as mediator; common grace and special grace also are not sufficiently distinguished; the *Vermittelungstheologie* is pantheizing and therefore out of harmony with Scripture. Regeneration is not transubstantiation but is still an *Abbild* of the divine-human personality of Christ in us, upon the basis of which God justifies man.[114] With Rothe, regeneration depends upon conversion which is a work in part of the grace of God but also of the free will of man. In conversion man puts himself into the right relation to God.

We see how far this pantheizing and Romanistic conception worked through. Ritschl tried to call a halt and again emphasized the doctrine of justification, which he conceived of as a synthetic judgment and placed in the hands of the church. But even so, regeneration and justification are really identical because the individual by attaching himself to the church and his appeal to the supreme purpose of God with the kingdom, now comes to the consciousness that he no longer feels guilty and is at one with God. We see in these various theories a general tendency to make regeneration dependent upon the action of the sacraments or church in conjunction with the individual. In each case the judicial aspect is made secondary, and it could not well be otherwise because if the determination lies with man or the action of sacrament it is already reformatory as the fruit of man's own labors, and God can then proceed to justify upon this basis.

It is therefore of extreme importance that regeneration is the fruit of the immediate activity of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of man. Dr. H. Bavinck has devoted a study to this question in which he makes it abundantly plain that it was expressly maintained by Calvin that the new life is of the Holy Spirit alone. The Synod of Dort also would not hear of mediate regeneration, i.e. through the means of grace or the activity of the will. This does not mean that therefore we must fall into the extreme of the Anabaptists and say that the means of grace have no value. We have already seen that the doctrine of common grace can safeguard us from such extremes. But it does mean that the implantation of the new life is absolutely from God alone. We could perhaps argue for a long while about the question whether e.g. in the case of Lydda regeneration was effected through means of the Word or not, but on that basis the term "means" has a different significance. The Holy Spirit perhaps rather terminates immediately

[114] Bavinck, *Dogmatiek*, 4:39.

upon, than acts independently of, the faculties, but it is the Holy Spirit alone that gives the initiative. There is not only a sort of inertia, a sluggishness that the Spirit must overcome, but he must turn the being of man, that was formerly directed away from God, to God. This is then in the last analysis a subconscious action. The righteousness of Christ is freely imputed unto him, not upon the basis of any activity of his, not even upon the basis of his mystic union with Christ.

Here we again meet with a subtle form of thought that thinks to do justice to the Biblical concept of regeneration by saying that regeneration cannot be given to man for any merit of his but it can be given to him because he is one with Christ. But we may then ask on what basis is he considered one with Christ? Is it not the free grace of God whereby he has predestined us to be accounted one with Him? For otherwise the condition again becomes the basis of the state, while in Scripture we are first transplanted from the state of sinners to the state of justified by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The sinner is justified *qua talis qua impius*. If we conceive of it otherwise, we subvert the notion of grace and justice with God. We are first of all transplanted by grace from one state to another, and then once transplanted God in justice gives us grace to conform in a measure our condition to our state. We are counted in Christ. As such we are saved and have eternal life and might immediately enter upon eternal life. But we are given to realize in consciousness what our implantation in Christ means and then we strive for sanctification.

We must therefore keep clearly before our minds what is meant by our mystic union with Christ. It is not the Immanence of the Logos in all creation with which *Vermittelungstheologie* intermixes the mystic union. Nor is it a mere unity in consciousness as Socinians and many Arminians conceive of it. Still less is it a union of essence as philosophical Mysticism often maintains. Finally, the mystic union cannot be effected by any external means, for it is a union above the physical sphere. Positively we may say that the union is an organic one, as of the vine and its branches. It is further a union of life Gal 2.20, 2 Cor 13.5, though not the divine-human life of an abstract divine-human personality. The union is effected by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ 2 Cor. 3:18. As such, the Spirit was given to Christ at his exaltation, and the Spirit is in turn one of the gifts of Christ's work to us. The Spirit was operative in the human nature of Christ, and is operative in the believer. This prevents us from conceiving of the union as one of essence but rather as a personal union, through which the believer individually receives life directly from Christ, which life becomes a transforming power in his own life. Thus the union even becomes reciprocal; we

are taken up in Christ, through the initiative of Christ's Spirit (Eph 3:16) but we must take up Christ in our lives. [115]

In the light of this view of the judicial and reformatory relation of Christ's work to the individual, and the view of the mystic union with Christ, we consider regeneration as a work of the reforming and not of the judicial kind. Yet it is the fruit of the judicial relation in which God has placed the sinner to Christ. The act of regeneration takes place beneath consciousness and cannot be resisted. "*Te zeggen, dat zij kan weerstaan worden, zou altijd weer op de voorstelling berusten, dat zij zich tegenover haar voorwerp plaatst. Zij doet dit niet maar werkt immanent in het hart des menshen.*" [116] Still this does not detract from the personality of the individual. "*Hoe verwerkt God de wil des menschen? Op eene wijze die met de vrijheid en het spontaan karakter van de wil overeenkomt. Niet derhalve door zich tegenover de wil te plaatsen en hem met geweld om te buigen. Ook niet door eene physische of ongeestelijke kracht, gelijk de Roomschen beweren dat in den doop geschied. Maar door in de wortel des levens, waaruit de wil zelf opkomt eene omkeering teweeg te brengen. Het gevolg daarvan is dan dat de wil vanzelf in tegenovergestelde richting werkt dan vroeger het geval was, en zulks niet meer onwillig maar spontaan, gewillig doet.*" [117]

The New Testament terms γενηηθεναι ανοθεν John 3:3, γεννγαενα εξ υδατος καυ πνευ ματος, παδινγεννεσια Tit.3:5; αναγενηη θεναι 1 Pet. 1:3; εκ θεου γεννη θεναι, Jo. 1:13, confirm the presentation given.

Thus we see covenant-theology also adheres to the theistic motif in the *ordo salutis*. God is again the Absolute; all initiative comes from him; yet finite personality is not pushed aside but realized.

We can now be brief about the other parts of the *ordo salutis*. With respect to calling the distinction is usually made between *vocatio externa* and *vocatio interna*. But this implies that the efficiency of the calling is a matter of pure grace. For if that is not the case the distinction between *externa* and *interna* has no meaning. Believers have always realized that no merit distinguishes them from other men but only grace (1 Cor 4:7). It is therefore not man's will that decides but God's grace. This grace is not only a restoration of the power of the will that it may be able to accept the gospel call, but it is grace that effectually changes the will.

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[115] Vos, *Dogmatiek*, 4:25 f.
[116] *Idem*., 4:66.
[117] *Idem*., 4:58.

So with conversion. "*De wil voorzoover zij in de bekeering betrokken is, keert zich naar God toe.*" (Acts 8:22) To repent is given man by God; yet it is an act entirely of man. The struggle between the Reformed and the Remonstrants was in part about who was prior in conversion. The distinction was made between *conversio habitualis* and *conversio actualis*. The Remonstrants held that the *conversio actualis* came first and was produced by the joint action of God's grace and man's free will. [118] But the Reformed conceived of the *conversio habitualis*, i.e. regeneration, as a *habitus infusus* and not *acquisitus*, and attributed it exclusively to the operation of God, while in the *conversio actualis* man puts into practice, through the power of the Spirit, the virtues of faith and love.

It was again a bone of contention in what way, if any, means were used in the production of this conversion. The Remonstrants defended the notion that the action of conversion was due to man's acceptance of the Word by his own strength plus the grace of God. As to the *conversio habitualis*, the Reformed held that though it is the work of God, the preaching of the Word is not useless, "*maar veeler noodzakelijk als een voorafgaand bijvoegsel, dat krachtens Gods inzetting tot de genade van den wederbarenden Geest vereischt wordt.*" [119] And for the *conversio actualis* they held that the preaching of the word was requisite. Rom 10.14–15, 1 Cor 3.5 The immediate working of the Spirit is not inconsistent with the use of means. "*De onwederstandelijke of onmiddelijk werkende genade sluit wel uit, dat er tusschen haar en de door haar gewerkte wedergeboorte iets in staat, zooals bijv. de vrije wilskeuze van den mensch, maar zij sluit niet uit, dat er aan hare werking in het hart van den zondaar middelen voorafgaan.*" [120]

So also with faith; God does not cooperate with man in the production of it as the Remonstrants maintained, for God is the only cause of faith. But God works this faith in man after the preaching of the gospel has preceded as the means ordained by God, while then God concurs with man who has received the habitus of faith in order to have faith issue into good works. Emphasis on man's side of faith brings a reversal to nomism, a reversal from the gospel to the law. In the Roman system good works, as we have seen, are not the fruits of a faith that is worked by the Spirit of Christ, but are due to the restored *donum superadditum*. Man then is able in his own strength to inherit eternal life. Accordingly, faith is for Catholicism only intellectual assent to the doctrines of the Church and rests with man. But faith "in order to be truly a *fides salvificans* and to perform its great mission must be unshakable. It must therefore rest on truth undoubtable and

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[118] *Idem*., 4:150.
Bavinck, *Roeping en Wedergeboorte* (Kampen: Zalsman, 1903), 67.
[120] *Idem*., 67.

attest itself as real by its own witness and power in the heart of man. Behind faith must lie the truth, the will and act of God. In other words faith is the fruit or effect of election; it is the experience of an act of God." [121]

Faith then ultimately rests on the firm basis of election. We need not analyze the concept of faith in detail. Sufficient for our purpose is to note that it is both God's action in man and man's action, so that here too the covenant relation is maintained. We have already spoken of justification in conjunction with regeneration and have seen that pelagianizing thought scarcely has any room for this concept at all and almost ignores it, and pantheizing thought makes of it merely a reaction in the finite consciousness of what it perceives itself to be, while Reformed theology sees in it the conscious realization of change from the state of guilt to the state of righteousness before God.

Finally, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints rests upon election and is therefore sure. On the Roman basis, grace once received through sacraments may be lost at any time through mortal sin, and no one can clearly distinguish between mortal and pardonable sin so that the Catholic must live in constant fear. Even Lutheranism cannot entirely overcome this, as Dr. Vos beautifully expresses it: "*De Luthersche leeft als een kind, dat in den lach der vadergunst het oogenblik geniet; de Gereformeerde als een man, in wiens bewusten geest de eeuwige glorie Gods haar schijnsel werpt.*" [122]

Hence the joy, the peace and the richness of the covenant theology. We need not discuss in detail the covenant of grace. Through the covenant of grace Christ instead of Adam becomes man's representative with God. Man's guilt is taken away and eternal life actually earned for him and imputed to him. Now there is no more possibility as with Adam that eternal life may still be lost. The covenant relation in the larger sense is maintained through Christ. The Christian now is truly free. He comprehends not only a momentary sense of forgiveness and justification, but envelops in his consciousness the whole Christ as prophet, priest, and king. The full glory of the grace of God reflects itself in his consciousness; he walks here already in a new paradise. No, not as though he were already perfect in condition, for the burden of sins weighs down upon him still, and he strives ever onward and upward in the strength of his Lord. Having died with Christ from the rudiments of this world he seeks those things which are above where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. "My heart is with Him on his throne, and ill can brook delay." For the Christian who feels in his consciousness that his finite

[121] Warfield, *Calvin and the Reformation*, 112.
[122] Geerhardus Vos, *Verbondsleer in Gereformeerde Theology*, 41.

personality is again fully recognized and to be realized because being in the covenant of grace. [123] He prays; do his prayers change ought in the eternal plan of God? No they do not. Are his prayers then in vain? No they are not. He knows he is in Christ and is saved and will be saved. May he therefore sin? No, the urge within his own soul will cause him to strive toward the ideal. He preaches. Will God then change the number of the elect through his effort? No, but he has the command of God, and knows his labors will not be in vain; God wants the salvation of all. He extends his mission effort even to the remotest ends of all the earth, but not in excited fashion as though millions were each moment falling over the precipice because he is taking time to get a thorough preparation. No, he wishes to work earnestly and hard in God's way to extend the body of Christ for His glory. He educates his children, knowing they are heirs of the covenant; he instructs them from earliest youth in their covenant privileges and obligations, by all means of family and school at his disposal, so that the child may see and have it engrafted upon its consciousness that all of life in every sphere is subject to God and must be made subservient to its maker through the focus of his soul. In short the church that lives in the full consciousness of its restored covenant relation is ready to do the world's work which is nothing less than bringing the world into its correct relation to God, i.e. of becoming the means whereby God Himself is glorified, and therefore the creature realized. And this will come to pass. The cosmical implications of Calvary are that the world is saved. Dead branches are lopped off the tree, but creation as a whole with man its conscious centre is reinstated and confirmed in its originally intended place. All nature sings and tells the wondrous story and thou my soul lead thou the chorus on, for thou art free.

A theory of the will that is to be satisfactory must have philosophical justification. We have attempted to give this in the first part of this paper. There we found that the theist can negatively show the insufficiency of any other position than his; the implication of the finite consciousness is theism. But positively we cannot expect to compel conviction as to what form of theism is implied. The *principium speciale* is a denial of the ultimate validity of the *principium generale*. By the former we are placed on Biblical grounds. This implies the recognition that we accept a logic that is higher than ours as the final bar of appeal. Hence we seek not to subject any part of Scripture to the *principium generale*, nor subject any part of Scripture revelation to any other part, for that amounts to the same thing as again subjecting it to our own judgment.

[123] missing phrase—Eric Bristley

We found in our second part that the Reformed covenant theology remained nearest to this Biblical position. Other theories of the will go off on either of two byways, namely, that of seeking an unwarranted independence for man, or otherwise of subjecting man to philosophical necessitarianism. Reformed theology attempts to steer clear of both these dangers; avoiding all forms of Pelagianizing and of Pantheizing thought. It thinks to have found in the covenant relation of God with creation the true presentation of the Biblical concept of the relation of God to man. Man is totally dependent upon God and exists with all creation for God. Yet his freedom is not therewith abridged but realized. Sin did not destroy this original covenant-relation because it is carried through in Christ. Members of the covenant of grace are again members of the covenant with man and therefore free.

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